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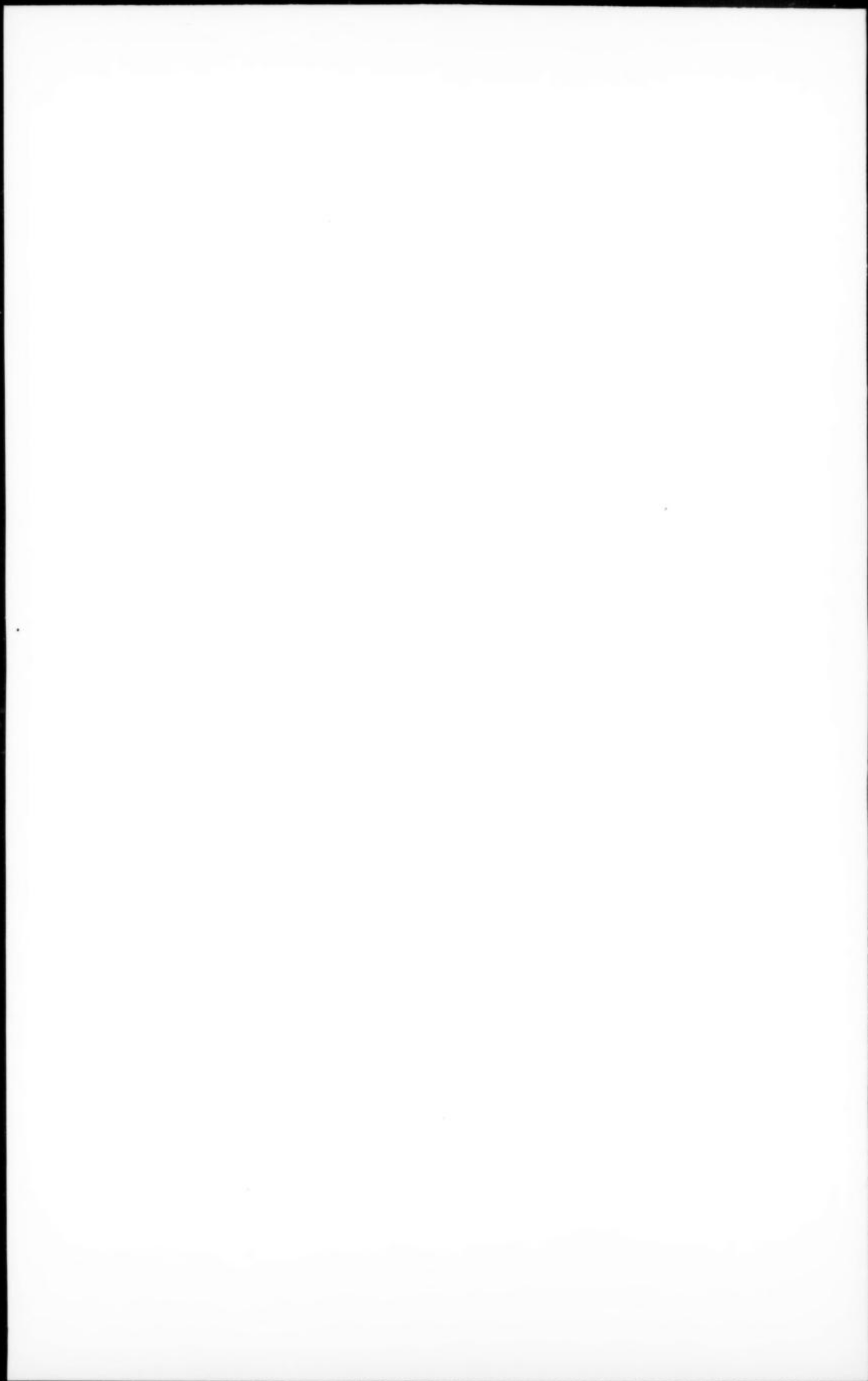
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International Year of Peace Commentary

Key Element in the Struggle Against the Nuclear Threat

THE 'Soviet Union' decision to extend its unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions until January 1, 1987, announced in the August statement of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on Soviet television, has become a political factor of great moral force and a powerful incentive to action. A continuation of the previous major peace initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, this decision has again highlighted the simple truth that for the struggle against the mortal threat to mankind to be successful, a first and concrete step towards nuclear disarmament is needed. Without it progress towards the shaping of a secure world is inconceivable.

The clearly, tangible and convincingly formulated political will of the Soviet Union to curb the arms race has generated world-wide response. No one taking an unbiased view of the statement's meaning can fail to note that the words of the Soviet leader display a high sense of responsibility for the future of the human race and for the preservation of civilisation and life on Earth, the Soviet Union's readiness to search, together with all countries and peoples, for practical solutions to the pressing problems of our age.

Of course, not everywhere did, the response to this new peace initiative correspond to its significance. This is explained by the existing differences in political thinking, in the interpretation of one's own interests and those of all mankind. The imperialist quarters of the United States and other NATO countries record merely the fact that the Soviet moratorium has been extended and ignore the motives behind this decision, dismissing them as 'propaganda'.

This is clearly an attempt to conceal one's own irresponsibility from world public opinion. But what prevents the United States from imposing its own moratorium in response and from engaging in its own propaganda of new steps toward peace? The claim that the ban on nuclear tests runs counter to the interests of the United States and its friends and allies is untenable. What about the Soviet Union and its friends and allies? To them too, security is sacred. Nevertheless, the Soviet moratorium has been extended.

It follows that there is a different reason. Circles close to the White House are quite open about it: a moratorium would prevent the Pentagon from testing the nuclear warheads to be used in the Trident sea-based missiles and the Midgetman mobile

strategic missiles, as well as the nuclear components of 'star wars' laser weapons. That is the real reason.

Those who are loath to give up nuclear weapons, who profit from the arms race and try to shape international relations on the basis of armed force see the nuclear test ban only as a threat to their own political or economic interests. After all, it would be impossible to perfect the available or create new types of armaments without such tests. Meanwhile, arms production is an important channel the military business and its politicians use to fatten themselves.

This is why the military-industrial complex and its agents in the NATO countries are doing all they can to prevent the US joining the Soviet moratorium. Moreover, the extension of the moratorium hurts their interests too because the Soviet Union's unilateral peace actions are eroding the myth about the 'threat from the East', the myth created by militarist propaganda and used to justify the arms race in the eyes of public opinion. How else can one explain the openly provocative course of the US administration with regard to the Soviet moratorium? Facts demonstrate that this is precisely the way Washington is moving. Facts refute its claim that the USSR has completed its nuclear testing programme and that the United States is forced to catch up. In 1985 (prior to the imposition of the Soviet moratorium) the USSR conducted nine tests against 20 by the United States. Besides, from August 6, 1985 to August 6, 1986 18 nuclear explosions, three of them unannounced, were conducted on US test ranges.

The overall situation is that, according to the Swedish Defence Institute, as of January 1, 1986, the United States had conducted 238 more nuclear tests than the Soviet Union, and the gap is still growing. Washington responded to the Soviet appeals to join the moratorium with new nuclear explosions, defying the demands of the public and the opinion of many respected parties and organisations, and ignoring the alarmed concern of its own allies and of the American people themselves.

Such is the logic of militarism. Such is the stand taken by the opponents of the moratorium. No realistically-minded person can understand it or find it rational. Plain common sense makes it unforgivable and politically shortsighted to reduce the statement by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee to the mere fact of extension of the Soviet moratorium. In politics, both actions and their motives are important. The latter are as important as the former because they enable one to grasp the purposes and intentions of the other side, and make its actions more predictable, which serves as the basis for the stabilisation of bilateral relations.

The exceptional significance of the statement made by the Soviet leader stems from a global view of the problems mankind encounters, an integral and comprehensive evaluation of the trends international developments display, and an integrated approach to the improvement of the international situation. World public opinion justly sees a model of new political thinking in the way the Soviet Union assesses world developments and in the ways and means it suggests for tackling the tasks facing all mankind.

Self-interest based on narrow national or bloc considerations is alien to the Soviet approach which is rooted in a sober analysis of the realities of our nuclear and space age and prompted by the awareness of the truth that increasingly rapid militarisation can rob the world of its future.

Mountains of nuclear and various other weapons have been piled up; nevertheless, the arms race is not abating but gaining speed. There has emerged the threat of its transfer to outer space. The United States and the entire NATO bloc are militarising fast. The rate at which military technology is developing is so high that it increasingly limits mankind's ability to stop the slide into the nuclear abyss.

All those concerned over the future of the world are aware that the situation is becoming intolerable. Today, it is not enough to preserve the existing treaties. Major

practical steps capable of curbing militarism and reversing the course of developments for the better are required. One cannot dispute Mikhail Gorbachov's idea that the 'balance of fear' is ceasing to be a deterrent. This fear is a direct participant in the arms race: it forms a vicious circle of heightened tensions by intensifying mistrust and suspicion.

Life itself is bearing this out. Suffice it to recall the pernicious role played by all the myths the monopoly-dominated press has invented about the 'red menace' and the 'aggressiveness of socialism'. Lenin, in his time, spoke about 'political crooks' who were 'shouting about red militarism', coming up with fraudulent arguments and 'throwing dust in the eyes of the masses'.¹ After World War II US imperialism used anti-communist myths as an ideological smoke-screen to cover up the intervention in Korea, the invasion of the Dominican Republic, the acts of aggression against Cuba, the long years of armed piracy in Indochina, the fanning of the Mideast hotbed of tensions, the interference in the affairs of Angola and Ethiopia, or the occupation of Grenada. Today, the pretext of repulsing 'communist expansionism' is used to wage undeclared wars against the peoples of Afghanistan, Nicaragua and Kampuchea.

The Soviet Union rejects the imperial policy of interference in the affairs of sovereign countries and peoples. It maintains that the old approach to war as a means to attain political goals is no longer viable.

Despite the complex, diverse and contradictory nature of the way it is developing, the world is objectively becoming ever more interdependent and integral. This makes the deliverance of Earth from nuclear annihilation a universal cause, a cause of all peoples. Mikhail Gorbachov is right when he states that 'pre-nuclear thinking in fact lost its significance on August 6, 1945. Today, it is impossible to ensure one's own security without taking into account the security of other states and peoples. There can be no genuine security unless it is equal for all and comprehensive.'²

The pooling of efforts of all countries and peoples is also made imperative by the dangers the use of technology poses in the nuclear and space age. The deaths of the Challenger crew and the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant have highlighted what could happen if outer space is turned into a scene of armed rivalry and if nuclear weapons are used. Experts have calculated that the setting off of even the smallest nuclear charge would equal three Chernobyls in radioactivity. It follows that the setting off of even a small part of the existing nuclear stockpiles will become a catastrophe, and an irreversible one at that. And the aggressor cannot hope to survive either. If someone does dare to deliver a first nuclear strike, he will doom himself to agonising death—not even from a retaliatory strike, but from the consequences of the explosion of his own warheads.

Broad sections of world public opinion fully share the Soviet view that universal security can be attained only if weapons of mass destruction are completely eliminated. As a socialist country committed to peace by its very nature, as a nuclear power aware of its responsibility for the preservation of civilisation and life on Earth, the USSR is striving to do all it can to safeguard mankind's peaceful future. This year, the International Year of Peace, has witnessed new and large-scale initiatives on disarmament put forward by the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community. Many of those initiatives have been discussed in *World Marxist Review*.³ They cover the entire spectrum of disarmament issues—from outer space to the reduction, under strict mutual control, of armed forces and conventional armaments in order to lower the level of military confrontation in Europe and other regions. We also see the broad platform advanced by the USSR for security and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific as very important; it is designed to stop the increasingly rapid militarisation processes in that region and to remove the obstacles to lasting peace.

Viewed against this impressive background, the decision to extend the Soviet moratorium on nuclear explosions is a new and specific expression of the peace policy

formulated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. As an act, and not just a proposal, the moratorium proves indeed the seriousness and sincerity of the programme for nuclear disarmament, of Moscow's calls for a new policy—that of realism, peace and cooperation. There is another graphic example—the Soviet consent to the installation of US monitoring devices in the area of Semipalatinsk (Kazakhstan); this belies Washington's contrived claims that effective verification of a moratorium is 'impossible'.

It is clear from Mikhail Gorbachov's statement that should the US administration show political will to achieve disarmament, an agreement on ending nuclear tests can be reached promptly and signed this very year at a Soviet-US summit. This would be the main tangible outcome of the summit and a major step toward ending the arms race.

All those closely following international developments are aware that socialism does not lack in goodwill or efforts for peace. However, not everything depends on socialism alone.

It is true that so far, solutions to many disarmament problems have been blocked by Washington's refusal to scrap even a part of its stockpile. Nevertheless, the peace efforts undertaken by the USSR and supported by the other socialist countries are not in vain. Peace movements across the world are gaining considerable weight. Their pressure on the official and political quarters of the NATO countries is growing. Many governments, influential parties and organisations are becoming increasingly active, advancing their own peace initiatives that are consonant with the demands of the times. The Mexican Declaration of the Delhi Six—Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania—adopted at their meeting in Ixtapa, again calls for an end to all nuclear explosions and expresses their readiness to do all they can to assist in the creation of an effective monitoring system to verify compliance with the nuclear test ban. The Soviet moratorium has been approved by the UN General Assembly which is the most representative forum of the world's nations, by most member-countries of the non-aligned movement, by many trade unions and by the latest congress of the Socialist International. The USSR's moves have been welcomed by prominent scientists—by physicists and medical experts, those who are aware better than others of the dangers with which the atom is fraught. One also notes the substantive shifts that have occurred in the views of a considerable part of US congressmen who have to take into account the nation's public opinion which favours a ban on nuclear explosions, as well as arms reductions.

The Soviet moratorium is an impetus to new and more vigorous action aimed at removing the threat of a world-wide conflagration. Such is the position held by the Communists and their numerous partners in the struggle for peace. With renewed vigour, they are launching mass campaigns to finally secure a comprehensive and complete ban on nuclear testing so as to ensure a truly peaceful future. The demand that the United States join the Soviet moratorium was the theme of the International Day of Trade Union Action for Peace, when millions of workers raised their voices in favour of disarmament. In those NATO countries where election campaigns are on or about to begin, voters are responding enthusiastically to the appeal to oust from elected bodies those who advocate the arms build-up and act to push their nations and the world closer to nuclear catastrophe. In the United States, scientists, technical experts, teachers and clergymen are demonstrating at the gate of the Livermore nuclear laboratory. The press reports that farmers have recently been joining them too. Their mood was clear from the giant poster displayed by a farmer whose plot of land was being squeezed from all sides by the laboratory's testing grounds. The poster said, 'Do Not Rob Our Kids of a Future. End the Tests!'

'The children will perish because the fathers told lies' is a warning that has come down to us from ancient times. That was said when the fate of a city-state, of a

separate nation and even of several nations was at stake. Today, the survival of the entire human race is at stake. For our children not to perish, truth and reason must triumph now.

Zenon Zorzovilis

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¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 66.

² *Information Bulletin*, No. 20, 1986.

³ See Roald Sagdeyev, 'Into the Third Millennium: Without Nuclear Weapons', *WMR*, No. 3, 1986; 'At a Crucial Time of World Development', *WMR*, No. 7, 1986; 'Socialism's Peace Offensive Continues', *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.—*Ed.*

At a New Stage of Social Development

Jozef Czyrek — Political Bureau member,
Central Committee Secretary, PUWP

THE Tenth Congress of the PUWP (June 29-July 3, 1986) was a major event for our party and the entire nation. It also generated widespread international response. Viewed in terms of its general significance, the congress took stock of the experience the party had gained working in an extremely complex and at times dramatic period of Poland's postwar history. The congress thus marked the conclusion of an important stage in the struggle to stabilise the socio-political fabric and consolidate the national economy; it also ushered in a new stage at which the policy worked out at the Ninth Congress of the PUWP (1981) and designed to ensure socialist renovation will continue at a radically new level. This policy will mean, first and foremost, a more consistent tackling of the tasks set, accelerated socio-economic development and improvement of the party's work. The goals of the new period are outlined in the Programme of the Polish United Workers' Party adopted at the recent congress.

The five years that elapsed between our Ninth and Tenth congresses were a period of high tension and anxiety, but also of production accomplishments. The nation still remembers the time when it went through a profound crisis and faced a great danger. There was discontent among the working class which protested against the distortion of socialism caused by the errors in the strategy and policy of party and government leaders in the 1970s. Assisted by imperialism, the counter-revolutionaries used this discontent and protest to attack the people's government and the foundations of the socialist system.

Inciting and directing the activities of anti-socialist groups, the imperialist forces expected the destruction of the political structure in Poland to erode the world socialist system and change the alignment of forces in Europe.

The crisis at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s reflected both the backlog of socio-economic contradictions in our country and the highly complex nature of the competition between the two systems. The crisis accentuated the problems that face

socialism at crucial stages in its development.

The previous party congress charted a course of national concord with all patriotic forces who accepted the foundations of socialism. It was a course of struggle against counter-revolution, of socio-economic reforms designed to consolidate the socialist system. In this way the party of the Polish working class demonstrated that it—and it alone—could offer a feasible programme of overcoming the crisis, lead the people in surmounting the existing difficulties and ensure the nation's progress.

On December 13, 1981 the constitutional authorities of our republic, proceeding from their legitimate duties and rights, adopted a sovereign decision on the imposition of martial law. Recourse to this extreme was essential in order to remove the threat of a civil war, a threat posed by the activities of the counter-revolutionary forces, to end anarchy, stop economic dislocation, ensure Poland's survival as a nation and prevent a deterioration of the political situation in Europe. Our party deems it its duty to defend Poland's revolutionary gains by drawing on its own resources and relying on the solidarity of our class allies. This task is rooted not only in our party's responsibility to our working class and the entire nation but also in the fact that the PUWP is part of the international communist and workers' movement and the Polish People's Republic, an important element of the world socialist system.

The years that have passed since the Ninth Congress have proven that the course was chosen correctly and have brought about radical changes in the life of the nation and of the party itself, as well as in the functioning of the people's government and the socialist economy.

The Tenth Congress owed its particular importance above all to the fact that it adopted the PUWP Programme which defined the party's objectives for the rest of the century. After the Ideological Declaration approved at the Unification Congress in 1948, this is the first document in the history of our party to formulate the long-term goals of socialist construction.

The Programme is the result of a Marxist-Leninist analysis applied to the development of socialist society in Poland, to the actual alignment of social forces, to the class structure of our society, to the nature and intensity of social contradictions. Drawing on the rich experience of the party and of Poland's entire organised workers' movement which is over 100 years old, the Programme exemplifies a creative application of general, historically tested laws of socialist construction to the specific, distinctive conditions of our country. In drafting its policy document, the PUWP used the collective theoretical and practical experience accumulated by the fraternal parties, the decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU playing a particularly important part. As Comrade Wojciech Jaruzelski stressed at our party forum, 'we connect our party's policy of socialist construction precisely with the long-term prospects of socialist development, the path it (the CPSU—*Ed.*) is blazing boldly'.¹

The PUWP Programme also rises to the challenge of our age, the challenge posed by the progress of civilisation, primarily by the revolutionary advances of science and technology. Reaffirming communism as the long-term historical goal of the party, the Programme defines our immediate task—the building of socialism, the first phase of the communist social formation, and the complete establishment of socialist relations in all spheres of the social fabric.

Poland is at the close of a period of transition from capitalism, to socialism, the foundations of which have been created in major areas. The socialist mode of production is dominant in our country. The political system is socialist. A Marxist-Leninist party is the leading force of our society. Socialist processes are penetrating deep into the spheres of democracy and public self-government. Poland is a firm link in the chain of the socialist community countries.

One must, however, note that social transformations have not affected the basis and the superstructure to the same extent. Along with public property which plays

the decisive role, there is also private property (small-scale producers in agriculture and handicrafts) and, on a minor scale, petty-capitalist property. This gives rise to different and even contradictory social interests. The history of people's Poland confirms that the transition from capitalism to socialism implies not only a simple accumulation of a socialist system's features and values but also a complex process of overcoming antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions.

The Programme sets specific goals for two periods to come. The first, which will end with the 1980s, will see the complete elimination of the aftermath left by the socio-political crisis. In the economy, we are to stop the obsolescence of production plant, speed up the technological and organisational restructuring, increase the efficiency of the national economy, balance the market, largely curb inflation, strengthen our export capacity and put the foreign trade balance of payments in order. With these tasks solved, we will be able to pass to the second stage—to increase the rates of intensive economic growth in the 1990s, thus securing a radical acceleration of our entire socio-economic development and adding faster to our national income. Widespread modernisation of production, far-reaching changes in the economic structure, the levelling out of development imbalances between different regions and a steady decrease of the external debt are to become salient features of this period.

Under the Programme, the national income is to rise by at least 75 per cent within 15 years—by the year 2000. This calls for labour productivity to grow at least 65 per cent and the energy intensiveness and material intensiveness, to decrease 30 to 40 per cent. Solution of these tasks will enable per capita consumption to increase 50 per cent and make it possible to accomplish major new social projects. The course and the essence of socialist transformations in society's class structure, political system and intellectual field have also been outlined.

A party-wide pregress discussion centred on the Draft Programme and on a paper which was prepared for the congress and which specified socio-economic tasks for 1985-1990. At meetings and conferences, in person-to-person discussions and in the course of informal and free exchanges of views, each party member could express his opinion of these documents and make whatever points he wished to make. During the discussion, many critical, relevant and constructive proposals were submitted; this made it necessary to introduce radical changes into the original Draft Programme and to enrich its content. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Programme expresses the collective wisdom and the experience of the entire party, of all working people—the working class, the peasants and the intellectuals.

Attaining policy goals is no easy task. Socialist transformations and changes occurring in the world at large are complex and uneven; some spheres of activity marked time and even suffered retrogression due to the economic decline at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, as the Central Committee reported to the Tenth Congress, 'accelerated development is the paramount national task and a historical necessity. The time factor has acquired new dimensions for Poland. That is the principal and essential condition for implementing the PUWP Programme. We interpret acceleration above all as a process of profound and radical change both in material production and in social consciousness.'²

A radical modernisation of production and structural changes in the economy call for the speediest possible development of industries that rely on the latest advances of science and technology. To us, structural change implies not only a change in the correlation of the economic branches but also widespread application of electronics, automation, robotics and informatics, as well as the introduction of advanced technologies into the manufacture of materials and products; many of them are to display new properties and must be of the highest quality. The switch to face the exigencies of the day also demands that we achieve savings through the frugal and rational use of

primary commodities, materials and energy—that is, resources whose growth will be considerably limited.

Advances of the scientific and technological revolution will be used in an organic connection with the advantages of socialism; this is to be the principal motive force of socio-economic progress. In the current five-year period, allocations to science will double. The role of the nation's central economic agencies in directing basic research will increase; simultaneously, economic and legal conditions will be created for a more flexible organisation of research and of applying its results, with small enterprises also playing a role.

Man, his knowledge, expertise, commitment and initiative will be the decisive factor here. Poland has a great number of highly skilled personnel among the working class, peasants and intellectuals. These people are our greatest asset and a source of our optimism. To use their skills rationally is a major economic and political task.

The Tenth Congress recommended that all jobs and organisational structures in the national economy and government be evaluated and certified. This does not imply automatic cuts in manning tables for the sake of economy; the aim is to bring all elements of the economic and government mechanism into conformity with the actual level attained in terms of the forces and relations of production. The evaluation and certification drive will not be a short-lived campaign but the beginning of a continuous mass movement to improve the organisation of work and of the managerial apparatus.

At its previous congress, our party initiated changes in the financial and economic system; in other words, an economic reform was launched. It is essentially designed to strengthen the strategic role of central planning as a means of expressing the nation's interests; simultaneously, the autonomy of government-run enterprises is to increase in the creation and managerial use of economic tools such as profits, credits, taxes and prices. The reform is to free the initiative and activity of working people as collective owners of socialist property.

Introduced in 1982, the new financial and economic system has already yielded certain results. It has helped to increase labour productivity, reduce the consumption of materials and energy, and improve the supply of goods to the market. This has made it possible to lift rationing regulations (except those concerning meat and meat products) and to reach the precrisis level in the availability and consumption of many goods. The reform has exerted a tangible impact on the way people think and act on the job.

Still, these innovations were introduced against the extremely complicated background of a profound slump and imbalance in production, of enormous difficulties in the supply of raw and other materials. As a result, the reform has failed to influence economic efficiency to a greater degree and turned out to be inadequate for eliminating the imbalances between the growth of people's incomes and the production of the necessary goods. Together with several objective factors, this is a source of our continuing high inflation which plays a destructive role in the economy and in the social fabric.

Naturally, the implementation of the reform is a long-term and involved socio-economic process. Its financial and economic tools and mechanisms must be constantly improved and adapted to the changing situation and to new economic phenomena. The Tenth Congress of the PUWP advocated that the reform be intensified and shifted to its second stage, essentially aimed at making economic management more efficient. This makes it necessary to reduce budgetary subsidies, to rationalise prices and to strictly observe the principles of self-financing. An added benefit is that this will make it possible to curb inflation, strengthen incentives to better work, increase the national income and improve the supply of goods to the market.

The congress accorded great attention to the development of agriculture and the food industry. The Party Programme envisages a considerable increase of agricultural output and, in the longer term, Poland's self-sufficiency at a relatively high level of food consumption. We are to re-equip the agrarian sector and to introduce modern agricultural methods on a large scale.

The concentration of agricultural estates in Poland is an objective process. But land—our people's common asset—should be used as efficiently as possible. Bearing this in mind, the party advocates not only voluntary socialisation of land (based on sound economic principles), expansion of cultivated areas and the establishment of new state-run farms but also the strengthening of highly productive family farms linked through production with the socialist economy. Care will be taken to enhance the role and the importance of state-run and cooperative agricultural enterprises in supplying the population with food.

The efforts to modernise the economy and make it more efficient will help to expand our export capacities and to involve Poland more vigorously in the international division of labour. The party believes that all-round economic cooperation with the other socialist countries, primarily with the USSR, is an important factor in the acceleration of our nation's development. Recent difficult years are added proof that these links are something we can rely on. At a time when Poland was subjected to discrimination and economic sanctions by the capitalist powers who brazenly violated the agreements concluded and went back on their foreign trade obligations, the Soviet Union and other sister countries helped to preserve the viability of our economy and save it from disintegration.

We attach great importance to radically new forms of cooperation with the CMEA, to more profound coproduction and specialisation, and to the expansion of direct economic ties between individual enterprises. Poland is active in the follow-up of the CMEA countries' Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress through the year 2000 and of a similar Polish-Soviet programme. Their implementation gives rise to radically new forms of cooperation, such as joint industrial design offices and science/production centres.

Our party is in favour of mutually beneficial and equitable economic relations and partnership in trade with the countries of the other social system—provided there is no discrimination or protectionism.

A steady rise in the standard and quality of life is the purpose of the strategy of intensive economic development. In the coming years, social policy will be aimed primarily at meeting more fully the food requirements of the population, improving housing conditions, bringing education closer to practical needs and consolidating its infrastructure, ensuring progress in the fields of health care and environmental protection, and equitably distributing the national income along the lines of 'from each according to his abilities, to each according to his work'.

The working class has been and remains the leading force in socialist transformations. In Poland, it forms the main base of socialism and expresses the interests of all working people, of the entire nation. The party will see to it that the occupational skills, the cultural level, the social position and the comprehensive influence of the working class continue to grow.

The working class discharges its historical mission in alliance with the peasants and the intellectuals. This alliance forms the class-rooted base of popular government and underlies the PUWP policy of national concord. This policy stems from the point Lenin made to the effect that communism can only be built if all working people take part in this effort. Therefore, the policy of concord is not a transitory tactical line adopted for a difficult period but a steady course to form a broad alliance with those social forces which, despite their different philosophies and approaches to specific issues, recognise the constitutional principles of the socialist system and are ready to

share the common responsibility for the future of the nation.

The new and complex tasks facing Poland have an impact on the evolution of the very concept of national concord. While previously, political understanding was particularly important, it is cooperation in the socio-economic sphere that is moving to the foreground today. Expressed in the activities of the Patriotic Movement for National Revival, the strategy of concord is the basis underlying the mode of governing the country in coalition with the United Peasants' Party and the Democratic Party. We have rejected the practice of regarding the allied parties as mere transmission shafts for the PUWP or as organisations dressing up the nation's facade. Recognising the leading role of the PUWP and accepting the programme of socialist construction, these parties act as our partners in the drawing up and implementation of the policy pursued by our people's republic.

The issue of the socialist state's relations with churches and religious denominations is an integral part of the national concord policy in Poland. There are fundamental differences between dialectical materialism, the foremost component of our party's ideological basis, and idealist philosophy. We are consistently upholding the constitutional principles concerning the separation of church and state and, at the same time, ensuring religious liberty, the freedom to perform religious rites, and the equality of civic rights and duties irrespective of the citizen's attitude to religion. While opposing the trends of political clericalism and the attempts to play on the religious feelings of believers and to use places of worship for anti-socialist purposes, the party advocates constructive relations between the state and the churches. We face tasks common to all mankind and to our whole nation—such as the struggle to deliver the world from the threat of nuclear war, efforts to rebuff the West German revanchist forces, protection of the environment and of culture, as well as care for the moral health of our society; fruitful cooperation is possible in all these fields. In broad terms, the PUWP's policy in this area is directed at creating the moral and political conditions which will enable millions of believers to be active in the building of socialism.

Despite the difficult years we have lived through, values that are inseparable from socialism—such as social justice, democracy, equal opportunity, and social confidence—have struck deep roots in the mentality of the working class and all working people. As Wojciech Jaruzelski stressed, 'in this sense, the ideas of Marxism-Leninism have entered the nation's bloodstream, and socialist values and forms have become an integral part of social consciousness'.³

The result is the loss of social influence and the virtual political isolation suffered by the clandestine counter-revolutionary groups and the subversive imperialist centres backing them which launched what amounted to psychological warfare against people's Poland. Polish society is increasingly grasping the anti-labour and anti-national nature of these 'champions of workers and their rights', the fact that they act as agents serving alien interests.

However, we do not idealise the social situation and the political moods prevailing in our country. We are waging a consistent and increasingly effective political struggle against those adhering to views and concepts that have sprung from alien soil and that are hostile to socialist ideology. This is of particular importance for work conducted among young people. The party has launched a drive to clean up social relations, to ensure full respect of the law, to rule out any deformed or perverted social practices. A widespread educational campaign is going on to combat such disgusting things as alcoholism, theft of public property or gross violations of moral standards.

The progress of socialism is inseparable from the expansion of democracy, from the drive to perfect the forms and methods of participation by the working class and all working people in the management of economic enterprises and in the administration of communities, regions and the entire country. Since the Ninth Congress, progress

has been registered both in institutions exercising social control over government activities and in public self-government, in representative and direct democracy. The role, prestige and legislative activity of the Sejm are growing. The consultative Socio-Economic Council which comprises representatives of industrial enterprises, the agricultural sector and research agencies has come to play an important role in the work of our parliament. The powers of the national councils (local government bodies) have been strengthened considerably. These councils are becoming true masters of their districts and important centres of public initiative.

The class-based trade union movement has re-emerged and currently affiliates 6.5 million members. It recognises the leading social role of the PUWP and truly represents the interests and protects the rights of working people. The party respects and protects the unions' independence of the government and their organisational autonomy, and firmly favours the movement's ideological and political unity.

Workers' management has emerged as a tangible form of socialist industrial democracy, playing an important role in the tackling of the factories' essential problems—in the approval of current and long-term plans, in the distribution of earnings, etc. The trend towards transforming workers' management into a form of political struggle is disappearing; conflicts between the specific interests of individual factories and national objectives are becoming less and less frequent. A system of cost/efficiency production teams and partnership groups is developing. In them, the workers themselves are responsible for the organisation of work, for product quality and for lower production costs; this serves to heighten their sense of responsibility and to enhance their team spirit and social activity.

The congress has acknowledged that conditions are ripe for a further development and enrichment of the means of socialist democracy. Specifically, the democracy of the electoral system is to be strengthened. A new institution—the guardians of civil rights—will be created under national councils at all levels; provincial national councils will have consultative bodies similar to those which operate under the Sejm. The party is working to make the social fabric more open and to broaden the legal and political framework for a constructive criticism of negative phenomena. We want the development of socialist democracy to lead to a fuller realisation of our working people's political, economic, social and cultural rights, to consolidate civil liberties and enhance their guarantees.

Being inseparable from the destiny of our nation, the PUWP is the principal guiding force of socialist progress. It has left behind a period of withdrawal and ideological confusion, rallied its ranks and strengthened its Marxist-Leninist essence. Amid the acute political struggle which is still going on in our country, the Communists' political consciousness has heightened. Within the party, the Leninist principles of democratic centralism are observed firmly. The amendments and additions introduced into the PUWP Rules at the congress help to reinforce these principles. Pursuing a political course consonant with the interests of the working people, the PUWP is gradually but steadily raising its prestige and winning the respect and support of the masses. Consolidation of our ties with the working class has been and remains our principal task.

The leading and guiding social role of the PUWP depends above all on its ability to apply Marxism-Leninism creatively. This calls for an in-depth Marxist analysis of our realities and trends, for a scientific approach to the contradictions and problems that arise. The party deems it its duty to do all it can for Communists to gain a more profound knowledge of the theory of scientific socialism and be better able to apply it in the difficult conditions of Poland, for the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin to dominate the intellectual life of our people.

International issues featured prominently on the agenda of the congress. Recent years have demonstrated the dialectical connection between the situation in our

country and the international alignment of forces. These years have once again proven the inviolability of our allied ties; as far as the latter are concerned, our friendship and all-round cooperation with the USSR are of paramount importance. Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, had this to say at the Tenth Congress of the PUWP: 'We have a comradely stake in the success of your projects and undertakings, in Poland being a strong, independent socialist state, an active member of our community, a firm link in it. This is consonant with the vital interests of the Polish people, our common cause.'

'Close cooperation and alliance between Poland and the USSR—the two biggest European socialist nations—is essential for the successful development of our countries, for stability and peace in Europe.'⁴

To socialist Poland, this close cooperation and alliance are an important factor of our security and territorial integrity, an essential condition for the consolidation of our international position and our peaceful and harmonious development. The alliance draws its strength from the firm foundation of our common class and national interests, of our common internationalist purposes and aspirations. The PUWP fully accepts and shares the far-sighted, realistic, wise and fair course of the 27th CPSU Congress with regard to protecting the world against the threat of nuclear annihilation, an issue of the utmost importance for all mankind. We are working hard to support the Soviet initiatives aimed at freeing the world from nuclear weapons and creating a system of universal international security. We support the new philosophy of peace advanced by Lenin's party—a philosophy that asserts the responsibility of all countries for the future of humanity and the priority of the preservation of peace over national and bloc interests.

Peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems is not only possible but also historically inevitable; it is an expression of common sense and of the instinct of self-preservation. The peace policy elaborated jointly by the Warsaw Treaty countries offers tangible moral proof of the ideological advantages and humanitarian nature of socialism which rises above the self-serving interests of the monopolies and the schemes of imperialism, primarily US imperialism, to attain military superiority and thus threaten the very survival of the human race.

History has taught Poland to pay close attention to the issues of peace and security in Europe. In a declaration on European security and cooperation, our party congress evokes the historical Final Act of the Helsinki Conference which, having recognised the inviolability of the postwar political and territorial arrangement, charted a long-term programme of Europe's peaceful development. We want these ideas to be implemented, we are for the practice of dialogue and cooperation, we are against the upsurge in the activities of the West German revanchist forces which try to wreck this arrangement. Poland is ready to make a vigorous contribution to the cause of peace and to accept all constructive initiatives designed to achieve disarmament, defuse tensions and promote all-European cooperation.

The Tenth Congress of the PUWP paid tribute to the solidarity of the fraternal parties with the struggle of the Polish Communists. Our party strives to develop contacts and broad cooperation with all communist and workers' parties on the basis of equality, non-interference in each party's internal affairs and respect for its views on this or that question. We hold invariably that what unites Communists is of particular importance and that peace and social progress are their common cause. Our congress reiterated the PUWP view that it would be useful to convene a world communist conference to define the ways and techniques of fighting for peace, of preventing man's nuclear destruction.

The party forum was a time of critical and self-critical stocktaking for the PUWP. It highlighted our weak points and mistakes and showed how they should be corrected. We regard the promotion of criticism and self-criticism as an important factor in the

struggle for socialism and its advancement. To lead is to serve the working class and the entire nation—such is our motto.

¹ *Trybuna Ludu*, June 30, 1986.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Trybuna Ludu*, July 1, 1986.

Socialist Agrarian Policy in Action

Frantisek Pitra – CC Presidium alternate member, CC Secretary, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCz)

THE economy of the European socialist countries is now at a turning point: it is being switched to mainly intensive development. Life keeps posing new problems, while many old ones tend to present themselves with other facets; there is a search for modern and more efficient forms and methods of economic management, and their testing in practice. This fully applies to the agro-industrial sector of the socialist economy, and to the agrarian policy of the fraternal parties, including the CPCz. It guides the restructuring of agriculture and the allied industries now under way in our country, seeking to ensure fuller satisfaction of the requirements of our society and the interests of the working people in the countryside, and further to consolidate the alliance of the working class and the peasantry.

The CPCz has given constant and major attention to agrarian policy throughout its sixty-five years. In the bourgeois republic, it carried on a relentless fight to give land, the main source of livelihood, to the agricultural proletariat and the small and middle peasantry.

Following Czechoslovakia's liberation by the Soviet Army, the Communists got down vigorously to securing a just solution to the agrarian problem, an important prerequisite for the success of the national-democratic revolution. In 1945, almost three million hectares of land was confiscated from German nationals,¹ and also from traitors and collaborators. Elective popular bodies—peasant committees made up of agricultural workers and poor peasants—joined with the organs of the revolutionary people's power in the localities—the national committees—in distributing the land among those who had a rightful claim to it.

The Eighth Congress of the CPCz in 1946 emphasised that Czechoslovakia's postwar renewal required a radical and long-overdue solution to the problems in the countryside. The victory in that year's elections led to the formation of a new government headed by CPCz Chairman Klement Gottwald, which proposed a review of the inconsistent bourgeois land reform carried out in the prewar period. As a result of the review, the remaining large feudal and church estates—a total of almost one million hectares—were abolished. The forests went to the state, and the farmland, to the small and middle peasants and—partially—to state farms. The CPCz consistently realised the basic lines of its postwar agrarian policy and also worked to solve the other acute problems in the countryside: introduction of a single agricultural tax, national insurance for peasants, improvement of machinery supplies, and democratisation of the cooperative movement, and of the hunting law.

That helped the Communists to win over broad masses of the agricultural proletariat and the small and middle labouring peasantry, who sided with the working class in the crucial clash of class and political forces in the country in February 1948.

The CPCz's historic Ninth Congress in 1949 formulated the general line of socialist construction and also came out for radical transformations in the countryside. These were the memorable words then spoken by Klement Gottwald: 'We shall have no socialism, unless the countryside moves on to socialism; and we shall have no transition to socialism in the countryside, without a bloc, without an alliance of the working class and the bulk of the small and middle peasants.'²

We have scored great successes since then in developing the agrarian sector and remodelling the life of the peasantry. The systematic concern of the Communist Party and the socialist state for rural development, and the farmers' skill and hard work, with constant political and material assistance from the working class, have added up to the crucial factors of progress in this sphere of the national economy, and have helped to build up the large production potential it now has.

There are now 1,677 unified agricultural cooperatives (UACs) and 226 state farms, with an average of 2,600 and 6,200 hectares of farmland, respectively. They have at their disposal a powerful material and technical base and highly productive machinery, and have been switching to industrial farming methods ever more widely through the use of modern technologies and scientific and technical achievements.

What has been done testifies to the advantages and potentialities of large-scale socialist agriculture: gross output in the agrarian sector of our economy has doubled since 1948, while the number of persons employed in it has been roughly halved; meat output per hectare of farmland has gone up from 63 kg before cooperation to 303 kg; milk production from 337 to 992 litres; and cereal output has risen from roughly 5 million to 12 million tons a year, or from 3.8 centners per head in 1948 to 7.5 centners.

Under the CPCz's leadership, deep changes have taken place in our agriculture within less than the lifetime of one generation. They are expressed both in the restructuring of its material and technical base, in the steady growth of food output, and in the establishment of qualitatively new social relations in the countryside. The victory of socialism has brought about a drastic change in the conditions of those who work in the countryside, and in their entire way of life. The cooperative-peasantry class has taken shape as large-scale socialist production was built up. It is closely allied with the working class, our country's leading force, and is now a solid political pillar of our system.

The working people in the agrarian sector of our republic have very high living standards and are sure of their future. The character of labour in agriculture is now more akin to that in industry, while the economic and social distinctions between life in town and country have been obliterated. Average wages in agriculture are now the same as those in the national economy as a whole, while wages in the UACs are even higher, now being equal to those in industry as a result of faster development over the past three years.

Social security for peasants is among our society's major gains: they receive sick pay, old-age and disability pensions, child-care leave, and various other child benefits on a par with industrial and office workers. Urban and rural families have virtually similar household appliances. Every peasant family now has a refrigerator and a TV set, and 70 per cent of them also have a car. Hundreds of creches and nursery schools, cultural institutions and modern shopping centres have been built with the active participation of local inhabitants. The agrarian sector is close to the top among all the sectors of the national economy in terms of labour-skill structures: it has 23,000 specialists with a higher education, and 80,000 with a secondary specialised education.

The peasants' socialist consciousness has been rising steadily, as their own experience drives home to them the advantages of collective farming: one particular indication is that not a single UAC was disbanded in the country during the 1968-1969 political crisis.

Cooperative farmers and other workers in the countryside are actively involved in shaping and conducting the party's agrarian policy, and in administering the society: tens of thousands of them have been elected deputies to national committees of every level, to the Czech and Slovak National Councils and to the Federal Assembly. The peasant deputies work hard in various social organisations. Their immediate interests are represented by the Union of Cooperative Peasants, which has an important role to play in the National Front, together with the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (ROH), which unites industrial and office workers throughout the country.

The successes scored in the Czechoslovak countryside in the 37 years of socialist construction are undoubtedly an important achievement of the CPCz's agrarian policy. It has creatively applied Lenin's cooperative plan in our conditions, once again reaffirming the universal significance of the Marxist-Leninist theory of switching small-scale peasant production to large-scale socialist production. Time has shown that only a modern intensive agriculture can keep pace with the growing requirements of a developed socialist society in high-quality foodstuffs.

The main thrust of our party's policy is to go on creating all the conditions for our people's life in peace, and steadily raising its material and cultural standards even in the present complicated international situation, in solid unity with the fraternal socialist countries, the Soviet Union in the first place. Satisfying the growing demand for foodstuffs, mainly from our own resources, is here an important factor, and that is why we have been working consistently to create the prerequisites for ever more intensive agriculture. Our pricing policy is designed to ensure all the strata of the population with supplies of high-quality produce.

Our people's nutrition standards have steadily risen in the period of socialist construction. Quantitatively, basic food requirements were satisfied back in the 1960s, and since then biologically more valuable animal products have gradually come to prevail over vegetable products. But the meat demand tended to grow faster than the production of foodstuffs, some of which had to be imported, an undesirable practice both economically and politically. The CPCz set the long-term task of going over to greater self-sufficiency in foodstuffs. Satisfaction of food requirements from our own resources will have a positive effect on the solution of the world-wide food problem.

Workers in the agrarian sector have consistently followed the party's course, and have changed the situation for the better over the past five years. The constant expansion of farm output has provided the population with ever ampler supplies of foodstuffs produced in the country. Most importantly, plant growing has developed twice as fast as stock-raising, so helping to increase coarse-grain and cereal output and to make important cutbacks in cereal imports (notably by one-third from the non-socialist countries). The five-year target for the procurement of animal products was surpassed, and last year meat consumption per head came to about 86 kg. The economic results of agricultural enterprise activity have been substantially improved, and the level of their workers' wages has gone up.

But the party has not rested on its laurels. It has kept comparing its goals with the society's continuously growing requirements, seeing to it that its policy is implemented in accordance with the requirements of life. Whenever any departures or contradictions appear, we lose no time in noting them and taking relevant measures. That is the critical approach and high standard of exactingness to our own activity that marked the work of last spring's 17th Congress of the CPCz.

Summing up the results of our agrarian policy, the congress assessed them as an important factor in keeping our domestic market well balanced, and the whole of our national economy steadily developing. It was said, at the same time, that all the available reserves have yet to be fully marshalled. Not all the UACs and state farms

have made efficient use of their farmland or expended their material resources rationally. Inputs into farm output are still relatively high, which is why the society has to make considerable outlays to subsidise retail prices so as to cover the differential between prices and the high production costs. There has been criticism of the quality of potatoes, sugar beet and vegetables, and attention has been drawn to the need to switch more consistently to intensive technologies in growing these. Feed stocks do not yet make for reliable stability in animal farming. There are still unwarranted differences between the economic results of individual agricultural enterprises operating in comparable conditions. The quality and mix of material and technical supplies to the agrarian sector still falls short of the due level, while the parameters of some farming facilities are not up to the best world standards. The level and quality of chemicals in farming, especially in plant protection, do not always meet present-day requirements. What is also worrying is that, as agriculture is intensified, the negative effects of the process on the main elements of the environment are ever more pronounced.

We believe that it is especially important to display more complex care for our farmland and to raise soil fertility, while strictly abiding by the principles of environmental protection. The point is to reduce the pollution of sub-soil and surface waters, to switch to new and more rational dosing of fertilisers and pesticides and to keep widening their range. We seek to intensify agrarian production primarily by biological methods, i.e., through the use of biotechnologies, biological plant protectors, organic fertilisers, etc. We insist that workers in all the sectors of the economy change their attitude to the environment, making efforts to improve it and create an optimal farmland structure, with more rational management, especially in areas protecting the country's water resources. Under a decision of the party's 17th Congress, the state, agricultural and industrial enterprises, and national committees in the localities are to allocate more funds for these purposes than before.

The party seeks to assess our country's achievement with an eye to the future, and to analyse our own potentialities in the light of higher standards. Those are the criteria of the Main Guidelines of Czechoslovakia's Economic and Social Development for 1986-1990 and Until the Year 2000 adopted by the 17th Congress of the CPCz, and they set the framework for our agrarian policy.

The scale of the tasks before us is not determined only by the high rate of projected agricultural growth, but also—and above all—by the need to make the utmost use of the available material and energy resources. The congress set before the country's agro-industrial complex the task of bringing about a radical change by going on from one-sided intensive expanded reproduction to all-round intensive expanded reproduction. The latter is the higher type, and it differs from the former in that it not only helps to economise on living labour, as it gives way to wider use of machines, mechanisms and other means of production, but also to save on fixed and circulating assets. So in the ever more complicated conditions, material and energy resources must be used with the utmost efficiency, the structure of production must be rationalised and stabilised, and product quality raised.

It is common knowledge that as the division of labour gains in depth, the supply of foodstuffs to the people ceases to be the concern of farmers alone. Czechoslovakia now has a state-wide agro-industrial complex which, apart from agriculture and the food industry, includes industries supplying them with chemical and biochemical products, farming machinery, plant for the processing of raw materials, etc. The efficiency of the agrarian sector now depends not so much on its saturation with diverse types of producer goods, as primarily on their quality and complex use. Indeed, concerted cooperation between all the units of the production line has become the main condition for success. We have entered a stage at which further progress can no longer be achieved through mere improvements in the individual

sections of agriculture; all the crucial factors of intensification need to be meshed for simultaneous operation.

A major advance along this line can be achieved only through purposeful development of science and technology, and wide application of their latest achievements in practice. This applies to key areas like mechanisation and automation, electronisation and robotisation, electrification and chemicalisation of agriculture and allied industries, and development of biotechnologies. Science also has a key say in improving the organisation and management of production, and in raising the working people's skill standards. Demands on state institutions providing biological and technical services are also very much higher. Front-ranking UACs and state farms, well-equipped and staffed with experienced personnel, have done much in applying the results obtained by scientists, agronomists, zootechnicians, engineers and technologists.

The new problems we have to face as intensification proceeds in the specific context of Czechoslovakia's agriculture need to be mentioned in particular. The quality of our farmland is not high. Besides, the possibilities for its intensive use are limited, because a special regime needs to be maintained in the vast areas of water conservancy; soils are exposed to erosion and suffer from dust and gas emissions in many parts of the country. In these conditions, the 0.31 hectares of farmland per head we now have is the lowest limit at which the country can be kept supplied with its own food.

The present, fairly high level of agricultural intensification has been attained mainly through a high level of energy-intensiveness. We are among the states with maximum inputs of mineral fertilisers per hectare of farmland. There is also the effect of other factors not directly related to agriculture. The high concentration of industry both here and in the neighbouring countries of Central Europe has an impact on the environment. Besides, the massive use of local brown coals with a high sulphur content is a specific feature of our national economy. All of that, taken together, tends to raise the acidity of the soils, and to reduce the intensity with which solar energy is converted into food energy. It is economically ever more challenging to maintain an optimal water regime in the soil and to ensure adequate supplies of pure water.

If we are to attain the targets set for the end of the century, we must cooperate more efficiently with the fraternal countries within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the Soviet Union in the first place. The main lines of our cooperation were agreed in the early 1970s. The Comprehensive Programme for Socialist Economic Integration is an expression of their readiness to make fuller use of natural, climatic and economic conditions of production in the individual countries, and so more fully to concert their national interests with the requirements of the socialist community as a whole. Consistent use of the advantages of the international division of labour is important for rapid progress of the productive forces in the agro-industrial complex. It helps to improve the supply of agricultural enterprises with the necessary genetic stock, fertilisers, chemicals, farming machinery, biofactors and so on. The Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress of the CMEA Member Countries up to the Year 2000 was adopted in late 1985, and it will also effect radical qualitative changes in the development of agriculture, above all in biotechnology.

It is no easy problem to bring about such a qualitative and radical change. The CPCz believes that it can be solved by further improving the socialist relations of production, which is why attention is focused on consistent improvement of the economic mechanism, fuller practice of the principle of distribution according to labour, and wider participation by the working people in management. The quality of management generally is now of fundamental significance, because under

intensification it naturally has to be different from that under extensive economic development.

The effort to apply the principles of the improved system of agrarian-sector management was started in Czechoslovakia in 1982. The planning process within the agro-food complex has been simplified, and economic normatives are being more widely applied. More effective relations between suppliers and consumers of agricultural produce are being arranged. These measures have yielded good results. They have stimulated the activity of cooperatives and state farms, and have enhanced their responsibility for the development of production. Changes in the management system induce better use of local potentialities. There has been a change for the better in providing material incentives for personnel, and everyone's personal contribution to the activity of the work collective is being more precisely assessed.

Since, as has been said, consumer demand for foodstuffs on the domestic market has already been mainly satisfied in terms of quantity, we are no longer faced with the need to boost their output at any price, regardless of the material costs. Now that there is no longer any need to keep 'pushing' for tons and litres, efforts can be concentrated on improving the structure of production and stabilising it, building up reserves and lowering the cost of foodstuffs by reducing the inputs of assets, materials and energy per product unit.

Life has, therefore, produced new problems and needs, requiring a corresponding 'readjustment' of the economic mechanism. Accordingly, we have striven to reckon not only with the problems that have matured in the development of the agro-industrial complex. The CPCz Presidium and the Czechoslovak government took measures in 1985 to improve the management of the agro-food complex in the Eighth Five-Year Plan period. They have made higher requirements on all its units and will exert strong pressure on all the enterprises, impelling them to thriftier management of production potentialities, cushioning the drop in revenues in low-crop years, tightening up economic calculus, and improving the remuneration of labour according to achievement. Simultaneously, favourable conditions are to be created for the efficient and proportional development of the agro-industrial sector in accordance with the society's requirements.

The new measures are aimed above all to enhance the role of the plan as the basic instrument of administration and management. That is required by the intensification in agriculture, the food industry and the industries servicing them. We now believe that it is especially important to ensure coordinated development: fuller account must be taken of all the internal interconnections within the agro-industrial complex in the process of planning. But such an approach requires abandonment of the established stereotypes, surmounting of departmental barriers, and joint action in the interests of the entire people.

Our plans in recent years have covered the agro-industrial complex as a whole, with the consolidated plan for scientific and technical development being the starting point in their elaboration. It is the basis on which all R and D units, regardless of organisational subordination, work on the key problems in the production and processing of agricultural raw materials.

The methods in the planned direction of UAC and state farm activity have been altered. The number of directive indicators has been sharply reduced, down to two: procurement of cereals and beef cattle. The state no longer lays down directly, in the form of concrete assignments, what precisely each enterprise is to produce and how, so giving the work collectives in the countryside broad rights in choosing the most advantageous structure of production.

Management is now structured in such a way that these decisions have to be taken by the UACs and the state farms on the strength of economic contracts concluded with other state organisations. In other words, the enterprises find themselves in

conditions in which they have to reckon more precisely with the structure of social requirements, to study the market, and to adapt to the demand of the population.

In order to give contracts greater authority, changes have been made in the legal norms regulating deliveries of farm produce. Measures have been taken to tighten up contractual discipline. Breach of obligations is regarded as disrespect for state-wide requirements, and material sanctions are imposed on the persons at fault. Conversely, scrupulous fulfilment of contractual terms is encouraged. Contracts are gradually being turned into an ever more important means of integration between cooperatives, state farms and the enterprises processing their produce.

The improvement of the economic mechanism has placed enterprises in the agrarian sector in tougher economic conditions. Thus, in order to bring out more fully the actual value relations, there has been a marked reduction in the under-priced and state-subsidised producer goods: subsidies have been abolished for mineral fertilisers, chemicals and dairy feeds. As a result, the number of such subsidies has been cut.

We strive to lower costs by means of economic instruments. Thus, the size of the bonus paid to an agricultural enterprise from the state budget for boosting animal farm produce now depends on how rationally concentrated foods are used for the purpose. The payroll fund is formed proportionately to the normative net produce, i.e. (the details aside), to the value added by that enterprise to the material values which it has used in the process of production.

We have saved a great deal by reducing or altogether abolishing subsidies, the price mark-ups, and bonuses introduced in the period when production was being expanded mainly extensively. Some of these savings have been used to increase the procurement prices for animals, while the bulk of them has gone to create a state fund for raising soil fertility, integration and intensification funds, etc. From the latter, monies are allocated to individual agricultural enterprises to help them overcome their lag.

The crop insurance system has been radically overhauled. Up until recently, farms had to cope on their own with the effects of unfavourable weather conditions, while crop failures occasionally had a painful effect on their economy: it has been estimated that such losses came to an average of one-sixth of their normal crop. It is not surprising that enterprises tended to run into debt. A complex system of state crop insurance has now been set up not only against natural disasters, but also against drought, excessive humidity, frosts, etc. That helps to make economic management on the land more stable and reduce the fluctuations in the working people's wages in the countryside, and increase the volume of resources going into expanded reproduction. That is of concern to each enterprise and to the society as a whole. These measures will also help to make the enterprises more self-sufficient.

The modern system of planned management opens up fresh perspectives for consolidating the economy of the UACs and state farms. We seek to improve inner-farm planning and management, and also the forms of labour organisation and workers' remuneration. We believe that to be necessary because production can be made more efficient by mustering internal reserves and widely applying high technology. The 17th Congress of the CPCz indicated that the organs of state administration and party organisations should consistently practise inner-economic calculus, further tighten up labour and technological discipline, and bring out and use all the available reserves. This will help to boost the productivity of social labour and increase the returns on every koruna invested in hardware, fertilisers, pesticides or other means of production.

With the switch to intensification, ever greater importance attaches to the human factor, the material and moral stake men and women have in the end results of their work. That is why we believe that it is necessary consistently to implement the

principle of economic self-standing of all the producer units—down to the ones at the grassroots—so as to give their workers greater scope for initiative and enterprise.

The best measures aimed to improve planned management will not, of course, ensure efficient economic growth unless the level of day-to-day management is raised, and educational and organisational activity is improved to overcome any signs of formalism.

The system of economic management in socialist Czechoslovakia is based on Lenin's principles of democratic centralism. The CPCz applies these in an effort, on the one hand, to improve the quality and substantiation of the central plan, and on the other, to create the conditions for further expanding the working people's participation in management, and to enhance their interest in improving production. Consistent fulfilment of these tasks will make it possible to attain the goals set before the country's agro-industrial complex by the party's 17th Congress and further to improve the people's well-being.

¹ Under the decisions of the Potsdam Summit Conference of the great powers in the anti-fascist coalition, Germans, with the exception of anti-fascists, were expelled from Czechoslovakia, because a sizable part of them had been instrumental in the country's partition and had collaborated with the Nazis during the occupation.—*Ed.*

² Klement Gottwald, *Spisy*, Vol. XV, Prague, 1961, p. 243.

National Interests and 'Atlantic Solidarity'

Hans Kleven – Chairman, Communist Party
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NATIONAL independence, the people's right to decide their own future and ways of development are burning problems of fundamental importance. Nowadays, a country may have political independence, but may be economically dependent on foreign capital, and that inevitably has an effect on its policy. It is true not only of one-time colonies which have acquired state sovereignty, but also of other countries in the capitalist world. The system of imperialist domination also puts in jeopardy the sovereign rights of 'old' capitalist states, but there political dependence assumes covert, indirect, 'civilised' forms. Agreements freely concluded between 'equal partners', say in NATO or the Common Market, in actual fact establish the dependence of some of the members of imperialist regional alignments on the leading members.

Norway is one of the developed capitalist countries in whose history and present-day life national independence has been and continues to be an important issue. That is due to the fact that for more than five centuries it was a political and military pawn of other powers, and an object of economic exploitation. First, its sap was sucked by the Danish feudal lords and greedy crown officials, and then by the Great Sweden aristocrats. Following the break-up of union with Sweden in 1905, they were replaced by British, French, German, US and other capitalists. Among the exploiters nowadays are the transnational corporations (TNCs), which operate in the country as insolently as they do in other regions of the capitalist world.

At the same time, Norway has found itself in growing political and military dependence on the major imperialist powers, primarily the United States and the FRG. Since its entry into NATO, bloc decisions have determined the key aspects of its policy. And while the country is nominally sovereign, its national independence is in fact being increasingly limited. Here, Norway's lot is shared by a number of other

bloc member-states. That is why standing up for national sovereignty and national interests is a central issue in the class struggle both against imperialism and foreign capital, and against the internal forces which objectively or subjectively help to bend the country to an alien will.

It is an historical tradition of the national liberation movement to resist the activity of external and internal anti-national forces. Constitution Day, which in Norway is marked on May 17 to celebrate the secession from Denmark in 1814, and the adoption of its own bourgeois-democratic Constitution, symbolises the kernel idea of independence in the Norwegian people's consciousness. We, Communists, wholeheartedly share it, while simultaneously striving to remain true to our class approach.

In 1814, the first stage of the bourgeois revolution put an end to the 400-year period of foreign oppression by the Danish kings, nobility and officialdom, and because the drive for national liberation was led by the bourgeoisie, it won political autonomy and also power, which, it is true, it had to share with the Swedish aristocracy when Norway came under the rule of the Swedish crown.

At the second and final stage of the bourgeois revolution, which culminated in the break-up of the union with Sweden in 1905, the national liberal bourgeoisie once again had the leading role in alliance with the peasant democrats and the young working class movement. However, in the struggle for state independence there was clear evidence of proletarian internationalism and Scandinavian working class solidarity. The Norwegian and Swedish working class movement acted in concert, setting an example of peacefully settling the nationalities question in the interests of the working class and of both peoples. They demonstrated how national interests and internationalism harmonise with and determine one another.

The international working class movement was agreed that the Norwegian people's policy on the nationalities question should be based on the right to self-determination and independent statehood. In a 1914 pamphlet, 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination', Lenin formulated the fundamental positions of the working class movement on the nationalities question. In the section entitled 'Norway's Secession from Sweden', he dealt 'with the tasks which confronted the *proletariat* of both countries in connection with this secession',¹ and said that the point of departure, in his view, was that 'in the question of the self-determination of nations, as in every other question, we are interested, first and foremost, in the self-determination of the proletariat within a given nation'.² The *Norwegian* proletariat undoubtedly had the duty to come out against the Swedish aristocracy, i.e., for complete secession, and for 'Norwegian peasant democracy (with all its philistine limitations)'.³

Lenin believed that *Swedish* social democracy would be sure to undermine the cause of socialism and democracy if it failed to: fight against the ideology of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, and to 'demand, *not only* equality of nations in general, . . . but also the right of nations to self-determination, Norway's freedom to secede'.⁴ 'The close alliance between the Norwegian and Swedish workers, their complete fraternal class solidarity, *gained* from the Swedish workers' recognition of the right of the Norwegians to secede. This convinced the Norwegian workers that the Swedish workers were not infected with Swedish nationalism. and that they placed fraternity with the Norwegian proletarians above the privileges of the Swedish bourgeoisie and aristocracy. The dissolution of the ties imposed upon Norway by the monarchs of Europe and the Swedish aristocracy strengthened the ties between the Norwegian and Swedish workers.'⁵

So the dissolution of the union with Sweden went to benefit not only the Norwegian bourgeoisie. National independence, won in that way, also benefited the working class. It went to create new and greater potentialities for the class struggle, for action to extend democratic rights, and for social and cultural progress. Within the

framework of the independent state, there was a faster growth not only of capitalist development, but also of the trade union and political organisation of the working class. The contest between it and the national bourgeoisie now came to the fore, with the basic class contradictions clearly crystallised.

The following stage in the struggle for national independence in our country was connected with the looming threat posed by German fascism, whose offensive was countered by a mounting anti-fascist movement, both *democratic* and *national*. The foremost goal within the working class movement was increasingly the struggle for peace, democracy and independence, a fact emphasised in Georgi Dimitrov's report to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935. It was the working class of the developed capitalist countries that had to raise the banner of struggle for these values, because the bourgeoisie proved to be incapable of standing up for the national interest. In many countries, the bourgeoisie was, moreover, prepared to betray these values in the face of the steadily growing working class movement in order to safeguard its profit system, although it kept mouthing empty phrases about 'patriotism' and 'defence'. This feature of the bourgeoisie was revealed in Norway long before the Second World War, when a section of it collaborated with German imperialism and fascism.

The Norwegian people was once again deprived of its freedom in the period of the war and the Hitler occupation. The working class became the core of the Resistance movement. The overwhelming majority of the nation, including a section of the bourgeoisie, came out against fascism and the German invaders, against the Quislings and their accessories. While the bourgeoisie confined itself to passive resistance, the working class took the line of armed struggle against the fascist invaders. Despite the common urge to liberate the country, the bourgeoisie and the working class pursued different aims: the former hoped to restore its power by entering into a military-political alliance with Anglo-American imperialism in the new battle against Bolshevism. It was prepared to abandon the neutral course officially taken by Norway after independence, and the possibility of pursuing an independent foreign policy. The working class, for its part, strove for a renewal of democracy, and for an alliance-free policy eventually in close cooperation with Sweden and Denmark.

Such was also the line of the Communist Party of Norway, the only party which in that period engaged in clandestine work inside the country. It was in the van of the struggle for active resistance and for independent democratic foreign policy after the war. A decision taken by its Central Committee on July 1, 1943, said: 'The military defeat of Hitlerite Germany will mark the start in the creation of a nationally-free and independent Norway, where *the people will itself determine the course of its development and forms of government*.' This main slogan for the postwar period was subsequently expressed in concrete terms by a CC statement on June 1, 1944, a year before the country's liberation: 'The Central Committee of the Communist Party declares that the main idea of the policy of our country, and of the other countries of the world, in the postwar period should be efforts to ensure peace for coming generations, consolidation of lasting peace on the globe to enable our people to mobilise its forces in the conditions of a peaceful and tranquil life, to fulfil the great national task of developing the productive forces so as to satisfy material and cultural requirements. All the postwar issues need to be subordinated to this political goal. That is why the strengthening of peace is a task as important as victory in the war. The party must subsequently work for the pursuit of a policy promoting our country's further democratic development.'

'Atlantic solidarity', instead of national independence, was the line which gained the upper hand in the Norwegian Storting in the postwar period, in the late 1940s, to be more precise. The country was tied to the United States, which assumed leadership in the capitalist world following the rout of Hitler Germany and the

weakening of Britain and France. While the Second World War was still on, this line was mapped out by the forces rallied round the Norwegian government in exile in London, with the tone set by the section of the big bourgeoisie which had always taken an Anglo-American orientation. Big capital was also followed by the right-wing leadership of the Norwegian Labour Party, which played a significant role in drawing the country into the Atlantic bloc.

The 'Atlantic community' idea was in complete accord with the urge of the United States to set up a 'Europe of its own', fashioned in its own image and likeness. This process was fairly well described by the liberal-bourgeois newspaper *Dagbladet* in an article which stood out for its realistic analysis. It said that since there was evidence of a marked radicalisation of public opinion after the rout of German fascism in Europe, the United States put its stake on the 'moderate' section of the West European social democracy: the left wave was to be contained and then rolled back through these parties and the trade union movement they led. The article pointedly noted that the advance of the troops of the Western allies was followed by 'US emissaries agitating for acceptable Social Democrats and trade union leaders and subsidising them'.⁶

The CIA soon also joined in the 'shaping of a new Europe', the aim being to roll back communism. This was done to a greater or lesser extent in some of the West European countries, with substantial help from the right-wing social democratic politicians and ideologists. Those who still held socialist or Marxist views within social democracy itself were drastically purged. The implementation of a number of social reforms and the rise in living standards on the basis of postwar economic development enabled the bourgeois and reformist propaganda to trumpet the advent of a 'general welfare state'. Gradually, the paper said, 'the US view of the world was asserted in a wide spectrum of influential power centres in Western Europe: in political parties, trade unions, research institutions, academic establishments and student organisations'.⁷ The NATO military bloc was knocked together on the continent under US sponsorship, while 'Atlanticism' became the ideological platform for the foreign policy of a number of West European countries, big and small.

There are three main theses in the propaganda campaign, first for the establishment of NATO, and now for its continued existence: that there is some kind of 'threat from the East', i.e., from the Soviet Union; that in terms of geography, culture, history and what not, Western Europe, and, of course, Norway, 'naturally' belong to an 'Atlantic community', allegedly the best, the freest and the most democratic part of the world; and that national sovereignty is a historically 'outdated and obsolete idea'.

There is no need to scrutinise in detail the gist of the first thesis—it is a fraud and its purposes are perfectly obvious. The myth of some kind of 'Atlantic country kinship' could be analysed in a special study which goes beyond the framework of this article. One should mention, however, that it is an artificial division of the world geographically, ignoring the basic class barriers and the different national interests. It deliberately neglects the dissimilar historical development and cultural traditions of Europe and the United States and their peoples. Those who advocate the idea want to rank the geographical regions in such a way as to put at the top a leader-region, namely, the 'Atlantic community'. One finds that this is a modern version of Hegel's division of the peoples into historical and non-historical, and also of the Nazi 'nation of masters' (*Herrenvolk*) theory, and it is fed mainly by US hegemonism.

Concerning the third thesis, that national sovereignty is 'obsolete', its advocates have done imperialism a highly valuable and much-desired service. Sovereignty is presented as some kind of mystical, emotional and romantic notion which no longer has a role to play in present-day reality. The claim is that 'international', or rather 'Atlantic', cooperation, calls for a new and more relaxed attitude to sovereignty.

The constitutional provisions on national independence in our country have been

fiercely attacked. Article One of the Fundamental Law gives this clear-cut definition of sovereignty: 'The Kingdom of Norway is a free, self-standing, indivisible and independent state.' This follows historically from the fact that the bourgeois-revolutionary struggle for independence in the 19th century was simultaneously a national liberation struggle, as it was not so in such neighbouring countries as Sweden and Denmark, which adopted their bourgeois constitutions as states in their own right. Many generations have seen Article One of the Constitution as an injunction to defend Norway's independence. The Fundamental Law lays down stringent and clear-cut limits to the delegation of powers and the right of decision-making to any organs operating outside the country, a provision that is especially important for a small capitalist state. The Norwegian people's historically-inherited notions of national independence have been and continue to be an important factor in the fight against imperialism.

That is a provision the advocates of 'Atlanticism' do not like. They want, for instance, to put a 'broader' interpretation on, or to amend Article 93 of the Fundamental Law (1962), under which the Storting is empowered, only by a majority of three-quarters of the votes, to decide that an international association which Norway has joined or is about to join must be authorised to exercise the prerogatives vested in the Norwegian state. They would like to reduce the necessary majority to two-thirds.

Norway's Fundamental Law is a bourgeois constitution, but it also has some specific national features, which have evolved historically. It contains democratic elements which do not go beyond the framework of the bourgeois system, but they are the result of the struggle of the working class, the peasants and other non-exploiter strata of the population. The progressive aspects of the Constitution are deeply ingrained in the minds of the people. We, Communists, defend them and advocate their further development.

The constitutional safeguards of national sovereignty do not, of course, prevent the Norwegian state from undertaking obligations under numerous international agreements, conventions, trade treaties, etc., to the extent that these are based on equality and sovereignty. But there is a basic divide between such international agreements and organisations, as the United Nations, and 'supranational' ones, including 'Atlantic' treaties and alliances, like NATO and the EEC, which have an imperialist character.

As I have said, Norway's entry into NATO had been prepared in political and juridical terms by means of diverse arguments, which are still current. Ruling class 'scientists' were set the task of putting an interpretation on everything safeguarding vital national interests that would whittle down the progressive and truly democratic content of the Constitution. Thus, 'Atlanticist' lawyers have insisted that the sovereignty principle, which is written into the Fundamental Law, is a piece of clay that can be 'remoulded' whenever NATO's leading circles think it desirable and expedient to do so. Leading bourgeois lawyers have set forth what they claim to be constitutional arguments for membership in the bloc and in a supranational command structure. The 'Atlantic community' advocates insist that the definition of national sovereignty in Article One of the Constitution is of no more than historical interest, and that it is no longer of any juridical or political relevance.

These are instructive examples of the bourgeoisie's past and present attitude to the Fundamental Law, which it long regarded as 'sacrosanct'. Its provision concerning Norway as a sovereign state has now been declared to be 'outdated'. It is declared that the 'tradition-hallowed principle of independence is in a state of erosion', that the national-sovereignty slogan is dogmatic, and that there is a need for 'radical restrictions' on sovereignty in favour of states striving for 'cooperation'. In other words, the key provisions of the bourgeois constitution have turned out to be useless

for capital in the epoch of imperialism.

The same thing happened in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in the period of struggle over Norway's entry into the EEC. The advocates of West European integration—big capital and the right wing of the bourgeoisie and social democracy—attacked what they called the 'narrow-minded' view of national interests. They called for an amendment to the Fundamental Law, so as to delegate decision-making concerning Norway to the supranational organs in Brussels—the EEC Commission and Council of Ministers—where the vote of the big states carries more weight than that of the small ones. There we find not only an actual but also a juridical breach of the principle of equality of member-states, i.e., the principle on which the United Nations or the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, for example, are based.

The wide popular movement against Norway's entry into the Common Market, which involved the most diverse social and political forces, won the 1972 referendum, when a majority of the population clearly said 'No' to the plans for integration. The movement had an anti-monopoly and general democratic content, its political and ideological denominator being national resistance, defence of national interests and values, and the sovereign right to take decisions to counter the 'European' interests of monopoly capital.

As earlier on, in the struggle against Norway's entry into NATO and the Common Market, so now, in the struggle against the country's integration with US nuclear strategy, the issue is defence of the very foundations of the nation's life. The reckless US line, whipped up by its unrestrained arms race, poses a threat not only to the individual countries of our continent, but also to Europe as a whole. There is a need for a truly national security policy within the framework of a Europe-wide system diametrically opposite to the US-sponsored 'Atlantic community'.

It is another matter to what extent the need for such an alternative security policy is understood by West European politicians and statesmen. But more and more people are coming to see the danger of Europe being turned into the main battlefield for the third time within this century. The highly promising cooperation of states on the basic issues in strengthening peace in Europe, started by the Helsinki Final Act, is closely bound up with this question: what is, in this nuclear age of ours, a true security policy meeting the national interest?

Both the concepts of security and defence of peace, as of national interest, have acquired new dimensions under the impact of the developing military technology. A 1982 Report by the Palme International Commission says: 'Nuclear weapons have changed the world. The dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 posed the questions, Would mankind survive as the dominant species on the planet earth? Or would he eventually destroy himself and all his works?

'The development of nuclear weapons has forced a re-examination of the meaning of security and the basic purposes of foreign and defence policies. Apart from their traditional objectives of protecting and enhancing national interests, these policies now have to accommodate an additional and over-riding goal—avoiding nuclear war. For there is no defence against missiles armed with nuclear warheads. The only way to withstand nuclear war is to prevent it from occurring.'⁸

In the light of the fundamentally new nature of modern weapons, and in view of Norway's geographical and strategic situation, our party has formulated some of the most important questions relating to the country's future. What are Norway's real security requirements? Do they consist in allowing itself to be integrated with US nuclear strategy as a vast bridgehead with airfields, ports for submarines, including those with nuclear missiles on board, stockpiles of weapons brought in well in advance, and radar stations designed not only for early warning but also for espionage? Can our country's security be ensured by freely agreeing to its being inevitably regarded as a target for bombs and missiles in the event of an armed

conflict? Can the nation's future be guaranteed through a step-up of tensions in Nordic Europe, instead of an easing of such tensions? Can these goals be achieved without rejecting the new policy on foreign military bases, as now advocated by Norwegian generals?⁹ Do we truly need to permit US nuclear-armed warships to enter Norwegian territorial waters and ports, as the battleship *Iowa* has done? Must the consent to have foreign military equipment stockpiled in advance also imply nuclear weapons, something that is becoming ever more probable?

These questions are especially meaningful because Norway's territory, its waters and airspace have already been long involved in the global military strategy of the United States and NATO. Our country has been assigned the role of an unsinkable aircraft carrier on the bloc's northern flank, as will be seen, in particular, from the following facts: the conclusion of agreements on preparing a number of Norwegian airfields for accommodating, in the event of a crisis situation, US aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons; NATO's annual and ever wider military exercises in Northern Norway; the arrival in Norway of AWACS aircraft for aerial espionage against the Soviet Union; the presence on Norwegian territory of military detection and tracking stations; the involvement of our scientific personnel and the economy in research and military production for the needs of the United States and NATO; advanced stockpiling of US heavy weapons and material in Trondelag.

The main responsibility for the worsening international situation is borne by the US administration, but some of the blame also falls on the Norwegian authorities, which have promoted the arms race and the step-up of the war danger. The conservative government in Norway, which recently had to leave office, is especially to blame, for it kept giving in to US demands and pressures, behaving as one of its most loyal partners in NATO, and disgracing the country by its submissively loyal and anti-national conduct.

We do not agree with the way the Norwegian big bourgeoisie and the Høyre Party have been shaping defence policy on the plea of safeguarding the national interest. Has the right-wing power anywhere in the world produced genuine security? Høyre represents capitalism, a social-class system, which has brought death and destruction to millions of people in the course of its history. Høyre holds out false promises of 'certainty in the morrow', but its line means lack of security both on a national and international scale, and economic and social uncertainty in the future.

Many military policy issues affecting our country are now being decided in Washington. The Norwegian people is a small one—just over four million—and it will be a helpless victim of any adventurism and outlawry, if we are latched onto the US administration's first-strike strategy. Involved in US nuclear strategy. Norway is a plaything in the hands of the most aggressive circles of US imperialism. Norway can never defend itself, but can only destroy itself as a nation by means of nuclear weapons. Decisions on defence matters must clearly be taken in our own country, and not elsewhere.

The Communists believe that self-determination, national sovereignty and free and equal cooperation with other states—instead of slavish submissiveness and self-denial—must be the basis of Norway's security policy. More than ever before in the past, our country's sovereignty has become the vital condition for our people's spiritual and physical existence.

Defence of the national interest for the CP Norway means not only a struggle against the dangerous situation in which our country now finds itself. It also means a principled stand on the nationalities question. Our Programme clearly declares that we stand for 'the Norwegian people's undivided right to determine the future of its own country. Norwegian state power must not be delegated to so-called supra-national organs'.¹⁰ Accordingly, the sovereignty slogan acquires a clear anti-imperialist and *class* content. It is the working class that must act as the bearer of the

sovereignty idea and the champion of the country's security. It is the working class movement, including the trade unions, that has to fight for peace and security more vigorously than in the past.

Our party has highlighted the significance of the nation's interests and the need to stand up for sovereignty, while rejecting national narrow-mindedness and nationalistic tendencies in any form, because the Communists are simultaneously patriots and internationalists. Our party's Programme clearly and dialectically formulates this principled stand: 'The Communist Party of Norway supports the working class of the socialist countries and joins them in fighting against the common enemies, and for our common goals. The socialist countries are the mightiest bulwark of universal peace, and the most important force in the international class struggle against imperialism. There is no contradiction between Norway's national interests and the international interests of the working class. The more solid the international positions of the working class, the more headway the Norwegian working class and the Norwegian people as a whole can make in their struggle. The CPN stands for stronger ties of international solidarity between workers and their organisations. It favours mutual exchanges of experience and joint actions against international monopoly capital and its imperialist policy of oppression. Enhancing proletarian internationalism means acting in accordance with Norway's national interest, with the interests of the Norwegian people.'¹¹

The struggle for a national Norwegian security policy is at the heart of our activity for peace. Instead of 'Atlantic solidarity', the CPN demands Europe-wide security and nuclear disarmament on the continent. Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland could make an important contribution to the effort by concluding a treaty to turn Nordic Europe into a nuclear-free zone. The three latter countries are prepared to negotiate on this matter, and it is now up to the Norwegian government and the Storting.

Economic and political contradictions have been ever more noticeable within NATO over the past several years. Some bourgeois and social democratic leaders are beginning to turn attention to the common interests not only of Western Europe, but also of the whole of Europe. At the same time, there are forces active within the bourgeoisie and within the working class and trade union movement which would like to see Europe independent with respect to the two 'superpowers': the United States and the Soviet Union. As Marxists-Leninists we cannot confine ourselves to recording such trends, but have to decide on our attitude to them. We believe that this question has not yet been adequately discussed within the communist parties and between them.

The working class and communist movement in capitalist Europe has to propose an alternative to 'Atlanticism', which is led by US imperialism, and the 'European movement' sponsored by the big West European monopolies and the Common Market's top technocrats. This alternative envisages Europe-wide cooperation in ensuring security, and strengthening peace through arms cuts and disarmament, and the development of mutually advantageous ties between states, irrespective of their social system, on the basis of equality and respect for the national sovereignty of each country, whether big or small.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 426.

² *Ibid.*, p. 428.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 429.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Dagbladet*, October 25, 1982.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Common Security. A Programme for Disarmament. The Report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues under the Chairmanship of Olof Palme*, London, 1982, p. 49.

⁹ Norway does not allow the siting of foreign military bases or nuclear weapons on its territory in peace time.—*Ed.*

¹⁰ *Prinsippprogram for Norges kommunistiska parti*, Oslo, 1973, p. 27.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

the party

The Prospects of Revival

Roberto Freire – Executive Commission member, Central Committee, Brazilian Communist Party (BCP), National Congress member

AFTER the victory of the Democratic Alliance¹ at the presidential elections of January 15, 1985, the situation that emerged in Brazil was volatile and unclear. The transition to democracy cannot be accomplished as if by magic. It involves a period of time during which many difficult problems are to be solved. What we call 'cleaning up the authoritarian debris'—that is, destroying the legal foundations of the former dictatorship—is one of the more important aspects. Removing the restrictions on democratic freedoms was our foremost task.

One must recall that throughout the two decades of the dictatorship, the government allowed only two parties to function. Only with the passage of the constitutional amendment which essentially lifted the restrictions did an unprecedented upsurge of political activity begin. Of course, there was also those who founded this or that party simply to ascertain the degree of their personal popularity with the voters. The spectrum of political organisations broadened considerably, and now they number over 30, but very few of them play any significant role.

Parliament has suspended—but not repealed—legislation on the compulsory registration of parties with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal; only five parties are registered in the old way. Nevertheless, progress in the institutional sphere is obvious: within a short time, an atmosphere of freedom, albeit within the limits of bourgeois democracy, was revived in the nation.

In the socio-economic field, the current government of President Jose Sarney can use the advantages of relatively favourable conditions: the slump is over, the economy is picking up, and the number of the unemployed is diminishing, particularly in areas where industrialisation is underway. All this obviously facilitates the implementation of a more popular policy on key social issues over which the main class battles are being fought.

One should also note that the very existence of a democratic regime in Brazil is important both for Latin America and for international relations as a whole. Our country has been and is playing a prominent role in continental terms. Suffice it to recall its support for the Contadora group. This helps in the search for a peaceful solution to the problems of Central America, the zone where US imperialism is particularly aggressive. Or take Brazil's position on the issue of the external debt and

our country's attempts, timid though they still are, to ensure greater coordination with the other Latin American debtor nations and to regard this problem as more political than financial.

There are, however, spheres in which the situation has remained unchanged. There is the agrarian question, one of the central issues over which the struggle to topple the dictatorship was waged. The Democratic Alliance promised to conduct, upon winning the elections, an agrarian reform in the northeast of the country and in those areas where the action of the rural population to secure the right to own land took an unprecedentedly sharp turn. There, reactionaries assassinated squatters and landless farmers almost daily and dealt brutally with trade union leaders. All of the nation's democratic forces as well as the church demanded an immediate end to the violence. Nevertheless, no meaningful steps to implement an agrarian reform have yet been taken. The latifundistas still play a prominent part in the nation's affairs, particularly in the northeastern states. Pressure from these quarters and from the TNCs and the Brazilian big bourgeoisie, the owners of vast tracts of land, has forced the government to retreat.

Simultaneously, several programmes were adopted, designed to meet the immediate needs of the poorer sections of the population and to take the edge off burning problems such as hunger—for example, the programme for the free distribution of staple foods. We hold that for all their apparent usefulness, such steps may stimulate paternalism and demagoguery, but cannot change the situation radically, let alone extirpate the causes of social justice.

The Communists see both positive and negative aspects in the work of the government. We support those steps that are consonant with the interests of industrial workers and the working people as a whole, that have a positive impact on the situation in the region and the world. But we firmly oppose all that runs counter to the demands of social progress.

Our party strives to make discussion of its alternative proposals as open and specific as possible and to involve a majority of the people in the debate. For example, the BCP is mobilising the masses so that they exert pressure on the ruling quarters and make them keep their promises—specifically, begin tackling the agrarian issue. The Communists have also joined the discussion of public health issues, and we are explaining our position of principle to the people: we advocate universal medical care and, in the longer perspective, the transfer of the entire health care system to the public sector.

We maintain that today the most important thing is to support the transition process, to try and enhance its democratic content so as to create conditions for the establishment of an advanced democracy. But one must not lose sight of the dominant positions held by the big bourgeoisie. We believe that in order to combat its domination, it is imperative to advance organisational initiatives too, and to make mass action more vigorous.

The situation in Brazil shows signs of developing precisely in this positive direction: the mass struggle is broadening, the trade union movement is gaining ground, and discussions in the unions are becoming increasingly political. It follows that generally favourable prospects are opening up before the democratic forces.

In order to use these opportunities, a strong, united and influential party is needed. Aside from the brief period of 1945-1946, the BCP has never been as well-placed as it is now as far as its consolidation and development is concerned. For only the second time in its history of more than 60 years, it can freely build itself up, work within mass organisations and conduct an ideological struggle, asserting its role as a tangible political force in our society. Over the brief period of functioning in the open, the Communists have increased their ranks almost fourfold. Today, the party numbers more than 21,000 activists. And the important thing is that

this upward trend is continuing. The BCP's leading bodies are now operating in all states, in the Brasilia Federal District and at the level of other administrative divisions. On the whole, there are more than 200 party centres nationwide, plus the National Leadership in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. As a parliamentary party, we have secured the right to go on national television and radio with our own programmes. The first programme was devoted to the 64th anniversary of the BCP. Broadcast by all television and radio stations across the country, it was seen in Rio de Janeiro alone by 2.5 million people—over 60 per cent of the TV viewers. The programme traced the heroic path traversed by the party, set out its position on topical issues and its proposals on the ways of solving them.

In defining their strategy, the Communists proceed from the view that objective conditions are maturing in Brazil for advancing a socialist alternative. We believe that there is a way for the nation to develop democratically toward socialism. This path calls for a greater degree of organisation among industrial workers and other working people, for broad participation by the masses in the nation's affairs. This is why we consider more vigorous action in mass organisations, above all in the unions, as well as direct participation in social battles as an extremely important element in our party work.

The struggle for democratic rights and freedoms, for the establishment of a broad democratic front is now central to our revolutionary strategy. A programme of action in this field was adopted at a clandestine BCP congress held as early as 1967. The party has acquired considerable experience in the follow-up of this programme: there was our selfless underground work which steeled us, and there was our involvement in the political battles which brought down the authoritarian regime.

The Communists contributed substantially to the creation of the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (BDMP).² We were among its architects, and we took a direct part in its activities until the ban on the BCP was lifted. Some of our activists held certain posts in the BDMP structure and represented the BDMP in elective bodies. On the whole, we regard this experience as positive. The Communists played an important role in the Democratic Alliance; they were what held it together and infused it with truly progressive ideas. This has taught us to wage our struggle within a well-organised and strong movement and convinced us that the party's democratic course is correct and realistic.

Aside from a theoretical analysis, we were striving to use every opportunity to conduct, in very difficult conditions, vigorous practical work so as to organise and consolidate the alliance. As a result, the masses could see for themselves what the Communists actually were, and our prestige as champions of the people's genuine interests rose. Today, our comrades are valued in Brazil for their selfless resistance to the dictatorship both in the underground and on the political scene, for their unitarian efforts which facilitated the victory.

Another positive point is that at the height of pitched and diverse battles for democracy, we succeeded in training a cadre; this is an acute problem for many parties, particularly those that have emerged from the underground. I, for one, am a product of this struggle: I took part in the work of the legally operating front as a member of the BDMP parliamentary faction in the National Congress. Today, acting legally on its own behalf, the BCP includes a cadre comprising not only those who were steeled in the crucible of the underground but also those whose experience features participation in mass political action, in coalitions and in parliamentary struggle, as well as cooperation with representatives of other parties and organisations within the legally operating bloc and outside it. I refer not only to members of parliament but also to trade union leaders and to medium-level leaders in mass organisations such as the tenants' associations.

I would like to stress it once again that through its participation in the Democratic

Alliance, the Communist Party became directly involved in the struggle against the dictatorship (a dynamic and eventful political process in Brazil), gained valuable experience and provided its cadre with positive expertise. This explains the successful campaign our party conducted as an independent political force in the November 1985 municipal by-elections. We had our own ticket in nine cities, while in Rio de Janeiro our comrade ran for deputy mayor on a coalition ticket.

The election results were not very impressive in terms of the number of votes the Communists won. The national average in the electoral districts where our candidates ran was 2.2 per cent. However, one must not forget that it was the first time the BCP took part in an election campaign flying its own flag. It was the only left organisation whose slogans were fully consonant with its essence as the party of the working class. The modest results are also explained by the fact that some of our activists were still holding important posts within the BDMP and could not renege on their duties.

The election campaign provided the party with additional opportunities to explain its view of Brazilian realities as a whole and to set forth its proposals on the ways topical problems could be solved. We stepped up the ideological struggle against anti-communism which has struck roots in Brazil due to the lack of truthful information and to the way the ruling reactionary quarters had manipulated mass consciousness. The fact that we succeeded in adding substantially to the party ranks before and during the elections is another positive development.

Hence our conviction that our participation in the municipal elections was generally successful. The party is now using the experience it accumulated to prepare for the elections to the National Constituent Assembly slated for November 15. The BCP holds that these elections will be the culmination of the process of transition from the authoritarian regime to democracy. The party has brought all its forces into play: we are mobilising the masses and publicising the Communist election platform formulated early this year; besides, the problem of participation in coalitions³ to the degree allowed under Brazilian legislation has been solved. We are conducting a dialogue and searching for common ground with other political entities in order to jointly secure the drafting of a democratic constitution.⁴

The elections are important because the future alignment of class and political forces will depend on their outcome. The adoption of a truly democratic constitution would create conditions for Brazil's advancement toward an advanced democracy in the interests of the popular masses, a regime under which the working people, led by the working class, could present a socialist alternative of the nation's development.

¹ The Democratic Alliance, a bloc in opposition to the authoritarian regime, comprises the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (BDMP) and the Liberal Front Party.—*Ed.*

² The BDMP included other left forces besides the Communists.—*Ed.*

³ The BCP leadership has decided that in the elections, the Communists are to act in a single front with the political parties and all those striving to enhance genuine democratisation in the interests of the working masses, that is, those who support the Sarney government.—*Ed.*

⁴ Aside from the draft constitution prepared by a special government commission, the National Constituent Assembly will also consider proposals submitted by political parties. In August 1986 the President of Brazil received Giocondo Dias, General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee, who presented the text of the new constitution drafted by the Communists.—*Ed.*

Unity at the Grassroots: Basis for Alliances

Donis Christofinis – CC Political Bureau member, Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL)

THE policy of class and political alliances is a major component of the activity, strategy and tactics of AKEL. In pursuing it, the party invariably adheres to Marxist-Leninist principles, doing its best to use in the conditions of Cyprus the vast experience gained by the international communist movement. We consider that both the present domestic situation and the tense world situation, which is fraught with nuclear disaster, necessitate the formation of the broadest possible coalition of forces to eliminate the dangers threatening our people and the whole of humanity.

We attach primary importance to working class unity, to strategic alliances of the working class with poor peasants, progressive elements of the middle classes and intellectuals, and to tactical, short-term agreements with other class forces and their parties. AKEL proceeds from Lenin's proposition that the ultimate, strategic goals of the working class do not contradict general democratic goals and are mutually complementary. While giving priority to tasks imposed by this or that stage of the struggle in the country, we Communists never renounce the class objectives determining the nature of our party.

Communist policy couples the defence of peace, national independence and democracy with mobilisation of the working class to fight for better living and working conditions and to accomplish its historical mission, which is to build socialism. The interests of the proletariat coincides with those of the majority of the people. And while the patriotic section of the national bourgeoisie remains opposed to the proletariat in the social sphere, it allies itself with the latter in resisting aggression and in fighting for peace.

Marxism-Leninism and the Communists' international experience have shown that cooperation with other forces in defending peace and democracy require patience and tact in order to achieve closer cooperation on these issues and, where possible, to spread it to other issues, for instance, economic development in the interests of the majority of the people. In seeking unity of action of the working people on these issues, the party works to draw as many of them as possible into the fight for peace and into international solidarity actions.

The policy of alliances as conceived by Lenin is an art. It encounters major roadblocks, primarily in the form of tenacious anti-communist prejudices among prospective allies and partners. When national fronts are set up, nationalists often discriminate against the Communists, considering groundlessly that Marxists cannot be patriots because they are internationalists. AKEL has proved its patriotism by deeds. No amount of slander can refute the fact that during British colonial rule our party led the people's political struggle for liberation and that afterwards it was the mainstay of Cypriot independence and made numerous sacrifices in resisting the conspirators and Turkish aggressors¹ and in defending democracy and national independence. We must admit, however, that cooperation is occasionally handicapped by our own sectarian mistakes, by our making too high demands on partners, such as are out of keeping with their interests and the level of their ideological and political maturity.

In carrying on our activity, including our policy of alliances, we attach special importance to correctly combining the national with the internationalist. We do this with due regard to both the existence of two communities—Greek and Turkish—in

our state and the fact that Cyprus lies in the Eastern Mediterranean, one of the 'trouble spots' of the planet.

Cypriot Communists fought in the ranks of the Spanish International Brigades in the 1930s, and now they join actively in every international campaign of solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of Cuba, Algeria, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Palestine, South Africa, El Salvador, Nicaragua and other countries. In turn, this solidarity makes for stronger international support of our people's patriotic struggle.

The dialectical unity of the national and the internationalist also expresses itself in the Communist-led movement of Cypriot public opinion against the foreign bases on our soil. The movement is patriotic, since real freedom, security and independence will be impossible for as long as the bases are there. Besides, the bases serve imperialism as a bridgehead for aggression throughout our region, and this lends the fight for their abolition an internationalist character.

The Communists of Cyprus have been pursuing their policy of alliances on an inter-national basis ever since the beginning of the revolutionary movement on the island. As far back as the 1920s, the Communist Party of Cyprus called on all Greek and Turkish Cypriots, on all working people, to act together within a united liberation front against British colonial rule. An article published in its newspaper, *Neo Anthropos*, on January 8, 1927, said that 'all the parties which realise the need to free Cyprus must direct their efforts' towards forming this front and that 'all anti-British elements, whether they side with the bourgeoisie or the proletariat and whether they are Greeks or Turks, must cooperate in the struggle against foreign domination'.

Ours is the only party having hundreds of Turkish Cypriots in its ranks. Dervis Ali Kavazoglu, a member of the AKEL CC killed by Turkish terrorists, was a hero of all progressive Cypriots and a symbol of friendship among members of different nationalities. Thousands of Turkish Cypriots belonged to the Pancyprian Federation of Labour (PEO), the largest national trade union of the country, an organisation led by the Communists until 1974, when the island and its population were partitioned.

The party and the mass organisations led by it always strive for close relations between the two communities. A broad-based Commission for Closer Relations set up on AKEL's initiative carried on work to this end, and recommended the government to issue a Declaration on the Rights of Turkish Cypriots, which it did.

In spite of the difficulties and obstacles created by Denktas, head of the regime imposed on the Turkish-occupied part of the island, PEO and Devis (progressive trade union of Turkish Cypriots) as well as right-wing trade unions of the two communities—SEK and Türksen—maintained contacts between themselves. At a conference held in London (November 1984), six trade union organisations of Greek and Turkish Cypriots jointly discussed social security problems. In 1985, national trade unions concerned themselves in Nicosia with the problems of a social security fund, the dockers and fruit-packing workers.

Large delegations of the two communities attended world peace forums in Sofia and Prague, where they issued joint statements in favour of peace and an independent, sovereign, united, federal, non-aligned and fully demilitarised Cyprus. These statements were signed by AKEL and the Democratic Party (DP) led by President Spyros Kyprianou and operating on the free territory of the island, the Turkish Republican Party and Party of Communal Liberation active in the occupied area, by trade unions, youth organisations and peace committees of both parts of the country, as well as by many other organisations. Until recently, intellectuals representing both sides met in Nicosia and outside Cyprus.

Ever since it was founded (1941), AKEL, successor of the Communist Party of Cyprus,² has been striving for the formation of an alliance of the working class, the peasantry and the middle strata. As a result of its efforts and the mobilisation of youth

and women, the party laid the groundwork for a united Communist-led front of working people known as the Popular Movement. This is the most powerful social and political alignment on the island, and while it does not yet speak for the majority of the population, it is a major factor of peace, social progress, and the independence of Cyprus.

Along with left unity, unity of action on current issues was achieved by trade unions of different political affiliation. Efforts by the Communist leadership enabled PEO to cooperate with SEK, the nationalist trade union, on a permanent basis and at every stage from the examination of a problem to the advancing of demands, the organisation of strikes and collective bargaining.

This unity of action, which is based on common economic and social problems, is all the more important since the proportion of organised wage and salary earners ranges from 80 to 85 per cent. This explains why nationalist unions cooperate with us in the defence of peace, the fight against racism in South Africa and other international actions.

A distinctive aspect of the working class movement in Cyprus is that, unlike other capitalist countries of Europe, Cyprus has no social democratic movement of the classical type. Whereas the communist movement in Cyprus has a record of nearly 60 years, the 'socialist' party known as the Unified Democratic Union of Cyprus (EDEK) came into being only 16 years ago. EDEK enjoys hardly any influence among the workers and peasants. The petty-bourgeois intellectuals are its main social base.

AKEL has always aspired to tactical maturity. In upholding class demands under British colonial rule, it gave priority to liberation from that rule. During World War II, the party saw the paramount task in fighting against Hitler fascism, and on June 16, 1943, its CC urged its membership to join in this fight. By combining principle with flexibility and following a policy of alliances in the struggle against colonial rule and fascism, the party increased its influence and won stronger positions among the people.

The anti-fascist war, the heroic offensive of the liberating Red Army and the Greek Resistance provided favourable conditions for implementing a decision of the Third AKEL Congress (April 1944) which called for the formation of a united front to carry forward the liberation struggle. In October of that year, a conference of parties and mass organisations signed a protocol on cooperation and reached agreement in principle on establishing a National Council. However, resistance from anti-communists and the civil war that broke out in Greece in December 1944 made it impossible to set up the council.

Nevertheless, our party kept up its effort to achieve unity, especially through contacts with progressive members of the national bourgeoisie and diverse democratic elements. During the 1946 municipal elections, AKEL and the National Front, which comprised various left-wing mass organisations, formed in common with other democrats a National Cooperation Bloc that won the elections in most cities. Communists became mayors of Limassol and Famagusta.

The people's liberation struggle went on gathering momentum. In January 1955, the AKEL CC called for the formal institution of a United Patriotic Front calling in its minimum programme for the full and unqualified self-determination of the Cypriot people. The party saw this as the fundamental and most pressing task. It urged all the Greeks and Turks of the island, regardless of ideological or other differences, to unite in struggle against the repressive policies of the colonial authorities, against the foreign bases and for the demilitarisation of the country.

In 1960, our people won limited independence, and the Republic of Cyprus was founded. But the national liberation movement went on. The three guarantors—Britain, Greece and Turkey—imposed their diktat. British imperialism retained its

bases on the island. Curbs on independence hampered unfailing enforcement of the Constitution.

Rightly defining that period of the struggle as a national liberation stage, AKEL declared for the formation of a Pancyprian United Front on the basis of a minimum programme and for the broadest possible anti-imperialist unity of the people. It backed the efforts of Archbishop Makarios, the first president of the republic, towards consolidating the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus and defeating chauvinist attempts to set the two communities against each other and the subversive activity of EOKA 2, the fascist organisation executing imperialism's will under the nationalist slogan of enosis

After the 1974 events and the Turkish invasion, we raised our sights to the formation of a national unity government. However, differences between other parties prevented the achievement of this goal. Thereupon a National Council embodying national political unity was formed, with Makarios as Chairman. The unifying centre at the grassroots was the Coordinating Committee of Parties and Organisations. On the initiative of our party, the Committee Secretariat was also proclaimed Cypriot Committee for European Security and Cooperation, a move reflecting a combination of the national with the internationalist and the connection between the struggle for national independence and the struggle for peace.

We Communists have always done all in our power to strengthen anti-imperialist unity and make it more active. In fighting against Turkish occupation, we spared no effort to bring the two communities closer together in a joint struggle against imperialism, for the restoration of the independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus and for its non-alignment and full demilitarisation.

The political platform for achieving unity to save the country was worked out by the National Council, with the Communists participating. The platform provided for a peaceful settlement ruling out an armed struggle unless it was imposed on the people; a negotiated solution of the ethnic problem within the framework of the UN, in line with the resolutions on Cyprus and the agreement signed by Makarios and Denktas in 1977;³ closer relations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots as a necessary step to facilitate and finalise a fair settlement.

Our party continued championing unity of the people after Makarios' death as well. A consistent policy for unity plus influence among the people⁴ enabled it to take the initiative, with the result that, following consultations in April 1982, AKEL and the DP signed an agreement on democratic cooperation. It was not an ordinary inter-party agreement but an inter-class political alliance under a minimum programme.

The minimum programme and the agreement on democratic cooperation were assailed by reactionary imperialist forces, which refused to stop plotting with a view to making the whole island their base. Operating from Greece and Turkey, they secured in Cyprus the support of the head of the church, the right-wing Democratic Rally party and EDEK. However, the people subscribed to the minimum programme. It became the electoral platform of President Kyprianou, who won re-election in February 1983.

The programme met the requirements of the national liberation stage. It provided for the restoration of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus, a policy of non-alignment and complete demilitarisation. It was also aimed at perfecting democratic institutions, carrying out social and economic changes in the peoples' interest and re-establishing mutual confidence and cooperation between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

The agreement on democratic cooperation was a compromise alliance. Although AKEL enjoyed great influence, it laid no claim to assuming leadership of the alliance by nominating its own presidential candidate, nor did it demand to be represented in

the future government. Its only aim was to help fulfil the programme.

The ability to compromise and make necessary concessions is an important part of the policy of the working class party if it is to bring about cooperation with heterogeneous class forces. This ability, Lenin pointed out, is absolutely necessary to the vanguard of the working class, which can defeat a stronger adversary only if it carefully uses under all circumstances 'any, even the smallest, opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional'.⁵

We made numerous compromises with and concessions to the DP and, indeed, refrained from openly criticising its discriminatory attitude to the Communists. But when, in 1983, the President allowed transit through the country's territory of a so-called multinational peace-keeping force to Lebanon, AKEL organised mass protest demonstrations. How could it be reconciled to the fact that while the governments of Greece and Turkey, both members of NATO, refused to help that force, the President of non-aligned Cyprus, elected with the support of AKEL, allowed it to use the Larnaca civilian airport and seaport?

That step marked a turning point in our relations with the President. We also criticised with good reason his stand on the constructive proposals of the UN Secretary General for the solution of the ethnic problem of Cyprus. Kyprianou neither rejected nor accepted those proposals. In violation of the policy of establishing a federation of the two communities as stipulated by the minimum programme, he actually contributed to division and to the formation of a separatist state in the occupied north of the country.

However, AKEL considered even then that the existing differences over the most important aspects of the minimum programme required discussion that could result in agreement. The party was aware of the importance of democratic cooperation for the future of Cyprus, for the extension and consolidation of the unity of the forces interested in a just settlement of the Cyprus question.

Although our party showed goodwill and readiness for talks while reserving the right to criticise wrong moves and positions of the President running counter to the very spirit of the agreement, Kyprianou unilaterally ended democratic cooperation in December 1984. Our Political Bureau released a statement on this matter which said: 'AKEL considers that this unity of action in the name of genuine national interests should be based on a common approach to the Cyprus question, firm democratic principles, equal rights, collectivism, and collective responsibility.'⁶

The Communists appealed to all political forces to unite in order to save their sovereign country, stressing the need to work out a common line for the solution of the Cyprus problem and re-emphasising the importance of closer cooperation with the Democratic Party. The AKEL leadership called for the formation of a national unity government representing all political forces.

Our party perseveres in this basic line, regarding all patriotic, democratic and anti-imperialist forces of the country as its allies. It takes account of the possibility of reviving the National Council which existed under President Makarios. Although we are understandably disillusioned with the discontinuance of democratic cooperation, we will go on seeking joint action under an acceptable common programme in the interest of the country and the struggle of its people for a peaceful, just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem.

AKEL prepared for the mid-term parliamentary elections in December 1985 under the slogan of forming a national unity government. It worked to mobilise the masses for joint action. The elections and preparations for them proceeded in an atmosphere of anti-communism and attacks from the Right, from certain sections of the Democratic Party, the church and EDEK. International imperialism did much to whip up a slander campaign. All this told inevitably on the outcome of the elections.⁷

The AKEL leadership asked all its branches to discuss the results of the elections and submit their opinion on the causes of our setback. The criticisms and judgements offered by the party rank and file were generalised at the level of regional committees and then at a plenary meeting of the CC. This collective discussion made possible a free exchange of views in the spirit of constructive criticism and self-criticism. It strengthened our ranks and contributed to inner-party democracy. And while an occasional participant in the discussion voiced too categorical a judgement, it definitely helped the CC in promptly working out measures needed to normalise the situation and overcome difficulties.

The discussion showed that there were no defeatist sentiments in the party and that the membership was set on regaining lost positions and strengthening party unity. We now make a special effort to improve organising work and ideological education, train cadres and carry on agitation and propaganda among the masses.

Our experience of alliances confirms, first of all, the need to consolidate unity at the grassroots. It is unification of the masses and their mobilisation for the application of the principles of the alliance that enable the working class party to play an important role in it and to help preserve and strengthen its unity. AKEL now seeks precisely this kind of united action by the masses and their organisations, primarily unity of the workers, peasants and urban middle strata.

Our experience bears out Lenin's thesis that a workers' party in an alliance with organisations representing the interests of other classes and social strata must be independent politically and ideologically. We must dissociate in good time from an ally's steps and positions at variance with the interests of the workers, of the people as a whole, must prevent their implementation. This is the only line enabling the party to preserve its identity in the eyes of the masses, and is particularly important in the case of inter-class cooperation, such as we had in our country. Although the working class party did not enter the government, the people tended to believe that AKEL was also responsible for all the ill-advised moves and miscalculations of the government and for its failure to keep its promises. Our experience also invites another important question: When is it advisable to withdraw from a political alliance? The problem of stepping out in time cannot be solved without mastering the art of political struggle.

The struggle for peace and disarmament necessitates a flexible and principled policy of alliances on the Communists' part. This is an internationalist and national problem in Cyprus. The presence of foreign military bases on our soil is a threat to our national security and as for the direct presence of imperialist forces on the island, it plays into the hands of the Right, prevents a peaceful and just settlement and tends to aggravate the socio-political situation.

US imperialism wants to safeguard its military presence and to turn the island into a powerful strategic base in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. With the authorisation of the Cypriot government the Americans began to build a further monitoring station in our country, in addition to the three stations already in operation. Western press reports connect the project with 'star wars' plans. Besides, the United States has spent hundreds of millions of dollars on building an Air Force base to be used by a rapid deployment force in the Turkish-occupied northern part of the island.

In this menacing situation the struggle for peace concerns all Cypriots: workers, peasants, handicraftsmen, traders, scientists, writers, members of the older generations and youth—women and men alike. It offers objective opportunities for the development of the broadest mass movement. AKEL contributes actively to the growth of the movement. At the same time, we are on our guard against imperialist attempts to neutralise the peace movement through its agents, using anti-Sovietism, the concepts of so-called impartiality and independence, the theory of the 'equal responsibility' of the Soviet Union and the United States, and so on.

The Pancyprian Peace Council is at the head of the peace forces of the island. It is committed to an explicitly anti-imperialist orientation which demands made by bourgeois elements have failed to shake. We do not accept the argument that it is better to have 50,000 conscious peace fighters than 100,000 supporters who have but a vague notion of what they want. It is our view that it is vital to carry on an ideological struggle and at the same time bring all opponents of war into joint action and cooperation during campaigns over specific issues.

'The struggle for peace opens up before the Communist Parties the greatest opportunities for creating the broadest united front. All those interested in the preservation of peace should be drawn into this united front. ⁸ This passage from a resolution of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, approved more than five decades ago, is still so relevant that it mobilises us to form a powerful anti-war front of the people capable of keeping reaction and militarism out of Cyprus.

¹ The author means the attempt at a coup which right nationalists made in 1974 with an eye to effecting *enosis* (annexing Cyprus to Greece) and the subsequent occupation of 37 per cent of Cypriot territory by Turkey.—*Ed.*

² The British authorities banned the Communist Party of Cyprus in 1931, following the anti-colonial revolt of the Cypriot people. In 1941, the CPC formed AKEL as an organisation operating legally. The two parties existed for a time side by side. After AKEL had become established as a Marxist-Leninist party, the CPC merged with it.

³ Added to these documents afterwards (1979) was an agreement between Kyprianou and Denktas.

⁴ In the 1981 general election, AKEL polled 33 per cent of the votes, or more than any other party.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 70-71.

⁶ *Haravghi*, December 23, 1984.

⁷ The rightist Democratic Rally won the largest number of votes (33.56 per cent), AKEL and the DP collected 27.43 and 27.64 per cent respectively and EDEK, 11.07 per cent.—*Ed.*

⁸ *The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. Resolutions and Decisions*, Cooperative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, Moscow-Leningrad, 1935.

new experience

Our Interviews

The Dictatorship has Fallen, the Battle Goes On

Rene Theodore — CC General Secretary,
United Party of Haitian Communists (PUCH)

The fall of the Duvalier clan dictatorship after almost 30 years was a milestone in Haiti's history. What was your party's contribution to the popular action that led to the collapse of the regime?

LIKE all the other opposition forces, the Communist Party did much to expose the

dictatorship in the eyes of the people. It was necessary to strip it of the mythical halo created by Duvalier propaganda and to show that the clan had managed to stay in power for so many years only through brutal terror. It was necessary to bring home to the people that the dictatorship was not all-powerful and that it could be defeated. A system based on terrorism and corruption, our party argued, was unable to take Haiti out of the deep state of crisis and solve the social problems which led the regime to bankruptcy.

The Communists brought their views to the people through direct contact and through broadcasts from abroad since they had no access to the mass media in Haiti. At one time, when the dictatorship closed down all the radio stations supporting the popular movement, including the Catholic Radio Soleil, our broadcasts from abroad were listened to by practically all the people and were the most popular in the land. We spelled out our party's position reflecting the demands of the popular masses and gave precise and clear recommendations to the people on how to organise the struggle to overthrow the Duvalier clan.

When the people came out into the open, the Communists said in their appeals: taking to the streets from time to time is not enough; organisation and readiness for action must be maintained throughout the whole period of the battle, because that is what makes the people strong. Our ideas gradually got through to the people. Neighbourhood committees began to spring up as an important form in organising the population against the tyranny, to whose destruction the people became increasingly committed. The Communists were, of course, directly involved in the action in early 1986 that forced Baby Doc to flee the country.

The people of Haiti have won some democratic rights and freedoms. But there is no complacency. The level of the people's mobilisation remains high as becomes evident whenever there is a need to press for democratic demands. The national governing council set up as a result of a compromise between Duvalier's adherents and some government institutions, notably the army, has to be pressured by the masses into adopting decisions that meet their interests.

Here is an example. At one point the present government—which we consider to be an interim one¹—intended to establish a 'consultative committee' to appoint members of the constitutional assembly to draft a new constitution. Our party resolutely protested against the move and demanded that the assembly should be elected. We were backed by the popular masses and representatives of the various social strata. The authorities had to retreat and call an election for November. Moreover, the draft constitution is to be put up for wide and open discussion before being made the subject of a national referendum.

What is your party's action programme at present?

Along with other democratic circles, it now opposes the political forces which are closely linked with world reaction and are proponents of a Duvalier-style autocratic tradition. We seek to put an end to that tradition, first and foremost, through reforms ensuring greater democracy in the country and grassroots participation in political decision-making.

The Communists are committed to the establishment of a new government in Haiti based on two principles: (a) constant popular control over government institutions and (b) replaceability of officials and deputies acting contrary to the people's interests. We believe that, among other things, the national assembly should have full powers, including the right to appoint and remove the country's president and ministers.

The national reconstruction programme put forward by the PUCH provides the framework for the solution of another vital Haitian problem—that of its economy.

We advocate, above all, a radical agrarian reform, industrial development in keeping with the country's needs and opportunities, and diversification of its international trade. Haiti's continued feudal dependence on the US, France, the FRG and Canada can no longer be tolerated. There is now a popular demand for establishing diplomatic, trade, cultural and scientific relations with all countries, including the socialist countries. The Communists' efforts in that direction have met with a broad response among the people. Finally, we demand that economic activity should be geared to improving Haiti's finances, which would require major changes in the government sector and in the administration. This is our minimum programme.

Your party has until recently been outlawed. How do you see its present state and the degree of popular support it commands?

The people of Haiti greatly appreciate the PUCH's role in overthrowing the dictatorship. The Communists have a very wide audience. The press, radio and television in Haiti find it necessary to tell the people about our party's position. People often telephone the radio to ask for the full coverage of PUCH statements and documents, and interviews with its leaders. They listen to everything we say with great attention and interest.

The result is the rapid growth of the party ranks. We are admitting more and more members. Among them are wage workers, employees and unemployed. We cannot of course, admit everyone at once. We explain that in order to be a member of our organisation one has to know its Programme and Rules, understand its political line and be ready to observe party discipline. We conduct preparatory work with those who want to join the party, bearing in mind, of course, that many of them would become genuine Communists only after they have joined the party.

Our party organisations are now active not only in Port-au-Prince, the capital, but almost everywhere in the provinces as well. We try to hold frequent rallies and meetings with the people and give press interviews. We are doing all we can to start publishing our own paper. It would then be easier for the party to spread its ideas, and it would no longer have to depend on the incomplete, if fairly accurate, summaries of our position appearing in the Haitian press.

The mass media generally give us much attention. The evening paper *Petit samedi soir* wrote that intensive debates on communism and the PUCH platform have lately provided constant food for the press and television. I was recently invited to take part in a television debate. Our opponents hoped to put us in a difficult position and undermine popular confidence in the Communists, but the party only gained from the broadcast and the ranks of its supporters broadened.

Tell us about your work in the mass public organisations, amongst workers, peasants and youth, and about the Communists' relations with the clergy?

Mass organisations in Haiti are, first and foremost, the neighbourhood committees, the traditional focus of activities by the Communists and the trade unions, which are going through a stage of revival. We try to strengthen the labour organisations, viewing their activity as a key prerequisite for greater democratic rights and freedoms.

Our line with regard to the trade unions is to give every possible support to those of them which take a consistent class stand. We are trying to help them in every way by assigning our activists to work in them. It is no part of the PUCH's intention to subordinate the trade unions. We are aware of the difference between their tasks and the goals of the communist political organisation which seeks complete liberation of the working class and all the working people.

Now about the peasants. They constitute the bulk of Haiti's population. The peasants more and more often stage actions under the slogan, 'Land to those who till it!'. A land reform is long overdue and, following our party, the church and even the government have begun to speak about it.

The sentiments of the peasants will now have greater political resonance than before, because administrative councils are to be set up in rural areas with popular representation. This is the first time in Haitian history that rural dwellers will gain direct access to local government. The party feels that this development deepens the democratic process. The Communists try to help peasants to become aware of the tasks confronting them and to bring it home to them that they can only improve their lot by acting together with the working class.

We pay particular attention to young people. They were in the front ranks of the forces that brought down the Duvalier regime. The party works hard to educate young people politically bearing in mind that the under-30s account for 70 per cent of the population. We have prepared a pamphlet addressed to the young which contains the conclusions and lessons to be drawn from the path travelled by the party. We do not want those who are now joining the struggle to repeat the errors of the past. The Communists are working to persuade young Haitians, irrespective of their social background, to come out for deeper democracy and progressive development of their country, arguing that these interests are best met by the PUCH's Programme.

A few words about our relations with the church. The Catholic church has played an important role in the struggle against Duvalier. It still takes a progressive stand, especially on the land reform issue, where its point of view is similar to ours. The church upholds the principle of the country's territorial integrity, demands non-interference in its affairs by foreign powers, notably the United States, comes out for Haiti's independent economic development on the basis of its own resources, while expanding equal and mutually beneficial relations with all countries.

In short, the present position of the Catholics, based as it is on the theology of liberation, provides a basis for cooperation with the Communists in defence of democracy and in pressing for a restructuring of the Haitian society in accordance with the ideals of social progress.

How do you assess the role of international solidarity with the Haitian people's struggle and in what way could it be helpful in the future?

Solidarity has always been highly important for the opponents of Duvalier. It went a long way towards isolating the regime internationally and rallying public opinion against it. The keen interest with which the world has been watching developments in Haiti since the fall of the dictatorship, and the progressives' support of our struggle for deepening the democratic process is also evidence of solidarity. We are particularly grateful for the solidarity of the communist parties and the world working class movement.

We are confident that international solidarity with the struggling people of Haiti will become even broader. It will help to establish diplomatic and other relations with the socialist countries, to develop our ties with the fraternal parties, the trade unions and youth movements. For our part, we are in total solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples in Central America, the Caribbean and other regions. We try to do all we can to preserve peace, which is the main task facing mankind today.

¹ This article was received in August 1986.—Ed.

Documents

Sri Lanka

HOW TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK

THE Communist Party of Sri Lanka has issued a statement emphasising that the crisis in relations between the two main ethnic groups on the island—the Sinhalese and the Tamils—holds the threat of endless bloodshed, escalation of tension, economic collapse, an end to democracy and the actual partition of the country. The Communists put the main responsibility for the dangerous situation on the government of the United National Party. The ruling regime, says the document, has demonstrated its utter incapacity to settle this vital issue.

How can it be settled? The party believes that the point of departure is to recognise the Tamils' right to regional autonomy within the framework of a united Sri Lanka, which must retain its territorial integrity. The concrete forms in which these fundamental principles are realised may be different and are subject to discussion. In the interests of restoring immediate peace, the CP Sri Lanka is prepared to support any negotiated democratic agreement even if it falls short of fully meeting the Communists' stand.

The party has put forward a number of concrete proposals: an end to the discrimination and illegal sackings of Tamils from government institutions and state corporations; a halt to the arrests and detention on suspicion now being practised with respect to Tamil young people; and recognition of the Tamils' national identity and their right to preserve and develop their own language and culture.

The Communists will do their utmost, the statement says, to create a political climate and conditions promoting a democratic solution to the nationalities problem. The CP Sri Lanka calls on all the other parties and organisations, especially those representing left-wing forces in the country, to join efforts in seeking a way out of the dead end.

In the Mirror of the Press

Nhan dan

DRAWING STRENGTH FROM THE MASSES

The Communists and the working people of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam are preparing for the Sixth Congress of the CP Vietnam, which is to be held in December. The central organ of the CP Vietnam Central Committee daily informs readers on the development of the socialist emulation campaign in honour of the forthcoming party forum, on the improvement of the economic mechanism, and the introduction of new technology, and on the criticism and self-criticism drive in the party.

An editorial in the newspaper on the preparations for the congress says that it is to map out ways for further progress in tackling these two strategic tasks: building socialism and defending the country. It is to discuss measures for strengthening and enhancing in every way the CP Vietnam's leading role in the society.

The party draws its strength from the creative activity of the masses, it has absolute trust in the people, and conducts a policy in the interests of the people. The Communists value the support of the masses and lead them in surmounting shortcomings and mistakes on to the goals set out by the Fourth and Fifth congresses of the CP Vietnam. The Communists strive to provide reliable defence for the country, to

strengthen its might in every way, and to make the life of the population more stable, healthy and just.

A potent revolutionary movement of the masses to welcome the party forum in a fitting manner is under way in the country. The unbreakable ties between the party and the people are demonstrated by the proposals addressed to the congress from workers, peasants and intellectuals, and by the discussion of the draft CC Political Report.

The interests of the socialist revolution demand a new approach to solving economic problems, renewing the style of work, and improving organisational and cadre policy, the editorial stresses. It calls for resolute efforts to combat formalism, mismanagement, showmanship and fraudulent practices, which sap the people's strength and waste its time.

If there are to be real returns, there is a need to renew the style and structure of management and administration at every level, to improve work methods, eliminate bureaucratic practices and administration by fiat, enhance the responsibility, activity and creative initiative of the masses, and to ensure democracy and discipline, respect for state laws, greater unity and observance of the rules of inner-party life.

Party organisations, the editorial says, have the duty to help enterprises and all working people to boost production, and to work out measures meeting the true interests and aspirations of the population.

Scinteia

SIGNALS FROM THE GRASSROOTS

Critical signals and proposals from the working people are an important source for analytical work by party organs, says the organ of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. This is exemplified by the RCP committee of Bihor District, where much attention is being given to analysing letters and to the work with the public. The results are used to take organisational and educational measures without delay. There is evidence of growing civic and party responsibility among citizens for getting things done and developing socialist production. Thus, signals from rank-and-file Communists helped the party's district committee to bring out and eliminate defects in the work of the Obradi Building Trust, to put things in order and strengthen its workers' self-management.

Communists in Action

OTTO TREML'S CONCERNS

The Communist Party of Austria gained some good results in the latest community council elections which were held in four major Federal provinces at the end of last year. Thus, in Steiermark, the number of seats won by the Communists went up by one-third, in the industrial community of Ternitz (Lower Austria) it more than doubled, and in the town of Steyr (Upper Austria), it increased by more than 50 per cent.

WHAT happened in Steyr appears to be indicative. The election returns in that

We continue publication of the series on the activity of Communists in executive and legislative organs of power in capitalist countries (see *WMR*, Nos. 4, 7 and 8, 1985, and No. 2, 1986).

town testify to the recognition given by its inhabitants to the work of the local party organisation. They are also a recognition of the personal efforts of employee Otto Tremel, a member of the CP Austria, who has represented his party on the community council for the past 14 years, and who has won his fellow-citizens' respect by his fine work.

When the newly-elected Steyr Council assembled for its constituent meeting, Otto Tremel said the following: "As the representative of the CP Austria on the council, I shall continue to support any project meeting the interests of the working people, old-age pensioners, small businessmen, and young people in our town, including projects proposed by other party groups. I shall continue to back common sense policies, and broader democracy in the council, while insisting on full publicity.

"The Communist Party intends to go on voting against the anti-social policy, while proposing that funds be found for preserving and extending the social service system. At the same time, I should like to say that the CPA is prepared for cooperation for the benefit of the working people."

What then are the problems now uppermost in the minds of the Communists of Steyr? What are their party organisations and its representatives on the community council doing for the solution of these problems?

The first thing to note is that the Communists rely on the fine traditions of the town's working class. Here are a few facts from its heroic record. A strike was staged against the Dollfuss regime at the local factories on February 12, 1934, and it developed into armed clashes with the army and the police which lasted for two days. Only when the workers ran out of ammunition did they withdraw from the unequal battle. The CPA's underground organisation in the Resistance movement and in the struggle for the country's freedom suffered heavy losses.¹ On the proposal of the Steyr District Committee of the CP Austria some of the streets in the town have been named after those heroic fighters.

A wave of strikes rolled across Austria in September 1950 in protest against what was called the 'fourth prices and wages pact', which had been secretly concluded by the employers and the top trade union leadership, a pact which markedly aggravated the working people's hardships. Once again, the workers of Steyr were in the front ranks of the strikers.

The Communists in the town are now developing these militant traditions by taking a stand for peace and disarmament, and against neofascist sallies. They are taking an active part in the work of the local peace committee and the Austrian Anti-War Movement, and consistently standing up for the working people's social gains.

People everywhere are now worried about unemployment and ecological and housing problems, and so the Communists have been working harder at the enterprises and in the neighbourhoods to provide more information in the factory newspapers about the problems connected with the life of their town, and in the community press on production matters. The Communists are successful in their activity because the CPA hammers out its policies collectively, citizens are regularly informed of the discussions at community council sessions, and the party's policy is explained to local citizens.

What happens to the town depends on what happens to the Steyr Works, the largest local enterprise, a nationalised car-making concern. The long-term offensive mounted by capital has also affected Steyr: there is a plan to reprivatise the works, to close down and fragment production into separate units, and to dismantle some units and workplaces. Such an 'elimination of superfluous units' would pose some grave material and social problems for the whole town.

The Communists of Steyr have put forward their own alternative before the production and community councils: instead of shutdown and reprivatisation, they want the Steyr Works to be incorporated in the state-owned EIAG concern, which is

there to develop new and promising lines of production, and this would create favourable conditions for Austrian enterprises instead of for the transnationals. The future of the Steyr Works is now being discussed within the narrow circles of 'social partners', while the Communists insist on publicity and on the full participation by representatives of the workers and employees in discussion on the future of the works.

The unemployment situation in the town is also an acute one. Almost 1,600 'unwanted' people are registered on the labour exchange. Women find it hardest to get jobs in the 'free market economy', which has no use for them. While other party groups on the Steyr Council have nothing constructive to offer, the Communists have used the *Steyrer Werksarbeiter*, the works trade union newspaper, and *Vorwärts*, the organ of the local organisation of the CPA, to keep raising these problems, showing the links between the enterprise and the community, and explaining the need for a radical change in the whole of economic and communal policy.

Housing is one of the outstanding major problems facing the town: one has to wait a long time to get a flat, while rents and the prices of public utility services have been growing so fast that even medium-income families have to make do with what is the barest subsistence minimum. And what does 'social housing construction' amount to? It is a term that needs to be used with great circumspection. Tenants now already have to pay up to 5,000 schillings a month for community-owned flats, apart from the need to carve out from the family budget another 80,000 schillings to cover the building costs. One of the Austrian Communist's important demands is a truly social solution to the housing problem in the interests of the working people.

Tenants were dealt another blow by the law 'On Improving the Hygienic Condition of Dwelling Houses', which entered into force in early 1985, because under it rents went up by another 500-1,000 schillings a month. A district conference of the CPA's Steyr organisation addressed a demand directly to the Ministry of Housing that this anti-social measure should be cancelled at once. The Communist member of the community council urged the other parties to join in the protest. Mass action by citizens has brought some relief: the rent increases have been deferred.

Steyr has always differed from its industrial fellow-cities, which remind one of a replica of the Ruhr, in that it has virtually no smoke-stacks. Preservation of a Steyr that is at once green and industrial is yet another Communist demand. In order to reduce the pollution of the air, they have proposed in particular, the installation of modern filters in the foundry shops, and the technical re-equipment of the boiler rooms. Otto Tremel has kept drawing the community council's attention to these problems, while numerous handbills have informed its inhabitants of the alternatives proposed by the Communists.

The inhabitants of Steyr are worried not only about the air pollution, but also about the noise produced by the traffic. Lorries keep lumbering along the roads of the Resthof District day and night. In 1984, the Communists worked out measures to limit these traffic flows and have kept advocating them both in the community council and at the meetings of the Transport Commission. Following repeated inquiries by the CPA deputy, the community finally got down in 1985 to a stage-by-stage reduction in the through transit of lorries. On the Communists' initiative, a pedestrian zone was set up in an area where it had earlier taken some effort to breathe because of the exhaust fumes.

Communist criticism of the privileges of local politicians has met with a wide response among the population. While working people's wages cannot keep up with the mounting inflation, the prime minister of the Upper Austria Province is paid 2 million schillings a year, and the burgomaster of Steyr—over 1.7 million. After a six-year term in office, these officials are entitled to a pension amounting to one-half of their basic salary. In Steyr, the only one to vote against such practices was the CPA

deputy on the community council. He is the only member of that body who is not paid at all for his work. The Communists' consistent action has produced a situation in which the members of the Steyr community administration no longer dare to dig too deeply into the public treasury when using the opportunities offered by the bourgeois law to increase the salaries of its officials.

It takes civic courage and a high sense of principle to carry on such painstaking activity in the organs of the community administration from day to day. It tends to produce results only when it is carried on by a man who has made a thorough study of the vital problems facing the town and its inhabitants, a man for whom their concerns are his own, a man entirely and selflessly dedicated to the common cause. Otto Treml, the Communist deputy, is just such a man.

Eva Wagner
staff member, Communal Policy
Department, CC CPA.

¹ For details see Lutz Holzinger, 'The Saved Speak', *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.—Ed.

In Brief

BANGLADESH

In a special statement, 69 members of parliament have demanded the lifting of the ban on the publication of *Ekota*, the newspaper published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, and other opposition newspapers and periodicals.

COLOMBIA

The eighth festival of *Voz*, the Colombian Communist weekly, has been held in Bogota. This year the event publicised the struggle to consolidate the Patriotic Union, the left coalition comprising the Communist Party, and displayed solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and with the patriots of Paraguay, El Salvador and Chile.

DENMARK

Land og folk, the newspaper of the Communist Party of Denmark, conducted its eleventh festival in Copenhagen on August 16 and 17. 'Vigorous Action for Peace and Progress', 'A World Without Nuclear Weapons by the Year 2000' and 'A United Front Against the Right-Wingers' were the themes. Joining the Communists in the celebration were some 200 various political and civic organisations, as well as delegations from fraternal parties and their press.

IRAN

A national conference of the People's Party of Iran has considered the situation in the country and the consequences of the unprecedented campaign of reprisals unleashed against the party by the ruling regime. Conference participants have condemned the campaign of terror conducted by the authorities against working people and ethnic minorities, above all the Kurdish people, and paid homage to the courage of the arrested, tortured and executed Communists.

ITALY

A fund-raising drive to support the Italian Communist Party and the communist press is on in Italy. *L'Unità* reports that voluntary contributions amounted to 13 billion lire over the first ten weeks of the campaign.

LAOS

According to *Pasason*, the newspaper of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, party ranks have expanded considerably. While the LPRP numbered a mere 400 members in 1955, when it was underground, today its 3,600 primary organisations unite 47,000 Communists.

PERU

Unidad, the weekly of the Peruvian Communist Party, has published its 1,000th issue. Launched 30 years ago, *Unidad* is now among the most popular of the nation's democratic publications, covering the more topical issues of Peruvian life and publicising the policy of the PCP. Consideration is being given to the creation of a daily published by all of Peru's left forces and of a communist theoretical journal.

SAN MARINO

In early August *La Scintilla*, the newspaper of the San Marino Communists, organised its festival at which Gilberto Ghiotti, General Secretary of the SMCP, spoke about the current tasks facing the party in the new situation: the Communist and Socialist coalition government in power since 1978 has been replaced by a cabinet made up of SMCP members and Christian Democrats, formerly in opposition.

UNITED STATES

The Communist Party USA has conducted a national conference to discuss the party's strategy and tactics in view of the congressional elections slated for November.

exchange of views, discussion

Unity and Diversity

The Communist Movement in a Changing World: New Potentialities

The WMR Commission on the Exchange of Party Experience held a meeting in Prague to discuss some meaningful problems in the communist movement

today. It was attended by representatives of the fraternal parties on the journal, and a group of researchers from the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU CC. Prorector **Yuri Krassin**, department head **Grigori Vodolazov**, Dr. Sc. (Hist.), **Mikhail Basmanov**, Dr. Sc. (Hist.), and **Alexander Volkov**, Dr. Sc. (Hist.).

The opening speech at the meeting was delivered by **WMR** Managing Editor **Sergei Tsukassov** (CPSU). Among those who took part in the discussion were: **Jose Maria Lanao** (CP Argentina), **Bert Ramelson** (CP Great Britain), **Duong Ngok Ky** (CP Vietnam), **Donald Ramotar** (People's Progressive Party of Guyana), **Roland Bauer** (Socialist Unity Party of Germany), **Zenon Zorzovilis** (CP Greece), **Kamel Magdi** (Egyptian CP), **Kadhim Habib** (Iraqi CP), **William Stewart** (CP Canada), **Alvaro Oviedo** (Colombian CP), **Francisco Gamboa** (People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica), **Antonio Diaz Ruis** (CP Cuba), **Gunnar Wahl** (CP Norway), **Felix Dixon** (People's Party of Panama), **Cesar Jimenez** (Peruvian CP), **Domingos Lopez** (Portuguese CP), **Jaime Barrios** (CP El Salvador), **Ali Ahmed el Tayeb** (CP Sudan), **Ali Ileri** (CP Turkey), **Georg Kwiatowski** (German CP), **Oriel Viciani** (CP Chile), **Rodny Ohman** (Left Party—Communists of Sweden), **Raja Collure** (CP Sri Lanka), and **Elean Thomas** (Workers Party of Jamaica).

Below is a report of the discussion.¹

THE international communist movement, speakers said, is a most influential ideological and political force of our day and continues its forward development. At the same time, the Communists have been faced with new problems and tasks in the past several years, and there is every indication that our movement has entered upon a qualitatively new phase. That, as the congresses of several fraternal parties held in recent months noted, calls for a bold and imaginative approach to the problems generated by the changing situation in the world, and for an in-depth analysis of the new phenomena reflecting the law-governed processes and tendencies of the current stage and its specifics, for the purpose of deciding on the most effective and objectively warranted ways and means of combatting the growing war danger, and carrying on the struggle for the people's peaceful future and for social progress.

That is the approach, speakers emphasised, which one will find in the documents of the 27th Congress of the CPSU and they show the dialectics of peace and social progress, and of the social contradictions of our day, and formulate the principles of the new political thinking in the context of the realities of the nuclear age. The ideas put forward by the congress are a reflection of the Communists' capacity to take account of changes in the situation in due time, and to face the reality; they are innovative and give much food for thought about the present state and prospects of the communist movement, and its role in the struggle for peace and social progress.

What then are the concrete realities of our day urging the need for further development of theory and a renewal of the practice of the communist forces' struggle?

First of all, participants in the discussion said, there is the qualitative change in the content of the struggle for peace in the face of the imperialist nuclear threat, a struggle aimed not just to avert war, but to save human civilisation from destruction, a fact which requires a deeper comprehension of the correlation of defence of peace and the struggle for social progress.

There are, furthermore, the dynamic processes in the development of existing socialism, which has set the task of utmost intensification in building the new society and enhancement of its influence on world developments.

There is the technological revolution signifying a radical break in the development of the productive forces, and entailing deep changes in the population structure, and

so also in the communist parties' social base, especially in the industrialised capitalist countries.

There are the changing conditions in which the Communists of the Third World have to fight, with mounting crisis tendencies caused by the policy of imperialism and internal reaction, on the one hand, and a spread and deepening of the liberation movement, on the other, a fact which increases its global importance.

There are, finally the processes of internationalisation, in which some erstwhile national or regional problems are evolving into mankind's problems, a fact that also sheds a largely new light on the international cooperation of the communist parties, and of all the other progressive and peace-loving forces.

The world as a whole is changing rapidly and becoming ever more diverse. It abounds in sharp contradictions and unprecedented dangers, but, as never before in the past, clearly reveals its oneness, and that the most varied phenomena, objective and subjective factors of human existence, the international and the national, the social and the individual are intimately interdependent.

It was said in the course of the discussion that the process of adapting to the changing situation is no simple one, and that it is fraught with contradictions. But is the novelty of the circumstances fraught only with difficulties, does it not also offer the Communists fresh perspectives? Speakers said that the communist movement has more favourable opportunities for development today than it did yesterday. However, these need to be comprehended and clearly defined. An in-depth and objective examination of present-day realities can alone make it possible to use in policy all the pluses of the existing situation, and to reckon with the minuses and to neutralise them to some extent. The emerging possibilities, said **Roland Bauer**, can undoubtedly be translated into life by the communist parties' joint efforts, but that also calls for new political thinking, a new approach to outstanding problems, and a new attitude of the parties to one another.

"Are we not perhaps in a hurry to declare as new something that is not such in fact?" asked **Bert Ramelson**. The problems being discussed here have been the subject of debate in the communist parties of the Western countries for many years. Are we not perhaps overdramatising some of the phenomena regarded as some kind of sudden and recent revolutionary changes, to which the communist movement has not yet managed to adapt itself? Take the threat of nuclear war. Did it not exist back in the 1950s, when these death-dealing weapons were first developed? If there is anything new about that, it is that it has taken decades to become aware of the danger to mankind's very survival.

The new realities in the world and in the communist movement are there, **Domingos Lopez** objected, although, of course, they should not be set up as an absolute by declaring that something had not existed in the past. The most difficult thing about theory, as the present discussion shows, said **Grigori Vodolazov**, consists in a clear-cut definition of the novelty of the problems. Nothing emerges or disappears all of a sudden. There is always a connection with the past and it is, of course, highly important to indicate it. But it is equally important to bring out, within the framework of this continuity, that which is truly novel, if one is to have a clear view of the substance of the problems and, consequently, of the ways to solve them. The issue of peace now clearly presents itself in a different way from that of the time Marx and Lenin or even in the 1950s and 1960s. And the point here is not just the need for insights into this problem, but above all the objectively determined changes in its content and the nature of its impact on social development.

The discussion was, therefore, concentrated mainly on determining in what the novel concretely consists, and on the implications of this and other above-mentioned problems.

Peace: The Overriding Task

The historical mission of the working class and of the communist parties in the nuclear age, many speakers stressed, objectively acquires a broader dimension: it is not only the revolutionary transformation of human civilisation, but also its preservation, and prevention of a nuclear catastrophe. It was said that this thesis in general terms is not, in fact, a controversial one within the communist movement. Discussions arise whenever it is considered in connection with the formulation of strategy and tactics in the revolutionary struggle, and is concretised in such problems as: how can the Communists effectively advance to the attainment of their ultimate goals while giving priority to the task of safeguarding peace? Is there not, perhaps, here the danger of establishing a sort of social status quo that would, even if partially, compel 'sacrifice' of the interests of the revolution?

Securing peace throughout the world and, consequently, preserving life on the globe, said **Georg Kwiatowski**, is the basic prerequisite for the solution of all the other problems and for the triumph of the ideas of socialism. It is a task that unites people, irrespective of class, ideological, party, political or national boundaries. The contradiction between the peoples and the most aggressive forces of imperialism, at a time when mankind is faced with the 'to be or not to be' question, has become the main political contradiction of our time.

That, however, does not in any way minimise the significance of the contradictions produced by social antagonisms and the existence of two social systems, he said. These have their objective basis and are inevitable. That is why it is altogether wrong, for instance, to speak of a 'civil peace' between workers and 'good capitalists', an idea implying abandonment of the struggle for higher wages and preservation of workplaces at enterprises whose owners take a common-sense attitude to the defence of peace. Yet another point has to be borne in mind. While peace may be of concern to mankind as a whole, it still has some class aspects. The danger of war springs from the substance of imperialism, from the monopolies' urge to maximise profits and expand the sphere of their domination. Another important aspect is that existing socialism is the chief force for peace, and that the working class and its organisations have a considerable role to play in the peace movement in the capitalist countries.

Speakers emphasised that there is now a need for a fundamentally new approach to these problems, requiring a full comprehension of the spontaneous force of mankind's self-preservation and the involvement of working class vanguard in it, without claims of re-orienting it towards other goals. The new approach also requires the ability to influence that force in such a way as to bring out and widen the peace forces' anti-militaristic potential, to help the masses see more clearly where the sources of the war danger lie, and to concentrate their efforts on blocking them.

While social and national oppression continues, it is, of course, impossible to imagine a halt to the peoples' revolutionary struggle for their liberation, for independence, and for a better life. It is another matter that the progressive forces in any country have a growing responsibility for every decision, and that there is ever greater significance in scrupulously taking account of the class situation within individual states and in the world arena. This implies a deep comprehension of the forms of the revolutionaries' international interaction, and a search for effective ways of fending off the imperialist aggressive policy aimed against the peoples that have taken the road of revolutionary transformations.

It is, of course, no simple matter in practice to blend the two aspects of the historical mission of the working class, for it involves a great many concrete problems, but it is a historical necessity to do so. It is connected with the formulation of new political conceptions and an understanding that, despite the gulf dividing socialism and capitalism, the people living within these two systems will either perish or survive together.

The nuclear threat sheds a new light on many, if not all, of the problems connected with the dialectics of peace and social progress, said **Roland Bauer**. We feel that the new situation compels a deeper comprehension and even reappraisal of some of the Communists' theoretical positions, strategy and tactics on war and peace, and substantially amends the concept of priorities.

Thus, the only realistic way to lasting peace during the First World War lay through the socialist revolution. Today, prevention of a nuclear conflagration, preservation of peace on the Earth, and pacific settlement of regional conflicts are the key prerequisites for social progress. Unlike wars in the past, nuclear war would not be a continuation of policy by other means, but an end to all policy and, naturally, an end to all progress. In these conditions, the slogan of turning the imperialist war into a civil war, which was formulated by Lenin and Karl Liebknecht, and which was fully valid for the early years of this century, is absolutely inconceivable. There is also a need, we believe, for a substantial correction of some other traditional views, such as that revolutionary force is the midwife of social progress, that wars are just and unjust, that socialist weapons systems are superior, etc.

These and many other less stringently formulated approaches, the speaker went on, could now and again be regarded as a departure from class principles. Such charges are groundless. The experience of the class struggle shows: a peaceful situation never acts as a brake on social progress and, conversely, every success scored on its way serves to strengthen peace. From the standpoint of our class interests and ultimate goals, the peculiarity of the present situation leaves no other choice but to regard peace and the struggle for stronger peace as the cornerstone chiefly because the nuclear threat posed by imperialism is fraught with mankind's annihilation, and because its survival is a necessary prerequisite for social progress. An analysis of the various conditions for the development of contradictions constituting the basis of dialectical ties—both of the general and of the particular—between peace and social progress gives an important clue to their understanding. They have the same social roots, and essentially one and same enemy—imperialism. We believe, however, that the struggle for peace and for social progress spring from two different types of contradictions, and so develop in different spheres and mobilise different motive forces. Consequently, the resolution of these contradictions requires differing ways, means and methods.

The struggle for peace proceeds mainly in foreign policy, international law, and the norms and rules governing the relations between states and peoples, the speaker went on. After all, the threat of war and the struggle against it are rooted above all in class and other contradictions which are manifested precisely in the sphere of these relations. Social progress and its highest form—socialist revolution—are another matter, for they spring primarily from the society's internal contradictions. Their development is not frameworked by inter-state relations, but by internal, social, political and other conditions in a given country. The attained level of social progress depends primarily on the correlation of the class forces on the national level, and on the intensity of the popular mass struggle in the individual countries.

Retaining the Class Approach

Experience shows, said **Donald Ramotar**, that objective conditions in the less developed countries prevent the masses from comprehending the full importance and complexity of the problems in standing up for peace. Nor is that so only in these countries. Why do voters in some imperialist countries, for instance, vote for conservative parties, which pose a threat to peace? There the progressive forces have apparently failed duly to tie in the economic and social tasks of the working class with the anti-war struggle, for otherwise how can one explain, say, the fact that Reagan was twice elected to the presidency? It means that far from everyone is still agreed

with us that peace is the supreme thing. The same is evidenced by the attitude of many voters in Great Britain, the FRG, and France. The Communists evidently need to be more active in showing the close connection between peace and social progress, between peace and the working people's immediate interests.

Grigori Vodolazov said that there was some onesidedness to the thesis that the struggle for peace is a prerequisite for social progress. It is equally true, after all, that the struggle for social progress is a prerequisite for strengthening peace. Indeed, isn't the struggle against militarism, the military-industrial complex and its agents, the struggle to remove the reactionary faction of the bourgeoisie from political and economic power such a prerequisite, and doesn't it coincide with the stand for peace? These are, rather, two aspects of a single process.

This idea was elaborated by **Yuri Krassin**, who said that the complexity of these problems lies in the fact that there is no automatic connection between the movement along the way to lasting peace, and social-class interests. There is a need for intellectual effort and much political work to tie everything into a single package. The Social Democrats have been instrumental in launching the now widely current formula: 'Without Peace Everything Is Nothing'. While it is true, it fails to express the whole complexity of the present situation. To it should be added this other thesis: Peace is the main thing, but it is not yet everything. It does not invalidate the other values, including the revolutionary goals before the working class and the Communists. But even that is not enough: the strengthening of peace is impossible outside the context of the main content of the present epoch, i.e., outside the development of the main forces of social progress, which include world socialism, the communist and working class movement, the forces of national liberation, and the mass democratic movements.

The contradictions over the struggle for peace, the speaker went on, tend to unfold within the stress field of the basic contradiction of our day, that between the two social systems, i.e., there is here necessarily a social-class aspect. For its part, the revolutionary process does not at all depend only on the contradictions in the national arena. Consider, for instance, the revolutionary substance of the CPSU's programme for accelerating economic and social development, which is that its fulfilment will influence the whole of world development and the resolution of the basic contradictions of our epoch, and that this is bound to have an effect—not mechanically, of course, but through an intricate prism of national conditions—on the internal situation in the various countries.

Peace is an international and simultaneously a strictly national phenomenon, because it depends on what is being done to strengthen it by this or that country, this or that social force or party operating on the national soil, said **Antonio Diaz Ruis**. On the other hand, social progress always has national roots, although it is closely bound up with international processes. Thus, the revolution in Cuba would have been impossible but for the fact that its internal impulses were amplified by favourable external factors. There is now a growing interdependence of the national and international aspects of the struggle for peace and social progress. In the light of this, the CP Cuba strives to have every Cuban prepared to defend the gains of the revolution arms in hand, if imperialism should dare to encroach on them, and at the same time does everything to support the Sandinist Revolution in Nicaragua and the Salvadoran patriots. In this way, the interconnection between the struggle for peace and the struggle for social emancipation and national liberation is manifested in concrete practical form in the Latin American region.

In the present situation, **Alvaro Oviedo** added, a narrow interpretation of the interests and historical mission of the working class is unacceptable. However, one should also consider the other extreme, namely, the danger of the class factor being eroded in the approach to the problems of safeguarding peace. Such a danger exists in

various contingents of the working class movement and circles close to the Communists. One should always bear in mind what Lenin said about it being necessary for the working class and its vanguard to hold high the banner of peace and democratic demands in order to rally the masses, while ensuring proletarian leadership in the social movement.

He urged efforts to keep the social aspects of the struggle for peace constantly in the field of vision and to expose the character of the forces against which it is directed. The important thing is to show the class content of the basic source of war, which is imperialism, and also the reactionary role of the military-industrial complexes, the real warmongers. We declare: the first thing is to fight for peace and to safeguard it, but that does not at all mean that the imperialists are best left alone so that peace is not disrupted. We need peace, but we must not give up social change, democratic and revolutionary transformations, which imply the idea of destroying imperialism.

The Communists, who are opposed to war on principle, cannot afford even today to forget that there are just and unjust wars, said **Kadhim Habib**. If their country is subjected to aggression, their duty is to defend it. Resistance to imperialist aggression, armed struggle for independence and social progress are legitimate and well-justified. Nor does that contradict the general principles of our approach to the problems of nuclear war and universal peace, whose solution calls for scrupulous consideration of the concrete conditions in each country, and of the regional and national specifics of the tasks facing the Communists, and the other peace and anti-imperialist forces.

The present situation, said **Raja Collure**, does indeed require a new approach by the Communists to the question of peace, but not a reappraisal of their conceptions of the nature of imperialism. One should not, of course, lose sight of the possibility that in certain conditions the struggle for social emancipation and national liberation could lead to such a confrontation with imperialism that, in desperate straits, it would risk going to the extreme. Does it follow that one should abandon the revolutionary struggle? No, it does not. There is a need, however, constantly to bear in mind the tremendous responsibility for the destinies of the world, and to act in such a way as to restrain imperialism from any mad gambles.

Hunger, Dependence and the Nuclear Threat

It was pointed out in the course of the discussion that whereas in some regions the threat of a nuclear catastrophe is regarded as the most acute problem, so that the anti-war movement there surpasses in scope all the other forms of protest, elsewhere social calamities, deprivation and racism often have a more immediate impact on the mass consciousness and behaviour than the not-always-palpably-perceived danger of war.

The peoples of most less developed countries, said **Ali Ahmed el Tayeb**, are concerned above all with such burning problems as hunger, which daily takes the lives of many thousands of human beings, the lack of medical care, illiteracy, etc. These problems are being aggravated by imperialism's neocolonialist policy. It is natural that the struggle for economic independence and for stronger national sovereignty has become the main line of activity of revolutionary and all the other progressive forces in the less developed countries. We believe that this struggle serves not only the cause of national liberation and social progress, but also the strengthening of peace. Thus, the overthrow of the dictatorial regime in the Sudan did much to undermine the positions of the militaristic circles of US imperialism and helped to reduce the danger of war in the region.

Indeed, the problem of peace is not perceived as acutely in the less developed countries as it is, say, in Western Europe, said **Kamel Magdi**. However, the most explosive hotbeds of tension are located in the Third World. That is where the first

spark of a nuclear war may well flare up. Preparations for such a war are essentially under way, especially in the Middle East, where Israel has joined the 'star wars' programme, and where US nuclear-armed warships are allowed to use the Suez Canal. But comprehension of the war danger is getting through to the broad masses slowly, for they are most concerned with their social plight and the need to fight for their democratic rights and freedoms.

Mass action under purely anti-war slogans is relatively rare in Argentina, said **Jose Maria Lanao**. The powerful democratic movement, which is under way in that country, as it is in other countries of the region, objectively promotes the strengthening of peace. But it is important to develop action aimed directly against militarism and war, and not to confine oneself to national demands. However, it is extremely hard to do so in a country where millions of people have death staring them in the face from chronic hunger, and not from a nuclear conflagration.

There are three erroneous conceptions on the question of peace in the less developed countries, the speaker went on. Some say that priority should be given to the national liberation movement, even allowing for the risk of a world war. Others believe that national liberation tasks should be completely subordinated to the efforts to preserve peace. Finally, the most widespread attitude may be designated as intermediate: its advocates condemn war, but in practice ignore or underestimate the positive influence of the struggle for peace on the peoples' liberation movement.

In order to resist these tendencies and to stimulate the anti-war protest in these regions, it is important for the Communists to work, in the first place, for an understanding by broad public circles of the connection which exists between their vital problems and international developments.

This conclusion was supported by **Orel Viciani**, who stressed the need to use various instruments of propaganda and organisational influence to mobilise the masses for the struggle for peace. The masses learn mainly from their own experience and will never join in the struggle merely under general slogans. That is why there is a need to analyse the concrete tasks the struggle sets before them. In Latin America, the struggle for peace means, first, solidarity with the peoples of El Salvador and Nicaragua, and second, solution of the external debt problem. If the anti-war movement in the West came to understand the importance of tying in the debt problem with spending on the arms race, which is being whipped up by imperialism, he said, it would be a strong stimulus for the peace forces in the Third World. The struggle of the peoples in their countries for the removal of the US military bases in Panama, Turkey and Egypt, said **Felix Dixon, Ali Ileri and Kamel Magdi**, is a concrete manifestation of the concurring goals of the anti-war and the national liberation movements.

Mikhail Basmanov expressed this in concrete terms by drawing the attention of the participants in the discussion to the fact that the less developed countries account for three-quarters of the world's arms imports. An end to the arms race would unburden them of these expenditures. Advance towards disarmament would release resources for economic assistance to the young states. The money it is planned to spend on the SDI project by the United States alone could help to clear the trillion-dollar debt of the less developed world. And the main thing: a stable international order based on the principles of peaceful coexistence would shift the accent in human effort from the problem of the nuclear threat to the problems of development, creating a climate favourable for international cooperation in their solution, and for dismantling the system of neocolonial dependence.

Feedback Effect

The mounting anti-war protest, despite the patchwork of forces involved, speakers said, objectively expands the communist parties' potentialities. The broadest masses

of people, encompassing the members of the most diverse strata, join in active politics through the struggle for peace. The human urge for survival unites those whose class tendencies often diverge and are sometimes even antithetical. This calls for the formulation of an anti-war policy taking account not only of the discrepant, but also of the conflicting interests.

The German CP, said **Georg Kwiatowski**, does not regard the diversity of the peace movement as a weakness, but as a strength, because it includes the most varied public circles. Attempts to reduce them to a common denominator and to impose the same organisational forms on them would weaken the struggle. But this question arises: how are the joint peace-making efforts to be concerted? Each party decides on this for itself, in the light of its country's concrete conditions. There is no room here for stereotypes. While the FRG Communists take their own stand in the peace movement, they make a serious effort to reckon with the views of its other participants, and consider themselves to be partners, lay no claims to leadership, and expect to be treated by others in the same way.

The new approach to these problems, speakers said, has to be hammered out in the face of difficulties, among them anti-communism and chauvinism, the uneven and contradictory development of the mass consciousness, the lag of anti-war action behind the rapid material preparations for war, and the still insufficient activity of the working class in some cases in the struggle for peace. Nor does the moulding of a political thinking adequate to the present-day realities and comprehension of the need to combine the two lines of struggle—for peace and for revolutionary class goals—run a smooth course within the revolutionary movement itself.

Some Communists, said **Gunnar Wahl**, are apprehensive about the potentialities for playing an active role in the peace movement because of the diversity of views and standpoints within it. We feel that the real problem is a different one: it is the need to rise to the level of world problems and comprehend the new situation, which makes the movement such a tremendous force. There is, for example, the experience of Norway, where the peace fighters have most effectively altered the political atmosphere, something that no other public movement could have done. The Conservative Party in the country is now gradually finding itself in political isolation after many years of being at the helm. That has resulted from the fact that security and foreign policy issues have ceased to be the preserve of the traditional parties, including the conservatives.

There is yet another lesson to be learnt from the Norwegian experience. For a long time, the country's trade union movement was under complete influence from the social-reformists, and the Communist Party tried to change the situation without much success. Within the framework of the peace movement, the Communists' efforts in this direction proved to be more effective. Why? Because it turned out that within its framework the traditional forms of activity and relationships between the parties tend to change; those who are truly fighting for peace are much more receptive to political questions and are more willing to enter into discussion. At any rate, after the trade unions joined actively in the mass anti-war movement, they themselves evolved and became more militant.

It is usually assumed, the speaker said, that the working class movement has to influence the peace movement, and that is, of course, right. But one should also reckon with the possibilities of influence the other way. The working class can learn a lot from the peace movement. There should be no apprehension that the Communists' participation in it will be insufficiently authoritative or that it will obscure their class stand. The CP Norway still has few leading posts in the trade unions and other mass bodies, but it seeks to right the situation. Our first and truly major success is work in the peace movement, which has proved to be an excellent political school for the Norwegian Communists. They have amplified their

understanding of the pressing tasks and have acquired new experience of discussion with people of other ideological bearings. All of this has added strength to the Communist Party and has helped it to invigorate many other spheres of its activity.

William Stewart spoke of similar experience. The peace movement in Canada helps to activate the working people's struggle as a whole. Trade unions, Social Democrats and Communists work together in broad anti-war actions. More and more members of various strata and categories of the working people are acting together with the Communists for the working people's social rights, and against the reactionary policy of the monopoly circles.

How Is the Vanguard to Act?

Changes in the society's social structure, caused primarily by the technological revolution, confronts the Communists with some tough questions: to whom are they to look in their current work and over the long run? How are they to adapt to the new changes in all aspects of the communist parties' activity and inner life? How are they to update their policy and modernise their face, while remaining the 'basic type'² of revolutionary parties of the working class?

The analysis made by the participants in the discussion shows that today, as in the past, the traditional strata of the industrial workers—miners, metallurgists; builders, etc.—continue to be the mainstay of the communist movement, especially in the industrialised capitalist countries. They are concentrated at large enterprises, have a high degree of unionisation, much experience in class battles, and militancy. Despite the shrinking of their numbers, their weakening bargaining position due to the crisis, and the threat of redundancy, these strata are expected to remain a major component of the working class for a long time to come.

It is quite right, speakers said, that the communist parties regard as an integral part of their social base the 'unwanted', those who have been expelled from production by capitalist modernisation. The effects of the crisis are most painfully felt by the unemployed, by those engaged in arduous labour, the low-paid, and the old-age pensioners who barely make ends meet. It is up to the Communists to develop and direct their social discontent potential along the right lines. While standing up for the dispossessed and involving them in political struggle, the communist parties regard the social forces which are the vehicles of progress, and which have a future before them as their long-term support.

These forces, primarily working class groups which are most solidly integrated with the high-technology system are the nerve-centre of present-day capitalism, said **Alexander Volkov**. The Communists' programmatic demands oriented towards these 'new' workers show that ever greater importance is attached to ensuring conditions for creative labour, the right to information about enterprise activity, participation in decision-making and democratic control, and environmental protection. All of this should help to introduce the socialist consciousness into the new strata of workers and promote their ideological and organisational integration into the militant ranks of the working class.

Some speakers noted in this context that while recognising the objective necessity and reality of technical progress, it is important to use every opportunity to turn developments along lines more advantageous to the working people even under the existing system. This question has been asked: is there now perhaps some priority for the relatively modest but pressing task which concerns not only the Communists, but also the other left-wing forces, namely, that of standing up for an alternative development of capitalism to counteract the 'conservative counter-revolution' and help to increase the influence of the working class and of the democratic public on every aspect of social life? Should not the solution of this problem perhaps come ahead of the formulation of slogans for deeper democratic transformations, which the

documents of some parties designate an anti-monopoly democracy? There is also this other question: how is one to act? Is it by further diversifying the specific demands and deepening the individual approach to the various categories of wage-workers, or by emphasising their fundamental entity, which springs from the root contradiction between labour and capital?

Bert Ramelson said that it is futile to lay emphasis on a categorisation of the working class; the important thing is to insist on unity, and to prove to each working person in the capitalist world that tomorrow they may well find themselves jobless, regardless of their skill standards and the industry in which they are employed, to bargain for collective agreements with an eye to the interests both of 'new' and 'traditional' workers, etc. At the same time, he stressed that a lasting solution of economic and social problems can be attained only under socialism.

The idea of intermediate steps towards an anti-monopoly coalition was formulated by the Communist Party of Canada at the May Plenary Meeting of its Central Committee, said **William Stewart**. The party believes that one should not confine oneself to vigorous action only during electoral campaigns, and then wait for the next such opportunity, allowing the government to conduct an anti-people policy. The party intends to give greater scope to the extra-parliamentary mass struggle, above all under the slogans of averting the danger of war and abandoning the line of bending the country to US interests.

Ali Ilieri remarked that the primary goal of the Turkish Communists, who have to work in a country under a repressive regime, is complete realisation of bourgeois democracy today, within the framework of capitalist social relations.

Domingos Lopez spoke of the Portuguese Communists' tasks at the present stage and singled out among these the defence of the gains of the April 1974 Revolution, and the interests of the working class, which is being subjected to ever fiercer exploitation. The working people of Portugal, as those of all the other countries of Western Europe, are faced with the vital problem of safeguarding and strengthening democracy. For all that, he stressed, one should not for a moment lose sight of, or omit the main thing in propaganda: the socialist perspective.

The representatives of several Latin American and Caribbean parties expressed the view that the struggle for some limited democratic transformations under capitalism can hardly be set there as a strategic goal. The advance to socialism is being placed on the order of the day as the main goal by the exacerbating contradictions, the close interconnection between the local oligarchy and imperialism, the weakness and subordinate status of the Latin American bourgeoisie, and the level of the revolutionary consciousness of the popular masses, **Antonio Diaz Ruis** emphasised.

This conclusion was supported by **Elean Thomas**: Jamaica's economic and social problems cannot be solved without socialising the basic means of production and deep changes in the relations of production; the road of reforms within the framework of neocolonialism is getting narrower. Expecting social progress under capitalism is a typically West European view of the problem, said **Jaime Barrios**. In El Salvador, the stratum which used to be called the national bourgeoisie no longer has anything truly national about it today, and it caters for US imperialism. That is why there is a need for a democratic revolution as the first lap on the way to socialism.

Speakers noted the need to unite the ranks of the working class and to strive to form round it the broadest front of popular forces concerned with change. The Communists' prestige in the midst of the people, said **Francisco Gamboa**, is based on the sincerity, firmness and clarity of their course, and their capacity to act together with those whose views do not entirely coincide with ours. He stressed that it was well to modernise the party itself and its work, as this would help to draw new strata of the working class into the party ranks. The Communists of Costa Rica believe that it is

necessary to give up obsolete and amateurish forms of activity in favour of scientifically-based forms meeting the requirements of the epoch. This will enable them to pursue a more flexible policy and to take part in broad alliances on the basis of respect for diverse views, while maintaining the party's ideological purity and integrity, and its inner unity on Lenin's organisational principles.

The problem facing the Peruvian CP and the Left Forces Unity, said **Cesar Jimenez**, is not a shrinking of the social base, but the need for new methods of work to involve those who look for true leadership in the struggle for the interests of the people and the working masses. Bourgeois reformists, like those in APRA, the ruling party in our country, which combines anti-imperialism with certain reactionary attitudes, have tried to confuse people with their demagoguery. On the other hand, extremists of various stripes keep calling for and resorting to acts of terrorism, which are harmful. The Peruvian CP strives to show that it is the vanguard not only in word, but also in deed. This makes it important to develop criticism, self-criticism, and inner-party democracy, and relentlessly to combat factionalism, favouritism and sectarianism. Overt and honest action will bring the Communists even closer to those who sympathise with their ideas, to those who are, for various reasons, outside the party, but who are prepared to act for the people's cause.

The Workers Party of Jamaica, said **Elean Thomas**, believes that it is its duty to oppose every manifestation of sectarianism and dogmatism, right-wing opportunism and that which is called "abstract Marxism". The party strives to take account of the interests of the new social forces and to address itself not only to those who always support and share the Communists' views, but also to a broader mass by arranging a constructive dialogue without bias or preconceived formulas. The WPJ seeks ways of enlarging its ranks, notably by setting up party-support groups from among its sympathisers for the purpose of steadily recruiting new members.

Shunning Oversimplified Schemes

Speakers were agreed that the modern world is simply inconceivable without the Communists, and they will undoubtedly remain in the front ranks of the struggle for goals meeting the vital wants of the working masses, concentrating fire on the arch-enemy: the reactionary imperialist forces, those who are prepared to start a nuclear war. Almost all the contingents of the communist movement have become stronger and are developing, said **Duong Ngok Ky**. It has reached a level of maturity which enables it resolutely to consolidate its positions and firmly adhere to Marxist-Leninist principles, rallying the anti-imperialist and progressive forces and standing up for peace and socialism.

It was noted, at the same time, that the movement is passing through a hard period of transition to a qualitatively new stage of its development. The past few years have brought out the unusual complexity and unevenness of the process of transition to the new social formation. Not very long ago the Communists believed that the twentieth century would be one of world-wide triumph for socialism. But it is now clear that, however great the revolutionaries' natural desire to bring on the hour of victory, this goal has receded into a more distant future. The truth, said **Bert Ramelson**, is that we tended to underestimate capitalism's capacity to adapt to the chronic crisis, and its viability, while overrating our expectations of the speed with which socialism would spread its influence.

In this context, **Yuri Krassin** recalled Lenin's idea that the working class movement does not develop in an evolutionary way, but in leaps and bounds. These have sometimes been unperceived, with the proletariat accumulating its forces in something like behind the scenes, unnoticeably, a process which caused some intellectuals to be disappointed about the solid and viable nature of the mass movement. Then came the turning point, and new revolutionary forces, whose

existence no one had even suspected earlier on, surged up, as if from the earth, to go on and solve the new problems.³ It looks as though the working class and communist movement is now going through just such a phase of accumulating forces.

Considering the realities of the communist movement, **Roland Bauer** gave some data from which it follows that, while the number of Communists on the globe totals more than 80 million, only an insignificant part of them belongs to parties operating in the industrialised capitalist and less developed countries. Beyond the boundaries of the socialist world, the weight and influence of the communist parties (apart from a few of the most massive ones) on the political life of their countries can hardly be said to have grown in every case. Another problem, he said, was the inadequate and often lacking internationalist unity of Communists.

The participants in the discussion said that the existence of two or more communist parties in some countries is a painful fact. It was suggested that one of the reasons may lie in the differentiation of the working class, which has brought about important changes in the social base of the parties, especially in the zone of industrialised capitalism.

Considering this hypothesis, most speakers stressed that it can hardly help to explain the occasional fragmentation of the communist movement on the national level. Life shows that many parties working under the scientific and technical revolution and the social processes it generates have preserved solid unity in their ranks.

The existence of two or more communist parties, said **Domingos Lopez**, will now be found in some countries of Western Europe and elsewhere. The objective social situation can cause this phenomenon, but it is not based on the differentiation within the working class. The conditions in each individual country need to be closely examined, and they differ even within the framework of one continent: in Spain, Sweden and Finland the Communists face their own specific problems. The Portuguese CP's view is that everything needs to be done to attain the utmost possible unity of the Communists.

The creation of a truly democratic climate within the party itself is of much importance in this context, he went on, but it does not signify a mere subordination of the minority to the majority; it implies frank comradely discussion from top to bottom, and consideration of all the opinions and arguments. There is, naturally, no need to devote excessive time to discussions, but it is necessary to take account of the ideas expressed by the Communists. That is the PCP's view of democratic centralism.

Describing the experience of the Peruvian CP, which has gone through a number of grave crises and factional struggles leading to splits, **Cesar Jimenez** accentuated the effect of the subjective factor. It is most manifest when people without solid Marxist-Leninist grounding or renegades infiltrate high posts, which produces internal conflicts and may even lead the whole party astray, to the point of a loss of its 'basic type'. That is due to breaches of Lenin's norms of party life and various types of distortions. We believe that it is highly important for the party to take a well-considered and responsible approach to promoting committed and ideologically well-seasoned cadres.

There was a situation in El Salvador in which there were simultaneously five revolutionary political organisations, including the Communist Party. Painstaking work by the Communists, who established mutual understanding with other comrades-in-arms, helped to set up the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front in 1980; all its members are working for a common goal and acting under common slogans. The vanguard, said **Jaime Barrios**, is not those which lay claim to such a role, but those who actually lead the mass movement.

The Communist Party of the Sudan faced a split in 1970, after a new situation was created in the country when a group of 'free officers' seized power. At the time,

liquidationist tendencies appeared in the leadership, with an abandonment of the class approach and an urge to dissolve the party in a common political organisation with the petty bourgeoisie. The liquidationists were defeated at an extraordinary party congress, left its ranks and set up what was, in effect, a parallel party, although it was never officially announced. Our party, said **Ali Ahmed el Tayeb**, creatively applied Marxism-Leninism in the concrete conditions, consistently and selflessly stood up for the ideals of the communist movement, succeeded in overcoming the crisis, and became an important factor in the development of the people's struggle, which led to the overthrow of Nimeiri's bloated dictatorship.

Kadhim Habib declared that the Iraqi Communists reject any arguments that could appear to justify the existence or emergence of two parties in one country. The working class, the peasantry and their allies have been and continue to be the communist party's social base. Changes in the structure of the working population under the impact of the scientific and technical revolution call for more intense ideological struggle against petty-bourgeois views, efforts to raise the political consciousness of the working class, and a firm stand for proletarian internationalism. The existence of two communist parties in a country signifies that one of them is moving along the wrong road. This phenomenon cannot be regarded as being objectively justified and it cannot be accepted: it tends to weaken the communist and the whole working class movement both on the national and on the international level.

The reasons for the lack of unity in the communist ranks in some countries, said **Bert Ramelson**, appear to lie in their dashed hopes for the collapse of capitalism under the crisis, and for an early solution by socialism of all the problems in developing the new society. Undoubtedly the effect of these two opposing but complementary blows to the expectations of many Communists has been to create doubt and confusion about the relevance of long-held theoretical concepts. It led some to question the validity of aspects of Marxism-Leninism and/or look towards other sources of inspiration—creating tensions within parties and even splits. These experiences rather than the 'social change in the population' are the most relevant objective factors leading to divisions. However, the need is not only to understand the processes which cause division, but to seek ways for overcoming disunity, to recreate and maintain unity through frank but comradely discussion of the differences, within the framework of democratic centralism—which, to be of constructive assistance, must be exercised with a considerable degree of tolerance.

One event has taken place in Greece, said **Zenon Zorzovilis**, as a logical outcome of the activity of the splitters in the country's communist and working class movement: the so-called internal party, which had ranged itself against the Communist Party of Greece in 1968, held its Fourth Congress in Athens, which considered the ways of its development. Within a year there is to be another congress to decide on the establishment of a 'new organisation', with new Rules, and on its name. That is the outcome of a long process of the 'internals' departure from the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism in theory and organisational practice, their anti-Sovietism, and refusal to carry on a political fight for Greece's withdrawal from NATO and the EEC. He said the evolution had been caused by the absolutisation of the changes under way in the structure and material condition of the working class, loss of the class perspective and the mechanical transfer to the national soil of the experience of some other parties operating in different conditions. The decision on 'transforming' the CPG (Internal) and the subsequent setting up of a 'new organisation' will make it easier, the Greek Communists believe, for the left-wing and progressive forces to cooperate in fighting for genuine change in the country.

Grigori Vodolazov added in the context of the question that to identify the objective and subjective causes behind the two-party phenomenon does not at all

signify an attempt to justify it. It is merely an actual phenomenon which needs to be sorted out. Evidently, it is not the differentiation within the working class that itself leads to splits, but the incapacity of Communists in some cases to unite its various contingents into a single whole; it is not so much pressure from bourgeois ideology as inability or refusal to resist it.

He said that it was much too categorical a conclusion to declare that with the existence of two parties, one of them necessarily travels the wrong way. He supported **Rodny Ohman's** conclusion, who stressed the complexity of the process in which the united party can be created and consolidated in a country, adding that now and again it is not just one, but both parallel parties that are acting incorrectly. He suggested the possibility of a different situation, when there are elements of the truth in the strategy and tactics of both parties. The participants in the discussion agreed that this painful phenomenon needs to be analysed in all its interconnections, without oversimplifying, and refraining from any stark black-and-white division.

International Solidarity: Some Aspects

Communists in different countries, it was said in the discussion, now have more common tasks than they did in the past: solving global problems, above all preventing war and preserving peace on the Earth; converting STR achievements for the benefit of mankind as a whole; overcoming the trend towards a growing economic and social gap between the North and the South, between the 'poor' and the 'rich' countries; protecting the environment, etc. The need for better coordination of the struggles of the working class and the other working people against the sway of the transnational corporations and the urge of monopoly capital to bend the life of entire peoples to its interests is even more keenly felt. With a great many diverse but interconnected aspects of world development interwoven with each other, solving international solidarity problems is closely bound up with the need to deepen cooperation among the differently-oriented sections of the working class movement, the democratic and anti-imperialist forces, and all those who are worried about the threat of a nuclear catastrophe.

What are the principles on which such cooperation can be based? **Kadhim Habib** said that the primary task is the utmost assertion of proletarian internationalism within the communist movement itself and the development on the basis of its solidarity with the other revolutionary forces. **Yuri Krassin** declared that one also has to see the positive aspects of the ideas coming from the advocates of the 'new internationalism', meaning the need to work for the broadest possible compass of solidarity, going beyond class and national borders, when mankind's very survival is at stake.

The objective need to enlarge the solidarity front, many speakers stressed, does not deny, but on the contrary, demands the strengthening of cooperation between the front-ranking forces of the working class, the Communists in the first place. After all, they are the chief generator of the world-wide struggle to save our civilisation. The need for fraternal party solidarity and the need to make it more effective are ever more obvious, especially in the light of the policy of neoglobalism conducted by the imperialist forces.

There was a lively exchange of views on the question of coordinating the activities of the Communists, the working class and all the other working people in the fight against the transnationals. **Raja Collure** said that the TNCs are the common enemy of the peoples of the capitalist countries, both industrialised and less developed, and the TNCs predatory policy needs to be resisted in a common effort. At the same time, **Bert Ramelson** said, one should not assume that such resistance can be put up only on an international scale, for this tends to demobilise the working class movement in its fight at home for controlling the monopolies, curbing their power, and even

nationalising them.

Like many other aspects of communist activity, resistance to capital on the national and international levels, said **Georg Kwiatowski**, requires a considerable improvement in mutual information. The Ford and Opel transnationals, for instance, have subsidiaries in many European countries, and their managements coordinate their intervention in the workers' social struggles and concert their decisions on the relocation of production. Meanwhile, communist party groups at these enterprises operate mainly on their own. The German CP believes that it was a great advance for the Communists of these concerns to meet, and is prepared to extend such practices.

When elaborating the lines of their joint efforts, the Communists of the industrialised capitalist countries should not fall into the error of Eurocentrism, **Domingos Lopez** emphasised. The effects of the new technological processes, the problems arising from big capital's capacity to adapt the crisis, environmental protection, etc., are, of course, all highly important, but it is perfectly clear that there is now a pressing need to display greater solidarity with the revolutionary forces of the less developed continents, and above all to coordinate resistance to the most reactionary, aggressive circles of the United States and NATO.

The internationalisation of capitalist production throws an ever stronger light on the need to tie in more closely the revolutionary process in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America with the working class and mass democratic movements in the industrialised citadels of capitalism, and with the growing role of the socialist world in supporting the people's liberation struggle and checking the most aggressive forces of imperialism. It is important here, said **Kadhim Habib** and **Donald Ramotar**, that international solidarity should take account not only of the global balance of forces between the two world social systems, but also of the concrete factors of the class struggle in every country.

In discussing problems in the development of the Communists' internationalism, speakers emphasised the primary significance of the policies and practices of existing socialism. It is well known that its successes have always had a positive effect on the communist movement, while its failures, difficulties and mistakes have created certain complications. The growing dynamism of the new society and course it has taken for qualitative shifts are having a positive influence on the attitude to socialism on the part of various strata of the population in the capitalist world, including the working class.

It must also be taken into account, **Roland Bauer** said, that the example of socialism has not revolutionised the consciousness of the working people in the capitalist countries to the extent to which it was assumed a quarter-century ago it would. He drew attention to the new formulations in the documents of the 27th Congress of the CPSU concerning the diversity of the roads to socialism, the significance of collective experience, and the socialist system's greater attractive power on the international scale. All of that, together with a realistic assessment of the level of development attained in the Soviet Union, given by the Congress, helps to eliminate the still existing preconceptions, misunderstandings and onesidedness in the appraisal of socialism, he said.

Our numerous associates, as we ourselves, are convinced, said **Georg Kwiatowski**, that the line of accelerating the Soviet society's economic and social development will be successful and will eventually improve the conditions for the struggle of the Communist Party in the FRG and of all the other progressive and peace forces. He flatly rejected the 'recommendations' which Communists are now and again given by Social Democrats and Greens about keeping a distance from the socialist countries, and about displaying a 'critical solidarity' with respect to them. The GCP rejects such an approach, he said, because it cannot give the working class any socialist perspective, and would be tantamount to us distancing ourselves from our own

future.

The influence of socialism is not an automatic reflection in men's minds in the West of the various actual processes; to make it develop in the right direction, the FRG Communists actively work to spread information about the successes of socialism, and expose the anti-Soviet campaigns by the bourgeois mass media. Among the most effective in the FRG were 'Existing Socialism Weeks', which the Communist Party held in 1983 and 1985, with dozens of invited speakers from the GDR and the USSR, who took part in numerous discussions across the country and met people from various strata of the society, including those whom it is usually hard to involve in measures arranged by the Communists. What turned out to be valuable, among other things, was that the participants in these meetings were able to address their questions directly to specialists from the socialist world, and to receive concrete answers.

Zenon Zorzovilis described how the CP Greece countered the wild bourgeois propaganda campaign over the Chernobyl accident. In their contacts with people, and in their mass media, the *Rizospastis* newspaper in the first place, the Communists at once joined in the struggle and succeeded in changing the ideological situation at the very height of the anti-Soviet hysteria: marches and rallies against nuclear tests, the US policy of state terrorism, for disarmament, and in support of the USSR's peace initiatives were held in Athens and other major cities in the middle of May.

The ruling bourgeoisie and imperialism have the most modern technical facilities for manipulating the mass consciousness in the capitalist countries, but, he said, truth, the most powerful weapon, is on our side. Carrying it to the broad masses is the Communist's key task and a pledge of success in attaining their goals.

In discussing the problems of international solidarity, **Raja Collure**, **Gunnar Wahl** and several other speakers expressed the wish that the Communists of various countries should invigorate their multilateral meetings to discuss and give thought together to the new cardinal problems, without necessarily adopting any collective documents. **Duong Ngok Ky** stressed the significance of international exchanges of experience, whose skilful application in the specific situation in each country enabled the fraternal parties to act more effectively at home and in the international arena. The conception of unity and diversity, formulated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, was said to be a meaningful one in this context.

* * *

The need for an imaginative quest of answers to these questions posed by life itself before the communist parties was an idea that keynoted the entire discussion. This means developing the Marxist-Leninist theory in accordance with the new situation of our day, with the new requirements and potentialities of the communist movement, and its flexible application in practice in the concrete conditions and the growing diversity of the modern world. There was emphasis on the pressing need to oppose any attempts to distort the fundamental principles of the communist world outlook. It was the general consensus that this struggle implies above all the solution of a number of major theoretical and practical problems now facing the fraternal parties, because our adversaries speculate on the fact that they have not been solved. The need was suggested to develop a constructive dialogue with representatives of non-Marxist trends in the working class, anti-war and other democratic movements, with a view not only to expanding cooperation, but also to the positive role which personal acquaintance with their experience could have for correcting communist strategy and tactics.

In the course of the discussion, attention was drawn to the growing significance of the subjective factor in the development of the communist movement: the Communists' political activity and their capacity to comprehend the ongoing changes

in due time, to discern and make utmost use of the new potentialities, and their will to attain the projected goals. It was said that thorough consideration of this factor is of exceptional importance for an objective assessment of its activity by each communist and workers' party, and for a correct understanding of the specifics of the strategy and tactics in the struggle for peace and socialism.

All the fraternal parties, it was stressed in the discussion, are self-standing, independent and equal. But while being national forces, they are also international forces. It was said that the different conditions in which they have to act, and disagreements on any issues are no obstacle to making cooperation between the Communists of the various countries more active. The wish was expressed for ampler reflection by *WMR* of the various standpoints, giving more space on its pages for discussions of the pressing problems of our day, and for a presentation of the new phenomena and tendencies in the development of the communist movement and in the world-wide social processes.

¹ Some of the problems, e.g. the fraternal parties' assessment of the initiatives put forward at the 27th Congress of the CPSU, and the nature of the changes within the structure of the working class, among others, have not been included in the report or have merely been mentioned, because they were recently dealt with on the pages of *WMR*.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 401.

³ See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 211.

The Correlation of Theory and Experience in the Contemporary Ideological Struggle

The international research group set up by the *WMR* Commission on General Problems of Theory has discussed the interconnection of Marxist theory and socio-historical experience in the context of the contemporary ideological struggle. Contributions to the discussion were made by Professor **Mitriu Yankov** (Bulgaria); **Francisco Gamboa**, CC Political Commission and Secretariat member, People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica; **Semou Pathe Gueye**, CC Political Bureau member, Senegal Party of Independence and Labour; and Professor **Igor Naletov**, Ph.D., *WMR* staff member.

Following is a summary of the exchange of views.

THE entire record of the revolutionary struggle waged by the working class, the path traversed by the communist movement, and the development of the world socialist system bear out the scientific essence of Marxism as a theory of social progress. The drafting by fraternal communist parties of policy documents charting the overall course of development of socialist society, as well as their critical analysis of certain theoretical propositions that practice has shown to be untenable, have confirmed the viability of Marxism-Leninism, and given a fuller picture of its prospects and potential. These documents, primarily the new edition of the CPSU Programme, make a creative contribution to the development of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and deal with topical issues related to the theory of scientific socialism and communism, to the philosophy of dialectical materialism and to political economy. Bourgeois theorists and various pseudo-Marxists take a different view, claiming that the tackling of new theoretical tasks means that Marxism is 'in crisis', has become 'outdated' and so on.

It is a salient feature of the contemporary ideological situation that bourgeois and

petty-bourgeois theorists who would like to refute Marxism resort increasingly to 'methodological' arguments in addition to theoretical and factualist ones. They join issue with Marxists not only over this or that explanation or generalisation of socio-historical experience but also over the very principles of substantiating the knowledge gained by the social sciences, and over ways of carrying it forward. In the final analysis, 'methodological criticism' of Marxism comes down to questioning its scientific character.

In recent years many bourgeois scholars have hesitated to deny completely the scientific character of Marxist-Leninist theory. However, they recognise as scientific only a part of the doctrine's empirical content—usually, the historical experience it reflects. Furthermore, they ascribe to Marxism mostly positivist canons to which the bourgeois theorists adhere themselves and which are completely alien to it.

The Marxist conception of the scientific implies primarily *concrete* knowledge, since it is this quality that makes knowledge fundamentally verifiable. Concreteness is a necessary and sufficient condition of the scientific. Marxism makes this demand both on knowledge acquired by a specific science and on its own content. With its universal categories and principles, it is a concrete science which subordinates abstractions used by it to the task of gaining knowledge that is as accurate as possible, accords with reality and serves practical aims.

While it reflects the general laws governing reality, Marxism also expresses the more profound interests and aspirations of society's more progressive classes and strata. In the integrity of these aspects, it has always drawn on the live, creative historical activity of the masses and developed on the basis of their revolutionary experience. In Lenin's words, Marxism 'is a *summing up of experience*, illuminated by a profound philosophical conception of the world and a rich knowledge of history'.¹ Its founders teach the Communists to trust socio-historical experience, to base all their views on fact, on the results of concrete studies, and to consciously test any theoretical precepts against practice.

However, the principle of concreteness in Marxist methodology has nothing to do with the empiricism proper to positivist philosophy, which insists on a mathematically simple, that is, virtually absolute, adequacy of theory to experience. The teachings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin are a general *theory* of the development of nature and society and not merely a set of empirical generalisations. This theory is characterised by theoretical and not purely empirical concreteness and by a dialectical materialist substantiation of laws, nor does it amount to a mere sum total of isolated facts.

Marxism-Leninism has always been built on the solid foundations of strictly verified data provided by historical and current experience. Lenin offered a most apt description of this aspect of Marxist methodology. 'Facts,' he wrote, 'if we take them in their *entirety*, in their *interconnection*, are not only stubborn things, but undoubtedly proof-bearing things . . . We must seek to build a reliable foundation of precise and indisputable facts . . . And if it is to be a real foundation, we must take not individual facts, but the *sum total* of facts, without a *single* exception, relating to the question under discussion . . .'² Nothing could be more foreign to Marxism than dividing facts into 'bad' and 'good' ones and 'selecting' them accordingly to prove one's theory correct. Marxism sums up the aggregate socio-historical experience and singles out primarily the objective content which is independent of the subject.

But even the most complete summing up of experience is not an end in itself; it merely provides one of the main prerequisites for the scientific character of knowledge without entirely guaranteeing it. The Marxist-Leninist methodology of analysing phenomena proceeds from the assumption that theirs is a contradictory sphere and that hence it is impossible to explain correctly one fact or one part of empirical experience considered separately, without recourse to theory.

Theoretical concreteness as seen by Marxist-Leninist methodology implies the

absolute necessity of going over from an analysis of facts characterising individual phenomena to the discovery of the *essence*, that is, the chief determinant of all the fundamental aspects of the process under investigation. To see clear in the maze of contradictory facts which constitute, among other things, the very fabric of public life, one must ascertain its chief, decisive law-governed trend.

Present-day bourgeois scholars adhering to positivist traditions interpret the scientific in a different sense. In their opinion, a theory is scientific only if confined by all available facts, and loses this quality as soon as facts are discovered that do not fit into existing generalisations. Thereby they represent every scientific theory as merely an inductive, empirical generalisation whose fate depends almost entirely on experience. Since, furthermore, they regard facts as merely sensual data, as the subjective experience of the individual, positivists take a subjectivist view of scientific cognition at every phase of its evolution.

In bourgeois socio-philosophical literature, the scientific rests, in effect, on agnosticism, ignoring the really universal law-governed processes and relying solely on empirical generalisations as the basis of knowledge. However, these are invariably limited in one way or another to the very narrow temporal or spatial framework of specific (current or historical) experience and, beyond it, inevitably come up against facts refuting them. A theory reducible to empirical generalisations is always defenceless under the sword of Damocles in the shape of contradictory and multiform realities.

The subjectivism and agnosticism of positivist methodology have been coming out more and more with the evolution of the bourgeois philosophy of science. The fallaciousness of empiricism as a philosophical programme was fully revealed as natural science developed in the twentieth century, especially in the course of the scientific and technological revolution. However, empiricism still retains its positions in the methodology of social cognition. Its influence also make inroads into the ideology of the contemporary communist and working class movement.³

Bourgeois ideologists have lately been criticising Marxist-Leninist theory, trying to shake its scientific foundations precisely from the standpoint of the empiricist concept of socio-historical experience too. Their 'methodological criticism' treats *Capital* and other writings of Marx as purely empirical works containing important factual evidence which is alleged, however, to relate solely to the period of the formation of capitalism, of its competitive form. It limits the scientific to a short period of time and, moreover, to one region, the West European countries with their traditions and economic peculiarities.

Empiricism is often attributed to Marx's very method, especially after the appearance of his manuscripts of 1858-1859, on the ground that the Marxian analysis of the capitalist production mode at that stage was 'strictly inductive' and not what Marx himself showed it afterwards to be, namely, an ascent from the abstract to the concrete. The scientific character of his views, interpreted according to empiricist criteria, is often described as the antithesis of Engels' allegedly metaphysical (extra-empirical) approach to socio-philosophical problems.

Lenin's ideological legacy, too, is an object of many a speculation. Revealingly, those who recognise the scientific significance of his work (and who are rather few among bourgeois and pseudo-socialist authors) only do so with reference to his 'empirical' investigation of Russian reality as well as to his 'narrowly practical' recommendations on how to accomplish a socialist revolution in Russia. David Lane, a British sociologist reckoning himself among 'Western Marxists', recognises in his controversy with 'radical' bourgeois critics of Leninism its scientifically empirical content and even points out Lenin's loyalty to the fundamental postulates of Marxist theory. Nevertheless, he alleges that Leninism is merely an application of Marxism to Russian conditions, one strongly tinged with Narodnik tradition and therefore

lacking a universal theoretical content.⁴

In so-called Marxological and Leninological literature, the temporal or regional restriction of the sphere of applicability of Marxist-Leninist theory or its individual components, concepts, ideas—a restriction typical of empiricist methodology—unquestionably pursues a definite aim. In the final analysis, the purpose of 'methodological criticism' is to deny the significance of Marxism-Leninism in a broader context of social practice.

The Marxist theory of the socio-historical process in general and the doctrine of socio-economic formations in particular have always been a key object of 'criticism' of Marxism in the writings of contemporary bourgeois ideologists and pseudo-Marxists. This so-called criticism has lately been given something of a 'methodological' slant. It is contended, for example, that Marx and Engels only evolved the category of socio-economic formation on the basis of the empirical evidence of the capitalist production mode. But the sphere of social experience has since become much wider and diversified, and today none of the existing societies—neither socialism, capitalism, nor the Third World—fits into these categories, or so these 'critics' allege. The nature and trend of the contemporary world process are said also to 'shatter' the general Marxist 'pattern' of historical development based on this experience. The 'critics' therefore want it to be rejected.

Samir Amin, a student of Third World problems, believes that the Marxist concept of socio-economic formation and of social progress generally is losing its scientific significance today, since it does not fully cover the social process, primarily the peculiarities of the formation of developing countries. The 'orthodox Marxist' concept which describes confrontation between socialism and capitalism as the essential conflict 'is not empirically confirmed',⁵ he writes. What is needed, in his view, is a new or, at any rate, a 'more general' theory such as would also 'cover' the processes going on in the Third World. For 'the major conflicts currently at the forefront of the historical stage (true stakes of struggles) result from the contradiction between the pressures for globalisation (or "transnationalisation") imposed by the predominance of capital, and the aspirations of working classes, peoples and nations for some autonomous space'.⁶

In shifting the main contradiction of the contemporary epoch to the sphere of these relations, which he calls 'North-South' relations, Amin refuses to see any reasonably marked class antagonisms in today's capitalist world or a fundamental distinction between the two main socio-political systems. The working people in capitalist countries, he affirms, are renouncing the struggle for a classless society in favour of the strategy of improving their condition in today's society polarised by the relations between 'centre' and 'periphery'. One can see that empiricism leads bourgeois theorists to raise this or that specific experience to the level of an absolute and thus to build abstract, speculative constructs.

Similar methodological approaches are used by some Latin American sociologists, who advance the so-called theory of dependence or interdependence. The 'scientific' standard of their research is seen in the absurd conclusions drawn by, among others, Jose Luis de Imaz, an Argentine sociologist. Noting that certain major Western companies do business with socialist countries, he calls them 'transideological'. Indeed, he claims that the Soviet Union and the United States wield 'joint domination' over the world.⁷

One also comes across obvious illusions, with some authors of the concept of 'interdependence' asserting, for example, that Latin America's tie-up with the imperialist powers is loosening while a reverse dependence is growing in the case of Britain, Canada and even the United States. The objectivity and genuinely scientific character of the Marxist-Leninist, concrete historical analysis of world development processes contrasts all the more sharply with such plainly untenable and reactionary

ideas.

In the lifetime of the founders of Marxism, the development problems of the countries which have freed themselves from colonial dependence could certainly not be made the order of the day in full measure. But does this refute the concept of socio-economic formations, the theory of socio-historical development as a whole? Does it make the category of production mode, basis, superstructure, and so on, meaningless?

Neither Marx, Engels nor Lenin ever thought in a priori, dogmatic patterns. Strictly following the dialectical method in any theoretical analysis, they never ruled out the possibility of the rise of new economic, social and political structures, of diverse 'transitional' forms of social development, such as would require a closer and more specific definition of the socio-historical laws discovered by them. At the same time, they stressed with every reason that knowledge of the laws already discovered is a dependable basis for analysing new phenomena.

The independent development of the newly-free countries has really contributed much that is new to the content of the contemporary world process. Not a single major problem of our times can be solved without regard to the developing countries' impact upon it. However, it is also true that they emerged not 'contrary to Marxism' but entirely in accordance with it. The concept of some Third World theorists who have posed a global alternative of choosing between transnational and autonomous development, while partly reflecting realities, cannot offer workable ways and means of solving it, primarily because it is abstract. Any attempt at a more concrete theoretical analysis, a deeper study of international relations, is bound to make it necessary for the analyst dealing with the developing world to distinguish—in accordance with Marxist methodology—between the two socio-political systems and to consider their actual role in social progress.

It is perfectly evident that Third World countries cannot end their lag without choosing optimum development paths or without exactly ascertaining the outlook. In this, the Marxist-Leninist theory of socio-economic formations would be a necessary means of scientific analysis.

Nor does the 'methodological criticism' of Marxist theory skip the problem of the scientific character of the categories of class and class struggle. Many bourgeois authors affirm that Marx only made an economic analysis of the condition of the two main strata of capitalist society, the rich and the poor, such as lacks a universal sociological content. In the opinion of Charles Bettelheim, a French pseudo-socialist, Marx did not go in interpreting the categories of class and class struggle beyond purely economic, empirical arguments. And this 'economic' analysis is refuted by social development, he claims. 'Marx's "economic" arguments,' he writes, 'are incapable of providing the demonstration of such an historical tendency of class struggle. Marx attempts to support his arguments through recourse to the dialectic, whether in a speculative form, or by placing it within a reasoning of an economic character.'⁸

Pseudo-socialist theorists, calling for the rejection of the Marxian categories of class and class struggle, said to be at variance with present-day experience, propose instead to analyse contemporary society with due regard for new 'realities'. They consider that in modern society the concepts of bourgeoisie and proletariat are 'hollow abstractions', for it is people, individuals or groups and not classes, that are the real subject of history. One should therefore study the actions and aspirations of people and not those of classes. The individual as the real maker of history, as an active factor, is said to dissolve in the concept of class. Real economic, political and other struggles always take place at the level of individuals and social groups, it is argued.

Ignacio Sotelo, a Spanish Social Democrat, rejects the Marxist conclusion about

social polarisation as a historical trend on the ground that at present there is evidence of a process of 'transformation of proletarians into proprietors'. Fernando Mires, a Chilean Social Democrat, declares, for his part, that a 'deproletarianisation' process is going on in his country and that therefore 'it would be utterly absurd to raise the issue of a "proletarian party", as Lenin proposed'.⁹

The Social Democrats' opinions do not differ from the conclusions of typically bourgeois sociologists, such as Alain Touraine, who said during a discussion on social structures in Latin American countries that social classes should be defined as merely a 'sociological concept' and not as real, organised groups.¹⁰

'Refutations' of the objective content of the Marxist theory of classes and class struggle generally rest on various empirical arguments. Mires, for one, focuses attention on the fact that, during certain periods, the workers were unable to prevent by joint action the outbreak of imperialist wars, and alleges that this refutes Lenin's thesis about the historical role of the working class in staving off world conflicts. Touraine, setting examples of a bourgeois pseudo-scientific approach, bases his 'profound' sociological arguments on skilfully picked and misinterpreted instances of indifference to elections in a capitalist country shown by this or that working class group. His general conclusion actually calls for a complete break with a class-based analysis of social phenomena. Specifically, he asserts that 'a study of electoral behaviour does not in any way warrant the statement that the social class is always the main decisive factor in voting'.¹¹

This kind of argument is untenable above all from the factualist point of view. An examination of the totality of facts shows that class contradictions in, say Latin America are growing in step with the deepening of the vast crisis afflicting the region. Class collisions occur everywhere. The hand of the barometer of revolution is steadily nearing the 'storm' mark, which is also seen in new powerful actions by the people in Chile, Paraguay, Guatemala and other countries for demilitarisation and far-reaching social changes. Those who currently reject or falsify Marxist historical materialism are ignoring incontrovertible facts—the obvious existence of antagonistic classes and the militancy of the working people in capitalist countries. Matters in Latin America, for example, stand as the Eighth Session of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America stated in its resolution: 'The social changes and transformations accompanying the pattern of economic growth prevailing in the region have given rise to inequitable and highly polarised societies with a growing social differentiation and a very uneven distribution of the results of this growth.'¹²

In the context of the 'sociological research' of contemporary bourgeois theorists and 'critics' of Marxism, methodology is probably more important than factualism, since the whole set of arguments is based not so much on attempts to 'empirically' refute the Marxist-Leninist theory of classes and class struggle as on subjectively selected and interpreted facts. This approach only creates an illusion of concrete analysis whereas actually it uses arbitrarily constructed and essentially *hollow* abstractions, such as 'individual', 'stratum', 'interest group', 'pressure group', 'managers and managed', 'marginals', and so on, which reflect neither the essence of social processes nor their inherent mechanisms.

A Marxist would hardly deny the need for a detailed empirical investigation of public life, including new social movements, as a means of complementing and specifying a class analysis of contemporary society, Marxism has always paid attention to the interests of the individual and to his role in history. The question is whether research of this kind is a substitute for the theory of classes and class struggle. It was Marx who showed for the first time that the real theory of social development begins with an analysis of its material foundations, of the class composition of society. Concepts such as 'population', 'individual', 'group' or 'stratum' become concrete and acquire a real objective content only when considered in the context of the class

structure of society.

Marxism has solved problems of social development on the basis of a concrete and not abstract presentation of the problem of the individual. Looking at man in the context of the totality of social relations, Marx, Engels and Lenin saw him primarily as a member of a class and not an 'individual in general'. They were concerned above all else with the interests of the working people. Approaching the problem from a concrete historical point of view, the founders of Marxism showed that the working people can have their vital interests met only by fighting perseveringly and over a long period against the opposite class.

It is only in socialist society, which eliminates private ownership of the means of production, that the problem of the interests of *every* person, of his all-round development as a condition of social progress can really be tackled from scientific positions, according as society becomes more homogeneous socially.

Thus it is the theory of classes and class struggle that provides the requisite basis for a really scientific investigation of social problems and for their solution. It enables one to make investigation theoretically concrete, to separate essential factors of public life from secondary ones, necessary from accidental factors, and to ascertain the exact bounds within which a problem relating to the social structure of society is relevant and historically solvable.

As for the empirical approach, which bourgeois theorists constantly tend to take, it merely creates the semblance of a scientific approach, an illusion of adequacy to experience, replacing concrete scientific analysis by abstract arguments about 'man', 'society', 'progress', 'freedom', 'democracy' generally, and so on, and saying nothing about what individual (bourgeois or proletarian) or what state (capitalist or socialist) is meant.

Operating from the positions of empiricist 'methodology', present-day bourgeois philosophers and sociologists also criticise the Marxist-Leninist theory of socialist society. These and pseudo-Marxist critics are obviously birds of a feather. They accuse the Communists of advocating concepts and ideas that are 'out of keeping' with the real experience of socialism. The fact that Marx and Engels wrote nothing about the role of commodity, money, wages or prices in the new society is seen by bourgeois and pseudo-Marxist 'critics' as a sufficient reason to affirm that existing socialism has not been created 'according to Marx'.

Thus, Bettelheim comments that 'there is . . . seemingly, a contradiction between the actual working of the socialist economies which we know today and the analyses made by Marx and Engels'.¹³ Experience has shown, or so he believes, that there exists no socialist production mode as such, any more than a basis and a state corresponding to it. He considers that one may only speak of the existence of a 'transitional society' in which there is a contradictory combination of two 'production modes', capitalist and socialist.

It is indicative that in denying the categories of class and class struggle and insisting on a 'more concrete', empirical analysis of capitalist society, pseudo-Marxist theorists resort to an arbitrary, subjectivist manipulation of these terms when dealing with socialism. Ernest Mandel, a Belgian economist, affirms that under socialism social forces are guided by 'two antagonistic economic logics: the logic of the plan and the logic of the market . . . The two sets of laws evidently correspond to two class interests . . . the interest of the proletariat, and the interest of the bourgeoisie . . .'¹⁴ What he means by 'bourgeoisie', however, is the 'bureaucracy' alleged to exist under socialism as a class. Contrary to the facts and to logic, he sees laws governing socialism in isolated manifestations of a bureaucratic approach which the communist parties of socialist countries describe as phenomena that are alien to socialism and must be steadfastly eradicated.

There is no need to refute these concepts here, for they were refuted by history

long ago. What is worthy of attention as an object of criticism is, again, chiefly the 'methodology' of rethinking Marx and Marxism, all the more since even bourgeois and pseudo-socialist theorists now attach special importance to this aspect, as we have already pointed out. The 'methodological' pattern of this criticism of socialism is transparent enough. First it attributes to the founders of Marxism-Leninism dogmatic formulations of this or that principle without taking account of the concrete historical conditions in which these principles were evolved. Besides it ignores their subsequent development of their own views, Lenin's contribution to the development of many propositions originally advanced by Marx and Engels in a general form, and the creative research done by contemporary continuators of Marxist-Leninist traditions. Lastly, it generally distorts the significance of fundamental theoretical concepts in analysing new phenomena and processes. It claims, for example, that Marx and Engels described socialism as a society without a state, a society in which there must be complete equality, commodity-free production and so on. Thereupon it makes demands on socialism flowing from the theoretical prerequisite doctored in this manner. As a result, 'criticism' scores a 'double gain'. First, socialism is declared to be 'theoretically' indefensible. Second, Marxism is said to have been refuted 'in practice' since there is allegedly no adequacy between its theory and practice.

The conclusion to which this 'methodology' of criticism leads is an absurd alternative: better no socialism than a socialism which is a product of 'insufficiently mature' material prerequisites; either ideal socialism or none at all. This is not merely a doctrinaire approach, for its ideological bias is only too obvious. Pseudo-Marxism opposes existing socialism—the living cause of the popular masses and a major achievement of the world communist and working class movement—with projects of an 'ideal' new society which can never materialise because they are speculative and utopian. Objectively, this is betrayal of the fundamental interests of the working class and an indirect apologia for capitalism.

A continuous creative quest is what invariably accompanied Marxism from its birth and throughout its development. It is a major task of the Communists—the most consistent followers of Marxist traditions—to encourage fruitful discussion and a competition of ideas. But scholasticism, a passive recording of facts that shies away from bold theoretical generalisations, sacrifice of principle to expediency, or loss of contact with reality are totally alien to Marxism.

To every true Marxist, the experience of struggle for socialism, the winning of real political rights and freedoms, an improvement in the working people's life are more valuable than any number of the finest yet still unachieved social theories. Unless tested through experience and put into practice, the best such theory is nothing more than a project. Practice has yet to verify its scientific character.

The founders of Marxism only described socialism from the point of view of its main, essential characteristics, stressing the objective laws governing it, such as the existence of social ownership of the means of production, the need for political power of the working class, alliance between the two main (friendly) classes, collectivism, distribution according to work, and so on. Marx and Engels rightly considered that none but actual socialist construction and the history-making effort of the masses can offer a view of the future organisation of society. They did not regard socialism as a theory to be constructed mentally, down to the last detail, sitting in an armchair. They looked on it as a society to be built by the working people according to a theory capable of developing in step with the march of history. And they contributed steadfastly to the doctrine of socialism. Hence to examine it without analysing, say, Lenin's contribution means failing to appreciate the very essence of Marxism as a developing scientific theory. Yet this is the usual approach of bourgeois and pseudo-Marxist theorists, who would like people to come gradually to believe that our doctrine was created by Marx alone.

Specifying Marx's and Engels' ideas on the inevitability of a period of transition from capitalism to socialism, Lenin described in precise terms every aspect of life in socialist society, a society that has yet to free itself from the 'birthmarks' of capitalism. Marxist classics make it clear that the transition to socialism cannot be effected within the framework of capitalist society and that unless the working class wins political power, even perfectly mature economic prerequisites for socialism cannot lead to the emergence of a new social system. It follows that the idea of a 'traditional' society as a 'mixed' social entity—an idea upheld by pseudo-Marxist theorists such as Bettelheim or Mandel—is merely a petty-bourgeois illusion misleading the masses.

The theory of socialist and communist society is a vigorously developing component of Marxism today. Programme documents of the fraternal communist parties reflect the general laws governing the construction of the new society brought out by practice, as well as the more important peculiarities of a number of states belonging to the socialist system. They present problems of the theory of socialism and communism in specific terms, on the strength of an exhaustive scientific, critical analysis of the varied experience of building socialism.

Marxism has discovered that dialectical laws governing social development and enabled man to cognise reality in scientific terms in order to alter it. On the other hand it recognises the need for a critical attitude to its own content. Long before their present-day 'critics', Marxists established that the class struggle and historical development generally take place at different times and follow in different countries paths which cannot be absolutely identical; that the capitalist reality of today differs in many respects from the reality known to Marx; that the far-reaching changes typical of contemporary life inevitably lend diverse social classes and strata new features, largely transforming their behaviour and world-view, which, in turn, impinges inevitably and strongly on their notion of their role in history. Lastly, Marxists have long given up an illusion entertained by thinkers of the past, who imagined that general philosophical, social or political principles can replace the evidence of specific scientific research, for the two are dialectically inseparable. It is this methodological flexibility that enables Marxism to make steady headway in developing its theory and in applying it in practice, overcoming difficulties as it does so and occasionally retreating for a time.

'A responsible analysis of the past,' Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee said, 'clears the way to the future, whereas a half-truth which shamefully evades the sharp corners holds down the elaboration of realistic policy, and impedes our advance.'¹⁵ This is the lesson in truthful and comprehensive analysis of the experience of perfecting socialism that can be learnt from the recent congresses of the fraternal parties of socialist countries.

These congresses also drew important conclusions regarding the development of Marxist-Leninist theory. They resolutely brought to light shortcomings in socialist construction, critically analysed the situation and certain unproductive development trends in the social sciences and stressed the correctness of the fundamental political and ideological course charted by the parties. Thereby the advanced positions to be won by contemporary socio-political thought were indicated.

In the light of current tasks in socialist construction, an exhaustive study of the dialectic of the productive forces and production relations, the material and intellectual spheres, the laws governing the formation of communist society should be classed among the most urgent problems facing the social sciences. Research into the objective contradictions of socialist society, the working out of sound recommendations for their solution, and reliable economic and social forecasts were listed as tasks brooking no delay.

Communists are continuing an in-depth, truly scientific, Marxist study of the processes going on in the communist and national liberation movements and in

capitalist society. World development confronts humanity with many problems of global magnitude. Advanced scientific thought offers well-grounded solutions to them. Marxists-Leninists fully realise the need to combat bourgeois ideology, revisionism and dogmatism. Marxist-Leninist theory, its creative development and competent application in research and social practice are, as they always have been, a tried and tested principle of accomplishing all these tasks.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 407.

² Ibid., Vol. 23, p. 272.

³ See Rodney Arismendi, 'Lenin y nuestro tiempo' in *Actualidad eficacia del leninismo*, Peace and Socialism International Publishers, Prague, 1981, p. 42.

⁴ See David Lane, *Leninism: A Sociological Interpretation*, Cambridge et al., 1981, p. 10.

⁵ *Rethinking Marxism. Struggles in Marxist Theory*, New York, 1985, p. 2.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ See *Debates sobre la teoria de la dependencia y la sociologia latinoamericana*, Costa Rica, 1979, p. 150.

⁸ Charles Bettelheim, 'Reflections on Concepts of Class and Class Struggle in Marx's Work', in *Rethinking Marxism*, p. 17.

⁹ *ALAI*, Montreal, No. 50, 1980, p. 584.

¹⁰ See *Las clases sociales en América Latina*, Mexico City, 1977, p. 21.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² *Revista de la CEPAL*, Santiago, No. 11, 1980, p. 12.

¹³ Charles Bettelheim, *The Transition to Socialist Economy*, London, 1975, p. 33.

¹⁴ Ernest Mandel, 'Ten Theses on the Social and Economic Laws Governing the Society Transitional Between Capitalism and Socialism', *Critique*, No. 3, 1974, p. 9.

¹⁵ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 26.

The Mediterranean: Theatre of Cooperation, Not of Confrontation

Since remote antiquity the Mediterranean—cradle of many civilisations and the hub of three continents—has been a theatre of friendly relations and cooperation among peoples. But, time and again, it has also been a theatre of bloody collisions, of armed conflicts. Of late, the situation there, already tense, has been further aggravated. This is understandably troubling peace opinion, of the littoral states in the first instance.

The following is a collective interview given by eminent political and civic personalities from Mediterranean countries on the situation in the region and on what could be done to avert a dangerous escalation of tension and improve the international climate. They are **Francis Xavier Caruana**, Central Committee member of the Maltese Communist Party, **Abdallah Layachi**, CC Political Bureau member of the Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco, **Rachid Akhtarini**, member of the regional leadership of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party (Syria), and **Hassan S. Grew**, representative of the Organisation of Progressive and Socialist Parties of Mediterranean Nations.

Source of Danger

THE threat to peace in the Mediterranean, it was noted by all the participants in the interview, is created by the militarist course pursued by the most aggressive and adventurist quarters of imperialism, chiefly of the USA. The role of strong-arm tactics is growing visibly in the Mediterranean policy pursued by Washington, which sees this region mainly as NATO's southern flank and a likely theatre of hostilities. In it the Pentagon has spun a dense network of military bases, including nuclear-missile

installations, that serve as bridgeheads for interference in the affairs of littoral states and springboards for acts of aggression. US militarist activity is threatening to turn the Mediterranean basin into a focus of flashpoints. Libya has become an object of unending provocations and direct armed aggression. The danger of another attack is materialising, this time against Syria. No end is seen to the bloodshed in Lebanon fuelled by continued Israeli intervention and internecine discord largely provoked from without. Ill-intentioned intrigues are not ceasing against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus.

At the back of all this is imperialism's aspiration to subordinate independent nations to dictation and throttle the struggles of their peoples for true national liberation and social emancipation. The prime motivation of the piratical US raid against Libyan cities, said **Abdallah Layachi**, was to teach the republic a 'lesson' because of its anti-imperialist policy and staunch support for the just cause of the Arab peoples, especially of the people of Palestine.

Equally, the ferocious campaign of threats against Syria started by the USA in collusion with Israel is said **Rachid Akhtarini**, a typical bellicose response to the policy of determined opposition to the designs of imperialism and Zionism pursued under the leadership of Hafez al Assad, General Secretary of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party and President of the Syrian Arab Republic.

True, this time around the pretext for acts of aggression and militarist blackmail is the charge of terrorism or conniving at terrorism. But this is a downright falsehood. Those who resort to the use or threat of force and thereby inflame tension in the region, charged **Francis Xavier Caruana**, are far from being guided by any desire to eradicate terrorism. In the case of Libya, for example, the true reason for the long-standing animosity of the imperialists against that country is that it compelled the USA and Britain to dismantle their military bases on its territory, nationalised the oil companies, and steadfastly opposes the Camp David line and the attempts to undercut the anti-imperialist tendencies in the Arab world.

In this context **Rachid Akhtarini** drew attention to an important point. One cannot, he said, bracket terrorists with those who defend their country against invasion. The latter are patriots upholding rights usurped from them and trampled by the enemy. We side with such patriots, with partisans fighting to liberate their lands from Israeli occupation. But Syria has never had nor intends to have anything in common with terrorists. The charges of involvement in their actions are only a cover for the stratagems aimed at destabilising progressive Arab regimes.

The danger of becoming targets of imperialist attacks, declared **Abdallah Layachi**, hangs not only over countries steering a progressive course. The objective of the orchestrators of the attack on the Libyan Jamahiriya was to escalate tension in the entire Mediterranean basin in order to sow consternation and fear among the peoples, notably the Arab peoples, inhabiting this region, and compel them to resign themselves to imperialist blackmail and dictation, to imperialism's policy of trespassing upon the sovereignty and independence of other countries, of undermining international peace.

This outbreak of imperialist aggressiveness, said **Abdallah Layachi**, was in no way accidental. Lately, the national-patriotic forces in the Arab world have scored a series of successes, while the USA and its 'strategic ally' Israel have had to retreat in some sectors. The Zionist military fell short of their objectives in Lebanon when they invaded that country in the summer of 1982. Their attempt to force upon Lebanon the odious agreement of May 17, 1983 likewise failed. Insurmountable barriers for them were the courage of the Lebanese patriotic resistance and of the Palestinian units, Syria's staunchness, and the unwavering support given for their just cause by the Soviet Union and other socialist states and by democratic world opinion.

Suffering a setback, the USA rushed into a counter-offensive. This was a total

reaction, and no Mediterranean country can feel secure whatever the orientation of its regime. There are countries whose ruling circles are submissively following in the wake of US policy. But even in these countries, as everywhere else, the people are rejecting imperialist domination and supporting the just struggle of other peoples for their inalienable national rights, freedom and independence. To suppress and crush progressive, patriotic forces and movements, imperialism unhesitatingly strikes out also at countries where its flunkies are in power.

Rachid Akhtarini mentioned the fact that armed terrorism, adopted as state policy by Washington, is complemented and reinforced with economic terrorism—sanctions, embargoes, and trade blockades. One of its most dangerous and destructive features is the debt noose around the necks of developing nations, including Mediterranean countries.

The question of the peace-clouding socio-economic consequences of imperialist policy was expanded upon by **Hassan S. Grew**. By generating a debt burden, poverty, and instability in the countries of the region, the actions taken by imperialism and the international financial institutions controlled by it, such as the World Bank, are seriously endangering the socio-economic structures of these countries. Some patriotic regimes are succumbing to pressure and beating a retreat. The most grasping and adventurist elements are breaking through to levers of power. Using the cover of slogans of the 'open door policy' type, they are virtually yielding to imperialist dictation. There is growing confusion in the popular movement, and this is opening the door to negative forces that are offering no practical solutions to urgent problems, for instance, religious fanatics. This is unquestionably further shaking stability in the region.

Nor is the atmosphere being improved by factors such as the increasing US interference in the policy of the European Economic Community and the rigid imposition of the US line on the Atlantic alliance. In parallel, the independence of the national policies of some of the biggest Mediterranean countries is being debilitated. This is giving the green light to a further vitalisation of the Pentagon's militarist activities in the Mediterranean and increasing the threat to international peace.

The Moroccan Communists, said **Abdallah Layachi**, are convinced—and this is, they believe, the view of all the other progressive forces in Morocco and other Arab states—that the USA's aggressive activities in the Mediterranean basin are part and parcel of its global strategy of smashing the national liberation movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It must be borne in mind that the USA crushed Grenada's sovereignty, is fighting an undeclared war against Nicaragua, and Afghanistan, and conducting subversion against Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and other nations.

And another point: the whipping up of militarist activity and of the arms race in the Mediterranean is linked inseparably to the implementation of the imperialist plans for breaking the present military-strategic parity and attaining superiority over the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community, to material preparations for a war on land, at sea, in the skies, and in outer space. In hitting Libya, the Washington strategists counted on, among other things, diverting the attention of world opinion from the far-reaching peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and from the Washington administration's reaction to these initiatives. It was felt that the bombing of Libyan cities would muffle the underground nuclear explosions at American test sites and the hum of preparations for militarising outer space, for turning the latter into a 'star wars' theatre. These plans harbour a deadly threat not only to any single country or people, region or continent. The entire globe, the whole of humanity is endangered.

Joint Action to Repulse a Common Threat

The keynote at the interview was that the overhanging threat of war can be removed and peace and international security sustained only if all the anti-imperialist, peace forces close ranks and are united on the national, regional, and global levels.

Rachid Akhtarini accentuated the point that the solidity of the Syrian domestic front and the people's unity around the nation's party and state leadership are the source and mainstay of the unshakable staunchness displayed by Syria, which is prepared to resist any attack on its independence and sovereignty, any foreign aggression. This unity is embodied by the Progressive National Front, which consists of several parties, including the Communist Party. It acts under the leadership of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party. In parallel, an important role in mobilising the people against the conspiracies of imperialism and Zionism is played by mass public organisations—workers', peasants', women's, youth, and students'.

The unity of the progressive-patriotic forces in each individual country, stressed **Hassan S. Grew**, is the condition and foundation for concerted actions regionally and on a wider scale. The Organisation of Socialist and Progressive Parties of Mediterranean Nations is helping to institute such actions. This organisation was formed in the 1960s when progressive-patriotic forces, including some socialist parties, of the region felt the need for harmonising their views and coordinating their efforts in the face of NATO's militarist policy and the expanding imperialist presence in the Mediterranean. The organisation then set up a Standing Secretariat and began conducting periodic conferences and meetings, which are attended by both Socialists and Communists. This interaction is based on a common platform, whose wide-ranging objectives provide for uniting the peoples against the military threat created by imperialism, turning the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and security, and fostering productive cooperation to promote economic development and social progress.

Much is being done to strengthen the links between the public organisations in Mediterranean countries representing different sections of the population—workers, peasants, women, young people, and so on. There has been a constituent congress of the region's Union of Progressive Journalists and it has been decided to set up a Mediterranean Information Agency. Relations have been established and are maintained with the World Peace Council, the League of Arab States, the Organisation of African Unity, and the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organisation.

Abdallah Layachi pressed the point that there has to be unity among the Arab peoples, who are being relentlessly attacked by imperialism, Zionism, and local reaction. The masses can repulse the combined assaults of the adversary only if they themselves close ranks under the leadership of progressive-patriotic organisations, notably the communist and workers' parties, which are their revolutionary vanguard.

The Communists devote considerable attention to promoting such unity. The issues arising from this have been considered, in particular, at regional meetings and conferences of representatives of communist and workers' parties of Arab countries and also of countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Red Sea.

In the middle of last May, the journal *Al-Nahj*, published collectively by Arab Communists, sponsored a scientific-political conference in Damascus on the subject 'US aggression against Libya and the threats against Syria, and their impact on the situation in the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin and their adverse consequences to world peace and security'. This conference was attended by representatives of 54 parties and political and public organisations of socialist, capitalist, and developing nations. The final document notes that one of the central tasks of the forces of freedom and progress in the Mediterranean and the Middle East is to work out and develop optimal forms of coordination and united action in order

to counter the common threat and the common enemy, and to prevent minor differences from pushing the basic contradiction with imperialism into the background.

The influence and potential of Arab countries are such, noted **Hassan S. Grew**, that if they were to remove the friction and discord among themselves and achieve effective solidarity this would have a very strong positive impact on the situation in the Mediterranean. As a result, not only would the resistance to the anti-Arab actions of imperialism and Zionism become more effective but the conditions would be created for closer and more constructive relations between the North and South of the Mediterranean basin. There would be a new situation characterised simultaneously by diversity and unity. There would then be not an inkling of confrontation and hostility. The conditions would be on hand for establishing a climate of peace and concord in the region, where today tension and instability are so much in evidence.

The situation in the Mediterranean, said **Francis Xavier Caruana**, is one of the most acute international problems giving rise not only to local but also to global tension. The search for ways of easing this situation can and must be the business chiefly of the Mediterranean states and peoples themselves. Such a settlement would gratify people throughout the world, indeed every person who wants to live under a peaceful sky fearing neither for his or her own future nor for the future of coming generations. **Francis Xavier Caruana** observed that in organising Malta's population for action against US imperialism's strategy in the Mediterranean, the Maltese Communists are focusing special attention on rebuffing the attempts of US propaganda to spread the myth that there is a 'Soviet threat' to the region.

Rachid Akhtarini said that the Syrians rely, in the first place, on their own strength and potentialities to repulse aggression by imperialism and Zionism. But, in addition, they rely on their allies and friends in the Arab world and on the international solidarity and consistent support for its just struggle from progressive world opinion and the peace-loving nations, and in particular from the non-aligned movement, which is an immensely influential factor of present-day international life. It attaches special significance to promoting and consolidating cooperation with the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union, which has by its deeds shown that it is a true and dependable supporter of the Syrian and other Arab peoples.

This, noted **Abdallah Layachi**, is precisely why Arab-Soviet friendship is constantly under violent attack by the enemies of the Arab national liberation movement. They would like to subvert it and weaken the anti-imperialist front. The USSR is making tireless efforts to block imperialism's dangerous military sallies, prevent a new spiral of the senseless arms race, and restore a climate of detente in international affairs. All this is facilitating the struggle of the region's peoples for a free and peaceful life, for the right to decide their own destiny and to an unhindered advance along the road of national and social progress. The patriots and revolutionaries of the Arab world see their key task in strengthening their militant solidarity with their natural allies—the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Here, too, matters should not be confined to simple exhortation. Practical action and effective support for the multiple peace efforts of the Soviet Union are of undeniable political significance.

A Concrete, Realistic Programme

In the interview attention was focused on the Soviet initiatives indicating the ways and means of converting the Mediterranean from a theatre of ominous confrontation into a zone of lasting peace and cooperation.

The USSR, said **Francis Xavier Caruana**, had earlier proposed spreading agreed confidence-building measures to cover this region, reducing the armed forces stationed there, and pulling nuclear-armed warships out of the Mediterranean.

Further, it was proposed that the non-nuclear Mediterranean states should deny permission for the deployment of nuclear weapons on their territory and that the nuclear powers should pledge not to use such weapons against these countries.

At the close of last March the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachov declared that the Soviet Union was prepared to go further—to withdraw all its naval vessels from the Mediterranean if the same steps were taken simultaneously by the USA. The people of Malta, said **Francis Xavier Caruana**, have welcomed this offer of the Soviet leadership and its readiness to enter into negotiations with the USA forthwith on this issue.

In the series of Soviet initiatives **Hassan S. Grew** drew attention to the point about it being expedient to convene a meeting on the Mediterranean along the pattern of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It could be attended not only by nations situated in this and adjoining regions but also by the USA and other interested states. The presumption that the establishment of lasting peace in the Mediterranean is closely linked to ensuring European security and vice versa, **Hassan S. Grew** said, is winning increasingly active support among the nations participating in the Helsinki process. The initiative for convening a representative conference on the Mediterranean, added **Francis Xavier Caruana**, is in line with this year's second conference of Mediterranean non-aligned nations and with the Luanda Appeal of the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers Conference. As had been done by these forums, it calls for turning the region into a zone of 'peace, security, and universal cooperation'.

The view was stated that the practical implementation of this idea, as of the proposal for the simultaneous withdrawal of Soviet and US naval forces from the Mediterranean, depends largely on the overall state of Soviet-US relations, on the level of interaction between them in settling burning international issues.

The postures of the Soviet Union and the USA express in bold relief two diametrically opposite lines in world politics, said **Abdallah Layachi**. Moscow advances more and more constructive peace initiatives, while Washington rejects or blocks any step aimed at reducing tensions, ending the arms race, and achieving disarmament. The Soviet Union has a shore line along the Black Sea, which is a continuation, as it were, of the Mediterranean. The USA is many thousands of miles away from this region. The Soviet Navy has never been used as a weapon of aggression. The US Navy has time and again invaded or shelled countries of the region. The most recent examples are Lebanon and Libya. Yet it is the Soviet Union that proposes the withdrawal of the naval forces of both powers from the Mediterranean, while the USA responds negatively to this proposal, thereby showing the whole world its imperial ambitions once again.

Washington's attitude to the peace efforts of other nations is likewise negative. Following the American raid on Libya, said **Francis Xavier Caruana**, the Maltese government instituted steps to defuse the explosive situation. At first it offered to mediate between Libya and the USA, but Washington flatly turned down this offer.

The Maltese government then addressed the governments of Central Mediterranean states—Algeria, Greece, Egypt, Italy, Cyprus, Libya, Tunisia, France, and Yugoslavia—proposing the convocation of a conference at the level of Prime Ministers to consider the situation and coordinate practical steps to reach a settlement. In particular, it was proposed that the countries concerned should pledge to avoid using armed force against each other, disallow the use for such purposes of their respective territories and of the military bases and installations on these territories, and deny assistance of any kind to terrorist acts. This proposal took into account the existence of US military bases in Italy, Greece, and Cyprus over which the governments of these countries have no control, the presence of the US Sixth Fleet in the waters between Malta and Libya, and other circumstances of an analogous nature. The Libyan government accepted this proposal, but the Washington administration

rejected even this limited initiative.

Rachid Akhtarini and **Hassan S. Grew** spoke at length of how Washington is torpedoing all efforts to secure a fair and all-embracing settlement of the Middle East conflict, and providing Israel with diplomatic cover and massive military and economic aid, in fact encouraging its course towards aggression. Here, too, the obstructionist, hegemonistic policy of the USA is countered by the Soviet Union's constructive, purposeful line towards extinguishing this flashpoint in the Eastern Mediterranean. The ways and means for doing this are set out in the Soviet proposals for a Middle East settlement.

In Syria, said **Rachid Akhtarini**, the people are closely following and solidly supporting the Soviet peace initiatives, for they are aimed at ensuring freedom and peace, which are the most precious and cherished aspirations of all of the world's peoples. The struggle for peace and the struggle for freedom and social progress, **Rachid Akhtarini** continued, are interrelated and mutually complementary. Those who do not enjoy the blessing of freedom are incapable of making a tangible contribution to safeguarding international peace. In fighting and upholding independence and in striving for progress, the peoples are seeking to have the opportunity to come forward as active subjects of world development, above all of the battle against the threat of war.

Expanding on this, **Abdallah Layachi** underscored the following. The Moroccan Communists are steadfastly pursuing their course of closely coupling Morocco's national problems with international issues, central to which is today the problem of averting the nuclear threat hanging over humanity. In other words, they regard the fulfilment of their internationalist duty of countering US imperialism's militarist designs and actions and supporting and explaining the Soviet foreign policy of peace as a lofty patriotic task. They are doing everything to get the people of Morocco to understand that their own independent, free existence, that their destiny and that of all Arab peoples depends directly on the destiny of peace in the world. Either peace triumphs and national independence will be assured, or the threat to international security will inevitably turn into a threat to the freedom of the peoples.

Speaking metaphorically, said **Abdallah Layachi**, the Moroccan Communists are holding the banner of patriotism in one hand and the banner of internationalism in the other. They are combining what these banners symbolise—the struggle for the country's progress with the struggle for a life free of the fear of humanity's extinction. Patriotism is inseparable from internationalism, and the battle for independence cannot be fought in isolation from the battle for peace.

The interview showed that large sections of public opinion in Mediterranean countries are more distinctly seeing the causes and sources of the war threat and increasingly inclined to unite and conduct concerted actions to eliminate this threat. To a large extent this is fostered by Soviet foreign policy moves that lay bare the antithesis between the Soviet Union's course towards peace and the aggressive hegemonistic strategy to which the Washington administration is clinging tenaciously.

The movement for peace and security in the region, however, has its distinctions due to the modalities of the situation in different Mediterranean countries. Some of these are industrial capitalist states, but most are developing nations. In the former the anti-war protest, based above all on the human instinct for survival in a fragile world, was almost from the outset directed towards delivering humankind from the threat of annihilation in a thermonuclear holocaust. In the latter the struggle against the threat of an all-consuming nuclear conflagration is linked more closely with opposition to imperialist encroachments on the freedom and independence of peoples, with the efforts to promote the national and social progress of the developing states. This distinction in accents is by no means a hindrance to joint actions by the

peace forces. The manner in which the problem of war and peace is raised in individual countries and regions presupposes an active quest for specific ways of addressing it. There is here a wide field for action by the most consistent protagonists of the cause of peace, freedom, and progress, notably by the Communists.

viewpoints

The People's Self - Governance: the Motive Force of Progress

Lev Tolkunov – CPSU CC member,
Chairman of the Soviet of the Union,
USSR Supreme Soviet

ONE of the most important and pressing problems in our society is to deepen and widen the sphere in which the people's self-governance operates. The party's present approach to it was formulated in the CPSU CC Political Report to the party's 27th Congress: 'We know from our extensive experience as well as theory that the socialist system can develop successfully only when the people really run their own affairs, when millions of people are involved in political life. This is what the working people's self-government amounts to, as Lenin saw it. It is the essence of Soviet power.'¹

From the very outset, the new society was conscious of the need for people's self-governance. At the height of the Civil War, in the spring of 1919, the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of Russia (Bolsheviks) said in the party's Second Programme, which it then adopted: 'Proletarian, or Soviet democracy has turned the mass organisations of the capitalism-oppressed classes, the proletarians and the poorest semi-proletarian peasants, i.e., the vast majority of the population, into the permanent and sole basis of the entire state apparatus: the local and the central, from top to bottom. In this way the Soviet state realised, among other things, local and regional self-governance, without any authorities being appointed from the top whatsoever, in a much wider form than anywhere else. The party's task is tirelessly to work for the actual and full translation into life of this highest type of democracy, which requires a constant rise in the cultural standards, organisation and initiative action by the masses, if it is to function correctly.'²

We find that the task of asserting the highest type of democracy was already set in the programme which Lenin wrote. But the founder of the Soviet state was perfectly well aware that it would be a long and steadily deepening process which would get under way gradually, as the foundations of socialism were laid, as the inevitable mistakes in the delicate and difficult matter of running the society were overcome, as the cultural standards of the masses rose, and as the once-oppressed nations and ethnic groups were involved in the affairs of state.

Fresh potentialities for the development of socialist democracy were opened up by the building of socialism. The Soviet Union, once a dictatorship-of-the-proletariat state, has become the whole people's state, which means that power in it now belongs to all the working people. It is exercised for the people and by the people itself. Citizens now have every opportunity for taking broad and full-fledged participation in the management of production matters and in the administration of social and state affairs. The ideas of freedom, human rights and individual dignity are filled with a real content. The same laws and norms of morality, and the same discipline apply to one and all. Ever more favourable conditions are taking shape for the individual's harmonious development.

Impressive successes have, therefore, been attained in restructuring life on socialist lines, but that is no reason for self-complacency. We have entered upon the next phase in building the new society, and here the party is acting as the leading force and guarantor that the people's socialist self-governance will be consistently deepened.

*'... At the present stage the strategic line of development of the political system of Soviet society consists in advancing Soviet democracy and increasingly promoting socialist self-government by the people on the basis of active and effective participation of working people, their collectives and organisations in decision-making concerning the affairs of state and society.'*³

The whole people's state has in a sense absorbed the very substance of self-governance, which has gone through several stages of development. As we perfect it along every line, we help to strengthen our state and its fulfilment of its creative and constructive role. 'The elements of self-government develop within rather than outside our statehood, increasingly penetrating all aspects of state and public life, enriching the content of democratic centralism and strengthening its socialist character.'⁴

Our system has within it the potentialities of the people's actual self-governance in every sphere of life, and especially in the economy. Socialist property and the social character of labour, says Marx, imply an association of producers involved both in management and in production,⁵ but the party has to work vigorously to make these potentialities real.

The working people's self-governance is an idea that emerged and matured in acute ideological struggle, with our party firmly rejecting the ideas of 'barrack-room communism', which deny any democratic forms of the people's self-governance, and extol military-bureaucratic methods of administration. But the party has also consistently and resolutely opposed anarcho-syndicalist, petty-bourgeois theories of 'workers' self-government', which we find unacceptable because they contrast the socialist state and the work collectives' self-management. The fact is that, as experience shows, the Soviet state acts together with social organisations and work collectives as an instrument of the people's self-governance.

We believe that the functions of self-governance consist not in the working people being able to make demands on enterprise management and the state as a whole, but in joining them in helping their collective to achieve success and the society to flourish, with every working person responsible for the state of affairs at the enterprise and in the country as a whole.

A programme for accelerating economic and social development is now being implemented in the Soviet Union, and self-governance is a major motive force in the process, because it helps to combine the work of the actual producers with that of administering the national economy and the affairs of state and society, because it helps to harmonise the diverse individual, collective and social interests, and because it enhances the working people's interest in boosting labour productivity, increasing social production, and applying the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution, and in the end result of the activity of their enterprises, and the flourishing

of their homeland.

The 27th Congress of the CPSU noted that the Soviets of People's Deputies, the representative organs of power in the localities, and the political foundation of our state, have a special role to play in putting through the line of accelerating development and deepening self-governance as its effective factor. This idea of the congress was expressed in concrete and consistent terms in last July's Resolution of the CPSU CC, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the USSR Council of Ministers, 'On Measures for Further Enhancing the Role and Strengthening the Responsibility of the Soviets of People's Deputies for Accelerating Economic and Social Development in the Light of the Decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU'.⁶

The resolution on the Soviets is essentially a full-scale programme for the activities of the organs of representative democracy at the new phase of socialist construction. It says that these organs should be more self-standing and active, and should display greater initiative in exercising their powers, deepening the democratic principles and consolidating the material base, and showing greater responsibility to their electorate.

Among the key tasks before the Soviets are efficient economic management; improvement of the industries directly meeting the needs of the population; direction of capital construction; environmental protection and the complex use of natural and recycled resources; concern for raising the Soviet people's material and spiritual level; and many other things, a truly boundless field of activity!

Although the Soviets have sufficiently tangible rights, up until recently their potentialities for tackling various matters were limited. The fact is that there were excessive centralisation on matters whose substance is far from easily decided from the centre, and which it is more advisable to tackle on the spot, without their being coordinated with the 'higher-standing authorities'. This is especially important in the economy. But the fact is that the structure of economic administration in our country is such that most enterprises and organisations are not subordinate to the local organs of power, but directly to the 'centre', that is, the all-Union and Republican ministries, which have often overdone the technocratic side, by turning all their attention to the production aspect and allocating resources on necessary social and cultural projects only from the funds left after production outlays. Such an approach fell short of meeting the social problems bearing directly on the life of the working people, and so it ultimately had a negative effect on production itself.

The situation is now changing. The above-mentioned resolution says: 'It is considered necessary to increase the coordinating role of the Soviets of People's Deputies in solving complex economic and social problems on the territory within their ambit.' The Supreme Soviet of the USSR has enacted several laws under which the Soviets have been empowered to engage in such coordination, and also in cooperating the resources of enterprises for the joint construction of community projects, communications and housing. By way of experiment, enterprises under Union subordination are enjoined to deduct a part of their profits from the sale of consumer goods in the localities to the budget of the local Soviets, which considerably enhances their funding potentialities. In this way they exercise more fully their rights in being masters of their district.

There is the experiment staged in the Georgian town of Poti. It has something like 70 enterprises and organisations subordinate to 30 ministries and departments, both Union and Republican. Each has its own production concerns, interests and development plans, but they used to look to the town Soviet for solving many of their relevant economic and social problems. The fact is that the town Soviet did not have adequate funds at its disposal. While juridically being the master of the town the Soviet was unable to back up social and cultural construction to keep pace with industrial development in Poti. So, it was suggested that the disarray should be

overcome by setting up a special division—a territorial and inter-sectoral association—to coordinate the efforts of the enterprises and organisations located on the territory of the town so as to accelerate the development of production and to solve the social and cultural problems. The activity of this association is now based on a rational combination of the territorial and sectoral principles of administration, with emphasis on state-wide interests. The arrangement is such that along with the satisfaction of local needs, the town could make a growing contribution to the Republican and all-Union economic complexes.

The association's economic and social development plans are approved by the Executive Committee of the Poti Soviet, which now also directs capital construction in the town. The association is empowered to set up its own enterprises to turn out inter-sectoral products and also enterprises using local raw material resources, recycled waste and other materials for turning out consumer goods.

The new organ receives its funds from deductions by enterprises. It has set up funds for material incentives, development of production, social and cultural projects and housing construction. It stands to reason that the association as a whole, and each of its component enterprises, have a stake in higher profits from which these funds are constituted. The work collectives strive to make production more efficient, and this helps to consolidate the town's budget, from which, in particular, more funds are allocated for improving its infrastructure. The above-mentioned resolution recommends the Poti experience as one worth applying in other towns in the country.

The Soviets—and local Soviets alone number 52,000 with 2,300,000 deputies—carry on their multi-faceted activity through the masses and with their assistance. The small Ukrainian town of Konotop provides some meaningful experience in this context. In that town, social initiative organs, with about 26,000 activists, operate as aides to the town Soviet. The joint activity of house and neighbourhood committees covers all the streets and every house in the town. Through them, the Executive Committee of the town Soviet involves the inhabitants in efforts to improve the state of housing facilities, landscaping of streets, and upkeep of order everywhere. The social initiative organs maintain close ties with schools and cultural institutions, and regularly report on their activity to the population.

In this way, representative democracy—the local organs of power—is closely connected with direct, grassroots democracy. One example is the important role in developing the social activity of rural inhabitants played by public meetings held to discuss pressing problems in the life of big and small rural communities. Such meetings are, as a rule, held at least once in six months, with the attendance of leading members of the executive committees of district and regional Soviets. At such meetings, the population is informed about the decisions taken by party and Soviet government organs, and about legislative enactments.

One could say that public meetings are also held on the scale of the whole country when there are country-wide discussions of key draft projects and many problems of state life, something that is now established practice. Over 110 million people voiced their views on the draft Law on the Work Collectives (1983); almost 120 million took part in discussing the CPSU CC draft 'The Basic Lines of Reform of General Education and Occupational Schooling' (1984). There was a meaningful discussion of the documents put before the 27th Congress. The new edition of the CPSU Programme looks to a further extension of the practice of the country-wide discussions, and also to the holding of referenda. Experience suggests that there must be public discussions not only of all-Union problems, but also of matters of Republican and local concern. There is, for instance, the wide discussion by the population of projects for building up townships and villages, and of transport, everyday, medical and cultural services.

Lenin stressed that 'the minds of tens of millions of those who are doing things

create something infinitely loftier than the greatest genius can foresee'.⁷ The people are an inexhaustible source of talents which can be tapped under genuine democracy and the people's self-governance. These conditions are incompatible with voluntarism, subjectivism and suppression of criticism, to say nothing of revenge for it. Publicity is an effective antidote to any negative phenomena. The activity of broad masses of people in social life is inconceivable unless everyone is well informed to pass judgement and act knowledgeably. Publicity means the possibility of openly and boldly exposing shortcomings and mistakes, and the people's participation in elaborating small and big plans. It implies systematic and in-depth study of public opinion and the wants of the various groups of the population by the party, state organs, scientists and the press.

Life demands a further improvement of publicity. The organs of state power must back up by their every step Lenin's idea that the Soviets should do everything in full view of the masses. There are adequate means for doing so: reports by their executive organs and deputies to working people's meetings, travelling sessions, and wide use of the mass media.

The system of electoral mandates to deputies also helps the people to take a direct part in running the affairs of state. Mandates are social, not individual and are adopted by a majority of votes at electoral meetings. They bear on various aspects of internal and foreign policy, and on concrete matters in the constituency. The mandates are considered by the Soviets of People's Deputies at their sessions, and are taken into account when economic and social development plans are drawn up, and also in the framing of budgets. How widespread these collective mandates to deputies are will be seen from the fact that over the past 10 years the Soviets of People's Deputies have adopted more than 4 million mandates for implementation.

For their part, deputies are plenipotentiary representatives of their people in the organs of state power, and as such they are assured of conditions for the exercise of their rights and duties. Every deputy has the right of interpellation with respect to state organs and persons in office, who are duty bound to respond at a session of the Soviet. All social and state organisations have the duty to receive any deputy without delay and to consider his proposals within the established time limit. Every institution is bound to make available all the documents a deputy requires.

The party sees to it that the most fitting citizens capable of vigorously pursuing the affairs of state at a high level are elected deputies to the Soviets, and that the composition of the organs of power is regularly renewed. Accordingly, amendments to our electoral practices are being contemplated.

Since the 27th Congress of the CPSU, there has been a marked invigoration of the activity of the USSR Supreme Soviet, of its Presidium, and of the standing commissions of both chambers—the Soviet of the Union, and the Soviet of Nationalities. Within a brief period, the Presidium has examined a set of important economic and social problems in the life of the country, and has taken broad and far-reaching decisions. Thus, it examined the question of combating the extraction of unearned incomes; work on the observance of legislative requirements on the strengthening of the family and enhancing its responsibility for the upbringing of children in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic; the fulfilment by the state organs of the Vinnitsa Region of legislation aimed to overcome drunkenness, etc.

The standing commissions of both chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet carry on much important work. Each chamber has 17 commissions, involving 80 per cent of all the deputies. Within their purview is a wide spectrum of problems in the development of the economy, science, technology, culture, the social sphere and foreign affairs. Since the members of the commissions are highly qualified and well-versed in the problems in their field, they are naturally capable of making a thorough scrutiny of any specific problem, of drawing a well-grounded conclusion on it, and introducing

well-considered recommendations. The commissions have begun to make fuller use of their prerogatives, in particular of the right to introduce proposals directly to the USSR Council of Ministers, on which the government has to take concrete decisions.

Alongside the task of further improving Soviet legislation, which is handled by the supreme organs of power of the USSR and the Union Republics, there is a drive for fuller and more consistent fulfilment of the already adopted legislative acts. The party's 27th Congress called for undeviating implementation of the laws of the Soviet state, and for severe punishment for those who are guilty of violating them.

The USSR Constitution has clearly defined the status of the Supreme Soviet as the highest organ of state power, which directly controls the activity of the Soviet government, the State Planning Committee, the Ministry of Finance, and other agencies responsible to the party and the state for drawing up and implementing plans and budgets. This ensures the organic unity of law-making and law-enforcement, summing up and spreading advanced experience, and bringing out shortcomings. That is precisely how the objectives and purposes of control in the socialist society are formulated.

The commissions of the two chambers are engaged in constant and purposeful control activity. One-fifth of all the questions they consider has the purpose of exercising direct control over the activity of ministries and departments, and executive committees of local Soviets, and in-depth complex verification of their work.

The Supreme Soviet and its commissions naturally devote much attention to foreign-policy matters. Thus, a joint sitting of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the Soviet of the Union and of the Soviet of Nationalities was held at the Kremlin on June 20, 1986, to discuss the situation taking shape on the Soviet-US strategic arms limitations agreements as a result of acts by the US administration, which announced its unilateral decision to abandon their observance. The commissions took a decision on this matter and sent its text to the government and the Congress of the United States, and also to the parliaments of other countries.

Strengthening ties with the parliaments of the socialist countries is one of the key lines of the foreign-policy activity of our supreme organ of power. These ties do much to promote the exchange of experience in developing democracy. Drafting the acts on referenda, we looked at the way public opinion is studied in Bulgaria. We give close attention to the structure and practices of standing commissions of other parliaments, the way they conduct their electoral campaigns, and their experience in legislating and in international activity.

The development of socialist democracy is closely bound up with the further extension of the Soviet citizens' rights and freedoms. These were markedly extended by the 1977 Constitution of the USSR, which strengthened their political, material and juridical guarantees. There are rights, which have been written into the Fundamental Law for the first time, such as the right to housing, health protection, use of the cultural heritage, participation in running the affairs of state and society, freedom of scientific, technical and aesthetic creativity, etc.

It is hard to exaggerate the importance of the activity of work collectives in the exercise of all the rights and freedoms. There are 2.5 million work collectives in the country, and they have a decisive role in what happens to our programmes for transforming and renewing the society. In 1983, the USSR Supreme Soviet enacted a Law On Work Collectives and on Enhancing Their Role in the Management of Enterprises, Institutions and Organisations. Direct and immediate democracy of the masses has been largely effected through these work collectives. The working person also becomes the master of the country by being the true master of his plant, collective farm or shop.

The point is that a considerable part of the functions of the governing bodies—in

planning production, social development, organisation and stimulation of labour—is being delegated to the work collectives. In the past, management used to acquaint them only with the approved plans of production, so that it remained for the working people to fulfil these. Nowadays, the working people are involved in drawing up the plans, correcting them, taking on upwardly adjusted plans, i.e. commitments to improve the plans. Only after that has been done, the plans are sent up to the ministry for approval.

The collectives are now enabled to determine the technical policy of the enterprises, and the way they are modernised and remodelled. They also shape social policy and decide how the material incentives fund and funds earmarked for social and cultural needs are to be used.

The work collective law has undoubtedly helped to enliven initiative at the enterprises. But as practice shows, it is not yet being fully realised. Experience shows that there is a basic need to improve the mechanism for translating enacted democratic principles and norms into everyday practice. Many important problems in the life of the work collective are now discussed at general meetings of industrial and office workers. In small production groups and work teams, there are working people's councils, the point being for them to operate on the level of the enterprises as well, so as to bring together the members of the management, the party, trade union and Young Communist League organisations, the team councils, etc. Such councils have already been set up at some enterprises, and within two or three years virtually every worker will be involved in them.

Let us consider in greater detail the already existing primary cells of self-governance, namely, the cost efficiency teams. They elect their leaders, and practice shows that this is an effective way. This means that it is apparently worth while to spread the electivity to all the team leaders, and then gradually to some of the other categories of leading personnel, such as foremen, heads of shifts, sections, shops, and state farm units. This has already justified itself in the collectives of some factories and plants. It was stressed at the 27th Congress of the CPSU that this is the line along which one has to look for a combination of centralism and democracy, one-man managerial responsibility and electivity in running the national economy to meet present-day requirements.

When considering the work collectives, one has to deal with the importance of the trade unions in the country's economic and social life. They help to effect democracy in the management of production. There are any number of forms for doing so in this country. To those that have been mentioned should be added the organisation of social emulation, conclusion of collective agreements with management, participation in the work of the standing production conferences, and in putting through measures to promote technical progress. The sphere of trade union activity is being steadily amplified. Thus, they have successfully exercised some of the functions earlier vested in the state bodies, such as the management of social insurance, control of labour protection and safety techniques, organisation of the working people's health resorts and sanatorium services, etc. Under the Law on Work Collectives, general meetings (conferences) of working people arranged by the trade unions have become something like 'collective directors' of enterprises.

Other social organisations—the YCL, unions of those working in the arts, and in scientific, technical, cultural and educational societies—have an important role in developing social self-governance. They enable millions of Soviet citizens of various ages and occupations to display their initiative and activity.

The entire political system of the USSR is aimed to guarantee the rights of the individual and of the collective in the face of management and state bodies, and not on the basis of some antagonism, but on a common platform of joint efforts for the country's progress and prosperity, in an atmosphere of harmonious cooperation,

which does not, of course, rule out any criticism. The 27th Congress proclaimed that the party and the state regard it as their primary duty to deepen the social, political and personal rights and freedoms of Soviet citizens, adding that citizens' rights do not, and cannot, exist without duties, just as there are no duties without rights.

As we develop socialist democracy, we learn how to improve it from the CPSU, our society's leading force. Lenin's principles of democratic centralism, collective leadership, criticism and self-criticism, broad publicity are the fundamental principles of our inner-party life. The Communists apply them to the activity of state and social organisations and the rest of our activity.

In this context, consider the development of criticism and self-criticism. We know from the recent past, that wherever these are damped down, an atmosphere of permissiveness and impunity arises, leading to the most grievous negative consequences, including breaches of democratic norms. It must be owned that many functionaries are painfully affected by any criticism addressed to them, and even attack those who criticise them, thereby breaching the party Rules and Soviet laws.

The 27th Congress of the CPSU declared in the firmest and most clear-cut terms: there must be no organisations in the party or the society beyond control or closed to criticism and there must be no leaders sheltered from party responsibility. The decisions of the CPSU CC, the Party Control Committee and statements in the media reaffirm that our party's words are not at odds with its deeds.

The growth of the party's role in the Soviet society and the deepening of socialist democracy are a coherent, integral and law-governed process. Lenin repeatedly explained the political harm of the notion that the ruling party is alone capable of directing the entire development of the society on its own, ignoring or substituting for other organisations of working people. The CPSU has steadfastly translated into life the principle of the strict demarcation of the functions of party organs, and those of the state, economic, and social organisations. Party guidance of the Soviets is above all and mainly political guidance. The party works out the general lines of the state's internal and foreign policy, maps out the basic tasks in economic and cultural construction, and determines what is necessary for their implementation, while the whole of the society and the people work to realise these tasks.

The CPSU takes a creative approach to embodying Lenin's principle of the Soviet's plenipotentiary power, and does its utmost to strengthen the organs of the state power, enhancing their role in social life. Communist deputies instil a spirit of high exactingness, sense of responsibility and initiative in the work of the Soviets.

We believe that perfection of democracy is connected with the assertion of new ways in mass creativity, as an expression of the profound humanism of the Soviet political system. Its functioning helps to fill the ideas of freedom, human rights and individual dignity with a real and vital content.

¹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 62.

² V. I. Lenin, *CPSU on the Work of the Soviets*, Moscow, 1979, p. 223 (in Russian).

³ *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New Edition, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 49.

⁴ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, p. 62.

⁵ See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1962, pp. 799-800.

⁶ *Pravda*, July 30, 1986.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 474.

Tackling a Major Social Problem

Erhard Krack – CC member, Socialist Unity Party of Germany, Mayor of Berlin

FOR the past 15 years the SUPG has seen its preeminent objective in ensuring a steady rise of the people's living standard and cultural level through a dynamic growth of the country's productive forces. During this period the external political and economic conditions for socialist construction have grown more complex but the party has steadfastly kept on course, which reflects the inner essence of the new society. 'Central to our efforts,' said Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SUPG Central Committee, in the keynote report to the party's 11th Congress, 'is the maintenance of unity between economic and social policy. We intend to continue following this course.'

The economic strategy for the period up to the year 2000 and the directives for the GDR's economic development in 1986-1990, adopted by the congress, link the further extension of social production to using our potentialities more effectively and sustaining a dynamic economic growth rate. This means, above all, making fuller use of socialism's advantages to harness scientific and technological breakthroughs and linking science intimately to production, in other words, ensuring a close relationship between them. There is no other way for accelerating our development and achieving a higher level of labour productivity, which is a vital condition for promoting the people's welfare.

In its determined efforts to achieve this aim, the party gives priority attention to resolving the housing problem, regarding it as a key social issue. It is guided by the fundamental considerations conceived when the workers were fighting exploitation and oppression. Moreover, these considerations stem logically from the essence of socialism and a social system.

To provide working people with decent housing is a long-standing objective of the revolutionary working class movement. But, as Frederick Engels wrote, 'As long as the capitalist mode of production continues to exist it is folly to hope for an isolated settlement of the housing question or of any other social question affecting the lot of the workers. The solution lies in the abolition of the capitalist mode of production and the appropriation of all the means of subsistence and instruments of labour by the working class itself.'

For that reason, in fighting for social emancipation the proletariat pressed also for the possibility of living like human beings. The arbitrary actions of real estate speculators and homeowners, who inflated rents for profit, drew angry protests from working people. Addressing the Berlin City Assembly of Deputies in 1931, Wilhelm Pieck declared on behalf of the Communist Party of Germany that there was only one way to ease the need for housing: 'to set up a workers' state, for which the provision of housing for the working people would be a first priority'.

The possibility of ending the acute housing shortage brought about by exploiting society and creating everyday living conditions facilitating the development of the individual appeared only after the Soviet Union crushed fascism and the political power of the working class was established on territory that is now the German Democratic Republic.

The Communist Party of Germany,⁴ which embarked upon anti-fascist, democratic reforms as soon as the Second World War ended, made this one of the main objectives of its programme. Housing was a daunting problem at the time, for the years of fascist rule and the war had left an unnerving legacy. Whole cities lay in ruins, and their inhabitants had nothing they could call a home. More than one-third

of all the urban housing had been totally destroyed or seriously damaged, while many of the surviving houses had been reduced to dilapidation on account of the greed of their owners for profits. With the party of the working class leading them, the working people set about restoring the economy, gradually putting the existing housing in order and making sure that it was fairly distributed. More than 1,300,000 apartments were built or modernised in the period 1949-1970; four million citizens received larger and more convenient housing.

The Eighth Congress of the SUPG (1971) was a critical landmark of the republic's history and, in particular, of the drive to end the housing shortage. It advanced a proposition that was and will remain of fundamental significance to the party: as the building of socialism progresses the link between economic and social policy must grow closer and inseparable. This springs from the perception that economic progress is not an end in itself, that it is the means of meeting the people's growing requirements. It is vital that the people should see that conscientious and enterprising work in the interests of society brings personal well-being as well. In 1973, acting on the guidelines laid down by the Eighth Congress, the SUPG Central Committee adopted an extensive housing programme, which our people have been and are steadfastly carrying out to this day.

How, properly speaking, do we understand the solution of the housing question as a social problem? Simply as the mass building of housing? In industrial capitalist countries much housing is also under construction. The SUPG's purpose is to provide every family with a separate apartment. Moreover, it is not that some should have new, spacious, better appointed housing, and others should live in old, primitive, rundown houses. Our rule is that every dwelling has to be warm, well-built, and dry. And most importantly, the rent must be affordable to any family, so that people are freed of the fear of ever being evicted. Moreover, every citizen is well aware that as his family grows he can count on getting a larger, comfortable dwelling. This gives people as much social confidence as the knowledge that they will always have employment, that in their youth each has the right to a good education, while in declining years—the right to secure retirement. Socialism is the only system that can give the people such guarantees.

Let me mention one more fundamentally important hallmark of our approach to the problem: in parallel with dwellings we are putting up public buildings, rationally siting the social infrastructure, changing the planning of towns and villages, and consciously and purposefully creating the material foundation for our people's socialist way of life. Living conditions are a major factor of peace of mind in the family, of people's attitude to their work, and of their social thinking generally; the satisfaction of some of the individual's requirements is likewise linked directly to the social, functional, and aesthetic environment.

For that reason 'the housing programme is the core of the social policy of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany'. It is 'increasingly fostering housing culture and facilitating the organisation of worthwhile rest and leisure pursuits, and the formation of relations among people in society'. This building programme is being put into effect in our republic on the basis of long-term plans and is combined 'with the reconstruction and renovation of residential neighbourhoods, with the repair and modernisation of housing in such a way as to preserve historical cultural values and the progressive individuality in the structure and make-up of towns and create increasingly favourable conditions for the further development of the socialist way of life'.⁵ This is recorded in the SUPG Programme, in which the solution of the housing problem is seen as a key element of socialist society's progress.

Small wonder that our plans for mass housing construction and the strides that have been made in this area have won, as Erich Honecker noted at a plenary meeting of the SUPG Central Committee in June 1986, recognition among the citizens not only of

the GDR but also of other countries for their humanism and embodiment of a basic human right, that of always having a home, and for their contribution to fostering the everyday intellectual culture of the people.⁶

In the early 1970s much still remained to be desired of the quality of the housing in the country: many buildings were in a very poor condition or did not measure up to generally accepted standards of sanitation, the number of persons per apartment and the average housing space per person were dissimilar in different parts of the republic, and there were considerable imbalances in the type and size of the available housing. The housing programme adopted in 1973 provided for the rectification of these shortcomings.

During the past 15 years the people received over 2,400,000 apartments. Of these 1,569,000 were newly-built and 833,000 were modernised. This means that over seven million citizens are now better housed than before. Altogether, there were some 6,900,000 apartments in the republic at the end of last year.⁷ This approximately corresponds to the number of families. However, there still are some local distinctions in providing families with housing.

Considerable headway has been made in improving housing in rural communities. More than 50,000 homes have been built in these communities in only the period 1981-1984. With the help of cooperatives and agricultural building organisations peasants built their own homes and various public services and amenities so that it is now hard to distinguish housing conditions in rural communities from those in the towns.

In the GDR there now are roughly 400 apartments per 1,000 inhabitants, in other words, an average of 26 square metres of floor space per person. By international standards this is not at all bad, bearing in mind that there has concurrently been a perceptible increase of the proportion of well-equipped, comfortable housing. Whereas in 1971 only 39 per cent of all apartments had their own toilets and 38.5 per cent had bathrooms or shower-rooms, by the end of 1985 the proportion of such apartments rose to 68 and 74 per cent respectively (in Berlin the proportion is even higher—93 and 84 per cent). As towns expand close attention is given to making apartments of various sizes available in the new residential neighbourhoods, to fitting the housing programmes into the demographic pattern.

In the GDR rents are low and have not risen since 1949. Together with the expenditure on electricity, gas, water, and heating it averages not more than between 4 and 6 per cent of the family budget; as the population's incomes grow this proportion will diminish steadily. The monthly maintenance of new or modernised housing costs the state roughly 3 marks per square metre (this does include the cost of heating). But citizens pay much less: 0.9-1.05 marks in old houses and 1.05-1.87 marks in new housing developments. In other words, almost two-thirds of the actual cost are covered from social funds. The low rent allows for a balanced territorial distribution of the various demographic and social groups, and this, in turn, promotes society's homogeneity.

As I have already noted, in the republic housing projects include child-care facilities, medical centres, retail outlets, public catering network, and also cultural and sports facilities, recreation centres, and so on. This also is in line with the key provisions of the SUPG's socio-political programme and contributes to its fulfilment.

The state has established standards that have the force of laws: in the new urban neighbourhoods there have to be, in terms of 1,000 inhabitants, between 15 and 25 places in nurseries and 40-45 places in kindergartens, 150-180 places in secondary polytechnical schools, accommodation for 70-80 pupils in school gyms, 40-42 places in school canteens, 14-20 places in restaurants and cafes, one retail outlet (with a space of not less than 110 square metres) for commodities in daily demand, and everyday services centre (40-50 square metres), a medical consulting-room, 5-10

places in clubs, and 4-8 places in homes for the aged. These standards may vary depending upon the population pattern: in Berlin's new residential districts, where the number of young families is particularly large, the demand for child-care facilities is almost double the average, and we take this into account in our planning. The social infrastructure in the republic thus takes shape in keeping with the requirements of the people—retail outlets, artisan workshops, everyday services, restaurants, cafes, polyclinics, and pharmacies are sited in the vicinity of every apartment building. Homes for the aged are built near cultural and recreation centres so that people of advanced age do not feel cut off from life. Pensioners still able to run households are provided with apartments suitable for their age and state of health.

Steadfastly in keeping with established norms, we have reached a stage at which in the GDR there is, for instance, already today kindergarten accommodation for all children whose parents desire such accommodation. In nurseries there is now accommodation for 70 per cent (80 per cent in Berlin) of all children under the age of three. Society is thereby giving considerable backing to women in their aspiration for full social and economic equality.⁸

Housing construction is funded in advance in such a way as to provide for comprehensive projects: 60 per cent of the funds are used for building dwellings, 18 per cent for public buildings, and the remaining 22 per cent for developing territory, transport arteries and underground communications, decoration, and landscaping new neighbourhoods. We attach the utmost importance to this comprehensive approach: by the time tenants receive the keys to their flats the streets must be paved and have sidewalks, and retail outlets, services, child-care facilities, schools, and polyclinics must be prepared to function normally.

Construction teams compete in maintaining continuity of the production process and a balanced fulfilment of the plan—day after day, every ten-day period and month, at all times of the year. The reason for this is that practice has shown that schedule violations lead to delays in completing projects and to sub-standard quality. We want people to move into new apartments that do not require further finishing. Designers, technologists, and workers also undertake socialist commitments to reduce the outlay of materials and working time.

To provide every family with a separate apartment by 1990 means additionally to build or modernise more than a million apartments in the course of the current five-year period. The attainment of this target will make it possible in future to satisfy new applications for housing quicker and with a more differentiated approach. As formerly, priority will be given to families with many children and to newlyweds. Priority is also enjoyed by persons working at three-shift facilities (the state uses this incentive to promote maximum effective utilisation of production capacities). Since in allocating housing a major consideration is to have people live as close as possible to their place of work, the personnel of industrial enterprises and of important economic projects under construction in new neighbourhoods get preference. Experience has shown that this practice stimulates the growth of the productive forces, and plans for the future envisage more housing estates in the vicinity of large industrial combines and services industries. There will be a particularly large number of three-room apartments in such estates.

Increasing attention is being given to renovating and repairing old buildings. In terms of conveniences there is little to distinguish modernised dwellings from new housing; people are comfortable in them. In Berlin, for example, 99 per cent of the apartments will have their own toilets and showers or bathrooms by 1990. Reliably functioning heating systems ensure warmth during the cold period of the year. Thus, by the close of this decade there will no longer be housing failing to meet the requirements of day-to-day hygiene and hindering the formation of the socialist way of life.

The solution of the housing problem can be somewhat accelerated by distributing available housing rationally. This implies providing housing in accordance with the size of families, opening buildings to tenancy quicker after capital repairs, and return to the housing fund premises that have not been used in keeping with their designation. Moreover, the government supports initiatives from the people themselves. For example, the Free German Youth has launched a project calling for the restructuring and extension of old apartments. Those taking part become eligible for housing quicker. More apartments are being exchanged. Elderly people and people whose children have reached adulthood and now live independently are offered, at their own choice, to move into smaller apartments.

In the GDR housing is built by the state and the cooperatives. The proportion of new apartments turned over to the latter annually has increased in 15 years from 17 to 32 per cent. But most of the housing and all public building programmes are funded by the state. The acquisition of land, the tax on the use of land, the development of territory, and the relocation of people, factories, and offices from land chosen for construction projects are paid for by the state.

The cooperatives have two sources of financing: their own funds and state credits (which usually amount to 85 per cent of the cumulative outlays). The building of individual houses, especially in the case of large families, is given every encouragement in rural communities; if necessary credits amounting to the total cost of a house can be received. The debt repayment and the interest on the credit are stretched out so that they do not exceed the average rent for a comparable state-built apartment.

The housing question in the republic's capital, which now has a population of 1,200,000 is a high priority in the realisation of our plans. Under capitalism working people in Berlin lived in crowded, damp, and dark rented barracks. At least 40 per cent of the city's buildings were destroyed during the war. But a thriving city rose from the ruins. Three-fourths of the city's population have been given better housing since the GDR was proclaimed. While in 1949 seven new or modernised flats were turned over for tenancy daily, their number rose to 19 in 1970, and to 91 in 1985. Three new neighbourhoods—Marzahn, Hohenschönhausen, and Hellersdorf—have been built on the city's eastern periphery; some 220,000 people live in only the newly-built apartment houses. In all parts of the capital, especially in traditional workers' neighbourhoods, many buildings have been given a new lease of life after thorough renovation. More than 180 modern schools have been built here in the past 15 years.

In 1986-1990 we plan to build in Berlin another 117,000 apartments, modernise 47,000 apartments, and construct many public buildings. We are working on this large project in the period of the preparations to mark Berlin's 750th anniversary. When Berliners together with all the citizens of the republic and of the capitals of fraternal socialist countries celebrate this anniversary, in 1987, each will be able to see for himself that within only 40 years—a short time span in terms of history—our city has become more attractive than ever before and that its residents live in well-appointed homes.

The restoration of the city's historical monuments and the appearance of new neighbourhoods are testimony that never before has so much been done for Berliners as after the fall of the Nazi Reich and the formation of the first workers' and peasants' state on German soil. The capital's image has changed. It is a city of peace and its example shows that in our society conscientious work enables citizens to satisfy their material, intellectual, and cultural requirements ever more fully and live in the socialist way.

The party knew that the programme charted in the early 1970s could be carried out provided there was a massive transition to industrial methods of housing

construction. The application of these methods was steadily extended. The material resources for rapid progress in housing construction were built up systematically and purposefully. The republic's large house-building plants now prefabricate sufficient panels for more than 100,000 apartments annually (35,000 in 1970). Large-panel construction predominates and we are upgrading this efficient technology.

Over the past few years massive housing construction has been conducted on the basis of a single series—a set of basic elements individually combined and varied to assemble not only apartment houses but also public buildings, for instance, child-care facilities. This significantly reduces the outlay of materials and permits transferring arduous processes from construction sites to the plants, where the preparatory work is done. Moreover, serial production is no hindrance to diversifying architecture and town-building.

The GDR has 15 giant house-building plants subordinate to the relevant district authorities, and a number of central plants. These provide 80 per cent of the prefabricated materials for all housing construction, and have extensive research, designing, development, transport, and assembly capacities. As general contractors they are responsible to the local councils for the comprehensive building of residential neighbourhoods (including public buildings) and for their layout.

The SUPG Central Committee and the GDR Council of Ministers have set builders the task of still further raising the industrialisation level of their work and building houses more economically and of a higher standard. Our efforts are focused on intensifying construction all-sidedly, chiefly by speeding up scientific and technological progress. More material and technical resources are being placed at the disposal of specialised plants and organisations that develop new neighbourhoods—building gas, water, electricity, heating, postal communication, and telephone networks. Industry is widening its assistance to construction workers by increasing the output of lighting appliances, wallpaper, plumbing fixtures, furniture, and so forth.

District construction enterprises providing housing repair and modernisation services are perceptibly enhancing their capacities; they are, in addition, scientific and technological centres in regard to these services. Private and cooperative enterprises are joining more actively in the common effort. In the GDR building crafts have a reliable future. They now account for upwards of 13 per cent of the total volume of construction (two-thirds of this proportion is accounted for by cooperatives and one-third by private artisans producing small commodities). In 1984, for example, they provided more than half of all services for modernising and repairing housing. In Berlin alone there are 85 cooperatives and 1,061 private workshops.

Emergency repairs are carried out quickly by people's communal housing enterprises. Moreover, the people are themselves active in performing voluntary work to maintain buildings in good repair. Tenants' collectives annually sign contracts with local housing authorities on minor repairs which the tenants carry out by themselves. They are paid for this work and the local authority provides the materials. There are repair centres that have the needed instruments and where competent consultation can be received.

Huge sums are allocated for housing in the GDR: during the past 12 years they amounted to over 260 billion marks, which allowed the housing programme to gather rapid momentum. Its successful fulfilment is striking evidence of the concern shown for people by the new society and by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany.

¹ Erich Honecker, *Bericht der ZK der SED an den XI. Parteitag der SED*, Berlin, 1986, p. 26.

² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, pp. 352-353.

³ Wilhelm Pieck, *Gesammelte Reden und Schriften*, Vol. IV, Berlin, 1981, p. 407.

⁴ In 1946 it united with the Social Democratic Party of Germany to form the Socialist Unity Party of Germany.—Ed.

⁵ *Programm der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Berlin, 1986, pp. 27-28.

⁶ *Neues Deutschland*, June 14-15, 1986.

⁷ *Neues Deutschland*, June 15-16, 1985.

⁸ Of the total female population in the GDR 90 per cent are gainfully employed (95 per cent in Berlin).

Alternative to the Policy of the Right

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IN France the new government of the right headed by Jacques Chirac and formed as a result of the parliamentary elections¹ has now been in power for several months. There is no area of the economy or society's life in which a single category of the working people has not come under its onslaught.

Employment and production have been hit at many enterprises and in entire industries—shipbuilding, steel, automobiles, and telecommunications. Government credits for research have shrunk and the salaries of civil servants have been frozen. The mandatory deductions from wages and salaries for social security have increased. Meanwhile, a new assault is being mounted on social guarantees; in particular, retirement terms at age 60 are being reconsidered. The rights of working people are being questioned, and employers are getting new advantages and privileges. Administrative control over economically-motivated layoffs has been abolished, control over currency operations is being dismantled, the freedom of employers to fix prices is being asserted everywhere, and precarious or impermanent employment is being practised ever more widely.

Employers are getting new tax privileges: the special tax on large fortunes has been repealed; supplementary indulgences are enjoyed by employers who create precarious jobs for young people or organise short-term apprenticeships without ensuring proper professional training.

The privatisation of 65 industrial facilities, commercial enterprises, and banks² is in full swing. It has spread to all operations nationalised in 1981 with the exception of deficit-producing steel plants and hence unattractive for privatisation. Privatisation is also to spread to the Elf Aquitaine petroleum company, three of France's largest banks, and three leading insurance companies nationalised after the country was liberated, and the de Gaulle government that sprang from the Resistance movement came to power. Moreover, privatisation is encompassing public utilities. The Communications Act provides for the transfer of the public television network's first channel into private hands, and the dismantling of the social rights of post, telephone, and telegraph workers. National rules governing the functioning of public schools and universities are a target of attack, for the Right is out to create the conditions enabling entrepreneurs to influence these educational institutions.

The parliamentary election law has been modified at the same time: here the objective is to enforce a further cutback of the Communist Party's representation in parliament. The lack of security in the larger towns and the rampant terrorism are being used as the pretext for the adoption of repressive laws limiting freedoms, endangering immigrants, and in fact encouraging racist sentiments and inciting animosity between French working people and immigrants.

In short, all this is the outcome of right-wing policy serving the interests of entrepreneurs and transnational corporations and brutally striking at the working people. The shamelessness with which this policy is being implemented bears out the

assessment given by the FCP after the parliamentary elections, namely, that a 'general drift to the right' is to be observed.³

The reference here is, of course, to the shift in the feeling of the electorate. At the last elections the right-wing parties got a majority of the votes and of the seats in parliament. They had not had such voter support (54 per cent) since 1969. This includes the 9.7 per cent polled by the ultra-right National Front, which now has a parliamentary group.

Only five years ago it was believed that there were practically no ultra-right elements in France. But they managed to enlist the support of the most reactionary capitalist groups and of the politicians who constantly extolled them in the media, counting on thereby undercutting the influence of traditional bourgeois parties such as the Union for the Defence of the Republic and the Union for French Democracy. The National Front relies on the most reactionary elements and, also, on a section of the most disinherited social sections reduced to desperation by unemployment and the crisis. Between the French right-wing parties and the Front extremists there is no distinct boundary either in respect of cadres (many of the present ministers began their political careers in the ranks of the ultras) or in terms of political methods, as is demonstrated, for instance, by the demagogic rhetoric of both the former and the latter on law and order problems.

The drift to the right was also seen in the significant election score of the Socialists (32 per cent) and the new deterioration of the FCP's positions (9.8 per cent) compared with the elections to the European Parliament,⁴ although it received half a million more votes at this election to the National Assembly (2,800,000) and 600,000 more in the elections to regional councils⁵ than two years ago.

At a meeting of the Socialist Party's National Council on the results of the parliamentary elections, one of its leaders Jean Poperen said that in fact the Socialists had 'prised' a small number of votes from us and that the FCP's setback was, as formerly, due largely to abstentions by some segments of the Communist electorate. Nevertheless, this setback must be evaluated as a weakening of the influence of the ideas for revolutionary change in France.

The Socialist Party was supported, needless to say, also by those electors who were apprehensive about the right-wing returning to power and deluded by the SP leaders, who had maintained throughout the run-up to the elections that 30 per cent of the votes would allow them to preclude a change of government. But, at the same time, it must be clearly realised that it was a case of voting for a party that had sacrificed all its promises for anti-capitalist reforms to a policy benefiting the bourgeoisie, for a party that had used the last months of its parliamentary majority exclusively to push through laws adversely affecting the working people, for instance, the law on a flexible regulation of working time.⁶ In other words, the elections showed the extent to which the working people and the population at large had resigned themselves to the belief that the crisis was inevitable and that there was no credible cure except the one suggested in the capitalist recipes.

The Socialist Party bears the historical responsibility for the present situation. One can even say that the Socialists had, in fact, been moving towards it in the course of an entire five-year period, when they held all the levers of state power—the presidency, the Council of Ministers, and an absolute majority in the parliament.

In the initial months after the 1981 elections Francois Mitterrand and the Socialist leaders had to enforce the reforms for which they had been elected by the people, who were expecting changes. They somewhat raised the population's purchasing power and social benefits. But reforms (nationalisation, the right of the working people to participate in management, and devolution) were not used to whittle down capitalist domination. On the contrary, the nation's administration continued to give priority to purely financial growth, while markets were sought abroad, as previously,

despite the fact that the market in France itself represented for the government an opportunity, unique in the capitalist world at the time, for promoting economic growth. The Communists took a stand against this policy, advancing concrete proposals based not on any drive for financial profitability but on other criteria of economic and social efficacy. However, the government turned a deaf ear to them as it did to the militant grievances of workers of enterprises and entire regions. Instead, the government manoeuvred, backing away in the face of the pressure brought to bear by entrepreneurs and the right-wing parties, for example, on the question of schools when they lined up all their forces to protect private education.

In fact, the Socialist Party accustomed the working people to the notion that there could be no social progress and anti-capitalist reforms, pontificating that only a return to so-called realism, to austerity, a reduction of employment, and preferential encouragement for the growth of profits and fortunes would help to overcome the imbalances, the state budget and foreign trade deficits. The Socialists pursued a policy of actively serving capitalist interests, sought to persuade the working people that no policy held out any promise except one of sacrifice and, professing to show a concern for modernisation, tried to give people the impression that their approach to the crisis-triggered hardships, unemployment, and austerity was much more even-handed and socially effective than the policy offered by the Right. At the same time, the Socialist Party tried to convince entrepreneurs that it was seeking to 'rehabilitate' capitalism, that it could get a social consensus for its austerity programme, in other words, impress upon the working class, which has rich traditions of battle, that 'profitability' should be the only criterion of economics and social efficiency.

When they were in power the Socialists pursued not merely a situation-related policy that brought privation and suffering for the working people. It enforced an economic and social restructuring that accommodated the attempts to apply capitalist recipes for a way out of the crisis. This signified sacrificing employment and the living standard of wage workers to a redistribution of a significant portion of the nation's wealth in favour of capital. This is seen in the visible growth of profits and fortunes. Meanwhile, the entire strategy of promoting production backfired, and steps were taken to speed up a kind of restructuring, in the course of which France's industry curtailed production while the big bourgeoisie transferred an increasing proportion of its business interests to foreign countries, notably to the USA. The government prodded nationalised facilities onto the same path, that of sacrificing national interests to the so-called American locomotive, of encouraging export-oriented industries.

So-called flexible regulation of labour relations and working time, deindexation of wages and salaries, and the spread of various forms of precarious employment became integral elements of Socialist policy. The body of laws governing the rights of working people was used to wrest their consent for the abolition of jobs, for the depression of purchasing power, and for ideological subordination to the designs of the bourgeoisie.

Besides, devolution was used as a means of imposing job reductions and giving employers further opportunities for influencing local authority financing of public services, state aid programmes, and credits and other bank operations. The deep-going modifications introduced into the operations and policy of financial institutions adversely affected the unified control of the banking system, which nationalisation (in 1981) was designed, on the contrary, to reinforce. The government found itself saddled with the need to defray a budget and trade deficit and bankroll the running of a number of industrial facilities without drawing upon interest-loaded bank credits. A solution of this problem was sought in operations in financial markets, including foreign markets, dependence upon which grew steadily.

This policy was supposed to scale down the deficits, bring about deflation, and

promote the modernisation of the nation's production potential. However, the slowdown of the growth of prices was due mainly to some deflationary tendencies in the economy, but this did not make French goods more competitive. On the contrary, this indicator slipped; there was a further drop in production. Employment decreased and real capital shrank. More was destroyed than was produced. Financial freedom gave rise chiefly to a growth of the financial activity of firms (profitable investments, irregularities in the use of funds, takeovers, and the export of capital), which, in turn, swelled France's budget deficit and hurt its foreign trade.

In effect, the government of the Right is today continuing this entrepreneurial-slanted policy under new conditions, taking advantage of the difficulties and antagonisms generated when the Socialists were in power. The Socialists had worked methodically to create a consensus around capitalist 'anti-crisis' recipes, and now the new government is trying to utilise the potentialities offered by this consensus. It is developing its economic policy in two basic directions:

- impose an austerity programme on the basis of flexible regulation of labour and wages, a further cutback of public services, and an assault on social security;

- provide private capital (which has been flourishing in recent years) with more favourable terms than previously for investment, export and, in particular, takeovers in, among others, the public services.

This economic policy signals purely capitalist structural changes in all areas, and the formation of a divided society in our country, where millions are condemned to poverty and marginalisation, where all wage workers, all who live solely by their own labour, have no certainty about their future.

This policy, allegedly enforced to foster economic and national growth, will still further aggravate the situation in France and weaken the nation. It will lead to a growth of finance capital to the detriment of the development of modern industries and accelerate our economy's subordination to US and West German transnationals.

The privatisation of nationalised enterprises is a crucial operation of the Chirac government. But here it is not inventing anything new. Since 1982 the government of the Socialists had systematically resisted all attempts to institute guidelines for the management of nationalised enterprises. The democratisation law remained a dead letter. The former criteria of financial profitability were applied to the public sector, for which was blue-printed a development strategy based on the transnational model with employment as the loser. The government allocated a total of over 50 billion francs to abolish 100,000 jobs in the restructuring process. Production in this sector did not grow faster than in the private sector. Foreign investments and financial expenditures surpassed the investments in material production in France itself. The government found its resources dwindling because by spending large sums to curtail production and throwing sops to financial groups to the detriment of employment and the population's purchasing power it pared down its revenue sources. In this situation the privatisation process began, in fact, in 1983 when increasing recourse was had to offers to private capital in the shape of investment certificates and shares in nationalised enterprises. At least 6 billion francs' worth of these certificates and shares has been issued in only the initial months of 1986. Today the Chirac government intends to speed up this process significantly.

French financiers, who had received large compensation⁷ and had made big money on rents and speculation, as well as out of the austerity policy, now want to use their huge riches to buy what has become the backbone of the nation's development—the public enterprises. In acquiring these enterprises French and foreign entrepreneurs (US, West German, Japanese and others) have their eye on getting guaranteed markets and spheres of domination. The abolition of control over currency exchange operations is playing into their hands. And all this at a time when Western Europe is being turned into a theatre of economic conflicts that rage with

rising fury as the price of oil and the value of the dollar plummet.

Nor is privatisation helping to promote production or create jobs. Meanwhile, financial expansion will be more destructive than ever: vast sums (totalling at least 200 billion francs) will have to be allocated for the redemption of what already exists rather than for new industrial projects, the provision of employment, and supplementary investments. Private capital will push for growing dividends and profits without caring about a real growth of production. The calls for abandoning industries regarded as unprofitable are growing more strident. After they are privatised 'healthy' banks will be evaluated in accordance with the laws of the financial market, without state intervention. In order to obtain the best possible terms for self-financing and join in transnational business, bankers will increasingly neglect financing the French economy and spurn intermediary operations. One-fourth of the jobs in this sector of the economy will come under threat and the operating expenses of the banks will have to be paid by depositors.

Our country's imports are growing twice as fast as its exports. Since the beginning of this year the surplus from foreign trade in manufactured goods has been melting like snow in a hot sun. It is already half of what it was last year. The crash of the dollar and the price of oil is giving only an illusory postponement. The market in the developing world, which holds a larger place in our foreign trade than, for instance, the FRG and Japan, is shrinking. Moreover, we benefit less than these two countries from the plunge of oil prices. The fall of the dollar's value signifies a trade war for Europe: it is becoming ever harder to export goods to the USA, while the latter is seeking to increase its sales in Europe.

In the present situation it would seem to be important to protect national interests and develop productive cooperation between French firms enterprisingly, while helping to increase employment qualitatively and quantitatively and to re-establish the leading positions formerly enjoyed by these firms in the domestic market. In order to counter the US-FRG domination, new relations have to be fashioned notably with the Third World and the socialist countries. However, the Chirac government is pursuing a policy taking the nation in the opposite direction. Underlying this policy is the theory that French manufactured goods could be made more competitive by bringing down wages to below the level, say, in the FRG. Actually, the striving to keep labour costs at that level in France, debilitates the economy since it reduces the local market's demand for goods and is an obstruction to a rise of the skill level and to initiatives by workers, without which no modern production is possible. The capitalists prefer to invest their money 'reliably' in financial markets rather than expose it to risk by investing in production.

According to the National Institute of Economic Statistics, industrial executives expect investment growth to show a further slowdown (2 per cent in 1986 against 7 per cent in 1985). France's economic growth rate (2.5 per cent) will remain well below that of its main competitors. The benefits from the fall in production costs due to cheaper oil imports are, in the main, offset by the practice of curtailing and restructuring production, privatisation, and the export of capital.

Such is the socio-economic situation, in which the attitude of the Socialists harmonises with the basic political objectives of the French bourgeoisie. Actually, we are witnessing the emergence in France of the US model of alternation in power of parties that, while having some distinctions of their own and coming into conflict with each other (chiefly, to mislead the people), will pursue one and the same policy in the interests of the capitalists.

This is the context in which Francois Mitterrand's stand must be regarded. While remaining president, he distances himself in words from various initiatives of the Chirac government or makes politically motivated flamboyant public relations gestures that do not in any way influence decisions taken by the government.

The Socialist Party's national conference in June 1986 programmed its further actions in keeping with what it saw as the prospects for the presidential elections in 1988. Activists were urged to 'avoid haste' on the grounds that 'everything will be decided not in two months but in two years'. The highest trump that the congress gave the party's future candidate is criticism of the negative results of Chirac's policy but not any assault against him—just as the dismal record of the Socialist government was used as the main argument of the Right at the last parliamentary elections.

The Socialist Party is thus virtually striving to convert itself into a likeness of the Democratic Party in the USA, in other words, into a political machine serving the campaign of its own presidential candidate, into a conglomerate consisting of the entire spectrum from Socialists to centrists. The prospect of their returning to power is consequently linked not to a militancy against capitalist policy, not to efforts to end the crisis of the social system, but to turning the conflict between the Left and Right into a polemic on generalities, a polemic that will not lead to social changes, to any real improvement of the working people's condition.

Needless to say, this strategy, in which there neither is nor can be a role for the FCP, pushes the Socialist leaders into intercepting Communist votes, into attempts to further undercut our party's strength.

The French Communists are fighting for a different alternative. They consider that the conclusions to be drawn from the outcome of the parliamentary elections and from the new political situation do not call in question the guidelines charted by their 25th Congress. These guidelines retain their significance, and we are now working to deploy their innovative content in full. 'What we must do at the very least is,' it was noted at a plenary meeting of the FCP Central Committee in March 1986, 'to pass from the traditional political movement as the instrument of pressuring political general staffs to a much broader and fundamentally new popular alliance capable, on account of its strength and dynamism, of compelling changes in all areas of society's life.'⁸

This alliance should be formed in the struggle to solve concrete problems bred by the crisis and by the policy of the Right at every enterprise, in every town and rural community, in all areas of life. We intend to achieve unity of action by diverse initiatives from below, worked out with the participation of the citizens concerned. This unity is spearheaded against the policy of the Right, and it is aimed at implementing our recommendations (that take the interests of the working people and their families into account and are permeated with concern for social justice) for boosting employment in quantitative and qualitative terms, and promoting efficient social services. The proposals of the Communists are directed against domination by the big financiers and Stock Exchange barons, against their policies prompted entirely by their drive for profits, for ever larger fortunes.

To those affected by unemployment, afraid to lose their jobs, or made victims of the closure of their professions or enterprises, we say: you must act to compel the profits of enterprises, bank credits, and state aid to be used to create permanent jobs, provide vocational training, and promote research. The Communists reject the destructive logic of subordinating the nation to big capital and call upon workers, peasants, office employees, technicians, and engineers to unite in a struggle for a different road—for cooperation between French enterprises with the aim of ensuring France's development, retrieving their positions in the domestic market, using the latest scientific and technological breakthroughs in production, making investments more productive, and reducing the volume of frozen financial accumulations. They suggest organising mass vocational training in the operation of new equipment so that those who receive this training could get permanent jobs. Teachers, young people, all other working people are urged to combine their efforts to ensure the establishment of schools offering an education that would give students the knowledge they would

need in life.

Unity among working people, among people belonging to different sections of society and regardless of their political affiliation, can be achieved under these slogans. The main thing is that they should act in unison for a way out of the crisis. Of course, to ensure the success of this struggle, to ensure the fulfilment of the anti-crisis programme our ultimate objective is to put an end to the causes of the crisis, to the capitalist system in which they have their roots, and build socialism in the French way. The FCP sees a major achievement of its past few congresses in the emergence of the basic ideas of a programme for building a socialist society in France in accordance with our country's realities, with its distinctive needs and aspirations.

In the resolutions of its latest congresses the FCP rejected the political strategy of 'alliance at the summit' among the parties of the Left. We believe that it would have spelled out a dead end for the popular movement, which should play the decisive role. Of course, this rejection does not exclude the prospect of agreement between political parties. Speaking in Paris on July 2, Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the FCP, reiterated that the stand formulated at our congress retains its significance: "The new popular unity of the majority is not opposed to a union of the Left, of which we remain firm proponents. However, while drawing a vital lesson from our experience, we have included this stand in our new concept of alliance. As before, we want cooperation between our party and other political groups when this co-operation pursues anti-crisis aims and is directed towards resolving the problems confronting our people and country."⁹ He concluded with the words: "In the face of the onslaught of the Right we call for the broadest militant union. At a time when other political forces are suggesting nothing except their own reaccession to power . . . we are opening for France a new prospect based on the defence of the people's basic interests, on a policy of systematically surmounting the crisis, on the building of socialism in the French way, on the unity of our people."¹⁰

¹ Held on March 16, 1986.—Ed.

² The relevant law was passed by the French parliament in July 1986.—Ed.

³ *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 4, 1986, p. 20.

⁴ In June 1985.—Ed.

⁵ Regional councils were elected at the same time as the parliament.—Ed.

⁶ See Jean Charles Negre, "The Law Is in Effect, the Resistance Continues", *WMR*, No. 6, 1986.—Ed.

⁷ For enterprises nationalised in 1981.—Ed.

⁸ *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 4, 1986, p. 15.

⁹ *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 3-4, 1985, p. 388.

¹⁰ *L'Humanité*, July 3, 1986.

Reform Fights its Way The Agrarian Problem in Peru and the Communists

Cesar Jimenez — representative of the
Peruvian Communist Party (PCP) on the *WMR*
Editorial Council

OUR party has always regarded the agrarian problem as a key problem in bringing about revolutionary change. Today it has assumed a scope and urgency that make further delay impossible. Poverty and hunger cause the masses to mount ever more vigorous struggles whose success depends on correct orientation.

Over many centuries Peruvian peasants, mostly descendants from ancient Indian

peoples, were victims of cruel exploitation and oppression. Their heroic struggles for land and freedom were brutally suppressed. The situation did not improve when Peru gained independence in 1821: Spanish feudal colonialists were replaced by Creole latifundists (big landowners) and later by imperialist corporations. The development—if belated—of capitalism at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century gave birth to a national working class, including the rural working class. This gave the peasants their most loyal and consistent ally.

Peru today is not the predominantly peasant country it was: between 1928 and 1986 the total population rose from 5 to 20 million and the share of the rural population fell from 80 to 30 per cent. Six decades ago an overwhelming majority of Peruvians lived in the Sierra. Today it is the home of just 40 per cent of the population, the rest living in the Costa (52 per cent) and Selva (8 per cent) areas.¹ Industry (processing, mining, fisheries, etc. produces two and half times more than agriculture, although it employs only 20 per cent of the economically active population while crop and livestock farming employ 35 per cent (trade—14 per cent, the services—26 per cent).

The relatively low industrial level causes the main mass of migrants, driven by poverty, to look for a livelihood in small semi-cottage industries, crafts, retail trade and the service sphere. The urban poor, usually living cheek by jowl with workers in city suburbs, are allies of the working class in the social battles.

The Struggle for Land

Jose Carlos Mariategui (1894-1930), the founder of the Peruvian Communist Party, provided an in-depth analysis of the agrarian problem in Peru in the late 1920s.² At that time most of the land was owned by the latifundists (local land owners) and foreign monopolies who together oppressed the people. Their interests were closely intertwined. The weak local bourgeoisie was unable to force reforms in its class interests. In the countryside, there existed large capitalist estates, semi-feudal latifundia, peasant communities, small subsistence farms and primitive tribal communities (among the indigenous peoples of the Amazon plain).

A vast number of Indian peasants, most of whom lived in the Sierra, were subjected to a mixed form of exploitation—capitalist, semi-feudal and even slavery. Rural labourers, most of them Quechua and Aymara, also suffered from racial and ethnic discrimination. Most of them remained illiterate because schools used Spanish, the country's official language.

As capitalism developed, the Peruvian nation was taking shape through the gradual merger of the Quechua and Aymara peoples (its main components) and the ethnic groups of the Selva with the descendants of European, African and Asian immigrants. This complex process continues today, covering the bulk of the working class and part of the peasantry. However, the mass of the rural population preserves its roots, cultural traditions and adherence to the collectivism of Indian communities which they fiercely uphold.³

In Mariategui's opinion, the main starting point for solving the agrarian problem, in particular, raising the living standard of the Indian peasants and delivering them from hunger and poverty, would be a radical agrarian reform providing for a free transfer of land to those who till it within the framework of a democratic, anti-latifundist, anti-imperialist revolution that would pave the way to socialism.

Meanwhile, the old oligarchy, blinded by its power, would not hear of any reform. The rural crisis was deepening and social upheavals were brewing. The 30s and 40s saw numerous clashes between individual peasants, particularly members of the communes, and owners of estates and imperialist enterprises who continued to take away land from peasants with official connivance. Many thousands of people were killed, jailed and became victims of wanton violence.

In the mid-50s and early 60s, a broad and powerful peasant movement embarked

upon seizure of landed estates in various parts of the country, especially in the Sierra. The movement met with some success before being brutally put down. President Belaunde (1963-1968) promised to nationalise the oil industry and enact a land reform. But he broke his pledge and entered into a conspiracy with the right-wing oligarchy and the APRA.⁴ His new laws on the so-called agrarian reform left the *latifundismo* regime virtually intact⁵ and was largely limited to the sale of small tracts of outlying and economically unrewarding lands by the landowners themselves.

In reply, a number of left-wing groups—the Movement of the Revolutionary Left and the National Liberation Army—launched guerrilla activity in the forested mountain area between Cusco and Ayacucho in 1965. Their proclaimed goal was anti-imperialist and anti-*latifundismo* revolution and radical land reform. But they had no backing from the peasants and were quickly defeated by the regular troops. Nevertheless, the crisis of the regime sharpened and the situation was explosive.

Agrarian Reform

In June 1969 the progressive military government led by General Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975) promulgated the law on land reform.

Under the law, liable to expropriation were estates exceeding 150-200 hectares of cultivated land and 1,500-6,000 hectares of natural pasture lands in the Costa, 15-330 hectares of ploughland and an area sustaining 5,000-20,000 heads of sheep or an equivalent number of other domestic animals in the Sierra and the Upper Selva.⁶ The exact size of lands not liable to expropriation was specified in relevant legislation. The law did not cover the Lower Selva (Amazon plain), the country's largest region. It was to be the subject of a special decree, which, however, was never drawn up.

Land was expropriated with compensation (in cash and in 30-year bonds). In the expropriation of plantations, structures, farm and industrial equipment compensation was to be in cash (up to a certain level) the rest being covered in bonds. Cattle was paid for only in cash.

Land was given to new owners on condition that its cost would be repaid within 20 years. Small-holding and landless peasants were given so-called family allotments whose size varied depending on the zone but could not be less than 3 hectares.⁷ Part of the land went to the Indian communes. Farms that constituted economic production entities were not divided but were turned over to the labourers and employees in the form of agricultural production cooperatives (APC). Besides, agrarian social interest societies (ASIS) were created which united associations of cooperatives, communes and individual peasants. They could cooperate with the Agricultural Bank and the Industrial Bank and other government offices dealing with the production, marketing and processing of agricultural produce.⁸

In the initial stages, the reform allowed so-called private initiative parcelling of estates which enabled the landowners to pretend that they were handing land to peasants while in fact giving it to their relatives and friends, thus emasculating the law. Powerful protest among agricultural labourers and peasants forced the authorities to abandon this provision in the law. Expropriation of land and its distribution were thenceforth carried out under the common rule.

Expropriated landowners were allowed to cash their bonds if they were willing to invest money in industry (the cashable portion was to be equal to the amount of the investment). Eventually, the traditional stratum of big landowners (*latifundists*) disappeared having largely merged with the industrial, commercial and banking bourgeoisie.

In the course of the agrarian reform, more than 9 million hectares of farmland and pastures were expropriated and handed over to peasants and labourers in agriculture.⁹ The reform affected half of all lands¹⁰ and a little over one-quarter of rural labourers. Land owners now included small- and medium-holding individual

peasants, communes, cooperatives, wealthy peasants, medium latifundists and agrarian bourgeoisie.¹¹

The country could follow one of two directions: either speeded-up capitalist development or cooperation, which would open the way to socialism. The government was committed to the second way as it witnessed by the law on public property enterprises (1974) which were to be set up in all areas of *economic activity*, including agriculture.¹² However, few such enterprises were actually created and the process petered out.

The Peruvian Communist Party and other progressive forces stood resolutely on the side of the agrarian reform. At the same time, numerous conflicts arose in the process of implementation largely because of the actions of the reactionaries inside and outside the government, the APRA and ultra-left groups who took advantage of the just demands of the peasants and the errors and miscalculations of the authorities.

Counter-Reform

Following the overthrow of Velasco Alvarado¹³ the right-wing government of Francisco Morales (1975-1980) froze the agrarian reform and then proclaimed its termination. Having granted medium landowners the right of 'appeal for suspension of the law' the authorities began to return land to them, taking it away from peasants and cooperatives, and depriving the latter of economic, commercial and financial support.

The government of the oligarchy headed by President Belaunde (1980-1985) annulled the land reform law and issued a decree on 'Stimulation and Development of Agriculture' which inaugurated a return to *latifundismo*. Division and reprivatisation of cooperatives, expropriation of land from the peasants in favour of bureaucrats and capitalists followed. About one-fifth of the expropriated land fell into private hands, the rural bourgeoisie grew stronger, but *latifundismo* failed to stage a comeback because of militant actions by peasants, workers and all the national forces.

Applying the recipes of the International Monetary Fund, the administration opened the floodgates to the free import of subsidised agricultural products. This worsened the agrarian crisis. Rural poverty increased. Coupled with natural disasters, it forced growing migration to the towns, especially in the coastal area.

At present, rural workers are subjected mostly to the capitalist form of exploitation, directly—as labour in the employ of private agricultural enterprises and rich land-owners, and indirectly—through the market controlled by the monopolies which sell machines, implements, spare parts, raw materials, fertilisers, etc. at exorbitant prices while buying plant and livestock products at low prices. Another vehicle of exploitation is bank credit which bleeds rural workers white. One should also mention the intermediaries who control transport and wholesale trade, financing individual peasants, Indian communes and cooperatives and then buying future crops for a song.

The Communists and the other parties in the Left Forces Unity have always directed and supported the struggle in defence of the agrarian reform, helped to strengthen mass organisations of rural labourers who have formed themselves into three national associations—the General Confederation of Peruvian Peasants, the Peasant Confederation of Peru (affiliated with the General Confederation of the Workers of Peru),¹⁴ the National Agrarian Confederation (also progressive in orientation, it was set up under the Velasco Alvarado government)—and various independent regional and sectoral federations. In 1983 they sent representatives to a united agrarian national congress which formed a National Unitary Agrarian Council, a body coordinating their struggles and working closely with the national trade union centres.

New Situation

During the 1985 election campaign, the National Unitary Agrarian Council held public debates in which presidential candidates took part. During the discussion Alfonso Barrantes, president of the Left Forces Unity, voiced support of the just demands of the peasants and agricultural labourers. The then General Secretary of APRA, Alan Garcia, spoke in the same vein, albeit in a veiled form. The right-wing parties found themselves completely isolated.

Today the agricultural organisations demand that President Garcia deliver on his promises: respect for and restoration of the agrarian reform gains; aid to the peasants, communes and cooperatives; allocation of adequate financial and credit facilities; partial or full lifting of taxes; fixing a minimal guaranteed price level, etc. To date, Garcia's measures have been half-hearted. They are, to all intents and purposes, limited to low-rate credits during the agricultural season and some privileges in the sale of produce. These measures fall short of the needs of the peasantry. They do not solve the basic agrarian crisis problems and chiefly benefit the bourgeoisie.

One of the causes that brought about this situation is that the government bureaucracy in charge of implementing the agrarian policy is dominated by the opponents of the reform, people linked with the bourgeoisie and the transnationals, enemies of the workers' and peasant movement and fierce anti-communists.

The army and police, for their part, continue a 'dirty war' mainly directed against Indian peasants in the poorer areas of the Sierra. Driven to extremes by poverty and exploitation, and despotic treatment the local population has given some support to the armed actions of the *Sendero luminoso* guerrillas. However, the erroneous orientation and terrorist methods used by that organisation cause grave damage to genuine revolutionary struggles of the masses and provide a pretext for crackdowns and genocide, which began under the Belaunde administration.

According to official figures, 7,000 people have died since 1980. But the popular organisations put the number of dead at 15,000 plus 3,000 missing. Entire villages have been destroyed; people are tortured, burnt to death and buried in mass graves. Such crimes are being perpetrated on an ever larger scale today. The Garcia administration does not dare to curb, condemn and punish the culprits. On the contrary, the authorities have used the pretext of combating terrorist actions, mainly conducted by extreme right groupings, to spread martial law, the state of siege and curfew to new areas, including the capital Lima. Almost half of the country's population are affected by these measures. All this aggravates matters, precludes effective solution of the agrarian question and is fraught with still graver consequences.

Compounding the problems is the activity of drug traffickers in the Upper Selva zone. Speculating on the peasants' needs, they finance and buy coca crops, produce cocaine and smuggle it abroad, mainly to the United States. In fact, illegal cocaine trade has become a major 'export item'. Punitive operations cause more damage to peasants than to the drug businessmen. Their crops are destroyed without any damages paid. They get no assistance either in growing staple food crops or in the processing and export of agricultural produce. Finally, one must mention the violence, abuses and crimes perpetrated by the punitive forces as well as the drug traffickers.

The Food Problem

Although its area is 1,285,000 sq. kilometres, Peru has a mere 3 million hectares of arable land, i.e. an average of two-odd hectares per peasant family and 0.15 hectares per head of the population in general. However, along with a host of small farms of one hectare and even less, and landless peasants, there are cooperatives and capitalist

enterprises possessing considerable areas (up to several thousand hectares), and rich land owners. If all these lands are farmed by modern methods, with the use of fertilisers, machinery, high-grade seeds, irrigation, etc. the country could be self-sufficient in food. As it is, with the exception of a few areas, farming methods and tools are primitive, fertilisers are unknown, and draught animals and human muscle are the only source of power. There are a mere 9,000 tractors in use in agriculture, and many of them are obsolete. Sometimes as much as one half of the crops is lost due to drought, floodings, frosts, plant diseases, shortage of storage and transportation facilities. Part of the crops perish because wholesalers refuse to buy them or offer too low a price. As a result, an overwhelming majority of families are undernourished, getting about 55 per cent of the necessary calory intake and 70 per cent of the minimal protein norm.

The country's population is increasing at an annual rate of 2.6 per cent (500,000); almost a quarter of a million of young people are unable to find a job upon reaching employable age. At present, the country imports about 300 million dollars worth of food (and the people remain undernourished) and in the future the problem may become more acute.

Is there a way out? Undoubtedly there is. It is offered by the Peruvian Communist Party and the Left Forces Unity.

Peru is a country where practically all the climatic zones are represented from tropical to the temperate to cold (depending on the geographical location and elevation above sea level). It grows almost all kinds of crops. Modern technology could help bring it another 10 to 15 million hectares of land and even more. But this would call for an additional investment of some 5,000 to 15,000 dollars per hectare (to build major irrigation projects in the Costa and the Sierra and to cultivate virgin land in the Selva). Meanwhile, an investment of some 3,000 dollars into every hectare, the Communists believe, would raise crop yields by two or three times by building a controlled irrigation system, grain siloes and elevators, buying tractors and other agricultural machines, weeding, clearing away stones, expanding and meliorating terraces, rational distribution of crops, etc. We think it is important to forbid the sale of land to urban developers and to oblige government bodies and municipalities to fix the size and boundaries of urban growth. For a more rational use of resources in the crop and livestock raising and forestry areas it is necessary to implement a comprehensive transport development plan.

The Left believes that it is necessary to lend financial support to cooperatives, communes and organised individual peasants, to grant them credits to buy means of production throughout the agricultural season. To ensure financing and purchasing of crops at acceptable prices, its storage, transportation and marketing, it is necessary to reorganise and strengthen the government institutions and enterprises involved in the agrarian sector.

The Communist Party and the Left Forces Unity consider it vital to nationalise foreign and local monopolies producing fertilisers, pesticides, combined fodders, milk, flour, beer, etc. It is impossible to launch a project of large-scale improvements in agriculture without creating government industries to manufacture tractors, agricultural machines and equipment, without nationalising private banks and external trade, including import and export of agricultural produce.

According to our programme, to ensure the maximum yield from the land reclaimed from nature by irrigation and recultivation, it should be given free only to those peasants organised into cooperatives, rural communes, state farms and to landless peasants who would eventually form themselves into cooperatives. The same principles should be applied in the development of the Upper and Lower Selva with due account of the territorial rights of the indigenous communities represented by 60 ethnic groups of the Amazon basin.¹⁵ Due attention should also be given to

eradicating the drug business and replacing corrupt officials.

The Peruvian Communist Party and the Left Forces Unity conclude that a new and more effective nation-wide agrarian reform is on the agenda. A reform that would limit the size of inalienable property, put an end to *latifundismo* in every form, to the concentration of vast tracts of land in private hands, and would make no concessions to the transnationals. High on the reform agenda should be all-out development of the agro-industrial complex as part of the government sector, of peasant communes and cooperatives. It is essential that the reform should be implemented with active and decisive participation of peasant and workers' organisations, their representatives at every level of decision-making.

The state will find itself short of resources if it continues to allow the transnational corporations to plunder its national wealth, if it continues to pay towards foreign debts and spend vast sums to maintain the army and police. Therefore, the solution of the agrarian and food problems should be tied in with the nationalisation of the entire oil industry, major mining projects, banks and financial agencies, some private monopolies, with a moratorium on the repayment of the foreign debt (as a first step to its annulment) and the struggle for peace and disarmament.

The Peruvian Communist Party has provided the rural workers with a revolutionary programme, has pointed the way to liberation. It was the first to help them organise, to forge the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and it is consistently upholding their interests. The PCP has produced many leaders of the rural proletariat and peasants, many of whom have died like heroes. The ideas promoted by the Communists have struck roots and are bearing fruit among the masses. Today, dedicated work is going on at the grassroots level to unite the broadest forces on our platform.

The Ninth Congress of the PCP will review the struggle in this field and will lay down the guidelines that correspond to the present complex stage in the social development of Peru.

¹ The country consists of three long strips running meridionally: the Sierra—a mountain area of the Peruvian Andes (200-500 km wide), the Costa—the narrow coastal strip (40 to 170 km) along the western Pacific coast, and the Selva—a vast forested area of the eastern foothills of the Andes and the Amazon plain. The constitute respectively 28, 10 and 62 per cent of the national territory.

² See J. C. Mariategui, *7 ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*, Lima, 1928.

³ There are 6,000 peasant communities uniting more than 4 million people (*Programa del Partido Comunista Peruano*, Part I, Lima, 1979, p. 49; *Caretas*, No. 904, 1986, p. 31).

⁴ The currently ruling bourgeois reformist party.—*Ed.*

⁵ In 1961 1.4 per cent of the estates (over 100 hectares) owned 84 per cent of farmland (*Programa del PCP*, Part I, p. 18).

⁶ See *Legislación de Reforma Agraria*, Lima, 1971, pp. 18-21.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁹ Ploughland in Peru occupies some 3 million hectares (including about 0.5 mln hectares of fallow land), natural pastures (mostly of poor quality) occupy 27 mln hectares, forests—74 mln hectares, rocky mountains (partly snow-covered) and deserts (mostly sand)—25 mln hectares.

¹⁰ Of which: 52 per cent irrigated, 42 per cent dry, 43 per cent natural pastures (*Programa del PCP*, Part II, p. 73).

¹¹ According to figures for 1979 the APCs and ASISes accounted for 36 per cent of land (reckoned on the basis: 1 ha of irrigated land equals 2 ha of dry land and 100 ha of pastures) and 12 per cent of agricultural manpower; individual peasants 34 and 80 per cent respectively, small agrarian bourgeoisie 15 and 4.5 per cent, capitalists and medium landowners 15 and 3.5 per cent (*Programa del PCP*, Part II, pp. 74-76).

¹² See *WMR*, No. 6, 1986, pp. 102-104.—*Ed.*

¹³ Unseated in the coup of August 1975.—*Ed.*

¹⁴ The General Confederation of the Workers of Peru jointly with independent class federations unites three-quarters of organised labour.

¹⁵ There are currently 1,000 such communities numbering 200,000 people.

Bitter Battles Lie Ahead

Philemon Malima – CC Political Bureau
member, South-West African People's
Organisation

SWAPO has been fighting for more than a quarter of a century to liberate the Namibian people from the tyrannical rule of the South African racists. Within this period it has developed into a powerful vanguard of the revolutionary movement encompassing the majority of Namibians—people belonging to the indigenous population, coloureds, and whites. Under its leadership the people have fought successfully on the military and political fronts.

Thousands of people respond to our calls for demonstrations as, for example, on SWAPO's 25th anniversary, the seventh anniversary of the brutal actions against the people of Kassinga, and the 26th anniversary of the bloodbath in Windhoek. An illustration of the influence and prestige enjoyed by SWAPO is that when public pressure forced the racist regime to release SWAPO members held in the Pretoria prison, the Mariental concentration camp, and on Robben Island, large numbers of people filled the streets to welcome them, openly demonstrating their solidarity with and backing for our struggle. SWAPO has the support of all the leading patriotic parties and unions in Namibia.

We have been able to unite the population, to mobilise them for resistance to the racist aggressors occupying Namibian territory, to make this a nation-wide struggle. The invaders are gallantly challenged by thousands of members and supporters of our organisation. SWAPO's military wing, the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, has inflicted telling blows on troops of the South African racists and their puppets. Fighting now rages in practically the whole country. There is no place where Pretoria's puppets and troops can feel safe. During the first half of 1985 our army carried out 352 successful operations, killing hundreds of invading troops and their puppets. There is particularly heavy fighting in the central, northern, and northeastern parts of the country. Acting on directives from the SWAPO leadership on vitalising the armed liberation struggle, units of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia carried out a series of effective operations last spring and summer. In an attack on a large South African military base Namibian patriots killed 50 servicemen and blew up arms depots and barracks. They put the high-voltage power transmission line near the Ruacana hydropower station out of commission and took a heavy toll of the enemy's troops and military hardware.

The liberation forces are striking increasingly powerful blows. In the long, bloody struggle we have compelled the invaders to reckon with the patriots as a political and military force. The racists are compelled to spend millions of rands on their war of aggression, increasing their forces operating against the Namibian people to 110,000 effectives. Pretoria eagerly uses the services of mercenaries, who come to our long-suffering land from the USA, Britain, France, Chile, Israel, and other capitalist states. But despite its size, this military machine is unable to cope with the fighting masses.

Seeking to widen the conflict, sow discord among our people, and reduce their own losses, the racists have begun to mobilise Namibian youths into their puppet 'territorial forces'. But this reinforcement is not burning with any desire to fight for Pretoria—patriotic sentiments are running high among the young people. The South African rulers had, as they have done many times already, to reinforce their army of occupation. Special units have been formed for purely punitive functions. The most murderous thugs from among the white mercenaries (many of them pose as Africans, going so far as to paint their faces black) are recruited into these units. Their cruelty

against the civilian population knows no bounds. In short, we have no further illusions: ahead of us is a hard and grim struggle that will require much effort and sacrifice from SWAPO fighters.

The powerful upsurge of the national liberation movement, the magnitude of the strikes dealt the invaders, and their growing casualties are compelling the racists to manoeuvre, to have recourse to all sorts of subterfuges. To provide a political cover they have set up the 'Democratic Turnhalle Alliance' consisting of puppets from various ethnic groups in Namibia. Then on Pretoria's instructions and with its active participation there appeared a 'national assembly' consisting of the selfsame members of the 'Alliance', and later they set up a Ministers' Council.¹ Finally, last year the racists tried to impose upon our people a new 'democratic' form of administration—the interim government of a multiparty conference. It consists of the most reactionary elements from among the local collaborationists.

The South African government calculated that its puppets would win some popularity in Namibia, attract people from SWAPO, and thereby split the ranks of the patriots. However, this ploy failed: these venal politicians have no base in Namibia. This was to be expected. They play no independent role, serving only as a mouthpiece of their South African masters. SWAPO, whose fighters are engaged in a life and death battle for the country's independence, remains the leader and sole legitimate representative of the people.

Pretoria has lately been having increasing recourse to diplomatic subterfuges to camouflage its aggressive plans in Southern Africa. Last spring Pieter Botha, head of the racist regime, announced a 'new initiative', publicly declaring that South Africa was prepared to comply with the UN Security Council Resolution No. 435² requiring the withdrawal of racist troops from Namibia; he even named the date—August 1. But in the next breath he explained the meaning of the 'new approach'. He said that South African troops would be pulled out of Namibia provided the Cuban internationalist forces were evacuated from Angola.³

We see in this an arrogant ultimatum that gives the lie to the Pretoria rulers' big talk about wanting to settle the Namibian conflict. It is, in fact, nothing less than a ludicrous attempt to link the issue of terminating our country's unlawful occupation by foreign troops to a purely internal affair of a third, sovereign nation. When the independence of a people is at issue nobody has the right to lay down conditions. Pretoria must unreservedly comply with the relevant Security Council resolution. There neither is nor can be any other way of settling the conflict.

Pretoria's intransigence is easily explained. The racists know they have the backing of leading imperialist powers: the FRG, Britain, Canada and, of course, the USA. World capital is going to all lengths to save the apartheid regime in South Africa, which it regards as a strategic springboard on our continent and in the Indian Ocean for the suppression of the national liberation movement.

State terrorism, espionage, and political and economic subversion have long been practised by the imperialists in their relations with independent nations. It is hence quite natural that they should aid the racists in the drawn-out aggression against the Namibian people. The present US administration has declared publicly that it will not abandon South Africa, which it sees as a faithful ally and mainstay in Africa.

Apart from its political motivations, the White House's concern for Pretoria is dictated by purely economic considerations: world capital is trying to retain control of Southern Africa's colossal mineral resources, many of which are of strategic significance.

Foreign monopolies, including transnationals, are extracting fabulous profits from their relentless exploitation of Namibians. Namibian working people receive miserable wages, are denied normal housing, and suffer from a lack of elementary medical care. Our national wealth has been looted for decades on end. The following

illustrates the scale of this looting: the gross national income of Namibia (with a population numbering approximately one million) is 1,250 million dollars, which formally amounts to 1,250 dollars per capita. Thus, in per capita terms it is several times above the average in Africa. But in fact the Namibian receives only 125 dollars a year. In other words, nine-tenths of the gross national product go into the pockets of foreign exploiters. What people would resign themselves to this farcical distribution of their country's wealth?

We have never been alone in the struggle for national independence. An indication of the side on which the world community stands is the growing international prestige of SWAPO, which has established official diplomatic relations with many countries. Solidarity with the Namibian people is expressed by democratic circles even of those states whose rulers refuse to accept realities and continue to ignore our organisation.

SWAPO's prestige is growing in the non-aligned movement. Its 25th anniversary was marked by a special conference on Namibia convened by its Coordinating Bureau. At the opening of this conference in New Delhi, India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi declared that his country was extending full diplomatic status to SWAPO. India's example has been followed by a number of independent Third World nations.

The concrete moral and material support that our just cause gets from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is of special significance. Their solidarity is the natural response of the socialist social system, which rejects exploitation of man by man and any other manifestation of social injustice.

A further expression of solidarity with our embattled people and their vanguard, SWAPO, was last summer's Vienna International Conference on the Immediate Granting of Independence to Namibia. This conference was attended by representatives of 128 countries and some 70 non-governmental organisations and national liberation movements. The documents adopted by this major forum unequivocally reiterated the Namibian people's inalienable right to self-determination and national independence.

We expect much this year, which SWAPO has proclaimed the 'year of mobilisation and decisive actions for final victory'. In an appeal to the Namibian people our organisation's president Sam Nujoma noted that the moment has arrived for every patriot to ask himself: 'What have I done for final victory in the struggle for the independence of Namibia?' Every person is called upon to determine what he or she should personally do in the prevailing situation to expel the ruthless enemy from the country, to bring the country national independence, peace, and prosperity.

The assistance that SWAPO gets from the people is broad and diverse. The rural population gives our fighters shelter, food, and medicines (if such are available). Many courageous peasants risk their lives to inform us of the enemy's location and plans and act as guides. In towns every factory and every block of houses is a battlefield. A very significant role is played by workers. Strong actions by them are increasingly shattering the foundations of the occupational regime and hastening its inevitable downfall.

Intellectuals are playing a growing role in our movement. Their creative powers and ability to persuade people and enlist support for the fight for freedom are formidable weapons against the invaders and their local puppets.

SWAPO is being joined by growing numbers of young people—students, workers, teachers, by persons who have not only to fight on the battle front but also build an independent and democratic Namibia. We will make the enemy pull out of our country. The day of final victory is not far off.

¹ See Sam Nujoma, 'Fighting in a Besieged Garrison', *WMR*, No. 5, 1984.

² Resolution on Namibia, passed in 1978.—*Ed.*

³ Only a few months later, speaking through the lips of this selfsame Botha, Pretoria simply dropped even its rhetoric about reckoning with the UN resolution on Namibia.—*Ed.*

surveys, information and mail

Pages of History

'You Are a Legend!' (On the 50th Anniversary of the International Brigades in Spain)

The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)¹ was a particularly dramatic episode in the confrontation between the forces of progress and reaction in the period before the Second World War. It was by no means an internal Spanish matter. The anti-Republican fascist military revolt started on June 18, 1936, had massive backing from Hitler's Germany and fascist Italy. The Popular Front government desperately needed outside help. One form of this help, and a vivid manifestation of solidarity on the part of the proletarian and democratic forces in the world, was the creation of voluntary International Brigades which joined the People's Army in fighting the rebels. Below, a former International Brigade fighter shares his memories.

FROM the early days of the revolt hundreds of anti-fascists from Italy, Poland, Germany and other countries were fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with Spanish democrats in Barcelona, Madrid, Irun, Aragon, Sierra de Guadarrama and on Mallorca. Among them were political emigrants and worker athletes who had come to Barcelona to take part in the People's Olympics (intended to be a counterweight to the Berlin Olympics held under the sign of the swastika). Many of them joined the people's militia and became the first volunteers in international units.

At first these were battalions and detachments. In August-September 1936 Hans Beimler, member of the CC of the Communist Party of Germany, became commander of the Thälmann battalion in Aragon made up from Germans and Austrians; a British battalion, which was later included in the 15th International Brigade, was formed by the volunteers from Great Britain. An Italian column named after Roselli was active on the Aragon front. The Gastone Sozzi and Paris Commune battalions consisted of Italian, French and Polish volunteers. There was a Polish detachment named after Dabrowski and a Hungarian one, named after Racosi. All of them fought against the rebels who threatened Madrid from the north.

The people's militia which was set up after July 18 offered heroic resistance to the superior enemy forces. Its strength, however, was lessened by poor training, the lack of combat experience, and a low level of discipline, notably due to the considerable influence of anarchism in the midst of the working class. There was also a shortage of weapons, ammunition and reserves, lack of proper logistical support and food supplies, all the things that Franco troops enjoyed in abundance.

The republic found itself in an increasingly dangerous situation. There was an urgent need for a regular army, as vigorously advocated by the Communist Party of Spain. In August 1936 it set up the famous Fifth Regiment, a major centre for recruitment and training of fighters for the future army. Its commander was Enrique

Lister, a stone-mason, and political commissar Carlos Contreras (Vittorio Vidali), an Italian volunteer who had become immensely popular under the name of Comandante Carlos. The members of the Madrid Communist Party organisation formed the regiment's nucleus. Its strength quickly rose to 70,000 men, and these formed the first regular army units as soon as the government decided to create a People's Army (October 10).

The situation demanded the use of all resources, domestic and foreign, to resist the fascists. For, as Dolores Ibarruri, a member of the Spanish Popular Front delegation, told a mass rally in Paris on September 3, the Spanish war was but a first stage of fascism's aggression against other peoples of Europe. Assistance to the Spanish people became the concern of the whole international working class and anti-fascists in other countries.

Communist parties did their best to promote the mounting movement of solidarity with Republican Spain. In late August 1936 the Communist International called for assistance to the Spanish people by creating volunteer brigades to be put at the disposal of the Republican government and the Spanish army's general headquarters. (Madrid granted official permission to form such brigades on October 22.)

Meanwhile more and more volunteers were arriving in Spain (by various, often clandestine, routes). Among them were men and women from France, Brazil, Italy, Mexico, Germany, the USA, Bulgaria and Austria. People from 53 countries on all continents made their way, sometimes on foot, in order to join the struggle against the German and Italian fascist invaders.

Many volunteers had combat experience from the First World War and revolutionary battles. Young men who had come from countries with universal military draft had army training. Others received military instruction (often very basic) in Spain. The base and headquarters of the International Brigades was in the town of Albacete. The headquarters collaborated with the Spanish defence ministry on all the questions connected with the training of newly-arrived volunteers and sending them to the front.

Among the organisers of the International Brigades were such prominent figures in the international communist and workers' movement as Palmiro Togliatti, Luigi Longo, Francois Billoux, Vittorio Codovilla, Guiseppe di Vittorio, General Lukacs (the Hungarian author Mate Zalka), General Walter Karol (Swierczewski, a Pole), and others.

Throughout the war the Communist International and its member parties sought to strengthen the Spanish Republican Army, setting an example to other anti-fascist forces. Unfortunately, the same could not be said of international social democracy. Its leaders, while professing sympathy and admiration for the struggle of Republican Spain, avoided giving it any concrete support and refused to cooperate with the Communist International on this issue. Even so, many activists and rank-and-file Social Democrats managed to get to Spain to fight against fascism together with the Communists.

The communist parties sent their reliable, dedicated and militarily most experienced comrades. This was particularly true of the Soviet Communists. Talented Soviet military experts and instructors attached to the commanders of different armed services of the Spanish People's Army, its supreme command, army, division and brigade headquarters spared no effort, nor even their lives, to defend the cause of democracy and progress against the fascist threat. Soviet internationalist fighters in Spain numbered 2,500 (of the total 36,000 of foreign volunteers throughout the war).

What exactly was an International Brigade? It was an infantry unit comprising three to five battalions, a field artillery battery, an anti-tank battery, a communications company, engineers, transportation and medical companies and a cavalry platoon. Seven International Brigades were set up between October 1936 and

the end of 1937. The first of them (11th on the Republican Army roster) was formed in late October 1936 and numbered 1,900 officers and men and consisted of three battalions.² The Brigade Commander was General Kleber (G.M. Stern), former officer of the Austro-Hungarian Army who had been taken prisoner on the Russian front and, after the October Revolution, fought in the Red Army against the White Guards and foreign interventionists.

The 12th Brigade (1,600 men, three battalions) was formed in early November under the command of General Lukacs whose previous record was similar to that of the commander of the 11th Brigade: Austro-Hungarian Army, Russian captivity, Red Army. The 13th, 14th and 15th Brigades were set up in December 1936-January 1937, the 150th in the middle of 1937 and the 129th at the end of 1937. The composition of the International Brigades changed more than once during the war, especially after heavy losses in battles. For that reason, the 13th Brigade was disbanded in July 1937 and the newly-set-up, predominantly Slavic 150th Brigade took its place on the roster.

Along with the brigades there were three international battalions: in the 86th and 35th Brigades and the 45th Division of the Republican Army. There were also foreign volunteers in tank, aviation, artillery, anti-aircraft, cavalry, transportation and partisan units.

The crucial defence of Madrid took place on November 6, 7, and 8, 1936. The battle for the Spanish capital was a severe test for the International Brigades, and they rose to the test.

The rebel forces began their advance on Madrid in the middle of October. The People's Army tried to counter-attack and engaged in fierce battles sustaining heavy losses. The overwhelming fascist forces, however, managed to break through to the city and began shelling and bombing it.

On a call from the Communist Party of Spain and other progressive organisations the proletariat rose in defence of Madrid. 'No Pasaran!' (They Shall Not Pass!), the slogan launched by Dolores Ibarruri, that ardent revolutionary (La Pasionaria) expressed the troubled atmosphere of those days.

On November 8, 1936 the capital's inhabitants had their first sight of internationalist fighters who marched along Madrid's Gran Via to the solemn and stirring melody of the proletarian anthem which everybody knew and sang in his own language—French, German, Italian, Polish, Romanian and Hungarian. That was the 11th International Brigade on its way to Casa de Campo and the University campus in order to take up defence positions in one of the most vulnerable sections of Madrid's defence. On November 12, it was joined by the 12th International Brigade.

The defence was prolonged and gruelling. In the University campus it lasted until November 23, with every building and every floor fought for. Madrid was subjected to daily air raids and artillery shelling. German airmen from the Condor legion tried out a new weapon—incendiary bombs. However, fascist barbarism caused not fear but hatred, stiffening the resolve of the defenders to fight until last.

The besieged city stood its ground. The fascists could not seize it in open battle and retreated with heavy losses in manpower and material. The International Brigades, too, lost as many as 40 per cent of their men. But their staunchness and valour made an invaluable contribution to the defence of Madrid which remained the Republic's capital until the end of the Civil War.

International Brigade members also fought heroically in other battles setting examples of valour and dedication wherever they were sent by the Republican Army command. When the time came to leave the country, which had become a second homeland for them,³ the feeling of bitterness over the general outcome of the war could not totally eclipse the feeling of duty fulfilled to the end. There was no exaggeration in the farewell words La Pasionaria addressed to the members of the

International Brigades: 'You can leave proudly! You are history! You are a legend!'

Bruno Furch,
representative of the Communist
Party of Austria on *WMR*
former soldier in the communications
company, 11th International Brigade

¹ For more detail on this see *WMR*, No. 7, 1986, pp. 85-92.

² Most of the battalions in the International Brigades had names: the Paris Commune, Edgar Andre, Dabrowski, in the 11th Brigade and Garibaldi, Thälmann in the 12th and Chapayev, Mickiewicz in the 13th, etc.

³ In September 1938, the Republican government decided that the volunteers should leave Spain. The decision was prompted by international diplomatic reasons.—*Ed.*

Hunger in the Capitalist 'Paradise'

Hunger is usually named among the problems confronting many developing nations. However, this affliction has by no means been wiped out in industrial capitalist countries either. An illustration of this is the situation in the USA, the biggest and one of the richest of these countries. The fact that under-nourishment is a pressing problem for a large section of Americans is reaffirmed in a report compiled by a group of experts at Harvard University's School on Public Health under the heading 'Hunger in America: The Growing Epidemic'. The following is a survey by the *WMR* Commission on Scientific Information and Documentation. The statistics are based on the above-mentioned report.

IN the 1960s hunger was the lot of millions of US citizens. The situation was improved somewhat by the federal food aid programme, but not for long. The present decade is witnessing a dramatic resurgence of this problem. There is not a single state or city in the USA where a large number of persons is not registered as unable to afford basic foodstuffs. Altogether, there are some 20 million persons (8 per cent of the population) in the USA confronted by real hunger one way or another.

Long silent queues waiting for a free plate of soup, called daily meals in official documents, have become a fixture of the American cityscape. In only 1984 the need for such 'meals' increased by 50 per cent nationally (by a factor of two in Dallas, of three in Boston, and by 182 per cent in Chicago). This is a social tragedy by any standard. Many of those who now can only hope to get a free plate of soup were only yesterday seen as 'well-to-do' Americans. And the number of these people is growing steadily.

In 1980, out of every 100 Americans living in poverty 68 were getting food stamps; by 1984 their number had dropped to 58. The Reagan administration is intractably seeking to persuade public opinion that these stamps are needless charity. The White House has made deep cuts in the allocations for social programmes, including food aid. There was immediate results. About a million persons were deprived of food stamps, and the number of children receiving free school breakfasts dropped by three million (about a million of them are from low-income families).

According to a poll in the northern counties of California, 60 per cent of the people covered by the poll said they were denying themselves food in order to feed their children, and yet 22 per cent of these children go to bed hungry. About half of these people said they could spend not more than *10 dollars a week* on food for their families. A miniscule sum, indeed, if one takes the prices of food into account (in

September 1985, according to Department of Labour statistics, the price of a kilo of white bread was about 2 dollars, of meat between 5 and 9 dollars, of fish 4.7 dollars, of butter 4.6 dollars, of margarine about 2.2 dollars, and so on).

Summing up these facts, the experts drew the conclusion that in the USA hunger was the consequence of the White House's policies, as a result of which the poverty growth rate in the nation reached a record high while the allocations for social programmes were cut drastically. The dynamics of these cuts in 1982-1985 are given in the following table (in percentage of the previous year):

	1982	1983	1984	1985
Unemployment benefits	-4	+10.7	-14.8	-17.6
Aid to big families	-9.9	-13	-13.5	-14
Food stamps	-12.2	-9.7	-14.2	-14.1
Children's meals, including school breakfasts	-24.3	-28.8	29	28.5
Maternity benefits	-4.9	+10.5	+7	+4.3
Housing	-	+1.2	-4.3	-11.5
Fuel oil subsidies	-7	-7.6	-8.6	-9.7

Depression of state aid to needy people accelerated the spread of hunger in the USA. Other factors of this acceleration were flaws in the social insurance system itself and the economic decline that caused a growth of unemployment and poverty.

The social aid system does not guarantee even relative protection for needy citizens. The various indicators of the population's social security show that poor families and individuals in the USA do not get sufficient aid from the state. The level of subsidies, as noted already, has fallen significantly and, besides, does not keep up with the inflation rate. For instance, the real incomes of families receiving benefits under the programme of aid to families with many dependents dropped by one-third in the period from 1970 to 1984. Between 1980 and 1984 the population's purchasing power of 40 per cent of the population declined.

The real incomes of five different sections of the US population changed as follows in 1980-1984: those of the poorest and the poor diminished by 7.6 and 1.7 per cent respectively, and those of the middling secure, well-to-do, and rich rose by 0.9, 3.4 and 8.7 per cent respectively. The facts thus testify that the social policy of the present administration is beneficial for the propertied and detrimental to the poor. Far from having eased the adverse effect of inflation on low-income families, it has further eroded their already low living standard.

Poverty and, as a consequence, hunger were aggravated by the growth of unemployment from 6.2 per cent in early 1980 to 10.7 per cent at the close of 1982, the highest rate since the crisis of 1929-1930. Although in December 1984 unemployment dropped to 7.2 per cent, there still were 473,000 more jobless than in 1980. An indication that the problem of unemployment had exacerbated was the 70 per cent growth (from 820,000 to 1,400,000) of persons denied jobs for a long period (six months and more) and the rise of the number, given under a separate head by the Department of Labour, of chronically jobless, of those who had given up hope of finding a job and stopped registering with the labour exchange.

The number of chronically unemployed rose from 1,055,000 in the first quarter of 1980 to 1,303,000 (up by 23.5 per cent) by the first quarter of 1984, when according the official estimates there was some improvement in the economic situation. During the three cyclical declines in the USA between 1969 and 1980 persons who had lost all hope of employment comprised 36-37 per cent of the total number of jobless. During

the latest economic crisis (early 1980s) this indicator went past 50 per cent. According to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, of the 5,100,000 persons laid off in 1979-1984 only 60 per cent returned to work mostly at a much lower wage level. At the close of this period some 1,300,000 persons were still looking for work, while 700,000 stopped registering with the labour exchange.

Only a minority of jobless Americans are getting unemployment relief. During the economic decline of 1975 the unemployment rate was roughly the same as 10 years later, but while in 1975 relief was received by 78 per cent of the jobless by the close of 1983 the figure had fallen to 39 per cent, and in the latter half of the following year it fluctuated between 29 and 36 per cent. In December 1984 as many as 5,100,000 of the 8,000,000 unemployed got no benefits as a result of the cutback (by 110 billion dollars for the period 1982-1985) of budget allocations for social programmes.

The reduction of these allocations and the changes in the tax system led to a substantial redistribution of incomes in American society. Within a period of only three years (1983-1985) the incomes of poor families fell by a total of 23 billion dollars, while those of families receiving not less than 80,000 dollars annually rose by 35 billion dollars. This redistribution is illustrated in the following table (in billion dollars):

	Families with an annual income of less than 10,000 dollars	Families with an annual income of over 80,000 dollars
1983	-5.6	+9.9
1984	-8.1	+11.9
1985	-9.4	+13.1
	-23.1	+34.9

The growth of the population of tax revenues going into the Treasury from the population (from 73.5 per cent in 1970 to 82.9 per cent in 1983) and the simultaneous decrease of tax revenues from corporations (from 15 to 6.2 per cent) are the result of the double or treble rise of income taxes paid by poor families. A steadily increasing portion of the pitiful incomes of poor families is swallowed by taxes. Families living at or below the poverty line paid 4 per cent of their incomes in taxes in 1978, 5.5 per cent in 1980, 8.9 per cent in 1982, and 10.1 per cent in 1984.

This tax policy has a direct bearing on the growth of poverty in the USA, the extent of which rose by 20.5 per cent in the period from 1980 to 1983.

During these four years the army of the poor in the USA increased by 9 million to reach a total of some 35,300,000 persons. If we judge by the incomes left to families after taxes are paid, we shall find that another 3 million must be added to this total, while the number of persons whose incomes were above the poverty line prior to tax deductions but dropped below that line after taxes were deducted increased by 40 per cent in only 1980-1982.

Poverty statistics do not take the glaring disparities between the various groups of the population into account. The condition of families with women as the breadwinners is particularly difficult: more than 35 per cent of these families are impoverished; among ethnic minorities this proportion is larger—70-80 per cent.

A national problem in the USA, hunger is, in the first place, a health hazard for the most helpless groups of the population: children and senior citizens. In these two categories the risk of hunger-related diseases is much higher than among young and

middle-aged persons. At least half a million cases have been registered of prolonged malnutrition adversely affecting the health of children, being the cause of stunted growth and development, functional disorders, and other maladies.

An inadequate diet, in terms of quantity and quality, for expectant mothers is a risk factor for new-born babies. They are underweight (less than 2,500 grams), and their death rate before age one is 30 times higher than among new-born babies with a normal weight. In the USA infant mortality is higher than in most West European countries, Australia, Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

Moreover, infant mortality and disease incidence are testimony of the dissimilar opportunities available to poor and rich Americans. For instance, in New York's notorious slum districts (Harlem, Brownsville), the infant mortality rate is several times higher than in flourishing Brooklyn and Manhattan. In a county in Alabama it is three times above the national average and close to that of many Third World countries. Among Afro-American babies of up to age one it is almost double that among white babies. This is due not to any biological race distinctions but to socio-economic conditions, to living standard disparities.

The facts and figures cited in the report on public health are compelling evidence of the social tragedy afflicting Americans with a thin pocketbook and an empty stomach. Millions of citizens of a country portrayed as a veritable paradise by its leaders live on the edge of starvation. Relative to the reasons for this, the authors of the report do not, of course, dot all the 'i's'. They say nothing of the fact, for instance, that in the policy of the present US administration the interests of the military-industrial complex get priority over the vital interests of ordinary citizens. But precisely this imperialist value orientation is a significant if not the basic reason for the fact that there are huge numbers of hungry people in the capitalist 'paradise'.

WMR Film Laureates

THE jubilee 25th Karlovy Vary Film Festival was held under the traditional motto 'For Humane Relations Between People, for Lasting Friendship Among Nations'. The Karlovy Film Festival, the second longest-standing in the world, admitted 33 films to its principal contest, while altogether 200 films and documentaries from some 50 countries were shown. The underlying themes were social progress, friendship and understanding among nations, and wholesome human relations.

The WMR's representatives participating in the work of the festival presented the journal's prize 'For Peace and Socialism' to the film 'Rosa Luxemburg' (FRG). It is about the life and struggle of this outstanding personality of the German, Polish, and international working class movement and one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany. A humane film, it is superbly produced (M. von Trotta) and photographed.

Three documentaries were awarded honorary WMR diplomas. 'Loneliness of Gods' (Cuba, producer Santiago Alvarez) is about the enslavement of developing nations by international banking capital. 'Anvil and Hammer' (African National Congress, producer Barry Feinberg) traces the mounting struggle against the racist regime in South Africa. 'Give Us Back Our Childhood', by the Polish producer Zygmund Slomkowski, shows the suffering brought to children by the unceasing armed clashes in the Lebanese capital.

Diary

CLEMENT Rohee, Executive Committee member and Central Committee Secretary of the People's Progressive Party of Guyana, has visited the *WMR* editorial offices. He delivered a talk on the current political situation in his country and on the PPP activities. Comrade Rohee also touched upon questions of promoting his party's cooperation with *World Marxist Review*.

* * *

In Bogota, a *World Marxist Review* delegation took part in the festival of *Voz*, the newspaper published by the Central Committee of the Colombian Communist Party.

the book scene

Slaves Who Refused To Be Slaves

Richard Hart, *Slaves Who Abolished Slavery*, Volume 2, *Blacks in Rebellion*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, Kingston, 1985, 358 pp.

ONE of the many crimes of the colonialists is their deliberate distortion of the history of colonised peoples. Jamaica offers a convincing example. To this day bourgeois scholars try to obscure the fact that there was heroic resistance to foreign exploiters on the island and would like our people to believe that slavery was abolished due to the 'goodness of heart' of the British government.

These lies are exposed in the two-volume study *Slaves Who Abolished Slavery*. The author, Richard Hart, is a prominent historian, one of the first Jamaican Marxists who took an active part in the workers' movement. He now lives in Great Britain where he is a leader of the local Caribbean workers' solidarity organisation that unites West Indian immigrants.

WMR has carried a review of the first part of this history book published in Kingston in 1980 under the subtitle *Blacks in Bondage*.¹ Now, five years later, the second volume, *Blacks in Rebellion* has come out. It is reviewed below.

The book opens with a detailed account of the movement of Maroons, which started in the middle of the seventeenth century. They were runaway black slaves who formed themselves into communities in the island's remote mountain areas and fought for freedom. They had mastered the art of guerilla warfare and were so effective that one Major Sedgewicke wrote in a letter to Cromwell on November 5, 1655 that these rebellions were a great danger. In a later letter, he wrote: 'The Spaniard is not considerable, but of the Blacks there are many, who are like to prove

as thorns and pricks in our sides.' And in yet another letter he added that 'in two days more than forty of our soldiers were cut off by the Negroes' (p. 5).

The rebel leaders managed to forge a unity of the Maroon communities and tried to use inter-colonial rivalry to their advantage. The book cites a despatch from Governor Hunter to London reporting that the Maroons were making contact with the Spaniards offering an alliance against the British on condition that the Spaniards guarantee their freedom after the defeat of the British. Documents are cited to show that the Maroons also tried to make contact with the French.

The constant harassment by the Maroons wore British colonialists down. They were constantly sending for reinforcements, but nothing could help them to turn the tide in their favour. This was acknowledged by the acting governor John Gregory who said in March 1736: "What now gives us most trouble are the rebels; we have been willing to flatter ourselves with some success, but I fear their numbers have been little lessened by it; they begin to be in motion in several places and in considerable bodies" (p. 91).

The book relates little-known episodes of the liberation movement in Jamaica and offers a clear idea of the methods used by the colonialists. They relied heavily on 'divide and rule' tactics, still much favoured by imperialists. The British tried to set free Blacks and Mulattoes against the Maroons and planned to bring to Jamaica Indians from various parts of Latin America. But all these plans failed. Fearful that the war would drag on and that failure 'might operate on the minds of the slaves, who would be convinced of the power of the Maroons to maintain a successful opposition against the Government' (p. 100), the British signed an agreement with the rebels in 1739, recognising them as free citizens.

The liberation movement on Jamaica continued, however. The victory of the Maroons inspired those who still languished in trammels. Wide-scale anti-slavery actions began which lasted throughout the century. Rebels operated in extremely adverse conditions. The conquerors managed to split the slaves and the Maroons and even recruit the latter as mercenaries. The rebellious slaves did not feel safe even in the inland areas. Nevertheless there was a succession of rebellions. The biggest uprising took place in 1831-1832 and was led by Sam Sharpe, the national hero of Jamaica. A born leader and a talented speaker, he managed to unite the slaves both in the field and the more 'privileged' who worked as domestic help or in the factories and other services of the master.

Unlike the previous uprisings, the Sharpe uprising was organised. Sharpe prepared the slaves for struggle. He tried to make even the more backward slaves conscious of their slavery. One cannot help recalling the words of Lenin to the effect that a slave who has become conscious of his slavery and begins to fight for his emancipation has half ceased to be a slave.

Having united the ranks of his supporters, Sharpe organised a general strike which developed into an uprising. A contemporary newspaper, *The Watchman*, noted in January 1832 that 'this rebellion is one of the most serious and the most extensive, that ever has occurred in this island' (p. 303).

The uprising involved more than 20,000 slaves, it flared up simultaneously in several places and soon swept the whole island. Often armed with nothing more than spears and bows and arrows the rebels avoided major encounters with regular government troops. Operating in small groups, they launched surprise attacks on the enemy camps, harassed and made the enemy scatter his forces.

Speaking about the Sharpe army's operations, the author stresses the humane way in which the rebels treated their prisoners. The book quotes a captive overseer who attests that Sharpe did not tolerate cruelty and did not wish anyone to 'be harmed who did not oppose the rebels by force' (p. 325). This explains why there were so few white civilian casualties. Of course the colonialists did not show the same mercy and

brutally crushed the uprising.

The author pays tribute to the courage of the rebels who behaved with dignity even in the face of death. Sharpe himself met his death with his head raised high. While awaiting execution, Sharpe told a priest in prison that he 'would rather die upon yonder gallows than live in slavery' (p. 331). The priest, who witnessed his execution, gave the following account of Sharpe's last minutes: 'He marched to the spot where so many had been sacrificed to the demon of slavery, with a firm and even dignified step . . . He seemed to be entirely unmoved by the near approach of death; addressed the assembled multitude . . . in a clear unfaltering voice' (p. 333).

The defeat of the uprising did not undermine the resolve of the slaves to continue their struggle. In a letter to the governor of Jamaica dated May 23, 1832, J.B. Zuicke, a white resident on the island, noted that 'the question (of slavery.—D.R.) will not be left to the arbitrament of a long angry discussion between the Government and the planter. The slave himself has been taught that there is a third party, and that party himself. He knows his strength and will assert his claim to freedom' (p. 322).

Realising that the increasingly organised and mounting protest could not be contained by force, the British abolished slavery in Jamaica in August 1834.

While giving due to this victory, the author notes its limited character. Formal freedom to the slaves did not alleviate their economic and social plight. The establishment of the capitalist system doomed the former slaves to hunger, misery and illiteracy which more than a century and a half later are still the lot of the overwhelming majority of their descendants (see p. 336).

The present reactionary pro-imperialist regime has bartered the country's wealth to the transnationals and to the International Monetary Fund. The Workers Party of Jamaica has very good reason to accuse the present administration of Seaga that it has pushed Jamaicans back to virtual slavery under the new masters who include US imperialism and their local lackeys. The liberation struggle begun in Jamaica three hundred years ago continues. To bring it to a successful conclusion the oppressed classes must know the truth about their country's past in order to orient themselves, to take stock of the present and draw up plans for the future. This is the noble goal served by Richard Hart's book *Slaves Who Abolished Slavery*.

Donald Ramotar

¹ See Rupert Lewis, 'Jamaica Yesterday and Today', *WMR*, No. 9, 1981.—Ed.

Under the Monopolies' Thumb

Heinz Jung, Fritz Krause, *Die Stamokaprepublik der Flicks* (The Flicks' Republic of State-Monopoly Capitalism), Verlag Marxistische Blätter, Frankfurt on the Main, 1985, 151 pp.

THE bribing of leading Bonn politicians by Friedrich K. Flick, the West German industrial magnate, which came to light in 1983, was described by the weekly *Stern* as 'the biggest political scandal in the history of the Federal Republic'. For years, the Flick company had remitted to them tens and hundreds of thousands of marks under the guise of donations for their parties. According to another influential weekly, *Der Spiegel*, nearly the whole team of high-ranking politicians—from Strauss to Kohl¹—is on the firm's payroll. Helmut Kohl, for one, got over half a million marks between 1974 and 1980. In exchange, the company was granted various tax privileges in circumvention of the law.

The scandal forced Bundestag Chairman Rainer C. Barzel (CDU) to step down; Minister of Economics Hans Friedrichs and his successor, Count Otto Lambsdorff (both FDP), found themselves in the dock. For the first time in the history of the FRG, the public prosecutor's office in Coblenz and Bonn held investigation proceedings against Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the spring of 1986 on suspicion of his having given false testimony in the Flick scandal. The democratic press had depicted the Federal Republic as 'the Flicks' republic of state-monopoly capitalism' (see title of the book). The authors expose the owner of the gigantic industrial empire,² which built up its might by working on arms contracts for the Hitler Reich and which survived its defeat, giving an idea of the social relations prevailing under state-monopoly capitalism (sms).

The details of the 'Flick scandal', colourfully described by the press, take up little space in the book. Its exposure serves the authors as the starting point for revealing the manner in which 'the dominant role of concerns and big banks in the economy translates into political power and finds expression in Bonn's policies' (p. 5). The preface defines the subject-matter of the book as the connection between economics and politics, monopoly and state.

Flick, one of the wealthiest men in the Federal Republic, is a typical member of the monopoly bourgeoisie, whose standing is determined by its ownership of capital and the means of production. And while many corporations are no longer owned by individuals but by joint-stock companies, the collective form of capitalist property in no way alters the essence of the exploitive system, under which 'the interests of several thousand managers and owners of concerns and big banks, such as Dr Friedrich K. Flick, are far more important . . . than the vital needs of the other 60 million inhabitants of the Federal Republic. . . They (the capitalists.—D.W.) encroach inevitably on state and politics and circumscribe the sphere of action of parliaments, governments and parties associated with the system' (pp. 45-46). What is more, the capitalist economy cannot function normally without a state guaranteeing the preservation of the monopolies' property and privileges, both politically and economically, and operating as business manager of the financial and industrial oligarchy.

This idea is supported with solid arguments. There are, for example, many names of representatives of concerns and banks who hold various posts in the ministries and the Bundestag, and also in international institutions. Many civil servants, for their part, are members of company boards and supervisory councils. This interlocking enables financial and industrial magnates to exert much influence on the composition and activity of government bodies. Jung and Krause estimate that roughly 70,000 high-ranking officials in the Federal Republic 'represent SMC in the state apparatus' (p. 95). The economy is really controlled by big capitalists and big business managers, who are the core of the ruling class.

The bourgeois elite has a network of employers' associations and unions encompassing virtually the whole economy and affiliated, in turn, to the Federation of German Industries, Confederation of German Employers' Associations, German Union of Industry and Trade, Federal Union of German Banks, General Insurance Union, Federal Union of German Wholesale and Foreign Trade, German Union of Hotels and Restaurants, and so on. Members of these bodies participate in the activities of numerous consultative committees and councils under the Federal administration. And what is whispered in these 'exclusive clubs' echoes like 'a peal of thunder in the ears of the MPs and politicians in Bonn and the state capitals who conform to state-monopoly capitalism' (p. 96).

Contrary to the propaganda declarations of their leaders, the bourgeois CDU, CSU and FDP express the interests of big capital, whose 'recommendations' they perceive as orders. For more than two decades, the CDU has had an economic

council that is now something of a parallel government. After the latest Bundestag elections, the council demanded a substantial reduction in the tax burden on the monopolies, with the result that they were granted various tax privileges.

The three bourgeois parties seek greater mass influence in order to carry on a policy in keeping with the interests of big capital, and that is why the CDU, for one, wants its propaganda to reach not only members of the bourgeoisie but also workers, peasants and intellectuals. Various devices are used to involve them in mass actions designed for support of the government's pro-monopoly policy.

Special attention is paid to election campaigns. In preparing for parliamentary elections, spokesmen for big business and bourgeois politicians hold caucuses to work out action plans, and often to nominate candidates for election to government posts.

An instance of direct interference in Federal German politics by the industrial and financial oligarchy was the removal in the autumn of 1982 of the Schmidt-Genscher cabinet based on an SDP/FDP coalition. The FDP, on which the existence of the cabinet hinged, found itself under strong monopoly pressure and ended by deserting to the other camp. Its Chairman, Genscher, kept the posts of Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister, but this time it was in a government under CDU leader Kohl. '... Hans-Dietrich Genscher and his surrounding,' *Frankfurter Rundschau* commented at the time, 'ought to answer the question whether there is really no connection between Flick's secret cash donations in favour of rightist FDP politicians and the fact that it was precisely they who disrupted the social-liberal coalition in the autumn of 1982.'

The book leaves no room for doubt that the country's swing to the right was a result of direct pressure from the big bourgeoisie. To confirm this, it quotes a comment by ex-MP Karl-Heinz Hansen (SDP). The most adroit left agitator, he wrote, could hardly have proved more conclusively that 'capital has always known how to secure the ideological and political instruments needed to impose its profit-oriented strategy more effectively' (p. 134).

Jung and Krause give considerable space to the military-industrial complex, whose impact on socio-political life in the Federal Republic is growing. Its backbone is composed of 25 big companies producing more than half of the country's military hardware. The state owns only four of them. There are roughly another 2,500 firms, mostly private ones, deriving profit from Bundeswehr contracts. The Flick combine has always held a key place in arms production as well. One of its member firms, Krauss-Maffei, makes Leopard tanks 90 per cent of which goes to the Bundeswehr. The authors cite facts showing how the bosses of the military-industrial complex are escalating the arms race in a drive for profit. If Franz Josef Strauss and Lothar Späth, both of whom head state governments, zealously advocate participation of the Federal Republic in the US 'star wars' programme, then this is due to both their political views and the fact that most of the enterprises of the electronics industry are situated in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, and that their owners expect to make big money on Pentagon contracts.

The evidence furnished by the book throws a stark light on practices current in the 'Flicks' republic of state-monopoly capitalism and generally typical of other Western countries. 'And while in the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Japan and elsewhere there exist other names than Flick, BASF or Deutsche Bank, these countries, too, are all republics of state-monopoly capitalism dominated by big money and combines' (p. 84).

Public revulsion at the 'Flick scandal' and attempts to hush it up suggest that many in the Federal Republic are awakening to the actual state of affairs. The authors consider that those who now protest against the evils of state-monopoly capitalism today may come out against the very system tomorrow. In conclusion, they summarise the key provisions of the Communists' anti-monopoly alternative, which

calls for the nationalisation of companies and banks and for the participation of the working people in every government activity. 'According to historical experience and theoretical considerations, this certainly includes the establishment and build-up of an anti-monopoly democratic state power which can be an instrument of democracy in the hands of the working people' (p. 151).

Dieter Wenzel

¹ Helmut Kohl, Chairman of the CDU, Federal Chancellor; Franz Josef Strauss, Chairman of the CSU, ex-minister of defence and finance, now Prime Minister of Bavaria.

² Late in 1985, the Deutsche Bank bought the concern and transformed it into a joint-stock company. The deal earned Flick several billion marks.—Ed.

An Author's View

'Nothing Has Remained As It Used To Be'

Among the active participants in the Second Conference of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation on the new international information order held in Kabul in the spring of 1986 was Greek journalist **Georges Delastic**, author of the book *Afghanistan: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*.

Below he is interviewed for *WMR* by Afghan journalist **Mohammed Kabel**.

It was a pleasant surprise for us that a Greek journalist has written a book about Afghanistan. How did it happen and what gave you the idea?

FRANKLY, I did not intend to write a book when I first visited Afghanistan in late 1984. I travelled around your country for two weeks, talking with workers, peasants, mullahs, and tribal leaders. After that I returned to Kabul where I interviewed many high-ranking party and government officials. I put to them the questions prompted by my own acquaintance with the problems and achievements of your revolution and also the questions raised by imperialist propaganda over Afghanistan.

Upon my return to Athens I wrote a series of reportages about your country for *Rizospastis*, organ of the CC of the Communist Party of Greece. They caused an unexpectedly keen interest. Although we devoted a whole page to the subject for ten days in a row readers kept calling the newspaper and the party's Central Committee asking for more and more information.

I realised that I had to write a book. Of course, I knew that a collection of published reportages with the addition of some new material would not do. So, for several months I studied various literature on Afghanistan, compared it with my personal impressions and reworked part of the articles already published in the newspaper. The book was brought out in the autumn of last year by Synchroni Epochi, one of the biggest publishing houses in Greece.

How do you account for the interest the Greek public shows in Afghanistan?

I could name several reasons but I think the main reason is that the way Afghanistan is covered by the media in the capitalist countries continues to be an important area of ideological confrontation.

When *Rizospastis* announced the forthcoming publication of a series of reports on Afghanistan, two bourgeois weekly newspapers published bitter comments. They

declared my reportages false even before they were published!

The capitalist press keeps a stubborn silence over the efforts the Afghan people are making to get rid of ignorance, backwardness and poverty. In my book, I tried to reply to the questions the imperialist mass media raise over Afghanistan. I avoided lengthy analytical generalities preferring a vivid factual account based on first-hand impressions. Truthful information about the Afghan revolution based on personal observations was something of an eye-opener for my countrymen helping them to understand what is really happening in your country.

Could you tell us about the content of your book?

It has five chapters. The first offers pictures of Afghan life and a review of the highlights of Afghan history providing an introduction to the present realities.

The second chapter looks at the social forces in the revolution—workers, peasants, women as well as Islamic clergy and tribal chiefs. Here the reader will find on-the-spot interviews, my impressions and an account of the concrete measures taken in favour of these social classes and strata.

The third chapter speaks about the new society being shaped in Afghanistan. It deals with the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, its role, evolution and sacrifices, with the National Fatherland Front, the anti-illiteracy drive. It contains a survey of the economy.

The fourth chapter unveils the true face of the counter-revolution, its class character and goals, the past and present of its leaders.

The fifth chapter tries to answer the question: who is waging undeclared war against Afghanistan and why? It speaks specifically about the role the USA, Pakistan, Iran and some other countries are playing in the war. It touches upon the evolution of internal counter-revolution, the military situation, the role of the limited Soviet military contingent and the conditions for its withdrawal and the Geneva talks on political settlement of the Afghanistan issue.

There was an interval of two years between your two visits to our country. Did you, on this latest visit, find confirmation of the conclusions you draw in your book?

My answer is a definite 'yes'. The main conclusion in my book is that the April revolution marked the start of a new era for Afghanistan. Feudalism has collapsed, the people are learning to read and write, women have begun working in industry and are becoming involved in all areas of social life, land has been distributed to landless peasants, the mullahs and tribal chiefs come out in favour of the national democratic revolution. Everything is caught up in the whirlpool of progress. Nothing has remained as it used to be and there is no return to the past.

What would you have added or altered in your book in the light of the real changes in our society which you have observed on your second visit?

The most important change is the broadening of the revolution's social base, as evidenced by the enlargement of the Revolutionary Council and the government of the DRA by the inclusion of authoritative non-party members.

I was also deeply impressed by the Jirgah of the free Pashtun tribes some of whose meetings I have been able to attend here in Kabul. I would have treated more thoroughly in my book the flourishing of the representative democratic institution of the jirgahs. But this is the lot of all writers about revolutions: they can't keep abreast of the changes.

New Books

A Critique of Non-Marxist Conceptions of Socialism, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1986, 318 pp. (in Russian and Polish).

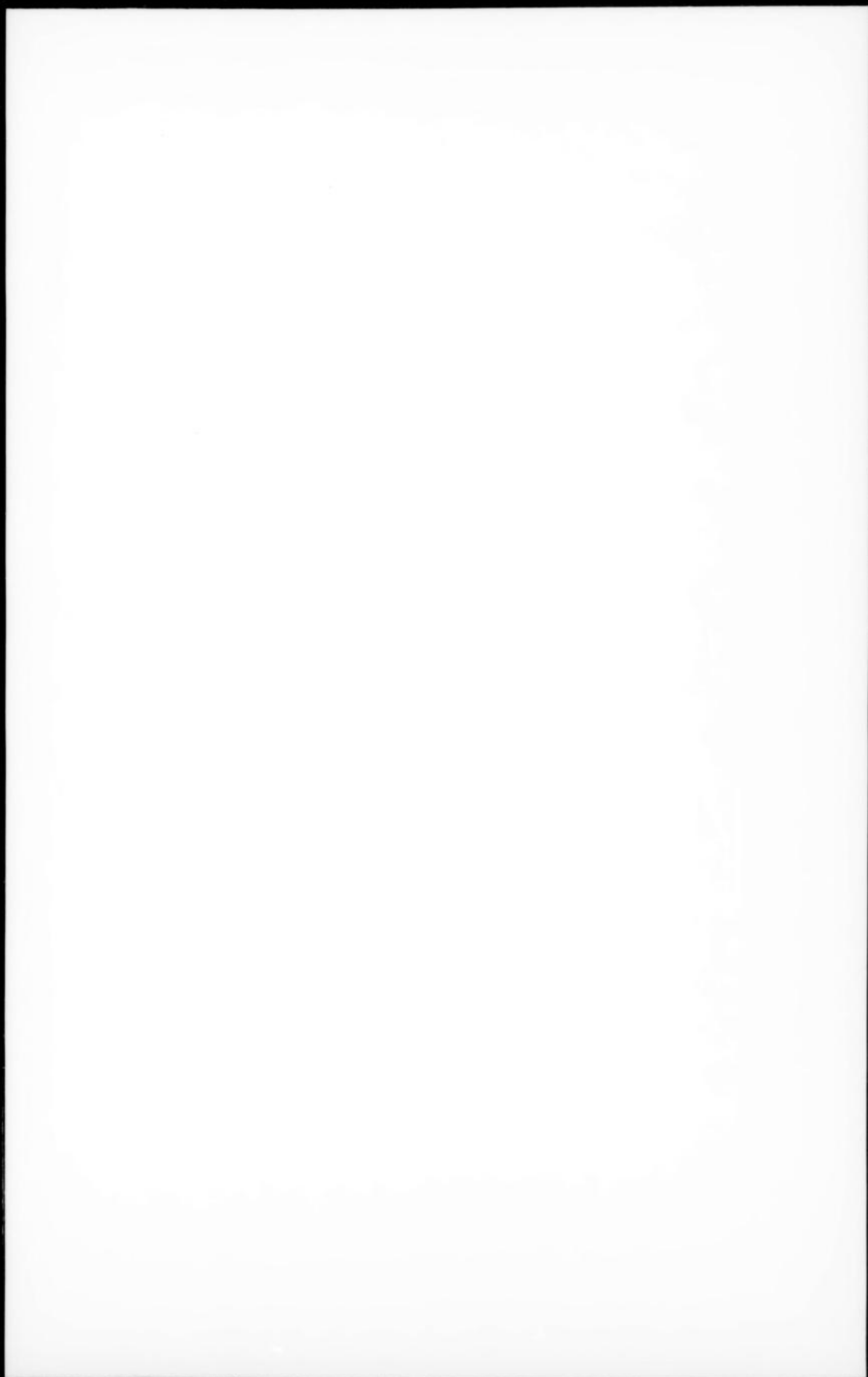
Written by academics on the Soviet-Polish Commission on Cooperation in the Social Sciences, this is an analysis of the most influential anti-communist, bourgeois, and revisionist conceptions. Attention is focused chiefly on the theoretico-ideological tenets that gloss over the fundamental distinctions between the capitalist and socialist systems and deliberately misinterpret various aspects of the economic and cultural life of socialist societies. The superficial and distorted notions about the socialist system put out by bourgeois propaganda come under close analysis and an insight is given into the problems and tasks of ideological work in Poland today. This book offers a generalisation of Poland's instructive experience of combating hostile, anti-socialist tendencies.

Siegfried Beier, Horst Fisch, Günter Pollach, *Neue demokratische Bewegungen in Westeuropa* (New Democratic Movements in Western Europe), Dietz, Berlin, 1986, 256 pp.

What triggered the current upgrading of the socio-political activity of great numbers of people in West European capitalist countries that started at the close of the 1970s? What gave rise to the appearance in these countries of new democratic movements uniting millions of people of different political and religious persuasions and different social status? In this book a group of staff members of the SUPG Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences attempt to answer these questions. In analysing the sources, objectives, and forms of the actions of the West European public, the authors note that these mirror, above all, the growing concern for humanity's destiny in the face of the threat of a nuclear holocaust. This is precisely why the struggle for peace, against imperialism has acquired such breadth in many capitalist countries. The study covers, in addition, the question of the interaction of the new democratic movements with trade unions and other traditional mass organisations of the working people.

Arvid Rundberg, *Frisco-Per*, Fram bokförlag, Stockholm, 1985, 228 pp.

With episodes from the life of the Swedish Communist and trade union activist Per Eriksson, this book shows how Swedish internationalists participated in the great battle of the peoples against fascism. Per Eriksson made his first acquaintance with Marxism-Leninism as a young seaman, and this determined his further destiny. He was one of the 500 Swedish volunteers who fought the Franco insurgents in Spain and was the first Scandinavian officer in the Republican army. Cut off from his homeland by the outbreak of World War II, he headed a branch of the Swedish Seaman's Union in San Francisco (hence the nickname Frisco-Per) and in this capacity did much for his countrymen working aboard ships of different flags carrying armaments and equipment to the armies fighting the anti-Hitlerite coalition in Europe. After the war he continued his trade union activities but gave much of his time to the movement for peace and the prohibition of nuclear weapons.



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