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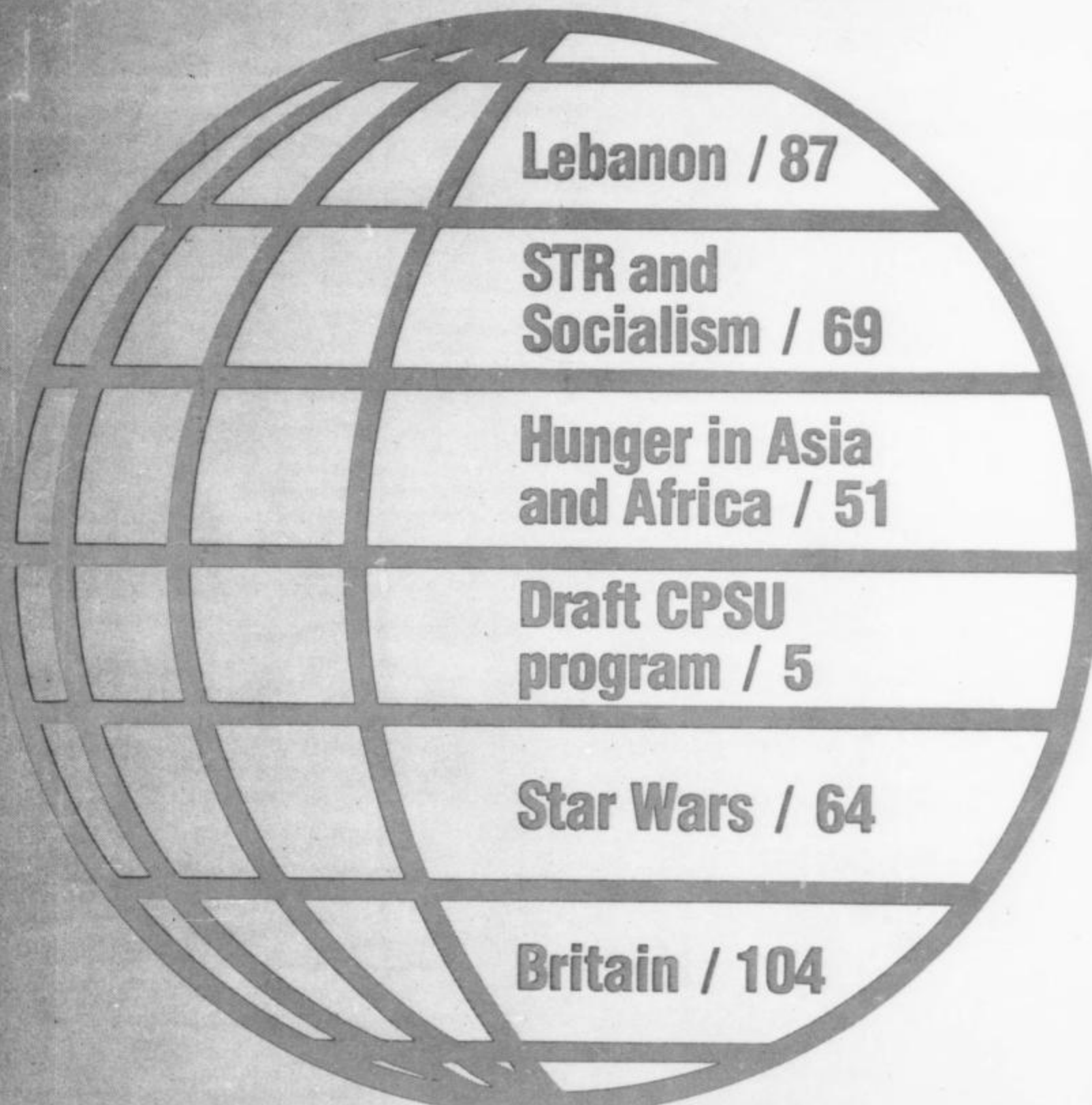
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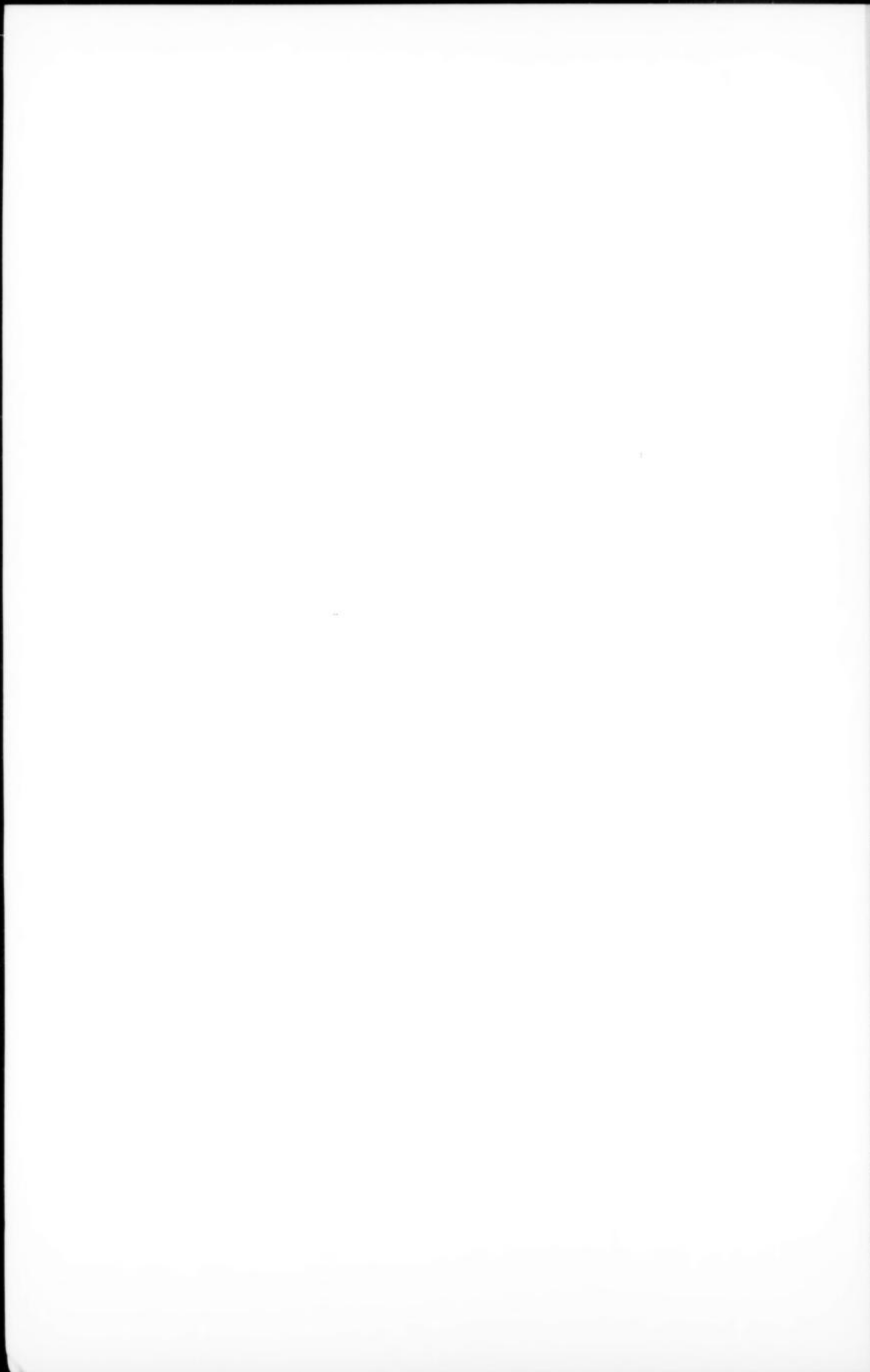
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A Document of Creative Marxism-Leninism

Fraternal Party Leaders on the Draft New Edition of the CPSU Programme

The publication of the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme has prompted *WMR* to request several prominent figures in the international communist movement to share their opinion of this document by answering the following questions

—How do you assess the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme and what significance do you attach to it?

—What specific provisions of the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme have attracted your particular attention in the light of the tasks your party has set itself and is tackling?

The replies received are published below.

An Inspiring Example

Gustav Husak — General Secretary,
Central Committee, Communist Party of
Czechoslovakia, President of the
Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

THE Czechoslovak Communists responded with great interest and close attention to the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme—the programme of perfecting socialism and building communism in the Soviet Union, of the struggle for peace and social progress. This major theoretical and political document, to be considered at the 27th Congress of Lenin's party, charts the principal aspects of its work now and in the future. It outlines the main goals of Soviet social development and the ways of attaining them. It also sets forth the foremost tasks the CPSU is to tackle in our age of transition from capitalism to socialism and communism, in our era of competition between the two world systems, of the struggle progressive forces wage throughout the world against imperialism, for democracy and social progress.

The draft new edition of the Programme is an exemplary case of creative development and enrichment of Marxism-Leninism. It offers a realistic and historically responsible assessment of the state of affairs in the Soviet Union and the world, of the changes in the alignment of class forces and dynamics of their development. Profound analysis, bold new conclusions, and a summing-up of the experience accumulated by the CPSU and the entire international communist

movement over the years serve as the starting point for developing the Soviet Communists' strategy and tactics in their drive to attain the party's policy goals in the name of peace, in the name of man.

Proceeding from a revolutionary understanding of continuity in CPSU policy, this document charts the implementation of a bold strategy of socio-economic change in Soviet society, change aimed at attaining a qualitatively new stage in its development, at further enhancing the international role and prestige of the USSR. This strategy is fully consonant with the interests of the world socialist system and of the international working class, with the tasks of the anti-imperialist struggle, and with the interests of all mankind.

Assessing the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme, the world's Communists are, naturally, comparing it with the policy documents of their own parties. This examination helps them to specify and deepen their own policy.

The Czechoslovak Communists share the revolutionary ideals and purposes expressed in the policy guidelines of the CPSU. We are unanimous in our assessment of the course of world developments. We are unanimous in our understanding of the mission and role existing socialism is to discharge in the global context, of the common international goals and prospects of the communist movement. This unity of ideas, interests and purposes lies behind the international solidarity between the CPCz and the CPSU, between the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Soviet Union, between the peoples of our sister countries.

CPCz policy has always attached great importance to the experience of Lenin's party and to the creative application of this experience in our country. This approach is all the more justified today, for the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme takes stock of the current experience gained by the Soviet Communists and rallies them in the struggle to accelerate the socio-economic development of the USSR.

This experience and these policy guidelines are extremely important to us too because we in Czechoslovakia are currently also tackling a vital task—to ensure, above all by accelerating scientific and technological progress, dynamic socio-economic development. This we regard as essential for the continued building of developed socialism.

To be convened in March 1986, the 17th Congress of the CPCz will tackle important and, in many respects, new tasks. It is to chart the way along which our society is to advance up to 1990 and our prospects up to the year 2000. Our plans are based on a comprehensive intensification of the economy, perfection of management and planning, effective operation of the economic mechanism, enhanced socialist democracy and full use of the human factor. We see this as conducive to the most effective use of the advantages of socialism for the benefit of the working man, so as to increasingly meet his material and intellectual needs. The wealth of ideas contained in the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme is a source of experience and inspiration to us.

The CPSU policy document is a graphic confirmation and development of the principle of socialist internationalism which guides the socialist community countries in strengthening their relations of a new type. The Czechoslovak Communists share this principle fully. They have always regarded promotion of their relations of a new type with the socialist sister countries, and especially cooperation with the Soviet Union, as an essential and increasingly important factor in the socialist development of Czechoslovakia. The Communists—and all our people—see our country's membership in the socialist community as a guarantee of Czechoslovakia's independence and security.

The conclusions contained in the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme with regard to the role and prospects of the world socialist system are of fundamental importance. We know from our own experience the indispensable role which our

reliance on the solidarity of the fraternal parties and our membership in the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and in the CMEA play in the successful building of socialism in our country. Naturally, the continuous advancement of the socialist community is connected with tireless efforts to find its new, most efficient forms, to tackle tasks that are often complicated and to overcome various obstacles and difficulties. The imperialist powers strive to apply a differentiated approach to socialist countries. That is why we believe it so important to always accord priority to what unites the socialist countries and promotes their closer unity.

As concerns our domestic needs and international tasks at the current stage of development, it is decisive for each socialist country and for the socialist community as a whole to reach a qualitatively higher stage of socialist economic integration, particularly in the field of accelerating scientific and technological development. This is why Czechoslovakia welcomes the results of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance extraordinary session held in Moscow in December 1985. The Comprehensive Programme of the Scientific and Technological Progress of the CMEA countries adopted at this session is fully consonant with the national interests of the socialist countries and serves to consolidate the strength of the entire community, ensure its technological and economic invulnerability to hostile imperialist moves and protect it from the effects of the economic crisis and other negative developments in the capitalist world.

Lenin's concept of the struggle for durable peace is developed creatively in the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme. This document offers a profoundly substantiated answer to the paramount question of our age—that of how nuclear catastrophe can be prevented and peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems ensured. The entire policy document is permeated with a firm resolve to do everything to prevent the outbreak of a world nuclear war that would threaten to extinguish human civilisation. This is what is behind this document's great appeal and mobilising spirit for all nations and for all people irrespective of their views or of their political or religious convictions.

Czechoslovakia has been and will be active in the realisation of the concerted foreign policy pursued by the Warsaw Treaty countries and aimed above all at bringing about a change for the better in international relations. We fully support the constructive Soviet steps designed to prevent militarisation of outer space, drastically reduce the nuclear arsenals on Earth and solve burning issues of international security. We hold that in today's complicated situation, joint action by the socialist countries to implement the collective peace initiatives advanced at the Sofia session of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee and at the socialist nations' summit meeting in Prague becomes increasingly imperative.

The Czechoslovak people respond with profound satisfaction to the comprehensive efforts of the Soviet Union aimed at overcoming the policy of confrontation and returning to detente, an approach reflected in the stand of Comrade Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, at the Soviet-US summit in Geneva. We are convinced that it is really possible—given an equally responsible approach on the part of the United States—to break the vicious circle of the arms race, to achieve a breakthrough in international relations and to attain universal security.

This is why we are looking ahead with optimism. We are convinced that despite all difficulties and obstacles, the voice of reason and the nations' striving for peace will prevail. This realistic approach is based on the awareness of the rising international prestige the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community enjoy and of the growth of the forces of peace and realism in industrialised capitalist nations and in developing countries. Our people are aware of the fact that the more vigorously we consolidate the political and economic strength and the defence capacity of Czechoslovakia, the

bigger contribution we will make to the preservation of life in peace.

Other documents to be discussed at the 27th Congress of the CPSU—the Draft Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and for the Period Up To the Year 2000 and the Draft Changes in the CPSU Rules—also contain valuable lessons for us. The course of the preparations for the 27th CPSU Congress and the discussion of these documents indicate that the forthcoming congress will be an important landmark in the work of the Soviet Communists and in the life of the fraternal Soviet people and that the results of the congress will be a new source of inspiration and strength for all fighters for national liberation, social emancipation, peace, socialism and the triumph of communist ideals.

The Appeal of Socialism

Herbert Mies — Chairman, German
Communist Party

WE are living at a time when the peoples of the capitalist part of the world, including the Federal Republic, are up against new questions and problems, against big challenges. Rising above their daily cares and preoccupations, they ponder more and more on how the survival of humanity can be ensured in the face of enormous military nuclear potentials and the progressing destruction of the environment. They are searching for ways to solve major problems, such as mass unemployment, old and new poverty, hunger in the world. This confronts many, more sharply than ever before, with the question of the future of humanity, their people, and their own destiny.

It is in this situation that the CPSU has published the draft new edition of its Programme. The draft sets tasks and indicates ways of perfecting socialist society and creating a communist society; it presents proposals and estimations concerning the solution of world problems. This alone gives the discussion of the CPSU document international and, moreover, historic significance.

There is not a sign in the draft of that fear of the future which is besetting many in capitalist countries. On the contrary, the document is full of confidence in the period ahead and of deep conviction that the Soviet people will arrive at a still more radiant future through new efforts. The lack of perspective, so typical of capitalism, is foreign to the spirit of the CPSU document, which opens up a clear and inspiring vista of social development, of better working and living conditions, for Soviet citizens.

Whereas the more reactionary circles in imperialist countries, primarily the United States, are stepping up world tensions by their policy of confrontation and their bid for military superiority, the CPSU advances a peace programme. It gives constructive and convincing answers to the question of how to stop the arms race on earth, prevent the militarisation of space, and put an end once and for all to the threat of a nuclear war that could destroy humanity. The draft is evidence that the CPSU and the Soviet people are unshakably committed to opening up a peaceful perspective for humanity, to realising socialism's ideal: a world without war and without arms.

The new programme document charts paths for advancing to communist society and for solving vital problems of man's existence and development; it shows a clear and constructive perspective of promoting peace. And this is what makes it important, not only to the Soviet people, but to the peoples of the whole planet, to the international communist and working class movement, to all democratic forces.

Now that the point at issue in industrial capitalist countries and in many newly-free

and other developing states is to find an alternative to imperialism and capitalism, overcome its deteriorating crisis, and put an end to economic dependence and backwardness, the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme shows the great social prospects which are unfolding for the peoples and countries advancing along a socialist road.

What determines the spirit and content of the draft is confidence in the future, not fear of it; far-reaching goals, not hopelessness; a policy of peace, not of confrontation; optimism, not pessimism or despair. From the point of view of the historical controversy between socialism and imperialism, this indicates that socialism is more successful in coping with key problems of our times. Soviet citizens know that they will never have to wrestle with mass unemployment and that, on the contrary, their working and living conditions will steadily improve. They know that the system which sees to their social interests will grow stronger and not weaker. They are well aware that scientific and technological progress will never become a curse but will serve as prerequisite for raising the standard of living and as a means of doing it. They can rest assured that their party and government leadership will consistently pursue the policy of safeguarding peace.

The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme helps us launch a political and ideological offensive to show more fully the appeal of socialism, its advantages and superiority over capitalism. The far-reaching prospects opened up by the document will provide greater opportunities to draw people into the struggle for the ideals of socialism.

The programme guidelines of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union contain answers to questions which are also agitating humanity as a whole. I mean the possibilities of solving the global problems of safeguarding peace and protecting the environment, the problems of energy, raw materials and food, the demographic problem, the problems of exploring outer space and the riches of the World Ocean for peaceful purposes, of ending the economic lag of many newly-free countries and eliminating dangerous diseases. Running through the draft is the idea of the need for a new approach to these overriding problems of today, an approach also taking into account and stressing what has proved its worth and what has been achieved.

We Communists of the Federal Republic are deeply impressed by the fact that, in analysing capitalism, the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme does not confine itself to warning against the dangers posed by the capitalist crisis and the imperialist policy of force and expansion. It also shows the possibilities which the working people and the international working class movement, as well as democratic and peace movements, acquire in fighting for real democracy and social rights, for the safeguarding of peace and for social progress. These important theses are consonant with the policy of the GCP, whose Seventh Board Plenum (October 1985) set the important task of bringing it home to the population that, along with the growing threat to peace and to the democratic and social rights of the working people of the Federal Republic, there are now greater opportunities to defend peace and the interests of labour.

The struggle of the democratic forces for a way out of the crisis and an end to the arms race is being strongly influenced by the following perspective held out in the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme: '... Already in the next fifteen years, the volume of resources needed to meet the people's requirements is to be doubled.' This is an impressive goal, since the working people of the Federal Republic are made to bear the burdens of the crisis and the arms race, which entail cuts in social rights and services, a reduction of real incomes, and an increase in mass unemployment. The fact that the Soviet Union is tackling such great tasks to improve the well-being of its citizens equips us with sound arguments convincing people that economic crisis, mass unemployment, and social dismantling are not inevitable phenomena of social

development.

The programme document of the CPSU describes the historical competition going on between the two socio-political world systems as a distinguishing characteristic of our epoch. This competition will decide which system can solve the problems of economic development and of scientific and technological progress in a way making them a blessing for people, or, in other words, which of them can carry on an economic and social policy in unity to improve life in every sphere. The system which accomplishes this will prove thereby its vitality and its historical superiority and advantages. From this standpoint, the perspective offered by the draft is valuable to our party because it will help us in our efforts to awaken the working class and other working people to the need to take the road of democratic and social progress, and ultimately to clear the way for socialism.

There is a growing trend in the Federal Republic in favour of social 'alternative models' and 'social utopias'. It reflects a desire to find a way out of the capitalist crisis, a search for humane and just social relations. The fact that the CPSU clearly indicates a realistic line and the stages of the road to the communist goal, to the ideals of the new society, is bound to benefit such quests for a better social system.

The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme adds to the appeal of socialism in many spheres; it helps enhance the prestige of socialism as a peace force, its attractiveness as a system capable of solving social and political problems, as a society which ensures the full development of real democracy and freedom for the people, and takes a new approach to the urgent problems of humanity. The draft offers arguments, impulses, and new incentives for vigorous effort to all those in our country who are searching for solutions to these problems as they ponder on the present and the future.

A Historic Turning Point

Harilaos Florakis — General Secretary,
Central Committee, Communist Party of Greece

COMMUNISTS and their friends and foes in various countries recognise—in their own way, of course—that the 27th CPSU Congress will be unusual. It would be no exaggeration to say that international opinion is increasingly focusing attention on Moscow. The reason for this is not only the recent major, truly revolutionary peace proposals of the Soviet Union, but also the new strategic line which the Soviet people are discussing and implementing to accelerate socio-economic development of their country and perfect the life of society in every respect. It is a question of changes that will result in what the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme describes as a qualitatively new state of society, and what Lenin defined as 'integral socialism'.

Thus it is right to expect the 27th CPSU Congress to be a congress of historic significance. The Soviet comrades justly consider that their policy of intensifying production and quickening the pace of scientific and technological progress is comparable as regards its place in history to the policy of industrialising the Soviet Union. The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme shows in perspective the development of socialism between now and the year 2000, a momentous period for humanity, and anticipates the development paths of the contemporary world. This is why we describe the draft with every reason as an epoch-making document.

In assessing the programme document, I would like to call attention to some of its key aspects. To begin with, the draft is *scientific*. It is based on a sound knowledge of

the law-governed processes going on in socialist society and of objective international development trends. It is *realistic*. The document takes a sober, well-considered view of existing problems and contradictions, and is free of subjectivist estimations and any tendency towards embellishment. Furthermore, it is *boldly innovating*. Indeed, the draft sets bold but well-founded goals, such as doubling the production potential of the country and thoroughly renewing it in qualitative terms by the year 2000, achieving the highest world level in social labour productivity, developing socialist self-government by the people, by drawing more and more working men and women into government and the management of public affairs generally. The CPSU takes a resolute stand against all shortcomings and distortions in the functioning of the administrative apparatus.

The draft is also characterised by *humanism* in the true sense of the word. The CPSU plans aimed at perfecting socialism are prompted by the desire to do 'everything in the name of man'. We may add 'and with man', for the Communists of the Soviet Union associate fulfilment of the tasks set with the growing role of the human factor, with the people's vigorous activity, creative effort, and sense of responsibility.

Lastly, the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme is *internationalist*. Naturally, it owes its international significance to the fact that it analyses and assesses the main content of the present epoch, its major problems and conflicts, the balance of world forces, and the path travelled by socialist society. The document describes the crisis of capitalism, the motive forces of the world revolutionary process, and the problems of the international communist movement as well as of mass democratic and peace movements.

I wish to stress the tremendous international impact of the process of perfecting socialism in the Soviet Union. Every step on this road adds to the appeal of the new social system among the exploited, who are made to bear the burdens of the deep crisis of the capitalist system. At the same time, imperialism admittedly uses every setback or serious difficulty in the socialist world against the communist and working class movement in capitalist countries. It is therefore evident how very strongly working men and women throughout the world will be impressed by the Soviet people's social achievements and by the measures for the development of socialist democracy which the draft envisages. The planned substantial growth of labour productivity in the Soviet Union and other socialist community countries will contribute tremendously to the effort to curb imperialism and to the common struggle for peace.

The Communist Party of Greece fully shares the fundamental thesis that the CPSU sees the effort to perfect socialist society and promote its advance to communism as the party's highly important international task whose fulfilment is in keeping with the interests of the world socialist system, the international working class, and the whole of humanity. Our party considers this thesis essential to its own struggle. We are convinced that the decisions to be adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress and the subsequent effort to put them into practice will also be very helpful to the Greek Communists' activity.

The programme document of the CPSU expresses the hopes, aspirations, and interests of millions across the planet. This prompts me to touch on some of its provisions.

The draft offers a way out to the masses in the capitalist world, who are hit by hunger, underdevelopment, epidemics, and illiteracy. This way out is peaceful coexistence, arms limitation, and disarmament. An end to the arms race would make it possible to switch huge resources from war production to peaceful uses, to steps to overcome the big difficulties of developing countries. It would considerably facilitate the joint solution by all countries of global problems of vital importance to humanity.

At a time when uneven development in the capitalist world is becoming more marked, when the discrepancy between the production levels of industrial capitalist countries and the majority of developing countries is increasing, and when these countries' dependence and debt are growing, with imperialist monopolies continuing to plunder them, the CPSU document shows how international relations can be reshaped on democratic principles of equality with a view to establishing a just world economic order.

The draft describes the special type of international relations shaping up in the socialist community. They are based on equalisation of the development levels of the member-countries, mutual benefit, and equal rights. In this community, no one has or can have special rights or privileges. The draft devotes special attention to distinctions between socialist countries in economic and political development and in historical and cultural traditions, and stresses the complexity of the tasks which each of them is accomplishing. All this, the document notes, requires maximum attention and all-round cooperation to ensure that there is no ground for disagreement likely to injure common interests.

Soviet society is a living and developing socialist society. It is dynamic and successfully surmounts its contradictions, which are non-antagonistic. Such a society has nothing to do with the ossified model painted by Western 'Sovietologists' and imperialist propaganda. On attaining the goals set in the programme provisions of the party, the Soviet Union will rise to a qualitatively higher level of socialist maturity. The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme repeatedly underlines such tasks as bringing about 'deep-going changes in every sphere of life', 'a qualitative transformation of every aspect of the life of Soviet society', 'a radical change in favour of intensifying production', a new technical reconstruction of the economy'. To fulfil these tasks, the Soviet people will have to exert great efforts in the years ahead. The draft points out that every premature attempt to introduce communist principles is doomed to failure. However, 'there must be no delay in affecting the changes that are ripe'. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the draft says, delay in this respect gave rise to some adverse trends and difficulties. Lenin's party is definitely against negative phenomena, which are alien to the very spirit of socialism.

The programme document of the CPSU makes clear to the working people of capitalist countries that it is possible to carry out a scientific and technological revolution in the production sphere and to implement vast plans for its reconstruction and modernisation without causing unemployment or reducing expenditures for the health service, education, and other social purposes, that is, without occasioning social insecurity and poverty. The Soviet Union is planning far-reaching measures for the reconstruction and thorough renewal of technology as well as serious economic transformations. The working people's rights are to be extended. The draft provides for a social policy aimed at appreciably improving the Soviet people's well-being.

In the context of the deep crisis of the capitalist system—a crisis intensifying authoritarian and reactionary trends in capitalist countries—the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme offers the masses the democratic perspective of socialist self-government by the people. This fundamental Marxist-Leninist conclusion is worthy of special emphasis. The draft sets the task of seeing to it that the management of society and the state is not only exercised in the working people's interests but becomes logically, step by step, a direct cause of the working people themselves. It is also a question of further enriching the personal freedoms of Soviet people, who have every opportunity to express their civic will and to apply it in practice. The draft envisages steps to improve the functioning of Soviets of People's Deputies, to ensure more fully publicity in the work of representative bodies and their regular accountability, to intensify people's control and raise the role of work collectives in the management of enterprises. With the realisation of these measures, the prestige

and influence of socialism, a social system capable of really furthering democracy, will grow among the working people the world over.

Particularly important to us Communists operating in a capitalist country are the assessments and conclusions of the CPSU concerning capitalism's crisis, the composition and role of the working class, the struggle against monopoly and war, and the current upturn in mass democratic movements in the non-socialist world. The draft rightly points out that people of diverse political orientations demand an end to the militarisation of society, to the policy of aggression and war, to discrimination on racial and ethnic grounds, the curtailment of women's rights, the deterioration of the condition of youth, corruption, and the monopolies' predatory utilisation of natural resources and the environment. 'These movements,' the document says, 'are objectively directed against the policy of reactionary imperialist circles and merge into the general struggle for social progress.' We believe this evaluation calls the attention of Communists to the vast variety of movements which are objectively broadening the front of fighters against imperialism and capitalist exploitation.

The new ideas which are set out in the CPSU document and have to do with the transition to communism, changes in economic management, the development of the people's socialist self-government, and so on, extend the Communists' theoretical horizons and add to their notions about socialist society. The draft's provision for the further creative development of Marxist-Leninist theory on the basis of studying and generalising new phenomena has a relation, in our view, to the communist movement as a whole. Also important to us is the provision for the party's encouragement of bold quests, competition of scientific ideas and trends, and fruitful debates. We share the opinion that it is necessary to go on steadfastly combating dogmatism and revisionism, and all influence of bourgeois ideology on the working class movement.

The personnel policy set out in the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme, while relating in principle to Soviet reality, also has general validity as we see it. The fundamental qualities of Communist cadre members are loyalty to principle, political maturity, high moral standards, competence, initiative, a sense of the new, readiness to assume responsibility, a sensitive approach to people, and renunciation of routine and voluntarism.

The programme document of Lenin's party meets the aspiration of the Communists of my country and other countries of the world for closer cooperation. Of fundamental importance from this point of view is the following provision of the draft: 'In its relations with fraternal parties, the CPSU abides firmly by the principle of proletarian internationalism, which inherently connotes both revolutionary solidarity and recognition of the complete independence and equality of each party.' Working for closer unity of the communist movement, we agree that the existence of differences over this or that issue should not be a hindrance to internationalist cooperation among communist parties, to joint actions by them.

I consider that the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme makes an important contribution to the theory and practice of the communist movement at this crucial stage in the life of humanity. The document will serve every Communist, all the left forces in any country, as a useful guide to the study and fruitful solution of problems of the struggle for peace and social progress.

Clear Objectives and a Realistic Road

Rajeswara Rao — General Secretary,
National Council, Communist Party of India

THE draft new edition of the Programme of the CPSU, to be presented to the 27th Congress, is a document of great ideological and political importance to all Communists, anti-imperialist fighters, democrats and peace partisans the world over. It breathes confidence in the future of humanity and holds out the prospect of a world without the threat of nuclear holocaust, and of historic competition between the two social systems, socialism and capitalism. The capitalist system cannot solve any crucial problem of the people. Country after country goes over to the new social system, each in its own way.

In this process, the first socialist state, the Soviet Union, and other socialist countries will play a decisive role by surpassing the capitalist system in all spheres of human life. The draft Programme says that the system of developed socialism in the Soviet Union will grow stronger in the course of the gradual transition to communism.

The merit of the document is that its style is lucid and its evaluations and conclusions are realistic and inspiring. India's Communists share the draft's definition of the main content of the present epoch as one of transition from capitalism to socialism and communism. It is an epoch of historic competition between the two world socio-political systems, of socialist and national liberation revolutions, the disintegration of colonialism, and struggle by the main motive forces of social development—world socialism, the working class and communist movement, the peoples of the newly-free states and the mass democratic movements—against imperialism and its policy of aggression and oppression, for democracy and social progress.

'The constant growth of these forces and their interaction,' the draft says, 'guarantee that the hopes of the peoples for a life of peace, freedom and happiness will be translated into reality. The advance of humanity to socialism and communism, though uneven, complex and contradictory, is irresistible.'

The CPSU draft Programme deals with a problem of fundamental importance to humanity and its further progress, namely, the problem of war and peace. The party of Lenin proposes that it be solved through cooperation among all countries, irrespective of social systems. It is well known that before World War II the Soviet Union and the international communist movement alerted the world against the danger of fascism. It was the country of the Great October that saved humanity from Hitlerite barbarity by making immeasurable sacrifices. And now it has fallen to the lot of the Soviet Union, the socialist community as a whole and the international communist movement to mobilise the peace forces in order to save humanity from a nuclear disaster. It is a matter of pride for the Communists that once again the first socialist country has posed this key issue before the world and suggested its solution for the happy future of mankind.

The Soviet state calls on all countries to cooperate in the interest of peace and for the good of all peoples in tackling global problems which have grown especially grave in the second half of the twentieth century. The draft stresses that their solution requires joint efforts by all countries and will be substantially facilitated if the squandering of efforts and resources on the arms race stops.

The specific measures proposed by the party of Lenin to safeguard international security are like a breath of fresh air in the present most dangerous and complicated world situation. They give vision and confidence to the forces of socialism, democracy, national liberation and peace.

After winning independence (1947), India took the road of capitalist development with all its inherent evils—growing unemployment, a rising cost of living, poverty, widespread corruption. The ruling Congress Party has been leading the country along this road.

At the same time, with the help and support of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, India is pursuing a progressive foreign policy and building up its industry, defeating the conspiracies of the United States and other imperialist powers. Ours is a big country like the Soviet Union. It shows considerable diversity in language, religion, nationality and racial stocks. But since India is advancing along the capitalist road, the religious, linguistic and other conflicts are getting accentuated, harming the tranquillity and unity of the country. In this respect, the experience of the Soviet Union in building the unbreakable unity of the diverse national and racial groups offers us an inspiring example. The portion of the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme dealing with the consolidation of the unity of the Soviet people and with the promotion of closer relations between socialist nations and nationalities is most interesting from the point of view of the work of our party.

That part of the draft dealing with the disintegration of the colonial system and the emergence of over 100 newly-independent states is very illuminating. Indeed, it concerns the problems which these countries are facing in the matter of social development, as well as in fighting imperialist conspiracies and in preserving and strengthening their independence. The Soviet Union offers full help to the socialist-oriented countries, which are advancing along the road of radical changes leading to socialism. Furthermore, it assists capitalist-oriented countries in strengthening their independence as they develop and in carrying out reforms in the interest of the working people. In this connection, we derive satisfaction and stronger conviction in the triumph of the cause of national liberation from the following passage in the draft Programme:

'The CPSU comes out in support of the just struggle of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialism and oppression by the transnational monopolies, for the assertion of their sovereign right to be masters of their own resources. . . .

'The Soviet Union is on the side of states and peoples repulsing the attacks of aggressive forces of imperialism and defending their freedom, independence and national dignity.'

The stand taken in this passage relates directly to our country. The Soviet Union has stood by India at all critical times when it faced direct threats from US imperialism. Therefore, despite the differences in their social systems, a close friendship has developed between the Soviet Union and our country.

The provisions of the draft Programme concerning the role of non-alignment in the preservation of world peace and solidarity with peoples fighting for their freedom are worthy of special note. We see in them support of the efforts of our own party to strengthen the anti-imperialist policy of non-alignment and to foil the game of pro-imperialist forces which want to weaken it. We would like to emphasise that India's Communists see the CPSU draft Programme as a document helping ideologically and theoretically our party and other socio-political forces which are struggling to take the country away from the road of capitalism to that of socialism in order to end the misery of our people and provide them a happy life.

We put on record with satisfaction the tasks which Lenin's party is setting to perfect socialist society in the Soviet Union and effect a gradual transition to communism. The example of the Soviet Union, which has eliminated the evils of unemployment, poverty, inflation and illiteracy and brought about a happy life for its citizens is a source of inspiration to the Indian people. With the further impressive growth of the economy through more rapid scientific and technological progress, the burden of

manual labour and labour requiring little skill will be reduced and a still better living standard achieved.

It is to the credit of the CPI that by steadfastly carrying on explanatory work, we have been able to acquaint large sections of the Indian people with many achievements of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. As a result of our propaganda and under the impact of concrete realities of the Soviet Union, the socialist ideal has become widespread among our people. It is a matter of pride and happiness for us that this ideal is enshrined in the Indian Constitution, something in which our party played a significant role.

Today even bourgeois parties, including the ruling party, swear allegiance to socialism, for the idea appeals to the masses. But they go on trying to distort its content so as to fool the people. At the same time, some strata of our society are not yet clear as to how capitalist oppression and exploitation can be ended and a just social order established in its place. In this context, it is now easier for our party to propagate socialist ideas and to show that existing, living socialism assures the working people prosperity in a large group of countries embracing one-third of humanity, while the world capitalist system is enmeshed in internal contradictions and acute problems, such as unemployment, inflation and poverty.

In conclusion I must say that the draft new edition of the Programme of the CPSU helps to unite the international communist movement on Marxist-Leninist principles and to advance successfully in the struggle for peace and social progress.

Meeting the Demands of Our Age

George Hawi — General Secretary,
Central Committee, Lebanese Communist Party

IT is natural for a communist party, for any revolutionary organisation to attach great importance to the question of its programme: after all, it is a question of defining the fundamentals of strategy and tactics in accordance with the demands of a whole stage of the revolutionary struggle. This makes the great importance of a policy document drawn up by the CPSU—the party enjoying such great prestige in the international communist movement and possessing such rich and famous experience of revolutionary transformations and of socialist construction—all the more obvious. The CPSU is at the helm of the Soviet Union, the world's first socialist country which embodies the very spirit of the age of the transition from capitalism to socialism, which champions the advanced, progressive ideas of today's world and which plays an increasing role in the shaping of humanity's future.

For this reason alone the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme has generated profound interest all over the world. An examination of this document prompts one to reflect in greater depth on many problems, ideas and positions that have a bearing on the current and future situation in the world. Historically, the significance of the draft is rooted above all in the fact that, proceeding from the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism, it answers the burning question of our age and outlines the theoretical foundation and the practical ways of their solution with due regard for the distinctive features of the current stage in the development of Soviet society and of the international situation.

Viewed in the context of domestic affairs, the essence of this stage is defined in the CPSU policy document as determined by the tasks of planned and all-round perfection of socialism and Soviet society's further advance to communism through

the country's accelerated socio-economic development.

The draft new edition of the Programme formulates the CPSU's current economic strategy aimed at doubling and fundamentally and qualitatively renewing the country's production potential by the year 2000. Steady improvement of living and working conditions is defined in the draft as the prime goal of social policy. As far as the development of the Soviet political system is concerned, the strategic line here calls for the perfection of democracy for all.

The importance of the prospects charted is not confined to the domestic aspects nor can it be gauged by these aspects alone. Each success scored by the Soviet Union is inseparable from the consolidation of the international positions held by the forces of socialism, national liberation and social progress and influences the course of the international competition of the two systems. Any domestic change in the USSR is a factor that helps to change the image of the world as a whole.

Viewed in the context of world developments, the salient feature of the current stage is rooted in the acuteness and topicality the problem of war and peace has now acquired. The CPSU policy document regards the defence of universal peace as the principal task facing mankind.

An analysis of the international struggle between the forces of progress and the reactionaries shows that the emergence of the socialist community and the growth of its strength have changed the alignment of forces radically. The general crisis of capitalism is growing deeper, and the sphere of capitalist domination is contracting inexorably. The historical doom of this system is becoming increasingly obvious. The upsurge of mass democratic movements in the non-socialist world is a characteristic feature of our time.

In the context of the analysis concerning the ways along which the world is developing, the problem of war and peace is treated not only as a profoundly human issue of life and death but also as today's principal revolutionary question, as a priority sphere of communist activity. The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme is fully justified to note that preservation of universal peace creates favourable external conditions for the tackling of the party's large-scale historic tasks within the Soviet Union. It also means the promotion and development of the factors that determine the distinctive aspects of the new international situation when imperialism no longer holds a strategic military superiority and is unable to reverse history.

The issue of peace is of exceptional importance to the revolutionaries; it is the principal question for the socialist community and for the international working class and national liberation movements. Priority goals of the CPSU's international policy include internationalist solidarity with communist parties and with revolutionary and liberation movements under the militant revolutionary slogan that 'the alliance of the forces of social progress and national liberation is a guarantee of a better future for mankind'.

Conducting revolutionary work guided by our scientific theory, we Marxists-Leninists attach special importance to the method used in the CPSU document to analyse social development trends. The salient features of this method include close attention to all that is new and revolutionary boldness in the approach to the practical solution, in the interests of the working class and all working people, of the tasks the Communists face. Optimism, openness and frankness in the assessment of both the achievements and the mistakes accompanying the revolutionary process are typical of this method. It is based on a creative application of Marxist-Leninist principles, on grasping the general laws of social development discovered by Marxism-Leninism, on gearing the revolutionary experience to the specific and distinctive conditions of each individual country and on drawing lessons from the problems that arise. As we understand it, this method demands above all that the revolutionary movement must keep pace with the process of development and renovate itself constantly in

accordance with the new features this process gives rise to.

Frankly—and here I am not displaying a narrow national or a narrow party approach—I would say that in the context of the tasks tackled by the Lebanese Communist Party, my attention was captured above all by that part of the document which mentions the situation in our country and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Assessing the policy of imperialism which refuses to recognise the political realities of today's world, the draft notes that 'the bloody war against Vietnam, the blockade of Cuba for many years, the flouting of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people, the intervention in Lebanon, the armed seizure of defenceless Grenada, and the aggressive actions against Nicaragua—these are only some of the countless crimes that will remain forever the most shameful pages in the history of imperialism'.

This passage points to the responsibility of world imperialism and of Zionism, its offspring, for the plight and suffering of the Lebanese, Palestinian and other fraternal Arab peoples who are fighting for their right to freely determine their destiny. The document thus reiterates the importance of the situation in Lebanon for the overall state of affairs in our region and the world. This serves to emphasise the increasing significance of the struggle waged by the progressive and patriotic forces for the complete liberation of the country from Israeli occupation, for the restoration of Lebanon's unity and preservation of its Arab identity, and for a democratic national solution to the crisis, the solution which will put an end to the influence of confessionalism in all its forms. The provision in question also concerns the struggle of all Arab revolutionaries and patriots for a just solution of their national issues, particularly the Palestinian problem. This makes it incumbent on us Communists and on the Arab and Lebanese revolutionary forces to grasp the importance of our historical responsibility more fully and in greater depth.

We have also noted the provisions of the draft dealing with the working class as the principal revolutionary class of our age and with the vanguard role of the communist movement in the world revolutionary process. Our experience proves that the changes and new features introduced by the process of development make it a duty of the communist party to attach unflagging attention to its vanguard role so that this role should be discharged in actual fact as befits revolutionaries and not remain a theoretical provision.

This truth is becoming increasingly important at the current stage of the revolutionary process in Lebanon. It is borne out by the entire record of the Arab national liberation movement whose success depends on the ability of the working class to assume the central position in the movement as its main revolutionary force and on the ability of the Communist Party to play the vanguard role within the alliance of revolutionary and patriotic quarters—the alliance which is helping this movement to enter a new stage; this calls for the overcoming of the factors behind the current crisis and for the creation of conditions conducive to a new upsurge so as to implement the tasks of a national democratic revolution. In this connection, the provision on closer relations with the revolutionary-democratic parties of newly free countries is of special significance to us.

The role of the working class in the overall democratic struggle is growing. This makes it imperative for the Communists to exert greater efforts in discharging the difficult mission of the vanguard in the national liberation movement. This role of the LCP was expressed with particular force in its decisive participation in the establishment of the Lebanese Front of Patriotic Resistance. We continue to accord priority to the development and improvement of the struggle waged by this front.

The question of democracy is the central issue of the struggle conducted in Lebanon by our party, other progressive and patriotic forces and the overwhelming majority of the Lebanese people. The LCP considers it its duty to be more active in

the struggle for democracy and to mobilise the working class and broad sections of the people. In this way, mass action will increasingly express the democratic essence of the current confrontation. We regard the successful rebuff to the Israeli aggression, to imperialist interference and to the domestic confessionalist fascist plans as an important step forward in the development of the national democratic movement, a step opening new vistas before the national democratic revolution and the further struggle for socialism.

Our party is working in difficult and distinctive conditions. In this connection, the Lebanese Communists attach special importance to the provision of the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme which states that 'communist and workers' parties in the non-socialist world are operating in a complex and controversial situation. The range of the circumstances and forms of their struggle is quite broad. However, this expands rather than limits the opportunities available to the movement. The diversity of the forms of activity practised by the Communists enables them to take better account of specific national conditions and concrete historical circumstances, and of the interests of different social groups and strata of the population.' It is also noted that 'the CPSU closely studies the problems and the experience of foreign communist parties. It regards with understanding their desire to improve their strategy and tactics.'

We see the new policy document as a starting point and a firm basis for strengthening the unity of the international communist and workers' movement, the unity that is essential for the development of the world revolutionary process. We strive to use every opportunity for rallying the movement closer together, for joint action by the communist parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, for promoting relations of friendship and sincere comradely cooperation with the party of Lenin.

A Manifesto of Construction and Peace

Jorge del Prado — General Secretary,
Central Committee, Peruvian Communist Party

HUMANITY is passing through the most dramatic stage in its history since World War II and the defeat of German fascism. US imperialism and the capitalist system as a whole have put the planet in real danger of a new world war, one incomparably more terrible and devastating than both earlier wars. But humanity also commands enormous forces and resources for the defence of life and progress, and is in a position to ensure the ascent of civilisation to new heights. These forces are existing socialism, born of the October Revolution in Russia (1917), and the factors which bring about positive political changes in the world under the direct or indirect impact of that revolution. They have been on the rise over the past forty years, ever since the formation of the world socialist system, and have been playing a decisive role.

The world conflict between two policies is admittedly nothing new. It is an expression of the fundamental contradiction of our epoch, which is compounded by all the other major contradictions and is at the centre of the most important political events of today. Assessing the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme and pondering on its international significance, I come to the conclusion that it lies primarily in the clear and strictly scientific definition of the universal and epoch-making character of this decisive contradiction. As this contradiction has become

extremely acute of late, it is time for all people on earth, whatever their ideological differences or political allegiance, to rise and fight in order to remove the danger of nuclear disaster. The CPSU document makes this very clear and calls for it.

'The most acute problem facing mankind today is that of war and peace,' the draft stresses. Imperialism is guilty of the rise and growth of the war danger, of the very likelihood that nuclear weapons of formidable destructive power would be used in the event of a new world war. Such a war would become 'a global armed conflict in which there would be no winners or losers and in which world civilisation could perish,' says the CPSU document. Thus the sharpening contradiction between the capitalist world, which is historically doomed, and the socialist world, which is steadily growing stronger, goes beyond the framework of confrontation between the two socio-political systems, taking the form of a conflict between humanity and those who are imperilling its existence, of a life and death struggle on the planet.

What is the way out? It is necessary to stop, to desist from the arms race on earth and prevent an arms race in space, answered Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU CC, in Geneva.

Now that the danger of nuclear death is threatening all countries and everybody irrespective of ideology, the principles of peaceful coexistence are particularly important. 'In a world charged with sharp contradictions, and in the face of an impending catastrophe,' says the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme, 'there is only one reasonable, only one acceptable way out: the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.' This implies not only the absence of wars but an international order based on good-neighbourliness and cooperation, with large-scale exchange of scientific and technological achievements and cultural values benefiting all peoples.

Since the contradiction between the two social systems also translates, in effect, into an ideological contest between the two world-views—bourgeois and Marxist-Leninist—many people put the blame for the present steep upturn in international tensions in equal measure on the 'superpowers', the United States and the Soviet Union. The new programme document of the CPSU conclusively refutes this false allegation. In doing so, it elucidates two key points. First, the question of the antithetical positions of the two systems on the origin of the present menacing world situation and on the social progress made by the peoples since World War I, when the general crisis of capitalism broke out, and the victory of the Great October, which ushered in the socialist era. Second, the question of which of the two social systems expresses the objective requirements of social progress and is an exponent of genuine humanism. We think a clear presentation of these questions, which the draft spells out, giving sound arguments, is an important component of the document lending it immense international significance.

The draft reveals the antagonism between the policy of brinkmanship and the policy of peaceful coexistence, between war and peace. It shows how this contradiction is being resolved—for the good of humanity or to its detriment. Throughout the postwar period, the world socialist system has been waging an unrelenting struggle against the reactionary forces of imperialism and its bid for world domination, against nuclear militarism. The mighty national liberation movement resists efforts to restore the colonial system while the working people's democratic movement comes out against attempts to suppress their just struggle. A contest is under way, the aim being to use the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution for the good of people and the progress of humanity and not for destroying it.

In every instance of this kind, monopoly capital has always encouraged and inspired what was negative, destructive and retrogressive, supporting it everywhere, overtly or covertly. As for the positive and progressive, it has invariably enjoyed

resolute support—direct or indirect—from the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole. Thus an objective polarisation of social forces is taking place. The ideals of progress, of national and social liberation, the ideals of socialism, are winning over new social groups, including groups which until recently had at best shown vacillation. An alliance is taking shape in the struggle for universal interests, giving this struggle further incentives and greater strength.

The anti-historic and anti-human nature of the capitalist system at the imperialist stage manifests itself in the destructive character of its activity, as well as in the deep crisis of its ideology. By contrast, the whole path travelled by existing socialism bears out the forecasts made by Marxism-Leninism; these forecasts, coming true, reveal the character of the present epoch as precisely an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism and communism.

The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme analyses the development of Soviet society and then that of the whole socialist system. It shows that the policy of Lenin's party is consistently carrying forward and enriching its creative approach to the cardinal problems which the new state had to solve in the sphere of social and national liberation and in creating the basis and superstructure of socialist society.

In the historical context of the contemporary epoch, the draft confirms the Marxist-Leninism postulate concerning the class content of the advance to socialism, now a social system as well. 'The working class,' the document says, 'has been, and remains, the main revolutionary class of the present epoch.' It specifies that progress in science and technology, generally described as the 'scientific and technological revolution', does not imply that the role of the working class is being passed on to experts in science and technology. On the contrary, this inseparable component of the contemporary productive forces is included in the proletariat and reinforces its ranks.

Thus the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme is characterised by a comprehensive analysis of the problems of our epoch, a creative Marxist-Leninist approach, and a rich theoretical content.

What gives the draft international significance is also the fact that, in defining the tasks in socialist and communist construction, it generalises varied experience of value to other countries as well, and contributes to our doctrine, Marxism-Leninism.

This prompts me to single out certain ideas of the CPSU having a direct relation to distinctively Peruvian problems. To begin with, I would like to mention the one-time colonies which gained nominal political independence long ago but find themselves in economic bondage to imperialism. Peru was first dominated by British monopoly capital, then came US imperialism, which now blocks out country's slightest opportunities for independent progress. Dependence on imperialism is increasing although Peru possesses huge and diverse natural resources and has attained a medium level of capitalist development, which sets it, like certain other Latin American countries, apart from the overwhelming majority of Asian and African countries.

There are many signs of neocolonialism in Peru, such as, first of all, the complete subordination of industrial development and domestic capital to transnationals. This is why the Peruvian bourgeoisie cannot be expected to take the lead in an anti-imperialist revolution. Our working class is really playing a vanguard role in the political struggle for national liberation and democracy, including the positive element which bourgeois democracy contains.

Peru's gigantic external debt is another problem. It will virtually pawn the whole economic future of the country if the nation continues recognising its debt and submitting to the intolerable dictates of the IMF.

The debt, which injures every section of the population, including the dependent bourgeoisie, has given rise to a very broad anti-imperialist movement. The movement

not only advocates a new economic policy for Peru and a new approach to international economic relations but calls for scientific and technological progress, a revival of national traditions, and the advancement of culture as a whole. This mighty movement comprises all left forces. It is in alliance with the peasantry and the urban poor that the working class and its party, the PCP, are operating within the Left Unity bloc.

In the situation prevailing in Peru today, the draft document's thesis about the possibility of non-capitalist development is very important. We regard such development as a stage between national liberation and socialism. The anti-imperialist movement in our country might assume a revolutionary democratic character as in the case of the Arab countries that have won freedom. However, its characteristics would be determined by the level of economic development and the balance of class forces, as well as by ideological peculiarities, which are less extreme in Peru than elsewhere. The long-standing tradition of nominal independence of the country with its bourgeois democratic institutions, which have lately gained somewhat in efficiency, would play its role.

Present-day Peruvian realities have exacerbated the anti-imperialist struggle and raised it to a higher plane. The Left is emerging as an alternative to the government in power. The connection between the destiny of our country and the preservation of world peace, the growth of the forces of progress, and the fact that the socialist community has achieved an equilibrium on the international scene and placed military parity in the service of peace, is coming out more and more. There arises a concrete need to promote international economic relations and to intensify cultural and technological exchanges in order to resist the pressure put by imperialism on the countries which refuse to pay their external debt. It is also necessary to advance the traditional and non-traditional branches of the national economy with a view to ending technological dependence as a factor in neocolonialist oppression.

I think the provisions I have pointed out are the most important ones. However, the CPSU document is so rich in content that it would be positively impossible to so much as list those of the document's ideas which are particularly noteworthy in terms of the struggle of the Peruvian Communist Party for the national and social liberation of its country.

The importance of the problems examined in the new edition of the CPSU Programme, its scientific content, and the summed-up results achieved by existing socialism from its birth to the present unprecedented turning point in world development, will make it a classical contribution to the theoretical and political treasury of Marxism-Leninism. It is a fitting continuation of the tradition of scientific communist thought begun by the *Communist Manifesto*.

A Guide to Action

Amath Dansokho — General Secretary,
Senegal Party of Independence and Labour

THE first point I should like to make is that the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme reiterates the vanguard role which the party of Lenin plays—on the level of both theory and practice—in the struggle against imperialism, for peace, national independence, and socio-political changes. This document is consonant with the imperatives of our epoch and may be quite rightly called the *Communist Manifesto* of the close of the twentieth century.

We visited the Soviet Union at a time the draft new edition was being discussed. We talked to working people, to Communists, engaged in different areas of political, economic, social, and cultural activity, and saw the unanimity of the support for the draft. It is a guide to action chiefly, of course, for the Soviet Communists, who will consider it at their 27th Congress. There has also been a wide response to this document in countries around the world. International democratic opinion justifiably considers that the implementation of the programme guidelines drawn up by the CPSU will mark a new and highly significant stage in the development not only of Soviet society but of the whole of humanity.

A paramount merit making the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme internationally significant is that it clearly defines prospects. 'The party,' the draft says, 'constantly brings its policy, its economic and social strategy, and the aims of its organisational and ideological work into line with the communist prospect.' Fulfilment of the CPSU's plans will take the great Soviet Union, where socialism has triumphed totally and irrevocably, further along the road to communism. The importance of this fact goes beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union, because the perfection of developed socialism and the growth of the might and prestige of the USSR and the other socialist community states serve as a new stimulus for the entire revolutionary movement. This is a key factor of the spread and growth of the influence of socialism's great ideas, a factor that is helping to change the balance of strength in the world in favour of the fighters against imperialism, for peace, democracy, and social progress.

We have called the CPSU Programme the Communist Manifesto of the end of the twentieth century. At the same time it is, in our view, a Peace Manifesto. Encapsulating the aspirations of all peoples for peace and security and expressing the widespread anxiety over the arms race started and being whipped up by imperialism, the draft stresses, entirely in keeping with the initiative—filled peace policy of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, that the preservation of world peace remains the principal issue of our day.

In studying the CPSU Programme document in the light of the political and ideological tasks now confronting our party and of the national and international conditions under which it is functioning, the Senegalese Communists focused special attention on some of its provisions.

'The socialist community,' the draft states, 'is the most prestigious force of our time, without which not a single question of world politics can be solved.' This conclusion is entirely in accord with the SPIL's assessments of the role played today by the socialist community. Mention of this role is not simply the proclamation of a principle or a tribute to some ritual. On the contrary, it is an expression of a political posture. In our view, it has to be accentuated with special force today when in their efforts to benefit by some of existing socialism's growth pains bourgeois ideologues and revisionists are trying to sow doubt about the indisputably stimulating influence of socialism's historic achievements. As a matter of fact, the wide range of means of ideological warfare employed by imperialism to misrepresent the actual situation in the socialist countries is striking confirmation of the prestige enjoyed by the socialist community and of the role it plays in world developments.

Elementary realism and attention to our people's interests make closer relations with the socialist community an imperative. This is what prompted our party's President Seydou Cissokho to urge, from the rostrum of our Second Congress (1984), that the government of Senegal finally establish relations of mutually beneficial cooperation with the socialist states. Experience shows that not a single major problem of the developing nations can be settled today on a long-term basis without taking into account the role played by the socialist community in the modern world, without drawing the necessary political conclusions from this fact. This concerns the

defence and reinforcement of Senegal's national independence, its security, and independent economic and peaceful democratic development. In this context, although they were limited, the results of the US-Soviet summit in Geneva were extremely indicative. They showed that the socialist community and the interests represented by it cannot be discounted. Moreover, let me note that despite the innumerable difficulties facing the Senegalese Communists, we look to the future with optimism.

Attention is drawn by the provision of the draft new edition stating that the working class remains the main revolutionary class of our time. At first glance, to every Communist this may seem to be a self-evident truth. But the significance of this reminder is quite obvious if we bear in mind the various 'theories' postulating the decline and disappearance of the working class. For parties such as ours this provision is of special significance. In Senegal and other developing countries there are quite many people who argue that because of its relative numerical, ideological, and organisational weakness the national working class does not play a historic, decisive role in present-day socio-political processes. In fact the Senegalese bourgeoisie has never stinted efforts to neutralise the working class movement, thereby recognising its significance.

After analysing the objective condition of the Senegalese working class, our party identified negative factors that are today preventing it from fully discharging its mission and, at the same time, clearly revealed its historic, vanguard role. This is the main thesis adopted by our party's Second Congress.

'The international communist movement is the vanguard of the working class movement and of all the other forces of the world revolutionary process.' It 'is the most influential ideological and political force of our day,' states the CPSU document. This is a lucid reply to the bourgeois allegations that the influence of our movement on world development is weakening, that it is affected by an irreversible 'crisis' and has finally ceded its vanguard positions to other socio-political forces.

We feel that it is particularly important and topical to reaffirm that the 'revolutionary party of the working class is guided by the scientific theory of social development, Marxism-Leninism, and pursues a fundamentally class policy'. This postulate, too, relates not only to the Communists tackling concrete tasks of socialist construction. It is important on the theoretical and political levels also for all who relate their activities, as is stated in the CPSU document, to the communist prospect.

In the same light we perceive what is said in the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme about the perfection of socialism on the basis of its historical gains and enormous, still untapped potentialities and the elimination of everything that obstructs progress. The draft clearly accentuates the understanding that communism is not a question of propaganda but constitutes the result of concrete and constant effort to qualitatively restructure the economy, social relations, political institutions, and the practical work of the party itself as society's guiding force.

The building of the new society requires the development and implementation of the best ways and means for the broadest mobilisation of the people's creative energy for the fulfilment of the large range of tasks on which that society's further progress depends. In stressing the significance of the human factor, the draft distinctly expresses this requirement: 'Socialist society cannot function effectively without finding new ways for promoting the creative activity of the people in all areas of social life.' This implies not merely efficiency. It covers the entire spectrum of questions related to socialist democracy, the approach to which has to be concrete-historical, not abstract.

In Senegal the ruling party, calling itself socialist, talks about democracy, portraying it as its militant banner, and does not scruple to lecture socialist countries. In this context it is, we feel, of the utmost importance to mention the organic unity

between democracy and socialism. As the CPSU document shows, socialist democracy is incomparably more effective and richer than bourgeois democracy.

This document touches upon other questions of immense concern to the Communists and all other revolutionary forces of the zone covered by the national liberation movement. For instance, the draft says: 'More and more peoples are denying capitalism their confidence, and do not wish to link their future with it.' Bearing out Lenin's basic postulates on the development of the national liberation movement, this historical tendency is today manifesting itself in Africa, where the number of organisations adopting scientific socialism and of socialist-oriented countries is growing steadily. This tendency was noted at our party's Second Congress, which pointed out that the socialist-oriented national democratic revolution was the prospect of our struggle today and defined its specific content in the conditions prevailing in Senegal.

The draft new edition of the CPSU Programme not only indicates the historical prospect of the struggle waged by the peoples of Africa and other Third World countries but also notes the difficulties along that road. Among these is the circumstance that the exploiting capitalist world is still strong and dangerous although it has passed its zenith. Further, as the sole force capable of guiding the transformation process, the working class of developing countries is still young. It is growing but has not adequately matured ideologically, organisationally, and politically and has not won the recognition of other progressive social forces as the element capable of leading them.

Other problems must be taken into account. The experience of socialist-oriented development is now being acquired by countries that are, by virtue of historical reasons, still linked firmly to the capitalist world market. This negatively affects the rhythm of basic socio-political reforms predicated on their ideological and political choice. The huge and diverse assistance and support that these states get from the socialist community unquestionably allow for a substantial reduction of the impact of the negative factors inherited from the colonial past. However, this assistance is not always used in full and most effectively, with the result that, as experience has shown, new difficulties are generated. Lastly, there is the fact of cultural backwardness and the still enormous influence of patriarchal structures and values on the behaviour of different classes and strata of society, particularly of the workers whose class consciousness lags behind considerably on account of these circumstances. Such are the factors that cumulatively explain the difficulties of socialist-oriented development noted in the CPSU document.

By and large, the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme reiterates creative Marxism-Leninism's vast potentialities and is evidence of the colossal viability of the movement started by the October Revolution. To those who in the face of capitalism's deepening crisis have nothing to offer save a nuclear apocalypse and social ruin, the draft explicitly replies: communism is the future of the world.

Existing Socialism and the Destiny of Latin America

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THIS century will go down in history as a period of wide dissemination and realisation of Marxism-Leninism, of active involvement of the oppressed and exploited in revolutionary creative effort, of immense changes in the destiny of the peoples of the

globe. The victory of the Great October marked the birth of a new socio-economic formation which succeeded the exploiting system, and the translation of socialism into an objective reality. The rise of the world socialist system amounted to the emergence of a mighty factor impinging in every respect on all countries and regions, on all political movements and parties.

The socialist community's coordinated policy for peace and its realistic and constructive approach to major problems of today embody Lenin's idea of the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems. They have made a tangible contribution to the defence of man's inalienable right to life, freedom, an existence fit for human beings, and an independent choice of his destiny, and constitute a forceful manifestation of internationalism and humanism.

Socialism is a society whose intentions and activities, in the international arena are aimed at supporting the aspiration of peoples for independence and social progress and serve the paramount task, which is to preserve and consolidate peace. For us who have chosen the path of revolutionary struggle, for our theoretical and practical activity in the context of Panamanian realities, it is very important to grasp the impact of existing socialism on the destiny of Latin America. Without attempting a detailed exposition of the subject in this article, I would like to deal with some of its aspects.

It would be hard to fully gauge the significance of the experience of the peoples of the Soviet Union and other socialist community countries to us. They have demonstrated the possibility of defeating the forces of foreign and home reaction, winning national and social liberation and making economic and cultural progress. The theory of building a new society has been tested in practice. Socialism has established itself in vast areas of the globe, helped by force of example to expand the communist, working class, anti-monopoly, anti-war, and other mass movements in capitalist countries, and brought about an unprecedented struggle of peoples for national liberation and social progress.

This is exemplified by the victory of socialist revolutions in a number of countries and by the appearance of new independent states which have opted for a socialist orientation. Members of diverse political organisations and movements are uniting on the broad platform of the struggle for the preservation of world peace, for social and economic progress.

'... We are fighting,' Lenin wrote in 1919, 'not only to win socialism for ourselves, not only to ensure that our children shall only recollect capitalists and landowners as prehistoric monsters; we are fighting to ensure that the workers of the whole world triumph together with us.'¹ In the socialist community, including Cuba, a Latin American country lying thousands of kilometres away from the other socialist countries, there are whole generations already which have never known exploitation. And while the road to the future is by no means strewn with roses, we trust that the day is not far off when imperialist and oligarchic domination will be ended once and for all in both Panama and other Latin American countries.

The experience gained by the fraternal parties of the socialist community in strategy and tactics, in providing conditions for the victory of the revolution, building a new society, and giving it revolutionary leadership, is of lasting value to us. Having confirmed in practice the validity and power of communist ideas and the indefensibility of the arguments of their critics on the right and the 'left' alike, it helps us become a real vanguard of the popular movement. Life has shown that the achievements of socialism are irreversible and that a principled policy based on the main components of the advanced doctrine of our times is the only correct revolutionary policy.

As far back as the 1920s, communist parties began to emerge everywhere on our continent under the impact of the Great October. Nor did Panama stay out of this process in spite of a complicated domestic situation and a hostile environment, which

told at once. Recently we marked the 55th anniversary of the People's Party of Panama. The party was founded on April 4, 1930, and was called Communist until 1951. The event was an important landmark in the history and intellectual life of the country attesting to a considerable increase in the revolutionary consciousness of the working people and various population groups in the struggle for national independence and social liberation. It implied that Marxism-Leninism has also reached our country and that the revolutionary theory of the world proletariat, once the patrimony of individual progressive Panamanians, had become the ideology of and a guide to action for a revolutionary party of the new type. Furthermore, it implied that Marxist-Leninist theory and practice had ended the monopoly of bourgeois liberalism and opened a clear, truly revolutionary path for us.

For Panama's Communists, the advanced doctrine of modern times is a method of cognising reality and has played its part in the development of social thought and national culture. The idea of broad alliances, advanced by Lenin and tested in the course of socialist construction, is of special significance to us at this stage and serves us as a guide in our struggle for advanced democracy, against the latifundium system and economic dependence, with the prospect of building a classless society. By studying, propagating and using the experience of existing socialism, we are perfecting the strategy and tactics of the democratic national liberation revolution and contributing to the anti-imperialist movement in our country by fulfilling the exacting tasks set by the latest PPP Congress.

The past decades have been a period of successful struggle against imperialist presence and venal oligarchic regimes on Panamanian soil. Our independent national state is consolidating itself. The people have won certain social benefits and democratic rights, which provides favourable conditions for the revolutionary process. All this has come about in spite of losses, of persecution and arrests on political grounds. The memory of those who gave their lives for the liberation, national dignity, and radiant future of the country inspires us to fight on.

In the new international situation, the imperialist camp has regrouped its forces. The more aggressive US imperialist circles have become a bulwark of reaction, a subversive, counter-revolutionary centre pretending to the role of world gendarme. Under the pretext of countering the 'communist threat' and 'export of revolution', they are trying to rally the capitalist world for a 'crusade' against the socialist countries, the communist and working class movement, and those who are fighting for national liberation.

Contrary to reality and common sense, imperialism's apologists hold forth on the 'economic weakness' of socialism and have repeatedly forecast its 'early end'. This was the case in the first months of the existence of the Soviet Republic, when it struggled in a hostile encirclement, and in 1941, the hardest year for the Soviet people, when the Hitler fascists treacherously attacked the Soviet Union and reached the vicinity of Moscow. We now hear much the same from those who call the socialist system a 'historical accident doomed to disappear'. The forecasts of advocates of the exploiting society are an admission of the invincibility and strength of socialism.

We consider the thesis about the 'aggressiveness' of the socialist community very dangerous, for it serves as an excuse for ominous imperialist plans aimed at escalating the arms race and spreading it to outer space, as well as at recapturing lost positions by means of 'local conflicts' fraught with a global nuclear clash.

Socialism threatens no one with war. War is alien to the very nature of socialism. All falsehoods notwithstanding, the Soviet Union has been the standard-bearer of an anti-war policy ever since it came into being; subsequently this mission was assumed by the socialist community as a whole. Revolutions objectively need peace to transform the old way of life. Peace was a vital necessity to Russia's Bolsheviks and Cuba's revolutionaries, just as it is a necessity to the peoples of Nicaragua, El

Salvador and other countries of Central America and the Caribbean who are beating off aggression from imperialism and its mercenaries and satraps.

Lenin's famous Decree on Peace and the latest bold and constructive initiatives of the socialist community are separated by years during which the indivisibility of the concepts of peace and socialism has been proved in deeds. It is not through so-called infiltration or interference in the affairs of other countries but through the living example of economic construction, a consistent foreign policy, invariable loyalty to the principles of proletarian internationalism, and solidarity with the peoples fighting for liberation that the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have won true friends everywhere and the respect of sober-minded people even among their opponents.

All talk about 'export of revolution' is absurd, to say the least. Experience has shown that a revolution cannot be imported and that it is the result of a deterioration of the crisis of a system which has had its day, of the development of a revolutionary situation, of the operation of objective and subjective factors in the country concerned. No one exported revolution to Bolivia in 1952, any more than to Guatemala, where power in the 1944-1954 period was held by progressive governments under Juan Jose Arevalo and Jacobo Arbenz, who had the 'audacity' to curb the power of the oligarchy and to throw down the gauntlet to the omnipotent United Fruit Co., a major US corporation. Democracy in Guatemala was simply strangled in the cradle by imperialism's mercenaries while the fruits of the Bolivia revolution were picked by the Creole bourgeoisie and US monopolies.

In those years, imperialism and its flunkies felt confident, for they underrated the revolutionary movements under way; they saw no threat to themselves when Fidel Castro and his associates first stormed the Moncada barracks and then landed from the *Granma* and took to the mountains to kindle the flames of a nation-wide struggle against the Batista tyranny. Official Washington imagined that this would come down to just another coup 'the Latin American way', to the replacement of one dictator with another or, 'at worst', the establishment of a bourgeois democratic regime.

However, the early 1960s witnessed a radical change in the situation. And it dawned on imperialist strategists that the Cuban revolution had opened a new chapter in the political history of the American continent and that socialism had become a reality in the Western Hemisphere. That was when they had recourse to every means from anti-communist and anti-Soviet propaganda and economic blockade to sabotage, subversion, and direct armed intervention, their invariable aim being to stamp out the shoots of social progress in the region, which imperialism had been accustomed to regarding as its traditional 'sphere of interests'.

Imperialism is no longer omnipotent; but it is still strong, and this has to be taken into account. After its crushing military defeat at Cuba's Playa Giron, it mounted a frontal counter-offensive against the liberation and democratic movements on the continent. The chronology of that offensive is common knowledge, so we will only list some of the facts: 1964, coup in Brazil; 1965, armed intervention in the Dominican Republic; 1971, overthrow of the democratic government under Juan Jose Torres in Bolivia; 1973, fascist coups in Uruguay and Chile.

The dark night of counter-revolution descended on many South American countries. Some progressive intellectuals expressed the fear that the ebb of the liberation movement would last long. We must not forget Lenin's prophetic words: 'Though the pirates may succeed in holding up the movement for a time, they cannot stop it altogether, it is invincible.'² The ebb and flow of revolutions are part of the dialectic of social development; this dialectic manifests itself in different ways depending on how conditions shape up in the given region or country.

Already in the second half of the 1970s, the revolutionary potential which had been building up within Latin America society made itself felt with new force at regional

and subregional level, including the Caribbean; it began with the anti-colonial movement in Panama and reached a high with the Sandinists' coming to power in Nicaragua in 1979. Some dismissed the victory of Sandino's successors as an allegedly accidental and isolated development; they had expected no such thing after decades of exhausting armed struggle by the Nicaraguan people against domination by imperialism and the Somoza clan. The reason for this underestimation was disregard of the actual situation in Nicaragua, which was favourable to a revolutionary upsurge. In this case as in others, however, the outcome had nothing to do with 'communist intrigues', the Soviet Union or Cuba, although their example and international solidarity did inspire the SNLF fighters as they stormed the bastions of the dictatorship. The Sandinists' victory was a result of the operation of the laws governing social development in a country where the crisis of social, economic, and political structures had gone so far and the tyranny had become so intolerable to the people and so offensive in the eyes of world opinion that the revolution proved objectively necessary and possible.

Imperialism saw in the defeat of the Somoza regime a 'new cuba' and another 'dangerous example' for the surrounding countries, which were likewise in a revolutionary ferment. As if it had forgotten its ignominious defeat in Vietnam and at Playa Giron, US reaction began large-scale preparations to put down the Nicaraguan revolution; it could not understand that times had changed and that the very existence of socialism as a reality is the chief obstacle to the execution of plans for aggression.

The establishment of a socialist system in Cuba, the revolution in Nicaragua, and other liberation movements and democratisation processes are evidence that a fundamentally new situation has arisen in the Western Hemisphere. In the wake of the Malvinas crisis and the criminal US invasion of Grenada, few governments in our region abide by their traditional loyalty to the 'great northern neighbour'. The explosive situation in Central America today is deeply worrying even those politicians who are far from being sympathetic to socialism. They realise that the roots of popular protest do not lie in 'intrigues of international communism' but in an extremely deep structural crisis, a huge external debt and dependence on imperialism, and that the current liberation movements have not been 'imported' but are a product of conflict-ridden Latin American reality. This realistic stand is a new phenomenon extending the opportunities for class alliances.

The democratic and national liberation process in our country has entered a phase in which deeper changes are needed than before. The previous period in the development of Panamanian society was characterised by the removal of the oligarchy from power and by the elimination of the legal basis for colonialism in the Panama Canal zone.³ The oligarchy is still there, however. It holds dominant positions in some economic fields, and ever since the death of General Omar Torrijos it has been busy laying its hand on the levers of government. The forces seeking a reversion to the past and preferring to solve the problems of the country without the people are visibly more active now. A rabid anti-communism entirely in keeping with Washington's policy and the interests of fascist-like elements inside the country is a further adverse factor.

Nor has US imperialism been forced out yet, for the Torrijos-Carter agreement does not provide for the final removal of the colonial enclave until the end of this century. The treaties on the Panama Canal, its permanent neutrality and its operation were signed on September 7, 1977; they were approved by the Panamanian people with certain amendments and reservations, ratified by the US Congress, and came into force in October 1, 1979. They provide for the repeal of all the shackling agreements on the Canal concluded earlier and for the assumption of full control of it by Panama in 2000. This is a notable but not final victory won by our people in their

struggle for sovereign rights.

On the other hand, contrary to the 'permanent neutrality' status of the Canal, the so-called Southern Military Command of the United States has bases on Panamanian territory. Now as in the past, 'special mission' troops and exerts in 'counter-insurgency' take training there. It is from these bases and not from the Soviet Union, Cuba or Nicaragua that a direct threat comes to our peoples.

This is why one of the priority tasks of the PPP and other patriots and democrats of Panama who cherish the cause initiated by Torrijos is not only to defend the changes that have been effected but to step up the fight against imperialism's military presence and bandit-like operations in Central America, and to identify themselves in deeds with the peoples of Nicaragua, El Salvador, and other countries.

Progressive humanity can curb world counter-revolution only by joint efforts. Proletarian internationalism, from whose principles we proceed, has a big role to play in this. In the past, the working people's international solidarity was of considerable help to Soviet Russia. It also helped revolutionary Cuba hold its ground and will undoubtedly help the embattled peoples of Nicaragua and the whole of Latin American and other continents in defending their sovereignty and dignity. The Panamanian people's fight for the independence of their national state benefited decisively from the solidarity shown by existing socialism, by all progressive forces. We remember and appreciate this.

Those who ruled Panama until 1968 made laws forbidding the workers and peasants to so much as dream of power. The fact that under Torrijos representatives of diverse classes won the right to power was in indication of progress. We have won this right and must uphold it. We do not want the sacrifices made by our people to be useless or too great. However, there are still those in Panama who thirst for blood and violence. We can now promise not to use violence. But if it is imposed upon us, we will not hesitate to repay in kind. Written into the history of my country in golden letters are the following words of Torrijos, that great patriot and democrat: 'This country, this small country, Panama, is not going to become one more star of the US flag.'

Relations with the socialist world are important if the region is to end its backwardness and dependence. Their formation and development have not been easy, and their history has had its ups and downs. Priority in this respect belongs to Mexico—it was the first country on the continent to establish diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union, relations which can be regarded as an example of peaceful coexistence and mutually beneficial cooperation between states with different social systems. By the end of World War II, under the impact of the Soviet Army's impressive victories over the fascist hordes, a number of Latin American republics established similar relations with the Soviet Union. During the cold war started by imperialism against the Soviet Union and the nascent socialist community, there was a visible decline in the development of these relations. In the 1960s, however, the process recommenced. To date these countries, Cuba included, are cooperating in various fields with many states of our region bar those ruled by reactionary regimes.

This cooperation is one of the results of a changed balance of world forces. The growing prestige of the socialist community, which has great possibilities of participating in world trade and the international division of labour, and the good reputation of socialist foreign trade agencies and organisations, which is buttressed by government guarantees of meeting obligations, bear fruit.

The achievements of existing socialism in various fields and its consistent foreign policy are known to all. This prompts Latin American politicians—realistic and pragmatic members of the bourgeoisie and even the big bourgeoisie—to think seriously about the future of their countries. The structural crisis is going from bad to worse under the domination of transnationals; the economic situation is becoming more and more uncertain; the external debt is increasing and can no longer be repaid.

Furthermore, there is a general toughening of US policy towards Latin America. It expresses itself in the adoption of new protectionist measures and a continuous reduction of the prices of traditional Latin American exports; imports from developed capitalist countries are becoming more expensive. In the circumstances, these leaders see mutually beneficial cooperation with the socialist countries as a real way of lowering the 'high fever' of the region's economy.

They recognise the value of the socialist experience of planning the economy, prospecting for, extracting, and processing minerals, utilising sources of energy, building large hydroelectric plants and irrigation systems, developing the fishing industry, solving the problem of urban transport, and training highly competent engineers, researchers, and cultural workers. This experience is already being used by some countries of Latin America, to say nothing of Cuba, which is a member of the socialist community and builds its international relations on a basis other than the capitalist powers do.

In an interview to the Mexican newspaper *Excelsior*, Fidel Castro stressed that the socialist countries apply no discriminatory measures and never resort to dumping or unfair competition that could cause damage to Cuba. Cuba's financial difficulties arising from credit requirements were remedied promptly and without hindrance. Cuba had solved its problems both by effecting changes and as a result of the establishment of what is, in a sense, a new economic order in relations with other socialist countries. Without this, economic and social achievements, successes in the public health service, education, physical culture and sports, in eliminating unemployment and undernourishment, and in raising the people's living and cultural standards would have been impossible. Nor would Cuba have been able to render technical assistance to dozens of Third World countries.⁴

The interest shown by our region in the activity of the CMEA, which includes Cuba as a full-fledged member and Mexico as an observer, is not accidental. Something of a further sign of the times is the coincidence of the views of some countries of the region and the socialist community countries on certain world political problems. These include renouncing force in solving international problems, declaring the region a nuclear-free zone, and resisting the arms race; the attitude to the non-aligned movement; the external debt; establishing a new economic and information order. Official Latin American quarters look on US foreign policy with growing distaste. Many countries of the continent, which until recently were part of the traditional 'voting machine' in the UN and OAS manipulated by the State Department, may be said to have become an independent and appreciable factor in world politics.

All this provides an objective basis for joint anti-imperialist action by revolutionary, patriotic, democratic forces for the ideals of freedom, independence, and progress. As we have stressed, this struggle is given a powerful incentive by the inspiring example of existing socialism, by its foreign policy and its readiness to cooperate in every field on the principles of justice and equality, irrespective of ideological divergences.

Panama, like other capitalist countries of the region, is going through an economic and political crisis aggravated by a back-breaking external debt that cannot be repaid. The more than four billion dollar debt incurred by a country of two million people means that every panamanian 'owes' the monopolies not less than 2,000 dollars, whereas the annual income of one-third of the population barely averages one-tenth of this sum. The IMF and IBRD are set on taking possession of a substantial part of an already meagre amount of foreign exchange by exacting payments of principal and interest on debt. The result is more suffering for the people and less national independence.

The situation is made worse by irresponsible attempts on the part of certain quarters to reduce the countries of the region to a 'modernised' strategic rear of the

Pentagon. They also want to hitch Panama to their cart, to involve it in military gambles in Central America; they sabotage the efforts of the Contadora Group and limit the country's opportunities for a foreign policy of peace by exerting pressures through diplomatic channels.

This is why the PPP has called on all democratic and national forces and circles, on patriots in all political alignments and currents, not to fall for reaction's schemes. We Communists have urged the people to fight on all fronts and to coordinate their everyday struggles with the main goal, which is to prevent imperialism from turning Panama into its colonial appendage and an accomplice in its acts of aggression. The choice facing the government is either to proceed contrary to the course of history by completely subordinating the country to the IMF and IBRD or to revert to Torrijos' concept of development and national independence, which is supported by all popular and patriotic forces. There is no other choice.

The Communists of the Soviet Union are at the threshold of their 27th Congress, which all revolutionaries are looking forward to with keen interest while all reactionaries are awaiting it with guarded attention. This writer has attended more than one of these forums, along with other representatives of the PPP. On every occasion, we satisfied ourselves that the CPSU congresses have a quality lending them historic significance. They not only inspire us but set an instructive example of revolutionary creative effort.

The upcoming congress will be highlighted by the adoption of important documents, primarily the new edition of the CPSU Programme. The draft of this document, which we have carefully studied, contains a profoundly scientific description of the main trends of Soviet life and the international situation, as well as of the experience gained by the CPSU since the approval of the Programme now in force; it shows successes and examines the problems, difficulties, and shortcomings which crop up as existing socialism develops. This explains why, for both the Soviet Communists and other revolutionary forces, the congress will be a big step towards accelerating social development, a new source of optimism, and an incentive for labour and struggle.

Those are certainly right who say that people in the Soviet Union dream on the basis of reality and raise the country to new levels by fulfilling within the time limits set plans whose very scope seems to make them unrealistic. The Soviet people and their party have by their entire historical practice, by their readiness for sacrifice and great deeds in the name of future generations, won the proud and difficult right—not the privilege—to be a bulwark of peace and social progress.

This was confirmed again by the Geneva summit last November. The Soviet Communists went to it, Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, pointed out, because world developments have reached a point where particularly responsible decisions are required, and where inaction or procrastination is criminal, for it is a question of preserving civilisation and life itself on earth. One should not miss the slightest chance of stopping the dangerous trend of world events.

One of the many questions discussed at Geneva was the acute problem of regional conflicts, whose likely consequences in this nuclear age must not be underestimated. The US imperialists, who are used to proceeding from the standpoint of 'spheres of interests', regard them as no more than instances of East-West confrontation. That is an anachronism, a recurrence of imperial thinking, which denies the peoples the right to think and decide by themselves. Washington ignores the deep-lying roots of these conflicts and equates the lawful governments of countries which have taken the road of national liberation and social progress with counter-revolutionary forces. The CPSU, however, declares for recognising the inalienable right of every people to freedom, independence, and an independent choice of road, for seeing to it that no one flouts this right and that there are no attempts at interference from without. The

Soviet Communists have always been—and we know they will always be—on the side of the people defending their independence. Such is the principled policy of Lenin's party.

We agree that the overall result of Geneva is positive. This was made possible by the construction and consistent policy of the CPSU and by certain realistic elements in the position of the US side. Of course, the real meaning of the useful aspects of the Geneva accords has yet to translate into concrete deeds. We have no doubt that the Soviet Union will continue seeking a downturn in the arms race and a general improvement in the international climate. The Geneva talks will bear fruit if the United States takes a similar approach. The situation is still complicated, but the conditions for making it healthier have improved.

We Panamanian Communists have always regarded solidarity with the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other socialist countries as our international duty. We share and publicise their policies and initiatives, and reveal the difficulties attending the effort to perfect existing socialism. Being well aware of our historical responsibility and our role in the solution of interconnected national and international problems, we will do our duty in the common struggle for the complete liberation and social progress of our America.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 485.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 472.

³ For details, see Ruben Dario Souza, 'The Dynamic of the Revolutionary Process', *WMR*, No. 5, 1983.—Ed.

⁴ See Fidel Castro, *La impagable deuda externa de América Latina y del Tercer Mundo, cómo puede y debe ser cancelada y la urgente necesidad del Nuevo orden económico internacional*. Entrevista concedida al periódico 'Excelsior' de México. Havana, 1985. p. 35.

the party

Meeting of Central Committee Secretaries of the Socialist Countries' Fraternal Parties

THE Central Committee international and ideological secretaries of the socialist countries' communist and workers' parties held their regular meeting in Bucharest on December 19 and 20, 1985. Attending were representatives of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Communist Party of Cuba, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Polish United Workers' Party, the Romanian Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The meeting was an exchange of views on topical questions of ideological and political work connected with the common struggle for peace and disarmament, above all nuclear disarmament, and for greater international security and cooperation.

Referring to the extremely dangerous nature of the continued arms race, the participants in the meeting stressed the need for prompt action to pool the efforts of

the political and social forces committed to peace in the struggle against aggressive imperialist policies, for effective steps to ensure disarmament, above all nuclear disarmament, and the fundamental right of peoples to life and to free and independent development. The participants reiterated the resolve of their parties and countries to cooperate closely with other nations, with communist, workers', socialist and social democratic parties, with anti-war movements of different political, social, ideological and religious identity and with all realistic forces committed to peace in the drive to end the arms race, remove nuclear weapons from Earth, prevent militarisation of outer space and establish a climate of security, mutual trust and broad international cooperation.

The participants in the meeting have noted that the documents adopted at the Sofia Meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee and the collective assessments and conclusions made by their countries' top leaders at the meeting in Prague are additional proof of the socialist nations' high sense of responsibility for the world's future, of their resolve to work for the elimination of the threat of a devastating nuclear war and for returning to the policy of detente and cooperation. The meeting stressed the special importance of continued efforts to marshal effective arguments in favour and ensure the follow-up of the initiatives set forth in the Sofia Declaration and of other proposals made by the socialist countries with the objective of removing the nuclear threat, reducing armaments and arms spending, promoting security, settling regional conflicts and bringing about a turn for the better in European and world affairs.

The fraternal parties' representatives stressed that the Soviet-US summit created more favourable opportunities for improving the international climate and continuing negotiations on nuclear and space weapons. Although specific issues of arms limitation and reduction have not been solved in Geneva, of fundamental importance are the provisions of the joint statement on the inadmissibility of nuclear war, on the pledge of both sides not to seek military superiority and on the need to continue political dialogue so as to introduce changes for the better into international relations. Efforts must now be stepped up to implement the accords attained in principle and to ensure an early conclusion of mutually acceptable agreements which would open the way to nuclear disarmament and peace in accordance with the aspirations and vital interests of nations.

The participants in the meeting expressed their confidence that, acting in close unity, the socialist countries and other revolutionary, progressive and democratic forces can change the dangerous course of developments, promote the policy of peace, detente, disarmament and international cooperation on the basis of peaceful coexistence and attain the ideals of freedom, independence, progress and prosperity for all nations.

In the course of the exchange of views, the participants in the meeting also discussed other international issues and paid special attention to the tasks of settling outstanding conflicts and all international disputes by political means, through negotiation. Today, when the food, energy, environmental and other global problems are becoming increasingly acute, when zones of poverty, hunger and illiteracy are still in existence, when the external debt of many countries, especially of the less developed nations, is increasing, the issue of establishing a new international economic order and eliminating underdevelopment is becoming ever more urgent.

The participants in the meeting reaffirmed their parties' and countries' solidarity with all revolutionary and progressive forces and peoples rebuffing direct aggression and the power politics of imperialism, above all US imperialism, and fighting against colonialism, neocolonialism and racism, against the policy of domination and oppression, for national liberation, social emancipation and independent progressive development.

The meeting noted the importance of efforts to impart a militant character to the propaganda of the socialist nations' revolutionary gains and outstanding achievements in all fields, including the creation of a material basis and a broad democratic framework for the genuine exercise of fundamental human rights and freedoms, above all the right to work and social security, for mass participation in government and for the all round development of the personality. The fraternal parties reiterated their resolve to rebuff any attempts to slander the realities of life in the socialist countries and to interfere in their internal affairs under the pretext of protecting human rights. The interests of peace and of all nations demand that ideological differences should not be projected into relations between states.

The participating parties shall continue their resolute struggle against the imperialist propaganda of war and international hostility, against ideological forays directed at revolutionary, progressive forces. The meeting emphasised the importance of stepping up ideological, political and propaganda work against the increased imperialist and reactionary attempts to revive fascism, neofascism and revanchism. It is imperative to combat all manifestations of nationalist, chauvinist and racist concepts and moves which promote hostility, undermine security and trust and hamper understanding, contacts and normalcy in international relations.

The participants in the meeting exchanged their experience of the ideological, political and propaganda work conducted by each party so as to bring up the younger generation in a revolutionary spirit and to prepare young people for increasingly vigorous participation in the building of socialism in all fields of material and intellectual endeavour, for managing society.

In this connection the meeting stressed the attention paid by the socialist countries to the efforts to impart the Marxist-Leninist world-view to young people, to enable them to master the latest advances in science and technology and to educate them through work and for work, in the spirit of complete loyalty to their party and their country, a high sense of responsibility for the cause of socialism and communism, of peace and friendship among nations, and intransigence to hostile ideology. The parties represented at the meeting hold that vigorous participation of young people in the building of socialism, ideological work closely connected with practical matters, greater efficiency, influence and international cooperation of youth organisations are the most effective means for the patriotic and internationalist education of the younger generation.

The participating parties underlined their commitment to strengthen the socialist countries' friendship, cooperation and concerted action in all fields. In this connection the meeting stressed the need to impart greater magnitude to the economic cooperation of the CMEA countries in the spirit of the decisions taken at the June 1984 CMEA Economic Summit and to publicise the importance of the Comprehensive Programme of the Scientific and Technological Progress adopted at that forum. Concerted follow-up of the tasks and long-term programmes of cooperation and coproduction will ensure the increasingly full use of the socialist countries' capacities, help to accelerate their economic and social progress and enhance the appeal and prestige of socialism throughout the world.

The meeting was conducted in a businesslike atmosphere of friendship and comradely understanding.

The Process of Kampuchea's Renaissance is Irreversible

Heng Samrin — General Secretary, PRPK
CC, Chairman, State Council of the PRK

THE People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea held its Fifth Congress late in 1985. The Congress made an objective and comprehensive analysis of the situation in the republic, summed up the results of the fulfilment of the tasks set by the previous PRPK Congress four years earlier, and decided on the lines of the social progress to come. The delegates discussed and adopted the first five-year programme for the socio-economic rehabilitation and development of Kampuchea in the 1986-1990 period. Substantial amendments were made to the party Rules; they reaffirm the Leninist norms of party life, including the principle of democratic centralism. Both the deliberations and the results of the Congress are evidence that a further big step has been taken on the road opened by the Kampuchean revolution.

The Congress agenda reflected the changes in the situation at home and abroad that have come about in recent years. The domestic situation as a whole is becoming normal. The people's state is stronger now and controls the whole territory of the country. It has defeated attempts by imperialism and by international and emigre reaction to thwart our people's peaceful labour. Steeled in battles, the armed forces of the republic are confidently defending the cause of the revolution. Operating jointly with Vietnamese volunteers, they have inflicted telling reverses on bands of counter-revolutionary groupings and driven them out of the country.

Kampuchea's economic situation has improved. Agriculture and industry are being rehabilitated. The working people's living and cultural standards are on the rise. Public organisations have stepped up their activity. Civil rights and freedoms are being extended.

The republic is steadfastly pursuing the goal set by the party—building a peace-loving, independent, democratic, neutral, non-aligned Kampuchea advancing to socialism. This policy is backed by the overwhelming majority of the population and is increasingly appreciated in the world. Indeed, about 40 states and national liberation organisations, including the Soviet Union and India, have officially recognised the PRK, and a number of countries have established diplomatic relations with it.

The leading role of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea is a decisive factor for the successful onward movement of our revolution. The party's origins go back to the Communist Party of Indo-China (CPIC) founded by Ho Chi Minh, the outstanding revolutionary who brought the light of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and the Great October to our peninsula. The revolutionary fighters of Indochina realised the need to link the struggle for national liberation with the struggle for social liberation, and the importance of the alliance of the three revolutions: the Vietnamese, the Kampuchean, and the Laotian. The Second CPIC Congress (1951), bearing in mind the consolidation of party organisations in all three countries and the evolution of the international situation, and aiming to promote the liberation movement, adopted a decision on dissolving the party and on founding on its basis the Working People's Party of Vietnam,¹ the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea, and the People's Party of Laos.² In the same year, the PRPK held its First Congress, which elected a leadership under Son Ngoc Minh and Tou Samut.

Our party organised the people's revolutionary movement and successfully led it in a hard struggle against the French and US Imperialists. The result was victory: in

April 1975, the patriotic forces of Kampuchea, supported by major gains of the liberation movement in South Vietnam and Laos, freed the country from the rule of the rotten regime that had served imperialism. However, the people were prevented from enjoying the fruits of victory. Power was usurped by the reactionary, terroristic, fascist Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique, which betrayed the country and Marxism-Leninism and embarked on a massive genocide of its own people. It proceeded to impose on the country practices that had nothing to do with socialism.

Under cover of pseudo-revolutionary talk, the Pol Potists evicted millions of people from urban communities, abolished all property, including personal property, did away with markets and money, closed down schools and hospitals, and destroyed temples. They turned the country into a huge concentration camp. The population was forbidden to move freely from place to place, families were separated, Buddhists, Moslems, and people professing other religions were persecuted. The Pol Potists deliberately destroyed all who disagreed with their anti-popular policy; they did it systematically and on an exceptionally large scale. In three years, 3.3 million peasants, workers and other employees, members of national minorities, monks, cultural workers lost their lives or disappeared.

A most heavy blow was delivered to the party. The Pol Pot clique struck upright party members with the greatest brutality; it killed 90 per cent of the party members who were loyal to Marxism-Leninism. As a consequence, the party, once a revolutionary organisation, degenerated under the influence of the adventurers who had seized leading posts into 'Angkar',³ which flouted the interests of the working class and working people, the interests of socialism.

However, the cause of our people's revolutionary liberation struggle was not dead. Those Communists who survived, all true patriots, joined in growing numbers in a resistance movement against the bloody regime. They set up the United National Salvation Front of Kampuchea, which united all the progressive forces of the country in struggle.⁴ Backed by the fraternal Vietnamese people, they toppled the hated butchers' clique on January 7, 1979. This victory saved the Kampuchean people from genocide and restored the long-standing fraternal solidarity of the three countries of Indochina. It marked the beginning of a new period in the history of our state and paved the way for a national renaissance and far-reaching socio-economic changes.

That was also when the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea was reconstituted on Marxist-Leninist principles. Over the past seven years, the party has been steadily gaining strength politically, ideologically, and organisationally as the political headquarters and leading force of the people.

In 1981, the PRPK held its Fourth Congress. The Congress defined as priority tasks of the Kampuchean revolution the need to staunchly defend national independence and rehabilitate the country in order to pave the way for laying the foundations of socialism. The Congress re-emphasised the importance of the party's carrying high the banner of patriotism and international solidarity. It adopted new party Rules and decided on ways of improving party work. The next Congress, the Fifth, put it on record that the targets set four years before had in the main been reached.

Problems of the party's economic policy were prominent on the Congress agenda. It was noted that thanks to the devoted effort of the people and all-round assistance from the Soviet Union, Vietnam, and other socialist countries, Kampuchea has scored major successes in resuming and expanding production.

The orientation adopted by the party in favour of collective forms of farming has fully proved its worth. The land has become the property of the people as a whole and has been put at the disposal of groups of mutual production assistance,⁵ whose number now exceeds 100,000. Harvests of rice and other food crops have come close to the prewar level.

Industrial production has nearly trebled since 1980. The financial system set up in

the country and the development of state trade have been helpful in establishing stronger ties between town and countryside, improving the operation of enterprises, and raising living standards.

These achievements are particularly impressive in the light of the fact that while in power, the Pol Potists virtually razed the social structure of the country and what was still an underdeveloped national economy. The cities were reduced to stone deserts. Ever since it came into existence, the people's republic has had to defend the gains of the revolution while building a new life.

Of course, the economic situation is still complicated enough. Production facilities have yet to be raised to the prewar level; besides, they still suffer damage from enemy subversion, which is continuing if with lesser intensity than before, and from natural calamities. We are short of energy, spare parts, raw and other materials. Our financial resources are limited, and we have yet to balance the budget. The country's manpower resources, which the former regime was engaged in destroying, must now be used simultaneously for defence, production, and capital construction. There is a shortage of skilled workers, research and technological personnel, experts in culture, education, and management.

The Congress adopted the first five-year programme for the socio-economic rehabilitation and development of the country with due regard to the overall situation and the strategic tasks of the revolution. We must complete the rehabilitation of the economy, steadfastly consolidate agriculture, forestry, and industry, produce more consumer goods, and export more. Our long-range goal is to provide the material and technical basis for socialism in order to continuously improve the people's life.

The heights to be scaled in various economic fields were specified in detail. With the population growing by 2.8 per cent a year, we expect to ensure an annual seven per cent increase in food production, so as to have an average 350 kg of food products per head (in terms of rice) by the end of the five-year period. Furthermore, agriculture is to meet part of industry's demand for raw materials and to guarantee exports. To this end we are going to resume the cultivation of abandoned lands and to reconstruct the irrigation system. Steps to extend production of natural rubber, one of the main exports, will receive close attention. Over half of the plantations have been restored, and this work is to be completed by 1990. We want to increase capacities for the primary processing of latex to 50,000 tons per year.

The next five years will see the rise of new, mostly medium and small, industrial plants. Output of electricity will go up considerably. The highways, railways, and water transport will be restored.

Meeting the population's demand for everyday necessities is a special concern of the party. This problem is particularly acute in the case of the national minorities, who were oppressed more than anyone else under the Pol Pot regime, as well as of the inhabitants of remote and border areas. We are doing our best to assure the people a reasonably stable and steadily rising standard of living.

The Congress defined the prospects of restructuring the economy. It is an objective historical reality that state, collective, family and private forms of property have coexisted in a number of fields for some time past. The party will work to strengthen the state and collective sectors of the economy, so that they can move into leading positions.

State property now encompasses over 60 relatively large industrial plants, many construction and transport organisations, rubber plantations, and trading facilities. The collective sector comprises diverse groups of mutual production assistance—in agriculture, the handicrafts, and other fields. Both these structures are a dependable basis for the solution of the economic problems by the people's state. To make fuller use of every potentiality, we authorise the activity of the private sector in the production sphere and in trade under state control. The new tax to be levied on this

activity will make it possible to limit the profits of private business and increase revenues derived from it.

The party closely links the solution of economic problems with progress in social spheres, primarily in culture and education. As many as 95 per cent of children are now in a position to go to school. The republic has eight higher and secondary specialised educational institutions. Thousands of Kampucheans study in fraternal countries' universities and vocational technical schools. One in every four inhabitants of the country is a student. Work to improve the educational system will continue. We intend to devote special attention to educating politically conscious and professionally competent teachers devotedly serving the cause of the revolution.

The five-year programme provides for the expansion and improvement of medical service. The network of medical institutions in rural areas and groups of mutual production assistance will be built up. The movement for hygiene will expand, preventive medicine will improve, and more will be done to combat epidemics, especially malaria.

Success will largely depend, as in the past, on how well our party organises its work. The Congress stressed the paramount importance of strengthening the party. The PRPK membership has increased from 62 in 1979 to 7,500 today. Its bulk is made up of peasants, soldiers of the People's Revolutionary Army, workers, and other employees. We are working continuously to win more members. However, we make no allowances in regard to the principle that party members must meet high ideological, political, professional, and moral standards. This is an earnest of the party's winning still greater prestige among the people.

The Congress defined work to reinforce provincial party organisations as a highly important task. To help them, the party sends cadre members of the central apparatus to the provinces. Growing party influence at local level also means consolidating people's power.

Now that the PRPK has become the leading and guiding force of society, party building is of decisive importance. We will strive to make the party a strong and solid Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class, an organisation dedicated to the interests of our working people and the ideas of proletarian internationalism.

We will have to improve our ideological and political education work among the party membership and the masses, for we need new people of the socialist type to build a new society. By this we mean men and women devoted to their country and the socialist cause, collectivists who respect and love labour, value public property, are disciplined and highly skilled, masters of nature using their energies, knowledge, and skills in a way benefiting the people and themselves. We want every party member to be a patriot and internationalist in reality.

Needless to say, the path charted by the Congress will not be easy. The party takes a sober and objective view of achievements. We do not shut our eyes to shortcomings. The highest party forum pointed out that ideological work does not always meet the exigencies of life. There are party organisations which do not look deep into the problems agitating the population. We are very short of experienced cadres. In reconstituting the PRPK as a Marxist-Leninist party, we have achieved visible successes which we can be proud of. However, it will take time and further considerable effort to accomplish the tasks facing us.

The Congress gave much attention to the problem of perfecting the political system of society, carrying forward democracy, and drawing the working people into an active and creative life, into government.

As early as 1981, free, democratic elections for local government bodies and the National Assembly were held in Kampuchea. The First Session of the NA unanimously adopted a Constitution and proclaimed the people masters of the republic. The government bodies formed by the NA have been taking steps to create

the prerequisites of transition to socialism.

Public organisations are extending their sphere of action. The party is doing its best with their help to take fuller account of the peculiarities of diverse population groups and to express their requirements and aspirations.

We attach great importance to the United National Construction and Defence Front of Kampuchea. The Front helps strengthen the worker-peasant alliance and national unity, unify the fraternal nationalities living in the republic, encourage the people's patriotic sentiments and their love of the new system, foster their awareness of being masters of the country, and draw them into revolutionary construction.

The trade unions of the Kampuchean working class are increasingly assuming a mass character. The party regards them as a school of economic management and government administration. The unions promote a new attitude to labour and a sense of duty in raising labour productivity and the quality of work, saving resources, tightening discipline, and protecting public property.

The League of People's Revolutionary Youth of Kampuchea infuses its members with devotion to the people's interests and the principles of international solidarity, high moral qualities, and industry; it encourages them to live modestly and mobilises them for active participation in the revolutionary movement.

The Revolutionary Women's Association of Kampuchea has gained appreciable leverage in the life of the country. With its aid the party applies in practice the principle of equality of the sexes, encourages women to use their vast potentialities in government, enlists their participation in economic and cultural construction, assigns them a bigger role in the matter of forming a happy family and educating members of society developed in every respect.

The Fifth PRPK Congress formulated the party's position on the national question in explicit terms (in addition to the Khmers, who make up roughly 90 per cent of the population, Kampuchea is inhabited by Vietnamese, Chinese, Thais, Meos, Pors, and others). We recognise the complete equality of all the members of the ethnic community of the country and intend to encourage them to proceed in unity in our common struggle.

The party respects the people's customs and traditions. One indication of this is that the principle of religious freedom has been guaranteed in practice. Everyone is free to profess Buddhism, Islam or any other religion or to be an atheist. We bring the mass of the people, including believers, into the construction of a new life.

Our party has invariably linked the tasks of the Kampuchean revolution with the common interests of universal social progress. It advocates a foreign policy of peace and friendship with all countries irrespective of their political and social systems, on the basis of mutual respect, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference, equality, and mutual benefit.

However, hostile forces refuse to be reconciled to the fact that Kampucheans are successfully regenerating the country and have set out to build a socialist society. These forces are continuing to hatch plans for the isolation of the PRPK and the PRK. At UN General Assembly sessions, they contrive to push through unfair resolutions in favour of keeping representatives of the former Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea's UN seat. These resolutions run counter to our people's will. We declare with a full sense of responsibility that People's Kampuchea is an independent and sovereign state. Any UN debate on the PRK carried on in the absence of its lawful representatives is an act of gross interference in the internal affairs of our republic.

International reaction renders military support to the Pol Potist bands which have found refuge in Thailand and constantly raid border areas of our country from there. A so-called coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea has been formed abroad with foreign help. It is a cover for the Pol Potist murderers, who constitute the chief military and political force in it.

The recent replacement of Pol Pot as 'commander-in-chief' of the armed formations based on Thai territory and operating against the lawful government of the PRK with Son Sen has changed nothing in the character of the Pol Potist butchers' clique. This resignation is merely a tactical ploy on the part of those who back the Khmer emigres in their subversive activities against the People's Kampuchea.

Our party counters the enemy's intrigues with a peaceful and independent foreign policy aimed at contributing effectively to the defence and construction of our country and to its gradual transition to socialism.

The conditions in which the Kampuchean revolution has been developing, the Congress pointed out, objectively demand that it should strengthen its alliance with Vietnam and Laos on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian solidarity. The government of the republic has a high opinion of the internationalist mission of the Vietnamese volunteer troops in Kampuchea. A conference of the top leaders of the SRV, LPDR, and PRK which met in February 1983 in Vientiane re-emphasised that these troops are neither a threat to anyone, nor a cause of tension in the region. They are in Kampuchea at the request of its legitimate government in view of the threat posed to its security from without; they will withdraw completely from the territory of the republic as soon as this threat is over. As for their partial withdrawal, it has been effected every year since 1982 by agreement between the governments of the PRK and SRV.

A new important step in this direction was taken in August 1985 at a foreign ministers' conference of the countries of Indochina. In examining the problem of restoring and furthering peace and stability in Southeast Asia, the conference discussed the possibility of completely withdrawing the Vietnamese volunteers from Kampuchea by 1990.

Kampuchea's growing ties with the Soviet Union, Vietnam and other fraternal countries are a guarantee of defending our independence and building a new society on our soil. The socialist community countries firmly and consistently support the just cause of the Kampuchean people and emphatically condemn the hostile campaigns which imperialism and reaction have launched against our republic. These countries render us large-scale technological and economic assistance in rehabilitating or building hospitals, schools, agricultural and industrial projects, as well as communications; they supply us with food, means of transportation and consumer goods. The Fifth PRPK Congress received with deep satisfaction the message greetings which came from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and the CPSU delegation's statement that the Soviet people will persevere in promoting friendship and cooperation with the Kampuchean people, helping them build a new life and strengthen their international positions. Our people are deeply grateful to the Soviet Union and other members of the socialist community for their support of the just cause of the Kampuchean revolution.

Fully supporting the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union, the PRK will continue in common with socialist countries and peace-loving peoples to fight against the policy of aggression, arms race, nuclear war preparations, and the utilisation of outer space for military purposes. It emphatically condemns the aggressive line of world imperialism headed by the United States.

We have already noted and the Congress said so again that Kampuchea stands for relations of friendship and cooperation between the countries of Southeast Asia and other countries of the world irrespective of their socio-political systems. We are against the policy of US imperialism and its reactionary underlings, which is designed to step up tensions and provoke confrontation in this region, to maintain hostility between two groups of countries, those of Indochina and ASEAN. We are willing to start a dialogue with neighbours without foreign interference in order to settle the problems of the region and to turn Southeast Asia into a zone of peace, stability.

friendship, and cooperation. Our party supports the proposal for negotiations between the three countries of Indochina, on the one hand, and the ASEAN Six, on the other, through Vietnam and Indonesia as representatives of the interests of the two groups of nations.

The People's Republic of Kampuchea fully supports the struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, and racism, for national independence, democracy, and social progress. It actively contributes to the efforts of non-aligned nations aimed at establishing a new international economic order on the principle of respect for national sovereignty.

We identify ourselves with the working class and other working people of capitalist countries who are carrying on a just struggle against national and transnational monopolies, for democratic rights and freedoms, social progress, and the preservation of world peace.

In the seven years since it assumed the historic mission of leading society, the PRPK has held its own against countries difficulties and trials as the Kampuchean revolution developed, and has made progress in every sphere. It has gained much concrete experience, which will be a most valuable asset in steadfastly fulfilling the tasks set by the Fifth Congress at the new stage of the revolution. We will safeguard our national independence, rehabilitate the economy, and advance the country, assuring the people well-being and a happy life and creating the prerequisites of building socialism on the beautiful land of Angkor.

We Kampucheans are full of optimism and feel certain that the PRPK, which owes its strength to its unity and its unbreakable bonds with the people and is loyal to the principles of proletarian solidarity, will carry the cause of the revolution through to final victory.

¹ Now the Communist Party of Vietnam. —Ed.

² Now the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos. —Ed.

³ Name given to Pol Pot's party. —Ed.

⁴ The Front was established in December 1978, with Heng Samrin as Chairman of its CC. In May of that year Heng Samrin, a major military leader, had assumed command of the insurgent forces operating against the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime. In 1981, the Front was reorganised into the United National Construction and Defence Front of Kampuchea, which groups all the nationalities and patriotic forces of the country irrespective of views or religious convictions. Functioning within the new Front as its affiliates are trade union, youth, women's, Buddhist, and Moslem organisations. —Ed.

⁵ The groups of mutual production assistance divide into three categories according to the degree of socialisation of labour and implements. The members of groups of the first category work together, using many commonly owned implements and distributing incomes according to their work. In groups of the second category, the land is cultivated by families but the collective principles of labour and distribution are applied fully enough. In the third category, the degree of socialisation is lower. Peasants form all these groups on a voluntary basis. —Ed.

new experience

Our Interviews Communists in Parliament

Aloys Bisdorff — CC Executive
Committee Member, Communist Party of
Luxembourg, member of parliament

The Communist Party has been represented in Luxembourg's Chamber of Deputies for over 40 years. Let us be frank, this is not to be observed in many capitalist countries. To what would you attribute this constant success of the Communists?

INDEED at the very first postwar elections in October 1945 the CPL, which was the nation's only fighting party during the Nazi occupation, received considerable support from the people and won five seats in the new parliament. My own parliamentary biography dates from the early 1970s. At the latest elections (1984) I was entrusted with one of the two seats held by our party today in the Chamber of Deputies.¹

You speak of the CPL's presence in parliament as of a constant success. It is true that since the war we have always held seats in the Chamber of Deputies. However, the number of these seats fluctuates mainly as a result of the changes in the nation's social structure.

Luxembourg has four electoral districts. The CPL's base has always been the south, where the bulk of the industrial proletariat, forming the most organised and class conscious contingent of the working population, is concentrated. In the other, particularly agricultural, districts our position is weaker. Besides, it must be borne in mind that to be elected in the north one has to receive ten per cent of the votes, and in the east—16 per cent. Everything received below that threshold is simply lost. That is why, although in some places more people than before voted for the Communists, we have not been able to increase our presence in the parliament.

Regrettably, the situation is growing harsher in the industrial areas as well. This is due to the decline of Luxembourg's main industry—steel making—which employs 12 per cent of the nation's workforce. A cutback in the output of steel entails a reduction of the number of factory workers of this industry.

The tangible difficulties we are experiencing in reinforcing our positions are also due to the fact that of Luxembourg's 365,000 residents nearly 100,000 are from foreign countries. Half of the working class consists of foreigners. The party strives to conduct work among them, but this can yield little in election terms—foreign workers do not have political rights and do not participate in elections. We have the paradoxical situation where in an industrialised country a significant proportion of the working class has no possibility of giving the Communist Party direct political support.

We therefore have to devote more attention to other social strata, chiefly to people

This is another interview in the series about Communists in executive and legislative bodies in capitalist countries. See *WMR*, Nos. 4, 7, and 8, 1985.

working in the services industry, transport, banks and insurance companies. Banking, which is presently expanding rapidly, employed 9,000 people, of whom two-thirds are Luxembourgiens. The state apparatus and the municipal bodies employ between 14,000 and 15,000 people. It is not easy to penetrate these strata, even for the trade unions, let alone for the Communist Party. Although individual CPL members work in these strata, as a party our aim for the immediate future is to win positions among the working people of these categories.

What are the Communist deputies currently working on in the Chamber of Deputies? How does the CPL organise its election campaigns and how does it relate the work of its deputies in the parliament to its mass work?

Luxembourg's Chamber of Deputies annually has more than 120 sittings and its commissions hold hundreds of meetings. This makes it clear that deputies, especially those representing small factions such as ours, have plenty to do. They have to go through piles of documents, constantly meet with people in order to prepare argued speeches on various bills, suggest amendments, make inquiries on pressing issues worrying the working people, and criticise governmental decisions that conflict with their interests.

Citizens often come to us with grievances against the authorities or with personal requests. We have to talk to all of them and, where possible, help them. You have to remember that a Communist deputy has neither secretaries nor assistants and you will understand that his working day is very packed indeed. Of course, in making suggestions we have the possibility, as in all our parliamentary activities, to rely on the conclusions drawn by the party, by its Central Committee that constantly analyses domestic and international problems from Marxist-Leninist positions, with account of the people's interests and grievances.

And now a few words about election campaigns. At the final stage they last from three to four weeks and this is, of course, the period when the propaganda machine of the bourgeois parties works at full blast. The funds that they have at their disposal exceed ours many times over. They can enlist the assistance of firms specialising in election posters and other visual agitation means that strongly influence the people. Our possibilities are much smaller. Everything is done voluntarily by party members in their spare time.

On the national radio and television we are represented in accordance with our strength in the Chamber of Deputies. Broadcasting time is distributed in accordance with the number of seats each party has. The quality and topicality of our broadcasts are generally acknowledged, but we have very few opportunities to appear on the ether or the screen. Bourgeois propaganda uses television all year round. Anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaigns are featured regularly also through the mass media of the FRG and France.

In this situation we orient ourselves on day-to-day ideological and political work and not on episodic strains only during election campaigns. In Luxembourg every family gets a free copy of reports of parliamentary proceedings and the radio broadcasts communiques on these proceedings. The parliamentary lectern thus provides wide possibilities for informing the people of the views and attitudes of the Communists regardless of the direct effect of any initiative taken by the CPL.

We constantly organise consultations on social problems—dismissals, pensions, housing, and so forth. We want people to come to us with confidence to discuss problems vital to them and ways of resolving these problems. We invite people from various public organisations, including sports and music circles, and take them on tours of the party printshop where our daily newspaper *Zeitung vum Letzeburger Vollek* is published. In short, it would be wrong to see the results of elections as

dependent solely on election campaigns.

The voting is influenced not only by the CPL's work but also by the international situation. Where bourgeois propaganda succeeds in persuading people that difficulties and shortcomings are natural to socialism, this affects our party because the political alternative suggested by us loses some of its attractiveness. For that reason the CPL's public relations campaigns invariably include information on reality in socialist countries and on the achievements and advantages of the new system. We always stress our militant solidarity with that system.

Cooperation with new public movements helps to disseminate the concepts, alternatives, and suggestions of the Communists. For instance, our views about energy and transport find a response among ecologists, whose influence and activity are growing steadily.² Communist deputies are often invited to take part in the round table discussions sponsored by various associations—parents' committees, school councils, and so on, so as to try and find ways of satisfying their grievances. Also, we use trade union meetings and conferences to put forward our considerations on matters such as, say, the nationalisation of the steel industry. Through the efforts of Communist Party members this has become the subject of a broad debate in the trade unions.

How do you assess the role of Communist MPs in the struggle for peace and security in Europe? What, in this context, are you doing in the Chamber of Deputies and on the level of international contacts?

Let me first answer the last part of your question. On the international level our possibilities are limited. We are a very small faction and are not represented in inter-parliamentary organisations, particularly in the Benelux Consultative Council, where questions such as peace and disarmament could be raised. Unlike some other communist parties of Western Europe, the CPL and its deputies do not take part in the parliamentary meetings of NATO countries either.

On the national level, we try to make ourselves heard in the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies. The Communist deputies take the floor when international agreements are ratified and bills are debated, and to put forward and substantiate suggestions for reinforcing world peace and security.

Every year the government's foreign policy is debated, and in this debate we state our views and demands. In the budget debate, especially when the question of military expenditures is on the agenda, we always urge a reduction of these expenditures and an increase of the allocations for social spending. We ask questions in parliament. One of these was in connection with our suggestion for turning Luxembourg into a nuclear-free zone. We spoke in emphatic terms against the stationing of AWACS aircraft in Luxembourg, as well as against the building of a strategic motor highway.

Peace and disarmament are in the focus of attention of the Communist Party of Luxembourg and, naturally, the Communist deputies leave no opportunity unexplored for raising these questions in parliament and for drawing the attention of the other parties and public opinion to the need to do everything to keep our common home, Europe, safe and preserve life on Earth.

¹ There are 64 deputies in Luxembourg's present parliament.—*Ed.*

² The Green Alternative, the party of the ecologists, won two seats in the Chamber of Deputies at the 1984 elections. This is its first-ever representation in the parliament.—*Ed.*

Documents

Columbia

FOR A DEMOCRATIC WAY OUT OF AN IMPASSE

THE situation in Columbia and the tasks of the Colombian Communist Party on the eve of the parliamentary and presidential elections slated for April-May of this year are analysed in a statement of the CC Executive Committee published in the party's weekly *Voz* in November 1985. The participation of the Patriotic Alliance—a broad coalition of left-wing, democratic political and social forces, including the Communist Party—in these elections, the statement declares, opens up new possibilities for pushing for the people's most urgent demands and the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the country.¹

As the CCP sees it, the factors indicating progress include: the formation of a governmental peace commission, and dialogue and verification with the participation of people professing various schools of political thought; the Senate debate of the armistice question and the positive attitude to it on the part of a section of liberal, neoliberal, and conservative quarters;² wide public support for criticism of the International Monetary Fund; large demonstrations organised by the Patriotic Alliance; combination of the mass peasant marches in towns with the new growing wave of civil protest strikes.

As negative elements, the statement notes the military operations against peasants in different parts of the country, raids in towns, the plans for physically eliminating leaders of the revolutionary forces and, in particular, the so-called Operation 85, which has been exposed by Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces;³ attempts to railroad reactionary anti-labour bills through parliament; opposition to the reform (proposed by democratic forces) of legislation on the elections of mayors and the postponement of this reform to 1988; the militarist campaign being fuelled by some quarters, notably retired military men.

The Colombian Communists believe there is a democratic way out of the impasse. This is precisely what the Patriotic Alliance is urging in the campaign for the 1986 elections. The Alliance's approach differs radically from that of the candidates of the traditional parties, who are maintaining that nothing should be changed and that there is no foundation for a democratic alternative. Ignoring Colombia's basic problems, these candidates are in fact rejecting the positive elements of the Betancur government's policies—its dialogue with the guerrillas and the democratisation of its foreign policy. Powerful capitalists and militarist circles are counting on the president waving and on the back-stage dealings of the defence minister. They are doing all they can to close the door to a prolongation of the armistice.

The reactionaries see a victory in the fact that they have prompted a renewal of hostilities by M-19,⁴ counting on being able to do the same relative to the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces and the People's Liberation Army.⁵ These circles are trying to reinforce operating repressive legislation. They are including in it judicial absurdities such as the bill declaring "invalid" votes received by coalitions charged by the government with "propagating armed struggle" (an unmistakable allusion to the Patriotic Alliance).⁶

At the same time there is an increasingly visible alliance between army services and groups of terrorist and anarchist fanatics. Both these forces are attempting to block the prospect for democratic changes urged by the Communist Party.⁷ Their strategy is to abolish everything that was achieved during the armistice. In countering this strategy, the Communists have restated that any attempt to establish a despotic regime would be resisted with determination, that it would lead to increased armed resistance and a spread of guerrilla warfare. However, this by no means signifies that

the struggle must be waged at a time and under conditions stipulated by the class adversary.

While maintaining friendly relations with the M-19 leaders and grassroots organisations, the Communists do not agree with their present tactics, believing that these only play into the hands of the most aggressive militarist circles. The dialogue must be resumed thoughtfully and there must be effective understanding making it possible to enforce urgent reforms and opening the way to advanced democracy, the statements says.

The Colombian Communist Party suggests the following political alternatives: immediate lifting of the state of siege; cessation of hostilities against revolutionary forces; resumption of talks by the government with M-19 and the disbandment of paramilitary groups; effective guarantees for the participation of the Patriotic Alliance in the upcoming elections. To achieve these aims it is necessary to mobilise the broadest masses, the statement declares. The Communists are of the opinion that the elections can and should play a decisive role in exposing and neutralising the plans of the reactionary oligarchy and the US imperialists backing it.

¹ For almost three decades a struggle has been flaring up and dying down again in Colombia between the armed contingents of oppressed peasants and the forces of 'law and order' serving reaction. —Ed.

² An armistice was signed between the main guerrilla forces and the Colombian government in 1984. —Ed.

³ A guerrilla organisation affiliated to the Patriotic Alliance. —Ed.

⁴ An insurgent movement that sprang up in Colombia after reaction falsified the presidential elections of April 19, 1970. —Ed.

⁵ A guerrilla organisation that signed the armistice in 1984. In December 1985 it announced that it was resuming the armed struggle. —Ed.

⁶ Another variant of the conspiracy of the reactionaries against the democratic forces is the proposal to cancel the elections in areas where the Patriotic Alliance has its strongest electoral positions. —Ed.

⁷ News of the Condor-85 plan, drawn up by reactionaries for the physical extermination of leaders of the Communist Party and other leading personalities of the democratic opposition, was received in December 1985. —Ed.

In the Mirror of the Press

Zagadnienia i Materiały

IMPROVING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

THIS weekly of the PUWP CC has published an article analysing the situation in the party education system. It notes that there was some progress in the 1984/1985 academic year; in most party organisations educational work was conducted regularly, and five or more classes were held in the course of the year.

A new form of party education known as Worker Activists' Schools has won popularity. During the year 513 of these schools were set up and they are now attended by 15,000 people. Half of these people are non-party members of trade unions, workers' self-administration bodies, and youth organisations. Progress has been made by the education system for activists; it is attended by 112,500 of the more than two million Polish Communists.

The party education system as a whole, the article states, is still not sufficiently effective: participants in seminars show little initiative, and their influence on the ideological level of the people attending party schools is insignificant. Concern is caused by the state of the work with candidates for membership of the PUWP. The

courses set up for them are attended irregularly, and in many cases only half of the classes are in attendance. As a result, a large proportion of those admitted to the party following the probation period do not get the proper ideologico-political training.

In charting ways for improving the quality of party study in accordance with present-day imperatives, the CC Secretariat has approved the main subjects of study, bringing their content more into keeping with the requirements of the day. Three subjects have been made mandatory: 'Aims of Primary Party Organisations in Reinforcing the Party's Guiding Role at Factories, Offices, and Organisations', 'Sources, Causes, and Effects of Modern Clericalism in Poland and the Party's Tasks in Surmounting Them', and 'The Party's Long-Term Programme as a Marxist-Leninist Analysis of the Process of Building a Socialist Poland'. Thematic perfection is accompanied by a quest for new, more effective forms of study and of organising classes.

Daily World

CHALLENGE TO MONOPOLY DOMINATION

THE first-ever national working class newspaper will make its debut in the USA this spring—as a result of a merger of the West Coast's weekly *People's World* and the East Coast and Midwest's *Daily World*.

The simultaneous publication of this new paper of the Communist Party of the USA by printing facilities situated 3,000 miles apart has been made possible by the party's decision, taken in 1983, to launch a drive for funds to expand and update the printing facilities of the *Daily World*. This drive brought in half a million dollars for the purchase of high tech electronic equipment. This will enable reporters from around the country to transmit reports to the paper's main offices in New York, from where computer-composed images of newspaper pages will be transmitted across the country through telephone wires in a matter of minutes.

The preparations for producing the new paper were started following the announcement of the merger plans last autumn by the party leadership. Readers of both papers were asked for their opinion of these plans and for suggestions on ways of carrying them out. Staff members have been training to operate the new equipment, and exchanges of expertise have been organised between reporters and printers of the East and West coasts.

In its issues of October 15 and November 14, 1985, *Daily World* wrote that the new national working class paper will be a challenge to domination by the media monopolies. It will continue to uphold and strengthen the working class, anti-monopoly, democratic, and pro-peace traditions of the 48-year-old *People's World* and the 62-year-old *Daily World* (successor to the *Daily Worker*).

The Story Behind the Fact

SUMMING UP PERSONAL TALKS

The Socialist Unity Party of Germany is to hold its 11th Congress in April of this year. During the pre-congress election campaign there have been individual talks with all members and probation members of the party. The

bourgeois press has printed allegations that this was tantamount to a 'purge'. What these talks are about, who conducts them, and what purpose is pursued by them is discussed by *Roland Bauer*, member of the SUPG Central Committee and of the *WMR* Editorial Board.

THIS is not the first time confidential individual talks have been held with all members and probation members of the SUPG. They have a long tradition. Usually, they are timed to important events in the life of the party and serve to draw all party members into the implementation of the SUPG's policies, into promoting its militancy, unity, and cohesion.

Numbering 2,200,000 members out of a working population of 12 million (above the age of 18), the SUPG is the largest party in the GDR. It has 58,247 primary and 26,754 shop organisations. The party is headed by its Central Committee, county and district committees, and also 80,000 elected bodies, each of which has from three to 20 activists. These statistics indicate that individual talks were conducted by hundreds of thousands of party members.

These talks, which covered 99.3 per cent of the party's members and probation members, were conducted in a frank, comradely, and constructive atmosphere and were an impressive demonstration of support for the SUPG's policies and of the unity of the party rank-and-file around the Central Committee headed by General Secretary Erich Honecker.

The talks were a tangible contribution to the success of the preparations for the party's 11th Congress, opening the election campaign. Members and probation members of the party and the entire population of the republic were informed of their course and results and also of the conclusions drawn from them by the CC Secretariat of the SUPG in a detailed report carried by the newspaper *Neues Deutschland*.

An indication of the enhanced political and ideological maturity of most SUPG members and probation members was the fact that they came to these talks prepared. The Communists gave the party an account of how they were discharging their lofty duty, critically and self-critically analysed their work, and, in the Leninist tradition, focused on unresolved problems. A total of 1,400,000 party assignments were distributed or specified, 230,000 new personal commitments were made, and over 720,000 suggestions and remarks were submitted.

The talks produced many constructive ideas and recommendations oriented chiefly towards the unfailing fulfilment of party decisions in every sector of activity. More than half of these suggestions concerned potentialities for boosting production efficiency and improving working and living conditions. Almost one-third were on ways and means of invigorating the primary organisations and improving the party's inner life.

The results of these talks indicate that the party has significantly grown and raised its maturity level—they demonstrate that the SUPG's policy of promoting the people's welfare and ensuring peace has the population's understanding and support, and that it is stimulating further successes in work. There has been a quick response to the personal talks with Communists from non-party citizens, who see them as evidence of the sincerity, breadth, and seriousness of the SUPG's nation-wide preparations for its congress.

The comprehensive talks with more than two million party members and probation members have also shown that some individuals do not strive or are unable to implement the party's decisions and comply with its Rules. During the talks 1,359 members and probation members (0.05 per cent) dropped out of the party. In accordance with the Party Rules it was found that 2,658 (0.1 per cent) persons had lost contact with the party and thereby ceased to be members, and another 1,129 (0.04) were expelled for behaviour unworthy of Communists.

During the preparations for the Congress (according to figures for November 1985)

the party was joined by over 73,000 new active fighters for socialism and communism. In the period of under five years since the Tenth Congress, the party has admitted 350,000 members.

In the talks with Communists, primary organisations secretaries and bureau members, as well as officials of district committees and other party bodies updated the documents of many comrades. New entries were made in the curricula vitae of more than 400,000 party members.

The over two million talks with Communists were a major contribution to fostering the SUPG's guiding role in all areas of society's life and helped to strengthen its political and ideological unity, organisational cohesion, and militancy.

In Brief

AUSTRALIA

Towards the close of 1985 *The Guardian*, the weekly of the Socialist Party of Australia, held its festival in a Sydney suburb. The attention of visitors was drawn to an exposition of the 40th anniversary of the victory over German Nazism and Japanese militarism and to displays devoted to the struggle for peace in Australia and the world.

CYPRUS

At the interim parliamentary elections held in a highly complex and tense political situation in December 1985, the Communists received over 27 per cent of the votes cast and won 15 out of the 56 seats in the new House of Representatives.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The membership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia totalled 1,650,000 as of December 1985. Over the less than five years that have elapsed since the 16th Congress of the CPCz, more than 240,000 new members have been admitted, industrial workers accounting for some 60 per cent.

ECUADOR

The Broad Front of the Left (FADI) which comprises democratic parties and organisations, including the Communist Party of Ecuador, held its second congress in Guayaquil in December 1985. The congress approved FADI policy documents—a manifesto and a statement of ideological principles—and passed special resolutions in support of the struggle for peace and against militarisation of outer space. The congress also expressed solidarity with Nicaragua and with the peoples of other countries fighting against imperialist aggression.

PORTUGAL

At the December 1985 local government elections the candidates of the Communist-led Alliance for Popular Unity, received some 20 per cent of the votes—four per cent more than at the parliamentary elections held in October. Communist candidates won in Lisbon's major suburbs and in many municipal districts in the province of Alentejo.

USSR

Mysl Publishers have completed the Russian-language edition of an eight-volume project—*The International Working Class Movement (Questions of History and*

Theory). The final volume deals with the working class of the socialist countries and with the development of the world communist movement in the postwar years. The set of volumes is also being published in English, German, Japanese, Bulgarian, Czech and Vietnamese.

exchange of views, discussion

Hunger in African and Asian Nations: Problems Await Their Solution

A SURVEY OF AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The dramatic events of 1984-1985 linked to the unprecedented drought in Africa and large-scale eruptions of hunger on the African continent drew international attention, compelling virtually the entire world to refocus on the unresolved state of the food problem in nations that have recently won liberation from colonial dependence or neo-colonialist domination. Although reassuring news about the effectiveness of the steps being taken to combat crop failure and about an improvement of the situation in agriculture following rainfall has come from some African countries, the crisis is still far from having been transcended. Enormous efforts by the people themselves in developing countries and support from the world community will be required to put an end to hunger, a glaring and intolerable global problem in an era witnessing unparalleled scientific and technological progress.

Jointly with guests invited to Prague from the Soviet Union, the GDR, and Ethiopia, representatives of fraternal parties on the journal *World Marxist Review* discussed pressing aspects of the problem of hunger in Africa and Asia. The symposium considered the food situation in that region, the causes of outbreaks of famine, the concrete experience of fighting this calamity, the ways and means of resolving the food problem, the role of international efforts to eradicate the recurrence of such crises, and some other issues.

A summation of the discussion follows.

SHORTAGES of food are one of the most critical socio-economic problems in developing countries. This is borne out by innumerable facts: more than a billion people in the developing world suffer from hunger, malnutrition, or inferior nourishment: in that zone the per calorie intake is about one-third and the protein intake is half or one-third of the level in industrialised capitalist countries, and this

gulf tends to widen.

It was noted at the symposium that because of the glaring property and social inequities in most of the countries of this zone, the absolute physical shortage of food signifies chronic hunger for millions of people, chiefly of the poorest sections of the population. Some assessments of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation were cited: in the early 1970s the total number of people hit by hunger was 400 million while in 1980 their number climbed to half a billion. In the middle of the current decade their number fluctuates between 600 million and 700 million. Here the criterion of hunger is its extreme extent determined by the critical level of the organism's energy requirements sufficient only for life on the verge of death from hunger.

Representatives of some fraternal parties of African countries drew attention to the food situation of the past few years in Africa. For various, including natural, reasons, an extremely complex situation took shape in the mid-1980s in the Sahel,¹ Ethiopia, the Sudan and some countries in Southern Africa. For instance, according to UN statistics, in the Sahel food self-sufficiency dropped from 98 per cent in 1960 to 65 per cent in 1973 and 55 per cent last year. Four in 10 children and six in 10 expectant mothers suffer from anemia caused by chronic malnutrition.

At the symposium attention was drawn to the critical shortage of proteins and to the calories deficit. The annual average quantity of basic foods per African was 200 kilos in 1970, while 15 years later this quantity diminished to only 180 kilos. While hunger does not reach the level of an irreparable catastrophe, it is constantly present in covert form. In developing countries malnutrition is a mass phenomena invariably accompanying the day-to-day life of large sections of the population. Two of its basic forms—covert or chronic and overt (when stark hunger is observed)—were dealt with by Doctor of Economics **Larisa Knyazhinskaya** (Institute of the International Working Class Movement, USSR Academy of Sciences).

The first form—chronic hunger due to poverty, to an extremely low purchasing power—manifests itself as an 'invisible' crisis, spelling out constant physical privation for hundreds of millions of people in a number of contiguous generations. Chronic hunger has become an inalienable part of the way of life of a large proportion of the people of African and Asian countries, where they lack elementary means of existence. Malnutrition is the lot of the colossal permanent army of partially or permanently jobless in town and countryside; paradoxically, it is also the lot of producers themselves—landstarved and landless peasants, tenant farmers, farm labourers, and their families. Hunger inflicts irreparable damage on the peoples of developing countries, being one of the main reasons for the high death rate (especially among new-born babies), the shortening life expectancy, and the exposure of people to serious diseases.

On account of constant mass hunger and malnutrition reproduction of labour resources—society's principal productive forces—can, to quote Marx, only take place 'in a crippled state'.² This undercuts people's ability to take part effectively in the modern production process, which makes steadily higher demands of the quality of the human factor. Covert hunger is clearly rooted in the social causes implicit in exploiting societies.

It is very symptomatic, **Larisa Knyazhinskaya** noted, that bourgeois mass media prefer to turn a blind eye to information on chronic—social—hunger. Yet they play up and make a sensation of local eruptions of hunger resulting from harvest failures, natural disasters, or devastation wrought in time of war or of political coups.

What is the situation as regards this second, overt, form of hunger?

During the years of independence many developing nations have somewhat eased the destructive effect of harvest losses—the direct cause of mass hunger—chiefly through special measures by the government (use of reserve food stocks, an increase

of food imports, the creation of a state food distribution network, and so on) and recourse to emergency international assistance. Nevertheless, cases of mass hunger are still no rarity. They continue to inflict irreparable losses. During the latter half of this century there often have been critical food situations in the developing world. During the particularly acute and large-scale food crisis of 1972-1974, when due to inclement weather food shortages coincided with a severe economic decline in the capitalist world, hunger and its accompanying diseases took an annual toll of, according to various assessments, from 30 to 40 million lives. The new outbreaks of famine caused by crop failures in many developing countries in the late 1970s and the early 1980s (India, Bangladesh, Uganda, Kenya, northwestern Brazil, Mexico, and some other nations) and the formidable situation that took shape in Africa in the middle of the current decade on account of an unprecedentedly long and severe drought give grounds for speaking of a threat of famine recurring in these regions. Whereas formerly the epicentre of the food crisis in the developing world was South Asia, it has now shifted to the African continent.

Causes of Food Difficulties

The causes of food crises were analysed at the symposium. Speakers agreed that, by and large, overt and covert forms of hunger may be attributed to, first, the colonialist heritage of backwardness and underdevelopment; second, to neocolonialist exploitation; third, to the internal processes in the developing countries themselves, particularly those on the capitalist road; and fourth, the climate factor.

Many of the speakers stressed that the socio-economic causes of hunger are traceable to the epoch preceding the independence of most African and Asian countries. Having conserved the backwardness of these countries, the colonialists and then the neocolonialists perpetuated this calamity, thereby making it difficult to combat it to this day. **Unni Krishnan**, member of the National Council of the Communist Party of India, cited some data concerning his own country: between 1770 and 1900 there were 25 major famines in the subcontinent in which millions and millions of people were wiped out. Over 3,500,000 people fell victim to hunger in Bengal in 1943. The harsh effects of British rule are illustrated by the virtual stagnant production of food grain in India throughout almost the entire first half of the present century: 67 million tons in 1900-1901, and only 66 million tons by the time the colonialists left (1947).

Imperialism's policy towards African and Asian countries invariably stimulated an influx of local labour into the mining industry and export-crop agriculture. **Sam Moeti**, representative of the Communist Party of Lesotho, cited the example of his country where, even before it acquired independence, this policy brought about a reduction of the local agricultural output. Because of the mass migration of able-bodied males to neighbouring South Africa women still had to till the land. This exhaustion of labour resources led to a decline in the output of food.

At the symposium it was noted that the economic dependence of the countries concerned on capitalist centres, their inclusion in the crisis-prone capitalist world economy, and the continued exploitation of their labour and natural resources by neocolonialist methods are to this day obstructing the surmounting of socio-economic backwardness and the solution of the food problem. A major inhibitor here is that imperialism has used transnationals to impose a division of labour between industrialised capitalist states and developing nations in food production. About a hundred transnationals virtually control the agriculture of tens of countries. As a result, what is grown is very often not what is needed by the local population but what is in demand in the capitalist world market. Albert L. Huebner, an American expert on hunger, puts it this way: 'The prevailing belief is that Africa is a basket case which will survive only through massive, open-ended aid. In fact it is a

rich and steady source of crops consumed daily in the advanced nations—meat, vegetables, tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar—and even of fresh flowers for the dinner table.’³

Further, agrobusiness influences the pattern of local agriculture and the demand, pushed by advertising, for foods that are shipped from the capitalist world but are not always more nourishing and wholesome. These are, in particular processed and, hence, significantly more expensive products. In other words, the priorities of the capitalist market, of the monopolies prove to be decisive and determining relative to the needs of the peoples of most of the new nation-states. Speakers offered the conclusion that the main reason for the difficult food situation in the developing countries are rooted in a policy whose aim has been and is to ensure profits to monopoly capital.

After surveying some general aspects of the aggravated food crisis resulting from imperialism’s colonialist and neocolonialist past and present domination, many participants in the symposium dwelt in detail on the relationship of the socio-economic causes of various manifestations of hunger and malnutrition to objective, especially climatic, factors.

It is clear that the problems of hunger in Ethiopia at the present time is the result of many centuries of oppression and exploitation, said **Wondwossen Hailu**, member of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Ethiopia. World imperialism has been doing all in its power to subvert the Ethiopian revolution. It has been financing and organising internal counter-revolutionary reaction, and directing internal and external forces hostile to the country’s unity. It is no secret that for ten years Ethiopia’s attention has been focused on defending the revolution and its gains. However, it would be proper and fair to say that the revolution has done much and will do still more to cope with the immediate and long-term effects of the terrible drought and the attendant famine.⁴

In Ethiopia droughts occur at regular intervals. Studies have revealed that the first recorded famine in Ethiopia dates back to the ninth century, and there has been a famine every 13 or 14 years over the last 600 years. Moreover, it has been found that the recurrence of famine has accelerated over the years (it has occurred every seven or eight years in the past few decades). The factors here include the destruction of forests, soil erosion, and the specifics of the geographical relief. About 70 years ago some 40 per cent of the country was covered with high forests, but at present this has gone down to 3.5 per cent. Lastly, a factor of the present disaster is that in the past few years rainfall has diminished by 30 per cent below normal—this is to be observed not only in Africa but in other parts of the world.

Unni Krishnan dealt with the climate as a factor influencing the availability of food for the population. It has been estimated that in India poor harvests occur roughly every three years; two consecutive crop failures have produced near-famine conditions in one or another part of the country (in Bihar in the mid-1960s, for example). The speaker noted that since the proclamation of independence India has not known outbreaks of famine on the scale recorded in colonial times. During the years of independent development the output of food was uneven but it grew steadily. At the outset of the 1950s grain output was about 55 million tons, but in 1977-1978 it topped 126 million tons. In 1983-1984 the crop reached a record of 151,500,000 tons. This level of food self-sufficiency, **Unni Krishnan** said, played an important role, reinforcing India’s ability to repulse imperialism’s neocolonialist pressure.

The CPI representative offered several examples to illustrate that under capitalist development even a multiple increase of the output of food does not remove the problem of hunger and malnutrition, particularly where such phenomena are chronic. The paradox is that the ruling circles worry where the sell ‘surpluses’ of unsold food grain, while about 45 per cent of the rural population lives below the

poverty line. The per capita grain consumption has diminished in India during the past 20 years. If this tendency continues, there will be a growth of the hardships suffered by the poor strata and of the threat not only of malnutrition but of hunger.

Agreeing that hunger and malnutrition are the outcome of a series of causes, **Semou Pathe Gueye**, CC Political Bureau member of the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour, noted that a concrete analysis of these problems in the light of the experience of a definite geographical region allows identifying more accurately the nuances and specific elements of a social, economic, and climate order that lead to crises. He characterised the situation in a group of countries in the Sahel zone—Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Chad.

These countries have a common climate and are threatened by the advance of the desert, which now occupies half of their respective territories. They have a common colonial past. Most of them are to this day in the grip of neocolonialist dependence. The bulk of their population, which totals about 30 million, is engaged in agriculture, the productive forces are backward, and the people's purchasing power is appallingly low. Such are the general social, geographical, climatic and historical features of this group of countries and they allow speaking of common (with small divergences) sources of the hunger problem existing in them. This problem is made additionally acute by some factors of a social nature. The agrarian population of this region is steadily decreasing and this is accompanied by non-growth or even a decline in agricultural labour productivity. In Senegal, for instance, it fell by 0.7 per cent in the 1980-1985 period. An alarming development is that young people are migrating from rural communities, and this depletes the labour force of these communities.

The fickle climate, the infertility of the tropical soil on which good crops cannot be grown, and the water shortage are among the major causes of the food crises in the Sahel. There is a water problem even where water resources are plentiful. The reason is that there are no irrigation systems, a matter that gets little attention from the governments concerned. However, although climatic factors have to be taken into account, they cannot be regarded as decisive. Their impact is eased and transcended when correct agricultural policy is implemented.

But where neocolonialism prevails, and there is domination by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which ignores the needs of the masses, the activities of the ruling elites impoverish society, depriving it of the resources that could have been used for progress in agriculture.

A conclusion offered at the symposium is that the food difficulties of the developing world are a multiple phenomenon. Many factors intertwine in it: social, economic, political, demographic, agrarian, technological, climatic, resources, ecological, and some others. It is extremely important to take into account the dialectical relations between these factors in the struggle against hunger.

What to Begin With?

The ways of resolving the food problem in African and Asian countries were considered from many angles. Speakers analysed the overall methodological approach to this problem and practical steps aimed at surmounting outbreaks of famine.

In realistic terms, said **Kadhim Habib**, member of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party, the situation in agriculture can be improved by pursuing a line towards ensuring political independence and mobilising the people for participation in the process of changes, for which political democracy is the dependable guarantee. Effective agrarian reforms are particularly important as clearing the way for abolishing survivals of feudal and semi-feudal relations and drawing up economic programmes using local and other resources. This course involves modern agrotechnical programmes, changes in the ways and means of

cultivating farmland, a transition to large-scale specialised agrarian production, programming agricultural services systems, promoting the living standard of the peasants, and increasing the purchasing power of the entire population. In broader terms, the radical restructuring of backward agricultural production has to be tied in closely with the operation of other branches of the economy. The agrarian sector needs growing support from the national government, which plays the central role in economic development. A just and democratic restructuring of international economic relations would serve as the key foreign political condition for the implementation of internal measures of this kind.

At the symposium it was noted that a *long-term* solution of the problems of hunger and malnutrition lies through ending the economic backwardness of developing nations and the creation of the facilities for meeting local food requirements. In principle, said **Horst Schilling**, head of the Department for Agriculture of the Institute for International Policy and Economy of the GDR, there is no way out except through self-sufficiency. A country able to feed itself is ultimately able to be really free, which does not, of course, mean autarchy. Although foreign food aid is significant in combating acute and severe crisis situations, it is not sufficient for a long-term solution of the problem of hunger and malnutrition.

While on the whole accepting this formulation of the question, a number of speakers asked to be told explicitly what sort of practical steps could be suggested as a way out of the critical situation in which some newly-free nations, particularly in Africa, have found themselves. Communists and other revolutionaries have to indicate not only long-term ways, noted **George Toubi**, CC Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, but also what should be done already today. The urgency of this approach underlines Lenin's well-known words: 'Famine is a disaster which sweeps away all other questions, which takes its place as the cornerstone, and overrules everything else.'⁵ **Ahmed Salem**, Economic Commission member of the Sudanese Communist Party, and **Raul Valdes Vivo**, Central Committee member of the Communist Party of Cuba, said that the left forces had to have a minimum programme for combating hunger. 'When we speak to the people in the countryside where hunger is particularly widespread,' **Semou Pathe Gueye** said in support of this idea, 'the first question we are usually asked is: What are you suggesting so that we are fed? In short, people are expecting concrete solutions, even forgetting that the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour is not the ruling party.' A concrete and lucid programme of struggle with this calamity, it was noted at the symposium, would place the progressive forces in a position not only to alleviate the suffering of the people but to lead them.

In this context, special interest was attracted by the experience of combating hunger and resolving the food problem in revolutionary-democratic states and also in some socialist countries at the early stages of their development. Questions on this point were answered by **Wondwossen Hailu**, representative of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia.

One of the first acts of the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia was to establish a Relief and Rehabilitation Commission to deal with the problem of hunger. This commission has saved the lives of millions of people. Almost all citizens—workers, peasants, women, young people—now belong to mass organisations. Through these organisations information is received on outbreaks of hunger in this or that locality, and food aid is organised opportunely.

Special attention is given to saving people suffering from chronic hunger. But since it is practically impossible to ensure adequate supplies of food in the poorest areas, the party is organising the resettlement of people from the arid north to fertile, grain-producing areas in the south. It is planned to resettle one and a half million people in these areas. With state aid 580,000 people have already been moved to

these areas, and this has allowed easing the effects of the crop failure in the northern part of Ethiopia.

As soon as the latest famine, affecting almost eight million people, broke out, the government of socialist Ethiopia informed the population and the world community of this. Thanks to the efforts of the party, the revolutionary government, the people, and assistance from many countries, a nation-wide struggle was started against the consequences of this extremely grave natural calamity. The party called for total commitment to the struggle against the drought. Members of the party leadership go to the affected localities every week. Considerable organisational and explanatory work is conducted among rural inhabitants. Ethiopia's problems are due in part to age-long traditional prejudices against some foods. There is a religious ban on fish, and many people do not eat pork. It is not an established habit to eat vegetables, because such a person was formerly regarded as poor. However, the explanatory campaign is yielding results.

The Ethiopian people strive to live with what they produce and have. In a peasant country with its grim legacy of socio-economic problems, it is important, above all, to feed, shoe, and clothe the population, and then to think of, say, importing private cars. As a matter of fact, this import is prohibited in Ethiopia. Moreover, the import of a range of textiles has been stopped.

After replying to questions concerning urgent measures being taken by the Workers' Party of Ethiopia and the revolutionary government, **Wondwossen Hailu** noted that these measures are being put into effect as part of the wide-ranging long-term programme of socio-economic development for the next decade. In this programme the accent is mainly on promoting agriculture and industries serving it, and resolving transport, energy, and many other problems. For a number of years radical agrarian changes have been taking place throughout the country, and cooperatives of various types are being set up. Thanks to the reforms that have been carried out a solid foundation is being laid for putting an end to socio-economic backwardness and solving the food problem.

The Vietnamese people's experience in this area was described by **Ho Chi Bang**, representative of the Communist Party of Vietnam. He recalled that as a result of the colonialist rule more than two million Vietnamese died from hunger within several months at the close of 1944 and the beginning of 1945. After the revolution of August 1945 the party and the people's government steered a course towards ensuring the people with food. Without this it would have been impossible to proceed with socialist industrialisation, the strengthening of the country's defence capability, and the fulfilment of the plans for raising the people's living standard. In response to a call from the Communist Party of Vietnam millions of people worked without stinting their strength, taking part in the production emulation movement. By tackling the food problem step by step while the war for liberation was still in progress, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was able to cope with the most acute food requirements.

Agricultural progress in Vietnam is illustrated by the striking increase in the per hectare rice yield (2,750 kilos in 1984 over 1,200 kilos in 1939) and by the per capita food consumption (correspondingly 300 kilos over 182 kilos). Within four decades the total grain harvest increased by more than 150 per cent. This was achieved despite the initial small material and technical base, thirty years of war, the destruction wrought by that war, and unending natural calamities (every year there are about seven typhoons and hurricanes). The advances that have been made are due to the correct policies pursued by the Communist Party of Vietnam. This is the outcome of the cooperated peasantry's active participation in the movement to restructure agriculture with the purpose of organising large-scale agrarian production, building cooperative enterprises in rural communities, cutting down on outlays, and

implementing the 'family contract' with payment in accordance with the end result. Lastly, the secret of Vietnam's successes lies in the fraternal economic assistance from the USSR and other socialist countries.

The party-government leadership has now set the people of Vietnam the urgent aim of concentrating effort on accelerating agricultural development, regarding it as a front of paramount significance, and steadfastly making it a sector of large-scale socialist production, while massively increasing the output of consumer goods and continuing the building of important large-scale industries. On the agenda today is the question of forming an integral industrial-agrarian structure on the basis of agriculture, the consumer goods industry, and heavy industry.

Raul Valdes Vivo spoke of the advances that have been made in promoting the living standard of the Cuban people. The production of milk, eggs, and other important foods was started after the revolution. Fishing is being developed. On Cuba there are no food profiteers. The present system of distributing food by ration card is based on the principles of social justice. A high level of per capita calorie and protein consumption has been achieved.

In considering the ways and means of surmounting the consequences of crop failures and of developing agriculture with account of the experience of socialist and socialist-oriented countries, the participants in the seminar agreed that the efficacy of emergency and long-term measures to resolve the food problem depend on how closely immediate and long-term plans are tied in, on how actively the people take part in progressive changes in rural communities.

Significance of International Assistance

There was a discussion at the symposium of questions linked to the role of foreign aid as a factor that can, given certain conditions, complement internal efforts, especially to alleviate the sharpest situations. Further, these questions were analysed from a broader angle: how, in general, aid of this kind helps to surmount hunger in both its overt and covert, chronic form.

Semou Pathe Gueye drew attention to the fact that the governments of many African countries are becoming increasingly sceptical of the efficacy of food supplies from foreign states, giving as an example some provisions of the resolution passed in the early 1980s by the Interstate Committee to Combat Drought in the Sahel.⁶ For a number of years these countries have been receiving food aid from Western donors. The resolution states that while this aid is helping to resolve urgent problems *partially*, it is fraught with the danger of making the recipient countries more dependent and may give them the thinking of a supplicant hoping for no more than support, which does little to foster the production of grain and disturbs traditional agricultural systems. Countries of the Sahel zone have gone so far as to suggest a cessation of free food aid (except in natural disasters and some other cases), coming to the conclusion that if it is permanent it '*conflicts with the aim of regional self-sufficiency*' (editor's italics). The Interstate Committee urged its member-states to develop the ways and means of limiting the adverse effects of such aid on local food production, pursue a policy stimulating the growth of this production, and improve the grain marketing and storage systems. The donors themselves, the resolution says, should accommodate food aid to the actual requirements of the population.

Imperialist food policy, said **Horst Schilling**, resembles a twin-faced Janus. Its primary motto—'food for peace'—is purely propagandistic, but its second, 'food is power', is in fact consistent with its class orientation. The purpose of the 'aid' strategy is to keep developing countries within the orbit of the capitalist world economy in the status of dependent debtors and prevent them from fighting for economic independence and social progress.

Imperialism's methods include, on the one hand, vocal demagoguery about the

'saving role' of food supplies from the capitalist West and, on the other, the use of the hunger weapon against peoples that have won liberation, the evidence being trade restrictions, embargoes, the withholding of credits, and other means of economic warfare. A 1975 CIA report headed 'Potential Implications of Trends in World Population, Food Production and Climate' underscores that the adverse effect of climatic changes on the harvest, especially in the regions nearest the equator 'could give the United States a measure of power it never had before, possibly an economic and political dominance greater than that of the immediate post-World War II years'.⁷

Initially, as it still is, the main purpose of supplies of food has been to market the farm surpluses of industrialised capitalist countries. A 1984 report of the US Department of Agriculture devoted to the 30th anniversary of Law No. 480, under which food aid was sent to developing nations on favourable terms, notes as an outstanding success that of the ten present heaviest buyers of American grain eight have previously had recourse to supplies approved by this law. In other words, it paved for agrobusiness the way to new markets and then to the sale of farm surpluses on a purely commercial basis.

Participants in the symposium cited many examples to illustrate how imperialism is using food to pressure the newly-free nations, to blackmail their governments. For instance, in its subversive war against revolutionary Nicaragua Washington had in the early 1980s halted the sale of food to that country and imposed a harsh embargo on it. Whereas during the Somali aggression against Ethiopia (latter half of the 1970s), the American administration of the time increased its food supplies to the Somali regime tenfold to support the aggression, a similar tactic is now being used relative to Nicaragua's neighbours.

Wondwossen Hailu noted that during a visit to Khartoum US Vice-President George Bush declared that the Ethiopians (meaning the separatist-insurgents) would get food only in the same package with weapons to fight the revolution. In the past year new Ethiopia has on several occasions encountered imperialist intrigues of this sort. To illustrate: a ship carrying food for famine victims set out for Ethiopia from Australia. It was demanded that Ethiopia permit aid to be distributed among those preferred by the donor. Ethiopia replied that it would be happy to receive assistance, but if the country's sovereignty and unity were made a condition for that assistance Ethiopia did not need it. Of course, it is hard to turn down food aid when people are going hungry. But firmness must be shown. Ethiopia declared that it would accept assistance from any organisation provided there were no prior conditions.

At the symposium note was made of other negative aspects of imperialism's 'aid' policy. It adversely affects the structure of consumption of traditional products, impoverishing local diet habits. For instance, consumption of nourishing foods like pulses and some others is decreasing. At the same time, poor and insecure strata of the population cannot afford to pay for imported rice. The specialised capacities for processing imported food products are in effect giving shape to an infrastructural base for dependence on foreign raw materials.

In some countries a large proportion of the food aid is stolen by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and wholesale dealers and middlemen. The imperialist donors shut their eyes to all this. Actually, this drain fattens the social groups and strata forming the class bulwark of neocolonialist regimes. Food stocks are used by the bourgeois-bureaucratic elite as an instrument for pressuring the population during election and other campaigns.

There is, said **Semou Pathe Gueye**, yet another dangerous aspect in US policy, namely, the striving to monopolise agronomical research, which, though conducted in many developing countries, is in many instances funded by the Americans. For example, the findings of Senegalese scientists studying rice-growing methods cannot

be published without the consent of the foreign financing organisation. Collecting unique seeds in the tropical zone for the development of new varieties of grain, the international monopolies sell these improved varieties to the countries from which these seeds originated and, of course, make huge profits in the process. These methods have been labelled 'genetic imperialism'.

In considering this group of problems the participants in the symposium stressed that a comparison between Washington's economic aid and its sales of military hardware to the developing world showed that the latter are unquestionably in the lead. As regards Africa, economic aid increased by 40 per cent between 1982 and 1985, while military imports in the same period went up by 150 per cent.

In their analyses of the class essence and concrete practice of the food policy pursued by capitalist countries in the Third World, speakers proceeded from the premise that for developing nations international food aid would remain significant in the foreseeable future on account of the food shortages in many Asian, African, and Latin American countries. **Raul Valdes Vivo, Kadhim Habib, Ahmed Salem**, and others noted that this aid is a duty and obligation of the imperialist states that had exploited colonies and semi-colonies for centuries on end. Further, this aid amounts to an insignificant portion of what imperialism pockets in developing countries by its neocolonialist methods. In other words, **Horst Schilling** said, it is compensation for the damage inflicted on the countries concerned by imperialism's policies. To ignore these just demands would be tantamount to playing into the hands of reactionary and conservative elements using the cover of neo-Malthusian arguments and references to shortcomings in the system of international food aid, to generally questioning the expediency of such aid.

Developing countries, the non-aligned movement, and mass democratic movements in capitalist countries are quite rightly demanding steps to prevent the attempts to halt food aid and ensure that this aid is continued on fair terms and is not used by imperialism as a means of bringing political and economic pressure to bear and as a bulwark of its neocolonialist policies. At the symposium it was declared that the Communists should re-double their efforts on behalf of these legitimate demands. Note was made of the specific significance of practical steps to control the food policy of capitalist countries relative to developing nations and ensure respect for the latter's sovereign right in using food supplies. These points had been made time and again at the UN and other international organisations. Despite resistance from imperialist quarters, there have been some partial concessions. The efficacy of the struggle for these aims depends on how united the Asian, African, and Latin American states are on the question of a radical restructuring of international economic relations, on how solid their links are to the socialist world, and on the effectiveness of their domestic agricultural and economic policies. The system of international food aid has to be part of the struggle for a profound and genuine democratisation of international economic relations.

Further, at the symposium it was pointed out that from the standpoint of the interests of the developing nations, multilateral forms of such aid would be more preferable: if it was dispensed by specialised international agencies, imperialism would have less opportunity to pressure the developing nations. Lastly, many speakers stressed that the most significant role is played by food and other aid that, while alleviating the problem of hunger in an emergency situation, contributes to economic and social development.

In this context, scientific, technological, and other cooperation with the socialist world, cooperation that helps to transcend difficulties and train skilled personnel, is of special importance. Where maximum use is made of local potentialities, **Semou Pathe Gueye** said, such cooperation cannot be supplanted by either food supplies or any other kind of philanthropic aid.

At present, as in the past, speakers pointed out, the socialist community countries are focusing on technical, economic, and scientific assistance to local agriculture, thereby making it possible to lay the foundations for its long-term development and turning it into a highly efficient element of the agro-industrial complex of the developing nations. This includes assistance for immense irrigational projects and agrotechnical programmes, supplies of sophisticated equipment, and support for progressive directions of agricultural production. In crisis situations aid from socialist countries is coupled to plans for surmounting food difficulties drawn up by the African or Asian country concerned and takes its needs into account.

The conclusion drawn from this is that the more tangible the successes of the socialist community in economic, including agricultural development, the more rapid becomes the economic advance of the socialist states and the more solid become the guarantees that imperialism will ultimately have no possibility of using food aid as a weapon of political dictation and blackmail against developing nations.

In the Focus of the Ideological and Class Struggles

A sharp class struggle has unfolded on the international scene in recent years over the problems of hunger and food crises that have become acute for developing nations. The manifold background of the food problem is increasingly acquiring yet another—political—dimension. This is due, first, to its close link to the choice of the way of social development and, second, to imperialism's efforts to politicise and ideologise the hunger problem. Reactionary propaganda is stripping this problem of its actual cause and effect and humanitarian content and using it against the forces of social and national liberation.

A favourite gambit of the bourgeois ideologues in their interpretation of the causes of a food crisis is to impute the responsibility for it to the victims. In these anti-scientific arguments, **Larisa Knyazhinskaya** said, unequivocal priority is given to the natural factors of this calamity. Some stress the narrow ecological-climate causes of hunger—the location of the crop-failure zone in the tropics or subtropics where conditions are unfavourable for agriculture, particularly for livestock-breeding and where the ecological balance is extremely unstable and fragile. The most widespread arguments interpret the problem from the neo-Malthusian standpoint of demographic determinism. It is claimed that the 'population explosion' in the Third World is the central cause of the food crisis—this 'explosion' is seen as a purely biological phenomenon embodying the instinct to multiply for survival. As was demonstrated by **Semou Pathe Gueye**, the neo-Malthusian pattern is refuted by empirical data on the developing nations. There are studies showing that in India, for example, the most severe famine was observed at times of small population growth. On the contrary, there was considerable population growth in periods when there were fewer extreme manifestations of famine.

A sharp struggle over the food problem is unfolding not only on the ideologico-theoretical level. Crisis food situations in an African or Asian country committed to an anti-imperialist orientation, to social progress, are used more and more frequently by imperialism to discredit the domestic policies of its government. A recent striking example of this is the smear campaign against Ethiopia.⁸ Speakers at the symposium denounced this Washington-led hostile campaign, the cynical methods used in it, and the efforts to benefit from the most severe natural disaster. The actual aim of its organisers is to discredit the Ethiopian revolution and the socialist orientation. Now Ethiopia's enemies are trying to show, in the first place, that far from having resolved acute problems the profound agrarian reform and the changes in the country's socio-economic system have exacerbated these problems.

Wondwossen Hailu noted that had a revolution not taken place it would have been hard even to imagine what the effects of the recent natural calamity would have been

to the Ethiopian people. Prior to the revolution the peasant gave three-fourths of his crop to the emperor, the church, the landlords and the local military commander. Today he works for himself and increasingly takes part in collective labour. This is precisely what the adversaries of the revolutionary government detest. They would like to see an abandonment of the course towards the gradual cooperation of the peasants and urge the introduction of capitalist forms of agriculture in Africa.

The constant bourgeois laudation of the green revolution⁹ as being the most promising form of capitalist modernisation of a backward agriculture lays bare the class interests of the originators of this theory. They accentuate that aspect of the food problem that directly links it to the social choice, to the determination of the ways for social development. **Kadhim Habib** called the green revolution a bourgeois-reformist means for reshaping agriculture, pointing out that the use of scientific breakthroughs, of technological innovations in agriculture had to be distinguished from the socio-political orientation, the class content of reforms. Special preparations were started soon after World War II, under the patronage of US imperialism, to apply the capitalist methods of the green revolution in some Asian countries. This work was later taken over by the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. High-yielding varieties of grain, irrigation, and fertilisers were used as a sort of technico-agrarian battering-ram for the assertion of capitalist relations in agriculture. The class essence of the green revolution, **Kadhim Habib** said, is to prevent any revolutionary changes in the agrarian sector of the Third World economy.

Sam Moeti spoke of a typically bourgeois *technocratic* approach to restructuring agriculture; outwardly it gives the impression of ignoring the social aspect of reforms. In Lesotho some agricultural schemes were started by the government to increase the output of food. These were funded from foreign loans and state subsidies. But there was not the least intention of giving the peasants a better knowledge of the methods used in modern agriculture. The emphasis was on purely technical issues related to agrarian problems, on the benefits that could be obtained from the replacement of traditional crops (maize, wheat, and sorghum) with so-called cash crops (pulses). The question of access to credits and machinery was resolved in favour of rich peasants. In the latter half of the 1970s the government started a drive for the cultivation of maize under the slogan 'Mantsatlala' ('Down with Hunger'), which initially brought peasants the hope that they would receive agrotechnical assistance from the government. But what occurred was that tractors ploughed the fields and sowed seeds, aircraft spread herbicides, combines brought in the harvest, and the peasants' labour was in fact not utilised. In the final analysis this benefited those who financed these programmes (credits came mainly from the private capitalist sector in neighbouring South Africa).

A clear-cut class interest can usually be traced behind the technocratic facade of the methods used in capitalist agriculture, it was said at the symposium. The journal *World Marxist Review* has carried articles revealing the aims pursued by the green revolution in India and Bangladesh and analysing its social results and the role played by transnationals in implementing it.¹⁰ These issues were dealt with by **Unni Krishnan**, who emphasised that from the outset the strategy could involve only the landlords and very rich peasants.

He was asked what alternative the Communist Party of India was offering to the green revolution.

His reply was: The green revolution condemns more and more thousands of agricultural workers to unemployment—this is quite natural on account of private property in land and the high ceiling on such property in many of India's states. The Communists are urging deep-going democratic changes in rural communities, an agrarian reform, a reduction in the size of large land holdings, the granting of land to landless peasants, the provision of jobs to everybody, and a minimum wage for

agricultural labourers, which has been fixed but is in fact not enforced. We are urging the utmost utilisation of scientific achievements in agriculture in combination with traditional agrotechnical methods that have justified themselves. The Communist Party is demanding government assistance to the peasants in the shape of machinery, credits, and fertilisers. Moreover, in the countryside the Communists are directing their efforts towards helping the peasants to take over excess land.¹¹

At the symposium it was pointed out that while in the social sphere development in the channel of the green revolution leads to the formation of a privileged landlord-kulak stratum and then to the stratification and ruin of the peasantry, experts doubt the technological usefulness of this experience in, for instance, Africa. The Director-General of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation **Edouard Saouma** has had to acknowledge that neither the green revolution technology of Asia nor the agricultural methods of the West are appropriate to Africa. 'Africa,' he writes, 'needs research to produce drought-resistant, high-yield food crops and to reduce pests and diseases. It needs new farming practices, . . . fertiliser and irrigation.'¹² The opportunities for transformations of this kind are gradually shrinking as the African nations' already large external debt grows, the prices of their exports to capitalist markets fall, and other economic burdens linked to the intensification of neocolonialist exploitation and imperialism's aggressive intrigues pile up.

* * *

In summing up the discussion, the participants in the symposium noted that the efforts of the peoples of the new nation-states have to be further mobilised for the fight against famine and malnutrition. They stressed an end to the unjust economic order, ensuring a thorough democratisation of social structures, and introducing new farming methods. To a huge extent steady progress along this road depends on the prevailing international climate. The food problem is one of the global problems that can only be resolved under conditions of peace, with reliance on vigorous international cooperation. Growing and more determined resistance to the imperialist policy of building up arsenals and effective action against imperialist exploitation, military dictation, and aggressive encroachment will increasingly bring to light the creative potentialities of peoples that have shaken off colonial and neocolonial tyranny and enable the true friends and allies of the developing countries to extend more assistance to help them end economic backwardness and the accompanying hunger and poverty.

¹ A semi-desert and desertic belt extending from Mauritania and Senegal in the West to Chad and the border of the Sudan in East Africa.—*Ed.*

² Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1956, p. 173.

³ *International Herald Tribune*, July 19, 1985.

⁴ This is considered in some detail in the third section of this summation.—*Ed.*

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 461.

⁶ The countries involved are Mali, Mauritania, Cape Verde Islands, Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal, Chad.—*Ed.*

⁷ See *International Herald Tribune*, January 16, 1985.

⁸ See Ahmed Salem, Abdoulaye Diagne, Essop Pahad, 'Background of an Anti-African Campaign', *WMR*, No. 6, 1985.—*Ed.*

⁹ Here the term 'revolution' is applied to technological advances taking place in a backward agriculture within capitalist forms of farming.—*Ed.*

¹⁰ Indradeep Sinha, 'The Contradictions of Agrarian Capitalism', *WMR*, No. 3, 1982; Ajoy Roy, 'The Vicious Circle of a Capitalist Orientation', *WMR*, No. 8, 1984.

¹¹ Although a limit on the size of the land holdings per person has been established by legislation in most of India's states, the 'surplus' land of many landowners is tens of times in excess of the official ceiling. While calling upon the peasants to take over these holdings, the Communists are demanding compliance with the law and taking part in the struggle of rural workers without fearing retribution from landlords or clashes with the police.—*Ed.*

¹² *International Herald Tribune*, April 29, 1985.

A Collective Interview

Perceiving the Star Wars Threat

The problem of preventing an all-incinerating world war has today grown particularly acute. The new arms race spiral and the course towards the militarisation of outer space being forced upon the peoples by reactionary elements in the USA have unprecedentedly intensified the danger of sliding into the abyss of a thermo-nuclear conflict, from which there will be no return. With international relations at a turning point the question at issue is the preservation of civilisation, of life on our planet. In fact, humankind faces the choice between survival and the threat of annihilation.

How is this situation assessed by peace opinion in different countries? What is seen as a possibility of averting a military catastrophe? What is the view about the role played by the peace movements, by their contribution to ensuring the human being's principal right, the right to life? *WMR* put these questions to **Otto Kreilisheim**, Chairman of the Austrian Peace Council, **Petar Sopov**, leadership member of the Bulgarian Peace Committee, Professor **Chadwick Alger** (USA), General Secretary of the International Peace Research Association, and **Gert Weisskirchen** (FRG), SDP deputy in the Bundestag and Chairman of the Initiative for International Security and Disarmament organisation.

The following are the slightly abridged replies.

In what do you see the main threat to the preservation and consolidation of peace?

Kreilisheim. It is my belief that humanity has reached a line beyond which will begin a fundamentally new, uncontrollable, even unpredictable and, possibly, generally irreversible process. This is due to the US administration's decision to spread the arms race to outer space. As you know, the Pentagon began using outer space for military purposes as early as the 1960s. But hitherto these have been ancillary, albeit rapidly more significant, functions by launched systems, notably communications, reconnaissance, navigation, command, and control satellites. The danger of the situation is significantly compounded by the USA's intention to develop and deploy space strike systems in circumterrestrial orbit. This programme, advanced by President Ronald Reagan in March 1983, is officially called Strategic Defence Initiative. But if we set aside the hypocritical manoeuvres of its propagandists, we will understand the main thing, namely, that this is a programme for aggression, not for defence, a programme for unleashing rather than preventing wars. Militarist circles in the USA would like to use the latest breakthroughs in military technology to achieve decisive military superiority over the Soviet Union and have the possibility to act with impunity anywhere in the world.

It is obvious to everyone who assesses the situation realistically that the attempts to use the Star Wars plans to upset the existing approximate balance of strength between the USSR and the USA will only spur the arms race and sharply increase the danger of a world conflict. The first victims of SDI will be armaments verification, the prospects for easing tension, the development of dialogue between the two great powers, and the efforts to improve the situation throughout the world. Military-political and socio-economic instability will grow more marked in many countries and regions, and crisis situations will erupt in international relations.

Alger. In suggesting the Star Wars programme, the Reagan administration is acting on the dangerous illusion that were this programme to be carried out it would be possible to make the USA safe against attack. In my view this is no more than another, extremely unwise step in escalating the arms race. There may soon appear Star Wars-2 programmes or something of that sort. The inexorable logic of war preparations will push us further along the road towards mutual annihilation. This development must be stopped and renounced.

Weisskirchen. The Star Wars plans are an imprudent attempt to attain world supremacy by military means. This will be an unavailing attempt, for it expresses a striving to settle political problems with the aid of technology. These can only be resolved by political means. In this lies the basic error in the policies pursued by the Reagan administration and some quarters of the governing parties of the FRG.

As many experts justifiably note, SDI is absurd from the technical angle as well, for it does not ensure security. Moreover, its implementation will require colossal spending, which will sharply increase the military expenditures of the USA and, correspondingly, of some other countries. On the social level, this is a demonstration of irresponsibility. We should not turn outer space into an inferno. Instead, we should tackle earthly problems such as finally ending hunger and poverty. But these problems will not be conquered if astronomical funds are spent on building up weapons of mass destruction.

Sopov. Developments have provided evidence that the arms race, which is escalating the threat of a nuclear catastrophe, has its locomotive, namely, world imperialism headed by the USA. Its refusal to reckon with realities has been remains the main obstacle to peace.

Regrettably, the USA has so far not responded affirmatively to the peace proposals of the Soviet Union and other socialist states. On various pretexts, Washington is opposed, in particular, also to the Bulgarian initiative for turning the Balkans into a nuclear-free zone. Moreover, an arms build-up is going on in our region on its initiative, through the NATO military bloc. New US nuclear first-strike missiles continue to be deployed in Western Europe. The USA is building up components of its strategic offensive nuclear capability. NATO is working on a programme for the development of ultra-modern conventional weapons with a destructive capability close to that of nuclear weapons. New types of chemical weapons are being developed.

In this connection it is my view that the time has come to think not in terms of opposing blocs but in terms of the planet as a whole, to consistently defend not merely one's own system, country, and allies, but the whole of civilisation. This is precisely what the socialist states are doing.

What is the foundation for the confidence that it is in fact possible to direct developments into the channel of peace? What has to be done to make this a reality?

Alger. Conventional military logic is based on the deep-rooted theory that weapons provide security. However, as a result of the swift growth of the destructive power of modern weapons the build-up of arsenals, instead of reinforcing security, has made people increasingly afraid that catastrophe is imminent.

For that reason, today, more than ever, efforts must be focused on surmounting the militarist logic of thinking, normalising state-to-state and human relations, and building confidence. The only way out is to learn to live together and to understand one another, to conduct dialogue and promote cooperation, and achieve a limitation on if not the total destruction of armaments. In themselves, the build-up and storage of various armaments (nuclear, chemical, bacteriological, and so on) are fraught with

disastrous consequences for people and the natural environment. This is obvious. And the number of people is growing who have come round to seeing that the larger the arsenals of armaments the less security there is.

The concepts 'confidence' and 'security' imply mutual understanding, the absence of hostility, the expansion of commerce, joint participation in the solution of global problems, and so on. In concert and through peaceful cooperation reliable security can be ensured faster and with less cost than through the build up of armaments.

Kreilisheim. I am convinced that the peace forces—the socialist countries, the non-aligned and neutral states, and the massive peace movements on all continents—are capable of blocking the war threat. Let us recall the case when their joint actions compelled the proponents of neutron weapons to retreat. Today it is again vital to use every opportunity to expose the criminal Star Wars plans and prevent them from being put into effect. As I see it, the peace forces must perseveringly, compellingly, and coherently show that the arms race is leading to the destruction of civilisation and that the voice of each person is valuable in the struggle for salvation.

I should like to underline the significance of the role of scientists researching peace problems. We are striving to bring them into closer cooperation with the anti-war movement so that science would render productive day-to-day assistance to practice instead of locking itself up in, as is still sometimes the case, purely abstract, objectivist study. Scientists are using concrete facts to help explain to large sections of society that countries with different social systems have no alternative to peaceful coexistence.

Weisskirchen. In the question of militarising outer space we are confronted by two components: existing weaponry and research with the objective of developing new armaments systems. Today there already is an anti-satellite weapon, a fact that is extremely disturbing. It is acutely desirable to halt and end the process of its deployment. As regards the second aspect, I believe it would be expedient to ensure understandings and verification capabilities covering laboratories as well. If this is not done, there will be the fear that one of the sides is secretly developing new weapons, and this would block the road to removing distrust.

I am quite certain that the Soviet Union is able and prepared to contribute to the vital process of limiting and ending the arms race. More, it is already acting in that direction. It is imperative that the Western countries should respond constructively to the Soviet initiatives. We, the Social Democrats, will do everything we can to facilitate this course of events.

Cooperation on the basis of concrete initiatives is a condition for strengthening security. It is not simple to arrive at mutual action, for there are the inevitable difficulties and contradictions, and the arguments of the Social Democrats with the Communists. But the main thing is that, despite everything, cooperation should underlie joint initiatives in the interests of mutual security and detente, because for us, Social Democrats and Communists, the key aim is to bring lasting peace to Europe and the rest of the world.

Sopov. In Bulgaria the Star Wars plans generated widespread anxiety and a feeling that a new deadly danger is threatening the world. But it did not give rise to demoralising fear or a sense of helplessness. First, we are confident that the Warsaw Treaty Organisation has the capability for an adequate response to an aggressor. This will deter him from taking a fatal step. Second, in Bulgaria and the other socialist countries there is sufficient historical optimism based on the philosophy of human society's life-asserting and onward progress regardless of problems and threats. This is borne out also by the past 40 years, during which a world war has been averted although the danger of it breaking out was more than enough.

This is what makes the Communists and their allies psychologically strong and unafraid of difficulties, supporting their belief that reason will triumph. Threats such

as in the Star Wars case only mobilise us, compel an invigoration of actions in defence of a peaceful, happy future for the whole of humankind.

In the present crucial moment of history it is of the utmost importance to achieve unity among all the peace forces and resolutely repulse the efforts of imperialism's reactionary quarters to split and weaken them. There is a particular danger in the attempts to draw the anti-war forces in the West into a 'crusade' against socialism, to drive a wedge between the peace movements in capitalist and socialist countries, to divide them into forces dependent on and independent of the state, to obstruct cooperation between them. Such subversive actions, whatever the camouflage given them, undercut public opposition to the nuclear war threat.

I consider that, in principle, resistance to the military threat must begin with a struggle for people's minds. The best way for this is to bring up the rising generation from childhood in a spirit of peace, confidence, and mutual understanding, instead of in an atmosphere of hostility, aggressiveness, and brutal rivalry of the 'might is right' variety. This can be appreciated because it is always harder to re-educate a person than to mould his world-view from the start, giving it intellectual healthy foundations.

In Bulgaria, as in other socialist countries, much is done to foster the ideals of peace. Echoes of the past are still fresh in people's minds—guns fell silent in Bulgaria not very long ago. But we are working perseveringly on behalf of peace. For instance, a major event last summer was in the children's international Peace Banner forum in Sofia. It was a tangible contribution to the upbringing of children, which is by no means a simple matter.

What contribution is peace opinion in your country making to avert the threat of war?

Sopov. Peace opinion in Bulgaria places much of its hopes on direct talks between the USSR and the USA on cardinal issues of strengthening world security. We are giving our whole-hearted support to the peace initiatives of the socialist community and exposing the foul anti-socialist inventions. In our work among the people we rely on such advantages of our system as the banning of war propaganda by legislation and the non-existence in our society of elements materially interested in the manufacture of armaments. The Bulgarian people see the guarantee of a life of peace not in a confrontation of strength with capitalist countries but in working with them on the basis of the principles of equality and equal security, confidence, and mutual understanding, with a dialectical link between peaceful competition and cooperation. Here the cardinal aim is not preparations for a 'nuclear' or 'space winter', which condemns nations to the dissipation of their material and intellectual wealth, but joint efforts to consolidate peace and resolve the accompanying innumerable extremely acute problems.

We in Bulgaria hope that in the West level-headed, realistically-thinking elements will ultimately prevail and again lead to an easing of international tension, to a halt of the arms race on the ground and in outer space, and to the removal of the threat of war. But, in our view, a revival of the process of detente and constructive dialogue should not signify merely a return to what was achieved ten years ago. We want much more. For us detente, as such, is not the end goal but only a necessary stage of transition from a world piled high with armaments to a dependable and all-embracing system of international security.

Kreilisheim. Forces that had earlier held aloof from the peace struggle have lately become active in Austria and many other West European states. The Star Wars prospect has evoked horror and made individuals, political and public groups, organisations, and parties think seriously of how to counter the threat from outer space, of how to safeguard life on earth.

Any conflict in Europe would be catastrophic. Recognition of this by all the European nations and also the USA and Canada fostered the detente process. The period of detente demonstrated the mutual benefit of peaceful coexistence and of cooperation in the economic, cultural, scientific, and other areas.

The NATO missile 'rearmament' was unquestionably the turning point towards confrontation. The Star Wars programme makes this confrontation ever more acute. However, there is no way to peace and security save through a return to detente.

The Austrian peace movement is protesting against our government's passiveness in questions related to the struggle against the nuclear threat. I have heard officials arguing that because Austria is a small neutral nation it can make hardly any impact on the situation in world politics. The Austrian peace movement considers that it is impermissible to live with the illusion that the flames of a nuclear collision or of Star Wars will stop at the frontiers of neutral Austria. It is therefore very desirable that our government should also work for a positive outcome of the Geneva Soviet-US negotiations on nuclear and space armaments and support the constructive peace initiatives of the USSR and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

Weisskirchen. A point I should like to make is that in my country a growing number of people feel confused when the two great powers fail to reach compromises and understandings. There is this paradoxical situation in which many disarmament proposals have been forthcoming but no real change is taking place in this direction.

It is quite obvious that public opinion will not find mutually acceptable decisions for the USSR and the USA, that it cannot do this for them. But it can influence the governments of its own countries in order to reinforce their readiness to come to an agreement at negotiations.

True, the experience of the FRG is that public pressure, even when it is quite strong, is by no means always successful. For example, in the case of the deployment of new American missiles the Federal government ignored the population's political will. However, I should like to hope that the Star Wars programme will compel the persons responsible for decision-making to take a more sober and realistic look at things under the influence of public opinion, and that this programme, which would make the future totally uncontrollable for all of us, is not put into effect.

The West German Social Democrats had clearly stated their emphatic opposition to Star Wars. This stand may influence a segment of US congressmen and this, I hope, will facilitate positive changes in the process of decision-making on major issues of war and peace in Washington.

The Social Democratic Party of Germany supports all the processes in the peace movement that lead to the understanding that following the struggle against the Pershing IIs and cruise missiles people have confronted with a much more complex and dangerous matter, whose dramatic character could not have been foreseen over a few years ago. We are working for a new consensus among the different forces taking part in the peace struggle in the FRG and the whole of Europe in order to mobilise the masses against the Star Wars plans. However, a cardinal solution of this issue, as of the entire problem of war and peace, demands a transition to a new phase of the policy of detente between East and West, a return to the policy that led to the European Conference on Security and Cooperation and the Helsinki Final Act.

Alger. In the USA the Star Wars programme encounters powerful resistance from the peace, including academic, community, from all level-headed people. I would say that many people are already now recognising that armaments cannot go on being developed endlessly. There has been a visible growth among Americans of a feeling in favour of ending the arms race, and a spread of the anti-war movement. In the USA it has in recent years become a much more perceptible component of political life than ever before.

True, to some extent foreign policy and international affairs are often regarded in

the USA as something very special and the province of only a select elite. Also, there is a notion about so-called national interests, which are likewise supposed to be comprehensible only to an elite. But what is presented to us as 'national interests' usually turns out to be the interests of a group in the US political and military establishment that speaks for and on behalf of the whole nation. However, peace opinion in the USA is quite capable of knowledgeably sorting out intricate issues of international politics—participation in the struggle against the threat of war has been a good school giving peace fighters an understanding of the world situation.

Large sections of the people in the USA are coming round to a clear comprehension of what the true interests of their country are. With growing insistence they are demanding the right to know the truth about what is happening in the world around them and to have a say in resolving foreign policy problems. The present administration is having to reckon increasingly with these demands.

The US peace movement is no longer isolated from foreign anti-war movements, which have entered the international arena and become an influential force. Having become global, this movement has, I would say, good prospects. One of the reasons for saying this is that the peace fighters are learning from each other and growing used to understanding one another. Also of great significance is the fact that in recent years the peace movement has considerably diversified the forms and methods of its activity. that it has not been confining itself, as was often the case in the past, to organising solely demonstrations even though they did not always have the desired political effect. I should like to believe that the future belongs to peace, not to the arms race fed by the dangerous illusions that military superiority can be achieved and a nuclear or star war is winnable.

viewpoints

Realities of Socialism

Technical Revolution: Boon, Not Bane for the Worker

All the industrialised countries have lately been redeploying their production, because they have to sort out the sunrise from the sunset industries. Microelectronics has given the greatest scope to automation; flexible production systems, robots and low-manned and unmanned technologies are being introduced. The new-generation technology could help to release man from monotonous, arduous and noxious labour, but in the capitalist world the current industrial revolution mostly has painful social consequences in store for the working class: the number of jobs is sharply shrinking and the working people's rights are being attacked. The picture of the political struggle in the imperialist countries is largely determined by mass unemployment, which does not disappear even when there is a temporary economic recovery.

Socialist social production is also undergoing deep technical changes. What are the consequent social problems and how are they being tackled? The answers follow.

From the Society's Standpoint

Rationality Squared

By the end of 1984, the USSR had more than 200,000 mechanised flow and automated lines (160,500 in 1979), and more than 100,000 sections, shops and lines of production with complex mechanisation and automation (83,500 in 1979). Within a year, 11,800 metal-cutting numerical-controlled machine-tools were installed, over 80 sections and shops equipped with industrial robots, and 20 complex-automated sections for the mechanical treatment of components were created. (Data from Soviet Statistical Year-books).

The USSR's scientific and technical policy and its social consequences are described by Professor A.F. Kamenev, deputy chairman of the USSR State Committee for Science and Technology, and Professor L.E. Kunelsky, administration head at the USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Matters.

The bourgeois mass media keep saying that there is a striking contrast between the persistent mass unemployment in the industrialised capitalist countries and the full employment in the countries which are members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) because the latter are allegedly technically retarded and have a low labour productivity which results in an artificially high level of employment. Is that so?

L.E. Kunelsky. Indeed, bourgeois propaganda has kept making the primitive claim that we have latent unemployment. It cannot be right if only because it is used to blanket the whole of socialism as a social system. But the fact is that every socialist-community country has industries with high technological standards (which are often the highest in the world) and also lagging sectors. Seeing only the latter and saying nothing about our society's achievements in other fields means deliberately trying to distort the reality.

The USSR has a vast scientific, technical and economic potential, but our party is perfectly aware of the importance of the revolution under way in production today and has been giving the most serious attention to its further development. It has kept stressing that the pace of scientific and technical progress in the country is not high enough, that it is somewhat flabby and more evolutionary than need be. It was said most emphatically at the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC in April 1985 and at a conference on accelerating scientific and technical progress held at the CPSU CC in June 1985 that we can no longer be satisfied with partial modernisation of plant and retooling or with some improvement of installed technologies. There must be broad introduction of the latest-generation hardware and high technology, i.e., there must be revolutionary changes in production.

The draft of the new edition of the CPSU Programme sets the task of completing comprehensive mechanisation in all the sectors of the production and non-production spheres and taking a major step in the automation of production, with a transition to automated shops and plants, and automated control and design systems.¹ Labour productivity is to be considerably increased through accelerated scientific and technical progress, radical changes in hardware and technology and the use of other factors in intensifying production: within the next three five-year plan period labour productivity is to go up by 130-150 per cent.

Will that not jeopardise the working people's full employment?

A.F.Kamenev. No, it will not, although we are aware that the electronic era will present many problems in a totally different light. Some Western futurologists expect automats to 'devour' up to 65-70 per cent of the jobs by the end of the century. Indeed, some of the giant corporations expect to do without 95 per cent of their workforce by as early as 1995. That is, of course, an expulsion of living labour by objectified labour on a scale that has never been witnessed before. Let us recall, however, that it is a process which Marx foresaw as he was working on the rough draft of his *Capital*. He also welcomed it because he was sure that it would mark the transition in the socialist society from the 'realm of necessity' to the 'realm of freedom', as man discovered himself and his creative potentialities and began to live in dignity.

For all our historical optimism, we are naturally aware that such a massive release of manpower is bound to create practical problems which our generation and future ones will have to cope with. The problems are bound to arise, but we are safeguarded from the major disproportions in economic development and the 'social dislocations' attendant on the current revolution in science and production in the capitalist world by our planned socialist economy and by our complex scientific and technical policy.

Let us recall, by way of example, that in pursuance of the decisions of the 26th Congress of the CPSU (1981), Soviet planning and economic agencies worked out a number of state-wide complex programmes (notably for automating engineering and other sectors of the economy), tying into one system the solution of many problems, ranging from the pursuit of a coherent scientific and technical policy, planning of research and development projects, and the engineering of new ideas, to the use of the advantages and potentialities of the international division of labour.

Let me add that the programme approach helps to concentrate resources and funds on the crucial lines of technical progress, but it does very little to guarantee against any painful social consequences. Take the national robotisation programme in Japan, where unemployment has been markedly increasing over the recent period. Under socialism, goal-oriented planning is complex in the broadest sense of the word, for it includes the social aspects of development as well. Solution of the problem of manpower resources and the training and retraining of personnel for the mooted projects is an important part of Soviet programmes; the technical and the social aspects are worked on by the planning agencies in organic connection with each other at the earliest stage, when it is already possible to foresee the processes connected with employment and to regulate them in the interests of the society.

Socialism has a clear advantage in making it possible to consider technical, economic and social development in each other's context and to assess its effectiveness not only within the individual enterprises, however large these may be, but also within the national-economic complex as a whole. Let us consider, for instance, why we decided to start with the automation of engineering, although its cost benefits (per rouble of capital investments) are only a third of those in, say, the automation of management? We did so because the remodelling of engineering provides the basis for a radical renewal of the other industries, so that we are entitled to expect a multiplication of the economic effect later. In other words, under socialism the technical re-equipment of production, its modernisation—which the bourgeois media designate by the general term of rationalisation—can be rational to a very high degree: not only in terms of the individual technical and economic returns, but also on the scale of the economy as a whole, which means an additional benefit from the higher economic level in various allied industries, better social relations.

The alpha and omega of Soviet economic strategy is putting the best modern hardware and technology at the service of man. We are convinced that, given a

well-considered and balanced implementation of this policy in the socialist society, there will be no major spontaneous movements of manpower, let alone social tensions.

L.E. Kunelsky. Our social system makes it possible to keep raising labour productivity without limits, to economise on labour, and still maintain full employment because production is not being developed for the profit of a limited circle of persons, but for the steady raising of the whole people's well-being.

There are no limits here of any kind: new wants—both material and spiritual—are being generated all the time, and since their satisfaction is not being impeded by any objective barriers in the form of the interests of capital and the exploiter classes, a job will be found for everyone to apply his energies and capacities. Scientific and technical progress, a mighty instrument for attaining the required goals, is similarly boundless. In other words, under socialism the objective possibility of everyone doing socially useful work springs from the combination of boundless growth of the working people's wants and boundless scientific and technical progress.

There is no reason for us to maintain a high level of employment artificially, because the requirements in labour and the potentialities of its useful application under socialism are virtually inexhaustible. On the contrary, we seek to economise on labour in every possible way. In the USSR, for instance, wage increments are offered for the acquisition of multiple skills, extension of the area of operation, operation of several machine-tools, and so on. Advanced labour organisation methods are being ever more widely used to induce the work collective to shed redundant manpower, but here the reserves are still considerable, and we are saying this for all to hear: here and there the economic mechanism fails to work as it should, here and there redundant manpower is still kept by aging plant and machinery. So we are seeking ways for an in-depth restructuring of economic management, and have pilot schemes going by way of experiment in getting enterprises to fulfil assignments with a minimum of personnel.

A few years ago there was a broad response from the Soviet public to what was called the Shchyokin method, an attempt to organise production on new lines at a combine near Moscow through a multiple-trades arrangement, and similar experiments were also staged in the laying of gas pipelines and in other industries. In the tenth five-year period alone, 6 million workers were 'released' from Soviet industry, and 3 million from 1980 to 1984, but the 'release' is purely tentative, because they move from one workplace to another, from an aging to a more modern one, so that there is no question at all of any unemployment.

Let me add that reactionary bourgeois economists and politicians try to explain the sharp growth of unemployment in the capitalist world today by insisting that it is 'structural'. They suggest that along with the mass of low-skilled labour ousted by automation from production, the labour market offers vacancies for higher-skilled trades, such as servicing fifth generation computers. They also refer to what is known as technological unemployment, i.e., the general reduction in the number of jobs requiring unskilled labour. Both these types of unemployment, they say, are the 'inevitable' costs of economic and technical progress, which socialism cannot avoid either. Indeed, they assert that the Soviet government's measures to mechanise and automate production have also gradually produced unemployment in our country and the formation of a reserve labour army.²

Let us note that this charge is the very opposite of the 'latent unemployment' charge, but bourgeois Sovietologists have never been famous for wincing at the contradictions in their own constructs. It is absurd to talk about some technological unemployment in the USSR. What we do have is a shortage of personnel in some ultra-modern fields, but the socialist society has extensive potentialities for taking account of the existing requirements for various occupations on a state-wide scale,

but also for arranging for their training accordingly. That is what we have been actively doing, offering knowledge about the latest advances in microelectronics, informatics and robotics, not only to young people about to enter production, but also to experienced engineers and managers. As for some surplus of unskilled labour-power, any personnel department will tell you how hard it is to find an office cleaner, a hospital attendant, a general worker or a boiler-man.

A.F. Kamenev. Generally speaking, there is now hardly any problem in providing jobs for those who are made redundant by the introduction of new hardware and technology. Indeed, we have a palpable shortage of manpower, and while the 'vacuum' is being filled, we have enough time to work out a conception for the future.

But, metaphorically speaking, Monday starts on Saturday, wouldn't you say?

L.E. Kunelsky. It has already started. Just now workplaces in the USSR are being rationalised and certified, which means bringing in more order and simultaneously 'taking stock', without which no solid strategy for the future can be worked out: after all, the first thing to do is to find out exactly what we have at our disposal. Special competent commissions made up of members of management, trade unions and medical specialists assess every workplace from the standpoint of working conditions, productivity and the skill standards required, in order to certify the workplace as being economically warranted, necessary, up to the required labour hygiene standards and so worth keeping. Very often the decision is a different one: the workplace is to be wound up or remodelled, i.e., additional funds are to be put in so as to change the character of labour and to raise labour productivity, provide greater safety, and so on. This kind of 'stock taking' helps to give a more precise idea of the number of truly necessary workplaces and so to put the labour-resources balance on a solid basis. The certification was first carried out at engineering enterprises in Moscow, Leningrad and Kuibyshev and Dnepropetrovsk regions. A special decision was taken by the CPSU Central Committee recommending that such a certification should be carried out throughout the Soviet Union during the 12th five-year plan period under the direction of the State Planning Committee and our own committee.

What happens to the manpower made redundant in this process?

L.E. Kunelsky. As I have already said, the "redundancy" is purely tentative. Just now, for instance, entire sections at many enterprises are left without manpower because young people with a ten-year education are unwilling to do arduous manual labour. When such a section is automated, a given number of workers is made tentatively redundant, but in actual fact we are merely making good the labour-resources deficit either at the enterprise itself or elsewhere. Since there is a shortage of manpower almost everywhere, any person made redundant as a result of staff cuts is offered a wide range of jobs by the management.

A few words about the wide network of job-placement offices. These were first opened in the early 1960s, and some bourgeois Sovietologists suggested that they were a signal of growing "technological" unemployment in the USSR, so that labour exchanges had to be set up to register the unemployed and to help them to find jobs.³

Only someone who has a ridiculous notion of the actual problems of employment under socialism or a deliberate liar can claim that the job-placement offices are connected with "technological" or any other form of unemployment. The establishment of such offices is not evidence of unemployment but, on the contrary, of an urge on the part of the state to ease the labour shortage by helping those who want to switch jobs do so *faster*.

Such offices operate in all the large and medium-size cities and in many smaller

populated localities. They have all the information of manpower requirements, and provide it to applicants free of charge, the cost of the service being defrayed by the enterprise in demand of manpower. Every applicant is offered a choice of jobs, with an eye to his or her training, place of residence, expected wages, and so on. Barring some kind of exceptional demands, applicants spend little time to find a suitable job. Experience shows that these offices help to reduce job-switching time by an average of 8-12 days, and on the scale of the whole country this means adding something to the actual time worked.

Some working people join organised groups to work at construction sites, especially in the eastern parts of the country, where various benefits, such as higher wages and longer holidays, are offered. Such forms of organised recruitment of manpower also help to control the social effects of the technical restructuring of production.

¹ See *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (New Edition) Draft*, Moscow, 1985, p. 38.

² See A. Abouchar, *Economic Evaluation of Soviet Socialism*, New York, 1979, pp. 11-12; Alec Nove, *Political Economy and Soviet Socialism*, London, 1979, pp. 162-163; M. Moskoff, "Part-Time Employment in the Soviet Union", *Soviet Studies*, Vol. XXXIV, April, 1982, p. 270.

³ See *Industrial Labour in the USSR*, New York, 1979, p. X.

Local Organs of Power At Work

Jobs May Be Redundant, People—Never

THIRTY-FOUR-year-old Klaus Kaszmarek works at a feed factory in the small town of Westeregein in Stassfurt district near Magdeburg. In recent years, he has twice changed jobs, and feels that that is normal. First he was a tractor driver, and then a metal-worker in a new section set up to fabricate the means of rationalisation. It was set up, among other reasons, in order to make technical improvements in production and to release some of the workers in basic production for other purposes, namely, to improve supplies on the domestic market¹ by starting the production of fruit juices and concentrates. There is a large demand for juices in the GDR. Kaczmarek liked his new job and was vigorously working on it. He then began to operate one of the presses whose potentialities he had by then got to know very well and which he could use to the full. His earlier job in the rationalisation section was taken over by another worker.

The new production potentialities naturally enabled the factory to increase its output. Kaczmarek is, of course, aware not only of the benefits the restructuring has yielded for the enterprise and the national economy as a whole: he himself has also gained. First, he now has a higher skill rating and so his wages are higher accordingly. Second, his work became more interesting as he saw more clearly the technical links within his production. Nor does he feel that he has reached the top, and regards his job as merely a springboard to new knowledge and experience. Third, the factory has helped him to build his own house in Westeregein, and that is a sure sign that he has decided to settle down in the place. It also means an addition to the body of hard-core workers, which are the mainstay of production, and whose energy and inventiveness keeps it going.

That story is no exception; many others in Westeregein think and act similarly. Thirty-two-year-old Jürgen Doebber, a farming-machine engineer, was appointed technical superintendent at the feed factory immediately upon graduating from his institute. He showed an interest in rationalising production and began to make

improvements on the above-mentioned juice-production line. He is now in charge of it. Doeber believes that the enterprise has made much headway because more and more of its workers value it as a place where one can earn good money, but also creatively apply one's capabilities and get on. That is what gives one a sense of accomplishment.

Here is yet another example of a working class career. Horst Biernoth was first a driver and a tractor-operator at the agricultural cooperatives near Westeregeln; he then took charge of the transport department at the feed factory. He also helped to arrange the production of juices. He then stayed on at the factory as shift head, which meant more responsibility, and also more satisfaction.

These three workers were vigorously involved in rationalisation and so advanced in their careers. However, production does not change fast enough for everyone to be able to get interesting jobs all at once. What about those whose job has been 'devoured' by rationalisation and who were forced to shift 'horizontally'?

Günter Meier, director of the combine of which the feed factory is a part, says: "For one thing, we have a good talk with each of these workers and try to explain the benefits rationalisation has in store for the society as a whole. Each was given enough time to make a mental adaptation to the change. No one was left jobless, because the infeasible principle of socialist rationalisation is that jobs can be redundant, but people—never."

This kind of approach is highly important for the GDR, which has no surplus manpower, and rationalisation helps to tap the labour reserves, including those at one's own enterprise. That, in turn, helps further to modernise the plant, to start more modern shops, and so again discover labour reserves.

An example for the whole republic was set by the petrochemical combine at Schwedt, where various measures helped to release 2,000 workers for use in new production operations. The retraining was painless because the party and the trade union organisations and the management were perfectly aware not only of the technical and economic aspects of the matter, but also of the equally important human aspect.

Capitalist rationalisation ignores the social aspects of the problem, for profit and nothing but profit is the yardstick of success: the redundant workers are ejected into the street without more ado. Schwedt provides a good example of the fundamental distinctions of rationalisation under socialism, for here there is an awareness of the importance of convincing—in good time—the person whose job is made superfluous by technical progress so as to win his consent for the job switch in the wider social interest. That is taken into account at the combine and everything is done in advance to prepare those concerned for new jobs.

The Political Bureau of the SED CC has recommended the Schwedt combine as an example to be widely followed in successfully blending the economic and social policy of the party and the state and so advancing the growth of the GDR's economic strength.

The recommendation was treated with a sense of responsibility at Stassfurt: the technical measures serving to raise labour productivity and reduce the number of workplaces are planned well in advance so as to give time to discuss everything thoroughly and without haste, and to solve all the emergent human problems.

Werner Behrend, a member of the district council on labour matters, says: "The final decision on any transfer is taken only after everyone whom it concerns has understood the meaning of what is being done and accepts it, and when all the production and social matters involved in the transfer have been stipulated."

Chairman of the district council Rudi Grams says: "Our district's five-year plan for 1981-1985 provided for a growth of net product by 52 per cent, with the same number of workers. It could be fulfilled only if labour productivity went up and fixed assets

were put to better use. That called for a restructuring of production and a switch of many people to new workplaces."

By the end of 1984, such transfers had already affected a total of 1,700 persons, of whom 1,300 switched jobs within the enterprise itself. Where did they go to? Most of them—305—were appointed to departments turning out various attachments and contrivances helping to improve the equipment; 234 persons operate newly installed hardware at Stassfurt enterprises; 126 work in preproduction departments; and 122 are engaged in the installation of electronic devices and robots.

Roughly a quarter of them (322) have been transferred to other shops so as to improve the running of modern highly productive machines.

Finally, 191 persons were transferred to shops set up under a SED decision to produce consumer goods: fruit juices, household plumbing fixtures, boilers, aerials, camping equipment, and so on.

The Stassfurt district added many of its own features to the Schwedt combine's initiative. Rudi Grams explains: "We were clearly aware of the high demands made by the party's new economic strategy on the district organs of power. After all, the task of intensifying production is not limited to development on the shopfloor. It also affects life in the cities and communities, transit, the services, merchandising and supply. That is why rationalisation, both at the centrally-run enterprises and in the district's public utilities should, we feel, be carried out in a concerted way, so as best to secure high economic growth, the basis of any social progress."

Wolfgang Grötschel, chairman of the district planning committee and a member of the SED district committee secretariat, adds: "When conducting the party's line, the local organs of power, on the one hand, create favourable conditions for the work of enterprise collectives, and on the other, seek to improve in a balanced manner the living and working conditions of the population, erect housing (the main element of the SED's social policy) and develop agricultural production."

The local council helps to fulfil factory rationalisation programmes and to give them as much scope as to make it possible to use some of the redundant workers elsewhere, in places where the demand for manpower is especially great, with no local possibilities of meeting it, as in the agrarian sector, in the services, or on the railways.

The council began by specifying the district's requirements in manpower. These data, with a precise statement of skills and occupations, expected place of work, and deadlines for filling vacancies were circulated to the Stassfurt enterprises, an approach that makes it possible to place people according to their occupation while taking care of the social interest. Here is one example. Werner Cuno was lately a transport worker at an enterprise mining potassium and rock-salt, but had once trained as a shoemaker, and shoemakers are scarce in the villages round Stassfurt. When his workplace was up for reduction, a commission consisting of representatives of the plant, the district council, the trades chamber and social organisations had an interview with Cuno and advised him to open a shoeshop in the rural community of Unseburg. All the social security matters were clarified, and a credit was arranged for the start-up. Cuno took the good advice, took out a permit to ply the shoetrade, and equipped a shoeshop with the support of the state agencies. It is now very popular, and shoe-mending is done on the spot.

As a rule, people are more willing to take up other jobs when the social meaning of the move is clearly explained to them. So, on the council's initiative or through its mediation, 103 persons have moved into agriculture, 95 on the railways, 24 into private or cooperated trades, and 34 into the services; 111 have been sent to work at the Stassfurt 'Friendship School', where about 900 young people from Mozambique are being educated and trained in various skills. It is the district's contribution to the cause of international solidarity.

The attention of the Communists and the local organs of power is focused on man

with his social and personal interests. Our republic's development has been stable and dynamic precisely because the policy of the socialist state starts from the well-being of the people.

Günter Fleischmann,
GDR journalist

¹ The Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) seeks, wherever possible, to have enterprises not working directly for the domestic market start the production of consumer goods.—Ed.

What Trade Union Activists Say Guided by the Principles of Socialist Humanism

A staff member of the *WMR* went to some Budapest enterprises to canvass trade union opinion on the spot concerning the social aspects of applying scientific and technical achievements to production.

THE shipbuilding and cranebuilding works in Budapest is a large enterprise with a workforce of 8,000. It turns out tugs, barges, sailing ships, floating and stationary port cranes and containers. It consists of several shops, three of which are situated outside the city limits. Laszlo Balla, secretary of the trade union committee for organisational matters, says:

"The reconstruction of the Budapest part of the works began in 1978 under a project submitted by Leningrad specialists, and it is state-of-the-art, when, compared with similar other enterprises in Europe. Since the modernisation was undertaken in the context of the overall specialisation of shipbuilding in the countries which are members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), we obtained a credit from the International Investment Bank."

Did the reconstruction entail the winding up of workplaces?

That is the wrong way to formulate the question. The collective began the reconstruction mainly because of the labour shortage. The shortage of personnel is a constraint on the further development of production.

Why is there such a shortage of shipbuilders here? Shipbuilding in the capitalist states of Europe is, after all, in a state of deep stagnation or even recession, and workers there are being sacked in batches. . . .

The outlook in shipbuilding and cranebuilding in the CMEA countries generally, and in Hungary in particular, is quite different. If our combine now had 1,000 workers more, we would even then have hardly met the demand for our products. Our orderbook is not only full all the way up to the year 2000, but we have had to refuse some orders from the Soviet Union, our chief customer.

Now about the 'scarcity' of shipbuilders. You see, next to mining, shipbuilding is physically the most arduous form of production, and it is not very attractive for someone who can afford to choose. It is true that we have already done much to lighten the work: in the past, for instance, the ship's hull was assembled in the open air, and now there is a roof above. The arduous manual operations have been reduced from 80 to 40 per cent in the overall process. We have even dropped from the

collective agreement some of the points on the improvement of working conditions as already being a past stage. Nevertheless, it is still not easy to recruit skilled young workers.

For the same reason, there is a high personnel turnover: in the past three years alone, almost 1,000 have left, and that is a fifth of all those working in the Budapest shops. It is hardly realistic to expect someone to come in and fill the gap, so technical reconstruction is the only way out.

What consequences has reconstruction for the workers?

Iozsef Karlbauer, chairman of the trade union committee of the Budapest section of the works, and S. Kalman, chief shop-steward,¹ explained:

"It calls for additional knowledge, the learning of allied skills, and an ability to handle new hardware, notably computers. Progressive technology requires the worker to be more than a welder or an assembly man; he must have an idea of the whole production process from beginning to end. A total of roughly 800-1,000 persons have either been retrained or have acquired higher skills at the plant."

How is retraining arranged, who pays for it and how do the workers regard it?

Chief shop-steward Laszlo Farkas replies:

"The works has appropriated for these purposes roughly 9-10 million forints (including the cost of the production which the worker could have turned out in the time he spends at the retraining courses, for the retraining partially proceeds during the working hours). Some are quite willing to learn, but many have to be persuaded. After all, everyone has a house and a car, and opportunities for good extra earnings after working hours. That is why, to be quite honest, there is no sense of special enthusiasm, for all have present skill training and that on a fairly high level."

The conversation was joined by shop-steward Laszlo Gasdik:

"All sorts of complications may arise. I myself, for instance, am a repair worker. In our shop we have many painters, metal-workers and so on. Some have agreed to retrain in order to master yet another trade at the expense of the state, and then move into the service sphere. Is that bad? It is bad for the works, but one could say that the state is not at a loss in any way: the demand for everyday services has been growing steadily."

What is your role as trade union activists in the restructuring process?

Shop-steward Istvan Czepin: "In accordance with the labour legislation in force in Hungary, any transfer to another job requires the endorsement of the trade union organisation. We also have the rule that if earnings temporarily decline in the new job, the worker should not lose any wages. He is given a period of time to adapt to the new conditions."

Still, conflicts with the management cannot be altogether ruled out.

Laszlo Gazdik:

"Difficulties arise, for instance, when someone is transferred from the old and smoothly working collective into a new one where the people still have to adjust to each other, and earnings are on the whole lower. In such cases, workers frequently object, and then it is up to the shop-steward to sort things out and sometimes to argue with the management in defence of their interests."

Have you, in fact, had any cases when someone has been left without a job?

Laszlo Balla: "Yes, it happened once in 1983, and not because of technical reconstruction, but because the conditions on the world container market had

worsened. Instead of the usual 3,000-4,000 containers, we managed to sell only 1,500 that year, when some developing countries started turning out containers. Some 150 workers at our branch in Vacz found themselves idle. A part of the operations previously performed in other sections were transferred to them, but that took care of only about 60 per cent, so that a temporary solution had to be found for the others: they were bused 30 kilometres to another branch making ship tugs. The works took care of the transport costs, and the output norms were lowered for a period of three months because the workers were not used to them. The trade union committee took care of the dressing rooms, provided good meals, etc."

How much economic sense did that make?

Laszlo Balla: "Well, it did cost the enterprise some money, if only because two hours of the six-hour working day were spent travelling. The works decided to have this arrangement mainly for social reasons, but also because the tugs are an important export item. That was, I repeat, a temporary solution until the marketing of containers was restored."

* * *

At the Printed Silk Combine in Budapest, rationalisation involves not so much technical equipment as the organisation of production in new lines. It was decided to merge two mills (there was not enough manpower for both) and to arrange things so as to raise productivity and so boost output. Some 400 of the 1,500 employees were to be transferred to new jobs.

Trade union activist Lajosne Racz says:

"When it became clear that one of the mills was to be closed down and its workers used elsewhere, a meeting of shop-stewards was held. They decided that the first thing that needed to be done was to find out how many persons and what kind of trades were to be affected. Representatives of the trade union, the party organisation and the combine personnel department set up special commissions in order to ease, as far as possible, the difficulties of transfer for everyone and to prevent it from becoming an unpleasant shock. The task was not too difficult because the two mills had kindred production."

But even if one knows the job as such, it still takes time to work out new reflexes, skills and something like automatic gestures. The shop-stewards persuaded everyone concerned that at the new place they would have good working conditions, and that they would be well established in the other collective as well.

Why did some not want to be transferred?

Iozsefne Sebesttyen: "They were accustomed to the old place, for some of them had worked there for 30 or 40 years."

How did you manage to break the psychological barrier?

Lajosne Racz: "In personal interviews, the commission offered each woman a choice of two or three jobs. The transfers were to be effected in June, but we began to train the printers who were to be transferred in December of the previous year."

Iozsefne Sebesttyen: "The trade union arranged visits to the new shops and teams to give an idea of how things stood well in advance."

Iozsefne Czina: "The shop collectives were looking forward to the arrival of the new workers and the atmosphere there turned out to be very favourable. Every new

worker was given a tutor with enough production experience to help her get the hang of things."

How were the money matters settled?

"In accordance with the law, anyone who was transferred to the new job retains all his social rights and privileges, and continued seniority. If time wages were paid in both places, only the size of the bonus can be different. That is why in the first three months, the mill paid a subsidy for the bonus. Those who had to be retrained were paid average wages up to the old level for a period of six months."

* * *

Sandor Szilagyi, deputy director of Hungary's Trade Union Research Institute, added to what the trade union activists had told us.

In 1983, Hungary's Council of Ministers decided to pay a cash compensation to those whom management has to transfer to other work for reasons of production. Does it mean that such transfers are fairly massive?

Yes, the fact is that production is becoming ever more efficient, and for various reasons the structure of our national economy tends to change. This is connected, first of all, with the general situation in the CMEA countries and the state of the world market. The production of some goods has to be discontinued and new products turned out, which means inevitable changes of profile, the merger and even the shutdown of some shops or enterprises, and so, inevitably, the transfer of manpower and its retraining.

The Hungarian trade unions believe that the time to take care of job placement and retraining is not when the restructuring is fully under way, but well in advance. We also know that change of workplace tends to produce some stress for those involved, and if the transfer is not on one's own initiative, there may even be a sense of grievance. It is not always possible to avoid these emotional moments, but the material aspect can always be settled most satisfactorily so that there is fairness in this area at least. That is why a new compensation law was passed on the initiative of the trade unions. It provides that anyone transferred to a new place because of the requirements of production is to receive average wages at the old place of work for a given period (depending on how complicated the retraining is; in some cases it could last for one or two years).

In Hungary this general principle applies: a person may be transferred to another place only with his consent. If you object, you turn first to the labour grievances commission and then, if you insist, apply to a court (free of charge). If the trade union is on your side and thinks that you are right, its law service will provide counsel. In extreme cases the trade union even has the right to veto a management decision which it considers to be wrong, and then the management cannot do anything until there is a ruling by the court.

The trade union sees to it that old people, sick people, those who have many children, or people who are restless and whom the management finds 'inconvenient' should not be dismissed on the pretext of a reduction in the number of workplaces.

Do the rationalisation of production and the consequent collective transfers of working people produce any conflicts? If they do, how are these settled?

I recall one such case at the Gyorg carriage-building works: it was reported in the

press and the situation there was examined by party organs. Several hundred jobs (out of a total of almost 10,000) were wound up on the management's initiative, with everyone up for transfer being offered a place at the plant. About 100 workers refused to be transferred, and these were mainly office workers who did not want to do manual work. The trade union committee made a thorough examination of the matter and agreed to the dismissal, but added in its ruling that the management had made a mistake: shortly before the reorganisation, it had taken on an excessive number of clerical workers, and so the mistake had to be corrected in a very unpleasant way. Because all managers of social production in Hungary are regularly endorsed by the collective, such an assessment by the trade union committee carries a lot of weight.

The shop-stewards have said that the state takes care of the costs of retraining. How is it organised?

The mechanism of the manpower transfer is based on the fact that the retraining is of interest above all to the enterprise getting the new labour. The management of an economic unit releasing manpower has to give due notice of this to the local council, while the actual costs of retraining are borne by the enterprise to which the workers are being transferred. The local council later includes this amount into the tax the enterprise has to pay into the state budget, so no one is worse off.

What is the ratio of job-seekers to available workplaces?

There are no official statistics of this kind. The enterprises short of manpower rarely act through intermediaries, which is why the job placement offices do not have all the data. But according to them, there are roughly 10 openings for every applicant, and according to the newspapers which carry notices of vacancies, the ratio is even higher: 20 to 1 or even 30 to 1. One should also bear in mind that people looking around for jobs already have one, merely wishing to make some improvements, such as work closer to home, do something else, have higher wages, etc.

Could the massive transfer to high technology subsequently alter the situation and give the employment problem a new twist?

Very much is now being done in Hungary to develop microelectronics and robotisation, but the era of this progressive technology is only just dawning in some industries. Shall we have to face more acute social problems when automation gets into its stride? I am sure that we shall not. First, not very long ago, when robots and flexible production systems were few, the industrialised capitalist countries had—qualitatively speaking—the same kind of production apparatus that Hungary now has. Did they not, at that time, have any unemployment? They did, indeed. And we do not. That alone warrants that as we advance along our own, socialist way, we shall be able to provide jobs for all our citizens even under the new technology. Second, there are many outstanding economic problems in Hungary, and in the immediate period we face some major tasks, such as providing everyone, young people especially, with modern housing, improving the highway network, modernising the telephone system, paying more attention to environment protection, and so on. The people's requirements keep growing. There is so much to do that there can be no question of unemployment. At present, even the question of a further reduction in the working week is not being considered. No matter how much manpower the 'clever' machines may make redundant, our planned economic system will find place

for everyone to apply his or her capabilities for the benefit of the society as a whole.

* * *

Technical progress alters the destinies of men: of dozens at a Budapest factory, of hundreds in a small German town, and of millions in the sprawling Soviet Union. Some move to another workplace, others even move to another town, but behind such changes under socialism there is no human tragedy, no loss of faith in oneself and in the future, as it happens to the men and women who lose their jobs in the capitalist world. The social certitude of the working people in the new society is rooted in their firm conviction that in it human beings and their welfare is the main thing under any kind of technical revolution!

¹ In accordance with the rules, trade union groups (from 5 to 50 persons) elect shop-stewards, who, in turn, elect the chief shop-steward (and his deputy) of the primary trade union organisation which brings together several trade union groups.—*Ed.*

Multilateral Effect of Socialist Integration

Mystavyn Pelzhe — MPRP CC member,
Deputy Chairman, Council of Ministers
Mongolia's Permanent Representative in CMEA

THE world socialist system has now been in existence and fruitfully developing for more than three and a half decades. Its formation marked the emergence of a historically new type of international economic relations based on the principles of respect for state sovereignty, independence and national interests, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, complete equality, mutual advantage and comradely mutual assistance.

The relations between the socialist countries are such because of the specifics of the international, socialist division of labour, and the fraternal countries' kindred economic and social system. All of this creates favourable potentialities for extending and deepening their economic cooperation, so bearing out the predictions of the founders of scientific communism, who stressed that national and international means of production could be harmoniously coordinated only under socialism.

That is made abundantly clear by the economic and social development of the ten members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), which have joined efforts to speed up the progress of the community as a whole and of each of its individual members. The ways and means for doing so are most explicitly set out in the Comprehensive Programme for Further Deepening and Improving Cooperation and Developing Socialist Economic Integration, which was adopted in 1971.

Since then, the CMEA countries have relied on the advantages of the socialist economic system and their all-round and mutually advantageous cooperation in substantially consolidating their economic, scientific and technical potential, fulfilling major social programmes, and ensuring a marked growth of the people's well-being, and development of science, education, culture, public health, and social security. They have been developing at a dynamic rate: over the past fifteen years, they have doubled their industrial output, while the leading capitalist countries have increased theirs by just over a third.

The CMEA Economic Summit in 1984 marked a major stride forward in the fraternal countries' policy coordination, and further extension of the scale, and enhancement of the efficiency of their cooperation. It outlined the tasks which spring

from the changing internal and external conditions and the switching of their economies to the intensive way of development, to raise economic efficiency, mainly by applying the latest scientific and technical achievements, perfecting the structure of social production, and making better use of all their resources.

The key role here belongs to the Comprehensive Programme of the Scientific and Technological Progress of the CMEA Member-Countries until the Year 2000, which was adopted at the end of last year by the 41st (extraordinary) session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Its realisation will be a major contribution to accelerating the fraternal countries' economic and social development, and strengthening their unity and cohesion, and this is fully in line with their common policy concerted at meetings of their highest leaders.

Mongolia is also taking an active part in fulfilling this programme. The common tasks of cooperation and agreed measures are taken into account in working out the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of Mongolia from 1986 to 1990, a document to be adopted by the 19th Congress of the MPRP in May of this year. Our party believes that our society's continued progress is connected with a deepening of the integration and cooperation of the CMEA countries.

The policy of the USSR, the biggest state in the community, formulated in the light of socialist internationalism, is of fundamental significance for the successful development of all-round ties. The draft of the new edition of the CPSU Programme says that the CPSU will actively participate in the joint work of the fraternal parties to coordinate their economic policies, improve the mechanism of their economic cooperation and evolve new forms of cooperation, deepen specialisation in production and coproduction, coordinate plans, exchange advanced experience, and develop direct links between associations and enterprises. It will help to enhance the role of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and broaden economic, scientific and technical cooperation on the basis of bilateral and multilateral programmes. Accordingly, one can expect the relations of fraternal solidarity between our two countries to continue fruitfully to develop in the future as well.

Cooperation within the CMEA framework is having a beneficial effect on all its segments. It is important to note that the community's stable economic and social progress goes hand in hand with faster all-round development of states which inherited a backward material, technical and social base from the past. They are brought closer to their economically more developed partners in terms of national income and industrial output per head, labour productivity and real incomes, and so on. In these and many other respects, the European CMEA countries have already attained a rough equality, although there had earlier been a very wide gap between them.

Developments have been running in a similar direction in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Cuba and the Mongolian People's Republic. They still lag behind the other members of the community, but are rapidly advancing: over the past two decades, their average annual economic growth rates have been higher than those of the other fraternal countries. The CMEA Economic Summit designated the further acceleration of this process as a most important task of the present stage.

This alignment of development levels is not a manifestation of some kind of 'charity' on the part of the more solidly developed partners, but is the outcome of the common class positions of the working people carrying on a struggle for common socialist goals. The diverse cooperation within the CMEA framework differs fundamentally from the relations between the imperialist powers and the less developed countries, especially the smaller ones, relations which are based on a policy of enslavement and plunder. New forms of exploitation, now known as neocolonialism, are aimed to keep these countries within the capitalist system as the industrial powers' agrarian and raw-material appendages. While imperialist

economic aggression has produced a vast and inexorably mounting debt and impoverishment for the Third World nations, and a yawning gulf between rich and poor, economic mutual assistance within the socialist community has acted as a powerful accelerator of development in every sphere of economic and cultural life.

The history of the Mongolian People's Republic provides a visual example.

The very notion of aligning Mongolia's economic development level with that of its European partners in CMEA testifies to the truly colossal progress which has taken place in our society in the years of the people's power.

Highly brutal, precapitalist forms of exploitation of the people by local feudal lords and foreign merchant's and usurer's capital prevailed in the country until the 1921 Revolution. It is perfectly obvious that had Mongolia gone along the capitalist way of development, it would have eventually had to face even harsher political and economic enslavement and perpetuated backwardness, with the feudal exploitation, at best, being replaced by capitalist exploitation.

Our people opted for the non-capitalist way, and within the lifetime of a single generation the MPRP-led country traversed an entire epoch, which turned it from a feudal into a agrarian-industrial socialist country. The Soviet Union's internationalist assistance was the key factor which helped our country to solve that historic problem.

Following our country's entry into the CMEA in 1962, its cooperation with the USSR and the other fraternal countries entered upon a new stage. Socialist economic integration helped to concentrate efforts and funds on the priority development of industries for which Mongolia has the best conditions, to tackle the problems of shaping a modern national-economic complex, and to make extensive use of scientific and technical achievements.

With an eye to our country's specific features, the CMEA has put through a number of consistent measures to accelerate the growth of our economy and to make it more efficient, among them joint construction and operation of industrial and other national-economic facilities, assistance in starting rated capacities at enterprises, extension of credits on easy terms, and help in bringing out reserves and enlarging the working of mineral and raw-material resources. Much is being done to develop science and to speed up scientific and technical progress and train national personnel. Incentive foreign-trade prices are fixed for the farm and manufactured products we export, specialists dispatched to our republic are offered higher wage-rates, and so on. All of this has a great impact on its economic development.

Mongolia's national-income growth has gone up from 1.1 per cent a year before 1960 to 4.8 per cent in the subsequent period, and even higher in the five-year period which is now drawing to a close. Over the past 25 years, our aggregate social product has grown at an average of 6.0 per cent a year, and industrial output, by 10.1 per cent.

More than 750 national-economic projects have been started in our country with our CMEA partners' technical and economic assistance, including almost 700 of these, with the Soviet Union's assistance. This promotes radical changes in the sectoral structure of the economy, which is increasingly industrialised. Industry, building, transportation and communications have been developing apace. Such newly-built industries as fuel, energy, mining, metal-working, the light and food industry, forestry and wood-working, structural materials and house-building, are being consolidated. Industry now accounts for 45 per cent of the aggregate social product, and that is a great achievement for a Mongolia that has been traditionally agrarian.

Considerable shifts have taken place in the territorial location of the productive forces. Not long ago, Ulan Bator, our capital, was the country's sole industrial centre. The central, eastern and north-western regions of the country have been rapidly developing over the past few years. The Darkhan and the Erdenet industrial regions have been built up, and industrial centres are taking shape at Baganur and Choibalsan.

Agriculture, still the leading sector of our economy, has developed successfully. Its material and technical facilities have been consolidated. Greater production and procurement of feedstuffs, erection of farm buildings and irrigation of pasture lands are being given most attention. A totally new sector—field cropping—has been built up, and now the country's requirements in food grains, potatoes and vegetables are being satisfied entirely from our own production.

There is extensive introduction into the national economy of modern scientific and technical achievements, and the technical facilities available per worker are being increased in every sector, with the result that social labour productivity is now 160 per cent up on 1960.

As the process of socialist industrialisation is deepened and the country's economic potential is built up, our external economic ties with the fraternal countries are extended, as will be seen from our foreign-trade turnover with the CMEA partners, which has multiplied seven fold over the past 20 years, with the rate of growth being much higher than that of the national income and the population.

The sustained growth of industrial production and construction of new industrial facilities has been paralleled by substantial changes in the structure of export and import. In the past, our main export items were various types of animal raw materials, such as wool, hair, hides and furs, but now they are manufactured products, among them fluorspar, tin, copper and molybdenum concentrate, leather, fur and knitted goods, woollen carpets and structural materials. Our requirements in modern machinery and equipment, the basic consumer goods, especially durables, are satisfied mainly through imports from CMEA countries, notably the Soviet Union.

Socialist Mongolia's economic achievements, the dynamic development of the basic sectors of its national economy and foreign trade are a direct contribution to raising the working people's material well-being and cultural standards. It is now ahead of many states in Asia and on other continents in a number of key indicators, such as the output of meat, wool, wheat, electric power and hard fuel per head, and also in the number of schoolchildren, students, doctors and other specialists per 10,000 of the population.

All these achievements, let me emphasise, were made possibly largely owing to the new international economic relations which rest on the foundation of Soviet-Mongolian cooperation. The MPRP believes that its task is to go on strengthening and deepening in every way the relations of friendship, international alliance and cooperation with all the countries of the socialist community.

There is a new qualitative content to the present stage of socialist economic integration, and it is expressed in the wide coordination of national-economic plans, the ever closer interpenetration and interweaving of national reproduction processes, as the fraternal countries' economies and social life are ever more closely integrated.

The stable development of inter-state property in the means of production is the most effective line of Mongolia's participation in the integration processes. The formation of international economic complexes on the basis of the use of our country's natural resources is highly important both for boosting the productive forces of our republic, which has relatively limited labour, material and financial resources of its own, and also for satisfying some of its partners' requirements in some types of mineral raw materials.

This form of mutually advantageous cooperation has already been developed on a fairly large scale. Mongolian-Soviet economic associations—the Ulan Bator Railway, and the Mongol Sovtsvetmet for the exploration, extraction and concentration of some minerals—have already proved their worth. Asia's largest mining and concentration combine, the Mongol-Soviet Erdenet project, has been built on the basis of our copper and molybdenum deposits. Mongol-Bulgar Metal and Mongol-

Czechoslovak Metal operate on similar principles. Let us note that five of CMEA's twelve joint enterprises are located on our territory.

Joint facilities promote the rapid rise of our republic's productive forces and their rational location. They help to increase Mongolia's export resources and so also its import potentialities, and to improve the supply of producer goods to some sectors of our economy, agriculture in the first place.

That is one aspect of the matter. But there is another one of equal importance. It is that international labour collectives of workers and specialists are formed at these joint enterprises, so helping us to introduce on a broad scale advanced managerial techniques and organisation schemes into our production.

Under the scientific and technical revolution, when there is a growing need to speed the development of high technology and start the rapid and efficient output of new products, there is also an ever greater need to set up such joint facilities in industry to process farm produce, in transportation and building.

Modern cities and townships with their houses of culture, schools, medical institutions and developed transit and communication systems spring up close to the new industrial complexes, so raising the people's material well-being and cultural standards.

The shaping of an optimal national-economic complex in the republic has become the key line of integration in the present conditions, for it will help further to accelerate economic and social progress. When formulating the relevant strategy, we reckon with some of the specific features which determine the present situation in Mongolia. First, despite the high rate of development in the period of the people's power, and especially in the recent period, the existing economic structure still falls short of ensuring the required balanced upswing of the economy. Second, the country's natural resources have not yet been adequately explored. More than 500 mineral deposits have on the whole been proved to exist on its territory, but only a few of them have been explored in detail and approved for industrial working, so that the immediate prospects for enlarging the mineral and raw-material base are not entirely clear. Third, the rapid growth of the population, which could go on until the end of the century, will require a considerable increase in output. It is all the more necessary, therefore, to have a timely and complex solution to the key economic and social problems with the utmost use of internal and external factors.

We shall strive to reckon even more fully with the character of the international socialist division of labour, the requirements of our own country and those of all the other members of the community, and to develop the sectors and types of production for which our republic offers the best natural and climatic conditions. Much importance attaches, in this context, to the Long-Term Programme for the Development of Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation Between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Mongolian People's Republic for the Period Until the Year 2000, which was recently signed in Moscow. Similar programmes have been signed with other community countries. 'These external economic measures present good prospects for developing integration processes between Mongolia and the other fraternal countries in the next few years and over the longer term,' says Jambyn Batmunkh, General Secretary of the MPRP CC, and Chairman of the Presidium of Mongolia's Peoples's Great Khural.¹

Special attention is to be given to building up industrial capacities, concentrating resources and funds on the faster development of industries ensuring broad and complex working of natural resources, and on increasing the export of manufactures.

Considerable attention is being given in the republic to extending cooperation for the purpose of intensifying agriculture. The agreements reached with our socialist partners will help us solve the problem of consistently building up its material and technical facilities, create new modern agricultural installations, make more rational

use of water resources, and apply progressive technologies in livestock breeding and cropping. All these matters were reflected in concrete terms in the Goal-Oriented Programme for the Development of Agriculture and Improvement of the Food Supply for the Population in the Period Until the Year 2000, which was adopted in the summer of 1985. The wide introduction of modern achievements in bio-technology, whose accelerated development is provided for by the CMEA countries' Comprehensive Programme of the Scientific and Technological Progress, is a matter of major interest in Mongolia.

In order to go on steadily raising the people's material well-being and cultural standards—the paramount aim of socialism—joint efforts have to be made to build up the light and food industry, to increase the output of goods in high demand, and to enlarge the building of housing, schools, hospitals and roads.

Over the long term, Mongolia's economy is to develop a structure with an optimal combination of heavy and building industries with light and food industries, a highly mechanised and intensive agriculture, and a well-developed producer and social infrastructure.

Fulfilment of these tasks, which have been formulated by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, our society's guiding force, will transform our present agrarian-industrial country into an industrial-agrarian country, so helping to create the material and technical basis of socialism and to bridge the gap which now separates it from the industrialised fraternal countries.

¹ *Eleventh Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the MPRP*, Ulan Bator, 1985, p. 28 (in Mongolian).

The Lessons of the Lebanese Patriotic Resistance

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WITHIN the three-odd years that have elapsed since the Israeli invasion of our country Lebanon's patriotic resistance movement has scored important successes. The Lebanese-Israeli agreement of May 17, 1983 has been wrecked, the invading troops have withdrawn from most of the territory they captured, the US Marines and the army units of some other NATO countries have been forced to get out, and the plans of the fascist Phalangists have been firmly rebuffed. All this has been made possible by the heroic struggle of the Lebanese patriots and by their resolve to fight for the liberation and progressive development of their country, as well as thanks to the many-sided assistance from fraternal Syria, from the Soviet Union, a great friend of the Lebanese and other Arab peoples, and from all forces of freedom, peace and progress in the Arab world and all over the globe. However, much remains to be done to completely cleanse Lebanese soil of invaders.

True, the invaders still control a relatively small area in South Lebanon, always the object of Israel's greedy expansionist schemes. Israel covets not only the water resources of this area (this aspect of the problem is sufficiently well known) but also its land—the border strip which Israel claims it needs politically (to keep its inhabitants under Israeli control and to 'safeguard the security' of Upper Galilee) and economically (as a market for Israeli goods). In other words, the south of Lebanon is to serve as a sort of gateway for Tel Aviv's agents shuttling back and forth on political,

economic and military assignments.

Rising Wrath of the People

We believe that an examination of the national democratic role of the Lebanese patriotic resistance should take note of three elements: first, the development of the resistance from the viewpoint of its armed and mass political activity; second, its contribution to the rehabilitation of patriotism which is to serve as a basis for rallying the Lebanese people together in the restoration of their country as a political and geographic entity; and third, the role of the resistance at the stage of democratic change opening now, at the height of the civil war, before the national revolutionary movement.

One must begin by noting that the Lebanese patriotic resistance assumed its shape very quickly, that it has developed its forms and methods of struggle and even acquired its own traditions. Having emerged in different forms at the time Israel launched its invasion, and having taken on a distinctively defensive character during the nearly 90-day siege of Beirut, it developed into an organised and dynamic movement soon after Israeli troops entered the Lebanese capital. This transformation is no doubt explained by the activity displayed by the democratic forces, above all by the Communists, in the creation of the Lebanese Front of Patriotic Resistance and in ensuring the necessary conditions for its development in an extremely complicated situation. One must recall that at the time, a large part of the country had been overrun by the Israelis, the power structure was controlled by the Phalange Party, US and NATO troops were stationed in Beirut and their ships were in Lebanese territorial waters.

At first, the principal task was to let the invaders realise that there was little love lost between them and the Lebanese. The protest took different forms—armed operations, political action and various boycotts. The resistance demonstrated its extremely effective ability to conduct military operations, simultaneously assisting in the expansion of the mass movement which served as its base. This ensured a constant flux of fresh forces adding to the ranks both of resistance fighters and of participants in popular action.

Active in the battles fought against the invaders were patriotic Palestinians (members of different organisations) and Syrians. We pay tribute to their exploits. But the backbone of the resistance was made up of the Lebanese patriots representing a diverse spectrum of ideological and political currents—from the communists and other democratic parties to the Amal Movement, the Islamic current and numerous small, non-partisan groups whose sole actual links were with the resistance which they joined to defend the country against the foreign invasion.

The rebuff they encountered forced the Israeli troops to evacuate Beirut as quickly as ten days after they captured the city. Prior to their withdrawal they used bullhorns to call on the people of Beirut to cease fire and not to hamper the evacuation. However, more important events occurred later. The occupied communities in the Lebanese Mountains, in the south of the country and in the west of the Bekaa turned into centres of vigorous mass popular action. Many young men and women joined the fighters who mounted increasingly bold operations each day. The scope of the resistance in its armed and mass forms soon created a situation in which neither Israeli troops nor Israeli puppets (the army that operated first under Haddad and then under Lahad) could dampen the rising intensity of the struggle. Continued occupation proved impossible. The entire people rose up against the Israeli troops, rejecting foreign domination and using all means at their disposal to rebuff the invaders.

Terrorism: A Weapon of the Invaders

The genuine unity which developed among the participants of the resistance in the

course of the struggle should be singled out as one of the most important factors which helped the movement to become a truly mass, nation-wide force. Lacking an organisational structure, it was expressed in joint action in which a diversity of ways was used to mobilise the people against the invaders. Appeals were made to people's religious beliefs, to moral principles and, naturally, to patriotism—filial love of one's country and one's home, the determination not to leave them despite all difficulties, reprisals and terrorism unleashed by the Israeli invaders, and categoric refusal even to contemplate life abroad in diaspora.

One must note that the Lebanese democrats and patriots, including the Communists, had their experience of the civil war and of the battles fought to repel earlier aggressive forays by the Israeli invaders. They also had a cadre of fighters whose training for various types of military operations had begun in the late 1960s. Besides, acting in alliance with the Palestinian revolutionary forces since the time they settled in our country, Lebanon's patriots learned a great deal from the experience of the Palestinians and used these lessons successfully in the battles against the invaders. Nor can they ignore the rich revolutionary-democratic traditions of the struggle against foreign invaders or of the mass action taken against the Ottoman and French rulers, against the feudal system, against despotism and against the terrorist ways of the government's repressive agencies. No wonder that the resistance to the Israeli occupation soon developed its own traditions.

Let us dwell on two phenomena worth noting. The first concerned the transformation of the concentration camps set up by the invaders on our soil into flashpoints of resistance. The forms this resistance assumed included celebrations of national and religious holidays, clashes with the jailers, protest sit-ins, escapes, publication of manuscript periodicals, creative pursuits, etc. The second phenomenon concerned armed assault operations, when the patriotic fighters attacked and destroyed strongholds of the invading army and concentrations of enemy material. Sometimes, the participants in an operation took the courageous decision to sacrifice their lives for the liberation of their country. In other cases, too, difficult assignments involved very real and very deadly risks, but people accepted them unflinchingly.

The operation to blow up the radio station of the Israeli puppet Lahad is a case in point. This mission was accomplished by four young Communist fighters who came from different regions and different communities. Three of them died, and the fourth was captured. It is a mistake to claim that self-sacrifice is an expression of religious fanaticism. As a rule, such actions were a conscious expression of patriotic feeling and were carried out mostly by members of democratic parties, including the Communist Party.

When they refer to the Lebanese resistance, the bourgeois mass media in the West often equate its operations with terrorist acts, thus, wittingly or unwittingly, justifying the brutal reprisals of the Israeli invaders against the patriots. But since when has the defence of one's country and of its independence from encroachment by external enemies and efforts to repel foreign invaders become terrorism?

The true terrorists are those who used the latest deadly weapons to destroy and incinerate the Lebanese capital with all its inhabitants for almost three months; who blew up apartment houses and public buildings, devastated beautiful orchards and tilled fields; who executed unarmed people and subjected them to physical and mental torture—and not those who survived, emerged from under the rubble and began to hunt the beasts in human guise, cleansing Lebanese soil of the scourge of occupation. The attempts to deprive nations of their freedom and security, and mankind of peace, the imperial course of the US administration and the incessant aggressive forays of the Israeli ruling elite to the ranks of national policy—there is your terrorism, conducted at government level.

Genuine and Sham Patriotism

Another group of questions connected with the development of our patriotic resistance as it discharges its mission of liberating the country from the Israeli invaders concerns the extremely important role it has played in the restoration of Lebanese patriotism. Different currents clashed over this issue in the period which preceded the development of the resistance. Three currents acted to hamper the emergence of genuine Lebanese patriotism (although the contradictions between these currents were considerable) and to undermine the basis on which it was to be built.

The first current sprang up and grew from the concept of isolationism which divorces Lebanon from Arab history and restricts the Lebanese national identity to the characteristics of only one of the country's communities. Advocates of this concept claim that the farther Lebanon distances itself from the Arab countries and secures foreign protection, the more secure it will be. The imperialist quarters did much to promote and shape the isolationist current. The forces making up this current displayed such recklessness that they began to rely for support on the state of Israel which stood out like a sore thumb in the midst of the Arab world and whose mission was to prevent Arab national unity from taking shape and to undermine the Arab revolutionary movement. The isolationists began to solicit Israeli protection and literally invited Israel to enter Lebanon. Their aim was to seize power with the invaders' help and to decide the outcome of the civil war they themselves launched. In the final analysis, however, they were those who were dealt the heaviest blow.

The second current proceeded from an erroneous interpretation of the call for Arab unity. Holding a broader, pan-Arab view that individual states are to dissolve, as it were, even before objective and subjective conditions for the attainment of all-Arab national unity appear, its adherents do not regard or recognise Lebanon as an independent entity. Sometimes this produces a nihilistic attitude to the defence of the independence of this or that Arab country, and, needless to say, gives rise to a position that belittles the importance of the struggle for domestic revolutionary transformations. This approach manifests itself in the virtual refusal to recognise, within the context of the pan-Arab problems, the Lebanese national problem with its distinctive features. Exponents of this view (at least some of them) are convinced that the struggle for the solution of the Palestinian problem is the crux of the pan-Arab issue and therefore has priority. Having joined the Palestinian revolution, they dismissed Lebanon's cares and concerns as a 'luxury one can be without'. This course helped the isolationists to get entrenched more firmly and to defend their positions with increasing vigour.

The third current is based on Islamic slogans, whether age-old or modernised. In their interpretation of the national question, its exponents transcend even the boundaries of the Arab world and not only of individual countries, claiming that neither national nor pan-Arab problems have any meaning unless viewed as an integral part of what they believe is a greater and more comprehensive entity—that is, Islam and Moslem unity. This approach reduces the concept of 'nation' and 'people' to the framework of a 'Moslem community'.

These ideological and political currents did much to hamper the emergence of a correct concept of Lebanese patriotism—something for which the country's democratic forces led by the LCP, the party of the working class, had been fighting unswervingly. Gradually, these democratic forces emerged into a single movement which had a distinct organisational form at each stage (the National Patriotic Movement before the Israeli aggression, the National Salvation Front after it, then Democratic National Front and now the National Union Front).¹ The creation of the Lebanese Front of Patriotic Resistance to the Israeli Occupation, its increasing military and political activity and the major successes it scored played the decisive

role in rebuffing the trends described above, in supporting the efforts to promote, develop and enhance a correct understanding of Lebanese patriotism.

This resulted in an expansion of the social base of the resistance to which people from all of the country's regions and communities rallied irrespective of their political views—even those who had faced each other during the civil war. A sense of devotion to one's country was growing, and so was the desire to spot its enemies and friends and to determine the ways and means of upholding Lebanon's independence, restoring its integrity and directing its development along the path of democracy. The general concept of the fact that Lebanon is an Arab country is the most graphic expression of this shift of opinion. This fact is not to be questioned, and everything that runs counter to this principle must be rejected. The understanding was also growing that the more consistent the policy to eliminate confessionalism as the basis of the country's government and political structure, the more firmly its Arab identity is asserted and the better prospects are opening for the restoration of its integrity and democratic development.

For a Democratic Solution to the Crisis

And now about the role of the patriotic resistance in the improvement of the positions held by the forces that advance a programme of democratic change. This role has become distinctly tangible at the current, more advanced stage of the civil war, now that conditions for a national democratic solution of the Lebanese crisis have matured—a solution based on three fundamental principles, namely, reassertion of Lebanon's Arab identity, elimination of confessionalism and democratic reform in the political, economic and social spheres.

Against the background of the successes discussed earlier, the resistance also outlined the tasks to be tackled after liberation. Priority was accorded to the very complex question of who would control the country, for it was impossible to discuss the situation which would arise after the invaders' withdrawal (the problems of government, of social organisation, etc.) without a clear idea of the way the struggle for the settlement of the Lebanese crisis would take. For, should power, after liberation, remain in the hands of those advocating the fascist-isolationist scheme, sooner or later Lebanon will again be, in fact, dominated by invaders. And, should the exponents of confessionalism gain the upper hand, the aggressor will essentially attain what was the objective of the occupation—fragmentation of our country into hostile communal cantons, which will enable Israël and US imperialism, its strategic ally, to exercise full control over them.

The interests of Lebanon's complete liberation and reassertion of its Arab identity are linked indelibly with the implementation of democratic internal transformations. Dealing blows to the invaders, the patriotic resistance played a key role in defeating the plans of the fascist Phalangists who were supported by the invaders. The resistance has shown that all confessionalist projects—both the Phalangist and others similar to it—lead nowhere and demonstrated their inability to serve as a basis for the settlement of the Lebanese crisis. The resistance has thus created the necessary conditions for reasserting Lebanon's Arab identity and meeting the demands this entails. It has also opened up prospects of democratic transformations which imply replacement of the existing confessionalist system—but not with a similar regime (perhaps under a different name) of communal autocracy, sowing the seeds of a new civil war outbreak. The democratic forces advocate a completely different, national democratic system based on the complete elimination of confessionalism first in the political and then in all other spheres. They advocate substantive reforms in politics, the economy and the social fabric.

This is where the exceptional significance of the patriotic resistance lies. Despite the claims disseminated abroad to the effect that it has a religious or sectarian flavour,

the resistance has been and remains a national liberation movement in which, side by side with the democratic forces, religious quarters also play a role. As a result of the development of the resistance and of its political functions as the central element of the national revolutionary movement, firm bonds have been forged connecting the liberation of enemy-held territory with the national democratic solution of the Lebanese crisis.

Israel may soon evacuate the areas it still controls in our country. But that is not all there is to it. Apparently, Lebanon will find a solution to its internal crisis—a solution which we stress, can only be a national democratic, non-confessionalist settlement that would put an end to the civil war. But is it realistic to divorce the situation in our country from the crisis affecting the entire Middle East? This and many other issues are the junctures at which the destinies of the Lebanese and the Palestinian peoples and of their national anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist movements merge. Here I would like to emphasise a development that we take pride in—the growth of the resistance in its various forms in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In this way the Palestinian patriots are expressing their firm resolve to continue their struggle against the enemy along the path clearly charted by the Palestinian revolution from the very beginning.

We therefore believe that the role of the Lebanese patriotic resistance—the role that has recently taken firm root—will also display different forms in the future. Arab patriots—Lebanese, Palestinians, Syrians—all those who strive for a just and durable solution of the Mideast crisis—will no doubt find the most suitable ways and means of strengthening and enhancing their military unity. This, in turn, will contribute to the liberation of the occupied territories, will help to secure for the Palestinian people the right to self-determination and the creation of an independent democratic national state on their soil, will aid in defeating all the truckling schemes proposed by imperialism, Zionism and reaction, and will open new vistas for the development of the Arab revolutionary movement for national liberation and social emancipation.

¹ For more details, see George Hawi, 'To Find a Way Out of the Crisis', *WMR*, No. 11, 1985.

Whom Does Conversion Endanger?

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(Arguments Marshalled by Opponents of Disarmament and the Possibilities for Demilitarising Industry)

IN 1985 military spending world-wide exceeded 800 billion dollars. The growth of this spending is spurred by Washington's adventurist policy of seeking to achieve military superiority over socialist countries, halt imperialism's retreat on the world scene, and ultimately wreak social vengeance by eradicating the new social system. During the past five years the USA has doubled its military expenditures, triggering yet another round of the arms race, in which the other NATO members are also involved. The socialist states have no option but to reply to the imperialist threat with counter-measures. In developing countries, too, the proportion of expenditures for military

purposes is growing at an ever increasing rate.

The imperialist build-up of armaments is unquestionably a destabilising influence on international relations. It is aimed at confrontation and intervention, erodes world peace, and threatens the human race with incineration in a thermo-nuclear war.

Even when the colossal military machine is in a 'passive state', militarist policy engenders enormous tension and economic instability in all parts of the world. During the past 20 years humankind has been confronted with global problems of unprecedented dimensions. Already today a large and growing number of our planet's inhabitants suffer from hunger and a shortage of water and energy. By the end of the current century the world's population will have increased by more than another billion persons to add up to six billions. If this population is not ensured with food, drinking water, and fuel the results will be catastrophic. During the past few decades the natural foundations of life—water, land, air and forests—have been subjected to unparalleled strain and part of them have been destroyed. Their restoration and preservation will require increasing outlays and the concerted efforts of all nations. However, the funds available for these and other important purposes are inadequate because they are being rechannelled into the steadily growing military budgets.

The vast expenditures on armaments are impeding the economic and social development of countries. Colossal economic resources (labour, skill and experience, raw materials, energy, machinery, buildings, and land) are being used in such a way that they cannot be directed towards helping to raise the people's living standard either today (if we take the production of consumer goods) or in the future (meaning the production of means of production or the improvement of the infrastructure). These expenditures are a heavy burden on countries with different levels of economic development and different social systems. In capitalist countries they are intensifying crisis phenomena—unemployment, the dismantling of social gains, inflation, and so on; in socialist countries they are restricting the potentialities for putting into effect ever wider-ranging socio-political programmes for a steady growth of the living standard; and in the Third World they are blocking the road to independent development and economic progress.

That the astronomical military expenditures are perniciously affecting economic and social life has been proved by innumerable studies, notable among which are two substantive reports submitted to the special sessions of the UN General Assembly on disarmament in 1978 and 1982. The experts who compiled these reports draw public attention particularly to the immense benefits that would be derived if even part of the money now spent for military purposes were to be channelled into the fight against hunger, disease, illiteracy, the exhaustion of resources, and the destruction of the environment. The transfer of state allocations from military to productive civilian purposes, and the switch of research and production facilities from the manufacture of armaments, ammunition, and other military hardware to the output of goods improving the quality of life or serving to modernise and expand social production could become the key contribution to resolving humankind's acute economic and social problems. Of course, the cessation of the arms race and the transition to disarmament will not of themselves, automatically resolve all the problems confronting the peoples. But it will certainly be impossible to resolve them if such measures are not taken.

It is quite obvious that the arms build-up abolishes jobs. In capitalist countries, however, this fact is concealed by various subterfuges. The proponents of the arms race, the reactionaries, are utilising economic and social problems to urge an acceleration of military preparations. In the FRG the population has long been suffering from mass unemployment, which in periods of economic upswings hardly declines, or it may even increase. The fact that there is a giant army of redundant

labour—an indication of capitalism's inability to use the human and economic potential for giving all members of society a life worthy of human beings—in large measure determines the life of the working people. It condemns the jobless to poverty, cuts back the incomes of those who hold jobs, denies them confidence in the future, and encourages industrialists and the state to attack social gains and democratic freedoms again and again.

In this crisis situation which is being compounded by the rocketing expenditures on armaments, spokesmen of the armaments industry—both private persons and statesmen—are 'warning' against the socio-economic consequences of disarmament. They claim that disarmament will diminish the number of people earning a living by manufacturing military hardware and hence increase unemployment. It is alleged, that large and steadily growing military expenditures are a factor stabilising economic development and that the armaments industry's high technological level is benefiting civilian industries, making them more competitive in international markets. From this the conclusion is drawn that for economic considerations the output of armaments should be promoted quantitatively and qualitatively.

Experts in different fields and of different persuasions have repeatedly noted the untenability of these 'arguments'. They are no more than a cover for the profit lust of the monopolies and for the aspirations of imperialism's most bellicose forces to acquire the military levers for dominating the world economically and politically. In fact, government allocations for armaments, enlarged by cutting back the funds for education, public health, and social insurance, create fewer jobs than if they were invested in the latter areas, in other words, they lead directly to rising unemployment. Armaments research, experimentation, and designing, stimulated by government subsidies, bring the monopolies enormous profits. On the other hand, obstructions are erected to the given country's scientific and technological potential, whose mission is to help develop the national economy and contribute to the solution of global problems such as energy production, programmes to combat hunger, disease prevention, and environmental protection. This relationship is eloquently illustrated by the dynamic rise of labour productivity in Japan during the first 30 years after the war, a period in which that nation's military expenditures were relatively small, and by the decline of the development rate in the USA, where colossal state resources have been transferred from civilian to military purposes.

In their propaganda the opponents of disarmament in the capitalist countries argue that even if it were accepted that *in principle* state allocations for civilian programmes were economically more productive than analogous allocations for armaments, it would be a big risk to convert to civilian production the specialised armaments industry, built in the course of long years at huge expense, and all the accompanying research and development. It is contended that there is a high probability not only of the failure of such projects but also of a rise of unemployment and of the social impoverishment of further groups of the population. We are told that the technologies used in the armaments industry are so specific that the equipment and skilled labour cannot be used for the manufacture of anything except military hardware. Further it is declared that the economic aspect of the matter has to be taken into consideration: the production and other facilities of civilian industries are already now operating below capacity, this being an indication of overproduction. The allegation is thus that in the event the armaments industry is converted to civilian production, the supply of consumer goods in the markets will increase, further inundating them and leading to a deepening of the crisis.

The hirelings of the armaments manufacturers are spreading fables of this kind in the hope of driving a wedge between the working class movement and trade unions, on the one hand, and the peace movement on the other. The fear of losing jobs, incomes, and material confidence is used as a weapon against the movement for peace

and disarmament.

However, the arguments cited above are refuted by experience and by estimates. Let us make four points.

First, there was conversion after both world wars. The demobilisation of the armed forces was accompanied by a broad reorientation of the economy towards civilian production and no serious economic complications or any other significant difficulties were noted. Of course, in the social system based on public property in the means of production and on planning on the scale of the entire national economy, this conversion is easier to accomplish than in societies in which private property and rivalry reign. Nevertheless, after World War II conversion, with the relevant state support for the economy, was rapid not only in the USSR but also in the USA. Needless to say, the international situation and the internal mechanisms of economic growth in the different countries are today vastly different from what they were in the period immediately after the two world wars. Much has changed and become more complex. These changes have to be taken into account when preparing for conversion and putting into effect within the framework of a well-considered and energetic state structural policy. But the fact remains that in capitalist countries conversion is feasible.

Second, compared with postwar demobilisation and restructuring, disarmament in today's conditions is not an 'overnight' project but will require a long span of time. The alignment of forces in the world leads to the conclusion that it would already be an achievement of the peace forces if an arms race were prevented in a new dimension—outer space—if the build-up of nuclear and conventional armaments were slowed down, and the first steps were taken in the direction of disarmament. If one assesses the situation realistically one will clearly see that there are no grounds for the apprehension that in the event of disarmament the demand of countries for military production will at once drop to zero, and that all servicemen and all civilians employed in the armed forces will instantly become jobless. Indeed, if this were to be the pattern there would be economic complications (and quite considerable ones in view of the present situation). But the question is being put differently: it is suggested that military expenditure be cut, for instance, by from two to five per cent annually. At this rate, obviously, the creation of jobs in the civilian economy for persons thus released and the transfer to it of the relevant production resources of the armaments industry would proceed with incomparably less pain. A piece of humbug by bourgeois propaganda is that precisely those who extol the flexibility of 'dynamic entrepreneurship' and its ability to adapt rapidly to new circumstances as one of the advantages of capitalism, now suddenly see insuperable obstacles to relatively modest conversion programmes.

Third, the technological structure of the armaments industry and the skills of its employees are no impediment to conversion to civilian production. Most of the armaments factories are already now using some of their capacity to produce consumer goods. Many items designed for the armed forces may be successfully marketed for civilian purposes. Much of the equipment manufactured for the armed forces has its analogy in civilian industries (for instance, trucks, medical equipment, means of communication). If there is disarmament these can be used in conventional transport, hospitals, and better civilian communications. Of course, it would be hard to adapt items like tanks, warships, and military aircraft for civilian use. However, the factories manufacturing the electronic equipment, motors, transmissions, and steel, light alloy, and plastic aircraft bodies will have no particular problem switching to civilian production. The basic elements of electronic control systems, whose role is growing in sophisticated armaments, hardly differs from their counterparts in non-military computer management and control systems. For that reason many of the electronic concerns working for the armed forces run factories that manufacture both

military and civilian items.

The education and skills of armaments industry employees and the proportion of scientists among them are above average. Far from obstructing, this circumstance favours conversion: as a rule, the high training levels of the personnel allows this industry to restructure itself speedily and flexibly to meet new tasks. Moreover, work on comprehensive economic and technological problems of a national, regional, or global scale will require the enlistment of a large additional scientific and technological potential that can be obtained with the release of scientists and engineers from military research and armaments production.

Fourth, the assertion that there will be no market for the civilian goods produced in the process of conversion has no leg to stand upon. This would indeed be the case if the disarming states were to reduce the output of armaments to zero without any compensation to the industry in the shape of new contracts. In that case there would be a deepening of the contradiction, implicit in the capitalist economic system, between production and the market and there would be an aggravation of the problem of marketing. Those who make the 'no market' assertion try to discredit the idea of disarmament, using the bogey of non-existent threats. In fact, disarmament can and should be conducted in such a manner as to preclude a decline in the market demand and to replace state contracts for armaments with contracts for the manufacture of useful civilian goods.

Many urgent economic and social problems have piled up in capitalist countries. It will be possible to ease if not resolve them with the aid of large-scale programmes by society and, under present-day conditions, chiefly by the state. The latter has to allocate large sums of money to repair the damage inflicted on the environment, prevent further damage, explore and develop alternative energy sources, resolve the transportation problem (especially in clusters of urban communities), and place the disease diagnosis and treatment on a higher level. But state appropriations for all these purposes have been reduced in order to increase the military budget. Many industries are in need not only of additional financial resources but also of state-controlled development of the most advanced technologies (these get considerable attention from armaments production facilities). An extension of the sphere in which these processes can be applied will require a more active promotion of the creative capabilities of people, who are the main productive force.

If the state were to contract for, say, not military aircraft or tanks but for new systems of public transport, or if it were to fund programmes for research into early diagnosis of cancer, this reorientation would not give rise either to technological or to economic problems. In the economic balance the additional civilian output would be taken up by an increased state demand for this output as a result of the switch of allocations from military to civilian programmes. This sort of redistribution of resources would increase employment because, as we have already noted, non-military investments create more jobs than the same sums of money invested into the business of manufacturing armaments. As a result, there would be a vitalisation of the production of consumer goods. Consequently, the transfer of state funds from the armaments to the civilian industries would increase the supply of goods needed by people and take some of the edge off the unemployment problem.

Technological or economic difficulties are by no means the reason that nothing is being done to convert or to prepare to convert the armaments industry. References are made to such difficulties in order to divert attention from the actual reasons for the negative attitude to the demands for stopping the arms build-up and moving to disarmament, in order to provide a cover for the elements foiling these measures. Who are these elements?

In the first place they are the military-industrial monopolies themselves. By developing, manufacturing, and servicing high-tech armaments systems they receive

profits that are much higher than the average profits in all other industries and even the 'normal' monopoly profit rate. This explains their interest in military contracts and in the steady growth of these contracts. These monopolies are a highly influential group of big capital capable of pressuring the state apparatus into giving them further contracts. Moreover, the armaments manufacturers depict their drive for profits as concern for the security of the nation.

Armaments are manufactured not only for private and state corporations but also by mixed state-private ventures. In their activities the latter very eloquently demonstrate the state-monopoly essence of the preparations of the capitalist powers for another war.

A major role is played here by the top echelon of the section of the state apparatus linked closely to the making and implementation of governmental decisions in the military sphere (war ministries, general staffs, logistics departments, and so on). Mediation by it is what allows linking up the interests of the military-industrial monopolies, state policy, and military strategy. The armaments manufacturers' lobby, their union with the state apparatus, technological links, and much else form the dense network of the *military-industrial complex*. Back in 1961, at the close of his term of office in the White House, US President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned against the danger of this complex expanding its influence. Since then the power wielded by this complex has grown dramatically in the USA and also in Britain, France, and the FRG.

An interest in the continued arms build-up is also shown by elements that are stepping up their expansion on the international scene in the hope that this will resolve the problem of realising capital and finding a way out of the economic crisis. The central hallmark of this process, fostered very actively by the monopolies after World War II, has become the growing internationalisation of production and exchange. The potentialities for reinforcing the positions of capitalism and for it subjugating new areas of the world economy have gradually diminished. The debt of some Third World countries has reached dimensions that are making the monopolies regard investment in these countries a high-risk enterprise rather than a profitable undertaking. Other states of this group have begun to pursue a more independent economic and trade policy in keeping with their own interests and not with those of the transnationals. Imperialism's expansion is being decisively inhibited by the existence and active policies of the socialist states.

In a situation in which there has been a drastic shrinkage of its potentiality for manoeuvring, monopoly capital is, in alliance with the governments of the imperialist powers, growing more aggressive in its efforts to maintain its grip on the zone of economic influence exploited by it. It is escalating inter-imperialist rivalry, threatening developing nations with military invasion, and pursuing an increasingly dangerous policy of confrontation in the relations with socialist countries. In order to achieve the 'vital aims of the free West', in other words, in order to give, in the first place, the leading transnationals unrestricted freedom of action throughout the world, the imperialist ruling classes are putting their stake increasingly on building up a huge military capability as an instrument of political intimidation, escalating tension, and direct military interference.

Collaboration between the military-industrial complex and the monopoly capital quarters seeking unbridled expansion on the world scene is the principal motive force of the arms race. This alliance is generating the threat of war and opposing disarmament and the conversion of the armaments industry, seeing this as a menace to its positions.

In the USA and the leading West European nations the demand for the conversion of the armaments industry to the manufacture of civilian output is seen as a key link between the broad public movement for peace and disarmament and the trade unions

as organisations championing the economic, social and political rights of the working people. The conversion slogan counters the assertions of the entrepreneurs that the alternatives are: either a reduction of armaments or efforts to reduce unemployment and promote the living standard. The peace and trade union movements insist that a limitation on armaments must be combined with a rise in employment and the living standard. To explain to people that phased disarmament and the conversion of armaments facilities to the manufacture of consumer goods can create new jobs and give humankind more goods and services means to strengthen the foundations of the working class movement's unity with the other currents of the peace movement. With the monopoly bourgeoisie and the capitalist state concentrating power in their hands, the strengthening and extension of this unity are vital to the success of the struggle for peace, jobs, and the preservation of social gains.

Under the slogan 'Vital Consumer Goods Instead of Lethal Weapons' trade union militants and peace fighters marked September 1, 1985, the Day of Trade Union Actions for Peace, with joint actions calling for an end to the arms race, for disarmament and jobs, and a halt to social dismantling. These and other actions of the trade unions (in recent months they involved hundreds of thousands of working people) gave a better understanding of the direct relationship between the assault on social rights and the arms build-up, the need to manufacture consumer goods rather than armaments, and of the considerable benefit of solidarity and joint struggle to the trade union and anti-war movements.

The German Communist Party is also acting in this spirit. Its stand on this issue was enunciated in the Programme adopted at its Mannheim Congress in October 1978. 'The GCP,' the Programme says, 'urges the adoption of concrete steps to reduce military spending and cut back armed forces and armaments, especially in Central Europe. These would be significant steps on the road to general and complete disarmament. Moreover, this can be the way to forming favourable conditions for the purposeful conversion of the armaments industry to the more labour-intensive production of civilian goods, which would help to provide jobs.'¹

¹ *Protokoll des Mannheimer Parteitags der Deutschen Kommunistischen Partei, 20.-22. Oktober 1978, Rosengarten-Mannheim, p. 243.*

Differences are No Obstacle to Cooperation with the Environmentalists

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THE ecological movement has lately been an important aspect of the socio-political situation in Belgium. It has become a notable factor in national life, and its influence has grown visibly. The environmentalists win votes among youth, intellectuals, white-collar workers, left Christians, the urban middle strata and the petty bourgeoisie. In the mid-term general election held in October 1985, the environmentalists' parties—Ecolo (French-speaking Belgians) and Agalev (Flemings)—polled 6.2 per cent of the vote, or 1.7 per cent more than in 1981. This won them a total of nine seats in the Chamber of Representatives and four in the Senate¹. In 1984, several of their members were also elected to the European Parliament.

In Belgium as, indeed, in other West European countries, the ecological movement is a relatively new phenomenon. Its slogans reflect the sentiments of very large population groups and their increasingly strong protest against various capitalist realities. This confronts Communists with the need to assess the ideas and values upheld by the environmentalists and to ascertain their political potential and the opportunities of cooperating with them in the anti-monopoly struggle. Several years have passed since they stepped forward as an independent force, and so we can draw some conclusions.

The Belgian ecological movement sprang up in the second half of the 1970s, when the destructive impact of capitalist production, primarily monopoly activity, on the environment made itself felt more than ever. With the deepening crisis of the capitalist system, the movement went beyond purely ecological bounds. It began to criticise the mechanisms of Belgian society and the way of life typical of it and to raise social and economic questions relating in one way or another to the need to preserve man's natural environment.

When, in the early 1980s, international tensions and the threat of nuclear war increased, the movement joined in the struggle for peace. That was also when it gained in scope. The desire to protect nature and improve people's living conditions understandably induced the environmentalists to protest emphatically against the arms race and its numerous manifestations, such as nuclear weapons tests and the disposal or transportation of nuclear waste. From this point of view, the evolution of the movement is very similar to that of West Germany's Greens, who began with actions in defence of nature and gradually became an important anti-war force.

The environmentalists' formation as an independent movement was also linked with the social and psychological effects of the mass actions that took place in several West European countries in the late 1960s. In spite of their dimensions, these actions had no effect on the functioning of capitalist society or its power structure. In Belgium this outcome disappointed and disheartened some participants in the actions while prompting others to join rightist or even ultra-rightist organisations and still others (fairly many), to search for new lines of political and social activity. It was they who made up the core of the ecological movement.

Worthy of mention among the factors for the success of the movement is distrust of government institutions and political parties, which increased sharply after the social struggles of 1968 and 1969. This distrust grew still further in the subsequent ten to fifteen years, when it became only too clear that the leading bourgeois and social reformist parties of Belgium could offer no realistic way out of the crisis, and when many unseemly aspects of their activity were disclosed.

All those dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs came to look on the environmentalists as exponents of a realistic alternative and pinned on them hopes of a qualitative change in the way of life. This explains why environmentalist slogans appeal to the most diverse population groups.

As far as their demands and approaches are concerned, the environmentalists are unquestionably innovators compared with the major Belgian parties, which until recently ignored all the problems raised by the movement. However, many of its slogans are not really new. We Communists worked out, for instance, environmental protection programmes and a transport policy long before the environmentalists. However, our proposals failed to win massive support comparable to theirs.

There are several reasons for this, and first among them is the impact of anti-communism on social consciousness. The CPB has long been an object of systematic hostile propaganda campaigns. Besides, our party, which was founded in 1921 and has gained a great deal of political experience, is seen by many, especially by young people, as 'traditional' and hence not competent enough to answer the new questions which society comes up against, although the BCP is entirely different from other

parties in both programme and working methods. This stereotyped perception does not extend to the ecological movement, if only because it is of recent origin.

We must also admit that the Communist Party did not do enough to popularise its proposals. Its documents formulated the BCP position on energy and many other problems in vague terms, dissolving it, as it were, in the party's general policy programme. The Communists were unable to respond in time to certain questions that arose during the evolution of capitalist society.

It is interesting to note that where a struggle was carried on even before the emergence of the environmental movement, under slogans which the movement's ideologists consider to be their own and describe as new, the movement never succeeded in developing into a significant force. This is true, for instance, of the region where Belgium's first nuclear power plant was built. As criticism of nuclear energy is the environmentalists' favourite theme, we seem to be in the presence of a paradox. Actually there is no paradox at all. The construction of atomic power stations began long ago and immediately gave rise to a very active protest movement, with the Communists and some Socialists and left Christians in the lead. Our party was motivated above all else by security considerations, for the project was going up in a heavily populated community; it stressed that the project would benefit primarily the monopolies and not society as a whole. Besides, the government lacked (and still lacks) an acceptable solution to the problem of disposal of nuclear waste, which is very acute in a small country such as ours. By the time the ecological movement entered the scene, its 'place' in the region was taken. Incidentally, the Communists still hold strong positions there while the environmentalists have little influence.

But to return to the reasons for their nation-wide popularity. The movement uses very original—we might say modern—ways of publicising its ideas and knows how to introduce into them novel and spectacular elements that draw people's attention. Here is an example. The conservative government mounted a sweeping attack on public services, with the result that fares went up, the number of trains, railway stations and bus routes decreased and many employees were laid off. One day four environmentalists drove to Brussels in a Rolls Royce and held an improvised press conference outside the buildings of parliament. 'Look,' they said at the conference, 'we hired a Rolls Royce to come here from the country and the trip turned out to be cheaper than by train.' Actions of this kind are held with due regard to the likely reaction of the bourgeois media, which seize on any sensational or unusual occurrence; the next day many Brussels papers carried photographs of the press conference, with the Rolls Royce in the background. By and large, environmentalists show great flexibility and vary their forms of action depending on the objective of the action and the audience which they want to reach.

The movement is markedly democratic and this is a further factor for its success. The environmentalists do their best to lean on the population's support. In the communes, for instance, they see to it that neighbourhood committees are formed; these committees, which are still very few, enable people to express their opinions on the functioning of the local administration, to discuss its plans and make proposals.

Belgians trust less and less in the efficiency of elected government bodies. The bourgeois and reformist parties have largely discredited representative democracy. Their deputies generally forget about their promises shortly after elections. The environmentalists, however, work primarily on the principle of direct communication with people in cities, districts and communes by holding public debates and calling for specific if limited actions.

The desire to exercise 'direct democracy' and lean on the people for support also runs through the internal mechanism of the movement. All programmes and decisions are adopted at general meetings; there is a constant rotation of leadership, and the movement has no central leading bodies. The environmentalists invariably

stress their difference from both bourgeois parties and the Communists in this respect. This system appeals to many in Belgium, particularly youth.

Yet the system has major shortcomings. Many people fail for various reasons to attend environmentalists' meetings, and this affects the alignment of forces, for account is taken of the opinion of only those present while those who are absent find themselves excluded from the drafting of action programmes. Audiences are influenced most of all by good speakers who make the impression of being particularly well informed even if their arguments are untenable. Many decisions are taken under the influence of a good speech rather than as a result of proper analysis. In short, this mechanism is far from perfect, which it might seem to be at first sight. However, the environmentalists' 'grassroots democracy' gives them an advantage over bourgeois parties, in which all decisions are made, in fact, by a small group of leaders.

The ideology of the movement (that is, if it can be seen as an independent phenomenon) is exceedingly eclectic. Nor could it have been otherwise, since the movement groups the most diverse people ranging from declassed elements to specialists with a higher education who generally become its leaders. While the movement involves some workers, mostly Christians, the majority of its supporters are people with a petty-bourgeois background, white-collar workers and intellectuals.

The environmentalists' views are strongly anti-capitalist in the sense that they reject the consumer society and the political structures and party system of the bourgeois state. On the other hand, their programmes do not question the foundations of the exploiting system, nor do they say anything about far-reaching socio-economic changes.

This came out during a recent public debate on problems of the power industry. The Communists and environmentalists were at one in considering that it is necessary in Belgian conditions to stop building nuclear power plants, reduce charges for electricity, extend applied and theoretical research, and allocate more fund for the exploration of new sources of energy and the utilisation of those already discovered (such as solar energy). What they disagreed over was the proposal to nationalise the whole power industry, which the CPB has long advocated. We and the environmentalists found ourselves in different camps on this point.

In this case as in all others, they put the emphasis on the technical and not the political aspect of the problem by coming out against the effects of the capitalist mode of production rather than against the mode itself, against manifestations of the crisis rather than against those responsible for it, that is, the monopolies and those who defend their interests. The environmentalists' reaction to the events in Bhopal, India, where the activity of the US Union Carbide company resulted in the fatal gas poisoning of thousands of Indians, was most revealing. They attributed the tragedy solely to the lack of proper safety measures at the company's plants, without associating it in any way with the predatory and reckless practices of transnationals in developing countries.

This approach prevents them for the time being from realising the obvious fact that the uncontrolled distribution and consumption of all raw materials, high charges for electricity, pollution of the environment, and the priority development of research programmes most profitable to big capital are a result of the dominance of private business in the Belgian power industry. This implies that the only solution is to nationalise the industry and have the state manage it under effective control by the working people.

However, there is a further reason why the environmentalists reject our party's proposal to nationalise the power industry. It is their extremely negative attitude to the state as such. Nor is this only a product of their ideology, which inclines to anarchism, tending to reject the centralising principle at the level of the movement

itself and of society as a whole. This tendency is largely due to an instinctively morbid reaction to the role of the bourgeois state today, its intervention in every sphere of public life, the rottenness and anti-democratic nature of its political structures, the fact that power is in the hands of persons who are indifferent to the people's interests and that the more important questions are decided even without the consent of parliament, as the scandalous story of the deployment of US missiles showed again.

The environmentalists do not regard expansion of the nationalised sector of the economy as a weakening of the positions of monopoly capital, but above all as a strengthening of the state. They overlook the fact that the anti-popular Belgian state, which ignores the peoples' needs, is the political spokesman of the big bourgeoisie. This means that the struggle against it can be successful only if it goes beyond merely putting its evils on record and sets out to actively resist monopoly in every sphere of life.

The environmentalists' approach to social problems generally upholds the idea of 'equal sacrifices' on the part of the workers and the employers. To increase employment, for instance, they propose reducing the working week and hence wages. They do so at a time when purchasing capacity has declined sharply: the past decade has seen the incomes of the working population decrease by 200 billion Belgian francs. It looks as if the environmentalists are searching the workers' pockets for money to create new jobs. In this case the movement betrays ignorance of the everyday cares of the working people, and this is typical of it.

What the application of such remedies means is exemplified by Liege, the only city where the environmentalists have participated in administration since the 1982 local elections. As a result of their policy towards employment, the purchasing power of the employees of the municipal services has fallen off by 16 per cent over the past three years. The employees assessed this policy as a further way of cutting their incomes, and in the elections for the European Parliament in June 1984 this lost the environmentalists many votes. It follows that implementation of the movement's programme, which includes some very progressive provisions, may lead to a deterioration of the social conditions of a section of the population, thereby inducing a negative reaction from it.

The environmentalist's approach to the steel industry, which is of key importance in Belgium, is equally revealing. Ideologists of the movement affirm that as the industry is polluting the environment and, moreover, is too expensive for society, the task is to get rid of it and proceed to develop small enterprises and production cooperatives. They do not stop to think of the role of the steel industry in the economic development of the country and in the reorganisation of other industries, and seem to forget that steel plants employ tens of thousands of Belgians.

And now for the problem of the way of life. On this point the environmentalists are putting forward what is outwardly the most radical programme, demanding that the ideas of the consumer society be rejected. But what do they propose instead? Living 'more simply and naturally', that is, planting gardens, growing fruit and vegetables without using chemical fertilisers, baking one's own bread, and so on. As a result, they argue, people will largely become self-sufficient and need less money, lost values will be restored, man will move closer to nature and spend his free time better than before.

That is how the environmentalists respond to the fact that very large sections of youth, primarily young Christians, are dissatisfied with the way of life which contemporary bourgeois society imposes on them. They also raise the problem of the Belgian's leisure time, which is very acute indeed. Most of their leisure hours are taken up by television, whose primary objective is to propagate the ideology of the ruling class. Telecasts are very poor culturally and are dominated by foreign, mostly British and American programmes.

Are the environmentalists' recommendations a real alternative to the values of the consumer society? After all, people in Belgium have from time immemorial grown fruit and vegetables, using natural fertilisers, and yet this has in no way prevented the particular leisure activities which the movement opposes. To bake one's own bread is a rather labour-consuming occupation, and people could only do it at the expense of their free time. As for spending their leisure hours usefully and agreeably, they could not do it if they were short of money.

The environmentalists urge all those who are dissatisfied with the present state of affairs to live differently within the framework of the existing social structures. In spite of their outward radicalism, the slogans of the movement offer no radical solutions for the country's acute problems. It is not accidental that the movement has, in effect, been spared attack by bourgeois propaganda and that the monopolies' media represent the environmentalists as harmless dreamers and utopians.

Still, the environmentalists' efforts have yielded some positive results. Public opinion has been made more aware of some really important problems that need to be solved. Political parties, including the ruling ones, have found themselves compelled to tackle these problems. After the movement had advanced its own plan for the development of the power industry, official commissions were formed and long-term programmes for the industry drawn up. Yet formerly all the parties except the CPB regarded this industry as an exclusive domain of transnationals. Under the environmentalists' influence, diverse population groups have clearly become keener on the way of life, the quality of their diet and the protection of nature. They have also contributed to the growth of the peace movement in Belgium.

In promoting contacts with the environmentalists, the CPB proceeds from its long-term policy of uniting the progressive forces of the country on the broadest possible basis, a policy reaffirmed by its latest congress, the 14th (1982). The positions of the environmentalists and Communists coincide on many problems, primarily those of the campaign against US nuclear missiles on Belgian territory, the fight for peace and democracy, and environmental protection. However, we do not shut our eyes to differences, especially in the ideological sphere and over certain political questions, such as that of alternatives to the current crisis.

The fight for peace is an area in which Communists and environmentalists see eye to eye more than in any other. The Communist Party has always attached special importance to the promotion of contacts with them in the interest of forming a powerful peace movement. To date cooperation with the environmentalists in this sphere has assumed a lasting character. We are as one in demanding that the US cruise missiles deployed in Florenne be withdrawn and that the planned deployment of another 32 systems of a similar type on Belgian soil be barred, in upholding the more general objectives of disarmament and condemning the militarist policy of the USA and NATO. Nor are there any fundamental differences between us over the problem of nuclear-free zones.

However, we Communists have been carrying on an uncompromising struggle against our partners over their arguments in support of anti-war actions and certain of their political estimations. For instance, the environmentalists claim that the Soviet Union is as aggressive in the world arena as the United States. We always refute such allegations. Also, ideologists of the movement blame both the USA and the Soviet Union for the lack of progress at Geneva. They either overlook or ignore the fact that agreement is being blocked by the US side. We do not conceal our point of view in this case, either. But our controversy with the environmentalists, which occasionally takes sharp forms, is no obstacle to cooperation for a common goal.

The protection of nature, transport policy, some aspects of urban development, and the protection of foreign workers are further areas in which a virtual alliance exists between the two forces. The environmentalists have taken a very constructive stand

by proposing together with our party that immigrants be granted the right to vote and be elected in communal elections. Some experience of cooperation on the issues listed above has already been gained at regional and communal level. In some communes we have signed agreements on mutual support in self-government bodies.

What is particularly harmful to cooperation is anti-communism, which the environmentalists' political practice and propaganda often show, occasionally in the most primitive forms. It makes agreement at local level difficult or even prevents it, with the result that our potential partners unexpectedly adopt a deliberately sectarian position.

The impact of bourgeois ideology is not the only reason for this. Lately the environmentalists have attached greater importance to electoral gains; their activity has begun to show a plainly electoralist trend. Hence their attempts to capitalise on anti-communist prejudice and indulge in political demagoguery instead of pleading their political position. This presents a serious threat to the ecological movement and its democratic character.

The future of the movement will depend in large measure on whether it succeeds in moving on from a passive rejection of capitalist reality to a resolute struggle against monopoly power, from actions in this or that direction to all-out defence of the interests of the working population. The CPB, for its part, is willing to extend the spheres of cooperation with the environmentalists. But this does not depend on us alone.

¹ The Chamber of Representatives has 212 members and the Senate, 181.—*Ed.*

The Fight Back In Britain

Jim Mortimer

WHEN the Conservative government was elected in 1979 in Britain to replace a Labour government, its purpose was clear. It was to strengthen capitalism and to bring about a further shift of power, wealth, and income in favour of big business. Although the Conservatives were pledged to such a reactionary objective they were able to defeat the Labour Party and even to increase their parliamentary majority in the following general election in 1983.

A point to be made is that in neither of these elections did the Conservative Party gain a real majority. Six years ago it polled just under 44 per cent of the votes cast, which was less than a third of the votes of those eligible to vote. In the following elections when the proportion of the electorate who went to the polls declined, the Conservative vote fell to 42.4 per cent, which amounted to no more than about 30 per cent of those eligible to vote. Nonetheless, because of the electoral system, which distorts the true picture of the political sentiments in the nation, the Conservative Party secured and preserves a comfortable parliamentary majority. The Conservative government's policies have brought a deterioration of the British working people's condition, becoming for them the cause of considerable difficulties and hardships. The present situation in the country is the result of developments over the past few years, notably the British working people's fight back against the consequences of Conservative policies.

Jim Mortimer became General Secretary of the British Labour Party in 1982, a post he held until June 1985, when he retired on pension.—*Ed.*

The factors explaining Labour defeats still have a bearing on British politics and on the attitude of some British workers. The Labour cabinet that was in power in 1974-1979 came into conflict with the trade unions. Although it had carried through some progressive legislation helpful to workers' rights and trade unionism, towards the close of its term it sought to hold down wage increases below the rise of the cost of living. The spread of unemployment likewise caused discontent. The Conservative Party was able to take advantage of this situation and, with the aid of the newspapers, which in Britain are overwhelmingly on its side, sought to discredit the entire labour movement. It offered the alternative of the free play of market forces, which, it claimed, would stimulate the economy and bring prosperity.

A serious loss to the Labour Party was the breakaway of some right-wing leaders and the formation of the Social Democratic Party, which entered into an alliance with the Liberals. At the 1983 general elections this alliance won roughly 700,000 votes less than Labour, which was heavily hit by this defection to the right and had to rest content with the lowest proportion of the total vote than at any election for 67 years. Another factor was the lack of unity on some programme issues, particularly affecting nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament.

The political environment in the early period of the Conservative government did not thus provide the most favourable circumstances for a vigorous fight back. Even so, the negative effects of this situation quickly became apparent. The reliance on the market forces of capitalism, together with a monetarist policy, did not bring a revival of the economy. Unemployment continued relentlessly to increase. The burden of taxation was shifted away from the wealthy, house-building declined, and cuts were made in education and the social services.

The Conservatives are well aware that despite the disarray and disunity in the Labour Party the trade union movement still had an immense potential for activity in defence of workers' interests. Their urgent task, therefore, was to weaken trade unionism. This they did by a combination of measures.

The government introduced three new major pieces of legislation, all designed to weaken unionism. Support for strikers is now illegal and this makes trade unions liable for legal action for acts of solidarity. 'Industrial dispute' is redefined in such a manner as to make the organisers of many strike actions liable for legal action for 'transgressions of the law'.

The previous statutory protection against selective dismissals during strikes was severely weakened. The new legislation, in effect, is an invitation to victimise active trade unionists during a strike. Severe restrictions were imposed on picketing. The trade unions were now exposed for damages from their funds as a result of 'unlawful' industrial action. The dependent members of the family of the striker had previously been entitled to payments from the social security funds to provide a minimum level of subsistence. The Conservative government introduced the idea of a 'notional payment' from trade union funds. Regardless of whether a striker receives this payment or not, the payment to which his family is entitled has been cut by £16 per week.

Not very long ago more than five million British workers were employed in places where there was 100 per cent trade union membership. Barriers have now been erected to 100 per cent trade union membership; the law forbids any arrangement that contract work is done only by unionised labour. Regardless of their own rules and procedures, requirements have been imposed concerning the election of trade union executive committees and ballots before industrial action. Ten year ballots have been made mandatory to test members' support for the continued provision of a special fund for purposes defined as 'political' by law. The rules have been redefined to prohibit trade union expenditure on campaigns hitherto regarded as legitimate.¹

Over and above this legislation, the courts, responding to the new climate of 'public

policy', began to interpret the unwritten common law of Britain² in a manner much more hostile to the unions. Unlike statute law, which is passed by parliament, unwritten common law is determined by the judges. The expanse of the common law is limitless, except where immunities have been defined by parliament. From time to time the judges 'discover' new liabilities under the common law. Assisted by their parliamentary representation, the trade unions have to fight hostile definitions of the common law.

Another area where there have been significant changes under the Conservatives concerns the police. Britain is supposed not to have a nationally directed police force but, instead, a series of local forces with some measure of local accountability. But the reality is that the government can, when it wants to, mobilise thousands of police and send them to any part of the country to, for example, suppress a strike. They are authorised to prevent demonstrators and pickets from travelling to the scene of a dispute.

In developing the fight back against Conservative policy the working people have had to face not only these new legal difficulties and administrative measures but also the effect of ever-mounting unemployment and opposition from the distortion of the actual situation by much the greater part of the British press. Unemployment in Britain today is higher than ever before; higher even than in the grim days of the great slump of the early 1930s. The official figure of registered unemployed is over 3,400,000, but there are at least another 750,000 who are no longer registered as unemployed. Various changes in the compilation of statistics have allowed understating the official unemployment figure. The effects of unemployment on the workers' movement are diverse. Of course, a lucid picture of the actual condition created by unemployment can lead to increased consciousness among working people of the evils of capitalism and the need for radical social change. It can, however, have other and very different effects, for instance, a dampening of activity. Some workers may become concerned, above all, to keep their own jobs and show reluctance to take up the struggle to defend the jobs of all. Unemployment helps capitalism to divide workers, becoming a whip with which to intimidate all those who lack a developed trade union consciousness.

The intimidatory and divisive effects of unemployment are reinforced by unceasing mass propaganda. Nearly all of the national press is owned by a handful of very wealthy men, and most of this press supports the Conservative Party. All of these newspapers maintain an unquestioning attitude to the existence of capitalism and a generally hostile attitude to workers engaged in industrial struggle. The radio and television, though usually not as blatantly hostile as most of the press, nevertheless likewise present a distorted view of socio-political developments. The audience of the section of the press sympathetic to labour is small in comparison with that of these mass media.

The problems of mounting a fight back against Conservative policies, including legal obstacles, the intimidatory and divisive effects of unemployment, and the constant influence of hostile propaganda should not be underestimated. What is remarkable is that so much has taken place. The foundation of the present growing activity of the trade unions and the working masses was laid up by the build up of their resistance to Conservative policies in the preceeding years.

The first big national strike after the election of the Conservative government took place in early 1980 in the iron and steel industry. This is an industry that had been suffering big job losses and plant closures during the preceding five or six years. But the British Steel Corporation announced that it intended to reduce steel-making capacity by a further quarter, with the loss of about 40,000 jobs. The threat of losing their jobs did not deter the steel workers from seeking wage increases. The strike that erupted lasted for three months. The accent was made on linking the defence of the

living standard with a campaign against plant closures. There was considerable solidarity with the steel workers, especially from miners and railwaymen. Ultimately, a settlement was reached on satisfactory conditions.

The struggle of the steel workers set a pattern which has been confirmed in subsequent years in many other industries. Strikes to defend their pay rates, living standards, and jobs were staged also by workers in the civil service and in the National Health Service, the largest single employer of labour in Britain. They involved a large number of people who traditionally had not been involved in industrial action. Despite the pressure of mass unemployment a settlement was reached under which the average earnings of those retaining jobs would not fall behind the rising cost of living. This is an important indicator of the staunchness of the trade unions reflecting the offensive against employers. Unfortunately, similar protection could not be given to the millions of unemployed.

Special mention must be made of a big action that drew public attention to the plight of the unemployed, notably of young people. This was a People's March for Jobs (spring of 1983), which lasted for 44 days along the route from Glasgow to London. The culmination was a rally in London attended by more than 100,000 people.

In 1984 there were two widely publicised disputes of a special kind in the sense that they affected the basic rights of the trade unions. In one of them the National Graphical Association sought recognition of the status and rights of its members in two printing facilities in the northwest of England. The action was in fact over this union's right to exist. The printers were supported by the journalists. The employer used the new anti-union laws and took legal action. A series of heavy fines was imposed upon the unsubmissive trade union.

The printing union asked the TUC for a statement of support. However, within the TUC General Council a difference of views had developed concerning the extent to which the unions should challenge laws enacted by the Conservatives. No statement of support for the printing union was issued. Although the TUC gave financial assistance to the printers, the new anti-union legislation prevailed at the time. The outcome of the dispute was a significant victory for the anti-union policy of capital and the government. There has been a disturbing increase in employers' use of injunctions against unions.

The second dispute concerned the right of trade union membership for employees at the Government Communications Headquarters at Cheltenham. Several thousand employees were affected. The government announced, on grounds of national security, that employees of GCHQ must resign from their unions or look for another job. Instead of trade union membership GCHQ employees would be allowed to join a staff association approved by the government. Each employee was offered £1,000 as compensation. This was, in effect, a bribe to mute discontent against this attack on the trade union.

The denial of union member rights to GCHQ employees had, of course, nothing in common with security considerations. The TUC protested vigorously. A House of Commons Select Committee on Employment criticised the government's decision after considering the evidence submitted to it. Hundreds of thousands of civil servants and others participated in protest actions throughout the country in defence of the trade union rights of their colleagues. Many GCHQ employees have defied the government's order to leave the trade union or, encouraged by the solidarity support, have rejoined it. At its September 1985 congress the TUC addressed the trade union movement with a call for further expressions of support for GCHQ employees.

One of the most significant strikes in the entire history of the British trade union movement began in the coal-mining industry in March 1984 and lasted for a whole year. The Conservative government rightly saw the miners as the most militant and

class conscious section of the British workers enjoying the sympathy and solidarity of large sections of public opinion. Long before they returned to power the Conservatives had drawn up the so-called Ridly Plan to bring about the defeat of the miners. It envisaged the building up of coal stocks, contingency plans for importing coal, the utilisation, if necessary, of strike-breakers, and the replacement of coal with oil at power stations. It was suggested that there should be a large and mobile squad of police to deal with picketing. This plan was put into effect during the coal strike.

In spite of the promises to increase the coal output, the chairman of the National Coal Board Ian MacGregor, an industrialist with an anti-union background in the USA, embarked on a new policy with government approval—to cut output and, as the first steps, to close 20 pits and dismiss 20,000 miners.

The strike was triggered by the announcement of the closure of a colliery in Yorkshire. The entire Yorkshire coalfield, the biggest in Britain, stopped work. Other coalfields followed with strike action. Work continued in only the Nottingham coalfield, the second biggest in Britain. The miners working in this coalfield believed there was hardly any likelihood of closures because the pits were highly productive.

The strike lasted for twelve months and over three-quarters of the men in the pits were on strike for much of this period. The overwhelming majority of the miners remained solid to the end. There was outstanding solidarity from seamen and railwaymen, who refused to move coal during the strike. But the solidarity front was not united. For instance, non-union transport workers drove their trucks through the picket lines. Big payments were made to strike-breakers.

The police were mobilised in huge numbers to frustrate effective picketing. Thousands of miners were arrested. In subsequent trials before juries the great majority of miners were acquitted of the charges brought against them by the police. However, the law was used to an extent never witnessed before. After a series of fines were imposed on the national union, the latter's funds were seized by court order, and control of all its assets and income was placed in the hands of a 'receiver', who was answerable only to the court that appointed him.

The miners were ultimately forced back to work by severe suffering and privation. But their struggle gave inspiration to many other workers and to trade union activists. It had an invigorating effect on many sections of the labour movement. Millions of pounds were raised by local support groups, and big meetings and demonstrations were held in many towns. Nothing like it had been seen for a number of years. Of special importance was the role of the women's support groups, which brought many women into labour movement activity for the first time in their lives.

It would be fair to say that the miners went back to work with their heads held high. Hardly a week has passed since the end of the strike without some pit or pits in Britain going on strike for one or more shifts. Some are in protest of vindictive victimisation of a fellow miner for action during the national strike; others are declared against attempts to impose a speed up of work or alter conditions of work unilaterally. Managements mistakenly assume that the miners are demoralised and will not react to managerial bullying. These continuing strikes are the real evidence of the courage and militancy of the miners in the present extremely difficult situation.

Lessons of the miners' action have been widely discussed in the British trade union and labour movement. Regrettably, there are sharply divided views. Nothing, however, can take away from the miners the testimony of their example in the struggle to defend their jobs, their pits, and their communities. This was the high point of the fight back and it has influenced and will continue to influence the British labour movement.

Various groups of working people are following this example to defend their living standards and their jobs. Since the beginning of 1985 school teachers, for example, have been engaged in demonstrations and stoppages on a scale without precedent in

the history of the British education system. National Health Service workers are taking action against the government's intention to place a number of hospitals in private hands and contract some forms of hospital work to private firms. Ship-building workers at nationally-owned shipyards around Newcastle and Devonport have staged strikes and demonstrations against the reprivatisation plans and mass dismissals. In Scotland large public support, including support from prominent people in the Conservative Party, has been gained for the demands of the trade unions for an end to further closures of steel-making capacities. The locomotive works at Swindon were at one time among the largest in the world, employing 12,000 workers. There are now not more than 2,000 workers left, and these are campaigning vigorously against the closure of the works.

An essential part of the fight back of the working people against Conservative policies is the determination of the trade unions to retain their political funds. The ballots taken in 1985 under the terms of the new legislation have shown that over 83 per cent of the trade union members are in favour of the retention of these funds. This strikingly reaffirms the determination of the trade unions to protect their democratic rights and have their say in the nation's political life.

One other area of the fight back is in local government. Most of Britain's big cities and industrial areas are under Labour control for local government purposes. The Conservative government sees this as an obstacle to its policies and seeks cuts in allocations for local governments. More, it intends to abolish some of the bigger councils, including the Greater London Council. However, a clear majority of the public in these areas is opposed to the government's policy.

There is still much to do in Britain to defeat political reaction and reverse the economic decline and the mass unemployment. It is not always easy to organise the fight back against anti-union laws and a hostile press. It has also to be recognised that compared with the majority of unionised working people who have been able to keep their jobs, the condition of the unemployed, the ethnic minorities, and those dependent on the social services has been most painfully affected by the Conservative government's policies.

The facts indicate that Britain has entered a new stage. The Conservative government is widely unpopular. There are many examples of working people who are prepared to fight for their interests. There is plenty of evidence of the growing recognition by trade unionists of the need for political action. One of the main tasks in this context is to organise and strengthen the fight back against Conservative policies and win the protest movement for socialist ideas. The working people of Britain need a Labour government to reverse the catastrophic economic practices of the Conservatives, restore and extend the social services and trade union rights, rid the nation of nuclear weapons, and help bring back detente. Britain needs a Labour government with policies and determination for radical social change.

¹ The trade unions use their political funds to extend financial aid to the Labour Party. —*Ed.*

² In Britain a large role in the legislative regulation of society's life is played, alongside statutory laws enacted by government bodies, by custom and by court verdicts, that acquire the character of a precedent. —*Ed.*

surveys, information and mail

Effective Support for Sandino's Country

'Nicaragua will hold out.' This is the motto under which the international campaign of solidarity with the people of that country goes on expanding in the context of US imperialism's undeclared war and trade and economic blockade against it. The embattled republic has been receiving substantial assistance from the socialist community countries. In the non-socialist part of the world there are more and more instances of moral, political and material solidarity. The following is a survey of actions in support of Nicaragua in Western Europe and North America.

TO begin with, it is worthy of note that Washington's attempts to strangle the Sandinist revolution are condemned by the governments of many capitalist countries, including NATO allies of the United States, who insist on a peaceful settlement of the situation in Central America. The *French* government has rejected the anti-Nicaraguan trade and economic 'sanctions' of the United States and signified its intention to continue rendering Nicaragua political and economic support. The *Italian* Prime Minister has said that his country will not join in Washington's trade embargo and will continue building the planned 25 million dollar project in Nicaragua. The head of the *Spanish* government has promised Nicaragua 'firm support' and assistance in overcoming economic difficulties, made worse by the US embargo. In reply to US intrigues *Norway*, a NATO member, has declared that it will increase its aid to Nicaragua, now worth 60 million kroner a year. *Finland* helps Sandino's country economically; its aid in the 1985-1987 period will reach 83.9 million markkas. The agreement under which the *European Economic Community* will grant Nicaragua 5.2 million dollars in financial aid stands in spite of pressure from Washington. There are more facts of a similar nature.

The movement of solidarity with Nicaragua involves a large body of international opinion. In October 1985, sixteen West European national solidarity committees held a congress in Lisbon. The congress urged all the governments and parliaments of Western Europe to seek an end to US military interference in Central America. It decided on a closer coordination of the activities of national solidarity movements to support the revolutionary government of Nicaragua more effectively against the US imperialist interventionist policy.

The communist and workers' parties are in the forefront of the campaign in defence of the Sandinist revolution. They sponsor the most diverse solidarity actions, are carrying on explanatory work among the population and have organised a fund-raising campaign. In parliaments and at working people's rallies and meetings, they protest against the US policy of aggression in Central America.

And now for examples of public support for Nicaragua in Western Europe and North America.

Continuing our publications on international solidarity with embattled Nicaragua. See *WMR*, No. 11, 1985.—Ed.

Austria. The Austrian Committee of Solidarity with Nicaragua, headed by a former chancellor, Dr Bruno Kreisky, has been functioning since 1978. It includes noted members of the Socialist Party of Austria (SPA) and statesmen. It helps finance diverse projects under an Austrian-Nicaraguan relief agreement. Nicaragua Teams, ARGE (Labour Community for Free Nicaragua), an organisation formed in 1984 on the basis of Austrian work teams that were in Nicaragua for a time, maintains close contact with the Committee. It is doing explanatory work and forms volunteers' teams for the construction of various civilian projects, for assistance in harvesting, and so on, in Sandino's country.

Austrian solidarity organisations and work teams are engaged in a number of Nicaraguan projects, including the construction of a health centre in Zelaya Department, the restoration of cooperatives in the north of the country destroyed by contras, the construction of a settlement near La Azucena and of 400 dwelling houses in the south. Austrian volunteers help build sanitary facilities, bridges, schools and roads. Austrian Popular Relief, a committee set up by the SPA, and Caritas, a church organisation, contribute substantially to the financing and execution of projects.

The solidarity campaign benefited from the events sponsored in August/September 1985, during the 40th festival of *Volksstimme*, the national daily of the Communist Party of Austria. In a 'Latin American village' equipped by CPA activists, visitors viewed information stands of Austria's committees of solidarity with Nicaragua.

Britain. The 84th Conference of the British Labour Party (Bournemouth, September-October 1985) declared in support of Nicaragua. The resolutions passed by it commit the party to aid the Nicaraguan government in quantities and forms enabling it to resist the aggressive activity of the United States and the subversive organisations funded by it. Somewhat earlier, Denis Healey, MP, member of the Labour Party's shadow cabinet, described the US 'sanctions' against Nicaragua as interference in the affairs of that country and demanded that the Conservative government should condemn Washington's interventionist moves. Neil Kinnock and David Steel, leaders of the Labour and Liberal parties, respectively, put their signatures to an appeal by several hundred West European MPs to the US administration to stop backing the Nicaraguan contras.

Among the more active participants in and organisers of the campaign are the Communist Party of Great Britain as well as the Socialist League, the National Union of Sheet Metal Workers, the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trade Union, the SOGAT-82 Society of Graphical and Allied Trades, the Confederation of Health Service Employees, the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians, the National Organisation of Labour Students, and other organisations.

Manifestations of solidarity vary from rallies and meetings in support of Nicaragua to fund-raising campaigns. The solidarity movement publishes and circulates *Nicaragua Today*, a periodical carrying information and other items concerning the Nicaraguan people's life and struggle. The periodical has a section called 'Campaign News' which covers actions in support of Nicaragua in Britain and elsewhere.

Denmark. Most MPs have come out in favour of greater cooperation with Nicaragua. In the message to the Prime Minister and the government in May 1985, the leaderships of the Social Democratic Party, Socialist People's Party and Radical Left Party called on them to extend trade with Nicaragua and render that country greater aid.

The Social Democratic Party has granted 50,000 kroner from its Working Class Solidarity Fund in aid for the revolutionary republic. The board of the Fund has called on the government to take early steps in support of the UN effort to neutralise the US policy of blackmail and pressure in Central America.

The Communist Party is doing much to give stronger impetus to the campaign in

defence of Nicaragua. In the spring of 1985, it sponsored a nation-wide Solidarity Week in support of the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples defending their right to freedom, national independence and independent development. The CC Executive Committee of the CPD has announced a decision to set up a fund in support of this struggle.

FRG. Thousands of actions in defence of Nicaragua have taken place since 1983. They were organised by individual political parties as well as by broad solidarity alignments. The most important of them was the 30,000-strong demonstration in Bonn on November 3, 1984; it was addressed by members of the GCP, Willy Brandt, Chairman of the Socialist International and the SDP, speakers from the Green Party, trade unionists and church leaders.

The GCP, Socialist German Working Youth and the Spartacus Marxist Union of Students have raised funds for the construction of a printing plant for Nicaragua's youth. Contributions have also come from another 15,000 West Germans; a 63-member solidarity team bearing Carlos Fonseca's name¹ worked on the project.

On the initiative of the Nicaragua Information Bureau, over 700 young West Germans went to Nicaragua to help harvest the coffee crop. During a 'Work Teams for Nicaragua' campaign, contributions in cash and valuables totalling more than 300,000 marks were received. The Falcons Socialist Youth of Germany raises funds for the 'Defend the Sandinist Revolution' campaign and participates in the organisation of recreation camps for Nicaraguan children and youth. Within the framework of the 'Building Materials for Nicaragua' campaign, the Young Socialists in the SDP has raised about 150,000 marks for the construction of a plant in Masaya that will produce sidewalk-paving materials. The Young German Democrats is helping build a children's canteen in Pantasma Valley. The youth organisation of the Federation of German Trade Unions, which has raised about one million marks, is helping set up a vocational training centre on the Solentiname Islands.

The Education and Science Trade Union has put up 100,000 marks for a new school in Santa Teresa; the Metal Industry Trade Union sent a team of specialists to Nicaragua in April 1985 to repair machines; the Postal Trade Union has helped equip a vocational training centre for Nicaragua's postal workers. Medico International is taking part in the financing of the construction of health centres and housing in Nicaragua. The 'Peace List' has allocated 300,000 marks by way of relief and is carrying out together with the Democratic Socialists a project called 'Two Sanitary Planes for Nicaragua'. About 100 volunteers have worked on Nicaraguan building sites by assignment of the International Civil Service. In 1984, the national Anti-Imperialist Solidarity Committee contributed 150,000 marks for relief.

Sweden. All the political parties bar the Conservatives declare in support of Nicaragua and against US interference in its affairs. This support is reflected in the attitude of the Swedish government. Prime Minister Olof Palme is the first Western head of government to have paid Nicaragua an official visit (February 1984). Relief for the republic is to rise from 40 million kroner in 1981/1982 to 90 million in 1985/1986.

Sweden-Nicaragua Friendship Society, whose membership is steadily growing, conducts vast solidarity campaigns. During preparations for parliamentary elections in Nicaragua, the Society induced major Swedish newspapers to carry publicity material on Sandino's country; some 2,000 people, including many well-known political and religious leaders, made cash contributions in support of the republic. The solidarity campaign included the dispatch of newsprint and work teams formed by the Society.

Operating in Nicaragua are several Swedish relief organisations. They include a Social Democratic group of women and youth, 'Save the Children', the Diakonia church relief association, groups of the Swedish Volunteer Service, and members of

the Organisation for Aid in Education. Many educational institutions and the population of whole areas of Sweden carry out actions helping Nicaraguan institutions and provinces.

Sweden's Communists have been taking an active part in the solidarity campaign. The Left Party—Communists of Sweden raises relief funds for Nicaragua. Participants in the Sandinist revolution have been invited by the party to various solidarity actions held in Sweden. Arbetarkultur, the Communist publishing house, has sent to Nicaragua a collection of poetry published expressly for that country. Aid missions to Nicaragua have been carried out by members of Communist Youth, which takes part in the collection of funds and valuables.

Canada. Many political forces and a large body of Canadian opinion condemn the US policy of intervention in Nicaragua. The 26th Convention of the Communist Party of Canada (April 1985) called for a 'Hands Off Nicaragua' campaign and effective assistance to the Nicaraguan people, who are building a new society. In September 1985, CPC CEC released a statement putting special emphasis on the close connection between the socio-economic struggles of the Canadian working people and the actions of the working people of Nicaragua in defence of the path chosen by them.

The New Democratic Party has endorsed the Contadora Group's peace initiatives; it is proposed to establish a Canadian embassy in Managua and to increase economic aid for Nicaragua. A conference of organisations of solidarity with Central American countries which sat in Toronto (April-May 1985) called on the government to do everything possible in order to head off the threat of a US invasion of sovereign Nicaragua.

Such organisations have been founded in all the English-speaking regions of Canada and in Quebec. The biggest of them are the Anti-Intervention Committee, Canadian Action for Nicaragua, the Coalition for Aid to Nicaragua, and Medical Aid to Nicaragua. A campaign launched by the solidarity movement helped raise over one million dollars for the revolutionary republic in one year. The Federal government followed the example of the public by earmarking 13.5 million dollars for the development of Nicaragua's dairy industry.

The 'Boat Campaign' and the 'Tools for Peace' movement have assumed nationwide proportions; the funds raised by them are spent on purchasing various goods, tools and plant for shipment to Nicaragua. In Ontario Province alone, 40 crates of clothing, 300,000 sheets of paper, large quantities of medical supplies, copying facilities, etc., have been purchased with money raised by the population. The Canadian work teams for aid to Nicaragua comprise 40 provincial representatives.

The Fishermen and Allied Workers Union has shipped fishing equipment to Sandino's country; the British Columbia Carpenters Union has sent a team for the construction of a school, the United Electrical Workers of Canada (Montreal), a group of experts in electronics, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a group of specialists with electric construction equipment and tools, and the United Automobile Workers of Canada, an ambulance. Canada's educational workers, women's organisations, and churchmen carry out diverse actions of solidarity with the Nicaraguan people.

USA. In spite of difficult conditions, the US Communists actively support the Nicaraguan people's just cause. Their consistent position is reflected in many party documents, such as the statement on the 65th anniversary of the founding of the party released by the CPUSA CC in September 1984. CPUSA General Secretary Gus Hall's speech to a mass rally in New York in November 1985, stressing the need for effective resistance to Washington's plans for armed intervention in Central America, had a wide echo at home and abroad.

When, in 1983, it became evident that the US administration was out to strangle the

Sandinist revolution, American trade unions launched a movement of solidarity with Nicaragua. The leaderships of the California section of the American Federation of Teachers, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers took the initiative of inviting to the United States a delegation of trade union leaders of three Latin American countries, including Nicaragua. In July 1984, American trade unionists paid a return visit to Central America, after which the General Executive Committee of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America demanded that the administration should stop threatening the revolutionary republic.

With the danger of direct armed intervention in Nicaragua by Washington growing, a wave of protest rallies and marches swept across the United States. Hundreds of people demonstrated in Boston, Detroit, Denver and other cities. After a mass rally of workers, the Seattle municipal council unanimously resolved to establish sister-city relations with Managua. In 1985, demonstrations under the slogans 'Hands Off Nicaragua' and 'End the trade embargo' took place in New York (March and July), San Francisco (April) and San Jose (May).

In April 1985, Pledge Resistance, a broad coalition of American public organisations, announced a nation-wide protest campaign against the US administration's plan to remit more funds to the Nicaraguan contras. Over 55,000 Americans joined in diverse civic disobedience actions and demonstrations in support of Nicaragua.

A group of American peace supporters sued the Reagan administration in the Federal court of Uniondale, New York State, demanding an immediate halt to the US policy of intervention in Nicaragua. Common Cause, an influential American public organisation, called for an inquiry into the legitimacy of the National Security Council's aid to Nicaraguan contra groups. Upwards of 200 teachers and students at California's Stanford University signed a petition protesting against Washington's anti-Nicaraguan moves; a campaign to collect signatures in support of similar petitions is under way in other major American universities. American veteran internationalists who in the late 1930s fought as members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade on the side of Republican Spain against fascism have raised funds and shipped to Nicaragua equipment to be installed in seven out-patient clinics.

* * *

Such are some fragments of the vast panorama of international action in support of Nicaragua, which is now inseparable from the universal struggle for peace, freedom and national sovereignty. Sandino's country, which derives strength from international solidarity, will hold out against US imperialist expansion, pressure and threats.

*Working Group of the 'WMR' Commission on
Scientific Information and Documentation*

¹ For details, see *WMR*, No. 6, 1985. —Ed.

The Reader Wants to Know Japanese-Americans in World War II

I have heard that US citizens of Japanese descent participated in the victorious war against fascism and Japanese militarism, but have seen no account of this in

articles commemorating the 40th anniversary of this victory. Is this correct, and if so how to explain it, particularly in view of the long racist treatment of Japanese-Americans and their internment in concentration camps in the USA after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor?

Rosalinda Domingo,
a Filipina student

YES, the report you heard is correct. Japanese-Americans fought forces of the fascist-militarist Axis in both the European and Asian-Pacific theatres of war.

The US magazine *Time* reported in its December 20, 1943 issue that a battalion of US-born Japanese 'is fighting well on the front line in Italy; another twenty-five hundred Japanese-Americans are elsewhere in the US Army; hundreds serve in Military Intelligence in the South Pacific'. The *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*¹ states: 'The record of the 442nd Combat Team and the 100th Battalion composed of 33,000 Japanese-Americans from Hawaii and the mainland was unparalleled. The most decorated units in American military history, they suffered more than 9,000 casualties and 600 dead.'

Less certified is the explanation of why, despite their long racist mistreatment and persecution, they established such an exemplary and extraordinary record of bravery in the US armed forces.

Topping this record of racist discrimination was the rounding up of 110,000 Japanese-American men, women, and children living in US Pacific coastal states, 64 per cent of whom were US citizens, and deporting them to various special camps enclosed by barbed wire and guarded by military forces. This action glaringly contrasted with the unrestrained and permissive status accorded US residents of German and Italian descent throughout the war years.

Since service in the US armed forces provided a way out of these camps, it is not improbable that an idea prevailed among a number of these Japanese-Americans, as the *Harvard Encyclopedia* asserts, 'that they could prove their loyalty to the United States by enlisting and distinguishing themselves in war'.

However, other explanations of this development seem more reasonable to this writer. First, their long (and continuing) struggles against the injustice of racism and its exacerbation of the special class oppression of non-white immigrant workers in the USA, predisposed the Japanese-Americans to hatred for and hostility towards the fascist-militarist Axis powers, which were attempting to impose equally unjust and harsher conditions on all humanity.

Second, and of key importance, was the influence on these struggles against class and racist oppression of a number of Japanese-American members of the Communist Party, USA. Although themselves victimised by such mistreatment in the USA, they were committed to activities aimed at implementing the democratic heritage of the American Revolution, and were keenly aware of the threat which would ensue to this heritage if the fascist-militarist aggressors were not defeated.

Substantiation of these explanations is available, fortunately, in the work of a US-born Japanese-American, Karl G. Yoneda.² A follower since his youth of Sen Katayama, the great Japanese revolutionary and internationalist who was a founder of the Communist Party, USA, Yoneda spent many years of his life before the Second World War as a worker, organiser, and leader of workers in California agriculture and industry. A member of the CPUSA since 1927, Yoneda became a writer and editor of Japanese-American publications in which he denounced the Japanese imperial system and Japan's aggression against other Asian peoples. He wrote a history of workers of Asian-Pacific Islands origin in the US working class

struggles and their particular struggles for equal citizenship rights in the US trade unions and other areas of US society.

He was among the first prisoners in the US internment camps to volunteer for service in the US armed forces, and served in Military Intelligence in the China-Burma-India theatre. With the war's end he returned to work as an honoured member of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union.

Today Yoneda continues active work in the CPUSA, serving as co-chair of the CPUSA's Commission on the struggles of the US minority of citizens of Asian-Pacific Islands origin. He and his comrade wife are active in the fight for redress by the US of the wrongs and losses caused the Japanese-Americans by their wartime incarceration in what it would be more correct to call 'concentration camps'. As a result of this latter on-going activity the US Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians has had to characterise the wartime treatment of Japanese-Americans as a 'grave injustice' motivated by racism and cupidity. Although a step has been taken towards redressing a wrong, Japanese-Americans seek restitution of their material losses in earnings and property ownership during their incarceration. Yoneda's work in this is still unfinished.

However, despite the Washington government's refusal to act on the petitions for restitution, despite the deep-rooted official and institutional racism in the USA, the Yonedas have not lessened their efforts for justice. Together with other Japanese-Americans, and with other of the non-white minorities and democratic forces arrayed against racism, Karl Yoneda expresses a sentiment increasingly popular among them. "I firmly believe," he says, "that their struggle will succeed, for I have great faith in the multi-racial working people and their allies of this nation."

John Pittman

CPUSA representative on *WMR*

¹ *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980, p. 567.

² Karl G. Yoneda, *Ganbatte*, University of California, Los Angeles, 1983.

Diary

A ceremony attended by representatives of communist and workers' parties has been held in Madrid to celebrate the 90th birthday of Dolores Ibarruri, Chairman of the Communist Party of Spain. The Editorial Board and the international staff of *WMR* send a message of congratulations to Comrade Ibarruri, noting that her long life and struggle for the ideals of communism are an example to the younger generations of revolutionaries, of fighters for the emancipation of the working masses. The message was presented by Bruno Furch, member of the *WMR* Editorial Council.

* * *

Simon Reyes Rivera, First Secretary, CC, Communist Party of Bolivia, visited the *WMR* office. He told the journal's Editorial Council about the current situation in his country and about the Communists' struggle against imperialism and local reaction, for peace and social progress.

Let the Spirit of Geneva Grow Stronger

WMR is receiving letters from readers in different countries commenting on the results of the Soviet-US summit, on disarmament and on relaxation of international tensions. These letters reflect the profound commitment of the nations to an effective solution of the most acute problem of our age, the problem of war and peace. A sampling of such letters is published below.

The First Important Step

The very fact that the Soviet-American summit in Geneva did take place is a success of the consistent peace policy pursued by the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community, a victory for the forces of peace, freedom and progress. It proves that the nations' will to peace can block those who would play with the destiny of man, pushing him to the brink of war. And if, as the saying goes, a thousand-mile-long voyage begins with the first step, this step has been taken.

In our country—as, indeed, all over the world—people welcomed the joint statement adopted at the Geneva meeting, the statement in which the Soviet Union and the United States solemnly pledged not to seek military superiority and noted the importance of preventing any war between them, whether nuclear or conventional.

The overall results of the Soviet-American dialogue are, of course, gratifying. But I do not think we should close our eyes to the difficulties that lie ahead. After all, it may be a very long way to go from declarations to actual efforts—especially since we know that fundamental differences remain in the approaches of the Soviet Union and the United States to international problems.

Anyone viewing the matter without bias will agree that the USSR came to Geneva with serious and responsible proposals. They are aimed at preventing militarisation of outer space, securing nuclear arms reductions and attaining genuine detente. But that is not all. We in Syria also appreciate the Soviet position on acute regional problems which are to be solved in the interests of the peoples concerned, without interference in their internal affairs.

At the same time, certain interests in the United States apparently still cling to the hope of securing a sort of strategic superiority over the USSR and the entire socialist community. Otherwise, why would they insist on militarising outer space—a course that is obviously in conflict with what the joint statement says. The United States is still bent on foisting a vassal status on vast regions, including the Middle East, and is trying to force the Arab peoples to surrender to the Zionists, and to block the convening of a broad international conference for a just solution to the Mideast problem. Moreover, it would be no exaggeration to say that the United States is steeped in international terrorism, piracy and aggression. One cannot find a more apt description of Washington's support for the Israeli forays against Lebanon and for the Israeli air raid on Tunis, of the interception of an Egyptian plane by the Americans.

Nevertheless, let me repeat that the first step on the thousand-mile-long journey has been taken. It is now incumbent on world public opinion—which, as was shown in Geneva, carries a great weight—to work steadfastly for more steps along this road to be taken. I am convinced that if the forces of peace succeed in making every family, every person aware of the way both sides really conduct their policies, of the way they really act, the world-wide peace movement will grow stronger and the opportunities before it, greater. We must step up the anti-imperialist struggle and expand international solidarity with the forces of national liberation and social emancipation. Pressure from the nations will make the US administration adopt, even against its

will, a more constructive approach to the realities of our age. This, in turn, will lead to new progress in the drive for peace.

Z. Saad,
Aleppo, Syria

The Wall Is Breached: What Next?

As a long-time activist in the peace movement of the United States, I want to greet peace initiatives the world over, and especially those of existing socialism, whose representative, CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov, so ably defended our common aims and aspirations during the Summit Conference with President Ronald Reagan.

Together with many colleagues here, I hail with satisfaction the Summit's breakthrough of the frigid, threatening political atmosphere, and its opening of a new beginning of the USA-USSR dialogue on arms control and the prevention of a nuclear confrontation. Nor should the significance of the agreements on air travel and cultural exchange be underestimated.

Actually, one of our problems here is countering the efforts of the war party and the mass media to belittle and distort this watershed event and its global implications.

Up to the very end of the Geneva summit the advocates of the arms buildup and their media minions sought to discredit the Summit and prejudice its results. On the very eve of the Geneva meeting the 'leaked' letter of the fire-eating Defense Secretary Weinberger, demanding Reagan reject each and every Soviet proposal, was no exception but typical of the pressure for torpedoing the Summit.

For months and even years the war party's zealots and media voices had campaigned for the violation and jettisoning of the ABM Treaty, SALT I and the still unratified SALT II, the main political-legal guidelines for preserving the military and strategic equilibrium based on equality and equal security which have averted a US-USSR nuclear confrontation until now and prevented the incineration of humanity. Besotted with anti-Communist obsessions, these irresponsible pro-war elements dismissed as 'propaganda' all Soviet initiatives that offered the opportunity for arms reductions and the strengthening of peace. Moscow's unilateral suspension of nuclear explosions was disregarded. Its removal of SS-20 missiles from operational duty, the missiles that had been deployed to counteract Washington's stationing of cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe, was likewise ignored, as was Moscow's moratorium on the deployment of medium-range nuclear missiles. Also rejected were the Soviet's specific proposals at the pre-summit Geneva talks, including deep cuts in nuclear arms and particularly, nuclear warheads on land-based strategic missiles, which was a major position of Washington's negotiators. Ignoring every opportunity to remove the nuclear threat, these aggressive elements in the United States conducted a massive ideological campaign to deceive and mislead the people.

Still, thanks to the perseverance and patient struggles of the peace forces, the socialist community and Moscow in the first place, the Washington war party was unable to prevent the Geneva meeting. True, in Geneva, the President passed up the chance for a major arms control agreement that would include a ban on weapons in space. However, Moscow made it clear that such a ban is the condition for progress in the search for arms control in future meetings. It is the pivotal, life-and-death issue for all humanity.

But this is not only a question of future survival or annihilation. It is a question now, at this moment, of people before profits, of the well-being of our people or a frenzied corporate rush by the minuscule minority of insatiably greedy and rapacious billionaire monopolists for an undreamed-of bonanza of surplus value in government allocations for Star Wars armaments. To grasp this bonanza, no crimes against the

people and the Constitution are too dastardly for this minority to commit. May we peace activists have the courage and find the means to resist and put a final end to Star Wars.

Thomas J. Franklin,
Chevy Chase, Maryland, USA

Too Early to Dismiss the Issue

The Dutch government has agreed to begin the deployment of 48 US medium-range cruise missiles. This decision was preceded by dramatic events that repeatedly challenged the notion of the 'small country syndrome'—the claim that smaller nations have little impact on the world scene.

The Dutch decision regarding the missiles was postponed several times over the past five years because public resistance was considered too strong. The nation-wide People's Petition campaign against the deployment of the US weapons collected 3.75 million signatures last fall; opinion polls and an extensive debate within the media and in parliament have shown consistently that most of the population opposes the Tomahawks.

The Netherlands, the last European country to accept the placement of US missiles, agreed to the deployment on November 1, 1985. NATO even voiced its concern that the Dutch 'drop-out' position could undermine the alliance, and the term 'Hollanditis' was coined to refer to a syndrome NATO's champions feared might spread.

The last postponement in June 1984 carried the Dutch government's condition that the Soviet Union freeze its missile arsenal. NATO spokesmen immediately claimed that the number of Soviet missiles had increased. The USSR, on the other hand, has demonstrated that the number of its operational missiles in the European part of its territory is exactly the same as it was in June 1984—that is, 243. Other missiles have been removed and the stationary launching equipment is being dismantled.* The total of Soviet SS-20 missiles is fewer than the figure given by NATO.

During his October 1985 visit to Paris Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov made a special point of these facts in the light of the concern voiced by the Dutch ruling quarters. However, the Dutch government is simply following NATO and US counts and has not taken up the opportunity for bilateral negotiations.

The Dutch government is currently run by the centrist Christian Democratic Appeal Party (CDA) and the liberal People's Party of Freedom and Democracy (PPFD), both traditionally loyal to NATO. The situation that emerged provided an interesting opportunity for seeing Christian Democratic politics in action. The calls for compromise were combined with casuistry worthy of eighteenth-century Jesuits. After all, when Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek visited Moscow in April 1985, he did not even ask the Soviets for their count of the operational SS-20s in the European part of the USSR. Nor did he bring up the matter when he met with his Soviet counterpart in New York last fall. This while the number of the Soviet missiles was presented by the Dutch government as the crucial factor.

The Dutch only opened the door to bilateral communication with Moscow, but never followed through. The display of public agony staged by statesmen full of 'blind faith' in NATO was a case of hypocritical politics developed into a form of art.

The Dutch religious activists took a different position. The idea of unilateral disarmament was reflected in the motto of the influential Interchurch Peace Council: 'Help rid the world of nuclear weapons, let it begin in the Netherlands.' This movement expanded to a massive scale in the early 1980s, when the US

* On December 12, 1985 the Soviet Union announced that the dismantling had been concluded.—Ed.

administration began to preach 'limited nuclear war' that could allegedly be contained in Europe.

The coalition that centres around the 'No to Cruise Missiles' coordinating committee provides a structure for concerted nation-wide action. Planning sessions in numerous groups are now under way to respond to the new situation. The Party of Labour and other left-wing parties are visibly involved, and the youth sections of the CDA and the PPFd have taken a stand against the missiles.

There is a law suit in process joined by 20,000 people against the government raising, among other things, the constitutionality of allowing another country the right to take offensive action against a third country without the consent of the Dutch people. Within trade union circles, notably in construction and railroads, there is a positive climate for discussing actions such as refusal to work on projects related to the missile deployment. The Municipal Council of Woensdrecht, the location of the air force base, is opposed to the placement of US nuclear weapons and is appealing to the Council of State whether the government has the right to override pre-existing plans for the community. An action group calling for civil disobedience has formed and is supported by several members of parliament and many prominent civic activists. Tax withholding, work stoppages, blockades of military installations and other non-violent mass actions are also being considered.

The actual deployment of the Tomahawks is not scheduled to take place until 1988, while parliamentary elections are to take place in May 1986. Fearing electoral gains on the Left, as well as the possibility of a split within the CDA, the government has formulated its agreement with the United States on a five-year basis to bind the hands of the next cabinet. This move, generally considered as unscrupulous, can also be challenged.

The Dutch and foreign mass media often claim that the European movement against the deployment of US missiles is now over, but indications are that even after this decision by the Dutch government, a movement as massive and deeply rooted is not so easily sidetracked or isolated. The US may have gotten its deployment agreements, but at the same time, broad public resistance has grown stronger and sharper. While in 1981 the Dutch Party of Labour stood alone among the socialist parties of Europe in rejecting the US missiles, a similar position has now been adopted by the British Labour Party and strong currents in the West German SPD. As noted by NATO award recipient Professor Beugel at the NATO meeting in Brussels in November 1985, the socialist parties of Europe have 'dropped out' of the NATO line in substance if not in form.

The political landscape is indeed changing and 'Hollanditis' may still be at large.

Lisa Chason,
Amsterdam, Netherlands

A Dialogue That Gives Rise to Hope

We in Honduras, including people of widely different political convictions, followed the Geneva summit very closely. That is only natural: its results have a bearing not only on Soviet and US interests but on the future of all mankind.

The results of the talks give rise to hope. The leaders of the world's two greatest powers declared that they would shape their relations proceeding from the common understanding that nuclear war must not be allowed to break out. This is particularly important today, when international tensions run high and there exist many flashpoints that can produce a conflict threatening all nations. It is to be hoped that the success of the Geneva dialogue will positively influence the future of international relations, reduce the level of tensions and strengthen detente. However, one must not forget that it is the United States which is responsible for this global state of instability.

Let me say a few words about the region I live in. All responsibility for the dangerous situation there rests squarely with the United States.

It is a fact that US imperialism strives to perpetuate its dominance over our peoples and to eliminate their gains. It is a fact that, declaring Central America and the Caribbean to be a zone of its 'vital interests', the United States interferes high-handedly in the internal affairs of our peoples, violates their national sovereignty and even overthrows the governments it does not like. It is a fact that Washington has overrun my country, is waging an undeclared war against Nigaragua, threatening Cuba and helping the Salvadoran dictatorship in its attempts to drown the patriotic movement in blood.

General Secretary Gorbachov was right when he said at the press conference in Geneva that one cannot shape one's policy without regard for historical realities. Colonial rule is a thing of the past. It is time to give up imperial ambitions and learn to respect the right of every nation to choose the system, methods and forms of development it prefers. We welcome the Soviet position that the search for the settlement of regional problems should rule out any interference in the internal affairs of the nations.

The struggle against the more aggressive forces of imperialism and the struggle for peace are therefore closely interrelated. I think we should bear this in mind if we want to move faster along the way clearly charted in Geneva—the way to a better and secure future.

Enrique Torres,
La Esperanza, Honduras

the book scene

The Country of Great and Bold Endeavour

O. Arévalo. E. Cortés, *Ahora Contamos*. . . (And Now About. . .), Ediciones 40° Aniversario, Buenos Aires, 1985, 128 pp.

Not many people in the Soviet Union have heard about Mikhail Shkunov. In the 1930s however, his name was linked with an important landmark in the history of the world's first state of workers and peasants. On March 13, 1930 the unemployment registration office in Moscow was closed. Shkunov, who was last on the list, got a job.

Within a mere 13 years, the new social system eradicated unemployment, a holdover of the old order and a grave social ill with which millions of people are still cursed in capitalist countries. This point is made in *And Now About*. . . , a book published in Buenos Aires.

The book sums up the impressions Oscar Arevalo and Eugenia Cortes, Argentine Communist journalists, gathered on their numerous trips to the Soviet Union. They

last visited the USSR in late 1984 and early 1985. The country was preparing to mark the 40th anniversary of the victory over fascism. Work was under way to draw up the draft new edition of the CPSU Programme and other important documents to be submitted to the 27th regular congress of the party which was to take stock of the progress made and chart the further way leading Soviet society to communism. All this was reflected in the contents and the thrust of the book.

By summing up a wealth of observations, impressions and results of meeting people and studying documents, the authors produced a lively book containing many interesting facts and reflections on the past and the present of the USSR.

Soviet society is examined on two planes—economic and social. Numerous examples are cited to illustrate the achievements of the Soviet economy. The reader will learn that in 1984 the USSR became the world's biggest producer of natural gas and that earlier, it emerged as the leader in the production of oil, pig iron, steel, tractors, harvesters and several other types of engineering products. On the average, some 200 modern industrial projects are put into operation each year.

The authors do not merely quote statistics but reveal the social meaning behind them and help the reader to grasp the essence of the processes currently under way in the Soviet Union—processes that follow up the CPSU policy of accelerating the country's socio-economic development and imparting, on this basis, a radically new quality to society. Here, structural changes connected with the switching of the economy to the track of intensive development are of considerable importance. This objective calls for efforts to re-equip and restructure production on the basis of scientific and technological progress, its principal fields comprising electronics, automation, nuclear energy, development of materials with predetermined properties, biotechnology and informatics. New branches arise and advance rapidly so as to accelerate the scientific and technological revolution. Its progress can be glimpsed from the following facts: from 1971 to 1984, 7,000 automated systems were produced in the Soviet Union. In 1984 alone, some 4,000 new modifications of numerically controlled machine tools appeared (see p. 13).

Arevalo and Cortes show socialist society in its dynamic development, describe the search for solutions to complex problems and pay special attention to the human factor. The authors asked workers and factory managers about the objectives pursued in the restructuring and scientific and technological modernisation of production, about the essence of the new approach to economic problems, about ways of enhancing the creative initiative and the involvement of working people in economic management. The answers quoted in the book reflect the brisk, business-like atmosphere that is dominant in the Soviet Union.

The authors highlight the active attitude to life typical of the Soviet people, their striving to eliminate shortcomings, their concerned, creative approach to the implementation of the tasks set by the party. Specifically, Arevalo and Cortes discuss the extensive introduction into the national economy of the experience gained by enterprises and whole industries taking part in an economic experiment designed to improve management and enhance the economic independence and the responsibility of production units for the end result of their work.

A substantial part of the book is devoted to the development of Siberia, a vast region that is to become the essential base of the country's future economic development. 'The mineral resources, the forests, rivers and lands of Siberia,' the authors note, 'make it possible to build first-rate projects which are superior, in terms of efficiency, to similar projects in the European part of the country. Today, Siberia already accounts for all of the increase in the production of natural gas and oil . . . and for a sizable part of the coal output. The economic weight of Siberia's mining industry is 2.5 times greater than the national average. In 1981 Siberia produced more fuel . . . than the European part of the USSR and the Urals combined' (p. 35). This is where

the magnitude of the plans and achievements of the Soviet people is particularly obvious. The children and grandchildren of the heroes of the first five-year plans uphold the vibrant continuity linking the different generations. They have shown their mettle at the construction of the Baikal-Amur Railroad which is giving a powerful impetus to the development of the petrochemical, woodworking, steel and non-ferrous metal industries, to the production of fertilisers and to other branches of the national economy.

The economic strategy of the CPSU is examined in organic unity with social policy, its essence illustrated by specific examples from the day-to-day life of various people, including the family of an industrial worker from Minsk. Dialogue is a favourite technique used by the authors to better convey the truth about the Soviet Union to Latin American readers, to demonstrate the fundamental difference between the two social systems.

It is common knowledge that the position of youth reflects the state of this or that society. Capitalism is unable to offer a cardinal solution to the problems the younger generations constantly encounter. On the other hand, socialism guarantees young men and women the right to education, work and recreation. 'We do not claim that all contradictions have disappeared,' the authors remark. 'But the socio-economic factors of disorientation have been truly eliminated' (pp. 61-62).

Faith in the communist ideals is a salient feature of Soviet youth. 'The foremost quality of a real man is his spiritual generosity, his ability to share his knowledge with others,' the Argentine journalists were told by the boys and girls they met. 'It's very important to learn from childhood to use your time properly. . . It doesn't matter who you are, a turner or an engineer. Spiritual qualities have nothing to do with your occupation: a real man must always be a humanist and think about the good of others' (pp. 62-63).

The Communist Party and the Soviet government regard it as an essential task to bring up young people as champions of the fine traditions established by the older generations. The remarks of students, workers, teachers and engineers quoted in the book show that young people are making a valuable contribution to the building of communism, that they are sensitive to international issues and active in the drive to remove the nuclear threat.

Stressing the tireless efforts of the Soviet Union to uphold peace, the authors recall that as early as the historic year 1917 the Soviet government entered the international scene with a passionate appeal to put an end to war. The joy of creative work is the rationale of socialist society, and nothing is more hostile to it than war.

By presenting a truthful image of the Soviet people and an accurate and sincere reflection of their hopes, joys and concerns, the book promotes better international understanding and deals a blow to the inventions of bourgeois theorists and the reactionary mass media about Soviet policy. These quarters began by decrying 'Bolshevik atrocities' and are now brandishing the bugbear of 'communist expansion'. The authors stress that 'the "long arm of Moscow" was discovered as soon as any liberation struggle was launched or whenever the imperialists wanted to justify aggression or arms build-up' (p. 87). Such was the case with Cuba and Vietnam. Such was also the case in Argentina—way back in 1930, when the reactionaries tried to justify a coup they staged by invoking a mythical 'Bolshevik conspiracy'.

The call to join forces in the struggle for peace sounded with renewed vigour in the Appeal to the Peoples, Parliaments and Governments of All Countries, issued by the Soviet leadership to mark the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II. Arevalo and Cortes close their book with a quotation from this document, thus reiterating the humanitarian essence of socialism.

Alejandra Rojas

Windows With Blinds Undrawn

Alvaro Cunhal, *O partido com paredes de vidro* (A Party with Glass Walls), Edições 'Avante!', Lisbon, 1985, 271 pp.

Where do the Communists get their drive for struggle from? What motivates us to give all our energy, time, abilities and, if necessary, lives for the party's cause? Is it true that each person joining the Portuguese Communist Party has to forfeit his own individuality? Is it true that the party's unity is ensured by barrack-like discipline with unquestioning obedience from the rank-and-file to orders from above?

The author of these lines has on many occasions heard Portuguese Communists answering questions of this kind patiently and substantively before the most diverse audiences. The character and the tonality of the questions are not accidental. Above all, they reflect people's unflagging interest in the Portuguese Communist Party, which has had a spectacularly dramatic history. It is the only political organisation in Portugal that far from falling apart under the blows from the Salazar regime (1926-1974) was able, despite having had to function underground and in the face of harassment, to grow into the leading force of the anti-fascist resistance. Another thing that strikes people is the determination, passion, and staunchness with which over a period of almost eleven years the Communists have been defending the gains of the democratic revolution of 1974-1975 against the attacks of internal and international reaction.

However, in the questions asked by some people there is an instinctive suspicion of the party, about which there is in the country so much contradictory and 'enigmatic' talk, and even fear of the word 'communism'. Nothing about this is surprising. The savage anti-communist campaign conducted by the fascist regime for 48 years left a deep imprint in Portuguese society. To this day elements that go to all lengths to discredit the Communist Party dominate the state-run mass media.

Life makes it incumbent upon Communists constantly to expose the inventions of the ideological adversary. A large contribution to this task has been made by *A Party with Glass Walls* written by Alvaro Cunhal, PCP General Secretary, approved by the Central Committee's Political Commission, and brought out in Lisbon by the 'Avante!' Publishing House. The title itself is an invitation to readers to look, together with the author, into the house built by the joint efforts of the Portuguese Communists; to find out how and with what they live; and draw their own conclusions about whether the 'riddles' attributed to the PCP by bourgeois propaganda exist.

In the introduction Alvaro Cunhal writes of the character and content of our epoch, showing that the revolutionary party of the working class has, in its struggle for a fundamental restructuring of society, to take into consideration the universal laws of social development, on the one hand, and national specifics, on the other. He warns against two widespread distortions in the practice of applying Marxist-Leninist theory. The first is expressed in a dogmatic attitude to the works of the founders of scientific socialism, in an absolutisation of these works, and in a striving to supplant analyses of changing realities with references to known formulas and quotations. 'A Marxist-Leninist,' Alvaro Cunhal writes, 'should on no account reject reality . . . with the argument that it was not foreseen by the founders' (p. 23). The other extreme is similarly dangerous, namely, the attempts of some people to sacrifice the teaching to momentary political benefits; to 'renew' Marxism by separating Leninism from it. A lesson of experience is that those who 'run a dividing line between Marx and Lenin', denying the universal significance of his theoretical heritage, 'ultimately disavow Marx as well' (p. 24).

Clarifying the substance of the key provisions of the PCP Programme, adopted at the Sixth Congress in 1965, Alvaro Cunhal stresses that at all stages of its history the Communist Party has unfailingly been (and still is) the only political force in Portugal utterly devoted to championing the people's interests and the country's sovereignty and independence. Precisely here lies the answer to one of the 'riddles' of the PCP—the people's mounting confidence in it and the numerical growth of its membership even in the face of reaction's frontal assault on the gains of the April Revolution, an assault that has continued since 1976.¹

Alvaro Cunhal makes it compellingly clear that the PCP is the vanguard of the working class and not an organisation with a diffused social base. The party's class explicitness is seen in its ideology, policies, composition, structure, and forms and methods of struggle. Today more than half of its members are industrial or agricultural workers. Moreover, the party abides by the tradition that workers carry decisive weight in its Central Committee and other leading bodies (for example, of the 25 members and alternate members of the CC Political Commission 13 are workers).

At the same time, the PCP articulates the interests of other anti-monopoly classes and strata that bear the burden of the policy of restoring state-monopoly capitalism being put into effect in Portugal. True, Alvaro Cunhal notes, some party organisations are oriented solely towards the working class, underrating the problems of society's middle strata. This checks the growth of the PCP's influence in individual districts and in some areas of public life (p. 58).

Alvaro Cunhal draws attention to one more circumstance that has to be rectified as quickly as possible—the disparity between the PCP's actual influence among the people and the results of its election campaigns. At elections the Communists and their allies regularly receive about 20 per cent of the votes.² The party aims to win more voter support.

The book shows the speciousness of one of the most vulgar arguments of anti-communist propaganda, namely, that the PCP is 'undemocratic'. Comparing the mechanism of its operation with that of other political organisations in Portugal, it eloquently proves that none of them can rival the PCP for the depth of democracy in inner-party life. The real content of democracy, Alvaro Cunhal notes, goes far beyond the framework of outdated criteria and norms (p. 100). Inner-party democracy implies not only mandatory compliance in practice with the principles of democratic centralism but also constant enrichment of the experience of collective work and collective leadership; the uprooting of manifestations of individualism, subjectivism, and careerism; the promotion of fraternal and humane relations between Communists; the involvement of the entire party in drawing up and implementing its general line.

The bourgeois press has often been perplexed by the unanimity and enthusiasm with which resolutions are passed at congresses and conferences of the Portuguese Communists. In its efforts to interpret this 'riddle', it addresses the customary rules and traditions of non-communist parties. This produces the allegation that the unity of the PCP (the right-wing press calls it 'monolithism') is due to a careful selection of delegates, the omnipotence of the party apparatus, rigid, military-type discipline, pressure and coercion, and even the 'political and mental deficiency' of Communist Party members, who, it is claimed, 'vote thoughtlessly for any recommendation' (pp. 114-115).

This interpretation is evidence that superficiality and prejudice are at the back of assessments of the PCP. Actually, the unanimity of the voting at party congresses, Alvaro Cunhal writes, is the culmination of the immense political, explanatory, and organisational work that precedes these forums. At the preparatory stage draft documents are open to mass discussion and editing.³ All party organisations, groups,

and cells are involved in the discussions; tens of thousands of Communists move suggestions; thousands of additions and amendments are introduced into documents. Exchanges of views on such a large scale are an experience that has no equal in Portugal's political life.

In dealing at length with the style of the party's inner life, Alvaro Cunhal writes of the role of the collective and the individual. Collective work, he notes, requires the utilisation of the talents, abilities, and knowledge of every Communist in the party's interest and should on no account be an obstacle to the promotion of personal initiative (p. 83). Further, it is vital to cut short any indication of connivance at individualism and egocentrism for these lead to the rise of authoritarian and autocratic ambitions.

The style of leadership gets much attention in this book. The more rights a party functionary has, the greater his responsibility becomes and the more exacting must be the assessments of his work. 'To lead,' Alvaro Cunhal writes, 'does not mean to order, command, instruct, and impose one's views' (p. 123). The worst features of a leader, he notes, are superciliousness relative to subordinates, the habit of deciding everything without consulting others, arrogance, and dogmatism. Moreover, a serious threat arises to the party when a leading body (of any level) endeavours to isolate, seclude itself from rank-and-file members.

The most important qualities of a Communist holding office, it is stressed in the book, are the striving constantly to broaden his knowledge and draw lessons from experience, and the ability to listen to the opinions of others and accept criticism. An indispensable condition of a correct style of work must be close contact of leading bodies with party organisations and rank-and-file members, with the working people and uncommitted democrats.

The PCP General Secretary emphatically castigates flattery and laudation. Such an atmosphere erodes a party's moral health, undermines its ethical principles, and creates fertile soil for the emergence of a personality cult, which is dangerous and morally alien to the party.

Alvaro Cunhal focuses on questions concerning the selection and training of party cadres and the struggle against bureaucratic tendencies, and relates how after it acquired legal status the Communist Party was able to ensure a harmonious combination of experience and youth in its leading bodies. Continuity, a gradual renewal of the leading core, and an influx of young cadres are symptoms of an organisation's political health. Further, it is noted that competent, decent, and devoted people constitute the wealth of the PCP, which looks after its functionaries and strives to provide them with the most auspicious working conditions. But it is opposed to the creation of any privileges for party leaders.

In the concluding chapter Alvaro Cunhal repulses the ideological pressure being brought to bear by the class adversary, who demands that the PCP 'prove' its 'independence' and 'respectability'. The orchestrators of this pressure 'advise' the Communists to renounce Marxism-Leninism; to cut off relations of friendship with the CPSU; to level criticism at the USSR and the other socialist countries; to break with proletarian internationalism; to abstain from advocating socialist structural changes in Portugal and make allowances for the existence of different trends in the party.

In reply to this 'advice', Alvaro Cunhal declares that the Communists will not yield to the adversary's political pressures and will go on, as before, asserting their independence, being guided by Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and promoting fraternal relations with the CPSU and other communist parties. The party will not reshape its class image and will never be the party the bourgeoisie would like it to become.

More than half a year has passed since the publication of Alvaro Cunhal's new

book. Interest in it does not abate: there have been five printings in Portugal and the book continues to figure in the national list of books enjoying the biggest reader demand. One can understand the Portuguese readers: never before has any Portuguese political party opened its 'windows' so wide to them, allowing them to see it from inside. This step can only be made by those who are strong and honest, by those who are certain that they are right.

Sergio Tatais

¹ Whereas at the height of the revolution (March 1975) the party had 100,000 members, in December 1983 its membership exceeded 200,000. By way of comparison, the two other leading parties in Portugal—the Socialist and Social Democratic parties—have 40,000 and 60,000 members respectively.—Ed.

² At the parliamentary elections in October 1985 the PCP and its allies in the Alliance for People's Unity bloc got 15.5 per cent of the vote.—Ed.

³ For example, during the preparations for the PCP's Tenth Congress (December 1983) there were, only within the span of two months, over 3,000 meetings attended by 55,000 Communists. Over 3,500 amendments and additions were addressed to the congress, and of these 57 per cent were incorporated in the final resolution.—Ed.

New Books

Komintern und Friedenskampf. Auswahl von Dokumenten und Materialien 1917-1939 (The Comintern and the Struggle for Peace. Documents and Materials for 1917-1939, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1985, 304 pp.

THIS book takes the reader into a period replete with dramatic events, a period extending from the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution to the outbreak of World War II. Against the background of the class struggles of those years it traces the emergence and subsequent work of the Communist International and shows its contribution to the development of the international working class movement and the founding of Marxist-Leninist parties. The passage of time brings out more distinctly the significance of the resolutions adopted by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern (Moscow, 1935). These resolutions played a big role in organising the struggle against fascism, imperialist reaction, and war, for peace, national independence, democracy, and socialism.

Ho Chi Minh, *The Great Vietnamese-Soviet Friendship*, Chi That, Hanoi, 1985, 216 pp. (in Vietnamese).

The all-sided cooperation and close alliance with the USSR and the other socialist community countries constitute a major guarantee of Vietnam's successful advance along its chosen path. This is the keynote of the speeches and articles by the late leader of the Vietnamese people collected in this book. In these speeches and articles Ho Chi Minh attaches paramount importance to the traditional relations between the communist parties of the two countries founded on proletarian internationalism and fidelity to Marxism-Leninism. Gratitude is expressed to the Soviet Union for its assistance and support to the people of Vietnam in their struggle for national liberation and their efforts to build a socialist society.

A. V. Bachurin, *Intensifikatsia i effektivnost* (Intensification and Efficiency), Ekonomika, Moscow, 1985, 264 pp.

This work considers the measures being taken by the CPSU and the Soviet government to ensure a radical acceleration of scientific and technological progress and make the economic mechanism more efficient. The author, an economist, dwells

in detail on the economic and social aspects of industrial intensification, which opens up new prospects for a significant growth of labour productivity and for society's advancement.

La federation syndicale mondiale, 1945-1985 (World Federation of Trade Unions, 1945-1985, Prague, 1985, 168 pp. (in French, English, and Spanish).

This book, published on the 40th anniversary of the WFTU, may be described as a history of the World Federation of Trade Unions in facts and figures. The statistics given in it are evidence of the growing influence and membership of this largest federation of trade unions in the world. Affiliated to it are 84 national trade unions in 74 countries representing over 206 million working people on all continents. Unity and international solidarity have been and are the working people's most potent weapon in their struggle for economic and political emancipation, peace, and social progress. The year 1986, the concluding chapter notes, will see two major events for the world working class movement: the centenary of May Day (the international festival of the working people) and the 11th World Congress of Trade Unions to be convened in the GDR's capital to chart the tasks of the World Federation of Trade Unions for the immediate future.

Capitalist Exploitation in Greece. Its Extend and Forms, Synchroni epochi, Athens, 1985, 338 pp. (in Greek).

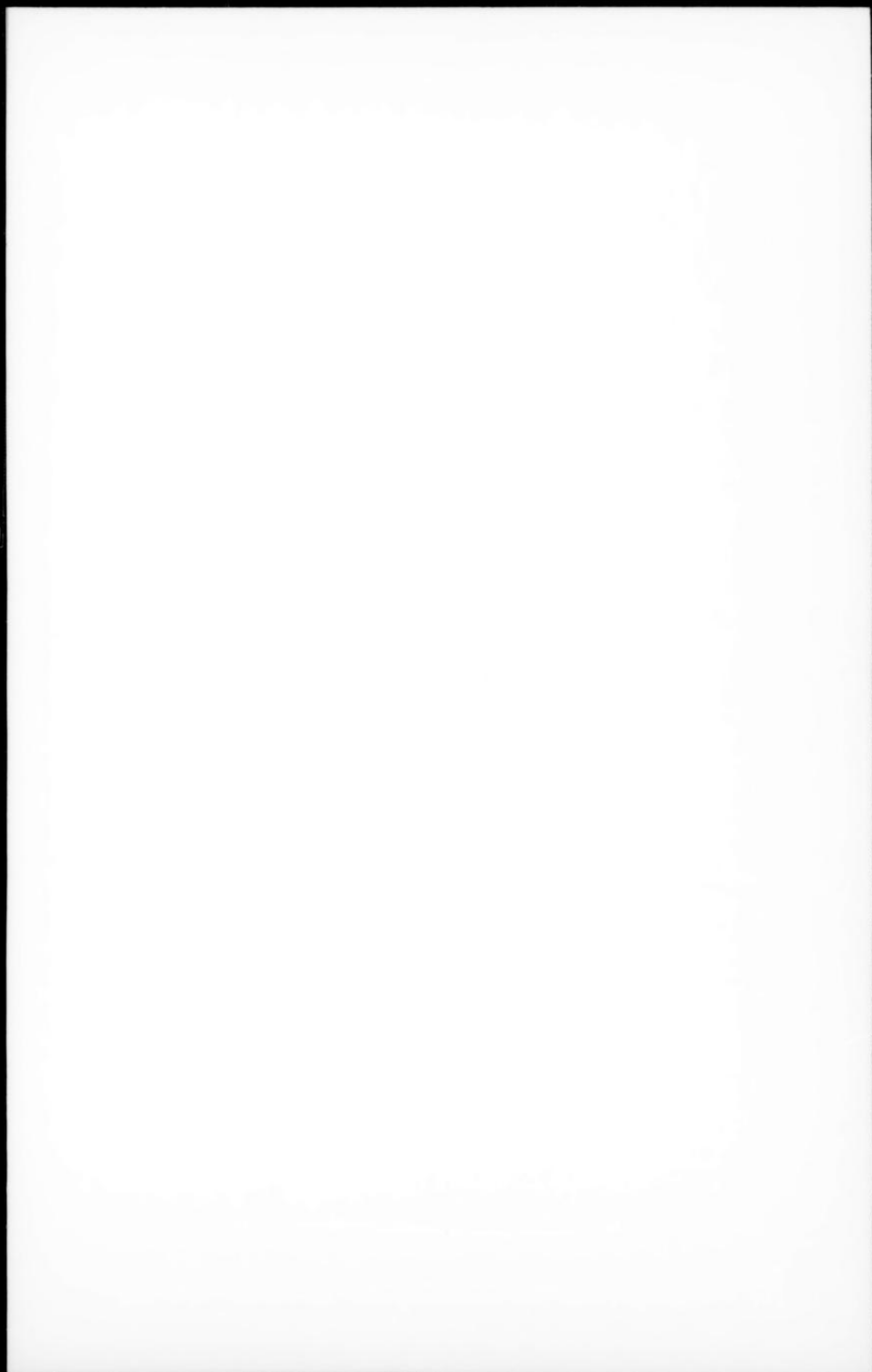
The question of the character of the relations of production is constantly in the focus of the ideological and political struggle in the capitalist world. Bourgeois and reformist ideologues seek to obscure the fact that capitalism is an exploiting system. This book, written at the Centre of Marxist Studies in Athens, offers an argued reply to the apologists of 'free enterprise'. On the basis of concrete facts from Greek reality it shows the extent and forms of exploitation and makes it clear that there is a need for a broad democratic alliance against state-monopoly capital.

Akhmed Saad, *Economic Development of Palestine*, Dar al-Ittihad, Haifa, 1985, 218 pp. (in Arabic).

The dedication in this book by an Israeli academic is 'To all fighters for the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine'. It presents an analysis of the socio-economic changes that have taken place in Palestine in the period from the close of the nineteenth century to the moment the operation of the British Mandate to govern this territory ceased. It unbares the political motivation and methods of the Zionist development of Arab lands that serves as an instrument ensuring imperialist domination in the Middle East. In its present extremely acute and explosive form, the author writes, the Palestine problem is the direct outcome of a conspiracy between reaction, imperialism, and Zionism.

Arturo Marcos Lozza, *Tiempo de Huelgas* (Time of Strikes), Editorial Anteo, Buenos Aires, 1985, 302 pp.

Underlying this book are talks with Florindo Moretti (1900-1983), member of the CC Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Argentina and a leading personality of the communist and working class movement of Argentina. But this is not so much a biographical work as a historical account of the courageous struggle of the republic's working people for their rights, against domination first by British and then by North American imperialism aided and abetted by the local oligarchy and landowners. The book covers the period from the birth of the Argentine proletariat at the close of the nineteenth century to the coup in 1930 by reactionary military frightened by the sharp exacerbation of the class actions of the working people. This was a period of the first major strikes and demonstrations, of protests against the country's penetration by foreign capital, a period that saw the founding of the Communist Party, the trade unions, and the peasant associations.



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