

WORLD

Problems of

MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

REVIEW

April 1986 Vol. 29 No. 4
\$2.00 ISSN 0043-8642



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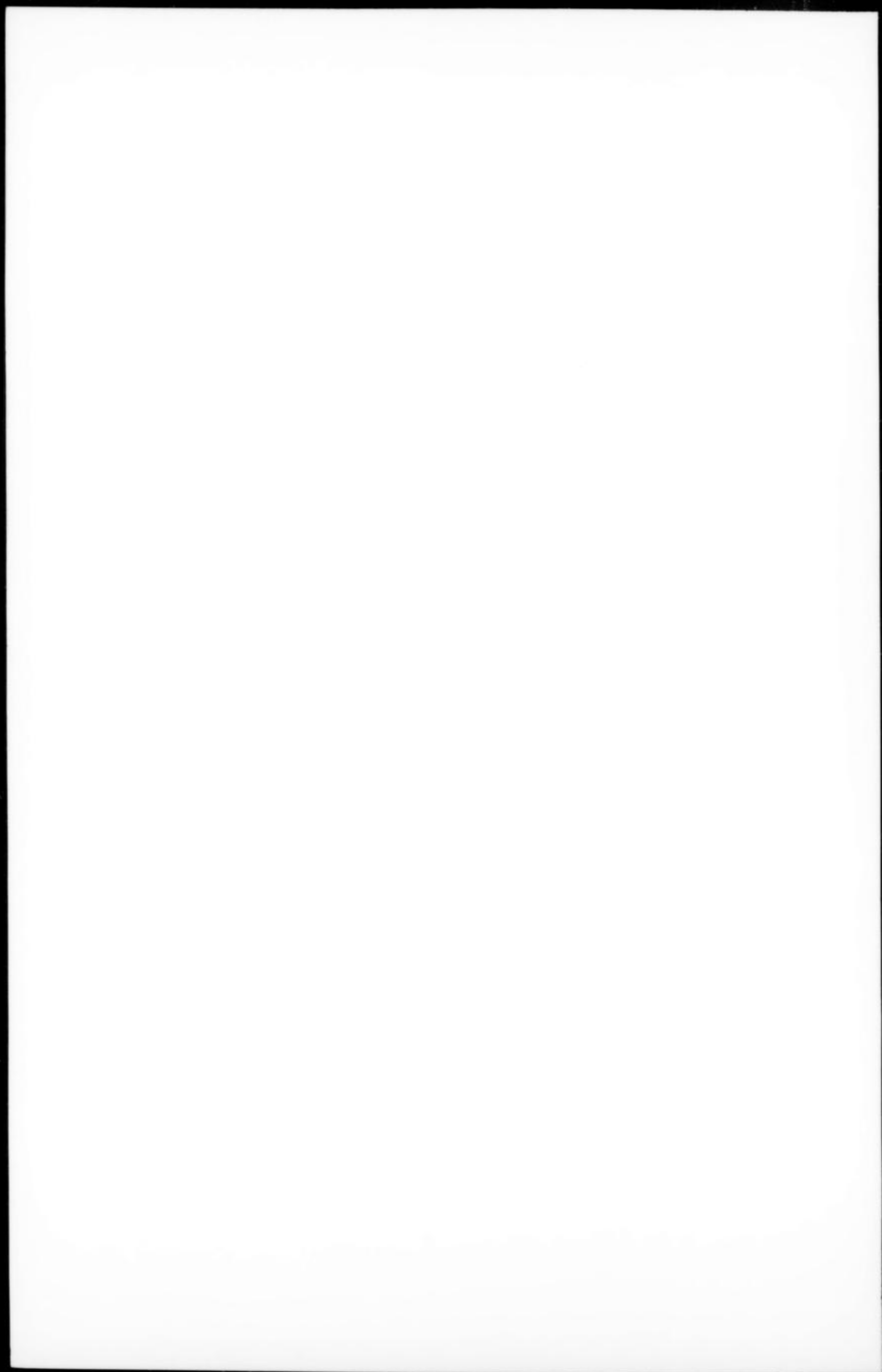
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world marxist review

VOLUME 29 NUMBER 4 APRIL 1986

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

*Theoretical and Information Journal of Communist
& Workers Parties Throughout the World*

WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

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Subscriptions to the National Editions of *Problems of Peace and Socialism* should be sent to:

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Central Books Ltd.,
14 The Leathermarket,
London SE1 3ER, England.

Progress Subscription Service,
71 Bathurst Street,
3rd Floor,
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Rani Jhansi Road,
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New Horizon Publications,
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BRD
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e Importadora C.A.
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Lenin's Party Rises to the Challenge of Our Age

WMR Delegation on the 27th Congress of the CPSU

EACH of us has been to Moscow before—many times, on various missions and in all seasons. But we will long remember the winter morning of February 25. As always, the guards of honour at the Lenin Mausoleum, the ancient onion domes and towers of the Kremlin and the snow-covered fir trees by the Kremlin walls had an air of solemnity. But that day, the familiar picture assumed a special significance: the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was opening at the Palace of Congresses.

Workers, collective farmers, engineers, scientists, economic managers, educators and representatives of party and other mass organisations from all over the Soviet Union filled the hall. They were the builders and full-fledged masters of their vast country, gathered there to review their accomplishments and discuss what should be done to advance farther and faster. The Political report of the CPSU Central Committee, delivered at the Congress by Mikhail Gorbachov, other reports and speeches by delegates reflected sincere concern for the prosperity of the country and the future of the world. The work of the Soviet communists' forum has reiterated that socialism and peace are indivisible. The party of Lenin is fully resolved to promote and uphold these two greatest gains of the world's working people. The party faces the future with confidence and optimism, and, naturally, this was also felt by the foreign guests.

While we were preparing for this trip to Moscow, we expected the deliberations of the congress to become a major event not only in the Soviet Union but also on the international scene. And still we were amazed by the great scope of the tasks the party of Lenin set itself, by its bold and principled approach to the most pressing issues of our age.

One cannot describe everything in a brief report written to record our immediate impressions. And so we will try to focus on what we decided was particularly important.

We are convinced that the 27th Congress of the CPSU marked the advent of a qualitatively new stage in the development of the world's first state of working people, the state born of the October Revolution. The congress has opened broader vistas and created greater opportunities for the realisation of the historical advantages of socialist society which—unlike the societies of our countries—has forever abolished exploitation of man by man, ethnic inequality, the sway of foreign capital, social contrasts, unemployment and poverty. The dynamic socialist society of the Soviet Union knows its strength and is confident.

"The path traversed by the country, its economic, social and cultural achievements," Mikhail Gorbachov said at the congress, "confirm the vitality of Marxist-Leninist doctrine and socialism's tremendous potential as embodied in the progress of Soviet society. We can be legitimately proud of everything that has been achieved in these years of intense labour and struggle."

Pride in these achievements was expressed both from the podium and in conversations between sessions. However, recapitulation of past accomplishments was by no means

the leitmotif of either the Political Report of the Central Committee or of the delegates' statements. On the contrary, most of the attention was focused on efforts to overcome difficulties and step up progress in the spirit of the tradition started by Lenin. Things that were neglected in political and practical work were discussed, as were unfavourable trends in the economic, social, intellectual and ethical spheres. It was stated that signs of stagnation had begun to surface in the social fabric.

The delegates discussed thoroughly yet passionately what ways and means should be used to put matters right as soon as possible. The discussion dealt with very specific issues and was completely devoid of ostentation, rhetoric or bombast. This businesslike atmosphere produced a great impression on us and on other foreign guests.

"The striving for renovation, the powerful upsurge of the Leninist spirit, of optimism, enthusiasm and hope can be felt tangibly in the atmosphere of your 27th Congress," Fidel Castro said, greeting the delegates on behalf of socialist Cuba. "The entire course of preparations for the congress and profoundly critical, comprehensively analytical, brilliant and bold report of Comrade Gorbachov tell us that although you have already made great political, economic, social and scientific strides, although you have already won great glory in the struggle for the freedom of your country, although the Soviet people and their militant communist vanguard have already displayed outstanding heroism, nothing will ever block your unstoppable advance towards new lofty landmarks along the way opened by the October Revolution."

Decisive acceleration of the country's social, economic and intellectual development, and qualitative renovation of society constitute the truly revolutionary task which the Soviet Communists have set, rising to the challenge of the times, to the urgent demands of the current stage in the country's history.

First and foremost this concerns a higher rate and a new quality of economic growth—comprehensive intensification of production on the basis of scientific and technological progress, a restructuring of the economy and efficient forms of economic management, of labour organisation and incentives. The policy of acceleration implies a vigorous social policy, consistent promotion of the principles of social justice, as well as efforts to perfect social relations. The CPSU believes that it is unthinkable and impossible to tackle these tasks without further developing democracy in all its aspects. "Democracy," the Political Report stresses, "is the wholesome and pure air without which a socialist public organism cannot live a full-blooded life."

Speaking highly of this precept, Alvaro Cunhal, General Secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party, told us: "As an integral feature of the socialist state and of the party, democracy is one of the fundamental ideas which highlights the directions for the creative deepening of theory and for the practical action charted by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. I refer to the assessments and objectives which will no doubt exert a powerful impact on the perfection of socialism and on its world-wide influence."

The concept of acceleration permeates all three major party documents approved by the congress—the new edition of the CPSU Programme, the amended CPSU Rules and the Guidelines for the Social and Economic Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and in the Period Ending in the Year 2000. We all know that the draft texts of these documents, published in the autumn of 1985, gave rise to an extensive discussion throughout the party and the nation. Millions of Soviet citizens expressed their ideas and proposals in the course of this large-scale consultation with the people. These views were taken into consideration in the final version of the documents.

The objective of doubling, by the year 2000, the country's production potential, the volume of the resources to be used to meet the people's requirements and national income—the latter through intensive development—reflects some of the general guidelines laid down by the congress. The Soviet people we talked to stressed that the country's powerful and growing economic, scientific and technological potential, the well-trained cadre of experts and workers in all economic branches, the considerable store of raw materials, the rapidly growing creative energy of the masses and the full

backing they gave to the CPSU's policy made everyone confident that the bold plans of Lenin's party were feasible.

The delegates of the party's supreme forum came to the Kremlin bringing with them their experience accumulated over the almost ten months of work to implement the course towards renovation and acceleration, advanced by the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. We talked to many people, including G. S. Bashtaniuk, a worker of the Kama Auto Works who was sent to the congress by the Communists of the Tatar Autonomous Republic. He told us that over this brief period, many new developments had occurred in the life of the party organisation and of the works as a whole: meetings turned into interesting and lively events, shop floor and technological discipline improved, and the drive for the high quality of KAMAZ trucks ceased to be a mere slogan and became a vital concern for all Kama Auto workers. Like other delegates Bashtaniuk said he was sure that the decisions of the congress would promote and increase positive changes in the social fabric.

All statements made at the party forum reflected a commitment to creative work and high hopes for the future which must be peaceful, both for the Soviet Union and for the world. The current period of history, it was noted, poses a tough challenge before all mankind: man has created not only extremely powerful means of production but also, unfortunately, means of self-destruction unprecedented in their effectiveness. The CPSU holds that the arms race launched by imperialism, the stockpiling and perfection of weapons, threaten the world with a global nuclear conflict in which there would be no winner but in which civilisation may perish.

Peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, a state of international affairs dominated not by armed force but by neighbourly relations and cooperation benefiting all nations is the only rational and acceptable solution. One needs hardly recall that this concept was advanced by Soviet Russia literally at birth, in Lenin's famous Decree on Peace of November 8, 1917. Throughout its history, the Soviet Union has been striving to promote this concept and make it a norm of international relations.

Upholding the traditional commitment to peace established by the previous CPSU congresses, the Soviet Communists have now advanced an integrated programme of peace up to the end of this century. They propose tangible nuclear disarmament measures which could be implemented in three stages by the year 2000, under appropriate international controls. These proposals, which were set forth in Mikhail Gorbachov's Statement of January 15, 1986 and which can be said to have opened the UN-designated International Year of Peace, have been welcomed warmly in our countries and in other nations. Millions of people justly regard them as a realistic, concrete and carefully scheduled plan of action. We are profoundly gratified that the 27th Congress of the CPSU reiterated the Soviet Union's dedication to the consistent implementation of this plan which is seen as the central objective of CPSU foreign policy in the coming years.

Mounting its peaceful offensive, the party of Lenin put forward new and far-reaching initiatives at its supreme forum, including the idea of a comprehensive system of international security. The Political Report of the Central Committee formulated the underlying principles of this system in the military, political, economic and humanitarian spheres. The CPSU holds that these principles could serve as a starting point and a framework for a direct and systematic—both bilateral and multilateral—dialogue conducted by the leaders of various countries. Of particular importance is a dialogue of the five nuclear powers who bear most of the responsibility for the world's future. Proposing that the leaders of these countries gather at a round table, the Soviet Union stresses that this is not a privilege, not a foundation for claims to "leadership" in world affairs, but a responsibility.

This idea and other proposals on strengthening peace expressed at the congress immediately prompted a concerned discussion among the foreign guests. The heads of several delegations granted our request and offered their brief comments to *WMR*,

concentrating on the relevant regional problems.

Kattorge P. Silva, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka:

"The Political Report and other documents of the congress contain a profound Marxist-Leninist analysis of the international situation and advance valuable initiatives for its radical improvement. Of particular importance to us is the elaboration of the idea of collective security in Asia. We are convinced that this calls for concerted and joint efforts by all countries and peoples of the continent, including the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. Our party fully supports and welcomes the work of the Soviet Communists in this direction."

Louis van Geyt, Chairman of the Communist Party of Belgium:

"Reiterated by the congress, the proposal on the elimination of Soviet and US medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe enables the peace forces of the continent to step up the struggle for the solution of this extremely important problem and poses a responsible choice not only before the United States but also before the governments of Britain and France who are urged to agree to freeze their nuclear capabilities. This issue is also very topical for Belgium, where 16 Euromissiles have already been deployed. Public opposition is so great that the government has been forced to note in a policy statement that the deployment is not irreversible."

Carlos Enrique Melgara, Deputy Chairman of the Peruvian APRA Party affiliated with the Socialist International:

"The wish expressed at the 27th Congress of the CPSU about the future convening of a World Congress on Problems of Economic Security which could discuss, in a package, everything that encumbers world economic relations is of great interest to Latin American nations and especially to countries such as ours which have incurred external debts. Our continent accounts for almost half the 900-odd billion dollars of the developing countries' total external debt. If this problem is not solved, the world's entire financial system will be threatened. And so the idea advanced here is no doubt topical, and we welcome it enthusiastically."

In analysing the current course of world developments, the congress accorded priority attention to the role of the popular masses, of public opinion in the tackling of international problems. The conviction that by pooling their efforts, nations can and must avert the threat of nuclear destruction, that a world war is not fatally inevitable has been reiterated. The CPSU sees vigorous involvement in a victorious battle against war as the essence of its foreign policy in strategic terms. Mankind simply must defeat war if it wants to enter the twenty-first century. This is a historic task posed by our age, and we believe it is very important to realise that we Communists must tackle it in cooperation with social Democrats and all people of goodwill who cherish life on Earth.

The party of Lenin came to its 27th Congress as a strong, united and constantly developing political organisation, as the true vanguard of working people and the leading force of all Soviet Society. With its membership of more than 19 million, the party is forging ahead confidently, leading the country to new frontiers.

As it was clear from the statements we heard and the conversations we had with delegates, the CPSU functions as a profoundly democratic organism which combines centralised leadership with grassroots initiative, free discussion and concerted action. Convincing the people that its policy is right, the party acts through communists to direct the work of government agencies, enterprises, educational establishments, Soviets, trade unions and other mass organisations.

Figures quoted at the congress prove that the party's composition in terms of its members' social background, age and level of education is being increasingly brought into harmony with the structure of Soviet society and the demands of its development. Very many young people are joining the party—young people who hold modern views, are well-trained and capable of taking the helm and piloting the ship of socialism into the twenty-first century. These favourable trends in the development of the CPSU

membership have also been reflected in the composition of its leading bodies.

The congress devoted great attention to questions of party building, of strict observance of Leninist norms in the life of the party. The approved amendments to the CPSU Rules are aimed at promoting the role of primary organisations, democracy and, at the same time, personal responsibility by members of the party cadre at all levels. The party's fundamental law now makes stricter demands on the Communist's moral standards. Modesty, integrity, a demanding attitude to oneself and an attentive attitude to others must be typical of both party leaders and rank-and-file members. The party can tackle new tasks effectively only if it constantly develops, if it is free of the "infallibility complex", if it assesses its record critically and sees clearly what remains to be done.

In connection with the sharp and bold criticism and self-criticism which sounded at full volume at the congress, we asked Comrade William Kashtan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada and a veteran of the international communist movement, to reflect on the fears sometimes expressed about the possibility that bourgeois propaganda might seize on this to malign the CPSU, existing socialism and communism as a doctrine and a movement.

"Of course it will—it already is," he replied. "But it won't be able to profit from this campaign. The strength of Lenin's party lies precisely in the fact that, true to his behests, it exposes its mistakes boldly, speaks about them unhesitatingly, draws lessons from them and learns to correct its mistakes. Meanwhile, ruling bourgeois parties will never admit that they are wrong. They blame unemployment on the working class and the crisis on objective phenomena. Their policy is essentially fallacious and unable to withstand an impartial analysis. Hence the fear of self-criticism. But the Communists have nothing to fear: we are confident that we are right."

The CPSU's supreme forum has stressed that the party has always been and remains an integral part of the international communist movement, of the broad front of democratic liberation and peace forces that oppose aggressive imperialist forays and the threat of world nuclear war. Delegates of an unprecedentedly representative spectrum of these forces arrived in Moscow to attend the congress from 113 countries all over the world—152 delegations of communist workers', revolutionary-democratic, socialist, social democratic, labour and other parties, as well as leaders of democratic civic organisations. It was an impressive demonstration of international solidarity with Lenin's party which sees perfection of socialist society in the USSR and its progress towards communism not only as a duty to its own people but also as a major international task, as a historic mission to be discharged in the interests of the world socialist system, of the international working class and of all mankind.

Today, the future of the world and of social progress is linked closer than ever with the dynamic economic and political development of the world socialist system. This idea was expressed in the statements of many delegates and in the messages of greetings to the congress sent by leaders of sister parties.

Representatives of all currents of the world revolutionary and liberation movement expressed their internationalist sentiments when speaking in the Kremlin. We were profoundly moved by the following episode. While delivering the Political Report, Mikhail Gorbachov asked the delegates for permission to express, on behalf of the CPSU, sincere admiration for and fraternal solidarity with the Communists waging their struggle in capitalist countries. The ovation nearly brought the house down and took a long time to subside.

The work of the congress is additional proof of the fact that the CPSU spares no effort to promote unity and joint action among the fraternal parties. The CPSU holds that the diversity of our movement is not a symbol of disunity, just as unity has nothing to do with dull uniformity, hierarchy or interference by one party in the affairs of another. The communist movement can and must draw its strength from its class solidarity, from the equal cooperation of all fraternal parties in the struggle for our common goals. This conclusion expressed at the 27th Congress offers, we believe, an effective basis for

promoting concerted international action by the Communists.

Speaking from the rostrum of the Palace of Congresses, meeting with work collectives in Moscow and other Soviet cities, and exchanging their views with us, the foreign guests of the CPSU stressed the tremendous international importance of the Soviet Communists' forum, of its conclusions and decisions for the unity of democratic, peace and anti-imperialist forces. The 27th Congress, they said, has given a new impetus to the struggle aimed at improving international relations, securing a return to detente, bringing about gradual disarmament and enabling mankind to enter the twenty-first century with confidence. Our delegation fully shares this assessment.

Jose Maria LANAO,
member of the Central Committee, Communist Party of Argentina, member of the
WMR Editorial Board and Editorial Council.

Unni KRISHNAN,
member of the National Council, Communist Party of India, member of the *WMR*
Editorial Board and Editorial Council

Georg KWIATOWSKI,
representative of the German Communist Party on the *WMR* Editorial Council

Moscow, March 1986

Peoples Protest Against Gunboat Diplomacy

Anthony Vassallo – General Secretary,
Communist Party of Malta

THIS year began under the sign of hope generated by the results of the Geneva summit—hope for an improved international situation and for progress in disarmament. The foreign policy provisions of the documents of the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the inspiring prospect of ridding the world of nuclear weapons, the prospect outlined in the January statement of Mikhail Gorbachov, the Soviet Communists' leader, gave a new impetus to this hope. The world's nations yet again saw proof of the Soviet Union's sincere striving to overcome the negative, confrontation-oriented trends on the rise in recent years and to pave the way to curbing the nuclear arms race on Earth, preventing it in space, defusing the war threat and promoting trust, an essential element of normal international relations.

However, recent events have shown that influential quarters in the United States and NATO are unwilling to give up the aggressive course which has affected the international situation so adversely and pushed the world closer to the fateful brink of nuclear catastrophe. The struggle of these two trends has made comprehensive impact on the situation in our region too.

Since the times of ancient Phoenicia, the central Mediterranean where our island is located has been criss-crossed by important trade routes between Europe and Africa, routes along which ships of many countries have been travelling. This favourable geographic location not only made for prosperity but also aroused the insatiable greed of invaders and colonial rulers. The hurricanes of armed conflicts and the dramatic twists and turns of colonial rivalry in the region did not spare Malta. The Maltese people remember World War II by massive Italian fascist and Nazi air raids. Wrecked ships and

live bombs still remain in the coastal waters, endangering shipping and the peaceful work of fishermen and sailors.

There is no quiet under the azure Mediterranean skies today either. The sound of lapping waves is often marred by the roar of combat planes and bomb explosions. The situation in the region is not simply complicated: often, it becomes dangerously explosive and poisons the international climate throughout the world.

"Neoglobalism": What Is Behind It?

The events of late 1985 and early 1986 have demonstrated again how certain political and military quarters in Washington can threaten universal peace by moving against those countries who dare disagree with the policies of the United States and Israel and steer an independent course.

Having groundlessly accused Libya of complicity in the terrorist acts committed at Rome and Vienna airports, the US administration took steps tantamount to an unprovoked declaration of war on that Arab country. The Pentagon and the CIA hastily identified specific "targets" of potential strikes against Libyan territory and sent aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers and frigates to Libya's shores. The Pentagon has massed a total of 26 naval vessels there. The sabre-rattling and the economic sanctions against Libya were accompanied by demagogic references to the need to "stamp out terrorism".

We Maltese do not have to be convinced that terrorism deserves to be harshly condemned and demands vigorous joint action to stamp it out. After all, in November 1985 we witnessed the drama of the hijacked Egyptian plane in the airport of our capital, the drama in which dozens of innocent people were killed. However, we are fully aware that if any country could be accused of violating the security of the Mediterranean peoples, this charge should be addressed to the Washington-based instigators of "neoglobalism" who conduct a chauvinistic policy and encourage state terrorism against Libyans, Lebanese, Palestinians and all those who refuse to toe Washington's line.

Those who are behind the new exacerbation of tensions in the Mediterranean are not at all motivated by a desire to combat terrorism. The real—and old—grudge against Libya is that it forced the United States and Great Britain to evacuate their bases from Libyan soil in 1970 and, three years later, nationalised 51 per cent of virtually all foreign oil companies, including the property of the Royal Dutch Shell. The United States is also incensed by the Qaddafi government's firm opposition to the Camp David policy and to the attempts at undermining anti-imperialist trends in the Arab world.

Today's international situation demands that nothing be done to fan the flames of new conflicts or to aggravate the existing regional problems. Rather, it is imperative to settle these problems peacefully on the basis of justice and unflagging respect for the legitimate interests of the peoples concerned and for their right to self-determination. In this situation, of great importance was the January statement of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee who opposed any linkage of disarmament issues to "regional conflicts". These "linkages" are a smokescreen hiding the imperialist forces' refusal to embark on the road of disarmament and their intention of imposing their own will and ways on sovereign peoples. This policy is at loggerheads with the interests of mankind and with the imperatives of our nuclear age.

Awareness of this is gaining increasing popularity with world public opinion, and the leaders of many capitalist countries cannot fail to take this into account. That is why the capitals of Europe are in no hurry to obediently join Washington's imperial moves in the Mediterranean. Malta's Prime Minister Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, too, has expressed grave concern over the sharp deterioration of the situation in the region brought about by the US moves. He has declared that his government resolutely condemns any and all militarist steps against Libya.

The new version of the "gunboat diplomacy" practice and the frantic campaign of blackmail threats and diktat launched by the United States and Israel have directly

affected our country which maintains traditional ties with Libya. We have had occasion to realise that we are dealing with a large-scale, thoroughly planned operation aimed at raising tensions in this region and at using this pretext to bolster the US military presence here. Specifically, amid the hue and cry against Libya, the United States and Italy paved the way for the decision to transfer the US Delta Force, whose detachment had been brought to the Mediterranean from Fort Bragg in the United States during the hijacking of the cruise liner *Achille Lauro*, for permanent duty at Sigonella, Sicily. The events of late 1985 and early 1986 were used as a pretext for the entrenchment of new US expeditionary forces in the heart of our strategically important region.

A Threat to the Peoples of the Mediterranean

All these developments are occurring against the background of the already complicated situation created in the Mediterranean by imperialism. For many years now, a conflict has been raging in the Middle East where the Zionists continue their barbarous practice of oppressing the Palestinian people and where provocations are staged against the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon. Israeli bombs have already fallen in Tunisia, almost three thousand kilometres from Palestine. The problem of ensuring the integrity and security of the Republic of Cyprus is still unsolved. The brutal reprisals unleashed against representatives of the democratic movement in Turkey are adversely affecting the situation in the region.

A mere 100 kilometres separates Malta from Comiso, Sicily, where 112 US nuclear missiles are sited. The range of these first-strike weapons enables them to reach the western areas of the Soviet Union, and their combat radius covers the Balkans, the periphery of the Eastern Mediterranean and vast areas in North and Central Africa and in the Middle East. The cruise missiles pose a direct threat to all peoples in the region; the very presence of these missiles destabilises the international situation and compounds mutual mistrust. The deployment of this new first-strike capability in Italy is in sharp contradiction with the policy of the government of Malta which has chosen a policy of no foreign military presence in the region, closed the British-NATO military base on the island in 1979 and voiced its support for the lofty ideas of declaring our sea a sea of peace and the Balkans a nuclear-free zone.

The Comiso base is not the only hotbed of tension and foreign interference. Naples is the headquarters of NATO's Southern European Command; numerous military installations of the North Atlantic bloc are located both in Italy proper and on Pantelleria and other islands.

A ramified network of the US bases has covered Spain where more than 12,500 officers and men of the US Army now serve. The Rota naval base where 14 Poseidon submarines can moor poses a particularly sinister threat. Spain is not only a fuelling station for US naval vessels: most US military installations there make it possible to refuel strategic bombers in flight. The Pentagon's bases can be used to "lock" the entrance into the Mediterranean; they are also to provide logistical support for possible military operations in Europe.

The Pentagon also maintains a powerful military presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, specifically in Turkey, and strives to preserve its bases in Greece. The militarist activities the United States and NATO engage in include the patrolling operations of the US Sixth Fleet, as well as constant war games conducted on land and sea. This sabre-rattling is designed not only to intimidate the countries of the region, it also aggravates the overall military and political situation throughout the world. Suffice it to say that in the course of these militarist exercises, NATO generals and admirals perfect coordination and concerted action with other possible theatres, specifically the European theatre.

Grave concern is connected with the so-called Rapid Deployment Force which is based in the United States and which can be airlifted at a moment's notice to the East and South Mediterranean. This force can be nuclear-capable.

The decade that has elapsed since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act has been marked, among other things, by a growing understanding of the interconnection between the security of the Mediterranean and the situation in Europe. Hence the significance of the constructive initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and designed to prevent the transformation of our vast region into a theatre of confrontation. I refer to the Soviet appeal to renounce the deployment of nuclear weapons in the non-nuclear Mediterranean countries and to the proposal that the nuclear powers pledge not to use nuclear weapons against any Mediterranean country that has prohibited their deployment on its soil. Malta's Communists have repeatedly voiced support of the Soviet proposal that vessels with nuclear weapons on board be withdrawn from the Mediterranean. Freeing one of the world's most densely populated regions from weapons of mass destruction is a task of tremendous importance.

The Communist Party of Malta has never viewed the concerns of the Mediterranean peoples as a local matter. Now that Washington has declared our region, thousands of miles away from the American mainland, a zone of its "vital interests", the involvement of our countries in the world-wide contractions has become even more obvious.

The Effects of Mutually Beneficial Ties

Virtually all of today's global problems are distinctively reflected in the Mediterranean on a regional scale—the arms race, economic inequality, the deterioration of the environment, the promotion of equitable cooperation in trade, culture and education, the development of new energy sources and the rational use of the resources of the World Ocean. Capitalist and socialist countries, industrialised and developing nations coexist here. In this region, as in other parts of the world, the monopolies conduct their greedy pursuit of new sources of raw materials and threaten the independence and freedom of the countries rich in oil and other mineral resources. Our neighbours include both capital-intensive national economies and countries whose economic prospects depend on the degree to which they can use their manpower resources. Several countries are still shackled firmly to the leading imperialist powers; this runs counter to the striving of former colonies for economic independence and progressive development and consequently compounds the instability of commercial and political relations.

The many problems that affect all Mediterranean countries include the protection of our regional environment. A clean Mediterranean is what the prosperous, quiet and secure life of our coastal and island nations depends on to a great degree. We cannot but feel concern over the fact that, according to the official statistics of the World Health Organisation, over 12 million tons of organic and industrial waste is dumped annually into the Mediterranean. There is no doubt that only joint construction efforts by all interested countries in the spirit of equality and respect for one another's legitimate interests can stop these destructive processes. But such efforts are unthinkable in an atmosphere of confrontation and mistrust.

Under the circumstances, one cannot strive to eliminate poverty, hunger or underdevelopment on either a global or regional scale, or to prevent the accumulation of new contradictions and problems without fighting resolutely for peace and equitable international cooperation. This is the basis of our approach to the relations among the Mediterranean countries, to issues of Malta's foreign policy and trade.

If trade relations are to become an effective and long-term factor of peace and development, they must be cleansed of methods running counter to UN principles—methods such as unilateral abrogation of treaties and agreements, commercial, credit and technological blockades, discriminatory moves and all sorts of arbitrary "sanctions" against sovereign nations. As the anti-Libyan campaign of the US administration has confirmed yet again, such methods undermine the very basis of international economic security which is an integral part of the international security in

general.

The establishment of mutually beneficial economic and other peaceful relations between countries with different socio-political systems benefits greatly both the development of individual countries and the situation in the Mediterranean as a whole. The Maltese Communists are working tirelessly to explain to our people the importance of promoting increasingly close and friendly relations with the countries of the socialist community and to encourage them to demand that the government act accordingly. We believe that genuine social progress and neutrality for Malta can be ensured along this path only. True, these relations have, unfortunately, not always developed the way we would have liked. Our island's profound dependence on capitalist markets is the prime reason here: 80 per cent of Malta's exports are tied directly to West European countries and adversely affected by the economic upheavals and crises there.

Conversely, mutually beneficial ties with the socialist world help to create a climate conducive to the solution of the most acute political problems; at the same time these ties help our republic to tackle many complex issues of socio-economic development. Unemployment is one of Malta's serious concerns. The growth of commercial and transport operations and of international tourism would make it possible to secure contracts for the ship repair sector of our economy, for our hotels and other services.

Hence the great importance for Malta of the neutrality treaty signed with the USSR in 1981 and of the agreement on the bunkering of Soviet merchant marine ships. The conclusion of a multimillion-pound contract in the course of the 1984 Maltese-Soviet talks in Moscow was a good example of the promotion of peaceful coexistence in our region. Specifically, the contract made it possible to create new jobs, thus alleviating the problem of unemployment, especially among young people. Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, who later replaced Dom Mintoff at the helm of the Labour cabinet, declared at the time that the government was ready to sign similar agreements with Western powers too if they, particularly the United States and Italy, "effectively confirmed their friendly attitude to Malta the way the Soviet Union has done it". That same year, an agreement on expanding cooperation in trade and industry was signed with Bulgaria.

Influential quarters of the NATO countries are using the marked improvement in Malta's political and trade relations with the socialist countries, primarily with the Soviet Union, as a pretext for launching campaigns hostile to our people. Newspapers in Italy and other NATO countries publish articles in which they present our island as a sort of "Mediterranean Grenada". Thus they are actually preparing the ground for interference in our country's affairs through the use of open pressure and other far-reaching means imperialist quarters have resorted to repeatedly since the Labour government closed the NATO military base.

The Maltese Communists have always exposed—and will continue to expose—the US strategy in the Mediterranean and the cunningly slanderous all-out attempts by US propaganda to try and convince public opinion in Malta and the neighbouring countries that there is a "growing Soviet threat" in this region. Recently, *Time* magazine has even spotted this threat in the Soviet liners on which citizens of different countries tour picturesque areas of the Mediterranean. However, if one deals with the actual, not mythical threat to the independence and security of Malta, one cannot fail to see that there are no Soviet bases near the island, while the United States makes use of military facilities in virtually all West European countries of the Mediterranean.

Suffice it to recall that the anti-Libyan, anti-Tunisian and anti-Palestinian moves taken by the United States and Israel in recent months have been accompanied by violations of our country's sovereignty and incursions into our territorial waters. This serves to undermine the fundamental principles of international law and the most elementary norms of international relations. As Dom Mintoff, former Prime Minister of Malta, acknowledged, "the Soviet Union has never done us any harm, while the United States opposed our independence".¹

Links in the Chain

True to its Marxist-Leninist policy, the Communist Party of Malta has consistently criticised the Labour government on a number of domestic policy issues, but it supports the government's foreign policy and hails the course of non-alignment which, we believe, is best for the interests of the country.

The struggle against colonialism and racism, the striving to consolidate peace and international security and the vigorous efforts advocating a restructuring of international economic relations and elimination of hotbeds of international conflicts have now emerged as the salient features of the non-aligned movement. These features shape the movement's positions on the key issues of world politics.

Malta could fully pursue a non-aligned policy only after our region is freed from US and NATO domination. Meanwhile, we can detect numerous indications that a veritable conspiracy exists against our government and its foreign policy. This conspiracy is clear from the readiness with which the Italian government allows the Pentagon to set up military bases around our island, from the movements of the US Sixth Fleet which is now stationed between Malta and Libya and from the absurd charge that human rights are violated in our country—charges that are fabricated by the US State Department, played up in the Council of Europe and seized upon readily by the right-wing opposition National Party. All these are links in the same chain of events. The objective is clear—to install those forces in Malta which, once in control, would open the doors to US generals and admirals and again transform the island into an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" threatening the neighbouring countries' peace and freedom.

The policy pursued by the government of Malta and adopted by other non-aligned countries incenses the imperialist quarters and their allies. They would dearly love to erode the clear-cut anti-imperialist thrust of the non-aligned movement and to lead this influential force of today's world into the morass of "equidistance".

One cannot follow the lead of those who strive to equate the aggressive NATO bloc with the defensive alliance of the Warsaw Treaty countries. The new global balance of forces between socialism and imperialism is a major historical accomplishment. It is consonant with the interests of all peoples dedicated to freedom, whether they be big or small nations. This makes for the growing prestige of the smaller countries such as Malta in world politics. The realisation is increasing that it is precisely imperialist diktat and arbitrary rule, not the size of territory or population that often relegated smaller countries to secondary roles, to the status of mere objects of inter-imperialist rivalries, of actual vassals of the Western powers. And the narrower the sphere where reactionary, neocolonialist forces hold sway, the firmer the rebuff to the imperialist policy of blackmail and aggression, the more favourable the conditions for the free, independent and secure development of all countries, including the nations of our region.

This is what is behind our clear-cut position vis-a-vis the elimination of tensions in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. We support the Cypriots' struggle for the removal of foreign military bases and the action of the Italian working people against the US Euromissiles. We uphold our solidarity with the cause of the Palestinian people who are defending their inalienable rights, and we condemn the Israeli aggressors. We see it as our constant task to explain the peace policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, to expose the militarist course pursued by US imperialism and by NATO.

Different political forces raise the question of liberation from foreign military diktat, of turning the region into a zone of durable peace as a priority issue that brooks no delay. The realisation is growing that the Mediterranean will have no peace as long as the United States regards it as its own playground. The movement against NATO bases is active in Spain, Greece and Cyprus; Italy's anti-war forces are mounting action against the missiles. The militarist "pollution" of the waters washing our shores is even more terrifying than any tilt in the environmental balance because it threatens to destroy whole nations.

Concern over the future of the region and a call to action were voiced at the second

meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and Red Sea communist and workers' parties held in Nicosia, Cyprus, in 1985. In a document adopted at the meeting, the participants expressed their conviction that the reactionary offensive staged by US imperialism, supporter of the Israeli Zionists and other reactionary forces, can be repulsed and the balance of forces in the region changed in favour of peace, national liberation and social progress. "The basic prerequisite for it is the cooperation of the broadest anti-imperialist forces in the region with the active participation of the popular masses through the defence and restoration of their democratic freedoms and rights, the satisfaction of their basic social and economic needs. It is imperative that differences on secondary issues be set aside, that the discrimination against the Communists be overcome and the efforts by certain forces to isolate them be ended, so that a broad anti-imperialist front be created to raise a barrier against the imperialist attack, finally free our region from dependence on imperialism, open up the road of national independence and progress for all countries in the region and to contribute to the consolidation of peace in the world."²

Making its contribution to the joint action of all progressive forces world-wide and loyal to proletarian internationalism, the CPM maintains and expands ties of friendship and cooperation with the fraternal parties on a bilateral, regional and multilateral basis. Given today's tense international situation, the unity of Communists is a prime factor of success in the struggle to preserve peace in every region and throughout the world.

¹ *Review of News and Events*, Valetta, July 13, 1984.

² Quoted in *Information Bulletin*, No. 7, 1985, p. 20.

Time for Decisive Changes

Jorge del Prado – CC General Secretary,
Peruvian Communist Party (PCP)

FOR nearly one year now, Peru has had a government formed by APRA¹ and headed by President Alan Garcia Perez. This government may be said to differ considerably from its predecessor. At the same time, one is struck by discrepancies between certain of its pronouncements and moves. For example, the new leaders of the country have taken an independent stand on the problem of repaying foreign loans, with the result that US banks and the State Department have declared our external debt "depreciated" and proceeded to apply repressive economic measures against the Peruvian government. On the other hand, Garcia himself has sharply and groundlessly assailed the proposal of the leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, to refuse payment of the external debt.

This inconsistency gives cause for understandable doubts about the future course of the new government, especially in view of the history of APRA, now in power for the first time since it was founded 60 years ago. APRA sprang up under anti-imperialist slogans and identified itself internationally with West European social democracy after a period of zigzagging development (conciliation with imperialism in the wake of World War II and occasionally alliance with the oligarchic and dictatorial Right). Today it backs Nicaragua and favours Latin American intergration in the interest of economic independence. A mass party with an efficient organisational structure and an ideological basis of its own, APRA has always presented itself as an allegedly better and "more feasible" alternative to the PCP, which is inspired by Marxism-Leninism.

The policy of the APRA government has yet to take final shape. Much will depend on what it undertakes against "Sendero Luminoso", a Pol Potist-like terroristic grouping, and how it calls a halt to the acts of genocide perpetrated on the pretext of combating this

grouping in the "counter-subversion war" started by the previous government.

Important changes are really taking place in the republic. But they can only be assessed after analysing previous developments.

The government under Fernando Belaunde (1980-1985), which represented the interests of the financial oligarchy and imperialist transnationals, led the country into the worst crisis ever. The cost of living soared, with inflation exceeding 3,500 per cent and the devaluation of national currency, 4,000 per cent.² All accounts began to be settled in dollars. In 1983-1984 alone, GDP dropped to what it had been ten years before.³ Real wages diminished by 60 per cent against 1973. The proportion of "redundant" people increased by one million, with the officially registered unemployed adding up to 12 per cent and the partially unemployed, to 60 per cent of the workforce.

The agrarian reform effected during the presidency of Gen. Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-1975) was furiously attacked by reaction. The rightist cabinet under Gen. Francisco Morales Bermudez (1975-1979) granted expropriated landowners the right to have recourse to the so-called "petition for the suspension of the law". In line with this decision and other "laws" of a similar nature, many peasants were deprived of the land allotted to them. Indeed, the reform itself was declared to be "at an end". Afterwards the Belaunde government issued a decree on the "Promotion and Development of Agriculture", virtually legalising the complete abolition of the agrarian reform and the plundering of peasants. And while the large latifundiums transferred to cooperatives were not restored to their former owners, middle proprietors in the 1980-1985 period retrieved over 1.5 of the more than 10 million hectares of land taken away from them.

It was Morales who set out to dismantle the public sector of the economy. Belaunde continued the process on an even larger scale. The sector was undermined systematically and deliberately. Taxes on oil, mining, food and other transnationals were substantially reduced while the population was made to pay higher indirect taxes.

The regime restricted the working people's rights, repealed the law on "job stability" and did away with many of their other gains. Social security was curtailed and medical service reduced to the minimum. "Labour communities" (private and state enterprises whose employees participated in management) were deliberately deprived of support and then of most of their rights. As for publicly owned factories,⁴ they found themselves in a deep crisis. Many of them were closed down and others are on the brink of failure. Repressive measures were adopted against workers defending their rights.

On the excuse of suppressing the terroristic activity of "Sendero Luminoso", the regime declared martial law in seven of the country's 24 departments and started, as we have said, a "counter-subversion war" using repressive practices against local inhabitants. The people called it the "dirty war". Nor is it only in the areas mentioned above that the "Anti-Terrorist Law" is applied against trade union activists and left-wingers. As a result, 90 per cent of those charged with membership of "Sendero Luminoso" are actually fighters for social rights who have nothing to do with terrorism. The practice of killing or kidnapping people (who disappear without leaving a trace) has been widespread ever since 1980. Secret graves are discovered time and again. In short, genocide is an everyday occurrence.

In public life, both old and new evils made themselves felt more painfully than ever. Corruption in the state apparatus assumed unprecedented proportions and gave rise to scandals that shocked the Peruvians. What is more, the police and top government officials turned out to be involved in drug traffic. As for parliament and the judiciary, their activity became a frank travesty.

The external debt was the worst manifestation of neocolonialism and betrayal of the national interest. By late 1985, it stood at 15 billion dollars, Interest payments alone swallowed 60 per cent of export earnings, or 40 per cent of budget appropriations. Altogether Peru in 1985 was to have paid over 3.5 billion dollars whereas its exports could only earn it 3.1 billion, according to all forecasts.⁵ In other words, the country objectively found itself unable to repay its debt. The government itself, which had

sacrificed the country to repay loans and meet the conditions of the IMF, was caught during the last months of its rule in the crisis caused by itself and had to suspend interest payment.

It is obvious, therefore, that unless Peru refuses to pay its external debt and gets rid of IMF dictates, there can be no question of bringing about substantial improvements.

Imperialism's brutal neocolonialist offensive against Peru through the IMF was aimed at something more than subjugating our economy still more. It was also intended to nullify and discredit the gains in economic independence and the social progress made under Velasco. The people's reaction to imperialist pressure was therefore very sharp, and as for the Belaunde government, it is justly regarded as the most *anti-patriotic* one in the history of our country.

This is why the general election in April 1985 had a new quality. It involved three markedly different forces: the right continuists,⁶ who put forward three candidates (for the Popular Action and Popular Christian parties and the Morales grouping); the centre left (APRA), and the United Left (UL) bloc.⁷ The fundamental issue, the attitude to the economic policy imposed by the IMF, divided the contending forces into two camps. The Right called for the continuation of the earlier policy while APRA and the UN rejected it.

The advocates of socio-economic changes defeated reaction for the first time since the 1945 election, in which the National Democratic Front⁸ took part. Over 80 per cent of the votes (this figure does not include the ballots pronounced invalid) were won by APRA and the UL (53 and 28 per cent, respectively). The Popular Action and Popular Christian parties only polled 19 per cent against 54 per cent in 1980.

Let us note some other factors. The election took place under a bourgeois system and in a country where there is no long-standing electoral tradition (although voting is compulsory) but, even so, it drew 87 per cent of the 8,290,000 voters. "Sendero Luminoso's" appeal to the electorate to stay away from the polls or to drop invalid or blank ballots was ignored. The rightists, who favoured IMF remedies, discredited themselves so badly that the main contest unfolded between APRA and the UL, that is, not between supporters of a continued anti-popular policy of betrayal and advocates of social change but between forces demanding changes: through timid, stage-by-stage reforms in one case and through far-reaching but feasible revolutionary solutions in the other. APRA did not announce its programme in full, preferring with due regard to the pressure of the masses to duplicate the UL's slogans and demands supported by the people.

A change unprecedented even under "representative" bourgeois democracy came about in the balance of political forces. APRA, having carried the day and secured a majority in parliament, formed a government, that is, won executive power. Our coalition, which collected 600,000 more votes than in 1983, emerged as the second largest political alignment and the likeliest future alternative to APRA rule.

The APRA victory may be seen as an indication that the majority of Peruvians (or of the electorate) prefers the reformist path, that is, stage-by-stage development. Perhaps so, but this only applies to some of the proposed changes. Besides, it is very likely that many of those who voted for APRA's candidates favour what they consider a safer and more convenient process of change, one involving no serious struggle or risk. As for economic policy, especially the external debt problem. APRA's backers, too, declare for substantive and fundamental solutions.

Taking this into account and trying to win as many votes as possible, the Aprists accentuated at the last moment the radical tenor of their election campaign. The bulk of the population assessed the UL programmes and the APRA platform as very similar. But one should not forget that our rivals had much larger funds and greater facilities for publicity, such as television, and used them to lavish every manner of promise on the people. As for the UL, it held the biggest rallies and demonstrations, and those who did not join in these street actions voted subsequently for APRA.

The masses, who want real changes and voted for the UL or APRA, *go on pressing for deep-going, comprehensive and lasting structural changes*. They demand a revision of both economic policy (in keeping with a firm, realistic and patriotic stand on the external debt) and all other government policies: measures against the political and moral crisis of the country, extreme reaction, backwardness, and the betrayal of national interests, all of which is a direct consequence of IMF pressure.

Those who call for change organised long ago; they do not belong to a temporary electoral alliance but are the product of a patient mustering of forces over a long period. They have their roots among the proletariat associated in the General Confederation of Workers of Peru, which is under Communist influence. Ever since it was founded, the Confederation has resisted the policy of submission to the IMF.

The national strike on July 19, 1977, was an unprecedented action that roused the whole of Peruvian society. It shook the power of the rightist military and forced them to set elections for a constituent assembly. The other nation-wide actions led by the working class that followed, the two general agrarian strikes and strikes in various departments as well as numerous militant demonstrations by working people and the most diverse population groups provided the basis on which economic, social and political struggle intertwined more and more closely. In the course of class battles, the Unitary Group for Struggle came into being. It comprised trade unions and other organisations. Another alignment that was formed was the Unitary National Agrarian Council, which coordinated the demands and actions of rural working people virtually throughout the country.

The forces seeking change formed during vast movements of workers, peasants, students, intellectuals and other population groups. It was these movements that preceded Velasco's accession to power and account to a degree for it. His government adopted measures which visibly altered the economic, social and political life of the country. It laid the groundwork for economic independence, abolished the latifundium system and initiated worker co-management and self-management (the workers began to manage the enterprises, as we have pointed out earlier). The anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic consciousness of the people grew and the proletariat became more organised. Our party did not stay out of this process; it played a leading role in mobilising the masses.

The gains that were scored and the growth of progressive social forces equal to defending their interests are typical of the Peruvian people's anti-imperialist potential. It is not only during elections that these forces can act. Led by the PCP, they have fought and will fight at all times and on all fronts.

By maintaining the working people's unity, we foiled divisive manoeuvres of the ultra-Left, which dogmatically accused the Velasco government of establishing *military* rule and described its reforms as imperialist stratagems. Considering themselves leftist, these groups had a vital stake in popular support, since otherwise they had no chance of competing with our party. On seeing the organised masses staunchly defend the social and national gains made and resist the policy of reactionary governments serving the interests of the IMF, they came over to our side of the barricade (afterwards leftists such as these tacitly recognised the PCP attitude to Velasco's reforms to be correct).

The PCP was far from underestimating this change, nor did it give in to rancour when looking back. Besides, we realised that even though the "new Left", being tempted by social democracy and Maoism, expected to wrest hegemony among the masses from the PCP, it was largely a product of radicalisation and growing revolutionary sentiments of a socialist shading among large sections of the petty bourgeoisie, intellectuals and students.

Relations became closer with the beginning of joint actions, which made it possible to unite the trade unions, peasants and students. There began a process of *mustering political forces*.

The campaign for elections to a Constituent Assembly (1978) and its outcome made

for closer unity. An important factor in this was united action by the representatives of progressive parties and groups in the Constituent Assembly. The hunger strike of some leftist leaders, who called it in solidarity with a major strike of teachers, produced results for its part. Communists are against this kind of action but this writer joined in it for once to correct the mistake made by the PCP during one of the earlier strikes.⁹ This helped us regain the confidence of an influential section of the intellectual community, an achievement which subsequently played a noticeable part by bringing the leaders of some left organisations and the population groups influenced by them closer to the Communist Party.

The results of the 1980 general election were negative but then highly instructive. By presenting separate lists, the Left won fewer votes than in the elections for the Constituent Assembly. The victory of oligarchic and imperialist forces furnished proof of the imperative need to set up a united front of progressive organisations and groups. The conditions for this were ripe by then. That was how the UL bloc of staunch fighters for a popular regime and for socialism came into being.

In the November 1980 municipal elections, our bloc moved into second place and emerged victorious in some local government bodies. Its strength grew after the next municipal elections (November 1983). The bloc still ranked second at national level but won the majority in Lima and some other cities. On that occasion, it was only by a small margin that APRA won the elections at national level. As for the rightist parties, they were badly defeated.

The UL owes its strength to certain interdependent factors rather than to the total numerical strength of its member parties. First of all, its *rallying power* is great precisely because it is united and has demonstrated to the people the fruitfulness of cooperation among all left-wing, democratic and progressive organisations. Second, it exerts *direct influence* (which it owes above all to our party) on large class and social groups in the trade unions, peasant and student federations, and other mass organisations, on revolutionary and progressive intellectuals, district and departmental committees for the defence of the population's interests, and so on. APRA is far less influential among these groups than the Left.

Most of the measures adopted by the Garcia cabinet since it took over may be seen as positive if inadequate, timid and inconsistent. The fact is that the policy of the previous regime was geared to the interests of the IMF and deeply affected not only the country's sovereignty and economy but every aspect of public life. What is needed now is structural reforms. They are demanded by the majority, by the most militant and best-organised working people, as well as by large sections of the petty bourgeoisie and an appreciable section of the middle bourgeoisie. However, imperialism and the domestic oligarchy have no intention of relinquishing the smallest fraction of their domination, and the government is compelled to gradually give up its positions.

Nevertheless, the APRA regime has taken important steps. One of them is its attitude to the external debt. The government has agreed to service the debt at an annual rate not exceeding 10 per cent of export earnings. Actually it pays 27 per cent instead of the 60 per cent paid by its predecessor. It has declared that Peru will enter into direct contact with its creditors without the mediation of the IMF to demand a rescheduling of the debt and a lower interest rate. At the Montevideo special session of the Latin American Parliament in October 1985, the Aprists modified their statements about Fidel Castro and reaffirmed their friendly sentiments towards Cuba.

Speaking of the US description of Peru's debt as "depreciated", the government stressed that it would not submit to imperialism's dictates but was searching for ways to solve the problem such as would not result in a rupture. It cancelled oil prospecting and extraction contracts with three US companies proved guilty of fraudulently appropriating over 640 million dollars. True, the government is negotiating new contracts with them, promising even more advantageous terms.

The government has tried to stop and reduce inflation without doing anything to

eradicate its deep-lying causes. It has adopted partial measures to curb the growth of the prices of various food products and basic medicines but they have failed to yield results it had expected. It has forbidden to fix rent and the prices of various materials in dollars, as well as savings, purchase or sales deals in foreign exchange, and so on. Certain imports which can compete with national products have been banned on a selective basis. Banks, financial institutions, insurance companies, and mining enterprises are now obliged to reinvest 40 per cent of their net profit tax-free by purchasing government bonds.¹⁰ The government demands that domestic raw materials and the output of the domestic food and other industries be used to the utmost. The state allocates some funds to revitalise industry and agriculture.

Among the measures that are important if half-hearted, mention may be made of those aimed at combating drug traffic and putting the administrative apparatus on a healthy basis. However, this task has been entrusted to a corrupt legal authority. The government has set about reorganising the police force, and has discharged many high-ranking officers accused of bribe-taking. But this measure has affected neither those who abuse authority for selfish ends nor the fascist-like elements involved in genocide. Two army officers directly responsible for massacres among peasants were relieved of their posts and court-martialled. Meanwhile the whole machinery of the "dirty war" is intact and those who have ordered acts of genocide go scot-free. Indeed, the APRA Minister of the Armed Forces justifies these crimes. As for the findings of the Senate Human Rights Commission revealing the degree of responsibility of various persons on the strength of factual evidence, they were rejected.

There are signs of some positive changes in labour legislation. However, the government prevents the workers from fighting for their rights and is out to neutralise the trade unions.

The government has also taken some progressive steps in foreign policy. Peru has declared for global and regional disarmament, announced that it is on Nicaragua's side, and come out against the threat of US armed intervention by proposing to form a group in support of the Contadora process.¹¹ APRA calls on Third World countries to fight imperialism in common, except that it has done nothing to this end so far. The government has normalised its diplomatic relations with Cuba (reduced to the level of charges d'affaires since President Morales' term in office); it is trying to extend ties with Arab and other developing states, and shows interest in trade with socialist countries. On the other hand, the regime occasionally takes an anti-Soviet and anti-communist stand.

There are dangerous factors limiting the depth of changes and the effectiveness of reforms. APRA's frankly anti-labour theory of the "social pyramid" is negative ideologically and politically. It does not differentiate social sectors according to ownership of the means of production, degree of class exploitation and appropriation of public wealth. The theory serves as the basis for drawing an arbitrary dividing line between 75 per cent of those who "earn less", that is, have an income below the minimum wage (poor peasants, the jobless, and partially employed townspeople in the lowest income bracket), and 25 per cent of those who "earn more", that is, more than the minimum wage of 30 dollars a month. This means lumping together capitalists, intellectuals, office employees and organised skilled workers.¹² In other words, it is an attempt to represent all trade union members as part of the "privileged", the result being a policy which makes it impossible for many working people to re-establish their incomes and living standards. This policy benefits reactionary plans directed against the more militant and organised population groups showing a high degree of class consciousness. A further cause for concern is that the leadership of the country and of the party now in power includes traditional anti-communist enemies of existing socialism and advocates of Peru's submission to imperialist domination.

APRA has failed to win full power. The Right still controls the judiciary, the armed forces and the police. Thus there is a shadow cabinet operating behind the back of the lawful government. The interests of the more influential economic and financial

quarters are intact.

The *principles of property* have undergone no change, nor are any modifications planned. The key factories are in the hands of monopolies and transnationals, with the government blocking their nationalisation. Nothing is being done to strengthen and expand the public sector, agricultural cooperatives and other rural collective enterprises. This is also true of the labour communities. Clearly, the plans of the ruling party do not go beyond establishing a bourgeois nationalist regime.

There is the striking fact that the existence of an APRA majority in parliament and government control of the state apparatus are reviving the tendency to abuse power for selfish ends. This trend came out in both chambers of Congress when MPs were denied a public answer to certain questions agitating them.

The decay of the dependent capitalist state has gone so far that structural changes in socio-economic life and the state apparatus are an *objective necessity* now. This is attested by the instructive experience of Chile under Salvador Allende (he was opposed by a majority in parliament and in the armed forces), of Bolivia under Juan Jose Torres (he had the army command and the top leaders of the police against him), of Peru under Juan Velasco Alvarado (while leaning on the armed forces for support, he had no party of his own, and underestimated or even ignored the people and left organisations).

A reactionary, pro-imperialist conspiracy is plainly in the making in Peru, one aimed at destabilising the political situation on two main lines.

First, by tightening political control on the part of the rightist military using intimidation and provocative massacres of the peasants and prisoners. This would confront the government with a choice between continuing the "dirty war" against the people and openly fighting its initiators and hence furnishing a pretext for a coup. Revealingly, even some military leaders appear to be against the abolition of "Sendero Luminoso" because this kind of "war" suits them.

Second, by weakening, dividing and eliminating the UL, all of which would help strengthen the right wing of APRA. This would free the government and APRA from rivals on the left and deliver them from the pressure of the masses. In either case, reaction counts on objective support from "Sendero Luminoso", pseudo-left splitters and intriguers.

However, in view of the government's *present* relatively progressive position and its policy directed against the IMF, its future will depend less on APRA than on the UL and the working people associated with it. All its internal problems and contradictions notwithstanding, the UL is still the main alternative to the existing power, a level of exerting pressure and influence on the government. This is realised by very large sections of the people.

The situation in Peru is most complicated and may produce a swing to the right or the left. Should negative factors develop, reaction would have two options: attempting a military coup (unlikely in the short term, as we have noted) and making the APRA government adopt a position that would evolve towards fascism. This would compel the Left to use new forms of struggle. Besides, reaction might provoke a civil war.

Should positive factors gain ground, the present administration might adopt a more progressive stance. Such a change is possible even though the APRA leadership consciously rejects it. It could be brought about by the policy of imperialist forces dreading the prospect of a precedent, as well as by a further deterioration of the world capitalist crisis. Account must also be taken of the difficulties which imperialism is experiencing in Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, the situation in Peru may be influenced by the need for the country to seek support from the socialist community and developing countries at a given juncture. One should also bear in mind the fact that President Garcia aspires to become a leader of continental stature second to none of the outstanding leaders of the Third World. Needless to say, the activity of the masses fighting for their demands and aspirations and against the manoeuvres of APRA's own reactionaries will be decisive.

Peru's Communists will take proper stock of all these factors and fight staunchly against imperialism. We are working to expand our movement and to render it more effective in order to try in the people's interest to ensure that the government embarks on an explicitly anti-imperialist course. This is why the upcoming Ninth PCP Congress is expected to make a detailed analysis of the present situation and decide on the party's subsequent line.

¹ Bourgeois reformist party founded in 1931 on the basis of the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance. Its official name now is the Peruvian Aprist Party but in everyday political parlance it is called APRA as in the past.—Ed.

² See *Cuadernos Laborales*. ADEC, 1985, No. 30, p. 38.

³ César Vásquez Bazán, *Los cien días*, Lima, 1985, p. 19.

⁴ The reference is to factories set up by workers with money borrowed from the state. Every factory was managed by a committee elected by the entire staff.—Ed.

⁵ *Actualidad Económica del Perú*, No. 75, 1985, p. 2.

⁶ From Spanish *continuar*, to continue; the term is applied to supporters of Belaunde's policies.—Ed.

⁷ Formed in 1980 by the PCP and other progressive parties and organisations.—Ed.

⁸ It included the PCP.—Ed.

⁹ The PCP refused to support the strike called by teachers when Velasco was in power.—Ed.

¹⁰ *Proceso Económico*, No. 32, 1985, p. 30.

¹¹ The group was formed in 1985 and comprises Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay.—Ed.

¹² *Qué Hacer*, No. 35, 1985, p. 11.

Can the 'Conservative Tide' Be Stemmed?

Armand Magnin – General Secretary,
Swiss Party of Labour (SPL)

In recent years, there has been much talk in the bourgeois mass media, including those in Switzerland, about the so-called conservative tide in the West. The media argue that a radical shift to the right has allegedly occurred in the public opinion of industrialised capitalist countries of Europe and North America and that conservative forces now have a popular "mandate" to implement their socio-economic and political concepts.

One cannot agree with this interpretation of the term "conservative tide". But it can well be used to denote the broad offensive launched by monopoly capital in the 1980s against the working class, all working people, left organisations and democratic movements. Reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie have clearly become more active in our country. Extreme right parties have grown more vigorous, and Switzerland is no exception. This trend is now a typical feature of the socio-political fabric in many capitalist countries today.

The trend should be viewed in close connection with the domestic and foreign policy pursued by the Reagan administration in the United States. The advent of this administration prompted the monopoly bourgeoisie in Western Europe to toughen its political strategy too. In some countries, the ideas of Reaganism have already been adopted as the basis of official policy; in others, the government quarters and the forces backing them are inspired in their efforts by its purposes and ideals.

Why Right-Wing Parties Want "Less Government"

What then are the salient features of the "conservative tide" in Switzerland?

One should begin by pointing out that this tide is rising against the background of the far-reaching and protracted crisis that has hit the world capitalist economy. The crisis has not spared Switzerland which plunged into it in the mid-1970s. The shock of 1974-

1975 was so powerful that the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development singled out Switzerland as the most affected West European country. Within a few years, employment declined by ten per cent, and only the fact that some 240,000 migrant workers left the country saved Switzerland from a devastating unemployment rate. The Swiss economy has now entered a new, predominantly structural phase of the crisis, with individual regions and industries hit particularly hard. The watchmaking industry, where employment has dropped from 90,000 to 40,000 over the past 15 years, is affected more severely than any other branch.

True, Switzerland's distinctive conditions and special place in the capitalist world have acted to absorb some of the shock of the crisis phenomena. Official sources put the unemployment rate at one per cent of the able-bodied population. This figure does not reflect the situation fully,¹ but it is definitely not as critical as in other countries, say, France or Belgium. The rate of inflation is relatively low too — some three to four per cent a year.

Nevertheless, the same negative economic phenomena that are present in other West European countries make themselves felt in Switzerland too. This is additional proof of the factor that for all its distinctive features, our society is fully subject to the principal laws and trends of capitalist development. And while the offensive the conservative forces are mounting in our country is not an all-out attack, the way it is in Great Britain, it is still sufficiently typical of the overall domestic political strategy adopted by the monopoly bourgeoisie at the current stage.

The determination of all these forces to secure a free hand for pursuing an economic and social course of their own without regard for the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population is now expressed in the slogan "Give Us Less Government" advanced, with various modifications, by all leading bourgeois parties. At first glance, the slogan appears paradoxical because the government has always played a very limited role in Switzerland. The government controls only the railroads, the telecommunications, the postal service, radio and television. Its social functions are not extensive either because most of them are taken care of by the cantonal authorities. Still, the slogan of the Swiss conservative quarters is not merely a reflection of the fashionable ideas of economic liberalism popular with Western economists. The slogan makes it possible to present the state as the regulatory agency of a certain body of social relations, to blame it for the deterioration of the economic situation and consequently, to demonstrate the advisability of switching to an "unlimited market freedom", that is, to a *carte blanche* for the monopolies and big banks. As long as the "economic boom" was on, they did accept the redistribution of a certain share of their profits, specifically, through the system of taxation, in order to preserve the "social consensus". But now big capital cites the crisis in a bid to reduce this share to a minimum.

At the current stage, the government in capitalist countries does discharge certain economic and social functions, working in the interests of the monopolies. However, bourgeois democracy forces it to show a degree of attention to the needs of the broad strata of the population, to the demands of working people, left parties and democratic movements; consequently, it has to impose certain limits on the activities of banks and industrial corporations. The latter now view these usually marginal limitations as an attempt on the principles of "free enterprise".

Hence the striving to prevent the functions of the government from expanding and even to reduce them as much as possible by various means, including curtailment of the financial resources available to the government. This trend is particularly pronounced in our parliament where I have been entrusted with representing the Swiss Party of Labour since 1981. Right-wing forces hold a majority there, and they have even blocked the introduction of a very modest, five per cent tax on certain types of assets, a tax that would nevertheless have added one billion francs a year to the national treasury. Today they are working to reduce taxes on the profits made by banks, private companies and industrial concerns allegedly to "create more favourable conditions for financial activity in

Switzerland" — as if these conditions were not as favourable as possible.

The Swiss advocates of Reaganism use the pretext of promoting a more rational and economic budgetary policy to hinder the allocation of funds for meeting social needs and to prevent an increase in the number of people employed by government agencies — an increase which the rise in the volume of work perfectly justifies. Attempts are being made at the privatisation of highly profitable nationalised sectors such as the telephone service and at putting private capital in control of the introduction of new technologies — specifically, satellite communications — in radio and television.

Naturally, those government activities that secure direct advantages for capital are not questioned at all. For example, the capitalists fully approve of the law on "safeguards against export risks" which assures Swiss companies of stable profits irrespective of world market fluctuations. In this case, the bourgeois parties welcome the economic role played by the government. In other words, the banks and the monopolies readily use the state to their own advantage but prefer to decide for themselves when this is to be done. They do not want any government agency to display any initiative, even though the agency may be controlled by their political appointees.

Gains of Working People Threatened

In the social sphere, big capital invokes the economic slump to block any advance and, if possible, to eliminate some of the gains won by working people. The fact that most of these major gains, attained over the thirty post war years, are not formalised under the law makes it particularly difficult to uphold them. The struggle in this sphere had a distinctive character which affected its outcome. It was conducted within the framework of the "industrial peace" policy which the Swiss trade unions have been observing: back in the late 1930s they concluded an agreement on cooperation with the employers. Essentially, the workers gave up strikes, all questions were settled through negotiation with the management and consequently, labour relations were regulated by collective bargaining and not by legislation. There have even been cases when the Communists and sometimes the Socialists proposed legal recognition of this or that provision but encountered resistance on the part of trade union leaders who did not want to lose their exclusive position of middlemen between workers and employers which was ensured by the practice of collective bargaining.

Working people are now paying for this policy. The financial gains it brought them were overwhelmingly dependent on the economic boom, on the long period of crisis-free development. At that time, the industrialists made such huge profits and had such a great stake in "civic peace" that working people could secure concessions from them even without an intense struggle, the kind that was waged in other West European countries. But while Swiss workers have gained more than their neighbours in purely financial terms, they are noticeably worse off as far as their social rights are concerned. The employers are now trying to use this situation to recoup their past "losses".

Playing into the hands of industrialists are both the instability of employment and, more so, the fact that foreigners make up a sizeable part — some 25 per cent — of the country's labour force. There are now some 850,000 foreign workers in Switzerland.² This category of working people is particularly vulnerable to the employers' pressure. The management can hire them on worse terms than those that are offered to Swiss workers. Some 15 years ago, when the labour market was different, there were migrant workers who were ready for social struggle. This readiness has now been weakened by the fear of losing one's job.

The foremost objective of big capital is to lower the wage level which was attained when the market was thriving. Specifically, the principle of the automatic cost-of-living adjustment, a long established feature of collective bargaining, is being called into question. This issue was raised by the extremely powerful Swiss Banking Association which cited the need to make Swiss enterprises more competitive on the international market. The same pretext is invoked to justify the first steps towards revising the work

day arrangements and introducing so-called flexible employment.³ Attempts are being made to lift the ban on night shift work for women.

Social security is deteriorating. One example will suffice. The law on old-age, loss of bread-winner and disability pensions, a piece of legislation which is quite progressive, has been on the books for 40 years now. It is perhaps the greatest social gain which Swiss working people have won over the entire postwar period and which they owe largely to the long and stubborn struggle fought by the Communists. Today, this legislation must be amended to take the constant rise of prices into account. It is also imperative to increase the size of pensions and to lower the pension age. However, the conservative forces oppose this and are even trying to restrict the scope of the legislation now in force. Under their pressure, the government and the parliament have already decided to cut subsidies to the medical insurance system, although the cost of drugs and medical service has almost tripled since 1975. Subsidies for housing construction are diminishing despite the extremely acute housing crisis; this enables the landlords in the private sector to push the rent upward.

Moves to Erode the Masses Will to Fight Back

But the conservative offensive is not confined to the socio-economic sphere alone. It is also mounted in politics and ideology.

The ruling quarters are steering a course towards the curtailment of democratic rights so as to erode the capacity of the popular masses to resist this onslaught. There is no reason to doubt that this is the main thrust of the amendments introduced, a few years ago, into the mechanism which lays down the procedures for popular legislative initiative and for the holding of referendums and which is a distinctive feature of the Swiss political system.⁴ While earlier it was enough for 50,000 voters to sign a relevant petition for this or that draft legislation to be put to the vote, the figure has now been upgraded to 100,000. Besides, public support for a referendum must be almost twice as extensive as before (50,000 instead of 30,000).

Of course, control over powerful means of shaping public opinion enables the bankers and the industrialists to sway the electoral process. Nevertheless, there have been cases when they failed to impose their will on the electorate. Progressive organisations, including our party, have repeatedly invoked their right to direct appeal to the public for blocking anti-popular moves by the government or parliament and for promoting democratic legislation. The ruling quarters expect the amendments to make it more difficult for the people to express their will and for the opposition to operate effectively and successfully.

Steps are also being taken to reinforce the repressive apparatus and expand the sphere of its competence. Militarism is rearing its head, and the militarists would like to silence all those who refuse to share their views. A powerful anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign has been going on for many years, designed to create a favourable atmosphere for the policy currently pursued by the ruling class.

The reactionary moves to hostility towards foreign workers should be viewed from the same angle. Extreme right parties — National Action and Vigilance — are particularly active. These parties blame migrant workers for all the difficulties the average Swiss citizen now encounters, above all for the deteriorating situation in the sphere of employment and for the acute housing shortage. There is nothing new to this obviously fraudulent argument, but with the crisis growing increasingly severe, response to it is broadening. Particularly receptive are the underprivileged sections such as pensioners. Unaware of the true causes of their difficulties, they look for a specific, tangible scapegoat and blame it all on "those uninvited" migrant workers.

The current attack on xenophobia is much more acute than similar past relapses and is accompanied by an upsurge of open racism in connection with the problem of the refugees which has raised particular concerns over the past few years. More than 20,000 people have applied for political asylum from police, racial or religious persecution at

home. Some have left their countries due to severe economic problems there. Africans and Asians (Tamils, Turks, Zairians, etc.) make up a large part of this mass of refugees. In defiance of elementary norms of compassion, the far Right has advanced the slogan "Switzerland for the Swiss" and is calling for immediate deportation of the main body of refugees, first and foremost of dark-skinned people. In the situation that now obtains this racist demagoguery does produce an effect. In the minds of many Swiss, the problem of refugees and migrant workers has pushed virtually all other issues to the background — exactly what the political reactionaries were striving at.

A noticeable consolidation of the positions held by the far Right is one of the results of this campaign. In the cantonal elections in Geneva in October 1985 almost 19 per cent of the electorate voted for Vigilance which left all traditional ruling parties behind and increased its faction in the local assembly from seven to 19 seats. Two weeks later the rightists took part in the communal elections in the neighbouring canton of Vaud and won 16 out of the 100 seats on the municipal council of Lausanne, the centre of the canton, where they had not been represented since 1978. Similar developments are under way in the German-speaking part of Switzerland where a National Socialist Party has even been recently set up in Zurich. True, so far it has recruited less than ten members, but the fact itself is alarming.

The Reasons Behind the Difficulties the Progressive Forces Face

The Swiss working class movement, the working people as a whole have proved to be poorly prepared for the current stage of the class struggle. Today, confusion and diffidence is the prevalent mood among them — or, at best, a defensive reaction.

This can be explained in part by the fact that up to the mid-1970s, crisis phenomena could be detected in the economy in embryonic form if at all; for a long time, unemployment was an abstract notion to working people. But the crucial part was played by the class collaboration policy of the Social Democrats and the Swiss Trade Union (STU). Very few strikes have been staged in our country over the postwar years. The working classes not only failed to acquire any tangible militant experience but was even barred from collective bargaining which was the exclusive prerogative of the union leaders.

Aside from that, many working people now have a feeling (which is actually justified) that the STU and the Social Democratic Party have failed to effectively counter the reactionary offensive and are incapable of showing how the country could extricate itself from this situation. A certain degree of erosion of confidence in the trade unions and in left political parties, the refusal to take part in the organised working class movement and the spread of individualistic attitudes are among the consequences of the "peaceful industrial relations" policy. All these no doubt pose a major obstacle to concerted and resolute action which is so essential for rebuffing the strategy of the ruling class.

The SPL, too, is going through a difficult period manifested, specifically, in the several setbacks it has suffered in national and cantonal elections. The problems which we encounter in connection with objective social processes are compounded by the difficulties caused by current events and the prevailing attitudes of the public.

The first category of these problems includes the contradiction of the natural base of Communist activities: the numerical strength of the industrial proletariat is diminishing because the development of the services is now the dominant trend in Switzerland. Today, 55 per cent of the able-bodied population are employed in the services, and the figure is likely to increase. Foreigners are replacing Swiss workers in industry. Comprising 60 to 80 per cent of the industrial labour force, migrant workers take little part in the social or political struggle due to their special status, motley ethnic composition (they come from some 20 different countries) and distinctive interests. Newcomers to the ranks of hired labour are supplied mostly by the services, and by managerial and technical personnel, and this is accompanied by an overall drop in Swiss working people's militant spirit which was never too pronounced to begin with because

of the socio-economic situation that was prevalent in the country and also due to the "peaceful industrial relations" policy.

The massive anti-communist campaign, the attempts to make the very idea of socialism repulsive to people by exaggerating the complexities of the socialist countries' development and often, with the help of a blatantly slanderous misrepresentation of their realities, are typical of the second category of difficulties.

The growing disillusionment with politics is another feature that should be mentioned.⁵ It is expressed in increased indifference to social matters, in the spread of individualism, particularly among young people in decisions to abandon "traditional" political parties, be they right-wing or left-wing, and in the emergence of various organisationally amorphous movements that pursue their own special, and often very narrow, interests.

Finally, as far as elections are concerned, the SPL is suffering setbacks because of its principled commitment to uphold the rights of foreign workers and due to its rejection of any manifestations of xenophobia or racism. The Communists acknowledge that the presence of 850,000 migrant workers in Switzerland does give rise to serious problems. Our party is aware of the need for some solution to the problem of refugees, but we advocate an approach that would combine humanitarian principles with the interests of Switzerland's broad popular masses.

Against the Offensive of the Ruling Class

Summing up some of these points, one can say that the progressive forces, first and foremost the Communists, have to work in conditions that are truly very difficult in our country. Nevertheless, our party believes that opportunities do exist for stemming the "conservative tide". In the more general terms, these opportunities result from the contradictions which are inherent in capitalist society and which cannot be neutralised by ideological or political means.

Although the right-wing offensive in our country has forced working people to go on the defensive, it has failed to dampen action for the social demands advanced earlier.

Significantly, the long-fought struggle for a shorter workweek—the workweek is longer in Switzerland than in other industrialised countries⁶—is assuming priority. A 40-hour workweek for most government employees has already been introduced. Now the task is to ensure extension of this arrangement to cover all working people without exception. In 1983 the Swiss Trade Union and the Social Democratic Party, directly supported by our party and by several other progressive organisations, sponsored relevant draft legislation. The petition has been signed by the required number of citizens and will be put to the national vote within the next two years. The SPL and other progressive forces regard this move as an integral part of the struggle for a 35-hour workweek with no loss in pay.

Working people support the Communists' and other left parties' demand of reducing the pension age from 65 to 62 for men and from 62 to 60 for women (this is where Switzerland lags behind most other West European countries too). Concerted efforts on our part have collected 100,000 signatures in support of this demand (the Communists collected a sizeable part of the total), and we hope to win when the ballots are cast.

The country's progressive forces are keeping up their struggle for equality for women. In June 1981 an overwhelming majority of the electorate approved the addition of a relevant provision to the Swiss Constitution. It is now essential to ensure its actual observance. The situation concerning women's wages and salaries remains unsatisfactory: they earn 25 to 35 per cent less than men for equal work. Nevertheless, a degree of progress is obvious. Certain categories of federal and cantonal employees—such as women teachers—have recently been granted salaries equal to those of men. In September 1985 some 55 per cent of the electorate defeated a frantic reactionary campaign and voted in favour of new family legislation which is a new important step towards full compliance with the constitutional provision on equality for

women.

All this shows that even today, the left forces can score certain results. Our party is doing what it can to help mobilise working people in the struggle to uphold and consolidate social and material gains and democratic rights. The Communists' militancy also enables them to play a role in promoting the activity of the trade union movement which shows signs of change.

A discussion is developing within the movement on whether it should continue to observe the "peaceful industrial relations" policy, especially in view of the fact that the employers are trying to dominate it fully. They themselves have rejected the idea of consensus in industry, and so this policy can no longer offer anything to the trade unions. One should also note that the unions' rank and file have grown more active. For example, in late 1985 the national leadership of the Union of Swiss Post, Telephone and Telegraph Functionaries was, for the first time in history, disavowed by the rank and file for not upholding their interests consistently enough.

The democratic aspirations and traditions that have taken firm root in our people's mentality due to the system of cantonal self-government and to the long record of bourgeois-democratic rule⁷ remain an important source of resistance to the reactionary forces. Suffice it to recall that when the government proposed a plan for the creation of a so-called federal security police force with extensive powers to "maintain law and order in the country", it was defeated by the people in a referendum—and that despite the almost unanimous approval of the bill in parliament, where only the Communist faction voted against.

One should also note that at the height of the right-wing offensive, there developed a struggle for peace without precedent in the country's history.⁸ Its scope is even bigger than that of the broad anti-war action launched during the period of the Stockholm Appeal. Two huge demonstrations were staged in Bern, our capital, in 1981 and 1983, bringing together 40,000 and 50,000 people respectively—very high figures for Switzerland. On the eve of the 1985 Gorbachov-Reagan summit a 10,000-strong demonstration was held in Geneva, a clear expression of protest against the arms race and of support for peace and international security. The important thing is that the anti-war action focuses precisely on those issues from which the right-wing bourgeois press tries to divert public attention elsewhere—US Euromissiles, the overmilitarisation of the country, nuclear-free zones, etc. The presence of several slogans based on the pernicious idea of "equal responsibility" of the United States and the USSR for the arms race does nothing to change the generally positive orientation of this movement.

Establishing Ties with Left Democratic Quarters

The recent trend towards more concerted action by the Left is the third factor behind the opportunities for an organised rebuff to the right-wing offensive. While SDP leaders rejected any possible relationship with the Communists as far back as 15 years ago, today we maintain contacts in parliament, and the two parties take a common stand on individual issues, specifically those of support for this or that initiative to uphold the rights of working people.

One can speak about direct cooperation in several French-speaking cantons⁹ where the SPL holds stronger positions. Joint action by the two parties—for example, during elections—enables them to attain a degree of success in resisting the onslaught of the conservatives and the extreme Right. The results of the November 1985 elections to the Geneva State Council (cantonal government) are typical in this regard. The Communists and the Socialists submitted a joint ticket to the electorate. And, although both parties had lost many votes in the elections to the cantonal parliament held four weeks earlier, this time the objective was attained: with SPL support, the Socialists retained their two seats in the State Council (out of seven), and both their candidates were among the top three winners, having secured more votes than almost all their rivals from the bourgeois parties. The SPL candidate was not elected, but supporting him was

about one-third of the electorate. Given the prevailing situation, that was not bad at all. Another important task of the progressive forces was accomplished in the elections: the candidate of the extreme Right was barred from the cantonal government.

The situation within the trade union movement has also improved somewhat. SPL members now hold several important posts in the cantonal federations of government employees, chemical and steel industry workers. Today's situation thus differs considerably from that of the 1950s, when Communists were subjected to a veritable witch hunt in the trade unions.

Close cooperation is also developing between our party and political forces to the left of the SDP—for example, with the Swiss Progressive Organisations (SPO), a party operating in the German-speaking part of the country, and with the Autonomous Socialist Party (ASP), formed in the 1970s on the basis of a Social Democratic splinter group in the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino. Representatives of the SPL, the SPO and the ASP form a single faction in parliament. Although it has only five seats and therefore cannot take part in the deliberations of the parliamentary working committees,¹⁰ one must not depreciate the very fact that such a faction exists despite the efforts of the conservative and openly reactionary quarters who are striving to fragment the Left and, particularly, to isolate the Communists. We organise joint action with these parties not only on the national but also on the cantonal level. Unfortunately, trends have recently surfaced in the SPO advocating a revision of its ideological platform and the party's transformation into a special-interest environmentalist organisation.

The final factor to be noted is the emergence of numerous non-traditional movements acting as a counter-weight to the conservative course in several fields. As a rule, they pursue rather limited and clearly delineated goals such as the defence of the interests of women, youth, tenants, pensioners, senior citizens or the disabled, or environmental protection, or the struggle against the construction of new nuclear power stations. The distinctly Swiss feature of these movements (compared to their counter-parts in other West European countries) is that they are in fact keeping aloof from broader political issues.

Nevertheless, our party maintains well-established relations with the associations set up to protect tenants' rights, and we have scored considerable results in this sphere. As far as the environmentalist movements are concerned, cooperation with them is sometimes hampered by their bourgeois character. As for left-oriented groups, they are also influenced by anti-communism. All this does not mean that our party rejects responsible cooperation with these forces. We are now searching for new opportunities to coordinate our positions and mount joint action.

Our party attaches priority importance to the organisation of a fightback against the right-wingers, maintaining that in this way it will be possible to lay the basis for subsequently changing the alignment of forces on the Swiss political scene in favour of working people and of left, progressive movements. The SPL is firmly committed to its strategy of paving the way for popular unity against the policy of big capital.

As emphasised at the latest, 12th Congress of the party (May 1983), now that the conservative forces are trying to jeopardise working people's gains and democratic freedoms, this strategy assumes particular importance. Our policy of broad alliances should promote the unity of ever greater sections of industrial and office workers, intellectuals, technical experts and craftsmen. The strategy is aimed at the creation of a political situation in which decisions consonant with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the Swiss people will be adopted and implemented, in which the people will receive full access to the great advances of scientific and technological progress.

Naturally, attainment of the goals the party has set itself depends considerably on its own militancy and influence among the masses. It is imperative for the SPL to gear all its work to the task of consolidating and adding to the party ranks, first and foremost by recruiting young people. We are also working to improve the effectiveness of our press: the process of improvement is already under way. Explaining to the people the real

causes behind the deterioration of their position, the Communists at the same time intend to step up their search for new ways and means of struggle so as to restore confidence to working people. Increased popular trust in the party will depend to a great degree on the effectiveness of these means and on the success of specific SPL action. The drive to consolidate its ranks and update its policy will enable our party to enhance its social role and redouble its efforts so as to stem and turn back the 'conservative tide'.

¹ Today, 32,000 people are unemployed in Switzerland (compared to 23,000 people in 1983). This figure should be increased by another 10,000 representing the approximate number of those who are no longer entitled to unemployment benefits and are not included in the statistics. Besides, partial unemployment affects additional scores of thousands of people.

² A total of 6.4 million people live in Switzerland now—*Ed.*

³ This means that the employers can use the workers they hire as they see fit, "depending on production needs".—*Ed.*

⁴ This mechanism essentially means that any Swiss political party, civic organisation or group is entitled to propose its own draft legislation and put it to a nationwide or cantonal vote, as well as to demand a referendum on a specific decision of the federal or cantonal government provided a sufficient number of citizens signs the relevant petition.—*Ed.*

⁵ A drop in civic activity during election campaigns is particularly typical of present-day Switzerland. In 1979 and 1983, less than half the voters cast their ballots in elections to the Federal Parliament. The turnout in the latest elections in Neuchâtel canton (March 1985) was 38.9 per cent and in Geneva canton (October 1985), 39.5 per cent of the electorate.

⁶ As of the early 1980s, the workweek averaged 42 to 45 hours in Switzerland, and the figure for some groups of working people was higher than that. For example, according to the People's Family Movement (a progressive-oriented Catholic organisation), 60 per cent of the able-bodied population in the French-speaking areas of Switzerland work 44 or more hours a week.

⁷ A bourgeois democratic constitution was adopted in Switzerland in 1848.

⁸ For details, see Andre Rauber, "Militarism Will Not Be Beaten Without Mobilising the People", *WMR*, No. 5, 1985.—*Ed.*

⁹ The cantons of Vaud, Geneva, Neuchâtel and Jura.—*Ed.*

¹⁰ The National Council—the lower chamber of Switzerland's Federal Assembly—totals 200 seats.

Promoting Unity

Matyas Szuros – HSWP Central
Committee Secretary

THE international communist movement is the most important consistent and organised force of social progress. It is active throughout the world in the principal revolutionary currents that objectively promote society's world-wide transition to socialism. It is one of the political forces that shape international relations. Aware of their historical responsibility for the future of nations and working people, the Communists are the most resolute champions of the struggle to avert the threat of nuclear catastrophe, for durable peace and security.

This article presents the HSWP view of certain topical issues concerning the development of today's communist movement.

The working class movement is constantly developing, responding to the changes in the conditions of our struggle, and that is why it has, over the 150 years of its history, radically transformed our world and developed into the most important political factor of our age. Although communist influence differs from region to region and from country to country and although the sister parties differ in terms of their numerical strength and degree of organisation, the movement displays a long-term trend towards a more powerful capacity to attain its goals. This trend is clear from the growth of the parties' number and membership and from the steady expansion of their social base. While the Founding Congress of the Communist International in 1919 brought together 35 communist parties and left organisations and there were 65 parties participating in the momentous Seventh Congress in 1935, today the world has over 100 communist, workers' and Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties. Having long spread

beyond Europe, our movement unites more than 80 million Communists on all five continents.

The historical record shows however, that the development of the movement has been a complex and contradictory process, has proceeded differently in different regions and travelled a fluctuating, not straightforward course. Upsurges such as those that occurred in the wake of the two world wars alternate with intervals of inaction, with periods in which the movement gathers strength and even with slumps affecting whole regions.

Our movement is affected by diverse international and local factors that are often mutually contradictory. Its effectiveness is now decisively dependent on the state of the world socialist system which influences the world by the power of its example, by the successful tackling of its internal tasks. Progress in the building of socialism adds to the appeal and prestige of the movement. The growing prosperity of the people, the continuous expansion of socialist democracy and the radical transformation of the cultural fabric clearly demonstrate that socialism presents a truly historic alternative to the capitalist system.

The countries of our community ensure the maintenance of a military balance of forces, thus making it possible to preserve peace on Earth. Their foreign policy is a paramount factor in the curbing of the arms race and in the easing of international tensions. A peaceful, stable and balanced international situation enhances the ability of the Communists in non-socialist countries to attain their objectives and goals, reduces the danger of counter-revolution being exported and helps objective laws of social development to assert their role. On the other hand, the difficulties that sometimes arise in the building of socialism, as well as accidental mistakes and deformations weaken the appeal of our system and, as one can see from historical precedents, encourage aggressive imperialist designs, create a beachhead of sorts for an anti-communist propaganda offensive and thus restrict the opportunities and the scope of action of sister parties in capitalist and developing countries.

Foremost among the factors that have adversely affected the development of the communist movement in recent years have been the acceleration of the arms race and the heightening of international tensions, both brought about by the policy the aggressive imperialist quarters pursue in their bid to secure military superiority over the socialist community. The bourgeoisie is striving to mount a counter-offensive not only in individual countries but also on an international scale; a wave of conservative attitudes has risen in the capitalist world (mostly due to internal reasons). It proved difficult for several communist parties to consolidate and sometimes even retain their positions in this situation. In an effort to oust these parties from the political scene, the reactionary forces are bringing open pressure to bear on some West European countries. Savage attacks are being launched against the national liberation movements, against the communist and Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties of newly liberated countries and against progressive governments that steer an anti-imperialist course.

The changes in the world economy—both those that have occurred over the past 15 to 20 years and those we encounter today—have also produced a generally negative impact on the state of the movement. The leading imperialist powers have embarked on a policy of greater protectionism; political considerations prompt them to increasingly resort to discriminatory moves and embargoes in their relations with the socialist and other progressive countries. This has adversely affected these nations, particularly if one takes into account the general rise in international political and economic tensions. The exacerbation of crisis developments in the world capitalist economy, their pernicious impact on national economies and the insecurity they result in have done nothing to promote the work of communist parties in industrialised capitalist countries.

The situation in newly free countries with their backlog of acute problems such as

socio-economic underdevelopment, the external debt, the population explosion, hunger and the deterioration of the environment exerts a distinctive influence on our movement. The aggravation of these problems—which can be solved only through international cooperation—is bad for the global alignment of socio-political forces. Several grave local crises are fraught with the threat of outside interference and with the escalation of armed conflicts. Preventing it and ensuring an equitable settlement of the existing problems is an important goal of all realistic and progressive forces.

A difficult situation is thus arising; in our age, developing countries offer a particularly favourable opportunity for a geographic expansion of the world revolutionary process; however, the class enemy seizes upon any step in this direction as a pretext for exacerbating international tensions. The socialist countries regard vigorous support of progressive processes as their internationalist goal and hold that it should be accompanied by efforts to preserve world peace, strengthen international security and promote cooperation between countries with different social systems. This was reiterated in the statement the Warsaw Treaty countries adopted at the Sofia meeting of their Political Consultative Committee in October 1985.

Suspension of detente, a deteriorating international climate, changes in the world economy and socio-economic restructuring were, along with other radical shifts, typical of the 1970s and 1980s. They were behind the problems that confronted individual communist parties each in its own way, depending on the specific conditions obtaining in this or that region or country. Our movement encountered new phenomena, and its development became more contradictory.

Over the past decade, the sister parties of the socialist world have been tackling their constructive tasks in a complicated situation, which arose due to unfavourable international developments. The need to both combat imperialist attempts at upsetting the military equilibrium and display solidarity with the forces of national independence and social progress made it necessary to exert much greater efforts than before. The economic complications of the 1970s hampered the transition of several socialist countries to intensive national economic growth; national income growth rates declined, and there have even been a few disruptions. Those socialist countries who are at a lower level of economic development and working to overcome their legacy of backwardness have had to cope with considerable difficulties.

Of crucial importance for the work of communist parties in capitalist countries was the fact that, as noted at the 13th Congress of the HSWP, despite the aggravation of the general crisis of capitalism, the latter proved that it possessed considerable economic and political reserves: even grave phenomena such as unemployment and inflation have failed to produce a directly revolutionary situation. Moreover, we hold that the developments of the 1970s and 1980s have shown that an attempt to carry yet another leftward democratic shift within the capitalist system to its conclusion would have encountered very serious internal and international obstacles. Vigorous efforts to promote the revolutionary struggle are hampered by the internationally intertwined character of capital and by the bonds linking most capitalist countries together: the military, political and integration alliances they have set up are functioning effectively enough in spite of all their innate problems and contradictions.

The Communists of the developing countries have their share of difficulties. The working class has not yet taken definitive shape in most of these countries, and the sister parties are drawing on the experience of the struggle for national liberation, not on militant working class traditions. Although former colonies and semi-colonies have attained independence, many retain close ties to their former colonial powers, depend on the capitalist economic system and are subjected to open or veiled imperialist pressure, up to and including direct interference in their internal affairs. A number of communist parties in Asia, Africa and Latin America are unable to work legally so as to ensure genuine independence, national revival and social progress for their countries. In some countries, the Communists are forced to wage an armed struggle

against dictatorships and foreign intervention.

The prospects for the development of the communist movement and the future expansion of the socialist world depend primarily on how effectively individual parties will be able to restructure their activities, gear them to the new global, regional, national and local conditions and change these conditions to their own advantage and on whether it will prove possible to solve acute problems of our age properly and in time.

A desire to find an answer and a creative search for ways leading ahead are a salient feature of our movement today. This search has become comprehensive: it covers both efforts to elaborate a strategy and the parties practical activities. Significantly, their policies are increasingly adapted to distinctive national conditions and their programmes, to the specific situation and historical traditions of this or that country. Many sister parties are striving to tackle topical problems above all on a national scale. A creative approach is essential here because there is no ready-made cure-all that could guarantee a successful solution of these issues. Precepts of Marxist-Leninist theory and the experience of other communist and workers' parties can be effectively applied only if they are adapted to the specific conditions obtaining in each individual country or region.

A diversity of forms is another important feature of our movement at the present stage. This diversity is rooted in the fact that the parties can attain their goals—the goals that coincide in their principal essence—only if the common ideological principles and experience are applied to the distinctive conditions of each nation.

History shows that the Communists' influence increases only when such diversity is combined with a common purpose, when their policies are realistic and adjusted to the actual situation. For example, the new strategy which was adopted by the international communist movement in the 1930s, which was more attentive to the distinctive conditions individual parties operated under and which granted them greater independence made it possible to double the membership of the communist parties.

Differentiation and regionalism are typical of our movement today (one does not rule out the other). The former feature is expressed in the diversity of theoretical views and political practices: even parties holding positions that are close and acting mostly in the same way nevertheless differ from one another and strive to steer a course of their own. The latter feature means that similarities in geographical position and in the level of economic development as well as a common history give rise to similarities in policy and promote regional unity among parties.

These distinctive features do nothing to change the international character of the communist movement. However, they obviously affect the forms of cooperation: parties strive to maintain ties that are up-to-date, reflect specific demands of the moment and are based on firm principles; preference is accorded to those types of cooperation that not only guarantee respect of each party's independence and its full equality but also ensure the effectiveness of the movement as a whole.

The sister parties are united by a common goal, that of replacing capitalism with a new, democratic and humanistic society without exploitation. The Communists proceed from a common ideological and conceptual platform that includes the classical theory of Marxism-Leninism, the long experience of the working class struggle, as well as theoretical and practical ones. The coincidence of the fundamental objectives pursued by the Communists makes it necessary for them to close their ranks and support one another; this need is reflected in the principles of proletarian internationalism and international solidarity, the most important features of our movement. Today, the actual meaning of its unity is determined above all by the joint efforts of the communist parties to defuse the threat of a world war and by their struggle against imperialism, for socialist goals:

The movement's unity is not an immutable state but a process whose content changes as it develops. It is natural that creative quests and the diversity of the forms of

struggle have led to a reappraisal of the meaning of unity; its content has become more complex than before. The type of unity that existed (and was indispensable) in the period of the Communist International is a thing of the past, and there is no need to return to it. Today's communist movement has neither an organisational nor a political centre; the sister parties act independently to elaborate their policy and to find the best ways of solving their tasks within their national framework. Unity is expressed in the community of their principles and purposes, in joint and parallel efforts undertaken in pursuit of common goals. This means that we are dealing with a trend of promoting unity through practical action.

The road to greater unity in our movement leads us above all to precisely identify our international interests, to carefully adjust the distinctive interests of individual parties to these international purposes and to choose forms of action that would serve both the attainment of our common goals and the solution of the specific tasks facing the Communists of this or that country. Recognition of the fact that distinctive national conditions give rise to distinctive interests, as well as the striving to realise these interests do nothing to weaken the international unity of the movement as a whole; on the contrary, they are an important factor in the consolidation of this unity. The unity and the joint efforts of the parties create favourable international conditions for the attainment of their goals.

The diversity of the conditions in which the parties operate, their independence and responsibility for the policy they conduct shed new light on their ideological unity. We know that the Communists' views are rooted in their common intellectual heritage. However, in analysing new aspects of their struggle and in the course of their creative quests, they often give different answers to the same questions. Only time and practice will tell who is right and who is wrong. The emergence of an ideological unity consonant with the new conditions and demands of our time is a process in which all parties are responsible for upholding the purity of our movement's ideological and conceptual precepts and for ensuring their creative development. The organisation of international meetings and theoretical conferences, cooperation that involves different research institutes maintained by individual parties and the establishment of collective research centres by several parties can serve to further this unity.

The common ideological basis of the international communist movement is neither a code of dogmata nor a closed system but a body of ideas and experience constantly renovated and added to in the course of the transformations the world is going through.

In the past, too, more or less lively exchanges of views occurred when individual parties compared their answers to the questions they encountered and the experience they gained in different conditions. This is perfectly natural. Suffice it to recall the sharp debates Marx and Engels conducted to defend their theory or the devastating force of Lenin's polemical articles. It is a law of dialectics that contradictions and, consequently, discussions are an essential concomitant of development.

There was a period when ideological differences again increased in the communist movement; this produced certain tensions which affected the relations the parties maintained among themselves. Different parties still view some problems differently. The bourgeois mass media distort and exaggerate these differences in an effort to prove that the movement is in crisis or about to break up.

The exchange of views and the discussions in question resulted mostly from a creative search for ways to advance. Domestic and external changes that accompanied the building of socialism prompted the sister parties of the socialist countries to carefully assess available options and select the best ways of accelerating socio-economic development and the means of perfecting economic management and the system of political institutions. The Communists of industrialised capitalist countries reflected on how they should pursue their revolutionary strategy in the new situation that differed so greatly from what they dealt with in the past. The communist parties of

developing countries where the situation was particularly fluid and different factors of the revolutionary struggle sometimes exerted mutually contradictory influences also reappraised and redefined their strategy and tactics. The debates concerned a number of issues facing the socialist countries and questions related to the mode of transition to socialism, the attitude to Marxism-Leninism and the issue of proletarian internationalism.

In devising a strategy geared to the changes that had occurred in the conditions of the struggle, some communist parties refused to accept the socialist countries as a suitable model, arguing that socialism had taken shape there in a different historical period, under different circumstances and at a lower level of development. These parties attempted to elaborate different concepts of socialist society and to outline the forms it should take in their national conditions. Specifically, these views arose in connection with the fact that in some aspects, the historical development of socialism proved to be different from what we expected: there surfaced considerable discrepancies between our somewhat idealised picture of what the new social system should be like and its actual image.

Attempts were made to suggest one's own solutions to various questions—whether the use of force is essential for the victory of a socialist revolution, if this victory can be attained only with the help of a dictatorship of the proletariat or whether there can be another way of securing this victory. Several parties stress that in this day and age, only a peaceful transition to socialism is acceptable; otherwise a global armed conflict may break out or a pretext may arise for the export of counter-revolution as a result of military and economic imperialist integration. Some communist parties categorically reject the use of force and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Making an absolute out of democracy, they aim at building a pluralistic socialist society. However, very many parties question the validity of such views; others believe that if at all possible, these ideas can only be realised in individual countries and under distinctive conditions; besides, the feasibility of these options is yet to be proven in practical terms.

The debate over the attitude to Marxism-Leninism developed because several parties deleted from their policy documents all reference to Marxism-Leninism as the common ideological basis of our movement. They cited different arguments in support of their decision; some did not marshal any arguments at all. It is not the question of which term we use that is central to this discussion, although that, too, is important. For example, if a party defines its ideological foundations not as Marxism-Leninism but as scientific socialism, this term in all probability refers both to the theory of Marx, Engels and Lenin and to the works of this party's own outstanding theorists. As far as the HSWP is concerned, we squarely identify our philosophy with Marxism-Leninism because we regard it as the ideological basis of all work Hungary's Communists are doing.

The controversy over the concept of "proletarian internationalism" gained in intensity primarily because, citing the changes in the character of the relations obtaining in the communist movement, some parties prefer "new internationalism" a new term used to describe a broad unity of left, progressive, anti-imperialist forces. We hold, however, that while this cooperation is important and necessary, it is no substitute for the close cooperation maintained by the communist parties, for their joint action on specific and topical issues of the movement's development. The important thing is what meaning is read into the concept of proletarian internationalism. Comrade Janos Kadar, HSWP General Secretary, had this to say at the 1976 Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties in Berlin: "The idea of internationalism has been added to constantly, its influence has been growing, and its strength has helped the international communist movement to develop into the most powerful political movement in history. We believe that the idea of proletarian internationalism implies harmony between national and international interests, for the

successes scored by individual parties strengthen the international working class movement, while the consolidation of the international communist movement helps individual parties. Proletarian internationalism stands for mutual solidarity and support, for comradely cooperation that implies the independence and equality of individual parties, as well as non-interference in one another's internal affairs."

A correct understanding of the nature of our differences and of our cooperation is of key importance to our movement. Differences of opinion that are rooted in the objectively different positions the Communists hold in different countries or debates prompted by dissimilar assessments of the situation do not have to be an obstacle to joint political action. However, there are, of course, some contradictory positions that can give rise not only to public discussions but also to regrettable tensions in relations between certain parties.

Public controversies have been noticeably less intense in recent years. Cases of a party openly criticising the socialist countries, calls for action without regard for others and violations of solidarity have become much less frequent. The parties formulate their objections not so often and not so sharply. In some cases, mutual understanding has improved and the methods, the style of expressing one's own views have changed. This is an important factor as far as relations among the parties are concerned. These views are essentially hypotheses born of the wish to pay greater attention to distinctive national conditions; they can be described as experiments, as attempts to make a party better adapted to the actual realities. Here, too, practice is the yardstick to prove or deny their viability.

Such debates create problems in inter-party relations only if, having advanced a new concept, a party tries to elevate it (and the corresponding political practice) to the rank of a universal law, of the only true solution which applies to, and is therefore binding for, all other parties. Specifically, such was the case with some views on the historical paths to socialism and on the current practices of the socialist countries.

In the decisions of its 13th Congress the HSWP stresses that as a component of the international communist movement, it regards the task of promoting the movement's unity as one of its priority objectives. Invariably guided by the principle of proletarian internationalism, the HSWP is fighting together with all other sister parties for the preservation of universal peace and for social progress.

We will continue to take part in joint creative efforts aimed at solving topical issues of our age, at identifying and overcoming differences of opinion. The Hungarian Communists strive to make inter-party discussions serve our common interests and greater unity, promote a high sense of responsibility for the purity of Marxism-Leninism and stimulate its creative development. Theoretical debates conducted in an appropriate form do not weaken unity because they do not hamper joint political action. On the contrary, discussions can help parties to better grasp one another's positions and the conditions obtaining in other countries and to bring their positions closer together.

It is our firm conviction that there is no universally applicable or binding model of socialism or way to socialism. However, general laws of its building and operation do exist. A considerable body of historical experience has been accumulated in this field, and it is important to use this experience for guidance—naturally, in a way that would ensure its best possible application to specific national conditions. Each party is entitled to decide—proceeding from the distinctive conditions and traditions of its country—which forms should be used to create the favourable conditions for a transition to socialism, which methods make the building of socialism more successful.

We support all forms of cooperation which are consonant with today's situation in the communist movement and with the norms of relations existing among the sister parties. We promote regular contacts, exchanges of views and comradely discussions with other parties, including those that assess some aspects of international politics and of communist strategy differently. We are convinced that alienation and severance

of relations serve only to harm, not to benefit the movement. We know from our experience that frank exchanges of views and patient efforts to explain and convince produce understanding, thus consolidating unity and improving the opportunities for joint action.

Our party attaches great importance to bilateral ties. We regard our cooperation with the CPSU as vitally important, and we continuously exchange our experience with regard to all aspects of the social and party fabric. The historical example of the building of socialism in the USSR helps us to solve our own tasks.

Our cooperation with other sister parties of the socialist countries is also developing. The community of our interests increasingly enriches the content of this cooperation. It helps us to learn more about one another's achievements and to apply them to the national conditions of this or that country. Inter-party cooperation serves to strengthen friendship among nations, consolidate our community and bring us close to our common goals.

At the 13th Congress the HSWP reiterated its commitment to expand its relations with the sister parties of industrialised countries. We follow their creative quests closely and affirm our solidarity with their struggle to restrict the sway of monopoly capital, to champion and broaden the democratic rights of working people and to achieve social progress. These parties are our reliable allies in the struggle for peace and international cooperation.

The HSWP also displays unflagging solidarity with the communist parties of newly free countries. The congress urged that greater attention be paid to the parties which had been established in socialist-oriented countries relatively recently and which had adopted Marxism-Leninism as their basic ideology. We will do what we can to help them in their just struggle to eliminate their legacy of underdevelopment, uphold their economic and political gains, make progressive change irreversible and accelerate socialist-oriented transformations. We assert our solidarity with the national liberation movements and assist them in their struggle against racism, dictatorships, neocolonialism, for genuine independence and social advancement.

Aside from bilateral ties, our party attaches great importance to the development of multilateral cooperation. The role of international theoretical conferences is growing. We hold that these meetings offer a good opportunity for a frank, comradely exchange of views, for learning about one another's experience, for identifying the spheres of future joint action and for consolidating our unity.

The HSWP supports all initiatives to organise bilateral and multilateral meetings that advance the common cause of the international communist movement, strengthen it and help settle disputes. We are aware of the fact that some time ago, a number of communist parties raised the question of a new universal communist conference (this view was expressed in *World Marxist Review* articles too). The changes that occur on the world scene no doubt demand that we consolidate our unity. This calls for forms of work which make it possible to better take the possible divergencies of interests, concepts and plans and the great diversity of the movement into account. Therefore, in assessing the question of convening such a universal conference of the communist parties, we note the changes that have occurred in their cooperation. One might, for example, recall the diversity of positions which surfaced in the summing-up of the results achieved at the Berlin Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties.

As the HSWP reiterated in the decisions adopted at its 13th Congress, our party believes that it is useful to exchange views with all non-communist parties and movements responsibly upholding the cause of peace. Ideological contradictions and dissimilar assessments of various social and international phenomena are no obstacle to moving closer to and cooperating with them in the tackling of issues that affect the future of humanity, in the struggle to preserve universal peace, for disarmament, for

peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems and for the expansion of mutually beneficial ties.

¹ János Kádár, *A szocializmusért-a békéért*. Budapest, 1978, p. 437.

Philosophy and Policy: Relevance of Lenin's Ideas

Jakub Netopilik – Corresponding Member,
Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences

MARXISM-LENINISM, the scientific world-view of the working class and the Communists, is an integral system of philosophical, economic, social and political ideas. Its integrality in theory and practice was remarkably epitomised in the activity of V. I. Lenin, the 116th anniversary of whose birth is being marked this year by progressive world opinion. The CPSU Programme emphasises: "Marxism-Leninism is an integral revolutionary teaching. Created by the great Lenin, the party has become the living embodiment of the fusion of scientific socialism with the working class movement, of the unbreakable unity of theory and practice."¹

Lenin's personality was one of uncommon harmony, but not only because of his individual qualities. His powerful mind, his indomitable revolutionary temperament, and his great charm were an embodiment of the best traits of the Marxist revolutionary, of the man of the new socialist society. The Communists regard him as the epitome of the blend of world-view and practice, of theory and revolutionary action method, of word and deed. What he said at the beginning of this century still rings most meaningfully today: "Anybody who tackles particular problems without having previously settled general problems, will inevitably and at every step 'come up against' those general problems without himself realising it," To come up against them blindly in every individual case means to doom one's policy to the worst vacillation and lack of principle.²

Marxists have always tied in the tasks of developing dialectical and historical materialism with a definite solution of social and political problems, and that is one of the most important distinctive features of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy from the bourgeois philosophy, which, as a rule, operates under a "non-party" cover of political indifference.

In the contemporary society, any philosophical system expresses—directly or indirectly—the interests of some class and is included in the sphere of its ideology. The point is, therefore, not whether philosophy assumes the form of ideology or whether it is connected with policy, but what kind of ideology it is, what are its objectives, and what is the content of the "union" of philosophy and policy. The reason for which bourgeois and some para-Marxist theorists are so clamorous in insisting on the political "neutrality" of philosophy and in trying to prove that their world-view is a "non-party" one is equally substantive and meaningful.

One has to note that the content of the concept of Leninism and of its ideological and political role in the society turns out to be the "hot spot" of all current ideological debates. The bourgeois and pseudo-Marxist approaches here cover a fairly wide spectrum, but it is possible to identify some dominant trends. Lenin is presented above all as a "revolutionary activist", and not as a thinker and theorist. There is also the more "moderate" view recognising the role of political theory in Leninism, but ignoring or minimising the fundamental importance of its philosophy.³ It is claimed, finally, that materialism is the "vulnerable aspect" of Lenin's philosophical views, for

it is allegedly just another version of the mechanistic world-view of the French Enlighteners of the eighteenth century. One pseudo-Marxist alleges, for instance, that Lenin's materialism was, in essence, the world-view of the bourgeois-democratic revolutionaries.⁴ This kind of reasoning is used to back up the general conclusion drawn by bourgeois and reformist ideologists: philosophy must not be connected with policy in any way, for it rises above the struggling classes and parties.

The most indigestible fact for this stripe of theorists is that Lenin's works exemplify the profound and fruitful inter-connection of world-view and political approaches, and that there is not a single one of his works that does not expose the numerous illusions concerning the political "neutrality" of philosophy, or policy without any basis in world-view whatsoever.

Indeed, these are the very tasks Lenin tackles in one of his earliest works, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats". For Marxism, the unity of philosophy and political activity, revolutionary activity in the first place, is based on a study of the objective historical processes and a formulation of general sociological laws. Reflection of actual processes is the crucial requirement for sociological theory, and, as Lenin shows, it is a requirement which Marx and Engels scrupulously observed in all their works to show the objective tendency of the capitalist society and its deep-seated internal contradictions in virtue of which it is doomed to go down and give way to a higher formation.

What is more, Lenin's theoretical legacy contains all the necessary arguments for polemicising with the present-day bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theorists who accuse him of adherence to a pre-Marxian materialism, a mechanistic determinism and similar other over-simplifications. They insist that Lenin took an "objectivist", "casual" view of the historical process, that he ignored the role of the individual and of the creative intelligentsia in the historical process, that he failed to reckon with the importance of political leadership, etc. But the fact is that, as Lenin elaborated the ideas of Marx and Engels, he demonstrated that concrete political actions could be strictly and correctly assessed in the light of materialist determinism, since the very possibility of scientific analysis tended to disappear when everything was heaped on the individual "free will". The idea of historical necessity shows the crucial role of the masses and does nothing to belittle the role of the individual in history, or of the political leadership in the social process. History consists of the actions of individuals who are, without doubt, acting individuals. However, the main question for the working class and its revolutionary party is: What are the conditions in which their political activity is assured of success? It is guaranteed, says Lenin, when such activity is an expression of the objective law of the historical process and has the support of the masses.

The role of theoretical activity and its connection with political activity is also a highly important question. Philosophical theory, says Lenin, must provide the answers to the basic spiritual requirements of the proletariat. If it accords with scientific requirements and helps to awaken thought in the working class, it will inevitably lead it along the course of Marxist, communist policy. Lenin says: "However much has still to be done to elaborate this theory, the socialists will do it; this is guaranteed by the spread among them of materialism, the only scientific method, one requiring that every programme shall be a precise formulation of the actual process . . ."⁵

The hope that philosophy entering upon the soil of social life could be politically "neutral" is an illusory one. It is nevertheless a fact that since the theoretical exercises of the leaders of the Second International to this very day attempts are being made to prove that it is natural and even necessary to have a "party-free" philosophy and political practice devoid of philosophical principles.

The gist of such illusions, which, together with the divining of the future through the reading of horoscopes, have become so fashionable in the twentieth century, was exposed by Lenin in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Bourgeois and pseudo-

Marxist theorists begin their efforts to "surmount" the party spirit of the Marxist philosophy with epistemological questions, by attacking the fundamental categories of materialism, which they claim to be some kind of absolutes, and fetishes, not tested in experience and laying "on the other side" of sensory perception (sensations), "truly scientific knowledge," and so on. Such theorists even claim that it is no longer meaningful to draw a distinction between materialism and idealism. Materialism, they insist, must give way to an empirically verifiable philosophy confining itself to a study and ordering of data on events given in sensory perceptions.

Some "Western Marxists" are now among those who take such a view. Maurice Cornforth, for instance, criticises Marx, Engels and Lenin for their "attachment" to the traditional problems of materialism and dialectics, saying: "If we once cultivate philosophy as genuinely empirical, the arbitrary character of all traditional philosophy is exposed and it is demonstrated that genuinely empirical philosophy fits the bill for obtaining the knowledge sought and obtainable by us of the human condition."⁶

The existence of objective laws in nature and social development is the main point at issue. If, as the empiricists insist, there is no sense in speaking about matter, there is no reason to believe in objective laws, among which the "neutral" philosophy regards as especially intolerable the class struggle, the proletariat's leading role in the historical process today, and the inevitability of transition from capitalism to socialism. But in that case we are no longer dealing with an epistemologically or politically "neutral" philosophy, but with a bourgeois, reformist doctrine whose essence is obscured by catchy slogans about the "non-party scientific approach", "neutrality", and so on. "Behind the epistemological scholasticism of empirio-criticism, one must not fail to see the struggle of parties in philosophy, a struggle which in the last analysis reflects the tendencies and ideology of the antagonistic classes in modern society. Recent philosophy is as partisan as was philosophy two thousand years ago."⁷

However, to this very day one will find Marxists prepared to accept the slogans about the "neutrality" of philosophy at face value, and indeed, try to "weed" Marxism with the conceptions of the most modern bourgeois philosophical schools. This ideological weed is most dangerous because it is so hardy, and the main danger undoubtedly consists in its spawning the seeds of an allegedly Marxist political stand that is said to occupy some "middle" ground. Not only the logic but the actual history of present-day social-reformism consists of a movement from "neutral" philosophy and ideology to an "averaged-out" policy without any proletarian class content.

When it comes to dialectics, its connection with political practice is obvious to every Marxist, because dialectics "includes in its comprehension and affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, of its inevitable breaking up; because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement, and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence; because it lets nothing impose upon it, and is in its essence critical and revolutionary".⁸ But one will find some theorists discerning a "gap" between dialectics and policy Marxism-Leninism, and the methods used by the bourgeois "Leninological" literature to contrast the two are highly diverse. At the same time, one will also discover a single "logical" scheme, one of whose mandatory premises relates to Lenin's attitude to dialectics. It is claimed, for instance, that he did not take part in working out the Marxist dialectical method at all; or that he turned to the problem only after 1914, or that he dealt with dialectics in his *Philosophical Notebooks* merely to familiarise himself with it, and so on. This line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that dialectics did not play any essential role in the activity of the leader of the revolution. None of that is true: it is no exaggeration to say that Lenin, as theorist and political leader, regarded the dialectics of Marx and Engels from the very outset as an organic element of the scientific world-view of the working class and as the key instrument of cognition and the revolutionary transformation of the society. He kept honing every facet of this instrument in combating metaphysics, eclecticism,

it is allegedly just another version of the mechanistic world-view of the French Enlighteners of the eighteenth century. One pseudo-Marxist alleges, for instance, that Lenin's materialism was, in essence, the world-view of the bourgeois-democratic revolutionaries.⁴ This kind of reasoning is used to back up the general conclusion drawn by bourgeois and reformist ideologists: philosophy must not be connected with policy in any way, for it rises above the struggling classes and parties.

The most indigestible fact for this stripe of theorists is that Lenin's works exemplify the profound and fruitful inter-connection of world-view and political approaches, and that there is not a single one of his works that does not expose the numerous illusions concerning the political "neutrality" of philosophy, or policy without any basis in world-view whatsoever.

Indeed, these are the very tasks Lenin tackles in one of his earliest works, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social Democrats". For Marxism, the unity of philosophy and political activity, revolutionary activity in the first place, is based on a study of the objective historical processes and a formulation of general sociological laws. Reflection of actual processes is the crucial requirement for sociological theory, and, as Lenin shows, it is a requirement which Marx and Engels scrupulously observed in all their works to show the objective tendency of the capitalist society and its deep-seated internal contradictions in virtue of which it is doomed to go down and give way to a higher formation.

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dogmatism and revisionism.

The development of the modern style of thinking, the methods of tackling the most challenging social and political problems of our epoch, and of strategy and tactics by the communist and workers' parties, and the refinement of the socialist society are inconceivable without the assimilation of the whole wealth of Lenin's dialectics. The programmatic and other documents of the congresses of the fraternal parties of the socialist countries make a point of emphasising the need to study the law-governed uniformities underlying the development of the new society, the whole complex of the contradictions of capitalism, the trends in the world revolutionary process and the communist and working class movement at the present stage. Dialectics requires the examination of these and other questions with all their concrete interconnections, all-round causality and contradictions, instead of taking an abstract view of them in isolation from the other factors of social progress.

"Marx's method consists, first of all, in taking due account of the *objective* content of a historical process at a given moment, in definite and concrete conditions; this in order to realise, in the first place, the movement of *which* class is the mainspring of the progress possible in those concrete conditions."⁹ Lenin asserted the Marxist dialectical method in contrast to eclecticism, which merely creates the impression of being comprehensive and of taking opposite tendencies into account, yet is in fact no more than a fake imitation of dialectics. Lenin warned that the spread of eclectics as a style of thinking, as an approach to political issues and, in particular, to determining the ways to socialism, posed a danger to the working class movement, a danger that was latent in itself. That is why Lenin attached such essential importance to the critique of "eclectical socialism" flavoured with a European bourgeois-democratic syrup. Here is what Lenin says about one of its specimens: "When two or more different definitions are taken and combined at random . . . the result is an eclectic definition which is indicative of different facets of the object, and nothing more."

"Dialectical logic demands that we should go further. Firstly, if we are to have a true knowledge of an object we must look at and examine all its facets, its connections and 'mediacies'. That is something we cannot ever hope to achieve completely, but the rule of comprehensiveness is a safeguard against mistakes and rigidity."¹⁰

Eclectics operates with lifeless and empty abstractions, ignoring the substance of the ongoing processes, and continuously confusing the individual and the general, the accidental and the necessary. Such is the view of the state and democracy taken, among others, by the theorists of the Second International (Karl Kautsky and E. Vandervelde).

Marx and Engels foresaw that the state, as a specific institution, would wither away in the communist society, and give a strict scientific definition of the conditions in which this would take place: the winning of power by the working class, a revolutionary break-up of the bourgeois state machine, and creation of a socialist state, and the development of socialist democracy and self-administration. By contrast, those who favoured the eclectic method took the view that since communism is a society which has no need of the state, the latter's gradual withering away would have to begin under capitalism, in a process of "democratisation". In other words, capitalism would effect "full democracy" through its own exertions in reforming the state power.

Exposing the logic of opportunism, Lenin says: "Usually the two are combined by means of eclecticism, by an unprincipled or sophistic selection made arbitrarily (or to please the powers that be) of first one, then another argument, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, if not more, it is the idea of the 'withering away' that is placed in the forefront. Dialectics are replaced by eclecticism—this is the most usual, the most widespread practice to be met with in the present-day official Social Democratic literature in relation to Marxism."¹¹

The present-day theorists of "democratic socialism", who have carried on this

opportunist line within the working class movement, do not like this concrete formulation of the question: What kind of democracy is actually meant—bourgeois or proletarian? In their view, one should concern oneself with “democracy as such”, the latter being reduced to an expression of will of an abstract majority and an abstract minority, without it being at all important which majority and which minority they are. The class character of democracy in present-day conditions is said to be inessential.

It may appear at first sight that the eclectic formulates the question of democracy in the most general terms that are applicable to any conditions. In actual fact, the eclectic approach results in democracy being stripped of all its concrete class content. In a “A Great Beginning” Lenin says: “Those who try to solve the problems involved in the transition from capitalism to socialism on the basis of general talk about liberty, equality, democracy in general ... thereby only reveal their petty-bourgeois, and philistine nature and ideologically slavishly follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. The correct solution of this problem can be found only in a concrete study of the specific relations between the specific class which has conquered political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole non-proletarian, and also the semi-proletarian, mass of the working population—relations which do not take shape in fantastically harmonious, ‘ideal’ conditions, but in the real conditions of the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie which assumes many and diverse forms”.¹²

Lenin’s thinking is also directed against that branch of eclectic logic which switches the reasoning about “democracy in general” to the problems of the socialist state, holding forth about the socialist revolution in Russia having been “premature”, about a “distortion” of socialism which had emerged on a soil not sufficiently “turned up” by bourgeois democracy, etc. The theoretical projects for a present-day “eclectical socialism” nowadays contain hardly more “positive” content than they had when they were subjected to withering criticism by Lenin. They still revolve in the magic circle of abstract reasoning about “complete freedom of the individual”, preservation of individuality, etc. But there is more venom in the charges levelled against existing socialism of its being “totalitarian”, “egalitarian”, “elitist”, and so on. All of this merely serves to emphasise that it is not such a far cry at all from the substitution of eclectics for dialectics to such attacks against the practical gains of the working class.

Abstract theorising, as has been shown, inevitably leads to a departure from dialectics; the idle game of playing with concepts is always fraught with eclecticism, when there is a joining or separation at random of that which is, in fact, not at all connected or separated in objective reality. Lenin believed that it is possible to keep correcting theoretical thinking by turning to practice, since in his view, the connection between philosophy and policy is necessary not only for a precise and consistent definition of the political line in accordance with theory, but also the other way round, since policy feeds and directs the development of theory. In this sense he always regarded philosophy and political practice as being interconnected and interdependent, even if through the medium of the creative activity of the masses. Practice is not at all a “linear” continuation of the philosophical ideas of Marxism. Nor is philosophy in the “service” of practice. Unless that is understood, it is futile to try to gain an insight into the substance of Leninism.

Let us bear in mind that Lenin regarded the tasks of the revolutionary struggle as of primary importance, but at the crucial moments of the revolutionary movement he turned to philosophy and even to its history for a deeper comprehension and assessment of major historical changes. Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote that “for Vladimir Ilyich philosophy was also an instrument in the struggle, and even in Siberia¹³ he worked exceptionally hard on philosophical questions ... And he then stressed that philosophy was needed to find the right approach in assessing all phenomena.”¹⁴

Paradoxically, the inventions about Lenin’s philosophical writings having no connection with political practice are supplemented in bourgeois and pseudo-Marxist writings with claims that for Lenin himself, and for his followers today, dialectics and

materialism have always been and continue to be no more than a means of political struggle. It is asserted, for instance, that Lenin was forced to turn to philosophy in the period after the defeat of the first revolution in Russia only by the factional activity of A. Bogdanov and some other Marxist intellectuals, and by their struggle for leadership and authority in the party. Both bourgeois philosophers and the theorists of "Western Marxism" love to point out that *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* was written in 1908 and feign bewilderment as to why, although aware of some Social Democrats in Russia being carried away by Machism, Lenin did not come out against the infection, say, in 1904, when the first part of Bogdanov's *Empire-Monism* appeared. One such modern "Marxist" says: "... Lenin was afraid that the Bolsheviks would be considered to be philosophical revisionists and the Mensheviks orthodox philosophers. The aim of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, therefore, was not to join together the issues of philosophy and politics, but rather to separate them ... Thus the real importance of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* lies not so much in its philosophical arguments as in his view that on practical political grounds it was the only philosophy that benefited the proletariat. Contemporary philosophical trends such as Machism were regarded as ideologies that were incorrect from the standpoint of party work."¹⁵ Such assertions hold no water either theoretically or in fact. But then they certainly carry a very definite ideological charge. In this context, some historical facts acquire a fundamental importance for an understanding of the philosophy-policy relation.

Lenin always—from the start of his political and philosophical activity—saw not only the connection but also the distance between them. He also took a consistent dialectical approach to the philosophy-policy relation. It is materialist dialectics that provides the general methodology of cognition and revolutionary action, and its application requires a creative approach. In this matter, as in others, he always unerringly found the main link at every concrete moment of history.

As the first Russian revolution was coming to a head, it was especially important to ensure the party's organisational unity. In the face of this situation, some philosophical differences (not on matters of principle) could be relegated to the background. Explaining his approach, Lenin says: "In the summer and autumn of 1904, Bogdanov and I reached a complete agreement, as *Bolsheviks*, and formed the tacit bloc, which tacitly ruled out philosophy as a neutral field, that existed all through the revolution and enabled us in that revolution to carry out together the tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy (=Bolshevism), which, I am profoundly convinced, were the only correct tactics."¹⁶

Different tasks faced the working class movement after the defeat of the first Russian revolution, namely, the need to comprehend its theoretical lessons. It was equally important to help in the ideological seasoning of vast masses of people who had been roused to revolutionary activity by the events of 1905-1907, but who had not had any serious theoretical schooling. That was when ideological and educational matters came to the fore. It goes without saying that philosophical disputes—which were, moreover, sharpened to an unprecedented degree—became the most pressing political matter. "The 'present moment' in Russia is precisely one in which the theoretical work of Marxism, its deepening and expansion, are dictated ... by the whole objective state of affairs in the country. When the masses are digesting a new and exceptionally rich experience of direct revolutionary struggle, the theoretical struggle for a revolutionary outlook, i.e., for revolutionary Marxism, becomes the watchword of the day."¹⁷

Lenin had the ability to create an atmosphere of bold quest, comradely discussion and exchanges of opinions, which were truly inspired by the search for the truth, without ever disrupting unity of action or hampering the Communists' cooperation. Whenever it came to the revolutionary substance of Marxism, attempts to vitiate the class meaning of the Communists' activity and distort the revolutionary character of the goals and means in the struggle for their attainment, he believed it to be necessary

to give the most resolute rebuff to opportunism and revisionism, dogmatism and sectarianism. When getting down in March 1908 to writing his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lenin said in a letter to Maxim Gorky: "You must understand—and you will, of course—that once a Party man has become convinced that a certain doctrine is grossly fallacious and *harmful*, he is obliged to come out against it."¹⁸

The international communist movement has gained a wealth of experience in the fruitful interaction of philosophy and policy, of world-view and practice. In each case, the historical groundwork tends to be different. The important thing is that the logic of Lenin's view of their interconnection remains indisputably valid.

Ready-made recipes for practical action cannot be derived from materialistic dialectics in every case, without regard for the concrete historical conditions, since this requires special theoretical and political analysis, but then none of the more particular questions can be resolved without resorting to it either. A philosopher, even when equipped with the dialectical method, will hardly risk deciding whether the Communists of some country should or should not take part in a bourgeois government, but the revolutionary party will find an indispensable tool for settling the matter in Lenin's principle of the interconnection of the various forms of working class struggle, the need to win political power as a preliminary condition for getting down to socialist construction, and so on.

The doctrine of classes and the class struggle does not of itself explain why the working class of industrialised capitalist countries, the revolutionary vanguard of the popular masses, has not always displayed in our day its potential political power, while its revolutionary activity often tends to be a string of ups and downs. Truly scientific answers to these questions require the mustering of data from the historical, economic and other sciences. After all, one must reckon with the fact that secondary factors have an influence on the content of the basic process, even when one is firmly convinced that the discovered general law is correct. Given the present level of social-science knowledge, any political analysis based on materialist dialectics requires the use of the advances in some social sciences.

Marxism-Leninism envisages not only a consideration of the attendant conditions in which a proposition is applied, but also the development and enrichment of the content of that proposition in the light of the specific circumstances. One should not forget these words of Marx's: "... We do not confront the world in a doctrinaire way with a new principle: Here is the truth, kneel down before it! We develop new principles for the world out of the world's own principles."¹⁸ In accordance with Lenin's methodology and the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, the interconnection of philosophy and policy itself requires a concrete consideration in the light of the new conditions.

It is, of course, not easy to obtain an alloy of philosophy and practice, of world-view and policy at the present stage of the historical process, with its complicated and diverse problems. The task can be fulfilled through constant theoretical quest and philosophical research into the vital questions in the development of present-day civilisation. No one, except the communist and workers' parties and theorists thinking the truly Leninist way, is capable of fulfilling this task for the benefit of the working class and the future of mankind as a whole.

The new edition of the CPSU Programme, and the matter up for discussion at the congresses of the fraternal communist and workers' parties provide specimens of the real interconnection of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy and political thinking. They rely on the principles of dialectical and historical materialism to obtain answers to the questions which are of fundamental importance for mankind and its continued progress, and show that it is possible to establish a just and lasting peace on the globe as the basic condition for solving all the other practical and political problems. These fundamental documents also do much to enlarge the basis of Marxist-Leninist philosophical studies, formulate meaningful philosophical and methodological questions, summing up the new phenomena in the sphere of policy: in the life of the

socialist society, and in the world communist, working class, national liberation and democratic movements.

The Czechoslovak Communists seek to make creative use of Lenin's theoretical and practical legacy, and strive to defend it against the efforts to distort, falsify and smear it. In 1968 and 1969, the CPCz was convinced in practice that the shortcomings which originate from a distortion of Lenin's principles are usually ascribed by the revisionists to "dogmatism", by which they groundlessly imply loyalty to these indefeasible principles. No creative application of the theory of Marxism is possible if one abandons Lenin's fundamental ideas.

Czechoslovakia's experience shows that the fruitful development and application of Marxism-Leninism is closely bound up with the principled approach to policy. The dialectical conjunction of theory and practice, which rules out trivial pragmatism and opportunism, has become the initial basis for the activity of our party's leadership headed by CC General Secretary Gustav Husak. This has helped to achieve major successes in building and refining socialism.

The new programmatic documents of the CPSU and the other fraternal parties testify that Lenin's ideas shed light on the further realisation of the communist ideals. Marxism-Leninism lays no claim to predicting the society's development in every concrete detail, but it has demonstrated in deed that it provides the only scientific method—materialist dialectics—for building a future for the benefit of the working people.

¹ *Pravda*, March 7, 1986.

² See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 489.

³ See A. G. Meyer, *Leninism*, Cambridge, 1957, p. 5.

⁴ See K. Korsch, "Lenin's Philosophy", in A. Pannekoek, *Lenin as Philosopher*, London, 1975, pp. 117-118.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 297.

⁶ Maurice Cornforth, *Communism and Philosophy. Contemporary Dogmas and Revisions of Marxism*, London, 1980, p. 139.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 358.

⁸ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 98.

⁹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 143.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, pp. 93-94.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, pp. 399-400.

¹² *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 422.

¹³ Lenin's exile in 1897-1900.—*Ed.*

¹⁴ N. K. Krupskaya, *About Lenin*, Moscow, 1979, p. 54 (in Russian).

¹⁵ D. McLellan, *Marxism After Marx*, London and Basingstoke, 1980, p. 106.

¹⁶ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 449.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 290.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. 34, p. 388.

¹⁹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 144.

the party

Against Reformism in the Trade Union Movement

Magatte Thiam – Political Bureau member
and Secretary, CC, Senegal Party of
Independence and Labour (SPIL),
trade union leader

Our party devotes increasing attention to work in the trade unions. It carefully follows the growth of the organised movement of working people and studies the opportunities which the movement offers for Communist activity within its framework.

This approach is prompted by many factors. The unions hold a noteworthy place in Senegalese socio-political life. They encompass a sizeable part of the working class and other working people, primarily office employees, whose social role has increased visibly in late years. Mobilising the working population against the regime's anti-popular policy and neocolonialist orientation will depend largely on the militancy of the trade union movement. The SPIL considers that in striving to win prestige among the working class, Communists must concentrate on major enterprises, where the unions generally hold strong positions. Lastly, this aspect of our party's policy is directly connected with attaining our strategic goal, which is to establish a broad democratic front against imperialism and for anti-capitalist changes in the country. The state and prospects of the Senegalese trade union movement and the tasks of the SPIL flowing from them were therefore the chief item on the agenda of the Third CC Plenum (Dakar, June 1985).

The trade union movement today is developing against the background of a marked deterioration of the socio-economic situation in the country. This is due, first of all, to Senegal's strong dependence on the world capitalist economy,¹ which is in a deep crisis.

The other cause of the crisis is the policy of the top rulers, who for 25 years now have subordinated the country to imperialist interests. The bureaucratic bourgeoisie parasitising the nation has sapped the pillars of the economy through corruption and bribe-taking as well as by embezzling public funds, an abuse which generally goes unpunished. The expenses which its abnormal consumption habits entail are paid out of the country's scant foreign exchange reserves.

This tragic situation got worse when the IMF and IBRD assumed control of the economic and social spheres by imposing a "plan for renewal" on the government. The main provisions of this plan are well known, being the same everywhere: abolishing the public sector and gradually forcing the state out of economic activity, blocking wages, cutting appropriations for education, the health service and housing, and taking steps to introduce capitalist relations in town and countryside at an early date.

This situation understandably hits the working people hardest of all. Here is, in rough outline, what the "socialist" government of Senegal² has "achieved":

the most precarious job situation in which the country has ever found itself and which is marked by an avalanche of dismissals and plant closures;

unemployment, which in a few years has come to affect about 10,000 working people as well as numerous graduates of higher institutions, such as doctors, economists or engineers;

wage rates falling hopelessly short of fast-growing prices, rent and fares;

curbs on trade union freedoms and on social and democratic rights, some of which were wrested from the colonisers through sustained struggles;

rampant usury, speculation and corruption.

Needless to say, the working people are deeply dissatisfied with all this. Hence the upsurge in their struggle for bread, jobs and higher pay and in defence of trade union freedoms. There are more and more strikes that not only assume vast proportions but last long, some of them as long as several months. Workers and the repressive apparatus clash ever more frequently. Police are on permanent duty at factory gates, being ready to help the employers quell unrest.

The scope of social struggles is extending as bank employees, transport workers, teachers, medical personnel and other new forces join in. More and more often, the Senegalese associate the difficulties which they encounter in their sphere of activity with the government's overall socio-economic orientation. Our party is doing its best to strengthen this trend, as by deeply analysing official policy in its press and making clear why the main contradictions of Senegalese society can only be resolved by effecting radical socio-political changes.

In a situation fraught with social explosions, the regime concentrates on undermining and neutralising the trade union movement and on dampening its will to resist government policy. In conformity with IMF guidelines, it tries to revise the social gains finalised in the Labour Code and to curtail trade union freedoms. We oppose this policy with a policy of our own intended to foster the unions' militancy and enhance the class content of their activity.

We must say that Communists come up against big difficulties in this matter that are inevitable in a developing country. The Senegalese working class is both young and small. Most of its new members are people of peasant extraction. The influence of religion and of traditional ideas and values is still very strong among the workers, as well as among other working people. Reaction is doing its utmost to preserve and build up this influence, and shrewdly uses it to divide and mislead working people.

Religious leaders play a very big role in this respect. Occasionally they go as far as to interfere directly in labour disputes in order to give the employers a helping hand. Nor is this surprising, since they are bound together by common class interests; some clergymen have become real modern capitalists by purchasing a large batch of shares of industrial, trading and agricultural companies.

In an effort to divide the workers, the employers exploit ethnic distinctions when taking on new workers or trying to foil actions by labour.

The efficiency of the trade union movement is also affected very strongly by great disunity and the continuing predominance of reformism. This enables enemies of the workers and other working people to worm themselves into the movement and to paralyse it.

This state of affairs complicates the effort of our party, which is still small. Many of its members have to fulfil several difficult assignments simultaneously and often fail to cope with all of them. By contrast with the huge financial and ideological possibilities of the regime and international reformist organisations, which are disrupting the Senegalese trade union movement, our party has very limited means of struggle.

Nevertheless, our policy produces some results. Its main objects are as follows: mobilising the working people to fight for their rights and giving full support to those forces in the movement which are ready to fight; carrying on an uncompromising ideological and political struggle against reformism, adventurism and defeatism; championing trade union unity and assisting trends towards it.

The party binds its members to join industrial unions and play as active a role as possible in them. We see to it that all members meet this demand. The party calls on them to publicise its ideas everywhere or to submit to democratic decisions where they cannot win the upper hand. We also consider it important to ensure that the unions always advance goals and slogans corresponding to the working people's social consciousness and actual possibilities.

While proceeding from these general principles, the party is pursuing its policy

flexibly, with due regard to realities. This is evident in its work inside the country's largest trade union organisation, the National Confederation of Workers of Senegal (NCWS), which is closely associated with the regime.

The official orientation of the NCWS may be described as "responsible participation", which is the Senegalese variety of "social partnership". The Confederation is controlled by a caste of functionaries who are known in our country as "syndicalist businessmen" because they look on the trade union movement as ordinary business, except that it is very profitable, since it enables them to become cabinet ministers or MPs and to buy shares of industrial and trading companies. Hence the extreme bitterness of the ongoing struggle between rival clans for control of the trade union apparatus which often culminates in hand-to-hand fighting and deaths.

Small wonder that the Confederation constantly infringes elementary democratic standards and is virtually carrying on no work locally, primarily in the enterprises. The function of its local organisations has been reduced to the election of delegates for higher bodies. However, these delegates have no chance to take a real part in the drafting of decisions or to influence the top leadership and, moreover, are brainwashed in a spirit of conciliation.

The NCWS is strongly influenced by international labour organisations, whose activity is conditioned by reformism and anti-communism. The Afro-American Labour Centre, which is closely linked with the AFL-OIO, has a branch in Dakar. It interferes openly in the affairs of the Confederation, helps advocates of class collaboration with money and propaganda, and conducts numerous classes and seminars for union personnel; recently it presented the Confederation with a whole printing plant. Also active in our country on a permanent basis are the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the West German Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

On the other hand, recent years have witnessed a trend towards renewing the NCWS that has been strengthening visibly in step with the deterioration of the socio-economic crisis; the ideological and political heterogeneity of the member organisations has become more pronounced. The "syndicalist businessmen's" group, made up of the most venal union officers, suffered a first telling setback at the 1982 congress. New cadre members have appeared in the Confederation who are closely linked with the rank and file and declare for trade union democracy and against class collaboration. This development is largely a result of the activity of our party, which set out long ago to work within the NCWS regardless of the frankly compromising position and anti-communism of the majority of its leaders.

Representatives of the SPIL are fighting against the official reformist orientation of the government trade union organisation, for the removal of leaders who are particularly devoted to the regime and the employers. They expose secret deals made by "syndicalist businessmen" and employers between themselves. We support in various ways the forces willing to seek a real improvement in the working people's condition. We urge the rank and file and industrial unions of the NCWS to demand its further renewal and its transformation into a real exponent of the interests of the masses.

In this instance, the SPIL acts on the advice offered by Lenin in *"Left-wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder*. "If you want to help the 'masses' and win the sympathy and support of the 'masses'," Lenin wrote, "you should not fear difficulties, or pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution from the 'leaders' (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must absolutely *work wherever the masses are to be found*. You must be capable of any sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most reactionary—in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found."³

The experience of our work in the Confederation has proved this thesis correct. The Communists' prestige within the NCWS has grown considerably of late, and some of them have been elected to important posts although they are known as members or even leaders of the SPIL. At present it is only as a result of our party's efforts that the regime's attempts to do away with the NCWS and set up a different organisation instead—one that would be more homogeneous and easier to control—fall through. The regime is worried at the growing militancy of the trade union movement and above all at new trends in the Confederation. The ruling party and its time-servers resort to diverse ploys and pressure to oust the Communists from their posts. But so far all their attacks on the SPIL have been fruitless because the party enjoys support among the working people, who see in it the most determined defender of their interests.

In spite of enemy intrigues, our party was formally invited to the latest NCWS congress (Dakar, October 1985). The message of greetings sent to the congress by Amath Dansokho, General Secretary of the SPIL, drew stormy applause. The reader can imagine how the leading figures of the regime present at the meeting were taken aback by that unexpected manifestation of sympathy with our party.

Communists are strongest in the second labour organisation, the Union of Free Workers of Senegal (UFWS). Its General Secretary is a member of the CC Political Bureau of the SPIL, and several of its leaders belong to our Central Committee.

The Union adheres to revolutionary class syndicalism. Mindful of the conditions prevailing in Senegal, it is fighting for a trade union movement independent of the neocolonial regime and political parties; it is a member of the WFTU and is closely cooperating with the trade unions of socialist countries. Our party maintains with it relations based on equality, mutual respect, solidarity, and loyalty to the interests of the working class.

The consistent line of the UFWS at both national and international level, its ties with the SPIL and its constant readiness to serve the working people arouse the hatred of the neocolonial regime as well as its "leftist" and anarcho-syndicalist lacqueys. They claim that the Union is "manipulated" by Communists. Yet our relations are based on a different principle, which syndicalist politicians cannot really understand.

Our party makes no secret of its appreciation of the confidence of UFWS members. Besides, close contacts with them keep Communists posted on the needs and requirements of labour and so help them effectively defend its interests. In turn, most UFWS members realise (we are certain of this) that they have in our party an ally on whom they can rely. The expanding social base of the UFWS and the substantial gains that are made in the election of union delegates wherever the vote is democratic show that the Union is winning stronger positions.

While the UFWS is weaker for the time being than the NCWS, its very existence contributes to the development of the class struggle in Senegal. The Union draws into its ranks working people who want the trade unions to really defend the interests of labour; furthermore, its activity forces the NCWS leadership to lend ear, at least in a measure, to the demands of the rank and file in order not to lose influence among them.

Senegal's Communists are also active in independent unions. The largest of these comprise the majority of teachers, health and social service personnel, engineers and power industry workers. They belong to neither of the two labour unions mentioned above but are pursuing a consistent class line and are very active in the social area.

Communists in leading posts in the UFWS and independent unions are working to promote these organisations' progressive orientation, and to help extend their influence in the sphere of labour, make their action more militant and effective, and foster an internal democratic atmosphere. The SPIL considers that unity of action of the working people can be a most important factor in their struggle and that it can be brought about through closer relations between the NCWS and UFWS as well as between these organisations and the independent trade unions. Our party is therefore doing its best to help establish such relations.

We see active participation in the trade union movement of Senegal as the chief condition for ridding it of compromising and reformist trends, corruption and the domination of "syndicalist businessmen". Strengthening the Communists' positions is a decisive prerequisite for the reshaping of the whole movement on the principles of working class and trade union democracy, independence and class approach, closer relations between and unity of action of the component labour organisations.

It is now most important to coordinate actions of the working class and working people generally with the struggle for peace, in particular within trade unions. This approach, far from moving the masses away from Senegalese reality, as enemies of the SPIL would have it, reflects their real requirements. After all, one of the main reasons why the neocolonial regime urges people to make increasingly heavy "sacrifices" and puts off satisfaction of their demands indefinitely is that it uses enormous resources for military purposes. The regime has signed with several NATO countries public or secret agreements which would directly endanger our people in the event of war. Within the framework of its "austerity" policy, it cuts appropriations for social needs while leaving allocations for the army and police intact. The cost of maintaining Senegalese troops in Gambia is enormous.⁴

This explains why the problem of restoring the universal climate of confidence and security under which the wealth created by working people could be used for the good of peace and progress has a direct bearing on the pressing demands of the Senegalese people. Some trade unions have already tried with Communist participation to draw the working people's attention to this problem. This was done through diverse seminars, lectures, statements, and speeches to public meetings. However, the steps taken so far have proved plainly inadequate. We have come to the conclusion that we have been unable to really open people's eyes to the connection between their everyday cares and the struggle for peace. As a result a very large section of the population still believes that the problem does not concern it.

It follows that the Communists will have to step up their work in the trade unions in order to give a new spur to the working people's anti-war actions, which are inseparable from the fight for genuine national independence, democracy and social progress.

¹ Two-thirds of the enterprises in Senegal are subsidiaries of transnationals. International, primarily French capital controls 51 per cent of the country's finance and 78 per cent of its export and import operations. The foreign debt is close to two billion dollars, and its amount per head has almost doubled since 1980.

² State power is in the hands of the Socialist Party, an affiliate of the Socialist International.—*Ed.*

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 53

⁴ They have been stationed there since October 1980 on the pretext of safeguarding "internal security".—*Ed.*

new experience

The Story Behind the Fact Lenin's Works for the Greek Reader

V. I. LENIN'S *Collected Works* have been published in Greek by Synchroni Epochi in Athens. The importance of the event was described to *WMR* by Zenon Zorzovilis, CC member, CP Greece, who is now the party's representative on the journal, and who had earlier been the director of Synchroni Epochi.

There is no doubt that the publication in December 1985 of the *Collected Works* of V. I. Lenin in Greek in a translation from the Russian Fifth Edition, prepared by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism under the CPSU CC, is a major event in our country's ideological and political life. It was preceded by the party's long and painstaking effort to disseminate Marxism-Leninism, an effort it began as soon as it was set up in 1918. Works by Marx, Engels and Lenin, and other social and political writings on various questions of the theory and practice of the revolutionary struggle were issued in Greece even when the party had to work underground.

Preparations for publishing a collection of Lenin's works began in the mid-1960s; 12 volumes were printed and distributed. Volume 13 had been printed but did not reach readers because the military dictatorship which took over in 1967 banned the publication of all progressive literature for many years. But despite the repression and persecution, the party continued purposefully to spread the ideas of the Marxist-Leninist classics. Books and booklets containing their works were handed on from reader to reader, so carrying the truth into the midst of the people, giving them hope and calling them to struggle.

The CPG leadership decided to publish Lenin's *Collected Works* up to a high professional standard because it was aware that without a knowledge, comprehension and creative application of the writings of the classics of scientific communism it is impossible to have a correct understanding of current processes, to work out the strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggle and to fulfil the tasks in strengthening the communist parties' organisationally and ideologically.

Delivering the CC Report to the 11th Congress of the CPG in 1982, Harilaos Florakis stressed the abiding importance of Marxism-Leninism and the need for its creative development. It is vitally important, he said, to combat narrow pragmatism and the doctrinaire approach, and to work tirelessly to raise the political and ideological standards of party cadres.

It took more than twenty years to issue Lenin's *Collected Works*. A large group of party scientists, experienced translators and writers worked on the translation and editing of the text. More than 6,000 sets of the edition were sold by subscription and in book shops in the first few months of 1986. Greek readers can have all the 55 volumes, with an alphabetical and subject indexes. This is one of the first—if not the first—full translation of the Fifth Edition in any capitalist country, and it retains the external format, the reference items, and the number and content of facsimile materials from the Russian original.

The translation of some works by the Marxist-Leninist classics earlier published in

Greek had some shortcomings, and these told on the quality of all the translated social and political literature in which these works were quoted. The publication of Lenin's *Collected Works* made it possible to eliminate the variant readings, and to ensure an adequate rendering of Lenin's thinking and its nuances in the Greek language, and precision in scientific terminology.

That helped to create a reliable basis for the further publication of the works of the leader of the Great October Socialist Revolution in the form of separate booklets, which are less costly, are more readily available to the working people, and have print runs which are unprecedentedly large for Greece. Thus, Lenin's *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* issued by Synchroni Epochi has had six reprints over the past ten years with a total printing of 18,000. *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* had a printing of 15,000 copies; *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*—20,000; and "*Left-Wing*" *Communism—An Infantile Disorder*—25,000 copies. Works like *What Is To Be Done?*, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, *The Collapse of the Second International*, *The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution*, better known as the April Theses, and *Letters from Afar*, were also issued in thousands of copies. *The State and Revolution* has had ten reprints with a total of 38,000 copies only at the Synchroni Epochi, despite the fact that, like many other works of Lenin's, it was also issued by other publishing houses in Greece.

The *Collected Works* provides the basis for the preparation of thematical collections of Lenin's works which are widely popular not only among party activists and rank-and-file members, but also among various other sections of the working people, for whom it is easier to begin the study of Lenin's ideas by reading up on some single topic in a concentrated form. We have already published several such collections, among them *V. I. Lenin on the Trade Unions*, *V. I. Lenin on the New Type of Proletarian Party*, and *V. I. Lenin on the Significance of the October Revolution*.

In its introduction to Lenin's *Collected Works*, Synchroni Epochi stresses that it brings together "the works of the man who opened up the way to liberation for the whole of mankind". The abiding importance of the effort put in by the Greek Communists in preparing this complete edition is that Lenin's writings are now fully available to Greek readers.

Our Interviews Vietnam Revolution: Sure Future

Vu Mao — CC member, CP Vietnam;
CC First Secretary, Ho Chi Minh
Young Communist League

Q. The whole world is aware of the role Vietnamese young people had in the struggle against US imperialism. What are they doing today for the revolutionary transformations and the building of socialism?

A. Our young people have not lost their militant spirit, and they now work where it is hardest of all. There are daily instances of their heroism in building the new life and in defending their country.

Vietnam is a country of young people, who make up 65 per cent of those employed in industry, and 52 per cent in agriculture; three million young men and women took part in developing the virgin and fallow lands; almost 200,000 are working hard at the key national-economic projects, which have been designated as communist youth construction sites. Carrying on the fine traditions of their fathers, the young soldiers of the Vietnamese Army are honestly fulfilling their patriotic and internationalist duty.

The rising generation is taking an active part in political and social life. It is broadly represented on the National Assembly, the highest organ of state power in Vietnam (127 out of 496 seats), and in the local councils and leadership of mass organisations. Young men and women have a big part to play in maintaining public order, in the activity of artistic and physical training groups, at enterprises, schools and rural clubs. Youth groups performing political songs are most popular.

Q. In 1985, the CPV CC Political Bureau adopted a resolution on enhancing party guidance of youth work. Why was such a decision necessary?

A. The party devotes unflagging attention to the communist education of young people in view of their role and place in the revolutionary process. The Political Report to the Fifth Congress of the CPV in 1982 stressed that the Communists have always regarded work among the rising generation as a matter of exceptional importance. The party believes that the main tasks in this work are education of young men and women in the spirit of Marxist-Leninist ideas, socialist patriotism and internationalism, loyalty to the revolution, and the moulding of the full man.

The young generation is the most dynamic part of our society, and the Communists are well aware that young men and women now have higher educational standards. Our legacy from the colonialists included only 16 primary and 3 secondary schools, but one in three persons in Vietnam now attends some type of school. We have built 4,900 primary, 11,000 seven-year, and 29 secondary schools. Teaching personnel are trained at 144 institutes and colleges. The country has some 90 higher schools. In the four decades since the August 1945 Revolution and the declaration of independence, dozens of research institutes, with thousands of researchers, have been set up.

All of this has necessarily had an effect on young people, and they have developed new cultural and everyday requirements. That is why the CPV keeps improving the forms and methods of work among their various sections, bearing in mind the vital tasks of the revolution, the psychological features of the rising generation, and some aspects of the ideological struggle in the international arena which have a direct impact on it.

The external enemies of the Vietnamese revolution are engaged in sustained psychological warfare against the republic, with young people their main targets. Magazines, newspapers, handbills and films are being smuggled into the country, to spread false rumours slandering socialism and menacing our country, to advertise the bourgeois way of life, the consumer mentality and the cult of violence. Attempts are being made to induce some young men and women, especially in the southern areas of Vietnam, to leave the country and to cooperate with the imperialist intelligence services.

Our enemies also use religious beliefs, which are still current among a part of the rising generation. The Catholic Church and various sects set up youth and even children's religious organisations in an effort to cater to the specific tastes of some sections of young people, to get them to take an interest in their rituals, and to distract them from the genuine cultural, ideological and political activity to which they are being called by the party and the YCL.

All of this demands of us constant vigilance and an improvement of the content and forms of ideological-education and organisational work among the young, as the resolution of the CPV CC Political Bureau requires.

Q. What are the main lines along which the YCL works to fulfil the tasks set by the party?

A. First of all a few words about our YCL.¹ It was set up more than half a century ago, and is now a truly mass organisation with a membership of 4.5 million, which is almost 30 per cent of the country's young generation. The YCL's numbers have been rapidly growing. It is the main reserve for new party members: of the 370,000 new members who joined the CPV over the past five years, 85.9 per cent came from the YCL.

That is why we take a very serious attitude to the admission of new members to the YCL. The right to join belongs only to the most active, most conscious and disciplined young men and women who are prepared to serve the cause of the revolution. In order to fulfil the tasks before it, the YCL works to improve the qualitative aspect of its ranks. Most YCL members and some non-members are enrolled in our system of education at various levels, ranging from current-policy circles, in which members learn about the party's policy, and the history and goals of the Vietnamese people's revolutionary struggle, and the main international problems to the schools under the YCL CC, in which ideological and leading cadres are trained.

The present situation and the new stage in the development of the revolution require that the young generation as a whole should take part in the process of construction. Our experience shows that every stage of the struggle has its own forms of broad associations, in this case the youth front, of which the YCL is to be the core. Today it is the Vietnam Youth Federation, which has nearly 10 million members. It has done much work to attract to social life young men and women in the liberated areas, members of the ethnic minorities and religious people.

Our main efforts are concentrated on the following lines: improvement of propaganda activity; political education closely tied in with concern for the young people's material and cultural standards; their recruitment for the struggle against internal enemies of revolutionary transformations and external reaction; and renewal of the forms and methods of organisational work.

The YCL gives much attention to raising the young generation's educational, scientific, technical and professional standards. It sets up youth work teams at new and technically sophisticated sectors of production; supports the mass movement for economies and thrift; and sees to it that young workers are actively involved in improving the economic management system, and in helping to do away with bureaucratic practices and economic mismanagement.

Such forms of involving young people in socialist construction as YCL projects, shock-work groups and teams will be further developed. They help young men and women to gain a sense of being collective masters of the country, and of personal concern and responsibility for any assignments. The party and the AYCL resolutely combat attempts by some leaders to use the activity and labour potentialities of young people, without doing anything to create the necessary working conditions, and material and cultural standards. On the other hand, the YCL sharply condemns the consumer mentality which has appeared among a section of the young.

It is up to the society as a whole to educate and train the young generation. Apart from the successes attained in this field which I have described, there are also some problems. A reform of education is now under way: all children are to attend school, and the quality of instruction and level of educational work in schools and institutions of higher learning is to be raised.

Q. Could you say a few words about the YCL's international ties?

A. Our YCL is a member of the World Federation of Democratic Youth. It maintains contacts with progressive youth organisations in almost 100 countries, and is an active participant in the festival movement. The 12th Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow has done much for the patriotic and internationalist education of Vietnam's youth and has helped considerably to extend our international ties. At that festival, the world's young generation voiced the common desire of the peoples to live in peace, to halt the arms race, and to put an end for ever to hunger, disease, poverty and fascism. Vietnamese young men and women are well aware of the need to solve these problems as soon as possible, for many of them have found out from their own experience what war is with its terrible consequences.

¹ For details see *WMR*, No. 6, 1985.—*Ed.*

A Centre of Marxist Thought

Nicolas Buenaventura – CC member,
Colombian CP, Director, Social Studies
Centre (SSC)

Q. A scientific comprehension of history and of the new processes on the national and international level, together with the training of theoretical cadres, is of great importance for the communist parties' practical activity. How does the SSC help to fulfil these tasks?

A. The SSC was set up in 1970. It is in close cooperation with the Colombian CP's National Commission on Education, but it is not a purely party institution organisationally. We began by organising the theoretical training of cadres for trade unions, student federations and associations of workers in culture and other mass organisations dealing with social problems in the urban neighbourhoods and rural areas. We set up courses in political economy, philosophy and the history of Colombia and its working class movement. As time went on, tuition methods were improved, and more attention was given to the preparation of study aids and the training of instructors. We are now moving further along this line. We maintain close contacts with trade union schools and study sections of other mass organisations.

The SSC has also set itself another task, that of coordinating the efforts of Marxist researchers and establishing contacts with universities and groups of progressive scientists. We have started a journal, *Estudios marxistas*, to popularise their works.

Our teaching and research activity is combined with the extension of direct assistance to mass organisations. Thus, SSC studies of enterprise profits, surplus-value level and wage cuts prepare the groundwork for action by trade unions in setting forth concrete economic and social demands. We believe that such cooperation is highly important, because it helps to consolidate the class orientation of the country's working class movement.

The centre has a small staff, including teachers, researchers and technical personnel. It has branches in the cities of Medellin and Cali, at Barranca, the "oil capital", among others. Our papers serve as the basis for the work of these branches which for their part, elaborate on them and analyse the vital problems of their own areas. Many scientists, with influence and authority in academic and scientific circles, carry on research as a matter of civic duty. Not all of them are members of the CCP. Many are progressive and democratic-minded persons taking an interest in social problems.

Q. Marxist-Leninist ideas began to spread in Colombia even before the formation of the political party of the working class. Could one say that the activity of the SSC rests on fairly profound traditions?

A. Indeed, it did not emerge in a vacuum. A communist group set up by the writer Luis Tejada (which also included the well-known poet and public figure Luis Vidales, who was awarded the 1985 International Lenin Prize for Strengthening Peace Between the Peoples) was engaged in spreading Marxism in Colombia as early as the 1920s. Its efforts were continued by the Socialist Revolutionary Party, which established contacts with the Comintern and which in 1930 was transformed into the Communist Party.

Among the first studies of Colombian reality in the light of Marxism-Leninism (apart from the documents adopted at party congresses, conferences and plenary meetings) are the works of Rafael Baquero, a founding member of the Colombian CP and now the President of the Institute of Colombian-Soviet Cultural Cooperation. These works analyse the problems of the country's economic dependence on the US monopolies. At the height of the struggle against fascism in the 1940s, there was a Social Studies Institute, which could be regarded as the predecessor of our SSC.

The Communists did not cease their research activity even in the cold war period,

which in Colombia was marked by brutal repression against the popular masses. In the 1960s, when the situation improved somewhat, we set up the Marxist Study Centre in the city of Cali. This short survey give an idea of the traditions now being carried on by the SSC.

Q. You mentioned the *Estudios marxistas*. Could you give us more details about it and other printed matter put out by the SSC?

A. Let us note, first of all, the *Estudios marxistas* emerged as the printed medium of the SSC, and not of the party. It carried items prepared not only by scientists who were members of the Colombian CP, but also by representatives of other ideological trends who were close to us and who were prepared to discuss and work on some subjects together with the Communists. Twenty-seven issues of the journal appeared in the ten years of its existence. However, we were forced to wind up its publication for financial reasons. We now intend to publish the results of the basic studies in an annual collection.

The rest of the printed matter issued by the SSC falls into two categories: general papers on political economy, the history of Colombia and the Colombian CP, and studies analysing pressing social and political problems, which are, as a rule, written in the livelier style of study aids, and so help readers to tie in theoretical propositions with the concrete tasks of the mass struggle. Among these are, for instance, the paper on "The Left and the Elections" containing an analysis of the activity of the democratic forces in the course of electoral campaigns, or the paper on "Strikes and Policy" concerning the forms and methods of the working class struggle against IMF dictates. Another paper, "The Armistice and the Patriotic Alliance", dealing with the present political situation in the country, was circulated in 1985. The results of our research help the Colombian CP leadership to take decisions, formulate new slogans and tasks, and improve the forms and methods of party work in the mass movements. Our papers are also used by the Communist members of parliament.

Q. How is the work of the SSC funded?

A. Most research centres in Colombia are financed by international funds from Social Democrats, Christian Democrats and Liberals. We do not receive any external assistance. The SSC uses funds made available by CCP members of parliament, and also gets paid for the services it renders to trade unions and other public bodies in the form of courses, seminars, consultations and various studies.

Q. A few words about the contacts of the SSC with other Colombian research institutions. Do you maintain ties with similar fraternal party centres?

A. We have fairly wide and close contacts on the national level. We hold joint seminars and round tables and jointly prepare publications. We also issue joint statements in defence of democratic rights and freedoms, which are now gravely jeopardised in Colombia in view of the mounting pressure from the militaristic circles.

International ties are a much more complicated matter, if they involve more than mere correspondence, and include direct and constant exchanges of experience. We have recently strengthened contacts with scientists in Cuba, Panama and Ecuador, and with the Sandinist Studies Centre in Managua. We maintain regular ties with students of Latin America in the GDR and the Soviet Union. But on the whole much remains to be done to extend scientific cooperation and exchanges.

In Brief

BELGIUM

A meeting of representatives of the communist parties of Belgium, FRG, France, Great Britain and the Netherlands was held in Brussels in mid-February to discuss pressing problems in the struggle for the working people's interests. It concentrated on

the sharpening problems of employment in the coal-mining areas of these West European countries.

CUBA

In February 1986, the CP Cuba had 523,639 members and candidate members working in 38,168 primary organisations; 43.2 per cent of the Communists work directly in production and in the services; about 17 per cent are intellectuals. Since 1981, the party has been joined by 92,779 men and women. Nearly 60 per cent of the new members in 1985 came from the Young Communist League.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

At the beginning of 1986, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had 1,670,000 members. Of the 285,000 candidates admitted into the party since the 16th Congress of the CPCz, 59.5 per cent came from the working class, and 6.5 per cent were cooperative peasants.

DENMARK

A plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Denmark has decided to convene the party's 28th Congress in Copenhagen from April 16 to 19, 1987.

INDIA

The leadership of the Communist Party of India and of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) have decided to arrange joint functions on May Day 1986 in order to demonstrate the successes of the world working class movement.

PORTUGAL

Avante Publishers has issued the third volume of the *Selected Works* of Marx and Engels, completing the first Portuguese-language edition of the more important works written by the founders of scientific communism. This was a joint project with the Institute of Marxism-Leninism under the CPSU CC.

exchange of views, discussion

The General Crisis of Capitalism and Latin America's External Debt Problem

The substance, character and main causes of the deep crisis affecting Latin America since the early 1980s; the role of the United States in exacerbating it; the economic and political consequences of the

imperialist expansion for the Latin American countries; the interconnection of the crisis and the external debt problem; the bourgeois prescriptions for escaping from it; and the alternative programmes of the Communists and other progressive forces on the continent were among the issues discussed by the participants in a round table arranged by the *WMR* Commission for the Problems of Latin America and Caribbean countries.

Among those who took part were: **Jose Maria Lanao**, CC member, CP Argentina; **David Moraes**, CC Political Commission member, CP Bolivia; **Luciano Barreira**, CC alternate member, Brazilian CP; **Donald Ramotar**, CC Executive Committee member, People's Progressive Party of Guyana; **Randolfo Banegas**, CC member, CP Honduras; **Alvaro Oviedo**, CC member, Colombian CP; **Luis Orlando Corrales**, CC Political Commission member, People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica; **Rogelio Gonzales**, CC member, Paraguayan CP; **Cesar Jimenez**, Peruvian CP representative on the *WMR* Editorial Council; **Jaime Barrios**, CC Political Commission member, CP El Salvador; **Orel Viciani**, CP Chile representative on the *WMR* Editorial Council; and Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, **Victor Volsky**, Director of the Institute of Latin America of the USSR Academy of Sciences, who presented the introductory paper.

Below is an abridged text of Volsky's paper and Orel Viciani's summary of the discussion.

The capitalist world has not suffered such a grave and shattering upheaval since the Great Depression of the 1930s, as it has over the past five years, Volsky said in his introductory paper. It is too early to say anything about the final results of the crisis of the 1980s: it is far from over in the less developed countries. But it is already safe to say that it is more than just another cyclical upheaval for capitalism, since the scale and scope to which the various spheres of the society have been hit by the crisis provide evidence of a further aggravation of all the contradictions endemic to imperialism.

Defects of Capitalism Hypertrophied

The cyclical crisis of overproduction and the debt crisis that followed served merely as parts and catalysts of the structural crisis of the exploitive system itself, essentially signifying a further deepening of the general crisis of capitalism, and a dangerous sharpening of its chronic and incurable ailments under the cumulative impact of the changes in the world capitalist economy over the past 20 years.

There is, first and foremost, a marked growth of the parasitic features of imperialism, a process based mainly on the further transnationalisation of the capitalist economy. The Transnational Economy Centre (Buenos Aires) has estimated that the 500 major industrial concerns' share of the capitalist world's gross domestic product increased from 23.4 per cent in 1962 to 30.1 per cent in 1980;¹ while their sales abroad grew twice as fast as those at home. The US corporations' exploitation of other countries is even more telling: from 1971 to 1980 alone, their sales abroad increased from 27.8 per cent to 42.9 per cent,² with Latin America as the main objective of their expansionism from 1966 to 1981, its gross domestic product increased roughly 2.5-fold, while the sales of US subsidiaries in the area leaped more than 7-fold.³

There is nothing new in the monopolies' penetration of Third World countries, in general, or of the Latin American region, in particular, but the novel element is that, as never before in the past, the foreign subsidiaries increased their capital mainly through external loans, which were, as a rule, underwritten by the governments of the recipient countries, that being one of the main causes of the mounting debt. It has been estimated that the TNCs account for 30-35 per cent of Latin America's debt. Let us add that in the process they have "skinned the ox thrice", collecting interest on the loans,

and increasing their repatriation of dividends on the growing direct investments, and earnings on their goods deliveries.

Nevertheless, the crucial changes in the capitalist economy have been expressed in a sharp growth in the strength and significance of loan capital. The energy crisis and the rise in the price of oil provided a real bonanza for the oil monopolies and the transnational banks (TNBs), which had at their disposal the bulk of oil exporting countries' earnings. That was largely the source from which the Eurodollar market alone multiplied 12-fold from 1971 to 1982. This capital certainly required to be profitably invested, and this was done by means of the latest hi-tech business techniques. External loans were not just made available; the powerful TNC-TNB bloc used the hard sell to push them on the market, while the strategy of the imperialist ruling circles took care of their interests and assured them of a free hand. There was a substantial reduction in the extension of "aid" to less developed countries along official channels.

But there was more to it than that. The capital traded by the banks was largely fictitious. On the one hand, that was due to its nature and its origination from mining (oil) rent, which had no real material collateral either in the country of origin, or even on the world market. There was here evidence of a constant trend to offset the oil capital with higher prices for the industrialised countries' products.

On the other hand, the vast masses of loan capital were also fictitious largely because of their unprecedentedly rapid turnover at a high and usurious rate of interest. Consider these figures: 10 major US banks had extended almost \$50 billion worth of loans to the major Latin American debtor countries (Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Chile), which was 50 per cent more than the banks' own assets, including, 262 per cent for Manufacturers' Hanover, 174 per cent for Citicorp, 158 per cent for Bank of America,⁴ and so on.

The "new role" of the banks under imperialism was exposed by Lenin, who gave numerous examples of their "terrorism" with respect to industrial enterprises.⁵ Nowadays, banks terrorise and dictate their will to entire countries, the less developed ones, of course, in the first place. The loss of a large part of their real economic power leads to growing disbalances and anarchy of production, and to the development of contradictory and destructive processes.

The intense development of intra-corporate trade is another "achievement" of contemporary imperialism. It enables the TNCs to use the mechanism of transfer prices⁶ to extract vast profits from the Third World countries, and the scope of these operations will be seen, for instance, from the fact that, in the late 1970s, the TNCs accounted for one-third of US imports from Latin America, including over one-half of manufactured imports.

Among the components of the markedly intensified exploitation of the less developed countries are the search for lucrative spheres of investment, accelerated development of capitalism in the peripheral countries, transfer to these countries of labour-intensive, material-intensive and "dirty" industries, and the emergence of "newly industrialising countries", which have to produce for export because their domestic markets are either too small or non-existent. Latin America, which has gone farthest in its integration with the imperialist system is being subjected to the most refined and ruthless plunder, whose proportions were thrown into bold relief by the crisis of the 1980s. Indeed, from 1978 to 1985, the continent made debt service payments in excess of \$368 billion—the amount of its present debt—but that notwithstanding, its indebtedness in the period more than doubled. How are the Latin Americans now to go on living with an external debt burden of more than \$1,000 per head—the equivalent of the area's annual income per head?

The US Role in Sharpening the Crisis

Of all the imperialist centres, the United States has been hit hardest by the current

crisis. However, it is not a victim, but the prime cause and chief culprit of the crisis. It is in the United States that the features of parasitism and neocolonialism have been concentrated and most strongly manifested, not least importantly because of its large economic potential. The United States reached the peak of its might in the early 1950s, and since then its dominant positions in the "free" world have been subjected to ever more palpable blows: from the exploited peoples fighting for their sovereignty, freedom and social progress; and from its imperialist rivals. Let us recall that over the past decades, the working people of Latin America have repeatedly attacked the bastions of imperialism with success. There was, first, the Cuban revolution, which raised the banner of socialism in the Western Hemisphere; the liberation process then developed into the victory of the Sandinist revolution in Nicaragua; there is now a mounting struggle by the peoples of El Salvador, Guatemala and other countries in Central America.

US hegemony in the capitalist economy has been substantially eroded. Thus, the US share of the capitalist world's industrial output shrank from 56 per cent in 1948 to 30 per cent in 1981, while that of Japan, which has moved into second place, increased from 3 per cent to 17 per cent, respectively.⁷ In 1982, 24 of the world's 100 major banks were Japanese, and only 12 were US-owned. In Latin America this rivalry is even more obvious: from 1966 to 1984, US direct investments went up 2.8 fold, and Japanese—more than 63-fold, which puts them in second place.⁸

But the United States has no intention of accepting the prospect of losing its leadership in the imperialist division of "spheres of influence". In order to attain its objectives, Washington has been making use—under pressure from the military-industrial complex, the TNCs and the TNBs—not only of all of its internal reserves, but also of the tribute which the US capital-and-state machine manages to levy abroad. The Reagan administration, as no other before it, has increased to a dangerous point the astronomical growth not just of unproductive, but also of downright anti-social and anti-human expenditures, those going on the arms race, the exercise of gendarme functions, the export of counter-revolution, the recruitment and equipment of mercenaries, the maintenance of a steadily inflated repressive apparatus, and the conduct of declared and undeclared wars against the peoples standing up for their sovereignty and the right to self-determination.

The United States has been inventing new techniques to marshal world resources to cater for the USA's hegemonistic ambitions. One such technique was the immediate cause of the debt crisis which broke out in 1982: the US Federal Reserve System raised bank interest rate to the record high of 17.3 per cent.

That had truly tragic consequences for the Latin American republics. Three-quarters of their external borrowing had come from private commercial banks on the basis of "floating interest rates", whose growth by only one percentage point in 1981-1983 increased their debt-servicing charges by \$2.3 billion a year. Besides, the rising bank rate in the United States itself acted as a powerful magnet pulling in capital from various parts of the world, above all from a Latin America toiling in the throes of inflation, unstable and unable to compete with foreign firms on domestic markets. According to various sources, Latin American deposits in US banks total between \$110 billion and \$170 billion. Such an unparalleled outflow of resources from the countries of the region has naturally pushed many of them to the brink of disaster.

The United States has brazenly speculated on its status of a country whose currency unit has been adopted as the international standard of value, manipulating interest rates, money supply, and dollar exchange-rates, and even engaging in downright smuggling of currency. One French journal, describing the tricks and dodges used by the United States to cover its vast military outlays and keep its economy going, says: "Only a country controlling the dollar can afford such a luxury. Others have to foot the bill."⁹

The general crisis of capitalism has been exacerbated by the imperialists' urge for

boundless expansion, and for the expanded reproduction of the relations of domination and dependence. The predatory model of the imperialist economy, which is pathological at root, cannot exist unless it keeps sucking out more and more of the less developed countries' lifeblood, although they are no longer capable of catering for the appetites of the leech which threatens their very survival. In view of the special role of the United States in this crisis, there is good ground to say that the existing order of things in the dollar empire has collapsed, and that US relations with what is virtually the rest of the capitalist world are bankrupt.

However, for Latin America the crisis is not something that is external or reflected, and that will take care of itself if business improves. The problem is not only—and not so much—that the scale on which the region is being plundered has gone beyond some tolerable limit. It is in fact the collapse of a model according to which most countries on the continent have been developing over the past decades.

The crisis has hit the Latin American economies more deeply and keenly than did the depression of the 1930s. Virtually all of them suffer from an absolute decline in production (against the background of the general decline, Cuba alone has demonstrated the incontestable advantages of its option: over the past five years, its gross social product grew at an annual average of 7.3 per cent). The crisis has also resulted from the failure of the basic concepts of development foisted on the continent. The so-called neo-liberal, or monetarist doctrine, imposed on Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Peru, Jamaica and Costa Rica by US imperialism has turned out to be an unmitigated disaster. Recipes for an "open economy" allegedly helping to harmonise the interests of the beneficiaries and of the TNCs eager to "cooperate" with them were proposed by the founders and fervent advocates of the Chicago School, among them Milton Friedman, R. A. Mundell, H. B. Johnson and R. Goldsmith. Their recommendations included such measures as unlimited freedom of investment, trade and competition, and foreign currency transactions, the "mutually complementary" domestic and external commodity and, especially, financial markets, curtailments of the state sector, and cutbacks in social spending by privatising the respective establishments to make them pay their way. In practice, this meant farming out the economy to foreign capital and its local agents.

Very many firms (and not only national firms), including the largest ones, were unable to operate in such conditions. There began in the countries adopting "monetarist" schemes a destruction of industry which is altogether incredible in our day. The share of industry in Argentina's gdp declined from 27.6 per cent in 1974 to 21.6 per cent in 1982, and in Chile's, from 29.5 to 20.2 per cent, while employment at Argentinian and Chilean enterprises shrank by 37 per cent.¹⁰

The effect of import-substituting industrialisation, another strategic economic line, likewise had grave consequences, for it actually increased, instead of decreasing, imports and dependence in imports; the TNCs tightened up the links between their subsidiaries and foreign technologies and sources of supply. The narrowness of domestic markets and the chronic balance-of-trade deficits forced some governments to start subsidising exports in order to surmount the protectionist tariff barriers in the industrialised capitalist countries.

The ruling classes' line of having the rural areas in some countries gradually integrated into modern capitalism via the "green revolution" and the development of new lands, instead of deep-going agrarian reforms, has led to a relative—often to an absolute—shrinking of the domestic markets and also to an unprecedented penetration of agriculture by the TNCs.

In the social sphere the crisis is characterised by a sharp decline in the living standards of broad masses of people. Unemployment and partial employment have more than doubled everywhere, and the impoverishment of tens of millions of people within the "informal sectors" of the industrial and agricultural population¹¹ has accelerated.

Political structures have also been deeply affected by the crisis. One need merely recall the bankruptcy of some authoritarian regimes, which relied on the "national security" doctrine. There has been a sharp set-up of action by the working masses, who now have a much greater role to play in deciding their countries' destinies. But the most important thing, perhaps, is that the crisis has shown—as never before in the past—that the main watershed in the current political struggle on the continent now runs between the pro-imperialist and the anti-imperialist forces.

Bourgeois Recipes for Enslavement

The ruling circles of imperialism are highly worried by the present situation, for the tense atmosphere of discontent over the exploitation and diktat is fraught with unpredictable consequences, and not only in the sense of possible social explosions and their political effects. Even a simple refusal by some major debtor to pay tribute in due time could bankrupt one or more major lenders. Furthermore, there could well be a chain reaction whose outcome it is hard to anticipate. The business barons have been trying hard to surmount the crisis with the smallest possible losses, but it is the future that worries them most. Having dragged Latin America into debt-bondage by means of dishonest "labours" and at the price of a crisis, imperialism has no intention at all of letting go of such a powerful weapon. Its purpose is to tide over the politically most dangerous phase and to turn the debt into a chronic malaise to be used as a handy instrument for extracting profits and controlling the economy.

When the banks were just starting to dictate their will to individual enterprises in the most developed countries in the early twentieth century, Lenin was quick to discern the techniques which the banks now use against any country on the globe. He wrote: "The concentration of capital and the growth of bank turnover are radically changing the significance of the banks. When however, this operation grows to enormous dimensions, we find that a handful of monopolists subordinate to their will all the operations, both commercial and industrial, of the whole of capitalist society first, to *ascertain exactly* the financial position of the various capitalists, then to *control* them, to influence them by restricting or enlarging, facilitating or hindering credits, and finally to *entirely determine* their fate. . . ."¹²

All the TNBs now sharing the international credit market in accordance with the size of their capital have long since banded into a world banking trust, with the Paris Club¹³ as its legislature, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as its executive. It is truly hard to exaggerate the role of "Señor IMF", as it is known in Latin America. It carries on large-scale intelligence and information operations to have an exact knowledge of the slightest changes in the economic or political situation of any debtor country; it works out the prescriptions, plans and peremptory "recommendations" which determine the lot of states and nations.

The IMF is now feverishly casting about for ways and means to take the edge off the acute situation. It is now already into a third round of negotiations with individual countries to decide on the terms for settling the debt. Fearful of their clients' becoming totally insolvent, the banks and the IMF are, of course, forced to do something to ease their plight by deferring dates of payment, slightly lowering some interest rates, and making available new loans to pay off old debts, whenever the debtor accepts the established rules of the game. It goes without saying that the solution of the debt problem is not brought any nearer by these financial and bureaucratic motions, for the debt continues to go up, instead of down. Meanwhile, the IMF continues to toughen up the terms on which it agrees to make "concessions" to the debtors and to make available additional loans. Apart from the "customary" recommendations (import cuts, government budget economies, etc.) it is now making political, rather than economic demands, among them massive sales of state-owned enterprises, transfer of the exploitation of natural resources to the banks and allied TNCs, introduction of new taxes, lifting of customs tariffs, and so on.

The IMF, like other financial organisations of the leading capitalist powers, devotes ever more time and attention to world-wide plans for settling the less developed countries' debt. The imperialist schemes, as a rule, boil down to taking the debt problem outside the framework of direct clashes between the nations and the TNBs, and turning it into some kind of permanently operating international economic factor. One suggestion, for instance, is to convert the debts into standard international bonds, with the relevant settlements to be controlled by an ostensibly independent supranational body. There are many other similar projects, but they all have one common defect: their main concern is to perpetuate the debt-bondage and to turn it into the main instrument of financial relations between the centre and the periphery of capitalism.

It is not only the public forces, but also the governments of Latin America that are coming to see the objectives of this super-task of imperialism. The annual session of the IMF and the IBRD in Seoul in October 1985 decided to set up an agency to ensure guarantees of security for foreign investments in IMF member-countries. The draft decision drew sharp objections from the less developed countries, with the Peruvian delegate launching the sharpest and most wrathful attack on the United States and the IMF. Nevertheless, the "masters" managed to put through their resolution, since "one country, one vote" does not operate within the IMF, although it is a fair and normal principle of international relations. Voting rights in the IMF are allocated according to the strength of capital (weighted vote), so that the United States has almost 20 per cent of the votes.

Strength Lies in Unity

The peoples of Latin America and all their progressive forces are seeking their own solution to the crisis and debt problem. Attention everywhere was focused on the initiative of Fidel Castro, who not only provided the most convincing proof that the debt was unpayable, but also indicated the concrete way of eradicating it: the leader of the Cuban revolution says that if the arms race were halted, it would take only 10-12 per cent of the present world military expenditures to clear all of the Third World's debts. Let us recall that at the 28th session of the UN General Assembly in 1973, the Soviet Union urged a 10 per cent reduction of the military budgets of the permanent members of the Security Council, with a part of the money so saved going into a fund for assistance to less developed states.

There was world-wide public response to the proposal for improving international economic relations set forth in a memorandum of the USSR government, which it put before the United Nations in January 1986. It says: "Ending the arms race, liquidating nuclear and chemical weapons, and substantially reducing the military expenditures of states are the most realistic and effective source of funds that are so necessary for the economic and social needs of the less developed countries, and for a solution of such global problems facing mankind as the surmounting of economic backwardness, and the elimination of vast areas of hunger, poverty, epidemic diseases, illiteracy."¹⁴

There are growing demands in Latin America for an end to the IMF diktat and protection for national sovereignty. The main thing the Latin American nations now need, one feels, is unity in the face of united imperialism. Awareness of such a need has been steadily growing on the continent, as will be seen, in particular, from the forum held in Havana in August 1985 and attended by more than 1,400 delegates from broad public circles in 37 countries of the region. A meeting of members of parliament from 14 Latin American republics in Montevideo in October 1985 likewise showed that the standpoints on the debt problems and the ways of solving it are drawing closer together.

Another thing is of equal importance. The most important and fundamental element of the debt problem is not the debt itself but the inequitable relations under capitalism, which are being entrenched and compounded in every way by the imperialist

monopolies. The world community has long since formulated and endorsed the principles for drafting a fundamental document clearly expressing the idea of establishing a new international economic order, but for long years the Western powers have been obstructing and sabotaging the adoption of a Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of Nations.

While the debt problem is not as acute in any other region as it is in Latin America, it is perfectly obvious that it cannot be solved within the framework of a single continent. The whole Third World, Volsky said in conclusion, is in need of a radical restructuring of international relations.

Key Issues Discussed

The participants in the round table dealt with three main problems: the characteristic features and peculiarities of the current crisis and its social and political consequences; the alternative programme presented by the democratic forces; and the international conditions which variously influence the possibility of overcoming the negative factors.

Speakers naturally concentrated on the external debt, now a real scourge on the peoples of the continent. However, it was not considered out of context, but as an organic link in the whole chain of elements which had produced the crisis. The debt is an integral component and, simultaneously, a natural product or a "concentrated expression of the crisis", as one speaker put it. The sharpening of the relations of domination and dependence imposed by imperialism on the Latin American and Caribbean countries has produced a tight knot of the gravest contradictions. The debt-bondage springs from the inner logic of capitalist development and its objective historical trends, which inevitably engender parasitism and speculative operations on an ever wider scale and in ever uglier forms. Hence this conclusion: the external debt problem is neither casual, nor transient. Nor is it some temporary "anomaly" caused by a conjunction of circumstances, such as an unfavourable cyclical outlook. It is structural, and that is what determines its place in the context of the crisis gripping the continent.

After all, speakers pointed out, if financial resources keep being extracted from the national incomes to service the debt, many Latin American countries can hardly hope to carry on expanded reproduction without more external borrowing that would sharply increase the debt.

The problem is rooted in the very nature of the present imperialist stage in the development of world capitalism. It is characterised, on the one hand, by TNC operations, and on the other, by the fact that the local bourgeoisie, primarily the financial oligarchy, cannot create (and cannot hope to introduce) its own economic development model taking account of the degree of dependence and foreign capital penetration into the structure of the Latin American states. Indeed, most of the loans are used not for the needs of production, but for speculative operations for the benefit of local and foreign financial groups, for the enrichment of those in power and the top bureaucracy, and also to a large extent to cover the growing military spending and to maintain a steadily inflated anti-popular repressive machine.

The facts show that the countries of the continent are doomed to remain underdeveloped, while parasitic trends are running ever more strongly both in the imperialist centres and on the periphery. That is the context of the external debt problem, which, as speakers repeatedly stressed in the course of the discussion, is simultaneously the cause and the effect of the crisis.

The most essential features of these processes (with various distinctions, of course) are also in evidence in other regions of the Third World, a vast zone of the globe in which the debt mechanism is used as an element of the latest and most refined system of imperialist plunder and enslavement of less developed countries. It includes a worsening of the terms of trade between the debtor countries and the imperialist

powers; high bank interest rates, subsequently become "floating" rates; artificial raising of the dollar's exchange rate; flight of capital; and growing military expenditures imposed on the Third World countries by the United States under militaristic programmes. All these factors, taken together, lead to extremes such as Latin America's conversion into a net exporter of capital for the centres of imperialism, the latter striving to maintain the existing order of things to the detriment of countries exporting industrial and agricultural primary materials.

The so-called international credit agencies, notably the IMF and the IBRD, have acted in the same spirit. While claiming to be intermediaries between debtors and creditors, their actual mission is to satisfy the inordinate imperialist appetites, while bolstering the role of money-lender cartels like the Paris Club or the US Banks Coordination Committee. All such agencies are engaged in a tactical operation with the following objective: to present a solid front against every individual debtor. The less developed countries are forced to accept the terms and "adjustment programmes" whose harmful consequences are perfectly obvious. Thus, unadulterated blackmail is presented as a desire to "facilitate" the receipt of new loans in the course of negotiations on refinancing and restructuring their debts. In actual fact, such new loans are entirely absorbed by annual interest payments and merely go to compound the debt-bondage. To escape from it, they resort to more loans, and these carry an ever higher price as interest is capitalised¹⁵ with the result that the debt keeps piling up. Such is the technique used in the continuous draining of the Latin American countries' lifeblood, and this must be ended—once and for all.

In the light of these facts, the participants in the round table expressed complete agreement with the view which is now being ever more widely accepted in the region. It could be summed up as follows: the conditions being what they are, the debt can neither be reclaimed, nor repaid; the debt has become a political problem, and that is the light in which it must be seen; the Latin American countries cannot hope to find a realistic and reliable way out of the existing situation, unless the problem is closely tied in with the establishment of a new international economic order whose basic principles are contained in UN resolutions; no time must be lost in starting a campaign for a democratic way out of the crisis, an impetus should be given to national development, payment of the debt should be repudiated, and the imperialist diktat rejected.

It was the consensus that any realistic alternative should come down to the following. There must be a halt to the endless and senseless game of "restructuring", "adjustment" and deferment of payment datelines, and the illusory hopes of lower interest rates must be abandoned. So long as this game goes on—even if its rules are changed for the better—it is impossible to resist the economic mechanism which was conceived from the very outset as an instrument of domination and plunder.

The specific forms for getting out of the crisis will, of course, differ in each country and will be determined by the existing economic and political situation and other factors. But the common element in this situation is—in any case—that it is impossible to go on repaying the debt. Most envisage a write-off, abolition or complete cancellation of the entire debt, while others suggest a deferment or a moratorium for a definite period, say, 10-15 years, upon the expiry of which the problem could be reconsidered on new and fundamentally different principles.

These could, for instance, signify a recalculation of the debt. In this context, some fraternal party representatives drew attention to the view widely accepted on the continent concerning the need to draw distinction between so-called legitimate and illegitimate debts (the latter including subsidies used to finance reactionary coup d'état, anti-popular repression, enrichment of the ruling elite or the rewarding of its political hangers-on). Accordingly, the proposal is to undertake the repayment of the former and to repudiate the latter. The concepts of state and private debt are also used in a similar sense. The need was pointed out to reckon with the existence of this clear-cut trend: an ever greater part of the debt, initially a private one, is being underwritten

and backed up with securities by the state, which for that reason has to expend vast public funds to cover it.

There are ever louder and well-justified demands in Latin American and Caribbean countries that they should not accept any responsibility for the obligations of financial groups which had used the loans for all manner of speculations and machinations cutting across the national interest. (Everyone knows that many monopolistic circles have been illegally transferring their capital abroad, only to have it returned in the form of "foreign loans" falling as a burden on the state. These same funds are subsequently remitted abroad once again). What is more, in view of the damage done to the economy, these groups deserve to have some kind of sanctions imposed on them by the state.

The capping of interest rates, and a ban on the practice of interest capitalisation were among the other measures proposed. Countries insisting on a moratorium and new terms for servicing the debt intend to allocate a reasonable percentage of their total export revenues to meet the annual debt payments. Others urged the need to make debt servicing contingent on the changing terms of trade between the Latin American countries and the developed capitalist countries.

It was the unanimous view of the participants in the discussion that such measures would help ease the blood-drained economy of the region and give it a breathing space. If this is paralleled by international economic restructuring, the ruthless plunder of the countries of the continent will undoubtedly end. Meanwhile, there should be no illusions that these measures will of themselves lead to the attainment of the desired level of development and economic growth. The important thing is to put in the utmost effort to make them so effective that—in strict conformity with national interests—they would provide Latin America with the necessary export stocks. Primary attention should be given to boosting production and investments, and practising thrift.

The concrete proposals for each country's development being made by the revolutionary and progressive forces, it was emphasised at the round table, necessarily reckon with their resources and economic peculiarities. Mention was made, in particular, of such possible initiatives as the cancellation of some contracts concluded with the TNCs for the exploration and working of mineral deposits and their transfer to state control. There was the demand to nationalise key sectors of production (duly considered in each concrete case), the banking and financial system as a whole, and foreign trade, which could become more extensive and ramified through the development of ties with the socialist community and the non-aligned countries.

There was also a consideration of the need to introduce control over prices and foreign-exchange operations, with a simultaneous increase in the working people's real wages, a reduction in indirect taxes on the population, and an increase in the taxes on profits and large fortunes; an increase of state investments in the sectors which are most important for national development (industry, transport, agriculture, livestock breeding, etc.); a framing of plans to assist small and middle enterprises, cooperatives, etc. In view of the state of the countryside, the progressive forces favour agrarian reforms with an eye to the specific conditions in each country. Some spoke of the need to rescind the decrees of the reactionary dictatorships which legalise the mechanism of plunder by the foreign monopolies. The fraternal party representatives were at one in urging that the agreements concluded with the IMF, the IBRD and creditor banks should, as a rule, be abrogated without delay.

The discussion also dealt with the external factors, and in particular, the fact that apprehensions are being voiced in various public circles about the consequences which could result from the implementation of alternative programmes, and mainly the two following consequences: the probable reprisals by the creditors, and the possible complete collapse of the entire international financial system (thus, some groups of the Latin American bourgeoisie say that it is altogether utopian to expect any comprehensive or definitive solution, and so prefer to consider some kind of

intermediate scenarios which, from their standpoint, do not transcend the "possible").

Considering the threat of reprisals, some speakers stressed that a definitive solution of the problem does not at all signify an intention to break with the money-lenders. It merely implies a formulation of new and acceptable principles of relations with them in the future, envisaging the creditors' recognition of the changed realities, and also a way out of the existing situation with due respect for the interests of the debtors. In any case, the greediest of the money-lenders may be expected to take hostile action and one should be prepared for such a contingency. Here, the task of establishing internal and external unity comes to the fore, as Fidel Castro put it. The broad movement for the attainment of such unity which has been gathering momentum on the continent will have to rise to a higher level of organisation and coordination of action. The proposal to set up a continental front of peoples and governments deserves to be given full support. There are real prerequisites for forming such a front, and it could include a wide spectrum of social forces: from the working class to groups of the bourgeoisie, outside the financial oligarchy and uncommitted beyond recall to foreign monopoly capital.

The Latin American and Caribbean countries are faced with the need of perseveringly seeking ways for solid mutual understanding. In this context, some speakers assessed and noted the positive aspects of the available experience in economic integration (Latin American Free Trade Association /ALALC/, Latin American Economic System/SELA/, Andean group, Caribbean Community/CARICOM/, and Central American Common Market/MCCA/). There was also mention of the shortcomings and clearly negative effects of the activity of such organisations as, for instance, the MCCA. While on the whole recognising the importance of integration, the participants in the round table reached this conclusion: it can proceed successfully only with the attainment of sovereignty and complete independence from imperialism and the TNCs. Elaborating on the subject of unity, speakers pointed to the need to seek support also beyond the boundaries of the continent, and to lay more solid foundations for mutual understanding with the non-aligned movement and the socialist community.

Finally, the participants in the discussion did not ignore the fact that the atmosphere among the money-lenders does not at all testify to their unity or cohesion: there are many contradictions between them, and evidence of different approaches to relations with the debtors, something that was made perfectly obvious by comparing the stand of the United States and that of the other capitalist powers. This factor needs to be taken into account and action should be taken accordingly.

When the debt was said to be a political problem, the following was implied: service payments on the debt are incompatible with the Latin American countries' economic development, in fact undermining their national security, and exacerbating their social conflicts, which, for their part, jeopardise the prospects of democratic processes because of the moves by extreme right-wing reaction. The IMF-imposed "adjustment programmes" in effect signify that national economic planning is conducted outside their territories, which is a gross trampling of the debtor countries' sovereignty and independence. It follows that a way reckoning with the Latin American countries' interests can be found only if the balance of forces tilts in their favour. The concrete goal here is to put an end to the present creditor tactics. This can be done only if there is unity, concerted action and mutual understanding between all the states. Success in resisting any repression depends on such unity and resolve to act.

Concerning the possible collapse of the international financial system, speakers stressed that there was no desire to cause such a collapse, but merely to rid the countries of the continent of the heavy burden that imperialism has imposed on them. Those are the considerations by which the debtors are being guided. The question is: what are the creditors' intentions? After all, it is they who are in possession of abundant resources that could avert any dangerous destabilisation. Everything depends on whether the

money-lenders have a desire to act in the light of elementary common sense.

Fidel Castro proposed a formula whose justice is perfectly obvious not only from the practical, but also from the economic, political and moral standpoints. The idea is to have the accumulated debt redeemed by the countries in which the creditor banks are located through an insignificant reduction in the vast military expenditures: these need to be cut back by only 12 per cent to clear the debt. Such an operation is quite feasible, and it will do nothing at all to burden the lending countries' taxpayers or jeopardise their security, because—for all practical purposes—their defence will not suffer. Finally, the amount of funds required for this operation is truly insignificant as compared with the profits the capitalist powers have extracted from the colonial and dependent countries over the centuries of their domination and plunder.

The participants in the round table repeatedly referred to the USSR's proposal (outlined in Volsky's paper) for a reduction in the military expenditures of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. Speakers stressed the exceptional importance of the step, for it was made by a state which—in contrast to the imperialist powers—has not developed by exploiting the Third World countries. It has never received any dividends from them, and has not engaged either in diktat or blackmail, but has, on the contrary, always been prepared to support the cause of their liberation.

While a 12 per cent cut in the military expenditures of the major capitalist powers would not remove the terrible threat of war hanging over mankind, Fidel Castro's idea could be taken up by hundreds of millions of people both in the industrialised and in the dependent countries as a powerful slogan expressing the idea that the battles for peace and for national independence are inseparable, so giving them a fresh impetus.

A movement is gathering momentum throughout Latin America and the Caribbean for a realistic way out of the crisis and solution of the external debt problem—and it is one of the broadest movements in the history of the region. Its victory will depend on whether the movement is capable of developing its potentialities, on whether it becomes massive and involves the various social and political strata and groups. The working people of the continent are stepping up their struggle along these lines, and this will be seen from the large demonstrations recently held against the imperialist diktat and the policy of the IMF, among them the popular uprising in the Dominican Republic; the mass action in Peru which led to the change of government as a result of the elections; the strike by bank employees in Brazil; the nationwide strikes in Colombia (June 1985) and Bolivia (the longest in the country's history: September-October 1985); the general strike and mass action by the proletariat in Argentina demanding a moratorium on debt repayment (August 1985), and a powerful nationwide strike (January 1986); the Chilean people's courageous struggle against Pinochet's fascist tyranny, which has applied the IMF "recommendations" by the nastiest and most brutal methods; and the Haitian people's powerful burst of indignation, which toppled the blood-stained Duvalier tyranny. There was, finally, the Continental Day of Action against the external debt (October 23, 1985), which was the first successful experience in simultaneously mobilising the masses on a regional scale.

The Communists, as ever in the midst of the people, are fully resolved to make their patriotic and internationalist contribution to this struggle.

¹ See R. Trajtenberg, *Concentración global y transnacionalización* Centro de Economía Transnacional, Buenos Aires, 1985, p. 50.

² Ibid., p. 83.

³ Estimated from *Survey of Current Business*, May 1976; August 1982.

⁴ *Le Monde diplomatique*, February 1985, p. 28.

⁵ See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 210-226.

⁶ The prices used in settlements between enterprises of one and the same corporation.—Ed.

⁷ Calculated from *Informe sobre el Desarrollo Mundial 1984*, Banco Mundial, Washington.

⁸ See H. D. Heydenreich, *Problembereiche ausländischer privater Direktinvestitionen in Lateinamerika*, Göttingen, 1974, p. 13; *Survey of Current Business*, August 1979; August 1985.

⁹ *Le Monde diplomatique*, February 1985, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Revista de la CEPAL*, No. 23, 1984, p. 112.

¹¹ The highly numerous and characteristic category of people in less developed countries who are involved in economic activity in the lower-order, and mostly small-commodity, sectors.—*Ed.*

¹² V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 214-215.

¹³ The Paris Club (or Group of Ten) was set up in 1961 under an agreement between the governments of the leading capitalist powers.—*Ed.*

¹⁴ *Pravda*, January 28, 1986.

¹⁵ As debtors find themselves unable to service their debts in due time, the interest in arrears is added to the principal.—*Ed.*

viewpoints

Thaelmann's Behests Live On

Ernst Diehl – member of the SUPG Central Committee, deputy director of the Institute for Marxist-Leninist Studies under the SUPG Central Committee

Guenter Hortschansky – chief of department, Institute for Marxist-Leninist Studies under the SUPG Central Committee

OVER the past two or three years Prenzlauer Berg, Berlin's traditionally working class district, has become unrecognisable. Instead of an old gas works which used to spread soot and stench all over the neighbourhood, there are now attractive new houses with 900 modern apartments for 4,000 tenants, a school, day care centres, a swimming pool, shops, a restaurant and cafes. The complex is called a park—not a very usual name for a residential district. Trees, lawns, ponds, playgrounds and sports facilities make up two-thirds of its area. Here, you can sit and relax, breathing fresh air. A 13-metre-high monumnet rises in the centre of the park—a bronze sculpture of a stocky man with a big head, standing under a red banner with a hammer and sickle, the symbol of the union of workers and peasants. There is no inscription on the monument because none is necessary: everyone in our republic knows that this is Teddy, Ernst Thaelmann, the man the new housing-and-recreation development is named after. In this way the working people of the GDR marked the centenary of the great leader of the German working class, the legendary chairman of the Communist Party of Germany.

Ernst Thaelmann was born in the port of Hamburg on April 16, 1886. He was born into a philistine family, his parents steering clear of politics at that time. Besides, Thaelmann grew up in a world in which there were neither socialist countries nor communist parties. He completed seven grades of school spending, like all Hamburg boys, long hours in the harbour. That was where he, then ten years old, witnessed a strike which the dockworkers conducted staunchly for eleven weeks and which he never forgot. At 14 Thaelmann began to work for a living and very soon 'learned my first major object lesson in the capitalist system of exploitation and its methods'.¹ At 17 his profound personal convictions led him to join the Social Democratic Party

(which, at that time, was revolutionary). A year later he was a member of the Transport Workers' Union.

At 28 Thaelmann was drafted into the army, and he experienced war at first hand during heavy fighting on the Somme. At 32 he went through the ordeal of the November 1918 revolution and knew hope and disillusionment. Two years later, by that time a seasoned and experienced revolutionary with a considerable store of knowledge of theory, a member of the Hamburg city council and chairman of the Hamburg organisation of the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (ISDPG), Thaelmann became a Communist. He had been ready to take this step before, but did it only after he had persuaded a majority of the Hamburg 'independents' to follow suit. Five years later he was elected chairman of the CPG.

Thaelmann conducted a great amount of theoretical work in connection with the strategy and tactics of the Communist Party and devoted great attention to political organisation. A man of exceptional self-discipline and industry, he also became chairman of the Red War Veterans' Union—Self Defence Units of the German Proletariat in 1925, served on the Hamburg city council from 1919 to 1933 and as a member of the Reichstag from 1924 to 1933. He was active in the work of the Communist International and discharged numerous functions there. As early as the 1920s he was a well-known activist of the international communist movement.

The ruling classes of the country unerringly saw Thaelmann, a man who became the acknowledged leader of the German proletariat, as a serious, influential and therefore dangerous political enemy. Four weeks after Hitler's rise to power Thaelmann, then 46 years old and underground, was captured by his mortal enemies. They kept him in a Nazi prison without investigation or trial for more than eleven years; on August 18, 1944 he was killed in secret, underhandedly, in the Buchenwald concentration camp.

Such are the principal landmarks of Thaelmann's biography, of the path along which a common worker became the leader of his class, one of the finest sons of the German people. His vigorous political activity was violently cut short when he was in his prime. Thaelmann spent only seven years leading the CPG in the open. Yet his life was rich, meaningful and dedicated, as long as he remained alive, to the cause of the working class, to the struggle against fascism, reaction and militarism, for world peace.

History offers numerous examples of political and government leaders who lived longer than Thaelmann. They never knew want, they were extolled, praised to the skies, showered with awards and decorations—but forgotten long before their centenaries. They were forgotten because they gave nothing to society, mankind or progress, because they were non-entities. 'You say "personality",' Thaelmann wrote shortly before his execution, 'usually when you refer to a person who rises above society and devotes all his strength to the service of his people.'²

This definition applies to Thaelmann himself, the leader of the German Communists and a man who had every right to go down in history. He was one of those communist leaders who emerged from the midst of the proletariat. Before he became a professional revolutionary, he had spent almost 25 years working as a coachman, packer, stevedore, transport worker and dockworker. He grew up in the midst of the German proletariat, his thinking was proletarian, and he remained a proletarian at the helm of the German Communist Party which was many thousand strong. 'The blood of a German worker runs in my veins, and that is what I will remain to the end. Social Democratic workers are my kith and kin,'³ he wrote proudly in prison.

Thaelmann was profoundly convinced that 'serious revolutionary practice is impossible without a healthy and clear revolutionary theory'.⁴ He attached special attention to ideological and theoretical work whenever the political struggle became

acute, and he protested vehemently each time he believed that this sphere of activity was neglected. He closely followed the Communists' party education. He monitored the work to make CPG propaganda in the press far-reaching and militant, to enhance its struggle against anti-communism and other types of reactionary bourgeois ideology. He also kept a watch over the regular publication of Marxist-Leninist classics.

Thaelmann himself was well-versed in Marxism-Leninism, and this knowledge helped him to rise to the level of large-scale generalisation and to work out original interpretations of many new phenomena of his time. He creatively applied the theory of Marx, Engels and Lenin to the conditions obtaining in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, and he added new dimensions to many provisions of this theory. This is particularly true of the analysis concerning various aspects of imperialist development in the prewar years, the spread of fascism in several West European countries, the tackling of the ethnic question in Germany, the establishment of a united workers' front and the Communists' policy of alliances.

The leader of the German proletariat invariably combined his analysis of these problems with the practical aspect of the revolutionary struggle, with propaganda and canvassing. His conclusions were based on an accurate and profound observation of the complex economic and political phenomena and developments of the period. This made it possible to proceed from a firm scientific foundation in shaping the strategy and tactics of the CPG. If Thaelmann's party comrades oversimplified things and contradicted the realities in their theoretical constructs, he firmly led them down from the clouds to the soil of hard facts.

The leader of the German proletariat kept encountering a great many new, acute and often urgent problems. Much remained unclear, and it was difficult to promptly find definitive answers in the maelstrom of events, when some phenomena had no time to crystallise. Something had to be adjusted and corrected in the course of the struggle, so that the explanations or slogans found earlier would not become petrified and hamper revolutionary action.

Thaelmann tirelessly stressed the great responsibility to the people the Communists bore as the politically conscious, advanced and organised part of the proletariat. Only an 'iron-hard, absolutely united and close-knit party with a firm discipline'⁵ could discharge this responsibility honourably. It is to the communist leader's great credit that the CPG really became such a concerted force, that in the dark period of the fascist terrorist dictatorship tens of thousands of dedicated, staunch Communists upheld their loyalty to the cause of the working class, socialism and peace. Together with his comrades, he laid the essential foundations of the historic victory the German working class and its allies won in the late 1940s, when Thaelmann's dream came true and a socialist state—the German Democratic Republic—was established on our soil.

The leader of the German Communists judged the maturity of a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party by its ability to overthrow the domination of capital and win political power. Together with other leaders of the CPG, he worked to forge it into a force 'which could lead the German proletariat in the struggle for power'.⁶ This problem was of key importance to Thaelmann, and he returned to it again and again in his articles and speeches. He was consistent and firm in his rejection of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois views, of all sorts of opportunism and revisionism. Thaelmann was convinced that government by the workers must be preserved and defended at all costs. 'When, drawing on the will of millions of proletarians in urban and rural areas, we take the helm, we will be resolved never to let go',⁷ he said at one of the rallies. To us German Communists, these words are a behest we follow unswervingly. From the very first days of the GDR, the party and the people have been consolidating and defending government by the workers and peasants, never allowing anyone to play

with it or attempt to subvert it.

Thaelmann was a firm advocate of the dictatorship of the proletariat because he regarded the notion that the exploiter minority would willingly surrender its positions to the majority of working people as a dangerous illusion. He held that the domination of the working class was to discharge a lofty mission of serving the people and ensuring an all-round development of the personality. He pointed out that only assumption of power by the proletariat and its allies could solve Germany's pressing socio-political problems, meet the urgent needs of working people and radically improve the well-being of the people. Only government by the workers and peasants can offer an alternative to capitalism, for socialism is indivisible from this government and, as long as this government is not established, no effective steps can be taken to build socialism.

The CPG never refused to use the conditions and opportunities of bourgeois democracy in the interests of the masses. From the podium of the Hamburg city council and in the Reichstag, Thaelmann skilfully defended the interests of workers and peasants, fought against attacks on their rights and social gains, exposed the arbitrary practices of the courts and the police and denounced the revival of militarism. The chairman of the party trained a large group of experienced Communist members of parliament who ably publicised CPG policy. The faction was active in election campaigns, and Thaelmann ran twice for President. He did not question the great moral effect of Communist electoral successes, maintaining that the more votes the party won, the greater pressure it would be able to bring to bear on the ruling classes. But, unlike the opportunists, he never exaggerated the importance of the electoral process because he was convinced that elections as such, without mass action, could not radically transform the political scene, that the working class could not wrest power from the bourgeoisie with the help of electoral ballots alone.

However, this sober assessment of bourgeois democracy did not mean that Thaelmann refused to see any graduations in the forms of bourgeois domination or was indifferent to this question. The CPG spotted the danger of fascism very early on. From 1929, the leader of the German Communists conducted a systematic and profound analysis of the crisis that hit the Weimar bourgeois parliamentary republic. He closely followed every turn of the way along which Germany's ruling classes were switching to openly dictatorial methods. Thaelmann displayed a high sense of responsibility in assessing the character of this or that German government and sharply contradicted those who believed, as early as 1931, that the fascist dictatorship was a *fait accompli*. The chairman of the CPG held that such assessments served to demoralise the party and the masses of workers in the face of an imminent and much more terrible danger.

Thaelmann argued convincingly that the advent of Hitler's supporters was by no means unexpected and that at any rate, it was not a sudden coup which stunned the German bourgeoisie. January 30, 1933, the day Hitler became Chancellor, was merely the culmination of a gradual process of transformation of state power, a logical summing-up of the policy pursued by Germany's big capital which consciously accepted the establishment of an openly terrorist dictatorship.

But even before this came to pass, Thaelmann arrived at an important practical conclusion: fascism can be stopped only if, without waiting for the 'decisive battle', every effort is exerted to block the downward slide into open reaction, to fight attempts at curtailing democracy and making the proletariat give up the positions it has won.

At that time there were people among the CPG leaders who maintained that the bourgeoisie's turn to fascism was a reflection of its weakness, that it was going on the defensive faced with the exacerbation of the contradictions between monopoly capital and working people. These Communists held that mass unemployment and

other crippling social effects of the crisis would very soon revolutionise the German working class and lead it to the barricades.

Thaelmann who, according to his contemporaries, possessed a rare ability to assess the situation soberly and realistically, arrived at a different conclusion by the early 1930s: there was no direct revolutionary situation in Germany, and the hopes for an automatic collapse of the capitalist system were groundless because objective factors alone cannot produce an absolutely hopeless situation for capitalism.⁸ He resolutely dissociated himself from those who, facing that situation, tended to lapse into anarchism and putschism and tried to resort to terror against individuals. Thaelmann unswervingly followed the basic Marxist precept that a revolution could not be made to order, with the help of pseudoradical slogans. 'We rely on objective prerequisites (which we subjectively further)',⁹ he wrote.

The leader of the German proletariat held that the struggle for the establishment of government by the workers and peasants was 'a political struggle for the million-strong masses of the working class and other working people'.¹⁰ No matter how staunch or ideologically tempered, a party cannot attain its historical tasks relying on a handful of revolutionaries. Meanwhile, one cannot convince the masses that the communist ideas are right or lead them to a struggle for these ideas 'with the help of diagrams; a correct general course is not enough for it either; it is, besides, the question of applying a correct psychological method, of understanding the psychology of the masses'.¹¹ Thaelmann knew from his own experience that working people would follow the party only if it advanced demands they could understand, including immediate, partial demands. We must be 'the mouthpiece of all needs and the foremost fighters for all demands of the day',¹² the demands the masses put forward, he repeated. The CPG was striving to win, again and again, the confidence of the people with every move and every step it took, so that the people, having learned firsthand that the Communists pursued a correct policy, would recognise this policy as their own.

Party organisations, CPG functionaries and rank-and-file members learned to combine the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism and the efforts to defend the vital interests of the masses into an integral whole. They came out for an eight-hour workday, higher wages, bigger unemployment benefits and pensions, against the housing shortage and the soaring rent, for better medical care, equal education opportunities, full equality of women and youth, for the observance and expansion of democratic civil rights.

In the critical period when the threat of a fascist dictatorship became increasingly real with each day, the CPG chairman called not only on the vanguard but also on the entire German working class to combat the offensive against the people's basic and vital rights. 'Only if you proletarians—Social Democrats, Christians, National Socialists are ready to fight, members of the free trade unions and those unaffiliated with any party—form a united front with the Communists, your companions in distress, only if you courageously raise the banner of struggle, only then will we be able to win bread, potatoes and coal for our families, for our boys and girls, clothes and milk for our starving children.'¹³ The CPG appealed to the Nazi rank and file too because it was aware of 'the great difference between the units of stormtroopers and SS men who try to stage instigative forays in working class neighbourhoods or attack workers' homes and beerhalls and the broad masses of the industrial and office workers, members of the middle strata, handicraftsmen, self-employed workers and even working peasants who are worn out by poverty and the crisis and who followed or are following the Nazis, swayed by the demagoguery and false promises of Hitler, Goebbels and Strasser'.¹⁴

Thaelmann regarded the cause of winning the support of a majority of the German working class and establishing a hegemony of the proletariat among all working

people not as a distant prospect but as an immediate and central task of the Communists. He held that sectarians who hid behind pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric only harmed the cause of the working class. Essentially, they steered clear of the masses because they gave in to the difficulties of winning these masses over to their side.

The way the CPG chairman interpreted the slogan of 'Reaching deeper into the midst of the masses' as applied to work among the trade unions is very significant. By the close of the 1920s there was a body of opinion in the German and international communist movement which advocated a break with reformist trade unions (the so-called free trade unions in the case of Germany) and the establishment of a revolutionary trade union opposition under the communist aegis. This position was rooted in the view that an economic crisis allegedly led the working class to rapidly grasp the essence of its position and become ready to leave the old unions in the near future and join new ones. Thaelmann did not share these illusions, and life proved that he was right. He was well aware of how strongly German workers were attached to their trade unions (which united more than 6.5 million people in Germany at that time). To accept the proposals of Thaelmann's opponents in the CPG leadership, to walk out of these trade unions and concentrate on extraunion work (that is, mostly among the unemployed and unorganised working people) would mean that the Communists would give up their purposeful work among the main mass of the proletariat and consequently, betray the revolutionary cause.

Under Thaelmann's leadership and thanks to the Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics of the CPG, its membership increased from 114,000 to 360,000. While 3.7 million people voted for the Communists in the Reichstag elections of 1924, in 1932 the figure rose to almost six million. Running for President, Thaelmann himself won 1.9 million votes in 1925 and five million votes in 1932. All these successes were no doubt considerable, but they were not enough to prevent Hitler from rising to power.

Throughout his politically conscious life, Thaelmann was a vigorous and staunch fighter against imperialism, militarism and war. As early as 1914 he regarded the chauvinistic position of the right-wing Social Democratic and trade union leaders who supported imperialist plunder and the annexationist plans of Germany's big capital as a complete break with Marxism and proletarian internationalism. Upholding the cause of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, Thaelmann fought uncompromisingly against Germany's rearmament and preparations for a new aggression. Later, recalling his experience as a front-line soldier, he wrote that the horrors of war added strength to his socialist convictions and to his resolve to do everything he could to resist the revival of militarism.

Between the two world wars, Thaelmann was perhaps Germany's most outstanding, passionate and consistent champion of peace. He saw preservation of peace as the foremost task of the communist movement of the period, as part of the historical mission of the proletariat. Within the CPG leadership, the party chairman was personally responsible for anti-war activities. He wrote articles and delivered speeches demonstrating that the threat of war was rooted in the very essence of imperialism and exposing the self-serving interests and the striving of Germany's ruling elite to profit by arms production, by the policy of expansionism and revanche. Thaelmann never tired of reiterating the importance of timely action to block war preparations and keep the guns silent. His warnings are particularly topical today, for a nuclear conflict is fraught with the annihilation of the human race.

When in mid-1920s German finance capital recovered from its defeat and again embarked on a course of preparing for annexationist wars, the Communists were the first to come out against this grave threat. The January 1931 Plenary Meeting of the CPG Central Committee adopted a resolution saying firmly that the CPG was the only party of peace in Germany ready to solve all central problems of German and

international politics without annexationist wars, without enslaving or threatening other nations.¹⁵

At that time, Thaelmann was already drawing the attention of the party and of Communists throughout the world to the fact that the success of the struggle against war depended first and foremost on the broadest possible involvement of the popular masses in it. 'It is impossible or next to impossible to fight against war without a really convincing policy of a united front, a policy essential for mobilising the masses to the struggle against war. That is a key issue. All our revolutionary orientation, all our knowledge of the question, all our commitment will be in vain if we fail to set up a militant alliance with *everyone* else, including workers who hold different views.'¹⁶ He saw a very broad range of potential allies: 'A united front comprising millions of exploited factory workers, the unemployed who have been ousted from production, millions of peasants, working intellectuals' and, besides, 'petty-bourgeois elements, the middle strata and small rentiers'.¹⁷ It would take concerted action by the world's first socialist state and by all peace forces throughout the world—Communists, Social Democrats, trade unionists and pacifists—to firmly block war.

Thaelmann believed that in order to create a united front in Germany, it was particularly important to ensure the involvement of the Social Democrats in the joint action. Eight million people voted for the Social Democrats in the 1932 elections to the Reichstag. It proved impossible to come to an agreement with the people in charge of this workers' party at that time, and so the Communist leader kept appealing to its rank and file. 'The thick wall separating Communist and Social Democratic workers'¹⁸ could be brought down only 'through marshalling comradely arguments that would invoke their own experience of joint struggle' and not by a sectarian 'bellowing of rude commands and abuse'.¹⁹ Thaelmann himself set an example of such dialogue. 'The Communist Party is addressing its Social Democratic class comrades and appealing to their socialist sentiments', he said at a rally held in Berlin in 1931. 'Yes, comrades, we are offering you our hand in joint struggle.'²⁰ He stressed that this appeal was not a tactical move, that it was dictated by an awareness of the need for workers' unity in the struggle against the war threat.

Thaelmann proposed the establishment of 'Anti-Fascist Action', a broad movement to rebuff fascism. In the summer of 1932 the CPG chairman met with a group of Social Democratic and trade union functionaries to discuss the issue of joint action. When these people proved to be prejudiced against 'Anti-Fascist Action', claiming that this was an 'organisation with a Communist Party hallmark', Thaelmann defined it as 'a supraparty rallying point for all workers who are prepared to wage a resolute struggle against fascism'. He added that differences of opinion on other matters should yield to the most important task—that of preventing the establishment of a fascist dictatorship in Germany.²¹ The CPG did not put forward any terms for cooperation and did much to consolidate the positions of 'Anti-Fascist Action' on the shop floor, in the midst of the working class.

However, the movement was slow to gain strength: 'despite the crisis, despite the past revolutionary upsurge, fascism and counter-revolution rallied their forces together faster than the revolutionary proletariat and the working masses it led formed their own forces.'²² The reign of terror unleashed by Hitler's supporters bled the opponents of Nazism and war white; several years later the fascists did plunge the world into a new war.

Thaelmann was an ardent patriot. 'I am a German,' he wrote. 'The people I belong to and love are the German people, and my nation, the nation I take pride in and respect, is the German nation, a chivalrous, proud and strong nation.'²³ But the leader of the German proletariat was also a dedicated and consistent internationalist. He saw his own work and the work of the CPG as part of the struggle waged by the international working class, and he always linked his tasks as party leader with his

duties in the Communist International. This served to broaden Thaelmann's vision and to clarify many issues connected with the building of socialism in the Soviet Union, with the class battles the proletariat was fighting in the rest of the world and with the upsurge of the national liberation movement. Performing his Communist International functions, the CPG chairman learned from the successes and setbacks of sister parties and, for his part, contributed to the work of the International by drawing on the experience of the German Communists. Side by side with other outstanding leaders of the working class, he promoted the unity of the world communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The October Revolution and the first steps to build socialism in the USSR played a central role in the shaping of Thaelmann's political convictions. 'November 7, 1917', he wrote, 'was the beginning of the greatest revolution in human history. The decisive victory of Russia's workers, peasants and soldiers over the joint forces of landowners and capitalists changed the image of the world. . . *A new era began in the history of the class struggle.*'²⁴ He regarded the party of Lenin as the model of organisation the proletariat needed to accomplish its historical mission.

Thaelmann brought up the German Communists in a spirit of unity and unshakeable solidarity with the Soviet Union, of relentless struggle against anti-Sovietism or any concessions to it. This he saw as the criterion of proletarian internationalism. In 1926 he declared at a session of one of the Communist International governing bodies that '*the attitude to the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union is the paramount issue for the international working class movement*'.²⁵ We believe that these words, spoken at a time when the USSR alone opposed the forces of capitalism, remain topical today, when a whole community of socialist countries has emerged. Comrade Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SUPG Central Committee, has noted that the conclusion made by the leader of the German proletariat 'is as true today as it was then, and it will be true tomorrow'.²⁶

The entire history of the GDR bears out the prediction of Ernst Thaelmann that 'an alliance with the USSR assures'²⁷ the genuine liberation of our people. In alliance with the USSR we carried out a socialist revolution and are building socialism, and the closer our friendship with the great socialist state, the more successful we are. As we advance, our fraternal alliance is acquiring new scope and new dimensions.

Despite the exhausting solitary confinement, despite the brutal torture, Thaelmann remained, even in fascist prison, unbroken, loyal to his cause, firmly convinced that his chosen path was right, and confident of victory. In the grim days when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union he wrote: 'The society of the future belongs to us. . . We have confidence in victory no matter how great the difficulties and the suffering we encounter on this road.'²⁸ History has proven that he was right.

Thaelmann saw the building of socialism on German soil as the paramount purpose of his life: 'We shall transform slaves chained to machines, penniless and desperate people into free and happy builders of the future, of a new life based on the principles of collectivism. . . Where revolutionary government is used in the interests of all working people, where land, mines, industry and the ships that ply the seas belong to the workers, there is the state of working people we are fighting for.'²⁹ This state is a reality in our country.

Today, on the eve of its Eleventh Congress, the SUPG has every right to say that in directing the building of socialism in the GDR, it has been invariably guided by Thaelmann's ideas and has followed his behests. The Communists are vigilantly defending government by the workers and peasants, working hard to strengthen the ties between the party and the masses and steadily pursuing the policy of alliance. Closely and fraternally united with the USSR and other socialist countries, our republic advocates international cooperation and works vigorously

to preserve peace.

¹ Ernst Thaelmann, "Mein Lebenslauf", in *Beitraege zur Geschichte*, No. 1, 1975, p. 95.

² *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, Vol. 5, Berlin, 1966, p. 592.

³ Central Party Archives of the Institute for Marxist-Leninist Studies under the SUPG Central Committee (CPA SUPG), NL 3/11.

⁴ CPA SUPG 1, 1/2/4.

⁵ Ernst Thaelmann, *Geschichte und Politik*, Berlin, 1973, p. 37.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁷ Ernst Thaelmann, *Zur Machtfrage*, Berlin, 1982, p. 378.

⁸ Quoted in *Ernst Thaelmann, Eine Biographie*, Vol. 2, Berlin, 1980, p. 496. Here Thaelmann supports the idea expressed by Lenin at the Second Congress of the Communist International. See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 227.

⁹ Ernst Thaelmann, *Zur Machtfrage*, p. 452.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

¹¹ Quoted in *E. Thaelmann. Eine Biographie*, p. 624.

¹² *Die Rote Fahne*, April 25, 1925.

¹³ *Die Rote Fahne*, Special issue, November 22, 1932.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, January 26, 1933.

¹⁵ See Ernst Thaelmann, *Volksrevolution über Deutschland*, Berlin, 1931, p. 42.

¹⁶ Central Party Archives of the Institute for Marxist-Leninist Studies under the CPSU Central Committee (CPA CPSU) File 495, op. 2, item 160.

¹⁷ Quoted in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, 1973, pp. 959-960.

¹⁸ CPA CPSU, File 495, op. 2, item 160.

¹⁹ *Die Internationale*, No. 11/12, 1931, p. 490.

²⁰ Quoted in *Ernst Thaelmann. Eine biographie*, Vol. 2, p. 526.

²¹ *Die Antifaschistische Aktion*, Berlin, 1965, pp. 163-164, 166, 167.

²² Quoted in *Ernst Thaelmann. Eine Biographie*, Vol. 2, p. 575.

²³ *Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, Vol. 5, p. 591.

²⁴ Ernst Thaelmann, *Geschichte und Politik*, p. 45.

²⁵ Ernst Thaelmann, *Reden und Aufsätze zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, Vol. 1, Berlin, 1955, p. 435.

²⁶ Erich Honecker, *Reden und Aufsätze*, Vol. 9, Berlin, 1985, p. 153.

²⁷ Quoted in *Ernst Thaelmann. Eine Biographie*, Vol. 2, p. 715.

²⁸ CPA SUPG, NL 3/9.

²⁹ Ernst Thaelmann, *Zur Machtfrage*, pp. 276-277.

Social Control Under Socialist Democracy

Ognyan Panov – alternate member, CC, Bulgarian Communist Party, Editor-in-Chief, *Problemi na sotsialniya kontrol*

STEADILY progressing democracy, increasingly active participation of the working people in government, the extension of civil rights and freedoms, the growing role of mass organisations in every sphere of life are all objective requisites for the advance of socialism. With social ownership of the means of production, the interests and requirements of the state, social classes and groups, collectives and individuals combine more and more closely. People begin to perceive the goals of the state as their own, and this induces them to step up their socio-political activity and to work with greater energy. Experience has confirmed Lenin's thesis about the growing constructive role of the masses under socialism.

At the stage of building a developed socialist society, the Bulgarian Communist Party, like other fraternal parties, considers that progress in all political, economic, social and cultural spheres is inseparable from a further extension of the democratic foundations of the management of public affairs, among which social control holds an important place.

This control is exercised in every society, if in different forms, of course. The fact is that the stability and integrity of the political system cannot be maintained in the absence of norms regulating individual and collective behaviour, any more than without procedures, rules and institutions ensuring respect for these norms. What makes a difference is the interests which social control protects and the ruling class whose requirements it serves. This is what determines the qualitative difference in control between diverse socio-economic formations. Under capitalism, control serves the bourgeoisie as a means of preserving the exploiting system. Under socialism, it protects the interests of the working class and other working people, and helps apply social justice and accomplish the multiple tasks involved in building the new society.

Furthermore, there is a difference in the content of control. Dominant under the socialist system is *preventive* and not punitive control, for the chief task is to create a situation ruling out anti-social behaviour. This explains, for instance, why drug addiction, that scourge of contemporary bourgeois society, is practically non-existent in socialist countries. The main characteristic of our social control is that it prevents in time infringements of established norms by bringing social influence to bear. The manner in which we exercise it and the forms and nature of the control institutions' activity likewise have their peculiarities. Control in our society is, in effect, a concern of the working people, a component of the people's socialist self-government. More and more, it is assuming a mass character by virtue of the democratic essence of the new society. Lenin attached tremendous importance to this circumstance. Looking ahead, he pointed out that 'control must be carried out at first by workers' organisations and subsequently by *each and every* member of the population'.¹

This approach is successfully applied in socialist countries as the principles of democracy are carried forward and perfected. An unquestionably interesting provision of the new edition of the CPSU Programme is, therefore, the one which says that the party 'will actively help to raise the efficiency of *state and public organisations' control*. It regards the participation of working people in *people's control* bodies as an important way of increasing their political maturity and heightening their activity in protecting the people's interests, and of fostering a statesman-like approach to matters and a proper attitude to the people's property'.²

Control 'from below', by working people and their organisations, combines in socialist society with control 'from above', by the state, for the latter expresses the interests of the working class and the people as a whole. These two components form the social control system functioning under the leadership of the Communist Party on three interconnected lines.

We mean, first, the right of every citizen to participate in government, to influence the work of the administrative apparatus through the People's Councils, public organisations, state and people's control institutions or directly through their work collectives. Second, the activity of specialised social institutions, such as the central and local control and auditing commissions of the BCP, state and people's control committees, intradepartmental and specialised control; the sphere of finance, quality and standards, social hygiene, environmental protection, and so on. Third, the necessary phase in management which consists in verifying the execution of decisions adopted by leading bodies at all levels.

Our party is working continuously to extend the democratic principles of control in every echelon of the political system. The 12th BCP Congress (1981) stressed the need for 'control truly *involving the people as a whole*, ensuring fulfilment of the tasks set and creating an atmosphere of intolerance of breaches of discipline, of encroachments on socialist property and civil rights, of any attempt whatever to circumvent or ignore socialist laws'.³ These theses were further elaborated in material prepared by the party for its 13th Congress.

New Conditions, New Opportunities

In Step with the construction of a developed socialist society in our country, qualitative changes are coming about in many spheres of life, which also makes for a bigger role of the working people in social control. Which of these changes are of fundamental importance?

First of all, the transformation of the Bulgarian state into a state of the whole people. Economically, this process is based on the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and on the formation of a single type of property belonging to the whole people (needless to say, the citizens' personal property is left intact); 90 per cent of the national income is produced by state enterprises, about four per cent by cooperatives, and about six per cent by auxiliary households.⁴

The state is operating on behalf of the people and on their mandate as owner of the whole of socialist property. It grants citizens ample rights, steadfastly improves conditions for the all-round development of the individual, enables everyone to work, creates new jobs, fully covers the expenses of vocational training and retraining, guarantees women equal rights in all social spheres, including equal pay, and takes steps to improve health services. Cooperating with the trade unions, the state has taken charge of the pensioning of all categories of working people; for years past, it has kept pensioning age at 55 years for women and at 60 for men while offering those who wish to go on working an opportunity to do so.

These and many other social achievements, the stability of the political system and the maintenance of socialist legality have made ours a state of a new type operating not only on behalf of the people but, primarily and in everything, for the good of the people. The population's distrust of the state as an instrument of exploitation defending the rich and strangling freedom—a distrust which had built up over the centuries—is a thing of the past.

Accordingly, the control functions of the state have acquired a new quality. Their main purpose now is to safeguard the people's interests against all violations or encroachments. It is these tasks that the army, militia and judiciary serve as organs of state power.

An important aspect of the present stage of socialist construction in Bulgaria is that the working people's direct participation in the management of public affairs is growing. We widely use referendums. So far there have been referendums on the drafts of a new Constitution, the Law on People's Councils and the penal and family codes, on the CC BCP Theses on the advancement of the educational system, draft documents of BCP congresses, the 'Fundamental Provisions of the Concept of a New Labour Code', etc. The citizen's rights in regard to the discussion of acts of central and local government bodies and to direct decision-making by vote (in a referendum) were substantially extended with the passing of the Law on Referendums by the National Assembly (March 1983). We need hardly add that not all current problems can be submitted to a referendum. This is why two new, permanent and interconnected forms of democracy have taken strong root in our society.

One of them is known as the *state-and-social or social-and-state principle* of managing diverse economic, social and cultural spheres of life. It implies the transfer of certain functions of the state to public organisations, which the Constitution has granted the right to draft laws. When deciding on matters of importance to communities, the Fatherland Front⁵ can hold local referendums. The working people are drawn increasingly into the activity of representative bodies. Noted members of diverse organisations, scientists and cultural workers participate on a voluntary basis in the work of the National Assembly⁶ and the State Council.⁷ Local People's Councils set up supernumerary departments and services, commissions for the modernisation of communities, vocational advice to youth, traffic safety, and so on, all of them

operating on a voluntary basis.

The social principle is combined with the state principle in many administrative spheres. It underlies, for instance, the activity of the National Agrarian-Industrial Union, which groups at national level and on a voluntary basis government and cooperative organisations producing, processing and selling farm produce as well as providing scientific, technical and other services to agriculture. The establishment of the Union goes far beyond the framework of an ordinary decision on economic organisation. This new form, which combines the functions and methods of government with those of a voluntary association of working people, decides on ways to improve economic management in our society.

The Supreme Educational Council, the Committee on Labour and Social Security under the Council of Ministers, the Cultural Committee, and the Bulgarian Association for Tourism and Working People's Recreation are functioning in a similar way. The very fact that they have been constituted and are functioning on democratic lines considerably extends the social basis of government. This makes it possible to solve many problems judiciously and competently, without increasing staffs, creates favourable conditions for social control over the activity of organisations, institutions and individual officials, and enhances the role and influence of those 'below'.

The other new form of democracy is a result of extending *the rights and opportunities of work teams and the staffs of enterprises, offices and organisations*. Work collectives, primarily in the production sphere, are becoming full-fledged, autonomous and active masters disposing over socialist property, self-governing entities. This trend is furthered by introducing the principles of economic accountability on a large scale, with the result that the economic interests of society and those of the staffs of enterprises and every working person combine more effectively.

Economic accountability was applied in our republic in the past as well. The current stage in its development involves the introduction of a new economic approach making the amount of a working person's earnings directly dependent on the end results of the work of his team and the whole work collective concerned. Workers participate directly in the distribution of profit with due regard to the contribution of each. This corresponds, in effect, to the economic role of owner of socialist property, a right granted to enterprise staffs. It follows that all workers have a stake in saving resources, fulfilling contracts and making production more profitable.

Executives and executors now have more equal opportunities to exercise control over the means of production and to use them. The organisational pattern of economic management as it now stands implies direct participation of the working people in it. The leading collective body of an enterprise is the general meeting of the employees (or the meeting of representatives in the case of a large enterprise), which is empowered to make decisions on key problems of production and of working and living conditions. Current work is directed by an economic council made up of members of the management, specialists and workers elected by the general meeting or the meeting of representatives and accountable to it. More and more often, work collectives exercise their right to elect executives, regulate their own composition and participate directly in its formation. They adopt socio-economic development plans and distribute profit according to the personal contribution of each. All this heightens the collectives' sense of common responsibility for the implementation of decisions. A number of factors loosening discipline, affecting the efficiency of labour and lowering public activity are being eliminated.

'The important thing now,' Todor Zhivkov notes, 'is to elevate the control functions of work collectives, to make work collectives a force of prime importance in

the social control system.¹⁸

Thus the new processes going on in Bulgarian society are evidence of further development of socialist democracy. This also manifests itself in the sphere of social control. The working people are offered increasing opportunities of not only expressing an opinion and influencing decisions made by government bodies, public organisations and work collectives but of verifying the execution of these decisions.

Social Control in Action

We have pointed out that the Communist Party, which sets social development goals, plays the leading role in the control system. Party control is political and is exercised through Communists holding jobs in government bodies, public organisations and work collectives. It covers a wide range of problems, for its function is to ascertain how correctly and consistently the tasks set are fulfilled. At this stage, the party gives special attention to its members' role in introducing the new economic approach, eliminating bureaucratic methods of leadership and preventing voluntarist decisions.

Party branches, each of which forms the political core of the work collective concerned, are central to this control system. They are entitled to oversee the activity of Communists holding managerial or government posts and to help extend the powers of work collectives.

The party's strength is largely predetermined by its ideological and organisational unity and the political, professional and moral qualities of its members. The moral and political atmosphere which has become established in the BCP encourages collective effort and an uncompromising attitude to shortcomings. A most fruitful practice is the discussion of various problems at party meetings, and the devising of steps to remedy miscalculations and mistakes. The activity of the control and auditing commissions of the CC and local party committees is very important in this respect. They check the Communists' adherence to the norms of party and state discipline and consider appeals against decisions on expulsion from the party or on party penalties. They have brought thousands of activists into their work, and this enables them to exercise control systematically, objectively and publicly.

The control functions of every echelon of the political system of society are being extended under the leadership of the BCP. The People's Councils as representative organs of state power are among the more important of these echelons.

Under the Constitution, supreme control over the activity of government bodies is the responsibility of the National Assembly. The latter can repeal decisions of higher executive authorities of the state, alter their structure and personal composition, and so on. Its sessions hear reports by the chairman of the Council of Ministers on the activity of the government as well as reports by individual ministers. The standing commissions of the National Assembly, aptly called 'little parliaments', verify law enforcement, the execution of decisions of the National Assembly and the results of their implementation, the activity of ministries, central departments and the executive committees of district People's Councils. The rendering of accounts to commissions by ministers is a practice gaining in scope and dynamism. Greater use is made of parliamentary check-ups, questionnaires and polls with the participation of people's representatives.

Local People's Councils check fulfilment of socio-economic development plans in their area, the provision of public services and the satisfaction of other requirements of the population. They inspect the economic activity of enterprises and working conditions there and see to it that socialist legality is respected.

At the same time, the electorate now exercises more exacting control over the activity of People's Councils and their agencies at all levels. The Councils render accounts to the population on a regular basis, and their work is marked by increasing

publicity. Deputies report on progress in carrying out the mandates of their constituencies, discuss draft laws and decisions with the population, study public opinion and take it into account in their activity. Voters have a right to recall a deputy or to set him a task, and they exercise this right. The party considers that every citizen should realise that he has his representatives in the people's government bodies and is free to seek help and protection from deputies when a fair solution of his problems is required.

However, sociological research has revealed the working people's direct and indirect participation in government to be still inadequate. Many a leader limits their real participation or makes it nominal. Red tape, speechifying, sham efficiency and occasionally eyewash understandably have an adverse effect on public life and labour.

Some shortcomings in style and methods of leadership, particularly in local bodies, stem from group interests. None but direct and intelligent participation of the working people in government, including social control, can clear the barrier of narrow group interests and bring about a creative, businesslike atmosphere.

Substantial powers have been granted to the State and People's Control Committee, which is directly subordinated to the Council of Ministers. It oversees law enforcement and the execution of government decisions and state plans and assignments, and combats breaches of discipline, manifestations of localism and sectionalism, inefficiency and wastefulness, red tape and bureaucratic routine. Its activity helps perfect the functioning of the state apparatus, and heightens the working people's sense of responsibility for the affairs of society. To this end the Committee carries out check-ups and reviews in enterprises and offices irrespective of what departments control them. A procedure has been established binding executives of any rank to examine without delay proposals and recommendations of state and people's control bodies, eliminate the shortcomings and violations revealed by these and report in due course on the steps taken.

The State and People's Control Committee has its branches in regional districts and communes, and leans for support on the autonomous people's control commissions operating in every work collective. Decisions on penalising those who break discipline combine the exertion of social influence, such as warning or discussion of the evidence of misbehaviour at meetings of work collectives or public organisations, with fines or dismissal.

Our party is working to draw all working people into careful control on a permanent basis, to encourage the activity of the vast army of people's controllers in order to combat shortcomings and induce everyone to take an uncompromising stand upon them. Functioning in every echelon of the Committee alongside a small staff are supernumerary economic, scientific and cultural departments composed of workers, collective farmers, office employees, pensioners, housewives and Communist as well as non-party representatives of public organisations. The people's control commissions operating in work collectives have over 250,000 members.

To be sure, large numbers are very important, but they cannot in themselves guarantee efficient control. No success can be achieved unless all controllers realise their responsibility and the fact that the rights granted to them connote additional duties and make new demands of their professional and moral qualities. This is why, in electing their members to control bodies, work collectives give preference to the unbiased and principled, to those who enjoy prestige and have the common interest at heart. Where these lack special knowledge, experience or habits of analysis, staff members help them in every way.

Prominent in the social control system are mass organisations, such as the Fatherland Front, the trade unions or the Dimitrov Communist Youth League. Each of them has its own well-specified control sphere. The trade unions see to it that

labour laws and the established system of remuneration and rating are scrupulously respected, and protect the inviolable rights of collectives as well as individual workers. They verify provision of proper working conditions and recreational facilities, fulfilment of plans for the construction of housing and cultural projects and satisfaction of the requirements of the population. In view of the importance of raising the efficiency of management, the trade unions have also assumed control over adherence to the norms of functioning of the economic mechanism.

Representatives of public organisations participate in the work of every government body, thereby overseeing it. Executives at all levels are obliged to clear their decisions, orders and instructions with the trade union and YCL organisation concerned. Public organisations are always drawn into the check-ups carried out by administrative bodies and the State and People's Control Committee.

Every control institution decides within its jurisdiction on the objects, methods and forms of its work. However, a number of lines are common to all, namely the analysis of adherence to state norms and decisions, care of fuller utilisation of the production capacities created by the people and of thrifty use of manpower and material resources; the struggle against bribe-taking, attempts to enrich oneself at the expense of society, and other evils.

The question may arise: Why have so many control bodies since they perform identical functions? After all, it may happen that several commissions will inspect one and the same work collective and so waste people's time. The point is that, despite the community of objectives, each control institution has its clearly specified sphere of action as well as rights and duties proper to it alone. We have already mentioned this. As for duplicating, it does occur here and there due to organisational miscalculations. But life suggests how to solve the problem wisely: we must coordinate actions and include representatives of diverse bodies in one commission.

The results of check-ups are made public through the media. The press systematically reports them in a permanent section headed 'Under the People's Control'. The media themselves carry out investigations in response to warning signals from citizens, thereby extending the objects and forms of social control. In the focus of their attention are, for instance, everyday problems of saving water and electricity and protecting the environment. The journal *Problemi na sotsialniya kontrol* (Problems of Social Control) is published for the express purpose of generalising the experience gained by the people.

The prospects of perfecting social control have been set out in decisions of our party. Working people well participate increasingly in this important activity, and certain functions of government bodies will gradually be transferred to mass organisations. We will have to improve the working methods of all control echelons, coordinate their efforts more closely and show greater perseverance in removing shortcomings. This approach is in keeping with the interests of socialist Bulgaria and its people.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 154.

² *Pravda*, March 7, 1986.

³ Todor Zhivkov, *Otchet na Tsentralniya Komitet na Bylgarskata komunisticheska partiya pred XII kongres i predstoyashti zadachi*, Sofia, 1981, p. 100.

⁴ A form of personal property comprising small outhouses, productive livestock, poultry, bees, and areas under agricultural crops, as well as small implements.—Ed.

⁵ The largest socio-political organisation in Bulgaria, founded in 1942. It has 28 collective members, including unions of creative workers, the trade unions and the Young Communist League.—Ed.

⁶ One-chamber parliament, supreme organ of state power.—Ed.

⁷ Standing supreme government body elected by the National Assembly.—Ed.

⁸ Todor Zhivkov, 'Dryznovena tvorcheska rabota', *Problemi na sotsialniya kontrol*, No. 1, 1983, p. 5.

Disperse the Clouds of Tension in Southeast Asia

Tomas Sinuraya – Leadership member,
Communist Party of Indonesia

RECENT years have seen imperialism, primarily US imperialism, step up its activity in Asia and the Pacific, including Southeast Asia. Washington's bid to turn our region into an 'area of US interests' is due to several circumstances: first, the countries of the region occupy a unique geographical situation and have access to both the Pacific and Indian oceans; second, their population of nearly 400 million is a huge manpower reserve and military strategic potential; third, the region abounds in oil, rubber, tin and other natural resources widely used in the war industry.

This explains why US imperialism is trying so hard to harness Southeast Asian countries which are following a capitalist road to its strategic schemes at both regional and global level. Washington has girded the planet with a chain of military bases and is setting up everywhere military blocs which could support it militarily and politically. It regards Southeast Asia as a key link of this chain.

The US administration considers militarisation of our region a major factor for maintaining its influence. Hence the ample military 'aid' which the United States renders to Southeast Asian countries. The flow of arms from overseas is growing year after year. Up-to-date armaments go primarily to regimes serving US imperialism with particular zeal. Recently the United States signed an agreement with Thailand on the delivery of 12 F-16-C fighter-bombers worth 318 million dollars; Singapore is to get eight planes of this type. In an attempt to offset its crushing defeat in Indochina, the United States gives increasing support to the forces which have been destabilising the situation in the region for years. For the first time ever, the US Congress has virtually legalised dollar shots in the arm for the anti-Kampuchean bands whose core is made up of remnants of Pol Pot's gangs.

Besides, Washington is modernising in all haste its bases in Southeast Asia or nearby. Ever since 1984, ships of the US Seventh Fleet cruising in the Pacific and Indian oceans off the littoral of Asian countries have been equipped with Tomahawk cruise missiles. This fleet alone comprises 20 nuclear submarines, three aircraft carriers, 22 warships and about 100 auxiliary craft. The United States spends millions of dollars on building nuclear missile launchers and airfields and on re-equipping aircraft carriers to be used for aggression. It reportedly plans to appropriate by 1989 half a billion dollars for the construction of medium-range and ballistic missile launchers.

The US Defence Secretary, Caspar Weinberger, has said cynically that it is better to defend California in New Guinea than near Oregon. Nor does imperialist propaganda deny that US missiles may be used, if necessary, against objectives lying in Asian countries, Southeast Asian ones included. The growing threat posed by these missiles is particularly evident in the light of the fact that US imperialism is building up strategic communications between its Asian and European bases.

The effort to form new blocs or militarise existing alignments is a key line of imperialist policy. To an extent, it has been made easier by the military agreements which the United States signed with Thailand and the Philippines long ago to hitch these countries to the Pentagon's cart. Imperialist interests are also served by joint war games of ASEAN countries even when the United States takes no direct part in them.

The first attempt to bring about a broad military political alliance was made by Secretary of State George Schultz in the summer of 1983, during a prolonged tour of

ASEAN and ANZUS countries. As for the idea of forming such an alignment, to be disguised as a 'Pacific community', it was advanced by Japan and backed by Washington even earlier. In addition to the United States and Japan, the 'community' would be expected to comprise Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei, Canada and possibly South Korea. Its purpose is to try to turn the peoples of the Asian and Pacific region into vassals of US imperialism and involve them in the US strategy of aggression directed against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

Our people are also concerned about growing US-Chinese military cooperation. The Pentagon has expressed through Navy Secretary John Lehman readiness to help China modernise its navy. Recently the United States and the PRC signed an agreement on the sale to Peking of modern military industrial technology worth 98 million dollars. Secretary of State Schultz, who has visited China, says that there is increasing mutual understanding on strategic issues between the two countries.

The peoples of our region must unite in response to imperialism's military political expansion to resist plans for aggression. The peace movement in Southeast Asia still lacks organisation and proper clarity of purpose. This is due to several factors. Most countries of the region, including Indonesia, have governments pursuing an anti-communist policy and clearly looking to imperialist powers for guidance. Sustained suppression of democratic freedoms, often by force of arms, is a major obstacle to the growth of a mass anti-war movement. Communists are the object of particularly brutal repression, for it is primarily against them that the machinery of terror is spearheaded. In Indonesia, hundreds of peace fighters have been behind bars for more than 20 years now, and peace actions are practically banned.

Reactionary regimes foment a distrustful attitude to socialist countries among their peoples, alleging that the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and its allies have a 'secret' propaganda purpose. They are manifestly prejudiced against the peace movement in their countries and ape imperialist demagogues by readily labelling peace supporters as 'Moscow's puppets', 'communist agents', and so on. Along with this, they peddle the lie about the 'threat' said to come from the Soviet Union, and claim that the United States and the Soviet Union are 'equally responsible for the general deterioration of the international situation in late years. A rigid censorship is applied against all printed matter exposing the military political expansion of imperialism and its proteges in Asian countries.

Certain sections of society in the region still look on the struggle for peace as something abstract having no direct bearing on the people's vital aspirations. In Indonesia, too, some still believe that detente and the struggle for world peace are almost exclusively a concern of the Soviet Union and United States. There is also the tenacious and dangerous illusion that in the event of a global conflict Asian countries could keep out of the 'battle between the superpowers' as neutral onlookers. Another utterly absurd yet still current idea is that a nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States would 'benefit Asians', who would allegedly strengthen their positions, having stayed out of a new world war, while the 'superpowers' would weaken each other as they fought. One might think that if a war broke out it would be waged on another planet.

It may be useful to point out in this connection that during World War II Asia did not at all find itself on the sidelines; indeed, it suffered heavy casualties and enormous loss of property. People in our country and abroad remember the horrors of the last war, the atrocious killing of hundreds of thousands of innocent people by the Japanese militarists and the plundering of the territories invaded and occupied by them. Afterwards it was in Asia that the atom bomb was tested for the first time in history. What is more, Hiroshima and Nagasaki might not have been the only Asian cities hit by that barbarous weapon. After all, it is an open secret that the Pentagon

was thinking of using the bomb during the war against the Korean people and that subsequently the more outspoken US generals threatened to atom-bomb freedom-loving Vietnam 'back to the Stone Age'.

It will be seen that imperialism is not inclined to renounce the prospect of using nuclear arms should it find this necessary. In fact, how can anyone living in Asia earnestly expect to 'keep out' of international politics at a time when Washington sees the continent as an 'area of US strategic interests' and a potential bridgehead in the fight against world socialism? How can any countries stay out of a conflict since the aggressor has stationed his bases on its territory and since his troops would join directly in hostilities?

More and more people are coming to see the reality of the threat presented by US imperialism's activity in Southeast Asian countries. In some of these, the passivity of the population is gradually giving way to a revival of the movement for peace and detente.

This revival is particularly indicative in the wake of the Soviet-US summit at Geneva, which gave hope for the long-awaited relaxation of world tensions. The opinion gaining ground in socio-political circles is that the chief task facing the peoples and governments of our region today is to take advantage of the budding change in the political climate for stepping up the effort to bring about peace and stability in Southeast Asia and for promoting the dialogue throughout Asia. The winds of change are also reaching the offices of cabinet ministers. Under public pressure, some members of ruling groups (including politicians who until very recently had taken their cue from US policy) now voice the conviction that unquestioning dependence on the United States must be ended. The policy of some states shows an increasing trend towards searching for an alternative to pro-imperialist policy. Washington's attempts to drag countries of the region into military alliances and the 'Pacific community' meet resistance. Some politicians say frankly that if this scheme were put into practice it would by no means improve the situation. At the same time, the peoples of Southeast Asia show an increasing desire to free themselves, at least partly for the time being, from the economic clutches of imperialism.

These changes have yet to assume a lasting character. However, a certain reappraisal of the 'value' established in recent years is taking place. Be that as it may, ever fewer politicians and other public figures are frightened by the 'Soviet threat', which has turned out to be a smokescreen for increasing imperialist pressure.

In the summer of 1985, leaders of 13 South Pacific states approved a treaty banning the deployment, production and testing of nuclear weapons there: the area was declared a nuclear-free zone. The declaration adopted by the international Conference for Peace and Security in Asia and the Pacific (October 1985), which drew delegates from 25 countries, stresses that the destiny of the peoples of the region depends in the final analysis on the success of a joint struggle by all peace forces to remove the nuclear menace.

The Communists have a special role to play in the effort towards creating a durable political climate. It is surely up to us to patiently make it clear to people that their pressing problems can only be solved in a climate of peaceful coexistence. Bourgeois propaganda has succeeded to a notable degree in making politically unsophisticated people forget that the struggle for peace is also a struggle for their own lives. Our task is to bring this back to their minds. You cannot be happy in the ominous shadow of the nuclear bomb. You cannot bring up your children, grow grain, build houses or carry on trade in tranquillity if there is a foreign military base next to your home. We must say outright that the force responsible for a deteriorating international situation is imperialism, which is stubbornly escalating the arms race, and its accomplices in various countries, who are willing to sacrifice the prosperity and very existence of

their peoples to alien ambitions and their own privileges.

The policy of the three Indochinese states—Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos—is an important factor for detente and stability in Southeast Asia. Their activity and peace initiatives aimed at improving relations between countries irrespective of socio-political system are appreciated more and more among various sections of public opinion in ASEAN countries. Today none but the most rabid anti-communists regards Vietnam and its allies as a 'seat of evil'. After all, the constructive step which the three Indochinese states have been taking are irrefutable proof of their sincere desire to see our region transformed into a peace zone. Specifically, Hanoi and Phnom Penh recently decided on the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea by 1990, and the Kampuchean government reaffirmed the earlier proposal for a dialogue with Khmer groups and individual leaders abroad—bar the Pol Potists—to bring about national reconciliation.

In many Asian countries, a large body of political opinion shows keen interest in the Soviet programme for delivering the planet from nuclear and chemical weapons by the end of this century. If carried out, this programme, which Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU CC, set out in his recent Statement, would greatly alter the situation in the world, including Asia, free the peoples of the Asian and Pacific region from the threat of total annihilation and raise their security to a qualitatively higher plane. However, the Asian countries themselves should set about working out and implementing concrete measures to ensure stability and peace. This constructive idea runs through the Soviet proposal for a comprehensive approach to security problems in Asia, and we welcome and support it.

Of course, problems which have been piling up for years cannot be solved overnight. But it is time to take the first meaningful steps along this road, all difficulties notwithstanding.

National Traditions Serve the Revolution

Mahmoud Baryalai – CC Political Bureau
alternate member, CC Secretary, People's
Democratic Party of Afghanistan

THERE were a number of notable events in our country last year, including the Loya Jirgah, the start of elections to the local jirgahs, and the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes. 'Jirgah' literally means 'assembly', and 'Loya Jirgah', a grand assembly, a gathering of men to consult with each other on some important matter. The jirgahs have a history which is rooted in the ages: since ancient times, they have been the most democratic way of solving the problems of tribal life, and an expression of tribal democracy. The tradition of convening jirgahs in one form or another runs right through the Afghan people's past history, and in this sense Afghanistan is a country of jirgahs.

This question naturally arises: why does the revolution preserve some of the tribal traditions? One would expect it to develop new forms, instead of returning to the old. Let us recall, however, what Marxism-Leninism says about the role of negation in the process of development. Lenin included negation among the key elements of dialectics, adding that what he meant was not sheer negation, i.e., rejection out of hand, but negation as an element of connection, an element of development, 'retaining the positive'.¹

The fundamental distinction of the 1978 Saur (April) Revolution is that it brought

with it the idea of restructuring the society, while reflecting, in its programmatic statements of intent, the most fundamental values and traditional ideals of tribal democracy and Islam's call for freedom, equality and social justice. One should bear in mind that the mentality of masses of people in Afghanistan has been hardly affected by the stereotype overlays of subsequent socio-economic formations springing from the relations of exploitation. In our country, feudalism was unable to displace tribal ties entirely or rapidly and, indeed, entered into a protracted conflict with their primitive democracy. When the revolution came, capitalism was embryonic, while the traditions of tribal democracy remained in the people's social memory, making themselves known from time to time in the most trying and extreme situations. These traditions were suppressed under Zahir Shah and Daud², but had to be given vent as an elemental force, and so when the revolution came, they were manifested in the general expectation of change. The revolution gave these expectations an outlet, while retaining a sizeable reserve of mass creative initiative.

Let me recall in this context a well-known idea which Lenin formulated after the Great October Revolution in Russia when pointing to the sequence of tasks which arose in the development of the revolutionary process. He stressed that the winning of political power does not automatically solve all the problems of the revolution. The following step, that of taking over the instruments of administration, is equally important.³

This idea is of paramount importance for Afghanistan today. The victory of the Saur Revolution could obviously not solve all the problems facing our society overnight, for these require persevering efforts by broad masses of working people led by the revolutionary party, implying broad democratisation, and involvement of the widest possible circle of men and women in running the state and putting through the cardinal economic and social transformations.

Broad democratisation appears, at first sight, to be premature, in view of the country's underdevelopment and low level of consciousness among the bulk of the population (let us bear in mind that not long ago more than 90 per cent of the Afghans were totally illiterate). One would assume that there is a need for long preliminary educational work to help raise the consciousness of the majority of the working people to an understanding of the substance and tasks of democracy.

But it should be borne in mind that the national-democratic revolution is a shift in what could be called one of the primary levels, and signifies merely the start of the advance along the way to building a new society. Such a revolution, as a rule, takes place in countries with an inadequately developed and far from polarised social-class structure, and sets forth definite goals to meet the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population. The bulk of the masses can be united on a broad national-democratic basis because the antagonistic-class contradictions are less than fully expressed and comprehended.

In Afghanistan, it is the revolutionary power—and not the succession of earlier regimes—that has taken a number of bold and resolute steps in democratising social and political life. The forms of this democratisation can be correctly understood in the light of the role of tradition in our country's past and present. It is not exaggeration to say that this role is a great one. Marx stresses that at definite moments and in definite situations, traditions can have a much stronger influence on the mental state of the masses than economic factors.⁴ The main thing here is to make use of tradition in tackling the tasks of the revolution.

That being so, it was only natural for the PDPA to turn to our people's long-standing traditions. The easiest and most simple way for the masses to accept revolutionary democracy is through the prism of historically established forms. This leads to the next coil of the dialectical spiral of development and makes it possible to build the new on the basis of traditions, which remain 'in a sublated form'.

philosophically speaking. This yields a considerable gain: the revolutionary content is actually asserted in a form that is acceptable to the everyday mass consciousness, a form which is hallowed in tradition and which, for that reason, does not cause any overtly negative attitude. In this way, the people are gradually educated and brought to move on from the old and habitual to the novel and unexplored. The people develop a forward-looking revolutionary world-view on the strength of their own political experience.

Let us note that the democratisation of social and political life in our country was complicated by serious mistakes and tragic miscalculations. The criminal acts of Amin and his gang did tremendous damage to the revolution. Democratisation now proceeds in the face of the unprecedented extension of the undeclared war which imperialism and its satraps have unleashed against revolutionary Afghanistan, so that the immediate and consistent realisation of the process of democratisation is definitely being hampered by the scale of the war and the counter-revolutionaries' extreme brutality. But those are the kind of conditions in which special significance attaches to every step in consolidating and extending democracy, because it involves defence of the gains of the revolution and a deepening of its transformations. For the masses of people, the fight against the counter-revolutionaries becomes a struggle for their own power, their own freedom and independence, while the counter-revolutionaries find themselves in a quandry: resisting the revolution now means attacking the hallowed traditions of the people's democratic self-government, which the revolution safeguards. In consequence, the counter-revolution is increasingly doomed to suffer a steady shrinking of its social base.

It follows that our party regards the use of the traditional forms of tribal jirgah democracy as their blending with the tasks of revolutionary economic and social transformations and the building of a new society. The substance of the PDPA's strategy at the present stage of the national-democratic revolution lies, briefly, in *strengthening and extending the revolutionary power through its consistently broader democratisation*. Let us stress that we have arrived at this conception through long and intense theoretical quest and painstaking practical work. It is, one could say, the result of our twenty-year struggle, scientific analysis, and creative application of Marxism-Leninism and the fraternal parties' wide collective experience to the intricate and specific conditions of the Afghan reality. Let us also note that our present course is the outcome primarily of a new, evolutionary stage in the development of the revolutionary process in our country. Although the basic ideas and propositions of this course were also maturing in the period of preparation for the Saur Revolution and in the course of its first stage, they could first be fully implemented only with the onset of the new stage.

Let us consider some of the practical components in realising our strategic conception, as specified and concretised at the latest plenary meetings of the PDPA CC, so as to dispel any impression of the above approach being too speculative. Indeed, the PDPA's leading and guiding role in the development of the Afghan society is manifested in the fact that all fundamental steps spring from its decisions.

A Loya Jirgah of elected representatives of villages, rural districts, regions, towns and provinces of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was held in Kabul from April 23 to 25, 1985. Its deputies were elected at 29 provincial jirgahs (i.e., in all the provinces of the country), which were preceded by lower-level jirgahs. The elections were held in complete accordance with the Afghan people's national and historical traditions, through a free democratic expression of the people's will, and in conformity with the requirements of shariat law.⁵ A total of 1,796 persons were elected, and of them 11.6 per cent were workers, 26 per cent peasants, 23 per cent intellectuals, 11 per cent religious leaders, and 3 per cent merchants and businessmen; 25.4 per cent were tribal chiefs and authoritative public figures; 20 per

cent of the deputies to the Loya Jirgah were members and candidate members of the PDPA. These figures are a clear reflection of the broadly democratic character of that forum, at which all the ethnic groups and tribes and all the social groups of the population in the country were represented.

This Loya Jirgah was, of course, not the first one in the history of Afghanistan. The monarchy and Daud's reactionary regime tried to use the people's democratic traditions for their own ends, but they neglected even to make a show of democracy. Consider the Loya Jirgah of 1977, which was convened for the purpose of adopting the country's constitution. It had only 400 deputies; of these, more than one-half were not elected, but appointed by the then head of state. Indeed, the 'elections' that were held for the rest were no more than a farce: undesirable candidates were removed, there was either no voting by a show of hands at all, or wherever it was held, the hall was simply packed with casual passers-by or hired men. Here is an indicative fact: under the pressure of the left-wing forces, the government was itself forced to admit that in Kabul, in the province of Parwan, in the districts of Mir bacha kut and Qara bagh, and in many other places, the elections were 'undemocratic', which simply meant that they were rigged. Before Daud's time, the same thing was done by the kings and their governments.

It will be clear to any fair-minded observer that the Loya Jirgah of 1985 differs from all the earlier ones in principle: in the way the delegates were elected, in the jirgah's make-up, in the spirit of its work and in its decisions, it was truly democratic, an open exchange of views, and a constructive dialogue between the party, the government and representatives of all the strata of the society.

The Loya Jirgah was convened for an honest discussion of the most burning and acute problems facing Afghanistan today. These were most frankly characterised in the report given by Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA CC, and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Afghanistan. Among these problems were, first, the fight against the aggression of world imperialism and regional reaction, against the armed counter-revolution being sent in from abroad; second, improvement of internal political life, above all development of genuine popular power resting both on the new elements brought in by the revolution, and on the Afghan people's historical traditions and third, the country's economic and social transformations and realisation of the large-scale plans for boosting the national economy. There were also the problems of cultural development and the population's spiritual growth, among many others.

The Loya Jirgah's unanimous resolution voiced full support for the domestic and foreign policy of the party and the revolutionary government at the new stage of the Saur Revolution. It emphasised that the PDPA is the leading and guiding force of the Afghan society and our state. And perhaps most importantly, it endorsed the party and government policy of utmost development of democratic principles in the country's life. The Loya Jirgah declared that the best way to solve Afghanistan's challenging problem is to combine the new tasks in consolidating and deepening the gains of the revolution with the traditional forms of democratic popular self-government.

Let me emphasise that the PDPA, in effect, put up its conception of revolutionary-democratic development for open discussion by almost two thousand freely elected delegates of the traditional organ of popular power. It addressed itself to the people and received what could be called a mandate to effect the policy it had formulated. No government or political party in Afghanistan had up to now dared take such a bold step, or met with such massive and truly popular support.

Our party and revolutionary government enjoy the support of the working masses precisely because they spring from their midst, voice their interests and aspirations, and meet their age-old hopes for genuine popular power. The party's transfer of

power into the hands of the people has further enhanced its influence and authority, and its role of ideological and political leader and teacher of the masses. This has been most forcefully confirmed by the elections to the jirgahs, the new organs of state power in the localities, which began soon after the Loya Jirgah.

The elections to the local jirgahs, the assemblies of the peoples' representatives, are being held in several stages, depending on the solution of the security problems in the various districts. The first stage, which has already been completed, proceeded in the capital of the country and the province of Kabul. The elections are now being continued in Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Nimrooz, Balkh, and other provinces.

The whole course of the elections in the capital, the villages, the districts and regions of Kabul Province showed that the people support the electoral platform set forth in Babrak Karmal's programmatic speech, which he delivered at the start of the first stage of the electoral campaign. In the city of Kabul, 90.3 per cent, and in the provinces—86.9 per cent of the electorate took part. These figures are impressive, considering the almost complete lack of experience of participants in measures on such a state-wide scale, and also the enemies' scheming and intimidation. All the people's representatives in the province (591) were elected unanimously, following open and allround discussion of every candidate. In Kabul, 461 deputies were elected, including 413 (89.6 per cent) unanimously, and 48, by an overwhelming majority. Only 0.22 per cent of the voters taking part in the elections cast a negative vote. All the nationalities, ethnic groups and social strata of the population are now represented on the local organs of power.

Here is another point to note: PDPA members and candidate members make up under one-half of those elected in the capital. The party did not carry on any special electoral campaign to promote its members, and sought to build up a political bloc of party and non-party people. The most authoritative, knowledgeable and respected people are being elected to the new organs of power, regardless of their party affiliations. This means broad popular democracy, instead of a democracy for the elect, even if they are members of the revolutionary party. The PDPA's leading role does not consist in the number of representatives on the local jirgahs, but in the impact of its ideas, and in the authority of every member of the party elected as a people's deputy.

Let me emphasise that our party neither demands nor creates for itself any privileges whatsoever, although it has the leading role to play within the revolutionary power system. It strives to involve the people in the exercise of power and in the administration of the state. The successful electoral campaign serves to strengthen the positions not only of the PDPA, but also of the popular, national-democratic revolution as a whole. Our task is to ensure the establishment of the power of the people themselves, instead of trying to invent artificial forms of 'power for the people'.

The elections to the local jirgahs under way in the country are in pursuance of the decisions of the Loya Jirgah and of the party's entire policy of democratising social and political life. These elections are a means of realising this policy, while simultaneously providing fresh evidence that our strategy and tactics are correct. The extension of this policy to the country's tribal population was the next step.

The High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes was held in Kabul on September 14 and 15, 1985, an assembly which is without parallel in the history of Afghanistan. No government in the past could afford to convene such an assembly.

Two trends were in evidence at the Jirgah: the traditions of tribal democracy, and the tribal jirgahs, on the one hand, and the line of the party and the revolutionary state of filling the old, traditional forms with the new content of democratic power, on the other. There was some risk that the traditionalist type of mentality of the tribal chiefs and elders and of the mullahs and ulemas could hamper them in

comprehending the dialectics of the interaction of the old and the new, as the age-old forms of popular power are used to tackle revolutionary tasks. There was also some danger that they would be unable to overcome the one-sided approach and to take such a view of the matter.

But these apprehensions were dispelled. The party's strategic line proved to be a direct reflection of the dialectics of life itself and, as such, justified itself. The tribes, creators and custodians of the traditional forms of popular power, recently found themselves in what was a contradictory situation. On the one hand, the precepts of their ancestors and especially the Pushtuni code of honour (Puchtunvalay) enjoin them to keep their traditions sacred and never to depart from them. On the other hand, the realities of life today, and above all the acts to which the enemies resort, demand measures that are un-orthodox and without precedent. Life itself has gradually impelled the individual tribes and clans to accept the new in various forms, and to solve the pressing problems in the traditions of jirgah democracy.

A number of tribal jirgahs were spontaneously held in various parts of Afghanistan in 1984 and 1985, heralding the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes. Thus, the Khuwaizi jirgah of the Momand tribe (Khyber Pass area) decided to interdict passage across the tribe's territory to caravans carrying weapons and ammunition for the counter-revolutionaries, and also to prohibit the presence of bandit units on its territory. The general Jirgah of the Momand tribe in December 1984 sharply condemned Pakistan's intervention in the internal affairs of the DRA. In May 1985, a jirgah of the Afridi and Shinwari tribes protested against Islamabad's anti-Afghan policy. Mullah Habibulla, the supreme theologian of the Al-haj tribe, rejected the attempts to use the tribes for fighting against the revolutionary power as acts explicitly cutting across the tenets of Islam. Decisions—traditionally formalised but with a revolutionary content—on fighting against the counter-revolutionaries were also taken by the Hoji, Ali-khail, Khoshi-khail, and Mooti tribes (Paktia Province). In early May 1985, the chiefs and elders of the Bajawur, Momand and Khaibar tribes sent the DRA government messages of condolence over the tragic death of the Soviet and Afghan soldiers who had been seized by the bandits and held in the Bada Bira camp in Pakistan.

There are any number of similar examples, and they all show that the tribes have come to realise the need to combine the traditional forms of democracy with the solution of present-day problems. So it was only natural that when the PDPA and the government proposed at the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes the way of combining the traditions of the masses with the revolutionary transformations on the scale of the whole country, it was unanimously approved by two and a half thousand delegates.

The tribes undertook to prevent counter-revolutionary bands from entering the country's territory, to help in every way in the reliable defence of its borders, and to promote the realisation of economic and social transformations throughout the country. The central government, for its part, is to intensify its measures for protecting the tribal territories and improving the living conditions of the tribes, and is to respect and support their fine traditions.

By undertaking to respect the tribal customs, the party and the government have, in effect, promised to help develop and strengthen the jirgah forms of popular power. But the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes emphasised that this should be done on a new, revolutionary basis, and went on to endorse the main line for realising this decision: consistent establishment of elected jirgahs, the new local organs of power, throughout the country.

In the other documents it adopted—an address to the Afghan people, a message to the peoples of the region, and an Address to the UN Secretary-General—the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes explained and argued its decisions, calling on all men of goodwill and common sense to help translate them into life. Its Address to the

UN Secretary-General drew special attention to the plight of their compatriots now languishing in 'refugee camps' in Pakistan and Iran and deprived of all democratic rights.

The special significance of the High Jirgah lies in the fact that it provided the third confirmation within a short period of time that the democratisation of the whole of social and political life is the only correct and massively supported course of the national-democratic revolution in a backward and under-developed country, such as Afghanistan now finds itself in consequence of the irresponsible and treasonable policy of the authorities in the past.

Our party has honestly and openly admitted that before the start of the new stage in the revolution, the anti-people clique of the traitor Amin was moving towards the establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship. At that time, mistrust of the government was voiced at the jirgahs of the tribes and ethnic groups. The revolutionary power was at first unable to win over the jirgah democracy, and allowed the reactionaries to have this powerful instrument. Indeed, some tribal jirgahs even proclaimed a 'holy war' against it. In Pakistan, the counter-revolution swore to destroy the 'mercenary regime' in Kabul, which it dubbed 'infidel'. But it did not win any success.

The party's course of democratising social and political life was legislatively enacted in November 1985 in the form of the new approach to enlarging the social basis of the revolutionary power through its utmost democratisation and involvement of all the groups and strata of the society in the revolution. Having thoroughly tested this course at the Loya Jirgah and the High Jirgah of the Frontier Tribes, and in the elections to the local jirgahs, the party put it before the whole people for discussion.

Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the PDPA, and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA, put before an extraordinary and enlarged meeting of the Revolutionary Council ten programmatic theses 'On the National-Democratic Character of the Saur Revolution and Its Urgent Tasks in the Present Conditions'. The purpose of these theses is to explain the substance of the revolution that has been carried out and to show the ways of its development. The national-democratic state set up by the revolution is the homeland in which no one feels crowded under its reliable common roof, and behind the solid common walls of its borders. Common goals are higher than individual differences. Hence the new approach: to involve the masses in active participation in exercising the revolutionary power, and to get each social group and stratum to shoulder its part of the responsibility for the radical transformations underway in the country. The situation can be drastically changed and the main issue of the revolution—'who beats whom'—definitively settled only if what has been mapped out is realised rapidly and with vigour.

The theses show what the revolution has already given and what it will give each stratum and group of the society in the near future, and call for a contribution to strengthening the revolutionary power. The novelty of this approach lies in the readiness of the party and the government for the broadest cooperation with every stratum of the population for the sake of national accord, democratic reconciliation and patriotic unity, for the sake of the people's happiness and the homeland's prosperity. It is a line of extending the constructive dialogue with the groups taking a neutral or even an ill-disposed attitude on the concrete ways and forms of revolutionary development, a line of achieving flexible compromise, democratising the apparatus of power at every level in order to establish peace and tranquility in the country, and winning over new allies. The democratic principles are to be further enhanced with the emergence of the new social and political organisations expressive of the interests of various social strata.

"The PDPA does not seek to impose its ideology or its views on anyone, and it values the views of all patriots and democrats," Babrak Karmal emphasised. "It has

based and will continue to base its relations with all the patriotic strata of the country's population, with other social organisations, and with all its allies on the equitable and constructive foundations of cooperation, trust, honesty and mutual respect. At this historical moment, we are clearly aware that if the noble goals and tasks of the national-democratic revolution are to be realised, we need, as the very air, close unity and cooperation of all the Afghans, of all the patriotic forces of Afghanistan."

The theses provided the basis for the November 14, 1985, Declaration of the DRA Revolutionary Council, which legitimated the new approach to the development of the revolutionary process. The theses and the Declaration have generated a considerable rise of political activity in the country. Thousands of comments and proposals came from the working people. At meetings and rallies, in the newspapers, on radio and television, and in letters addressed to party and government agencies, citizens declared their patriotic urge actively to promote implementation of these document's programmatic propositions. On the strength of the whole people's approval, the 16th Plenary Meeting of the PDPA CC in November 1985 formulated a concrete programme for the practical realisation of the new approach to enlarging and consolidating the social basis of the revolutionary power. Its decisions carried forward the development of the party's strategic course in utmost democratisation of social and political life, consolidation of the positions of the revolution in Afghanistan through the involvement of the whole people.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 226.

² Mohammed Zahir Shah, the last king of Afghanistan, who was overthrown in 1937; the Mohammad Daud regime, which took over from the monarchy, was overthrown as a result of the revolution in 1987.—Ed.

³ See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 242.

⁴ See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 654.

⁵ A code of Moslem legal and theological rules.

Shadows of the Past on the Political Scene

Walter Windischbauer — CC member,
Communist Party of Austria

Rupert Herzog — member, History
Commission under the CC CPA

IN March 1985, that is, 40 years after the liberation of our country from fascism and 30 years after the signing of the State Treaty which restored independent and democratic Austria, the Defence Minister extended a cordial welcome to Walter Reder,¹ a Nazi war criminal just out of an Italian prison. This scandalous fact, which outraged democratic opinion in the Alpine republic itself and abroad, brought back into focus the problem of extreme rightist influence in Austria and the need to combat it.

Is There Any Cause for Concern?

Of course, there is no immediate threat of fascism in Austria. Monopoly capital safeguards its domination by means of 'representative democracy' and 'social partnership'. Following the bitter social struggles of the period of the First Republic and the defeat of the 'millennial Reich', when the big bourgeoisie discredited itself, the ruling social democratic and conservative quarters preferred to steer clear of

direct, open class confrontation as best they could, bearing in mind the obvious weakness of Austrian capital in the early postwar years compared with other countries and the socialist changes effected in neighbouring countries.

However, there is also evidence that neofascist groupings are gaining strength in step with the deterioration of the economic and moral crisis. In the 1980 presidential elections, the candidate of the National Democratic Party (NDP), the main force on the extreme right, won over 140,000 votes (3.2 per cent) across the country while in Carinthia, Upper Austria and Styria, the regions hit hardest by the crisis, the votes cast for it added up to seven per cent.

No real denazification or extensive ideological exposure of national socialism was accomplished in Austria after the war. The legislative opportunities of combating neofascism are still used very seldom and in exceptional cases only. In Austria as in other capitalist countries, the basic reason for this tolerance of 'Browns' is that right extremism serves objectively as something of an outlet. It offers many of the victims of capitalism—jobless youth or members of the middle strata defeated in bitter competition—a political 'prospect' moving them away from an understanding of the real causes of their hardships. Unemployment, class and cultural degradation, and other products of state-monopoly capitalist society provide fertile ground for neofascist currents. And this means that the struggle against the threat from the right is also a struggle against the roots of social inequality.

The spectrum of Austrian right extremism is not limited to big-mouthed, bellicose groups, as a detailed study of the Vienna Documentation Archives of the Austrian Resistance² shows. These alignments are nothing more than what Professor Josef Hindels describes as the 'tip of an iceberg', and are dangerous due primarily to the existence of 'neo-Nazi field organisations'.³

The authors of the study list three main types of right extremist organisations. First among these are the *bellicose political groupings* mentioned above. Their members take combat training, wear a uniform and carry arms (in many cases), and show an inclination to violence and terrorism. These groupings are continuing the traditions of SA- and SS-men. Prominent among them are New Right Action, the nationalist Nordland union and, above all, the NDP.

For all that these formations wield little political influence and are rather negligible numerically, their extremist excesses often find themselves in the limelight. Besides, they have lately launched massive propaganda on sports grounds and in educational institutions, where they are trying to win over primarily young people. In the spring of 1985, the Vienna Senate demanded in response to an appeal of democratic opinion that the Federal government should pass a law to stop this propaganda.

So-called *cultural and ideological organisations* and societies operating under the slogan of 'defending traditions' are an important connecting link between bellicose and 'moderate' elements in the right extremist camp. There are a great many clubs, institutes and associations of this kind in Austria. The League Against Degenerate Art and the People's Movement for South Tyrol are typical.

Last but not least, there are major movements with a 'moderate' trend: the Austrian Gymnastic Union (AGU), the Carinthian Fatherland Service and 'veterans' associations'. They may be defined as *mass organisations of Austrian right extremism*. It is particularly important to distinguish between their rank and file and leading functionaries. Most of the associations' members are engaged exclusively in sports or other non-political pursuits. But many of these organisations are led by former Nazis, who take advantage of their leading posts to disseminate their ideas. In 1980 *Volksstimme*, the CPA national daily, exposed the 'neofascist style' of *Bundesturnzeitung*, a monthly published by the AGU, at a trial which attracted much public attention. A ban on major 'field' organisations of the extreme right would be useless, since the overwhelming majority of its members are not Nazis. The task is to

end all government support, financial or otherwise (such as official patronage), for their activity. A large-scale democratic explanatory campaign could bring about changes in the leadership of these alignments.

It would be impossible in Austria today to draw a distinct dividing line between the parties represented in parliament and the right extremist camp. This is largely due to the fact that a few years after the country had regained freedom, the Socialist Party of Austria (SPA) and the Austrian People's Party (APP) began to flirt with ex-Nazis, to woo right extremist forces with an eye to securing their votes. The Austrian Freedom Party, whose new 'liberal' programme is consonant with the Pan-German idea of non-recognition of the Austrian nation, likewise showed by its behaviour in the case of Reder that the influence of right extremist elements is not restricted to the three types of organisation we have listed.

The heterogeneity of this camp is attributable to differences over tactical issues as well as, apparently, to a sort of 'division of labour'. The community of their main goals comes out periodically in joint actions. To give an example, Norbert Burger, the NDP leader, a South Tyrol terrorist convicted by an Austrian court, was nominated for the Presidency in 1980 by a committee which included members of diverse right extremist organisations.

Thus, while there is no imminent fascist threat in Austria, the outcome of presidential elections and other facts indicate how very wrong the bourgeois media and the Federal government have been in constantly minimising the extent of the danger. Even though the direct influence of neofascist groupings is relatively small, this does not warrant the conclusion that there is no need to resist them constantly.

Lessons of History

How disastrous it can be to underrate the danger from the right was shown in prewar history. In 1930, too, the Austrian National Socialists scored but modest gains; they only won 110,000 votes in the general election, or 30,000 votes less than Burger collected in 1980.

The experience of European nations suggests that there is a need for resistance and a halt to fascism at the earliest stages and not for deals with reaction, which bourgeois and SPA leaders are inclined to make today. Our party's current fight against the rightist danger is a continuation of the glorious tradition of the anti-fascist Resistance, to which Austria's Communists made a tangible contribution. Let us recall some lessons of past history.

Immediately after the Nazi troops' attack on our country (1938), the CPA CC adopted an appeal 'To the People of Austria, to All the Peoples of Europe and the World' urging compatriots to put up active resistance to the invaders. The appeal expressed confidence that freedom and independence would be re-established. The party realised that the fight against the Nazis was a national liberation struggle. Accordingly, its members advocated the formation of a front of all Austrians and staunchly upheld the right of the nation to self-determination in the form of independent statehood.

Whereas Austrian big capital, the top dignitaries of the Catholic church and a section of the former leadership of the Social Democratic Party betrayed the nation's interests or threw them overboard, the Communists offered the Nazi invaders active resistance in close unity with the Socialists, trade union activists and rank-and-file Catholics.

In the spring of 1945, fighting was still on in many areas of the Federal republic; nevertheless, three democratic parties—the CPA, SPA and APP—published a 'Declaration of Independence'. That historic first Constitution of the Second Republic, which declared 'the Anschluss imposed on the Austrian people to be null

and void' and proclaimed the restoration of a democratic republic, formalised the anti-fascist consensus achieved immediately after liberation. The consensus also translated into far-reaching denazification laws. All three parties, which their 1945 Declaration called anti-fascist, saw their goal in creating a new, sovereign, independent and democratic Austria.

However, it soon transpired, as the CPA stated later on, that the three parties had two different concepts of postwar development. One of the concepts called for the mobilisation of the people to clear away the ruins, provide elementary living conditions, organise supply and production, rehabilitate the economy and fully eliminate the burden of the past. It was the Communist concept. Opposed to it was the concept of preventing or minimising various changes, such as the transfer of all economic commanding heights to the state, democratisation of the state apparatus, the land reform and the eradication of all vestiges of fascism. The partisans of this concept wanted to undermine anti-fascist unity and isolate the Communists, the motive force of renewal and transformation.

In postwar years, anti-fascists in the SPA and APP were pushed into the background. This told on the removal of remnants of fascism; the effort was reduced to purely nominal measures, and the denazification laws were ignored altogether or enforced in a half-hearted manner. Indeed, both parties began to include ex-Nazis in their electoral calculations, so that ultimately this group was virtually rehabilitated and reincorporated in the Austrian political and economic system. That policy culminated in the formation of the Union of Independents (1949), a sort of rallying point for has-beens, which six years later became the Austrian Freedom Party.

In spite of the broad anti-fascist political consensus achieved immediately after the war, anti-Nazi changes were soon discontinued and the country was reconstituted on capitalist lines. Bruno Kreisky, former Chairman of the SPA and Federal Chancellor, claimed that it was a question of 'defending ourselves against a massive Communist offensive' and of defending 'democracy'.⁴ This brings to mind what Engels wrote in a letter to August Bebel: 'In any case our sole adversary on the day of the crisis and on the day after the crisis will be the whole of *the reaction which will group around pure democracy* . . .'⁵

In Austria, that 'the whole of the reaction' contrived in that way to turn the anti-fascist consensus into an anti-communist one. The metamorphosis went hand in hand with 'anti-denazification', curbs on democratic rights, and the restoration of capitalism. Gross anti-communism and anti-Sovietism were elevated to the rank of 'state ideology'. In 1965, a right extremist killed E. Kirchweger, a Communist, and a year later Norbert Burger, sentenced in Italy for life, founded his neofascist party, the NDP.

The experience of the CPA and anti-fascists generally invites in this connection the important conclusion that anti-communism and anti-Sovietism must be fought unrelentingly. The fomenting of hatred for Communists and the Soviet Union is a source of inspiration to fascists and prevents the formulation and application of a strategy for united action by the working class movement against the threat from the Right.

What consequences blind anti-Sovietism can have and how dangerous it is to our people's interests is seen in the fact that for a long time the Pro-Western orientation of the SPA and APP and their support of the cold war policy of the Western powers, of US imperialism, prevented the drafting of so important an anti-fascist document as the 1955 State Treaty. At that time Oscar Helmer, one of the right Social Democratic leaders, openly took a stand against a trip to Moscow by Adolf Schärf and Bruno Kreisky⁶ for talks about the State Treaty. He said that if so far the party had expelled workers who had travelled to Russia, it could not possibly take a different approach to the party Chairman. Anti-Sovietism was placed above the national interests of the

people and the interests of the fight against fascism. But as a result of the consistent position of the Soviet Union, the Austrian government realised in the end that the country could not guarantee its independent democratic development by following in the footsteps of the United States and other Western powers. Thereupon the State Treaty was signed; by its terms, the republic committed itself 'to continue its efforts towards removing all traces of Nazism for Austrian political, economic and cultural life . . . dissolving all political, military, and paramilitary organisations of a fascist nature on its territory' in order to 'prevent all Nazi or militarist activity and propaganda in Austria'.

However, these stipulations notwithstanding, the ruling quarters are tolerant of Nazi organisations and their propaganda everywhere. Neofascists put forward their candidates in many elections, nor will the presidential elections due in May 1986 be any exception. The list of patent violations of the anti-fascist Constitution is long.

The principles of the liberation struggle of peoples which found a national expression in the Declaration of Independence, the State Treaty and the Law on Permanent Neutrality were won in hard battles. Today we communists explain why it is necessary to insist on respect for and scrupulous implementation of these documents, which are the main legal pillars of the Second Republic and have established a democratic, anti-fascist constitutional order.

A Task of Lasting Significance

We consider that the struggle against the rightist danger is inseparable from exposing so-called social partnership, a cover for the aspiration of the top leadership of the SPA and the Federation of Austrian Trade Unions to 'manage' the capitalist system in common with the employers. This concept may be called the 'double bottom' of Austrian home policy. For decades past, important problems of the country have been solved, not by parliament, but by agencies of 'social partnership', without democratic debate. This amounts to a systematic rundown of democracy, to disregard of the principles of popular initiative and active participation in management. " 'Social partnership' is no barrier on the road of reaction," the CPA Programme points out. "It increases the political and economic power of capital. By leading to deals behind the scenes, privileges and bureaucratic arbitrariness, it gives food for reactionary and neofascist trends and social demagogy."⁷

Resistance to the threat from the Right connotes effort to carry on extensive anti-fascist education in schools and the media, and to reveal the social roots and nature of fascism and neofascism, as well as the forms which they take. It is only in combination with explanatory work on these lines that the norms of our constitutional order can really ensure the eradication of all vestiges of Nazism in political, economic and cultural life. To strip 'Brown' organisations of all legal basis, it is also necessary not only to expose them in the eyes of public opinion but, above all, to drastically restrict their public activities. This would make it hard for right extremists to join in elections and would provide legal means of blocking fascist gatherings and the publication of fascist newspapers and other literature.

US imperialist policy, which is endangering the very existence of humanity, also affects the political situation in Austria, where reactionaries, militarists and neo-Nazis consider that they can now sail with a fair wind. Playing up the myth of the 'threat from the East' and representing communism as a 'sad and absurd chapter of history' are reminiscent of Goebbels' propaganda devices.

Neofascist groups are at one on rabid anti-Sovietism and non-recognition of the existing postwar organisation of Europe. This attitude is typical of imperialism's entire postwar policy. Therefore, the struggle for peace, detente and a stronger peace movement, against arms race and war, is also a struggle against growing fascism.

Unity and cohesion of all the democratic, anti-fascist organisations and currents, primarily the working class movement as the chief motive force of the struggle for democracy, are a decisive factor for the isolation and neutralisation of right extremism. As far back as the years of World War II, Austrian inmates of the Buchenwald prison camp drew up a document proclaiming the need for joint anti-fascist action, including the 'immediate establishment of organisational unity in trade unions, consumers' cooperative societies, sports and cultural associations, the formation of unity committees in all local and enterprise organisations, the promotion of economic rehabilitation by incorporating Austria in a European economic organisation in close cooperation with the Soviet Union, and the encouragement of all aspirations for unity in the international working class movement'.

Contrary to the historical legacy of the victims of Nazism, the SPA upholds a decision forbidding all cooperation of its members with Communists under penalty of expulsion from the party. It is indicative, however, that this prohibition is overcome in precisely the area of anti-fascist struggle. Functioning in many Federal states and cities are supraparty committees within which diverse political forces are cooperating. Consistency and militancy have earned CPA members high prestige in the committees. This kind of cooperation is exemplified best of all by the central Anti-Fascist Citizens' Committee in Vienna, which is backed by the unity of action of Communists, Socialists, members of national minorities and numerous anti-fascist district organisations.

'The Communist Party of Austria made many sacrifices in the anti-fascist Resistance,' CPA Chairman Franz Muhri stresses. 'It played the role of pioneer in fostering and strengthening Austrian national consciousness. Our party is co-founder of the Second Republic. Austria's Communists will continue in the forefront of the anti-fascist struggle.'⁸ This is a task of lasting significance.

¹ For details, see Antonio Boffi and Georg Lenker, 'Tantamount to Complicity', *WMR*, No. 5, 1985.

² *Rechtsextremismus in Österreich nach 1945*, Vienna, 1981.

³ Josef Hindels, *Der Freiheitskampf ist nicht zu Ende*, Vienna, p. 13; idem, *Antifaschismus in den 80er Jahren*, Vienna, p. 13.

⁴ Bruno Kreisky, *Reden*, in two volumes, Vol. 2, Vienna, 1981, p. 127.

⁵ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 382.

⁶ Adolf Schärf was Vice-Chancellor and SPA Chairman at the time and Bruno Kreisky, State Secretary at the Foreign Ministry. —Ed.

⁷ *Sozialismus in Österreichs Farben. Programm der KPÖ*, Vienna, 1982, p. 23.

⁸ *Protokoll des 24. Parteitages der KPÖ*, Vienna, 1980, p. 47 and foll.

What Prevents a Settlement of the Salvadoran Conflict

Guillermo Ungo — Chairman,
Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador
(RDF), Vice-President, Socialist International

In connection with the recent fifth anniversary of the beginning of the Salvadoran patriots' armed liberation struggle, the journal asked Guillermo Ungo some questions. They concern the results and current stage of the civil war in El Salvador, the prospects of ending it, and its impact on Central America. His answers follow.

THE past five years constitute a whole stage in our military and political struggle. I would like to specify right away that it is not merely a revolutionary guerrilla fight but something more complex, war having its peculiarities due, in particular, to US imperialist interference. The war we are waging includes elements of a political struggle in the domestic and international arena, and it is due chiefly to the external factor that, for more than 50 years now, our country has been ruled by a military oligarchic regime with the backing of a mighty power, the United States.

The political, military and diplomatic battles in El Salvador over the past period have resulted in the emergence of dual power, which means that the regime and its political structures are faced with people's power in the areas controlled by the insurgents. Hundreds of thousands of my compatriots living in these areas participate directly in local self-government. The people's power has won international recognition. While we have formed no government and do not plan to form one just yet, Third World and socialist countries as well as authorities quarters in the West reckon with us as with equal partners. We maintain relations and negotiate with political forces and their leaders, and also with government representatives of various countries.

Morally, the RDF and FMNLF¹ encounter enormous difficulties, for the enemy uses pressure, blackmail and threats through a powerful propaganda apparatus and means of psychological warfare controlled by US imperialism. Nevertheless, we effectively demonstrate the legitimacy and justice of our struggle.

The patriotic forces' gains, which have exacted tremendous sacrifices, are so tangible that we would have won long ago but for the Reagan administration's increasing interference in Salvadoran affairs. Regrettably, the war is continuing for the reasons I have listed, and we have so far been unable to gain the upper hand and form a revolutionary democratic government. Even so, the overall results of the past five years may be called positive.

The RDF-FMNLF alliance, established more than five years ago, is an important component of the Salvadoran revolutionary process, and this in itself indicates that the democratic forces realise its necessity. Our unity is not organisational and is therefore not based on the subordination of one partner to another or on a rigid line but on debate, agreement and consensus. This calls for the continuous promotion of internal democracy in the organisations forming the two-front alliance. Either front is pluralist for its part.

Our struggle and reality itself have shown that what unites us is superior to what disunites us. In the process of study and self-education, we gain a deeper insight into reality and the pressing needs of the alliance and achieve positive results. This is not to say that there are no differences. But we overcome them constructively, through dialogue and discussion, thereby helping to raise our struggle to a higher plane. In short, the RDF and FMNLF have become more solidly united and their mutual relations, more definite.

The social, economic and political crisis of both the system and the regime enable us to extend our ties and achieve mutual understanding with other social forces opposed to the Duarte government. True, this process has not yet become marked enough due to the atmosphere of terror and repression prevailing in El Salvador. The regime's excesses are exemplified by the fact that over 60,000 of my compatriots have been killed while about 20 per cent more have been evicted from their homes or are compelled to fly. In these circumstances, it is very hard to bring the masses into socio-political activity, to rid them of fear. But we know very well that the crisis of the regime increasingly injures the social and economic interests of diverse sections of the population. This makes it easier for us to understand one another and draws our views and positions closer together.

For political and moral reasons, the RDF and FMNLF advocate a peaceful

settlement of the conflict in El Salvador, and declare for dialogue and talks. In our opinion, this is the way to bring about national reconciliation, to spare the people still greater suffering, to prevent an even worse socio-economic situation, and above all, direct armed intervention by US imperialism. However, the regime and its master, official Washington, invariably reject all peace initiatives. True, the regime in 1984 agreed to start a dialogue and the RDF and FMNLF joined in it,² announcing even before the meeting their desire to make it substantive. We realised, however, that the government's acceptance was both demagogy and a political ploy, for, after making its proposal, the regime had expected us to turn it down. Why?

First of all, it was a proposal in the best wild West style, since Duarte, promising to arrive at the appointed place, made no mention of the main items on the agenda or of procedural matters, which could have facilitated the meeting. Second, the invitation was not formally addressed to our alliance, including the RDF, but was couched in deliberately hazy terms. In other words, Duarte refused to recognise the two patriotic fronts as legitimate parties to the talks. Nevertheless, we went to the meeting. The position of the RDF and FMNLF won international support, especially on the part of some governments, which provided us with means of transport and a diplomatic escort for those of our comrades who were abroad.

However, the proposal made by Duarte is unacceptable in its present form, because the regime invites us in disguised form to surrender, which we certainly will never do. Despite the absurdity of the enemy's stand, the RDF and FMNLF succeeded in rescuing the dialogue and in coming to terms on its continuation.

It is now clear that the government has failed to honour the accords reached at La Palma and Ayagualo. It has refused to approve the agreement signed at the latter meeting, November 30, 1984, on procedure and the terms of reference of the commission set up to promote contacts. Thereby the regime has broken its promise to the people, given for demagogical reasons prior to the March 1985 elections.

The dialogue is deadlocked now. The Salvadoran government and the Reagan administration controlling the former's decisions want no more meetings. They clearly intend to make a show of talks while camouflaging their strategy of military solution of the conflict to lull international opinion and reassure the American people.

I do not think the present situation can be changed by Duarte, who is entirely dependent on Washington, or by the Salvadoran army command. It is for our people and the RDF and FMNLF to pave the way for resuming the dialogue. We go on working to bring this about with support from the international community, which is awakening more and more to the pseudo-democratic nature of the brutal, repressive Salvadoran government.

It is hard at the moment to say what course developments may take. The La Palma meeting legitimised the dialogue to a degree. The population has shed fear. Popular and trade union organisations, and even quarters close to the government, call for the resumption of talks. But I do not feel optimistic about the near future, since the imperialists still trust the regime may remedy its military situation, characterised by recurrent setbacks. A further deterioration of the political, military and economic situation could bring the country closer to a crucial juncture where the United States had to decide whether it should persist in its current strategy and send troops to strangle the revolutionary process in El Salvador or stop raising obstacles to a political settlement in our country even though it does not relish the idea.

A word about the Catholic church, which is a very important factor in Salvadoran conditions and whose position must be considered from several angles. The church is admittedly composed of high dignitaries as well as ordinary priests, nuns and preachers. This part of the church identifies itself with the people's interests. As for the top clergy, it is influenced above all by a right conservative episcopate, as in other

Catholic countries. And it is important to note that even though the Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, now at the head of the Salvadoran church, holds views differing from those of Oscar Armulfo Romero, the martyred archbishop,³ he calls with a fair degree of consistency for dialogue as a means of settling the national conflict. This is another circumstance making for the isolation of the ruling quarters' bellicose opposition to talks. While we occasionally criticise certain church authorities, we continue to regard the Archbishop of San Salvador as a mediator in the dialogue between the warring sides.

The policy of the Reagan administration, which is doing its utmost to preserve the Duarte regime, is the main obstacle to a peaceful settlement of the Salvadoran conflict. Washington grants this regime over 1.5 million dollars a day. Thus it is the US government that decrees and implements the counter-insurgency policy in our country. It directs military operations strategically as well as tactically and operationally. This fact has been ascertained by journalists who have seen and proved (by citing documentary evidence) that US military advisers are directly involved in combat operations. Americans train over half of the regime's army, fly on night raids with its pilots, carry out reconnaissance flights on their own, and supply intelligence to the Salvadoran army command.

Washington also decides on many socio-political matters relating to our country. It specifies when this or that move should be made, where and how, funds elections in line with the counter-insurgency strategy, and directs the political and diplomatic activity of the Salvadoran regime. It prevents a peaceful settlement of the conflict through dialogue, as I have said. Nor does this apply to our country alone, for the United States has also torpedoed the Manzanillo talks with Nicaragua⁴ and goes on blocking the implementation of the initiatives of the Contadora Group. Using force as the chief instrument of its policy and diplomacy, it resorts to the most brutal methods in an effort to impose its domination on the peoples of the Central American region.

The US government now in office takes a strictly bipolar view of local conflicts. It automatically attributes all liberation movements and conflicts to the activity of the Soviet Union and its allies, affirming that they endanger the interests of the United States and its allies in the region. In other words, the 'hand of Moscow' is alleged to be present in every trouble spot on earth. Nor are the poverty, inequality, injustice and repression underlying conflict situations heeded in the least. This is supposed to justify increasing military interference as a means of crushing national liberation movements.

Lately the falsity of this approach of Reagan's has fully come out. It would be very hard indeed to ascribe the Iran-Iraq war to Soviet 'intrigues'. The hostilities over the Malvenas involved two close allies of the United States. And to cite events of more recent date, the South African crisis (whose expansion Washington did its best to stem so as to focus attention of world opinion on the presence of Cuban troops in Angola) broke out in the US sphere of influence. It cannot be ascribed to either the direct interference or the indirect influence of any 'external forces' whatever. The only cause of the crisis is the human apartheid regime. Thus the bipolar strategic approach of the United States, without reflecting the actual situation in the world, serves it as a handy means of justifying the most ambitious rearmament programme ever launched in the postwar period.

Imperialism sees a direct threat to its hegemonist interests in growing national liberation movements. This explains why the United States is preparing to resume the role of world gendarme which it played before its defeat in Vietnam. Nor are its preparations directed against socialist countries alone. The primary mission of the US 'rapid deployment force' is to suppress the resistance of peoples under attack in any conflict area of the Third World.

Nicaragua and El Salvador are permanently threatened—more than any other country in the crisis area—by direct US intervention, for they lie in Central America, which Washington calls its 'backyard'. The US policy of aggression assigns a notable function to psychological pressure on the weakest countries in the region without discounting, as Reagan himself has said, the possibility of direct armed intervention. The necessary preparations for it have already been made: bases have been set up in Honduras, Florida, the Caribbean for the use of 'rapid deployment' troops and other special forces; war games are held time and again as a means of intimidation and of keeping these forces on alert in anticipation of an opportunity to strike. True, the United States apparently does not plan to use them in El Salvador immediately because it does not consider that the regime's army has already reached the breaking point.

On the other hand, in view of what happened in Beirut and Grenada a few years ago and in Tunisia recently, when the world witnessed a bombing of the suburbs of that country's capital by Israeli aircraft with Washington's approval, we are convinced that the danger of armed intervention is perfectly real and must not be treated lightly. Therefore, our successes in the battlefield or on the political scene will be a deterrent to direct aggression.

At this point, I wish to disprove the 'domino theory',⁵ which is mechanical and simplistic. The triumph of the revolution in one country does not imply that the same will occur automatically in neighbouring countries. But we consider that for as long as not one of the main conflicts has been settled, stability or peace in Central America will be out of the question. The situation in Nicaragua may therefore be said to have its effect on the situation in El Salvador. A direct attack against the Sandinists would tell naturally on all neighbours, and vice versa. And while the Contadora Group does not yet devote any particular attention to the situation in our country or has only just put us on the 'waiting list', I believe it is commonly held that the conflict situation in the region will persist unless the Salvadoran problem is solved.

One of the false arguments used by the US administration for military and economic pressure and acts of terrorism against the people and government of Nicaragua was the allegation that Managua aided the Salvadorans. If we proved the utter groundlessness of this allegation, we could greatly complicate the implementation of the strategy of destabilisation and aggression against Nicaragua.

Furthermore, peace in Central America cannot be established until the current flow of arms to the region and the 'scorched earth' policy are ended. Steps such as the signing of the 'Act of Peace' drafted by the Contadora Group, bilateral talks between Nicaragua, on the one hand, and Honduras, Costa Rica and the United States, on the other, as well as the resumption of the dialogue in El Salvador could contribute to peace and provide the conditions for a negotiated solution of conflicts. We know well, however, that if the arms race is whipped up from without and if US troops continue building up their presence in the region, with Washington aspiring to shape our destinies, the desire of any country for peace will be no more than wishful thinking.

In conclusion, I would like to stress the significance of international support for the Salvadorans' struggle. We constantly witness manifestations of solidarity on the part of the peoples of all socialist and capitalist countries. The geopolitical situation of our country predetermines, in particular, the strategic importance of support from capitalist countries and their public opinion. From this point of view, I think special importance attaches to the assistance which the Socialist International renders to our struggle, chiefly through its member-parties. The SI enjoys definite moral and political prestige, and this is what makes the United States try so hard to neutralise the attitude of the SI to Central America or at least to modify it. The governments led by socialist parties have repeatedly been subjected by Washington to pressure, blackmail, intimidation, flattery, lies and deceit but I feel that they have stood the test

and generally shown unity of action.

The Socialist International calls constantly for dialogue and talks, with the RDF and FMNLF as full-fledged parties to them. This is a strong incentive to us. The SI has taken diplomatic steps in regard to the United States, officially or privately. Besides, it had accomplished other missions, to the point of mediating in a settlement of the conflict situation by treaty. It follows that despite the limits set to its activity, the SI has helped prevent the situation in Central America from getting worse.

The Salvadoran people have developed internationalist sentiments on the basis of their own experience. They are well aware of the significance of the support given by foreign governments, parties and other social forces, church representatives, various leaders and international organisations. The very problem of constantly expressing solidarity is a complicated and exacting matter, for in the case of El Salvador it is a question of helping people involved in a civil war that has been going for more than five years. It would have been easier to render active and effective assistance over a period of, say, one year. For all the various difficulties, however, widespread international solidarity with the patriotic forces of our country is growing.

We consider that we must inform international opinion in greater measure about the situation in our country, the outlook for its evolution, the gains of the patriotic forces and the objectives of our political programme. I see this contribution to *World Marxist Review* as a welcome opportunity to give the peoples of the world a better idea of developments in El Salvador.

¹ The FMNLF (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) is a military political alliance of five left-wing insurgent organisations, including the combat formations of the Communist Party of El Salvador. The revolutionary democratic front comprises over 100 political, trade union and other mass organisations opposed to the puppet regime under Duarte. —Ed.

² The reference is to two meetings between a delegation of the RDF/FMNLF and representatives of the government which took place at La Palma and Ayagualo in October and November 1984, respectively. —Ed.

³ Assassinated by members of the 'death squads', a terroristic paramilitary organisation of extreme reaction. —Ed.

⁴ In January 1985, Washington unilaterally broke off the Nicaraguan-US talks in the Mexican town of Manzanillo that were intended to normalise relations between the two countries. —Ed.

⁵ Advanced in the United States during the cold war. It contends that the fall of a pro-Western regime in any country of the world is bound to entail the collapse of similar governments in neighbouring countries. —Ed.

The Military Should Defend Peace Like Others

Gen. *Richelieu Levoyer Artieda* (ret.)
— member, National Congress of Ecuador

There is a low white mansion on the outskirts of Quito, on a site sheltered from the tropical heat by eucalyptus-trees. It is the home of Richelieu Levoyer Artieda, a noted public figure and peace fighter.

I was welcomed at the wicket by a dark-complexioned man of plainly military bearing although he was in mufti. The general invited me to his study, which is more like a museum. Photographs and diplomas certifying his promotion to successive military ranks, decorations, dummy tanks and maps illustrate his more than 35-year-long career. Also, there are small flags of the Latin American member-states of the Inter-American Defence Council¹ on which the general once represented Ecuador.

Levoyer Artieda's military education included a course of training for high-ranking Latin American army officers at Las Americas School (Panama Canal zone) which inculcated in them the idea of combating the 'communist danger'. Afterwards he enrolled in the Inter-American Defence College in Washington. He was military attache in the United States, chief of staff of the Ecuadoran army, a member of the military cabinet which ruled the country from 1976 to 1979, and chief commander during the 1981 conflict with Peru.

How did a man who had devoted his working years to service in the armed forces and received military training in the United States come to join the ranks of peace supporters? This is what he told me:

"WE veteran soldiers know better than anybody else what war could do to civilisation. We also know well that we must defend peace today and not tomorrow, when it may be too late.

"I'm a general, a man made for war so to speak, but I'm deeply convinced that our children are born to live a happy life and not to shed blood in war, which is contrary to human nature. This is why I call on everybody to work for the preservation of peace. I also do it as a father whose sons will soon wear uniform, because I don't want them to turn their arms against the likes of themselves. I want to see my sons on the people's side, and I trust they will follow my example. I'm proud to say that when I was a member of government I never did anything against the oppressed but destroyed prisons which had become places of torture, and took part in planning the return of Ecuador to democracy. In short, I always tried to use authority for the good of the people and not to their detriment.

"What prompted me to adopt this world-view was life itself, my own experience. As a professional soldier, I made over the years an in-depth study of the social phenomenon known as war and, needless to say, its effects. I firmly opposed all armed action against the people, for it inevitably undermines democracy. I saw right in the battlefield the appalling aftermath of the military conflicts and clashes in which both my country and other countries were the victims. This was evidence that war is a deadly challenge to humanism.

"Humanity now possesses weapons of incomparably greater destructive power than before. The nuclear threat makes one stop to think of the perfectly real danger to the very existence of civilisation. We military men can reveal this to everybody best of all by warning them that a nuclear conflagration could end all life on earth. Should everybody realise the dimensions of the impending catastrophe, it would be easier to solve the problems dividing nations today."

Levoyer Artieda does not merely warn against the nuclear menace but resists it as a peace supporter. He writes articles and participates in international anti-war forums, conferences and symposiums on human rights, considering that first among these is the right to live in peace.

"There is much talk now about the urgent need for disarmament," he said. "But are any effective steps being taken to this end? No. On the contrary, the mountain-high stockpiles of military hardware keep growing irresistibly. Industrial countries manufacture arms in immense quantities and supply them to Third World countries to help them 'solve' their national problems. Worse still, the United States wants to extend the arms race to space. That is madness, for by taking this road, humanity would inevitably advance even faster to self-annihilation.

"It's a deplorable fact to be reckoned with that tension, occasionally fraught with explosion, persists on the frontiers of some countries, as in Latin America. The world community is torn by contradictions which breed local conflicts threatening global

confrontation. I'm convinced that, regardless of world-view or differences, it is the duty of us all to unite against the threat of a new war. Ideology must not be an obstacle to this great goal. An ideology which advocates violence, terrorism and war isn't worth a rap."

Many will remember the general's forceful speech last August in Havana, where he addressed a meeting on the external debt of Latin America and the Caribbean, closely linking it with the global problem of disarmament facing humanity.

"As a spokesman of a Latin American country and the Third World," he continued, "I cannot but mention this important aspect of the problem we are discussing. International tensions are due not only to political developments, border conflicts and racism (as in South Africa) but certainly to economic contradictions as well. All this is quite enough to spark a world conflagration.

"The peoples of developing countries are burdened with a back-breaking external debt which they couldn't repay to transnational banks even if they sacrificed their economic progress and prosperity. Hence the pressing need to establish a new international economic order.

"What can be done about the debt? I fully agree with the leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro. First of all, it's necessary to cut military spending so as to head off an economic disaster whose effects experts—even experts of creditor countries—believe to be unforeseeable. Of course, general and complete disarmament would be the ideal solution. Reality suggests, however, that this is a remote goal as yet although its attainment would benefit all peoples, primarily and understandably those of developing countries.

"I would like to quote a passage from the declaration adopted by the Latin American economic summit in Quito in January 1984. It says: 'We insist on our call for disarmament, which would make it possible to use the resources being wasted on arms race and armaments for goals contributing to the development of all the peoples of the world. The problems of peace and development are inseparable, since no real development can take place without peace and peace without development would always be precarious.' I fully agree with this approach."

Naturally, the general touched on the Soviet-US dialogue in Geneva. His view is typical of the mood prevailing among the most diverse sections of public opinion, including sober-minded military men.

"Millions of people, who want a peaceful life and reject nuclear death, looked with hope to the Geneva meeting between the top leaders of two powers on which the destiny of humanity largely depends. Symbolically, the meeting took place exactly forty years after the Soviet Union and United States had put their signatures to the document founding the UN as an organisation called upon to serve lasting world peace.

"Unfortunately, the highly important problems of limiting and reducing armaments were not solved at Geneva. Even so, the meeting, held after six years of chill in relations between the two countries, marked a 'new beginning'. It confirmed the need to search for ways of preventing an arms race in space and stopping the arms race on earth, and pointed out that nuclear conflicts are impermissible. People have a right now to look forward to concrete moves.

"Reagan's refusal to discuss the SDI, that is, the Star Wars programme left a bad taste. True, he said, that the SDI threatens nobody, but his protestations didn't sound reassuring. After all, late last year the United States carried out a new nuclear test in

Nevada in direct connection with that 'initiative', a move which drew a natural and well-founded reaction from the Soviet Union and from peace supporters in various countries.

"Some negative circumstances notwithstanding, Geneva convinced us again that talks can lead to a peaceful way out of controversial or even explosive situations, to agreement on the greatest possible reduction of military expenditures, of course without injuring the legitimate right of nations to defence. This is precisely the policy which the Soviet Union is carrying on, doing its utmost for the preservation of world peace. It's regrettable that so far Washington has failed to respond properly to the Soviet peace proposals. What is more, the United States is pressing forward, as we all can see, with preparations for fighting in space. I wish the present US administration realised that that policy is highly dangerous to the American people themselves. I hail the position of the Soviet Union, which calls on the other great power to take the road to peace and real disarmament, to stop making atom and hydrogen bombs and missiles targeted on humanity itself."

Recorded in Quito by *Vladimir Korotkov*,
staff member of the journal.

¹ The Council was set up in 1942 at the insistence of the United States as a standing consultative body of the Organisation of American States. It prepares recommendations on ways of combating so-called subversive activities and works out measures for the coordination of military cooperation with the United States. The Council is virtually controlled by the Pentagon. —*Ed.*

surveys, information and mail

The Reader Wants to Know Planning the Integration Process

Since the socialist countries have a planned economic system, their economic integration within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance must evidently involve the use of planning instruments. How is that done in practice? What are the forms in which the integration process is planned? I have found no answer to these questions in our press.

Christian Passeron
(France)

The following was prepared for *WMR* at the International Institute of Economic Problems of the World Socialist System.

YOU are, of course, right, dear reader: the socialist economic integration of the CMEA countries proceeds on the basis of their joint planning activity and is closely tied in with their national systems of planning and economic administration. As the tasks in their cooperation become ever more complex, the scientific level of planning is raised and the latter assumes the form of complex goal-oriented programmes.

Their joint planning activity now involves the following set of forms:

- consultations on the basic aspects of economic policy and cooperation in prognostication;

- coordination of five-year plans;

- joint planning;

- exchange of experience in perfecting the planning and national economic administration systems;

- agreed five-year plans for multilateral and integration measures;

- long-term goal-oriented programmes for cooperation, and bilateral long-term programmes for specialisation and co-production.

Each of these specific forms has its own functions within the overall framework. Thus, the coordination of five-year national economic plans has an important role in shaping stable and mutually advantageous economic, scientific and technical ties. The experience of six five-year periods (1956-1985) shows that such coordination reliably ensures the necessary external economic prerequisites for formulating and realising national plans for economic and social development.

When the 1986-1990 plans were coordinated in accordance with the decisions of the CMEA's 1984 Economic Summit, much attention was given to further deepening the specialisation and co-production, especially in the engineering industries. The main proportions and structures of mutual commodity turnover and the elements of the producer cooperation were determined. Emphasis was laid on greater cooperation in developing the agro-industrial complex, production of consumer durables, and also on a gradual alignment of economic development levels, primarily by raising those of Vietnam, Cuba and Mongolia to the levels of the European CMEA countries.

Only a brief description of the CMEA countries' joint planning activity can be given for reasons of space. There are the long-term multilateral and bilateral programmes for cooperation in forecasting development, and experience shows that the framing and realisation of long-term programmes effectively serves the planned solution of problems that are of primary significance for the fraternal countries' economic development. Prognostication, as an instrument of scientific forecasting, has a highly important role in substantiating and defining the most effective ways of economic integration.

Multilateral Programmes

The CMEA countries adopted five long-term goal-oriented programmes for cooperation at the end of the 1970s, putting on record their agreed strategy in tackling the key national economic problems in the following areas; energy, fuel and raw materials; agriculture and food; engineering; consumer goods and transportation.

The measures mapped out under these programmes are effected in the course of national economic plan coordination through a system of multilateral and bilateral agreements, and the commitments are taken into account in the national five-year and annual plans. More than 230 multilateral agreements stemming from the long-term programmes have now been signed. They relate to the building of new facilities, joint expansion and remodelling of existing enterprises, deepening of specialisation and co-production, and scientific and technical cooperation, and also joint geological exploration projects.

Under these long-term goal-oriented programmes, the following facilities have

either been started or are under construction: the Khmel'nitsky and South Ukrainian nuclear-power plants; intergrid 750 kv electric-power transmission lines between the USSR and Poland, the USSR, Romania and Bulgaria; the Krivoy Rog mining and concentration combine; the Mosyr plant for the production of nutrient yeast from high-purity liquid oil paraffins; and a plant to turn out nickel and cobalt products in Cuba, where a complex of enterprises and facilities is also under construction to increase output of sugar and citrus fruit; new state farms are being set up in Mongolia, and a centre for the joint training of flight, technical and air control personnel for civil aviation is being equipped.

Realisation of these programmes has yielded tangible results. The provision of electric power and gas to the community countries has become more efficient and reliable, the supply of food and consumer goods to the population has been improved, the economic and technical parameters of the mutually delivered machinery and equipment have gone up, and the carrying capacity of trunkline transportation has increased.

The CMEA countries are now faced with new and intricate tasks which require joint approaches over the long run. Accordingly, a number of complex measures and programmes in further elaboration of the long-term goal-oriented programmes of cooperation have been prepared, among them cooperation in improving food supplies to the population. This supplements and extends the goal-oriented programmes in agriculture and the food industry to the year 2000. The long-term complex measures aimed to satisfy the CMEA countries' rational requirements in energy, fuel and raw materials have been supported by all the participants, and the relevant programme has also been enlarged and extended to the year 2000.

The CMEA countries have got down to economising resources, a line which their Economic Summit defined as one of the most important in tackling the fuel and raw materials problem, and have accordingly adopted a relevant cooperation programme until the end of the century. It includes more than 100 joint measures for working and broadly using resource-saving technologies and equipment, new materials and sources of energy. Fulfilment of this programme will help to save sizable material resources and to reduce the energy-intensiveness and material-intensiveness of their national incomes.

Large-scale facilities, such as the Yamburg gas deposits, and the main gas pipeline from the deposits to the USSR's Western border will be built on a multilateral basis in order to increase natural gas deliveries to the CMEA countries in Europe. They have decided to make joint use of hard coal deposits and to modernise the by-product coke industry in Poland; and to build facilities for the extraction and processing of magnesite in Czechoslovakia. They are also to cooperate in working non-ferrous metal deposits in Vietnam, Mongolia and Cuba. The Economic Summit further decided to shortly work out and adopt a programme for building nuclear-power generating and nuclear-power-heat generating plants for the period until 2000. All of this helps to lay a solid basis for solving the fuel, energy and raw materials problems within the CMEA framework.

Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress

The socialist community countries are faced with the common task of drastically intensifying their social production, the main line here being the use of the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution.

That being so, special significance attaches to the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress Until the Year 2000, which was worked out under a decision of the CMEA Economic Summit, and adopted in December 1985. It

is a major contribution to further deepening socialist economic integration on the basis of national scientific and technical development programmes, and concentrating joint efforts in key, priority areas. It provides for intensive science-and-production cooperation along five main lines: electronisation, complex automation, including flexible production systems, nuclear energy, new materials and technologies, and biotechnology. Its fulfilment will double the productivity of social labour and markedly reduce outlays of energy and raw materials per national-income unit.

The Comprehensive Programme calls for a concrete approach to the tasks it formulates. Cooperation on all its lines is to be organised along the entire science—hardware—production—marketing cycle. The approach here differs from working plans and projects for scientific and technical cooperation, which are confined to basic or applied solutions of this or that problem, in that the programmes are oriented towards the application of scientific and technical achievements to production. Implementation of the programme will bring about considerable structural changes, above all in engineering. This is most essential since acceleration of economic development crucially depends on improving the structure of the engineering industry and its material and technical facilities, and on the economic and technical standards of the new machinery and equipment.

Close to 700 scientific bodies from the fraternal countries are to join in fulfilling the Comprehensive Programme. It is so concrete that in the course of its approval these countries agreed that its up-to-1990 measures are to be included in the five-year national economic plans being currently drawn up by the community countries. At the same time, they signed general agreements on multilateral cooperation in developing and introducing automated designing systems, and also a common light-conduit information system, and an agreement on the institution of an international science-and-production association to be called Interrobot to develop robot facilities.

The Comprehensive Programme expresses the CMEA countries' readiness to coordinate their efforts with all other interested countries, a readiness which stems from their fundamental urge to normalise international economic, scientific and technical relations.

Bilateral Programmes

Bilateral long-term programmes for specialisation and co-production until the year 1990 have been concluded between European CMEA countries and the USSR, and are now being realised in the light of the basic principles, objectives and tasks of long-term cooperation. They determine the main lines of specialisation and co-production, and the mechanism for realising the agreed measures. The fact that the USSR acts as the connecting link for the other partners involved in all these programmes effectively turns them into multilateral programmes.

The realisation of these programmes helps to give the right profile to the individual industries, to improve the structure of production and its concentration, to ensure batch production of specialised products, and to boost the export potential of the cooperating countries. The long-term programmes involve a complex of bilateral economic, scientific and technical relations and envisage long-term developments of cooperation in almost every sphere of material production, engineering in the first place.

Each such programme takes into account the historically shaped lines in the international socialist division of labour. Thus, the following specialisation is characteristic of the GDR-USSR programme: the GDR specialises in rolling equipment, forging and pressing machines, passenger and refrigerator railway cars, textile and printing machines, computers, communications facilities, electronics,

machines for the treatment of plastics, farming machinery, etc.; the USSR specialises in equipment for electric-power plants, road-building machinery, diesel locomotives, passenger cars and trucks, tractors, some types of machine-tools, and some other types of products. The countries' commitments under these programmes are reflected in their national plans.

When deciding on the ways for tackling the new and more complicated tasks in the coordination of planning, most CMEA countries have agreed on the elaboration of bilateral long-term programmes for developing economic, scientific and technical cooperation in the period until the year 2000. These reflect the principles laid down by the CMEA Economic Summit for bilateral ties.

These programmes result from a coordination of techniques in jointly tackling major problems in science, technology and material production over the fifteen years ahead. They are now being elaborated into a system of concrete sectoral sub-programmes and agreements laying down mutual commitments, terms and deadlines for their fulfilment. These are being tied in with the measures being realised on a multilateral basis and also with national comprehensive programmes, so ultimately producing a fuller reflection of the agreements reached in the plans for economic and social development of the socialist community countries.

The record of the CMEA countries' economic cooperation testifies to the effectiveness of their multilateral and bilateral programmes, by which the fraternal states are guided in accelerating the switch of their national economies to the intensive way of development.

Prognostication

Cooperation in this field includes exchange of experience and information on the methodology used in drawing up national forecasts and their results, and also the joint elaboration of forecasts. More than 320 joint economic, scientific and technological forecasts, over 200 of them sectoral, have been drawn up within the CMEA framework, and these have helped to give more solid backing to integration measures, as in the writing of long-term programmes and national economic plan coordination.

Satisfaction of the fraternal countries' requirements in fuel, energy and raw material resources is a traditional objective of their joint prognostication. Let us bear in mind the important changes that have occurred in the energy situation in the socialist community in the 1970s and 1980s. Thus, from 1976 to 1980, the cost of extracting one ton of oil in the Soviet Union, where the extraction had shifted into remoter areas with a rugged terrain, had more than doubled, as compared with that of the early 1970s. Accordingly, the CMEA Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation drew up a forecast for the solution of fuel and energy problems in the period until the year 2000 and beyond, bringing out the most effective potentialities for cooperation in this field.

The state of the nuclear-energy industry is also being prognosticated. The CMEA's Standing Commission on cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes has prepared an economic and technical report on the use of nuclear reactors for heat supply in the community countries until the year 1990, and on the interaction between the nuclear-energy industry and the human habitat. Work is also under way on an inter-sectoral forecast for the development of this sphere of energy generation until the year 2000 and beyond.

Much attention is also being given to other forecasts. Thus, one of them considers the prospects for metallurgical production, the provision of its resources and the main lines of scientific and technical progress. Some jointly elaborated forecasts in engineering have, for instance, served as the basis for deepening specialisation and

cooperation in the manufacture of freight and passenger railway cars, and machinery and equipment for the textile, leather and footwear industries.

Of special importance are scientific and technical forecasts, among them the prospects for the development of new types of materials and technological processes, the use of non-traditional sources of energy, and the development of a new generation of computer systems, flexible automated production systems, robotised complexes and microprocessors.

Such are some of the forms and lines of joint planning activity within the framework of the socialist community, and we hope that what has been said gives a general picture of this important component part of the integration process.

The 'Vienna Dialogue' is Expanding

I have come across press reports on a 'Vienna dialogue' held periodically in the Austrian capital. What is this dialogue about and who takes part in it?

*Marion Freimacher,
Switzerland*

THERE is a prehistory of the 'Vienna dialogue'. In 1973 a World Congress of Peace Forces was convened in Moscow on the initiative of the World Peace Council. The openness and the democratic methods of the joint elaboration and adoption of concerted decisions made the forum a success. The congress formulated the common positions and the action platform of the peace forces and called on all of the world's anti-war organisations and movements to promote the spirit of cooperation, dialogue and joint action. With this end in view, the congress set up an international Continuing Liaison Council under a steering committee. In 1977 the council was reconstituted as an International Liaison Forum of Peace Forces (ILFPF). Thus a mechanism was created for joint action by a broad spectrum of civic organisations of different orientations. It is an international system of cooperation among parties, trade unions and international, regional and national non-governmental organisations. Participation in the forum enables their representatives to meet one another, conduct constructive discussions on important aspects of the way the world is developing, identify the common ground that exists in their positions and chart feasible forms of joint action for peace.

Today, there is every reason to note that the ILFPF is expanding its activities. It has provided the necessary framework for important meetings such as the Dialogue on Security and Disarmament in Europe (Stockholm, March 1984) and the international dialogue on 'The United Nations and Peace Forces: Ways of Strengthening Cooperation' (Geneva, September 1984). The forum served as the beginning of a world-wide multilateral dialogue on disarmament and detente, regularly conducted in Vienna and therefore named after that city. The first dialogue conference was held in 1982; the second, in 1983; and the third, in January 1985.

The meetings in Vienna have now gained a prominent role in the anti-war movement as a channel for international contacts to promote detente and disarmament on the non-governmental level. Participants agree that these meetings set an example of honest, open and constructive discussions among people representing a broad spectrum of social forces.

The third 'Vienna dialogue' was particularly broad in terms of its composition. It brought together more than 400 people from 72 countries, as well as representatives of six intergovernmental and 27 international non-governmental organisations. The

delegates belonged to 23 communist, 26 social democratic, 27 liberal, centrist, radical and Christian democratic parties, to 15 revolutionary democratic parties and national liberation movements. One might add that they included 32 members of parliament, over 80 trade union leaders, more than 50 prominent figures from the scientific, educational and cultural communities, over 30 clergymen and 115 high-level spokesmen of anti-war movements. This degree of diversity in the composition of the meeting bears out the internationally growing awareness of the fact that at today's responsible juncture mass action for a radical change for the better in international relations is imperative.

In December 1985 Vienna hosted another major international meeting. It was a dialogue on 'Ways of Promoting Detente' which outlined plans for 1986, the International Year of Peace, and for 1987 and examined topical aspects of the current international situation. Priority attention was paid to the issues of stepping up the struggle to ban nuclear tests and prevent the spread of the arms race into outer space. New Soviet initiatives were noted with appreciation, specifically the unilateral moratorium on all nuclear explosions.

The delegates taking part in the meeting fully supported the results of the Soviet-US summit meeting and laid particular emphasis on the joint statement of the Soviet and US leaders to the effect that 'nuclear war must never be fought and cannot be won'. It was noted that the world was tired of heightened tensions, confrontation and alarm-laden insecurity. Mankind has approached a juncture that calls for particular wisdom in political decision-making, for due consideration not only of national interests or of interests concerning this or that group of countries but also of the interests of the world community as a whole.

It was also stressed that the promising results of the Geneva summit must not create the illusion that 'all will be well', must not encourage an attitude of placid anticipation or complacency. Removing the nuclear threat by preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on Earth is a great challenge. Coping with it will require a responsible policy, greater efforts and a bigger contribution on the part of all countries, of all social and political forces dedicated to peace. As the meeting stated in its final document, it is therefore necessary to resist reactionary forays with more vigour, to help the 'Geneva spirit' evolve into a 'Geneva process'. That is the only way to restore detente to the world, establish civilised relations among nations and prevent nuclear catastrophe.

These tasks will shape all ILFPF activities in the near future. Agreement has been reached on the holding of new joint actions. Specifically, the plan is to organise, in 1987, the fourth World Dialogue Conference on the more pressing issues of disarmament and detente and a special dialogue on disarmament in Europe. These meetings will help in further expanding cooperation within the framework of the forum.

George White

Communist Youth Leagues

Brief Information*

Democratic Youth League of Bahrain (DYL)

THE DYL was founded on March 16, 1974, on the basis of the Youth of the National

* See *WMR*, Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10, 1984, Nos. 2, 6, and 9, 1985, and No. 3, 1986.

Liberation Front of Bahrain and the National Union of Students. It is continuing and carrying forward the democratic traditions of the country's youth movement. The League groups young men and women between 14 and 30 years of age, irrespective of social origin or religion.

When, in 1975, parliament was dissolved and some articles of the Constitution were suspended as the result of a reactionary offensive, the DYL had to go underground. Despite terror and persecution, its members are active in rural communities, urban neighbourhoods, enterprises and educational institutions. Its newspaper, *Ash-Shabiba* (Youth), comes out regularly and has a large readership.

The League draws young workers into actions demanding freedom to form trade unions, seeks higher wages and safe working conditions for youth and curbs on their exploitation, declares for the democratisation and advancement of the educational system, the founding of a national university, and defends consistently the students against the arbitrariness of the authorities. Together with other national patriotic forces of Bahrain it demands democratic freedoms for the people and the release of all political prisoners.

Hundreds of young people have become victims of persecution and repression. They were jailed, tortured, deprived of work, excluded from educational institutions, exiled. The courage shown by DYL members has earned it respect, confidence and support among youth.

The League is firmly anti-imperialist. It educates its membership on the principles of proletarian internationalism.

The DYL participates in the international democratic youth movement; it has ties with many progressive youth organisations and maintains friendly relations with the youth leagues of socialist countries. The League is affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the Arab Youth Federation.

Communist Youth of Sweden (CYS)

Being an autonomous organisation, the CYS takes guidance from the programme and policy of the Left Party—Communists of Sweden.

The origins of the organisation go back to 1903, which saw the founding of the Socialist Youth League, subsequently transformed into the Communist Youth League. Young Communists played an important role in the dissemination of socialist ideas and the defence of the working people's rights. They won particularly strong positions after World War II, when their numbers grew considerably. In 1967, the CYL merged with the Democratic Youth of Sweden to form the Left Youth League. However, this organisation did not last long, for in 1970 groups of communist youth who disagreed with the predominantly leftist line of the LYL stepped out of it and formed a new organisation, the Communist Youth of Sweden, which held its founding congress in 1973.

At present the CYS has about 18,500 members: workers and other employees (60 per cent), students, servicemen, and jobless people. Their age averages 22 years.

The organisation steadfastly defends the rights of the younger generation, primarily its right to work. One of its main slogans is 'Job security with proper pay'. The CYS and other youth leagues have jointly formed an association of jobless youth and help them socially and morally.

The CYS is active in the movement for peace and disarmament. It supports the idea of creating a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe and demands a freeze on nuclear armaments in Europe and the withdrawal of all first-strike nuclear missiles from the continent. The organisation considers US imperialism responsible for the arms race and declares against US interference in the affairs of other countries. It carries out campaigns of solidarity with the peoples of South Africa and Latin America, and

raises funds for the youth of South Africa, Chile, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Its members have travelled to Nicaragua as volunteers to assist the Sandinist revolution.

The CYS is cooperating with other democratic youth organisations of the country, especially with the Social Democratic Youth League. It is active in the international democratic movement and is affiliated to the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

The organisation bases its work on the principles of democratic centralism. The Congress is its supreme authority; it meets once in three years. In between congresses, the organisation is led by the Board and the Executive Committee. The Board is in charge of trade union, school, environmental, and other committees.

The CYS publishes *Unga gardet* (The Young Guard), a monthly, and *Röd träff* (Red Meeting), a periodical appearing eight times a year.

the book scene

The CIA Stands Accused

A Survey of Publications on the Main US Intelligence Agency

SENATOR Walter Mondale, a leading US political personality, once said that to learn the truth about the Central Intelligence Agency was like trying to pin jam to the wall. The secrets of Langley, the CIA headquarters, are closely guarded. In June 1982 the American President signed a bill making merely the disclosure of the name of a CIA official punishable by 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of 50,000 dollars.¹ Nonetheless, the scandals over the CIA's failures on the international scene, the exposures of its criminal operations in the USA itself, and the admissions of officials and recruited agents have become a source of considerable disclosures about the CIA.

This survey covers some books published in the USSR, Poland, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, India, the FRG, Italy, and the USA. The documents presented by the authors of these publications give a compelling picture of the main orientations, forms, and methods of US imperialism's principal spy agency.

The history of this agency's formation is a leading theme of a book by the Soviet researcher N. N. Yakovlev, *The CIA Versus the USSR*.² Yakovlev takes the reader to the mid-1940s when Washington, having a monopoly over atomic weapons, set out to achieve global supremacy, and shows the link between the aggressive ambitions of the US ruling circles, the preparations for an attack on the Soviet Union, and the reorganisation of the US intelligence service.

The national security bill passed by the US Congress in 1947 laid the beginning for a far-reaching restructuring of the armed forces and the national security agencies. It was then that the Central Intelligence Agency was constituted. As the author shows

with documents, its function was defined as to foster, by secret means, the attainment of Washington's international political ambitions—to gather information about potential adversaries, orchestrate psychological, economic, and political subversion against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, sustain anti-communist regimes in all parts of the world, and erode the influence and prestige of democratic forces and movements, notably in West European countries (pp. 36, 106-107).

The purport of the CIA's existence was spelled out as giving strategic backing to the interests of the American money barons. For their part, the latter spare no funds to equip the cloak and dagger artists with everything they need. This is eloquently brought to light by the Soviet journalist F. Sergeyev in the book *Secret Weapon of Aggression*,³ which is a compendium of information about US secret agencies.⁴ According to the official statistics cited in this book, the CIA has a personnel of 18,000 and an annual budget of several billion dollars (p. 42). But these statistics, Sergeyev notes, do not take into account the agents recruited in different countries⁵ or the allocations for particularly large operations conducted by other agencies.

The CIA, as this book demonstrates, is a state within a state. It has its own research centres, industrial facilities, mass media, airfields, and operational bases scattered in many regions of the world. In showing the dimensions of the spy activity conducted basically against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, Sergeyev underscores the fact that the CIA's principal objective is 'to back up US imperialism's military preparations and select the most propitious moment for a sudden strike' (p. 81).

In order to gather information about the defence, economic, and scientific potentialities of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation countries, the US intelligence agencies use stationary and mobile land-based radio centres, manned and unmanned spy aircraft, space systems, and sea-based radio interception stations. The manner in which these technical facilities are used is illustrated by a provocation engineered on the Soviet Far Eastern frontier in the early hours of September 1, 1983. The operation, stage-managed by US intelligence services, involved a South Korean airliner, AWACS and RS-135 spy aircraft, an Orion-class submarine, a ramified network of electronic spy stations in the USA and Japan, and a Ferret-D spy satellite. The entire operation was coordinated by the crew of a US Challenger spaceship.

Nor are traditional intelligence-gathering methods, including visual, ignored. To this end, Sergeyev writes, diplomats, journalists, tourists, members of various delegations, businessmen, and all sorts of traitors are used on a large scale.

The CIA gives much of its attention to 'psychological warfare'. Under direct control or in close contact with its experts, tens of radio stations, newspapers, and journals conduct an uninterrupted vicious campaign against the socialist countries. Langley funds some 500 anti-communist 'centres', 'committees', and 'associations' such as the anti-Soviet NTS or the groups of Czechoslovak renegades at Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe. The cardinal objective is to discredit the policies pursued by ruling communist and workers' parties, precipitate conflict situations, and subvert the socialist community's economic and defence capability. This practice was used in 1956 against Hungary, in 1968 against Czechoslovakia, and in recent years particularly against Poland.

A study entitled *US Policy Toward Poland in the Light of Facts and Documents (1980-1983)*⁶ gives a good idea of the role played, in accordance with CIA scenarios, by the Voice of America and *Radio Free Europe* in igniting crisis situations and organising and coordinating strikes, acts of sabotage, and terrorist and subversive operations.

Flagrant interference in the affairs of a sovereign nation is how, in the light of the norms of international law, one can qualify a programme broadcast by the Voice of America on September 10, 1983. In this broadcast it was stated in so many words that the 'solidarity' underground centre had to be turned into a 'cadre organisation for a

struggle for independence' (p. 177).

Another action illustrative of the provocations against the socialist community of nations was the attempt on the life of the Pope.

'On May 13, 1981 shots rang out in St Peter's Square in Rome. Covered with blood, Pope John Paul II fell to the ground. A wave of emotion, shock, and outrage swept across the world,' declare the first lines in a book by a leading FRG publicist Hubert Reichel, *Shots in St Peter's Square*.⁷ Who directed the hand of the would-be assassin? Using a host of background documents exposing this dirty provocation Reichel demonstrates that the trail from it 'led not to Sofia and Moscow but to Langley, Virginia, USA, to the CIA headquarters' (p. 126).

'We must learn to subvert, sabotage and destroy our enemies by more clever, more sophisticated and more effective methods,' states the Hoover Commission report presented to the US President in 1954.⁸ These words became a guide to action for the heroes of the sinister battles in the twilight, as the US President calls CIA agents. This agency's crimes against national liberation movements and developing nations, designated in Washington as practically the main theatre of its assault on communism, comprise whole chapters of postwar history. Let us mention only a few of them.

The overthrow of Mohammed Mussadeq, Prime Minister of Iran, in 1953. The coup in Guatemala in 1954. The assassination of Solomon Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), in 1959. 1961—the aggression against Cuba, the murder of Patrice Lumumba, Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo (now Zaire), and the coup in the Dominican Republic. The assassination of Eduardo Mondlane, Chairman of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, in 1969. The putch in Chile and the murder of President Salvador Allende in 1973.

FRG journalists Günter Neuberger and Michael Opperskalski, who have written a series of disclosures about the US spy agency, focus on the methods used against 'undesirable' regimes in Asian, African, and Latin American countries. Let us take their book *CIA in Iran*.⁹

The blow dealt the national democratic movement in Iran in 1953 and the restoration of the shah's regime were the first major CIA action of its kind. Planned and worked out in Langley and approved by the White House, it was conducted on the instructions of US capital, whose interests were threatened as a result of the nationalisation of Iran's oil wealth.

Bribery, blackmail, and the provoking of actions by religious fanatics were among the means used by the CIA to bring down the Mussadeq government (pp. 24-27). The authors remind readers of the steps taken by the Americans to reinforce the monarchy. The CIA was the godfather of the SAVAK secret agency, set up in 1957, whose name is associated with murder and torture (p. 29).

The Iranian experience, the same authors write in their book *CIA in Central America*,¹⁰ was used a year later by CIA agents in Guatemala, where the Arbenz government had nationalised and distributed among peasants a portion of the land owned by the powerful United Fruit Company. The White House saw the development of the revolutionary process in that country as a serious threat to the North American monopolies. The CIA was assigned the task of orchestrating a counter-revolutionary coup (p. 146), which marked the beginning of the grisly tragedy of the Guatemalan people. The army, the security forces, and the death squads were responsible for the death of 100,000 persons and the disappearance of some 35,000 others.

This action signalled that the US would not tolerate impingements on its positions in Latin America. Washington tried to apply the Guatemalan 'model' of pacifying unsubmitives to revolutionary Cuba in 1961. But the CIA mercenaries sent to crush the Cuban revolution were themselves crushed. In the 1980s an updated form of this

'model' was used for the occupation of Grenada.

In combination with ideological subversion and political and economic blackmail, terrorist operations are today used widely by imperialist forces against the people of Afghanistan. One responds with pain and anger to what is related by victims of the undeclared war which the US spy agency is fighting in that country with the hands of Afghan reaction, the Pakistani military, and the mercenaries recruited in various countries. The following is only one of the eye-witness accounts given in *Judge for Yourself*, a book published in Kabul last year. One night bandits surrounded the house of an ordinary peasant family and ordered the husband of the eye-witness into the street. His hands were tied and he was taken to the village square where he was beaten as a warning to those who refused to help the bandits. 'Then in front of me, my children and the rest of the people,' the horrified woman related, 'they cut off (my husband's) head' (p. 61).

US aid to Afghan anti-people forces, it is stated in the book, has acquired the dimensions of a major secret operation. The CIA is conducting it in several directions: material, political, and financial support to counter-revolutionary groups; military training; the training of rebels in spying and subversion; malicious anti-Afghan propaganda; and, lastly, direct management of armed provocations from Pakistani territory.

Along with their Washington masters, the CIA dirty work experts are responsible for the cruel suffering that fell to the lot of the Kampuchean people. The story of this suffering is told in *Undeclared War Against the People's Republic of Kampuchea*,¹¹ a book brought out by the Foreign Ministry of Kampuchea. 'On March 18, 1970,' this publication says, 'CIA agents in Phnom Penh engineered a coup, installing the Lon Nol puppet regime that at once unleashed repressions against left and other opposition forces' (p. 6). The country's peaceful development came to an end. It was drawn into the war started against Vietnam and Laos by US imperialism. To this day the CIA, which has set up strongpoints along the Kampuchean-Thai border, is extending substantial military and financial aid to counter-revolutionary units.

In its attempts to destabilise society in countries, whose governments are pursuing policies seen as 'objectionable' by the White House, the American spy agency is stirring up in these countries separatist sentiments, inter-communal conflicts, and chauvinism.

To try and find the 'Republic of Khalistan' in geographical maps is a waste of time. It is the product of the imagination of Sikh extremists and their leader J. S. Chauhan, who went so far as to proclaim himself its head. These hopes of the separatists have the support of quite tangible albeit carefully camouflaged forces. 'Khalistan' is the code name of the CIA plan to separate the State of Punjab from India and set it up as a puppet state. CIA activities are exposed in quite a few books published in India. One of these is the extensively documented work of a well-known publicist and chief editor of the newspaper *New Age*—central organ of the Communist Party of India—P. Parakal entitled *Secret Wars of CIA*.¹²

In the 1950s, Parakal writes, the CIA supported separatists in the northeastern State of Nagaland. Some years later it considerably extended the zone of its activities, operating in many regions. The expulsion from India of US Embassy staff members caught helping anti-government elements did not stop the CIA leadership. It is continuing its secret operations against India, using various US foundations, economic missions, pseudo-scientific associations, and reactionary trade union and youth and student organisations.

Why has India found itself on the hit list of the US policy of state terrorism. A partial answer, I believe, is to be found in the statement issued by the National Council Central Executive, Communist Party of India, on the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Indira Ghadhi, this document states, had been pursuing 'our country's

foreign policy of anti-imperialism, safeguarding world peace, and friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and progressive regimes. As Chairperson of the non-aligned movement she had been playing an important role in uniting the Third World in favour of world peace, against the threat of a thermonuclear war and for a new international economic order.¹³

Nor has the American intelligence service ignored the USA's European allies. In their study *The CIA in Western Europe*¹⁴ Günter Neuberger and Michael Opperskalski disclose that it not only has close contacts with the secret services of NATO countries but has been able to infiltrate the state machinery, political parties, public movements, the press, the trade unions, youth, student, and cultural organisations, the Church, and the armed forces, in fact practically all areas of the life of many countries of the Old World. More, with the aid of European colleagues, American intelligence agents have in some countries penetrated the terrorist underground—neofascist, leftist, and nationalistic associations, and even the world of organised crime, which they use to further US aims. How this takes place in Italy is related in *30 Years of Conspiracies* edited by Giorgio Bocca and published in Rome.¹⁵ The facts cited in this book disclose that terrorism serves the interests of the big bourgeoisie, creating a convenient pretext for attacking democratic forces, extending the power of the military and police apparatus, and clearing the way for the establishment of 'strong', to be more exact, undisguisedly reactionary regimes.

A government that places itself outside the law and morality in external affairs inevitably resorts to the same practices in domestic affairs. The USA is today a society where political assassinations, total surveillance, and persecution for persuasions have become commonplace. In that country's repressive system the CIA plays a major role alongside the Federal Bureau of Investigation. At least 60 of its departments are engaged in political investigations, identifying and 'neutralising' those who, in the opinion of its masters in Langley, undermine national security. Testimony of this is given in, for example, Stanfield Turner's *Secrecy and Democracy. The CIA in Transition*.¹⁶

For understandable reasons Turner, who headed the CIA from 1977 to 1981, had to pass much over in silence. In the foreword he laments that the censor had 'corrected' his manuscript in more than a hundred places, removing many passages. Nonetheless, the facts given by him offer a clear picture of how the elementary civil rights of Americans are outrageously flouted. With various reservations he acknowledges that the secret agencies in the USA had conducted wide-ranging research into the effects of strong narcotics on people's minds and health.

Let us add that not only Americans are victims of such 'experiments'. A recent instance is the bandit, terrorist act against the Soviet diplomat V. Yurchenko in violation of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights. He was seized by unnamed persons in Rome on August 1, 1985 and taken in an unconscious state to the USA. There, for three months psychotropic drugs were forcibly used on him in order to break his will and compel him to betray his country.

It remains to be mentioned that Turner justifies the 'reasonableness' of the aims set in such cases and only regrets some of the 'costs' in attaining them. The effects of the experiments on the life and health of the people on whom narcotics are used do not worry him. The results of a medical examination of Yurchenko give grounds for saying that such 'experiments' perniciously affect the human organism.

The dimensions of the CIA's operations continue to grow and its methods are becoming more subtle. As was demonstrated by last year's anti-communist assemblages sponsored by the CIA in the south of Angola and in Dallas, this US spy agency plans to unite the entire world counter-revolution under its aegis.

The books we have reviewed are a stern indictment of the CIA. They remind people of the need to keep a vigilant eye on the intrigues of the most sinister and

dangerous forces of international imperialism.

Jiri Vrba

¹ *International Herald Tribune*, July 8, 1982.

² Pravda Publishers, Moscow, 1983 (in Russian).

³ Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1984 (in Russian).

⁴ Apart from the CIA there is a large network of political surveillance in the USA. It consists of about ten agencies, including the military intelligence, the FBI, and the National Security Agency.

⁵ According to *l'Humanité* (November 5, 1985), the CIA has several hundred thousand paid agents outside the USA.—Ed.

⁶ *Polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki wobec Polski w świetle faktów i dokumentów* (1980-1983), Warsaw, 1984.

⁷ Hubert Reichel, *Schüsse auf dem Peterplatz*, Verlag Marxistische Blätter, Frankfurt on the Main, 1984.

⁸ *International Herald Tribune*, October 22, 1984.

⁹ Günter Neuberger, Michael Opperskalski, *CIA im Iran*, Lamuv Verlag, Göttingen, 1982.

¹⁰ Günter Neuberger, Michael Opperskalski, *CIA in Mittelamerika*, Lamuv Verlag, Göttingen, 1983.

¹¹ *La guerre non déclarée contre la République Populaire du Kampuchea*, Phnom Penh, 1985.

¹² P. Parakal, *Secret Wars of CIA*, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1984.

¹³ *New Age*, November 18, 1984.

¹⁴ Günter Neuberger, Michael Opperskalski, *CIA in Westeuropa*, Lamuv Verlag, Göttingen, 1982.

¹⁵ *30 anni di Trame*, ed. by Giorgio Bocca, Editoriale l'Espresso, Rome 1985.

¹⁶ Stanfield Turner, *Secrecy and Democracy. The CIA in Transition*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1985.

Source of Courage

Jean Blume, *Drôle d'agenda* (An Unusual Notebook), I. 1936-1948: le temps d'une guerre mondiale et d'une adhésion, Fondation Joseph Jacquemotte, Brussels, 1985, 160 pp.

TO write about the past is to do a job that is both exacting and binding. In recording past events, it is important neither to yield to the temptation of romantic idealisation nor to disregard the legacy of departing generations by making it out to be a succession of illusions and tragic mistakes. Hence the value of books which steer clear of both extremes.

Jean Blume's autobiographic account may be described as a book of this nature. A veteran Belgian Communist who has repeatedly been elected to the party's highest bodies, he is also known as a gifted publicist. This time he depicts events which occurred shortly before World War II, the trying years of struggle against fascism, and the circumstances in which he became a Communist and was tested as one.

Jean, the son of Isabelle Blume, a noted figure in the Belgian working class and democratic movement, began to seek independence when still very young. His views did not always coincide with those of his mother, who in that period held a prominent position in the Socialist Party.¹ But one of her recommendations may be said to have played a decisive part in Jean's life by prompting him to try his hand at journalism, with the result that in 1936 he joined the staff of the Communist newspaper *La Voix du Peuple*.

The devoted and enthusiastic people whom the young man met in the offices of the newspaper plus the militant atmosphere of the paper, which defended the interests of the working people and played an active role in all the developments of those turbulent years, helped Jean Blume make a final choice by joining the Communist Party.

The pages relating to the prewar period, to the struggle for the Popular Front, to

solidarity with Republican Spain, to the organisation of resistance to a fascism on the rise, are anything but reminiscent of traditional memoirs. The author does not cite historical facts to confirm his part in this or that event but to ponder on the fundamental problems of the working class movement posed by life to this day: how to achieve working people's unity of action while retaining one's identity and remaining loyal to the class approach, how best to combat right extremism and the war menace, and what solidarity with the socialist countries means in practice.

Analysing events that took place half a century ago, Jean Blume stresses the strong impact of the Soviet example on working people. What he writes is, in effect, a rebuff to those in the West who in commenting on the history of the communist movement use that moth-eaten stereotype, the 'hand of Moscow'. 'The reason for the interest in the Soviet Union shown by workers was simple and strong: they wanted to know how a country can be managed and governed without capitalist employers. The admiration for the Soviet Union shown by intellectuals was easy to explain. It was largely attributable to the cinema. In the cinema of the time, Eisenstein meant as much as Einstein in science . . . Literature—with Gorky, Sholokhov, Gladkov, Mayakovsky, Ehrenburg—enjoyed indisputable renown' (p. 56). More important still, it was inseparable from world literature (ibid.).

Blume is frank and self-critical. He mentions the Communists' electoral gains and other successes along with their losses, mistakes, and suicidal manifestations of sectarianism. When dealing with complicated and contradictory aspects of the history of the CPB, he either offers his own explanation of them or refers to the opinion of contemporaries, invariably inviting the reader to join in the discussion as it were.

The book points out the great importance of the support which the Communist International gave to the founder of the CPB, Joseph Jacquemotte, in his struggle against Trotskyism and sectarian trends. This went a long way towards assuring the Belgian Communist leader and his followers victory at the Charleroi party conference (1935), whose decisions enabled the party to take up a fitting place in the working class and trade union movement of the country.

World War II is the fundamental theme of the book. First among the numerous tests to which the war put Belgium's Communists was that of devotion to internationalism. In 1939, with reference to the signing of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact, the reactionary press and both bourgeois and social democratic politicians mounted a fierce anti-communist campaign accusing members of the CPB of 'betraying' the interests of the nation. ' . . . It is not the Red Army that is encamped along our frontiers,' the CPB answered, rebutting the calumny. Being true patriots, the Communists declared: 'Should the Third Reich attack Belgium tomorrow through the capitalists' fault, we would join the front-rank defenders of our country, arms in hand' (p. 74).

Indeed, immediately after the Nazi invasion, the CPB began to fight the fascist invaders and their flunkies. Dedicated to democratic ideals, the party proved capable under the invaders' nose of 'living and acting, of concluding alliances, working out and applying a policy serving the interests of the people and the nation, of being the chief organiser of a resistance movement which any serious historian is bound to praise . . . No other party had dared or been able to assume such responsibilities' (pp 84-85). Jean Blume participated in the publication of the early underground issues of *Le Drapeau Rouge*, the Communist newspaper. He became a leader of the patriotic National Youth Association (NYA) and trained young people for the Belgian Guerrilla Army.

In January 1943, Blume was denounced by a provocateur and seized by the Gestapo. The young Communist had to go through the inferno of Fort Breendonk, an old fortress not far from Brussels turned by the Nazis into a place of torture and execution. The relevant chapters of the book read like both an indictment of all who

would like to forget or justify the Nazis' crimes and a paen to the fortitude of Communists and other anti-fascist patriots who retained their dignity in conditions seemingly beyond human endurance. 'We risked talking before we died, and the Gestapo knew it. What prevented me from breaking down when I was arrested . . . was a fortunate anger . . . Afterwards I would derive strength from my resolve not to do any harm to the friends who had hidden me . . . Everyone must find his own source of courage, his own remedy against fear and suffering' (p. 109).

From Fort Breendonk, where the Gestapo set up 'records in sadism' and where tortures alternated with equally agonising hours spent in the death-row, Blume was sent to Buchenwald camp. What strikes the reader in the chapters describing that huge 'death factory' is not so much the author's restrained manner as the appallingly vivid idea he gives of the nightmare born of fascism . . .

Two boys, the only survivors of a Gipsy camp wiped out by the Nazis, stepped into Buchenwald's 'labour registration office'. They put on the desk a packet of tobacco stolen somewhere. The elder boy—he said he was eleven—stated his request. Children from the camp were about to be shipped to Auschwitz in two trains, he said. They both knew that Auschwitz meant gas chambers but what was worrying them was something else—they wanted to die together. The stolen tobacco was the 'fee' for them to be put on the same train. 'Everything was said politely and in a firm voice. I felt both like weeping and coming to attention in front of those two boys who had become men—and what men—at an age when others play ball' (p. 135).

And there was another Buchenwald, a clandestine, unvanquished, fighting one. It was led by an international prisoners' committee which organised the escape of inmates and acts of sabotage, punished informers and provocateurs, and made preparations for an uprising. When the long-awaited day of liberation came Jean Blume was among the few who had lived to see it.

He returned to Brussels, where he looked up his mother (she could not recognise him because he only weighed 40 kilogrammes) and paid his first visit to the party headquarters on Stalingrad Avenue . . . Those were days brimful of the heady joy of freedom and the sorrow of loss, for he was the only surviving leader of the NYA. The best way to dull the pain in his heart was to give himself up to work. The one-time prisoner became a journalist again, being appointed secretary of the editorial staff of *Le Drapeau Rouge*.

The postwar years were not without problems for the CPB. There were big gains but the party also suffered setbacks and losses. Nevertheless, the author does not for one moment regret linking his life with the party half a century ago. Severely condemning war and fascism, he considers that the most consistent way of combating both is the one chosen by him and his comrades. Whatever is said about them, he writes on the last page of his book, 'the communist movement and the Communist Party are the surest vehicles of the ideas of peace and progress. This is why I belong to them.'

Georg Lenker

¹ In 1951, Isabelle Blume was expelled from the Socialist Party for her active participation in the peace movement. Afterwards, in the 1960s, she was elected President-Coordinator of the World Peace Council. — Ed.

Influential International Force

Dvizheniae neprisoyedinenia (The Non-Aligned Movement), ed. by Professor I. I. Kovalenko, Nauka, Moscow, 1985, 422 pp.

The non-aligned movement, which comprises over 100 independent Asian, African and Latin American countries, has become an influential force in international politics. Its members represent a majority in the UN, and no burning problem of today can be solved without them.

A team of Soviet scholars examines the origins and nature of the non-aligned movement as well as its aims and activities.

The authors rightly associate the rise of the movement with the impact of the liberation ideas of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which delivered a crushing blow to imperialism and paved the way for the liberation of oppressed peoples. The prerequisites for the formation of the movement were created by the defeat of fascist Germany and militarist Japan, an achievement to which the Soviet Union contributed in decisive measure. After World War II, the socialist system came into being; colonial empires gave way to dozens of new national states which embarked on free and independent development. All this radically changed the balance of international forces in favour of socialism and national liberation.

The monograph brings out the dialectical connection between the increasingly solid positions of socialism and the gains of the national liberation movement. The downfall of the colonial system was made possible by the growing might of socialism and a marked shrinking of the sphere of imperialist domination. The national liberation forces, for their part, weakened imperialism in its struggle against the new social system.

The United States and its allies did all they could to put neocolonial fetters on the newly-free countries, to draw them into military-political blocs and to use them as a tool against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. However, most of the imperialist powers' attempts to involve new national states in their global strategy fell through.

'The countries which had won freedom refused to join imperialist blocs or to play the role of pawns in the cold war started by the West, to follow the imperialist powers and to be drawn into aggressive blocs. They searched therefore for new ways and means of consolidating the independence gained by them. They came to the conclusion that, in the given historical context, the most effective way for new national states to continue developing freely was to stay out of imperialist blocs, something which confronted them with imperialism and made them opponents of its policy of aggression' (pp. 4-5).

Anti-imperialist and anti-colonial from the outset, non-alignment has been aimed at fighting against imperialism and war, for detente, a curb on the arms race, and general and complete disarmament.

The book shows that the Soviet Union and other socialist community countries look with respect and sympathy on the efforts of new national states to safeguard their freedom and sovereignty against imperialist encroachments and to contribute to durable peace and international security.

Politically and legally, the non-aligned movement is based on the principles of peaceful coexistence. Its documents express its member-countries' desire to cooperate with all peace forces. This position has found specific expression in treaties of friendship and cooperation with socialist countries. The authors call attention to the 'common allegiance of the non-aligned and socialist community countries to the

policy and principles of peaceful coexistence as the only workable alternative to global nuclear disaster' (p. 68).

Considerable space is given in the book to the struggle of the non-aligned movement for international security and an end to the arms race. The reader will be interested in the authors' comparative examination of decisions of the movement on pressing problems of war and peace and of the Soviet and US positions on these problems. On the strength of a wealth of factual evidence, the authors point out that the Soviet Union and most of the non-aligned countries take a similar stand on the issues of limiting the arms race, removing the war danger and hence preventing nuclear war, using outer space for peaceful purposes, creating peace zones, and so on. The positions of the non-aligned countries are consonant with the strategy of the socialist community on world affairs and opposed to the policy of the United States and its partners in aggressive blocs.

The authors describe the role of the non-aligned movement in the peaceful settlement of international disputes and conflicts, the normalisation of East-West relations, and the establishment of political relations on an equal footing between developing and developed countries.

The struggle to bring about a restructuring of economic relations, that is, a new international economic order, holds a special place among the goals and tasks of the movement. It is a fact of fundamental importance that 'the movement does not now uphold this slogan from a purely economic point of view but in terms of the struggle for the decolonisation and democratisation of international relations generally, and lately in direct connection with the most acute global problems of today, primarily that of preserving peace' (p. 203). The socialist countries, above all the CMEA member-states, support the progressive demands of developing countries in regard to economic independence, including the legitimate demands they make of the imperialist powers.

There are noteworthy chapters in which the authors expose racism, racial discrimination and information imperialism, and reveal the undercurrents of the ideological and political struggle over non-alignment. 'Imperialist forces readily use the concepts of "equidistant", "superpower status", "universalisation" and "globalisation" for their strategic ends, which consist in stripping the non-aligned movement of its anti-imperialist substance and in loosening cooperation between non-aligned countries and the world socialist community' (p. 317).

The authors show that imperialism's subversive activity against the non-aligned movement is prompted by the class interests of Western monopolies, which are trying to use newly-free countries against the socialist world.

There is a detailed survey of the various stages and distinguishing aspects of US policy in the national liberation area; it reveals the causes of Washington's abrupt swing to the right in relations with developing countries since the Reagan administration took over. The main components of this policy are listed as follows: a substantial increase in military spending, the adoption of new strategic weapons systems, an expanding US military presence in various parts of the globe, a stepped-up ideological and propaganda offensive against progressives.

The US administration actively combines anti-Sovietism with the struggle against the national liberation movement. Added to economic blackmail, the concept of 'rapid deployment force' and 'permanent presence' are disguised forms of pressure, the utilisation of US allies and 'friendly regimes', and diverse forms of state terrorism. The negative impact of Washington's policy on the non-aligned movement is exemplified by the persistence of conflict situations in the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, northern and southern Africa, Southeast Asia, Central America and the Caribbean. In spite of imperialist intrigues, however, the movement is an obvious international reality today, 'an objective ally of all the forces seeking a secure future for humanity

and opposing the policy of war and exploitation' (p. 337).

The attitude of the Soviet Union and other socialist community countries to non-alignment is determined by their fundamental policy towards the anti-imperialist national liberation movement and the developing countries which have cast off the chains of colonial rule. The very existence of socialism as a reality and the support which it gives to these countries limit imperialism's opportunities to imposing its will and using force to influence them.

The authors do not ignore the contradictions and difficulties of the movement. They attribute clashes between trends in it to its heterogeneity and to pressure from imperialism and reaction. However, they consider that, in spite of complex socio-political differentiation processes and other disintegrational factors plus distinctions in the approach to the solution of internal and international problems which tend to weaken the movement, its member-countries will continue their efforts to achieve solid unity in the face of the permanent threat coming from imperialist powers.

The authors sum up the results of their research as follows: 'The Soviet Union and other socialist countries consider the non-aligned movement a component of the world anti-imperialist front, an important factor operating in favour of peace and social progress and a healthier international climate. . . The policy of cooperation between the two international political forces of our times—world socialism and the non-aligned movement—which are operating in alliance with the international working class and national liberation movements, is therefore a historically sound line of struggle against imperialism and reaction, for peace and international security' (p. 402).

The Soviet scholars' monography, which uses sound arguments and draws on numerous sources, is based on estimations made by the CPSU and fraternal parties. It acquaints the reader with one of the most noteworthy phenomena of today, the non-aligned movement.

Boris Borodin, Cand. Sc. (Hist.)

The Hard Road to Unity

Jerry Lembcke and William M. Tattam, *One Union in Wood. A Political History of the International Woodworkers of America*, published simultaneously in Canada and the USA by Harbour Publishing Co., Ltd. and International Publishers, 1984, X + 229 pp.

FOR nearly half a century, 'One Union in Wood' has been (as it still is) the slogan of the lumberjacks, sawmill workers, loggers, and wood processors of North America, encapsulating their attempts to build a democratic and strong industrial union capable of withstanding the pressures from monopoly. It is not surprising, therefore, that this slogan is used as the title of a book giving the story of how the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) emerged.

The authors, Jerry Lembcke and William M. Tattam, became interested in this subject when they were still graduate students at the University of Oregon and they devoted many years of painstaking study to it. They pick up their story in the 1880s, when the timber industry began growing rapidly in the northwest of the USA and in the Canadian province of British Columbia, and trace the events to the present. However, they concentrates on the stormy period of the Great Depression of the

1930s and the early postwar years, when the great union organising surge took place in the USA and Canada.

The book is a great lesson in the realities of bourgeois democracy: workers get what they are strong and united enough to win, and retain what they are strong enough to keep. It is the story of how American and Canadian workers, many immigrants from Britain, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Germany, and uprooted agricultural workers were herded into primitive logging camps on the border of the USA and Canada, where they cut down timber and piled up the enormous wealth of today's forest industrial giants. It is also the story of how these workers, confronted with miserable wages and intolerable working conditions, pitted their strength against powerful monopolies, the police, and the courts to win the right to combine themselves in unions.

'Woodworkers', we read in the book, 'have traditionally suffered the most dangerous and degrading working conditions found in North American industry: death and dismemberment routinely visited the woods; cold, damp, lice-infested bunk houses were 'home' to loggers; holidays, health benefits and pensions were non-existent. Sixty-hour work weeks were common. And when woodworkers tried to organise, employers met them with blacklists and lockouts' (p. VI).

Nevertheless, in 1937 the International Woodworkers of America was founded. It subsequently became the largest affiliate of the Congress of Industrial Organisations¹ on the West Coast of North America.

A major obstacle to the formation of unions at the time was the split in the working class movement under the impact of reformism. In Canada there was the newly emergent reformist party calling itself the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. Although there was no reformist party as such in the United States, there were in the trade unions strong reformist tendencies as well as leaders who were outright supporters of the capitalist system.

The top leadership of the CIO, which had utilised the energy and skills of the Communists in the initial period of organisation of the big industrial unions in the USA and Canada, attempted to dislodge progressives from any significant positions of leadership as soon as organisation was well under way. This found them lined up with the White Bloc² elements in the IWA, and top functionaries were sent from CIO headquarters to 'purge' the IWA leadership, in other words, to expel the Communists and other progressives. Anti-communism and anti-Sovietism became the ideological foundation of the alliance of the reactionary elements in the unions with employers and the authorities. 'The White Bloc was only able to come to power with the assistance of an anti-communist campaign waged by the governments of Canada and the United States and the employers on both sides of the border,' Harold Pritchett, the first International President of the IWA, notes in the Foreword (p. V).

In their meticulously documented work the authors allow the facts of history to speak for themselves and give the reader an exciting and dramatic picture of the events of those years. The intensity of the class struggle during the movement for union rights is illustrated, for example, by the events that took place at the close of the 1930s in the US state of Oregon. In order to expel Communists the White Bloc elements in the local union suggested a discriminatory amendment to the IWA's Constitution that, in effect, equated Communists to members of fascist organisations (p. 67). The amendment was defeated, but the right-wing elements started a malicious anti-communist campaign, provoking the burning and ransacking of union premises and, in January 1940, brutally murdering a trade union activist, the wife of one of the left workers' leaders. The inquest was turned into an inquisition of her husband, who was grilled about his connections with the Communist Party. The murderers went unpunished.

The anti-communist frenzy went on into the subsequent period. The left leadership

of the IWA in the USA was smashed immediately after the war. However, in British Columbia, Canada, the Left retained the leadership positions for some time. The White Bloc, the employers, the reformists Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, and the Social Democratic Party joined hands against them. Succumbing to provocation from the Right, the British Columbia union leadership undertook a futile attempt to secede from the international union. As a result, the union leaders lost the confidence of the workers, who considered their actions as divisive.

Although the IWA remains the main union in the wood industry in North America, there are now several other contending unions. This has made more difficult the struggles of the lumber workers for economic and social justice. Consequently, the struggle for unity remains a critical and unfinished task. Also, it should be borne in mind that not more than 40 per cent of the Canadian workforce is organised into unions,³ while in the USA the proportion of organised workers adds up to only 18.8 per cent.⁴

Most of the studies of the working class movement in North America conducted by bourgeois authors have attempted to smother the role played by the communist parties of the USA and Canada in the movement's development. Where these parties are mentioned at all, it is only to try and give the impression that others had organised the workers in spite of the Communists. *One Union in Wood* is a welcome departure from this stereotype historiography: it gives the true story of the persevering battles fought by the founders of the IWA, of their successes and setbacks.

Lessons of the past are particularly important today when monopoly capital is seeking a way out of the severe crisis in the wood and many other industries at the expense of the working people, when in both countries more and more concessions are demanded from workers in collective bargaining, while in the trade union leadership capitulatory voices are loudly counselling retreat and renunciation of the struggle.

But there is growing evidence that the lessons of the past have not been lost. The understanding that the workers are strong when they are united has been assimilated by woodworkers, who are preparing for battle to protect their gains and strengthen their union.

Although this book presents a study of only one industry in the USA and Canada, it makes instructive reading for workers of all industries in other capitalist countries. In the final count it is only when the workers begin to see that their enemy is not a specific monopoly but state-monopoly capital as a whole that they will acquire the class consciousness necessary to win the final battle against exploitation.

John Manning, US trade unionist
William Stewart, representative of the
Canadian Communist Party on *WMR*

¹ The CIO was formed in the mid-1930s when the American Federation of Labor refused to organise industrial workers in the USA and Canada. Although it was headquartered in the USA, it operated in both the USA and Canada.

² A name adopted by the right-wing anti-communist alliance formed with the support of the corporations, to keep the Communists and the Left out of leading positions in the union. —Ed.

³ *Directory of Labor Organizations in Canada*, 1984.

⁴ *International Herald Tribune*, February 12, 1985.

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Chicago, Illinois 60610.

World Marxist Review is published by Progress Books,
71 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 2P6.
Second class mail registration number 2352.
Printed in Canada.
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