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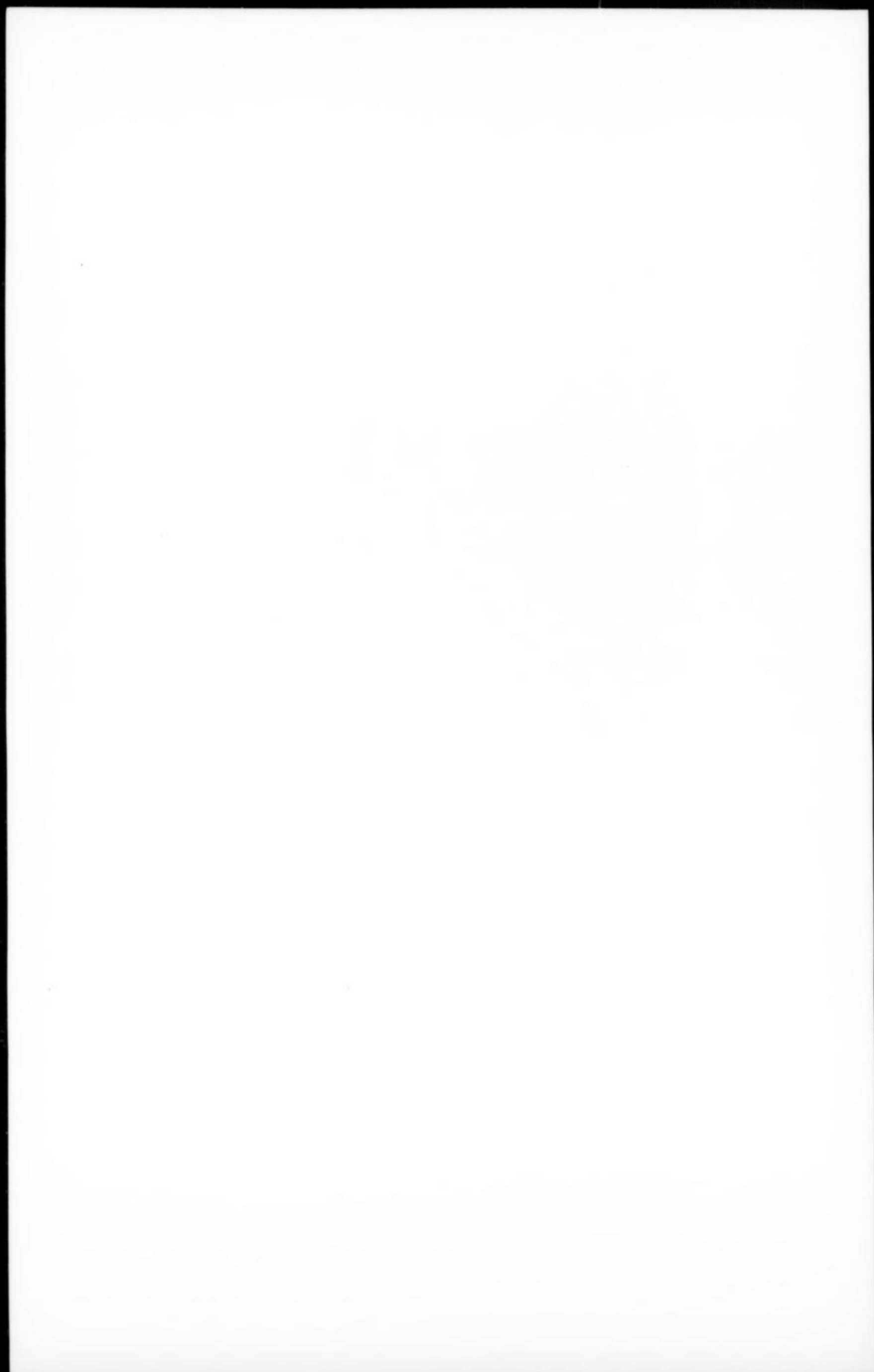
May Day —
Gus Hall / 5

Capitalism's
general crisis / 72

CPSU congress —
Razumovsky / 18

Scientists vs
Star Wars / 66

Bolivia / 32





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contents

MAY DAY CENTENARY

In the Crucible of Class Battles <i>Gus Hall (USA)</i>	5
A Tradition Born of Solidarity <i>Ibrahim Zakaria (WFTU)</i>	9
The History of the May Day	16
On the Road of Communist Creativity and Peace <i>Georgi Razumovsky (USSR)</i>	18
Behind the Facade of 'Partnership' <i>Franz Muhri (Austria)</i>	27
In Parliament, in the Trade Unions, and Among the Masses <i>Simon Reyes Rivera (Bolivia)</i>	32
On the Agenda: Democratisation <i>Gilberto Vieira (Colombia)</i>	39

the party

The Communist Alternative <i>James Stewart (Ireland)</i>	47
ANNALS OF COURAGE. Unbroken by the Inferno of Ansar Camp <i>Rafic Samhoun (Lebanon)</i>	52

new experience

Looking for Modern Approaches to the Young <i>Leszek Miller (Poland)</i>	56
Research Activities of the CP Canada <i>Gerry van Houten (Canada)</i>	59
Documents	61
In the Mirror of the Press	61
The Most Necessary Work <i>Vladimir Morozov</i>	62
In Brief	65

exchange of views, discussion

INTELLECT AGAINST THE INSANITY OF STAR WARS. A Collective Interview	66
The General Crisis of Capitalism: Economic Features <i>Max Schmidt, Lutz Maier (GDR)</i>	72

viewpoints

Labour and Consumption: Socialist Principles <i>Jiri Dvorak, Konstantin Mikulsky</i>	79
Committed to Peace and Good-Neighbour Relations <i>Nguyen Co Thach (Vietnam)</i>	87
Defending Democracy and Fighting for the Working People's Rights <i>Xavier Garaycoa, Luis Emilio Veintimilla (Ecuador)</i>	93
FRG: Dissent Outlawed. A Political Report <i>Sergei Yastrzhembsky</i>	99
Topical Notes. What's Behind the Show-Window? <i>Serge Dim</i>	107

surveys, information and mail

From Our Mailbag. Realistic Basis of Concerted Action	109
Dushmans: Who Are They?	112
Diary	117
In Memory of Moses Mabhida	118
In Memory of Seydou Sissoko	118

the book scene

A Rebellious Island Comes Alive Again <i>Elean Thomas</i>	119
'They Would Crucify Him Again' <i>Donald Ramotar</i>	122
New Books	125
AGAINST REPRESSION AND PERSECUTION. End Arbitrary Actions <i>Ali Ileri (Turkey)</i>	127

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MAY DAY CENTENARY

In the Crucible of Class Battles

Gus Hall — General Secretary,
Communist Party USA

At a May Day observance in the United States some years ago it was said: "On May 1, hundreds of millions of workers bask in the sunlit grandeur of the achievements, the victories, and the historical role of our class. It is the day when class consciousness is on display... May Day's roots are in the class consciousness of workers — in the history, the experiences, the memories handed down through generations, the treasured traditions and pride in their historic role... The roots of May Day belong to every worker. They are forever a part of the past, present, and future of the working class."

While being sparked by the struggle for the eight-hour day in the United States a hundred years ago, May Day has evolved into a unique day of mass actions and demonstrations world-wide.

For this 100th May Day anniversary there are also mass actions and demonstrations asserting the demands of working people on a host of issues. The issues are as many and as varied as there are countries, and probably more. The following are some of the issues in the United States, for instance.

Of those which express the common demands of workers in all countries, foremost is the demand for isolating and clipping the political wings of the forces threatening our planet and all humanity with nuclear annihilation. Nobody now should be unaware or confused about who those forces are. After Washington's rejection of the Soviet Union's proposals of practical measures to implement principles agreed by both sides at the US-USSR summit in Geneva last November, the workers should not fail to identify the causes of their disappointment.

When US warships intruded into both the Baltic and Black seas and when, disregarding the Soviet Union's moratorium on nuclear weapon tests, the Reagan administration triggered more tests in Nevada, there was no room for doubts or confusion. It was clear that the source of the provocations and the heightened danger of nuclear confrontation was the work of the most rabidly aggressive sections of the Reagan administration and its hangers-on in the NATO Countries. This 100th May Day anniversary is resounding with the working people's demands for strait-jacketing these forces and dismantling the nuclear threat.

Moreover, the Reagan administration has provided the United States working class and all other working people with an abundance of other issues.

Workers know Reagan and company as bitterly anti-union and anti-labour

executives, bent on fully supporting the monopolies' onslaught on the working conditions, wages, and living standards of the working people. They remember Reagan's assault on the air traffic controllers' union, which set an example for the most virulently anti-union corporations. They remember his sabotage of the enforcement of the national labour law by appointing a chairman opposed to collective bargaining.

The Afro-American, Native Indian American, Asian and Pacific Island and Hispanic minorities know Reagan as a hypocritical racist, doing his utmost to undermine the legal defenses of these minorities against discriminatory treatment.

United States working women know Reagan as a foe of women's rights, particularly their right to equal pay for comparable work and their right to determine the functions of motherhood.

Reagan is stealing food from the mouths of hungry children and destitute, poor people by cutting food stamp and other welfare programmes. He's evicting the poor from shelter by cancelling housing programs. Reagan is ploughing under what is left of family farms by vetoing emergency farm relief legislation. He's expelling students and depriving youth of education by cutting student loans and funds for education. He's shutting the sick and dying out of hospital emergency rooms and hospital beds by slashing funds for Medicare and Medicaid. He's picking the pockets of the elderly and infirm by reducing their social pensions.

The Reagan administration's militarists and foreign policy or provocation-makers are daily fabricating new Vietnam-fiascos with their aggressions against Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Lebanon and Libya.

And these issues are only a few on a much longer list.

Yet, this 100th May Day anniversary merits something else in addition to elaborating such demands. It provides an opportunity to give some thought to what has conferred such lasting value on the observance of May Day for working people not only of the United States but also of the world as a whole, to what has propelled it for these hundred years.

It is not because it is a day honouring the heroic workers, still remembered, who gave their lives in the struggle.

The May Day demonstrations pay homage to the working class, but that also is not the main essence of the mass actions.

What gives the May Day events their unique essence, what continues to propel them, and what relates them to the current events each year is the class struggle. Their focus is the class struggle.

That also explains why they are not celebrations — why they take the form of mass actions and protest demonstrations. Each year, May Day is a day of inventories, of assessments, of studies, drawing the lessons from the current events related to the class struggle.

It is a day of reassertion of the centrality of the class struggle. For a hundred years life has pushed the class struggle to centre stage, and for a hundred years the exploiting class has denied and covered it up. When forced to, the capitalist class accepted the idea of differences, and even struggle — but never the class nature of the struggle. It has always been necessary to restate and emphasize the centrality of the class struggle — because there is a never-ending effort to downgrade, to bypass, to bury, and to deny the very idea of class struggle.

Some will even accept the idea of the existence of a working class and still deny the existence of the class struggle. To deny or downgrade the centrality of the class struggle is to deny the existence of the main mover of history. The denial of the class struggle is the main basis and the roots for the development of all forms of opportunism. The centrality of the class struggle is the main class pillar in the development of the science of Marxism-Leninism.

As the fixed star was the point of reference for the men at sea, so the class struggle is the point of reference for all anti-capitalist forces, including the communist and

workers' revolutionary parties. It is the fixed star in the struggle against the socio-economic system that has created it. The class struggle, although the centre, does not have an existence of its own, in isolation from the rest of society. In fact, the class struggle, influences all and is influenced by all movements and struggles in society. Thus any attempt to deal with issues and struggle by other sectors, while ignoring the class struggle and the working class, such struggle will be buffeted by class winds and in most cases will succumb to the pressures of the dominant class, that of monopoly capital.

In terms of the history of human societies, 100 years are but a brief interlude. But the achievements and the victories of the working class in that period are very impressive. The inventory is proof positive that the class struggle is indeed the mover of history.

During the 100 years the working class has moved into the front ranks in the struggle for human progress. Within the 100 years the working class has become the dominant political and ideological force in over one-third of the world that is building socialism.

Under socialism the form and the essence of the class struggle undergo a change. It vanishes from the economic relationships, but remnants of it remain in the ideological arena. It is a factor in the relations of the socialist countries with the capitalist world. The forms change, but the class struggle remains a factor in detente and coexistence.

The working class played the dominant role both in production and in the front battle lines in the defeat of Hitler fascism. It joined forces with other classes in an anti-fascist front, but it did not relinquish its own class aims. It has played the dominant role, both internationally and domestically, in the victories of national liberation. Here, also, the role of the working class changes following the victories against imperialism, mainly because there is a change in the role of other sectors. After national liberation the issue of what will be the direction of domestic economic and political developments evolves as a central issue. Thus the class struggle emerges under these conditions. All who joined in the struggle against all oppressors and exploiters, domestic and foreign, may not remain in the anti-imperialism coalition. Some may move to become native class exploiters, and others may be willing to act as proxies to the old exploiters. Here again the class struggle becomes the key factor of life.

The working class has become the main force in the struggles against imperialism. It is the unifier of the various forces in the anti-imperialist movement. By militating for peace and against the negative effects of the huge military budgets on economic development it has moved the issue of peace into the arena of the class struggle.

It is the main force in the struggle against racism and, in the process, it is making headway in burning out the influences of racism in its own ranks.

In the capitalist countries the working class is the most consistent force against monopoly capitalism. Many class forces join in the anti-monopoly struggles, resisting the monopolies within the framework of collisions between classes. These class struggles acquire new forms as the objective conditions change. There have appeared, for example, giant multinational corporations, whose tentacles reach across national boundaries, giving them new sources of super-profits and new manoeuvrability. These multinational corporations and the overall internationalization of capital and productions present the working class with a new kind of challenge. In a sense, it dictates the internationalization of the class struggle.

As a minimum it calls for new kinds of international class unity, for new tactics, such as multinational strikes against the multinational corporations, such as a world-wide boycott of their products.

On this 100th anniversary, the US working class and its struggles also face new challenges. They face the Reagan-corporate anti-labour, racist offensive. They have to find ways to go from defensive struggles, from policies of cut-backs and concessions, to offensive struggles. They face the problem resulting from the fusion of huge corporate galaxies. These are trillion dollar monsters.

The working class opposes them, particularly the military corporations, which have

emerged as the corrupt, reactionary core of the military-industrial complex. These are corporations which get most of their profits from military production.

The rise of new technology is creating totally new problems for the working class. It leads to long-term unemployment and changes the kind of work that workers do, but it does not do away or in any way change the essence of the class struggle.

All this, and more, cast their shadows on the class struggle.

For the first seventy-five years of the century US working class fought for the right to organize legal trade unions. The Reagan-corporate offensive is now fighting to turn back the clock, by removing the legal basis for trade unions and eroding what has been gained by the working class in the long years of battle. Living standards and real wages have been on the decline for ten years.

While socialist societies are planning accelerated full-scale progress, as has been demonstrated recently by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the world of US capitalism is suffering from continued, full-scale deterioration.

The new challenges that effect the class struggle include the fact that 30 million Americans live below the poverty level, that at the height of the economic upturn 20 million are unemployed, that five million families with children are homeless and hungry, that thousands of farm families are evicted each year. Moreover, the working class and the class struggle are affected by the sharpening and growth of racism.

In many cities people are freezing, starving, and dying of neglect and lack of medical care. This situation has become a national emergency. No state is spared and the blight has reached the suburbs and farm areas. In New York City alone, where the crisis has become a full-blown state of emergency, 300,000 are unemployed, 60,000 are homeless, 144,000 are doubling up, and over 25 per cent are living in poverty, too poor to qualify for food stamps. Nation-wide, according to official figures, the ranks of the "working poor" rose a frightening 40 per cent in the last five Reagan years.

The homeless, hungry, and jobless are a permanent, not a cyclical problem. During the economic upturn the rate of increase slowed down somewhat, but the total numbers of homeless and hungry have increased each year. These growing masses of homeless, hungry, sick, starving, and malnourished are only the most critical tip of a much larger economic iceberg of socio-economic decay. We face a special crisis and its end is not in sight.

These circumstances are changing the thought patterns of the working class and the essence and forms of the class struggle. These new thought patterns were all reflected in the recent convention of the AFL-CIO. The convention has a new tone. There was a new sense of militancy. The focus was sharply anti-monopoly, anti-multinational corporations. Class collaboration sentiment was on the defensive. Class consciousness was on a new, higher level. Anti-Reagan sentiment, especially on domestic issues, was strong and militant. Anti-apartheid expressions were sharp. Anti-imperialist sentiment was on a new level, especially in regard to Central America and South Africa.

A new anti-racist position emerged. The convention addressed the problem of changing seniority rules¹ to ensure affirmative action.² It expressed a higher level of political independence and political action, especially aimed at the 1986 congressional elections.

Many factors in US history have slowed down the maturing of class consciousness. Many factors flattened the sharp peaks with valleys. US capitalism had the best of all factors for its operations: riches in natural resources, a big supply of foreign labour and skills, and, in later years, the profits from foreign, imperialist exploitation. A special source of profits and capital accumulation has been the racism that capital transferred from the slave market.

But these unique features have been slowly deteriorating, and with deterioration the class struggle has sharpened. And the sharpened class struggle has brought in its wake a growing class consciousness, creating the new material for the development of this

consciousness.

The human brain is not a clean sheet on which you can write whatever you like. To make room for the new class concepts it is necessary to remove some of the old anti-working class ones. The workers are surrounded by swirling ideas that justify class exploitation. They are engulfed with ideas that nothing can be done. Therefore, to help develop class consciousness, it is necessary simultaneously to fight against wrong concepts and to inject new thought. This is a most important feature of the class struggle. The replacement of old ideological thoughts with new ideas supports the working class in the class struggle.

The class will go through change in form, but it will be around, influencing events and the course of history as long as there are classes of exploiters and exploited, as long as there are two world socio-economic systems.

In the olden days, the seamen who ignored the fixed star lost their direction. In today's world, those who ignore the centrality of the class struggle will not only lose direction but find themselves in the swamp of opportunism. To ignore the centrality of the class struggle is, knowingly or unknowingly, to be on the side of monopoly capital.

Ideological clarity and firmness are possible only if they are rooted in a clear understanding of the class struggle. It forces one to take sides. One cannot sit on the fence between the two classes. For example, taking the side of socialism, in the world struggle, is taking the side of the working class — as one would support a strike struggle.

A deeper understanding of the class struggle, as the fixed star, is necessary to have a deeper understanding of the worker's role and place in history.

Such is the main lesson of the 100 years of May Day and the class struggle.

¹ Seniority rules grant privileges to workers with a long record of work in one industry. These are enjoyed mainly by white male workers on account of discrimination against workers belonging to ethnic minorities and against women. — *Ed.*

² The "affirmative action programme" is aimed at ensuring actual equality to ethnic minorities and to women. — *Ed.*

A Tradition Born of Solidarity

Ibrahim Zakaria — General Secretary,
World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU)

A hundred years ago, Chicago witnessed an event which had a tremendous impact on the subsequent development of the international working class movement. A strike by the city's workers started one of the most glorious and lasting traditions of the proletariat, annual May Day demonstrations. The relevant decision, adopted by the International Socialist Congress (Paris, 1889), had a wide echo. The following year May Day was marked in a number of countries as an international labour day. It has been gaining in significance ever since then and is now a holiday of the whole of progressive humanity.

May Day is primarily a solidarity day on which workers in various countries solemnly reaffirm their allegiance to the great brotherhood of labour.

May Day is a day of struggle for social and political rights, against exploitation and oppression in any form, for peace, democracy and progress.

May Day is a review of the militant forces of the working people of all continents, a holiday born in class battles and symbolising an aspiration for social justice, freedom and happiness.

In many countries the early May Day actions involved mere handfuls of people; meetings and rallies were banned and brutally persecuted by the police. There are still

countries where the authorities crack down on May Day demonstrators. However, the situation has changed greatly over the past 100 years. Nowadays May Day demonstrations draw hundreds of millions belonging to diverse nationalities. Every attempt by reaction to prevent them meets powerful resistance from the working people. In socialist and a number of other countries May Day is an official holiday. Last year the WFTU General Council passed a resolution dedicated to the centenary of the Chicago events. "The past hundred years," the resolution says, "have clearly revealed the role of the working class as the main driving force of history, the most decisive factor of the radical transformations in society. Today, this driving force has come to power in the socialist countries; it fights against exploitation and oppression by monopolies and for the extension of workers' rights everywhere under capitalist rule; it plays an ever increasing role in the struggle of peoples of the developing countries for national and social liberation."

This class is at the centre of our epoch. No major problem of today can be solved without regard to its interests or without the participation of its political and trade union organisations. This is a manifestation of the invincible power of historical necessity.

New Conditions, New Problems

The trend of growth of the international army of labour in the twentieth century refutes occasional allegations to the effect that scientific and technological progress and the emergence of new industries tend to reduce the role of the working class in society and are all but leading to its disappearance. The number of wage workers has increased tenfold since the beginning of this century and exceeded one billion by the mid-1980s. The proportion of members of the working class went up from 71 million to 660 million. Over 240 million of them work in industrial capitalist countries. The working class of developing countries is growing fast. Whereas at the turn of the century it numbered a mere 13 million there (most of them being plantation workers), today it is more than 200 million strong in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and roughly half of them hold industrial jobs. The socialist countries have substantially changed the map of the world of labour. The number of workers there has trebled over the past 35 years, and now it exceeds 200 million.

Quantitative changes are accompanied by deep-going qualitative and structural ones. The share of skilled workers is growing under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution (STR); the proportion of those engaged chiefly in brainwork has already come close to half of the workforce in industrial capitalist countries. Even in economic fields dominated by manual labour, workers are now better educated and more proficient than a few decades ago. The rise of numerous new professions involving the execution of complex operations makes for the intellectual elevation of workers. The continuing proletarianisation of engineers, technologists, commercial and office employees contributes to a qualitative renewal of the working class and offers it greater opportunities to fight effectively for its interests.

To be sure, the foregoing does not imply that the development of the working class encounters no difficulties. Old problems are becoming more acute and there arise new difficult problems due both to the objective conditions in which contemporary capitalism is evolving and to calculated activity by monopoly and the political forces expressing its interests. Various forms of dissociation and other factors unknown before prevent the working class from gaining higher trade union and political consciousness and hamper the achievement of class unity of action.

Under capitalism the STR raises additional barriers between diverse groups of working people. While encouraging the trend towards intellectualised labour, it is at the same time widening the gap between highly skilled workers, such as computer operators or adjusters of numerically-controlled machine tools, and highly specialised and low-skilled workers whose only duty is often to merely keep an eye on the work of

automatic machines. A similar process is underway among office employees; computerisation, while increasing the number of highly competent technical personnel, dooms certain categories of employees to mechanical operations requiring little skill. "Electronic work at home", made possible by the widespread use of personal computers, creates new problems. Experts estimate that in the United States, for one, this kind of work at home will involve 10-20 per cent of the workforce by the end of this century. This understandably complicates the problem of unification of the working people to a considerable extent.

In capitalist countries the STR has a painful impact on employment. In view of the economic crisis and increasing inter-monopoly competition, the use of up-to-date techniques and technologies by employers makes for fast-growing unemployment and lends it a chronic character. The replacement of mechanical with electronic components reduces outlays for labour power by 40-50 per cent. The use of robots, which can work around the clock and, what is more, never go on strike, leads to a reduction of employment. By the year 2000, robots will be doing half of the jobs in the United States, according to some estimates. The arms race is destabilising the economies of capitalist countries and imposes cuts in spending for social needs.

The monopolies, taking advantage of differences arising between groups of workers as well as between job-holders and jobless people under the impact of the STR, try to disunite them; they foment rivalries among them and undermine the positions of trade unions. Working class organisations strike back by combating the utilisation of new technology to the detriment of labour, and evolve a democratic alternative of applying achievements of the STR. The struggle centres on problems such as those of job preservation, labour organisation and division, general education and vocational training, social security and health care. A number of traditional problems of the trade union movement present themselves in a new way as they gain in acuteness. For instance, wage rates must now correspond, not only to the rising cost of living, but to growing productivity, skill, the intensity of labour, and the physical as well as nervous, emotional stress it puts on the worker; as for shorter hours, they must go hand in hand with reducing exploitation and unemployment and providing conditions for the professional and cultural development of working people.

In this struggle, the interests of labour clash inevitably with those of the transnationals, whose activity covers primarily sectors determining scientific and technological progress. An indication of this is that 60 per cent of the foreign output of 866 major transnationals comes from industries using sophisticated technologies. Their grip on the economy of the non-socialist world is tightening. UN experts estimate that by the end of this decade the transnationals will be controlling over 40 per cent of production in capitalist and developing countries. This is now the strongest and most dangerous adversary of the working class movement, which faces an international capital enjoying exceptional freedom of manoeuvre in the production, financial, economic and social spheres.

Transnationals use their colossal resources to transfer enterprises to countries where labour power is cheap and the trade union movement rather weak or non-existent. For instance, the set of enterprises owned by US companies abroad employs half as many people as are engaged in the manufacturing industry of the United States itself. The transnationals tend to create a top stratum of relatively well-paid workers in the head countries, where there are powerful trade unions, while below there are the underpaid and badly exploited workers of developing countries and immigrant workers. Using refined wage systems and various privileges, they are forming a labour elite also inside every country and at every enterprise to oppose it to the bulk of working people.

Transnationals are stepping up their attacks on the trade unions to undermine their influence and keep them out of decision-making on the introduction of modern technology and other socio-economic problems. By exploiting economic difficulties and changes in the situation on the labour market detrimental to the working class,

capital wants to nullify many social achievements of labour. The bourgeois state supports it in this through anti-union legislation and repressive measures.

A case in point is Britain, where laws passed in the early 1980s make it possible to declare nearly every strike "illegal" and where solidarity strikes are virtually banned. The repressive measures adopted against striking British miners and US air traffic controllers as well as other acts of anti-labour terrorism in capitalist countries won sad fame. The problem of trade union rights is very acute in a number of developing countries. In the past few years in the United States, Britain, the FRG, Japan and other capitalist countries some trade unions have made serious concessions to monopoly, and this has told on the working people's condition. The membership of trade unions has diminished noticeably in some countries. This is largely a result of unemployment, the decreasing popularity of reformist ideas and disillusionment with the slogans of "social partnership".

There is an imperative need to organise resistance to the offensive of capital, to work out effective measures against the monopoly policy of social revanche. The working class and its unions have a huge potential to this end built up by the struggle of generations of workers as well as inherent in proletarian solidarity.

Our Chief Weapon

Marx wrote that the capitalists "form a veritable freemason society vis-à-vis the whole working class, while there is little love lost between them in competition among themselves".¹ This is how, Lenin pointed out, a "general alliance of the imperialists of all countries, forming the basis of the economic alliance of capitalism, an alliance whose natural and inevitable aim is to defend capital", is taking shape.²

These words are more relevant than ever. The cosmopolitanisation of capital and the activity of transnationals are not only leading to the formation of an international system of exploitation but bringing closer together the conditions in which workers have to fight; they necessitate worker unity of action at national and international level. In the hundred years that have passed since the May events in Chicago, labour has gained ample experience of struggle for unity. The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), founded in 1945, contributes substantially to this experience, now as before. It is the first truly universal organisation in the history of the international trade union movement, an organisation comprising the overwhelming majority of the national unions that existed when it was founded. The main tasks of the Federation were written into the WFTU Constitution adopted by the First World Trade Union Conference (Paris). They provided for struggle against war and its causes to bring about lasting peace, for defence of the working people's interests in all international bodies, for the organisation of a common struggle of the trade unions of all countries against encroachments on the economic and social rights and democratic freedoms, and for a guaranteed right to work.

Since then, the bonds of unity and solidarity have been strengthening. The trade union movement has assumed world-wide dimensions. It has about 500 million people in its ranks. The WFTU alone now groups 206 million people, or 250-odd per cent more than at the time of its founding. Two other influential organisations — the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and World Confederation of Labour (WCL) — have 85 million and 18 million members respectively. Tens of millions belong to autonomous labour organisations.

The WFTU is not only a major labour organisation but the only one grouping workers of socialist, capitalist and developing countries irrespective of political convictions, religion or party allegiance. Functioning under it are, in addition to the 90 national unions affiliated to it, 11 Trade Union Internationals (TUIs) which see to cooperation among workers employed in one or several related economic fields. The TUIs comprise about 600 industrial organisations; more than 60 of these represent countries whose national unions do not belong to the WFTU.

Our Federation invariably pursues a policy of uniting the national contingents of the trade union movement in defence of common interests. Proletarian solidarity has always been our chief weapon in the struggle for these interests. Its significance today is greater than ever. It plays a decisive part in the struggle for the interests of labour and is a most important factor in preserving peace and staving off nuclear disaster.

We are well aware that the solution of this key problem of our times will largely depend on joint effort by the trade unions, on their militancy and unity of action. The struggle for peace on our planet and an end to the arms race fosters the anti-war traditions of the working class and the international trade union movement, and helps safeguard the socio-economic interests of labour. This explains why it is in the focus of the Federation's attention. Meetings dedicated to the struggle for peace and disarmament are held regularly in periods of statutory actions of the WFTU and TUIs. Our Federation emphatically rejects Reagan's Star Wars plans and backs the struggle of the working people of Western Europe against the new US nuclear missiles on the continent. It declares for creating nuclear-free zones in various regions of the globe and peace zones in the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, and demands an end to all nuclear weapons tests.

In common with all peace forces on the planet, the WFTU supports the programme for the complete elimination of nuclear arms by the year 2000 put forward by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, in his Statement of January 15 last and written into the decisions of the Soviet Communists' 27th Congress.

Working people also express on International Day of Trade Union Action for Peace (September 1, anniversary of the beginning of World War II) their resolve to put an end to the dangerous and ruinous arms race. They do it by holding anti-war rallies and mass demonstrations and by circulating leaflets brought out by trade unions. The leaflets spell out in simple terms the disastrous consequences of the arms race for the people and stress the importance of peace initiatives aimed at ending it.

The standing International Trade Union Committee for Peace and Disarmament, known as the Dublin Committee, performs the important function of coordinator of anti-war actions of the international trade union movement. Set up in Dublin, Ireland, four years ago by decision of the World Trade Union Conference on Social and Economic Aspects of Disarmament (Paris, 1968), it has won prestige among large sections of international opinion by its vigorous activity.

The WFTU considers that actions for peace and disarmament are inseparable from the struggle for employment and an upturn in the world economy, failing which no new social gains can be made. The primary need is to convert war production to production for peaceful purposes. The international trade union movement has emphatically refuted the myth upheld by the forces of militarism and aggression, who allege that disarmament leads to greater unemployment. Research done by trade unions has shown that, on the contrary, a rundown of arms production would make it much easier to end the employment crisis and solve other social problems. The strategy of struggle for peace and employment proposed by the WFTU is a realistic alternative to the imperialist policy of arms race and attack on the rights of labour.

Advanced trade unions couple their anti-war activity with actions against aggression by imperialism and its accomplices in Central America, the Middle East and Indochina. They identify themselves with all fighters against the inhuman apartheid regime in South Africa and support the struggle of the trade unions and working people of Namibia against the South African regime, which illegally occupies that country. These actions, as well as serving their direct purpose, contribute to the unity of the international working class.

The WFTU champions trade union unity of action irrespective of the political orientation of the trade unions concerned. It was from this position that it backed the American Professional Air Traffic Controllers' Organisation (disbanded afterwards by the administration) and campaigned in protest against the persecution of trade

unions in Turkey, South Africa and elsewhere. The Federation did all in its power to induce class brothers to aid the British miners on strike in 1984-1985. It widely publicised the strike, making clear to world opinion that the miners' action was justified. On the Federation's initiative funds were raised in many countries to aid the miners, who were also sent food and clothing; trade unions of socialist countries invited hundreds of strikers and their families to holiday homes.

In recent years, the WFTU has been doing much to promote cooperation among trade unions in the struggle against transnationals. Its efforts are aimed at ensuring that the ruinous activity of transnationals is put under democratic control, with the trade unions participating in full measure; that the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is applied in enterprises transferred by monopolies to other countries; that the unions participate by all means in the drafting and realisation of plans for the introduction of new technologies and for the further training of employees; and that a socially-oriented investment policy is carried on to meet the needs of working people and to create jobs.

WFTU initiatives directed against the arbitrary practices of transnationals find a growing response in the world trade union movement. There is widespread interest in, among other things, the activity of the standing WFTU Commission on Transnational Corporations and its concrete moves against certain companies. This experience promoted the WFTU General Council late in 1985 to call on all international, regional and national labour organisations to step up united action in order to resist the reactionary policy of transnationals.

The unions affiliated to the WFTU actively support the Declaration and Programme of Action on Establishment of New International Economic Order adopted by the UN in 1974. They come out for an early end to the economic lag of developing countries and the poverty, hunger and unemployment due to it. Federation members expose the neocolonialist policy of imperialist powers, which would like to use the crisis over the huge external debt of Latin American, Asian and African countries for subjugating them economically still further, for interfering in their internal affairs.

In fighting for the interests of the working class of developing countries, the WFTU closely cooperates with the Standing Congress for Latin American Trade Union Unity, the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity, the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions and other labour organisations.

In 1985, a series of representative trade union meetings were held in Asia and Latin America to discuss the pressing problems of socio-economic progress, the external debt and the establishment of a new international economic order. Broad forums of this nature are called more and more frequently. The Asian and Oceanic Trade Union Conference on Development and a New International Economic Order (Delhi, February 1985) showed that there are coinciding views in the trade union movement on key development problems.

The Conference, which drew trade unions affiliated to the WFTU, ICFTU and WCL plus various autonomous organisations, said in its Declaration that participation by the working people and their organisations is needed to implement long-term programmes for the democratic development of countries of the region at a level meeting the exigencies of the twenty-first century. This priority task cannot be accomplished without achieving unity and solidarity of the working people and trade unions of the region. The Declaration points out "the need and vitality of joint actions of trade unions of all countries, irrespective of social systems or level of development for achieving common goals. Actions of solidarity with those fighting for or defending their national independence, actions of solidarity in support of those fighting for their democratic and trade union liberties and rights are of particular importance in the present day world."³

New opportunities offer today to strengthen solidarity among both working people

and their organisations in Europe. The WFTU encourages relations with national and industrial trade unions of different orientations in an effort to contribute to greater mutual understanding among the trade unions of all European countries irrespective of their social systems or development levels. The Meeting of the European Commission of the WFTU (Moscow, 1985) noted that these relations help overcome mutual distrust and artificial barriers as well as differences over the analysis of problems of the working class movement and over ways and means of solving them.

Life imperatively demands closer trade union unity at regional and international level. Working people pay dearly for the fact that certain sections of the trade union movement cling to sectarian positions, blocking steps to end division in our ranks. Revealingly, transnationals take a direct part in funding propaganda for a divisive ideology. This propaganda launches particularly bitter attacks on cooperation between trade unions of capitalist and socialist countries, arguing that they are faced with fundamentally different tasks and can therefore have no real basis for cooperation.

Of course, account must be taken of differences in the activity of trade unions operating under different social systems. However, these differences do not eliminate the class community of the *goals* of national labour unions, no matter where they are operating. The community of interests of all working people is, now as in the past, the basis for proletarian solidarity between trade unions of any trend under slogans of the fight for peace, democracy and social progress.

On the strength of the experience of socialist countries, the international trade union movement can prove to the working people that their demand for a democratic social development alternative is perfectly realistic. In socialist countries the right to work, education and medical service, as well as other fundamental rights are fully guaranteed by a socio-economic policy based on wide participation by working people and their trade unions in the solution of economic, social and cultural problems. The tremendous role of the trade unions in socialist society was re-emphasised at the recent congresses of the communist parties of socialist countries. The trade unions of the new world make a great contribution to closer unity and international solidarity of the working people.

Our Federation welcomed Mikhail Gorbachov's message of greetings to its General Council on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the WFTU. The message expresses confidence that "the Soviet trade unions, which took part in the founding and development of the World Federation of Trade Unions, will continue to work actively in this representative international organisation, and assist in raising the effectiveness of its activity and in affirming the ideas of unity of action within the world trade union movement. As before, they will stand firmly on principles of proletarian internationalism and support the just struggle of their foreign class-brothers and sisters. International solidarity amongst working people is a powerful source of the trade union movement's strength."⁴

The WFTU is preparing for the 11th World Trade Union Congress due in Berlin, capital of the GDR, in September 1986. Its General Council has called on all trade unions and all working people to make the congress a representative forum. We seek a constructive dialogue in which delegates could join regardless of political, philosophical or religious views. The congress will be open to all unions willing to contribute to unity, friendship and international cooperation, and should give preference to the working people's *common* problems and *fundamental* interests. It is on this basis that a frank exchange of opinion can be held inside the world trade union movement with a view to furthering class solidarity and cooperation.

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1962, p. 194.

² V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 366.

³ *World Trade Union Movement*, No. 4, 1985.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 11, 1985.

The History of the May Day How it Began

May 1st was a beautiful day in Chicago. The blustery wind from the Lake, often particularly piercing in spring, suddenly died away and the sun was strong. It was a quiet day in more ways than one, the factories still and empty, the warehouses closed, the teamsters idle, the streets deserted, construction halted, no columns of smoke ascending from factory chimneys, the stockyards silent.

It was Saturday, ordinarily a day of work. But crowds of workers, laughing, chatting, joking, and dressed in their best clothes, accompanied by their wives and children, were assembling for a parade on Michigan Avenue. The avenue was gay with a holiday spirit — great red-necked men, a little awkward in their store clothes, repeating with satisfaction, "Everybody's out in my place; even the cat," but on side streets and nearby roofs the atmosphere was grim.

Off the main route of the parade and on streets adjacent to it, companies of armed police and special officers were gathering ready to enforce "law and order". On strategic rooftops police, Pinkertons, and militia officers were stationed with rifles and other paraphernalia of war. In the state armories 1,350 members of the National Guard were mobilized and under arms, uniformed, equipped with Gatling guns, and ready to march on the instant. In a central office building were gathered leading members of the Citizens Committee who remained in continuous session throughout the day prepared to receive reports from all points of the impending conflict; the general staff that was to direct the battle to save Chicago from the Communistic eight-hour day...

The parade was beginning, the thousands getting under way, each member of it feeling some surging emotion of quickened, joyful solidarity as he marched. The children sometimes broke away from their parents and skipped ahead. People laughed with a queer elation, continually looking back at the vast marching concourse which seemed a visible symbol of labour's power when unified. In its seemingly unending numbers were Knights of Labour and members of the American Federation of Labour; Bohemians, Germans, Poles, Russians, Irish, Italians, Negroes, and former cowboys who now worked at the stockyards. There were Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, Anarchists and Republicans, Communists and Democrats, Socialists, Single-Taxers, and just plain people all one and irresistible for the eight-hour day. ... The parade turned into the Lake Front, gathering there for speeches in English, Bohemian, German, and Polish.

... There had been no bloodshed, no repetition of the Paris Commune. The militia demobilized, the excitement of the morning gone, its members looking a little sheepish as they skulked home, their uniforms unpleasantly prominent in the crowds of civilians, many of whom had paraded. The press apologetically minimized its many predictions of violence...

The police, exasperated by the futility of May 1 after such high expectations, gained some relief by clubbing the locked-out employees of the McCormick Harvester Works as they rushed in 300 scabs. At closing time a great crowd of the locked-out employees were waiting the exit of the scabs when police suddenly charged them with drawn revolvers. They retreated when police, according to a witness, "opened fire into their backs. Boys and men were killed as they ran."

(Richard O. Boyer, Herbert M. Morais,
Labour's Untold Story, New York, 1955,
pp. 92, 93, 94)

Resolution of the International Socialist Congress in Paris (July 14-21, 1889)

A great manifestation will be organised on a fixed date, in such a way that,

simultaneously in all countries and in all towns, on the same agreed day, the workers will call upon the public authorities to reduce the working day by law to eight hours and to put the other resolutions of the Congress of Paris into effect.

In view of the fact that a similar manifestation has already been decided on for May 1st, 1890, by the American Federation of Labour at its Congress held at St. Louis in December 1888, this date is adopted for the international manifestation.

The workers of the various countries will have to accomplish the manifestation under the conditions imposed on them by the particular situation in each country.

(G. D. H. Cole, *The Second International*,
London, 1956, p. 9)

**From Engels' Preface to the German Edition of the
"Manifesto of the Communist Party"**
(London, May 1, 1890)

"Working men of all countries, unite!" But few voices responded when we proclaimed these words to the world forty-two years ago, on the eve of the first Paris Revolution in which the proletariat came out with demands of its own. . . . Today, as I write these lines, the European and American proletariat is reviewing its fighting forces, mobilised for the first time, mobilised as *one* army, under *one* flag, for *one* immediate aim: the standard eight-hour working day, to be established by legal enactment, as proclaimed by the Geneva Congress of the International in 1866, and again by the Paris Workers' Congress in 1889. And today's spectacle will open the eyes of the capitalists and landlords of all countries to the fact that today the working men of all countries are united indeed.

If only Marx were still by my side to see this with his own eyes!

(Karl Marx and Frederick Engels,
Selected Works in three volumes,
Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, 9. 104)

From Lenin's Article "May Day"

Comrade workers! May Day² is coming, the day when the workers of all lands celebrate their awakening to a class-conscious life, their solidarity in the struggle against all coercion and oppression of man by man, the struggle to free the toiling millions from hunger, poverty, and humiliation. Two worlds stand facing each other in this great struggle: the world of capital and the world of labour, the world of exploitation and slavery and the world of brotherhood and freedom.

On one side stand the handful of rich blood-suckers. They have seized the factories and mills, the tools and machinery, have turned millions of acres of land and mountains of money into their private property. They have made the government and the army their servants, faithful watchdogs of the wealth they have amassed.

On the other side stand the millions of the disinherited. They are forced to beg the moneybags for permission to work for them. By their labour they create all wealth; yet all their lives long they have to struggle for a crust of bread, beg for work as for charity, sap their strength and health by back-breaking toil, and starve in hovels in the villages or in the cellars and garrets of the big cities.

But now these disinherited toilers have declared war on the moneybags and exploiters. The workers of all lands are fighting to free labour from wage slavery, from poverty and want. They are fighting for a system of society where the wealth created by the common labour will go to benefit, not a handful of rich men, but all those who work. They want to make the land and the factories, mills, and machines the common property of all toilers. They want to do away with the division into rich and poor, want the fruits of labour to go to the labourers themselves, and all the achievements of the human mind, all improvements in ways of working, to improve the lot of the man who works, and not serve as a means of oppressing him.

The great struggle of labour against capital has cost the workers of all countries immense sacrifices. They have shed rivers of blood in behalf of their right to a better life and real freedom. Those who fight for the workers' cause are subjected by the governments to untold persecution. But in spite of all persecution the solidarity of the workers of the world is growing and gaining in strength. The workers are uniting more and more closely in socialist parties, the supporters of those parties are mounting into millions and are advancing steadily, step by step, towards complete victory over the class of capitalist exploiters. . . . Only the class-conscious and organised proletariat can win real, not sham, freedom for the people. Only the class-conscious and organised proletariat can thwart every attempt to deceive the people, to curtail their rights, to make them a mere tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

. . . Let the celebration of May Day win thousands of new fighters to our cause and swell our forces in the great struggle for the freedom of all the people, for the liberation of all who toil from the yoke of capital!

(V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*,
Vol. 7, pp. 199-200, 202)

¹ 1886.—*Ed.*

² 1904.—*Ed.*

On the Road of Communist Creativity and Peace

Georgi Razumovsky — CPSU Central
Committee Secretary

Only a short span of time has passed since the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union completed its work. But already now one can distinctly see the profound, indelible imprint it has made on the life of Soviet people and the mounting powerful impact that its ideas and resolutions continue to have on the work of the CPSU and the entire people.

The congress was convened at a steep turning point in the history of the Soviet Union and of the world as a whole. In large measure this predetermined its special significance, the character of its proceedings, and the content and political orientation of the resolutions and documents adopted by it. The congress compellingly demonstrated the party's high sense of responsibility for the country's present and future, for the building of communism in the USSR, and for the maintenance of peace and international security. It proceeded in the spirit of Leninist traditions, in an atmosphere of the party's commitment to principle and unity, of uncompromising exactingness and Bolshevik veracity, of an open identification of shortcomings and omissions, and produced a profound analysis of the internal and external conditions of Soviet society's development. It answered fundamental questions put to the party and the people by life, helped to acquire a more profound understanding of the essence and distinctive character of the period we live in, brought to light the new inspiring perspectives opening up for the Soviet Union, and charted a realistic action programme combining magnificent objectives and the party's plans with the hopes and aspirations of many millions of people.

The Central Committee's Political Report delivered by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachov was the pivot of the congress. Profoundly and comprehensively, from Marxist-Leninist positions it surveyed and summed up the work accomplished by the party and the Soviet people and the world's

development over the quarter of a century that has passed since the third Programme of the CPSU was adopted, incisively and frankly noted society's pressing problems, creatively and innovatively raised key issues of the theory and practice of scientific communism, and substantiated the party's programme aims and its economic and political strategy. The Political Report gave the Communists and all other people of the Soviet Union a clear vision of the tasks confronting them. The propositions, conclusions, and principled guidelines advanced in this Report were approved unanimously by the congress and used as the foundation for the substantive Resolution passed by it.

After they were considered all-sidedly the congress adopted the new edition of the Party Programme, the Rules of the CPSU, and the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and for the Period Ending in 2000. In accordance with the CPSU's democratic traditions, the drafts of these documents were submitted for discussion of the entire party and all the people. This discussion vividly demonstrated that the Soviet people whole-heartedly support and approve the party's political line, its domestic and foreign policies, and its concrete plans. The discussion showed that the tasks being put forward by the party are entirely in keeping with the people's aspirations and will, and allowed enriching the content of these highly important party documents with the experience and opinion of the people as a whole.

The CC Political Report, the congress Resolution on this Report, the new edition of the CPSU Programme, and the Guidelines were the product of extensive theoretical work by the party, of its in-depth Marxist-Leninist analysis and understanding of the basic tendencies and objective requirements of society's development, of the practice of communist construction, and of the situation in the world at large. These documents encapsulated the party's creative thought, its collective wisdom, scientific prevision of the prospects for progress, and staunch belief in the inexhaustible potentialities of the socialist system and the creative work of the people. The historic significance and enormous inspiring and mobilising strength of all the documents passed by the congress lie in the fact that in them are clearly defined the communist prospect of the USSR and the ways and means of taking Soviet society to a qualitatively new stage of development.

The CC plenary meeting of April 1985 laid a sound foundation for holding a forum such as the 27th CPSU Congress proved to be and for drawing up and adopting such large-scale, and far-reaching decisions. The plenary meeting gave a powerful impetus to all the work of the party and the Soviet people and created an atmosphere of constructive quest for new approaches to the solution of cardinal economic, political, and social problems. Those who took the floor at the plenary meeting spoke frankly of the difficulties and omissions in our work and of what had to be done to transcend them. Proceeding from objective requirements, the plenary meeting put forward the concept of the country's accelerated social and economic development as a vital condition for Soviet society's further, comprehensive progress, for a successful advance along the road of communist construction. This concept received the unqualified support of the Communists, of millions of working people. It permeated the party's entire pre-congress work and was in the focus of attention at the congress, being further elaborated and concretised in the CC Political Report, the new edition of the Party Programme, the Party Rules, and the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR in the 12th five-year period and in the period up to the close of the present century.

The congress adopted and endorsed the general line for the party's domestic and foreign policies, a line towards the country's accelerated social and economic progress and the consolidation of peace in the world. "We are aware," Mikhail Gorbachov said at the congress, "of the enormous responsibility the CPSU is taking upon itself before history, of the huge burden it is accepting in advancing the strategy of acceleration. But we are convinced of the vital need for precisely such a strategy. We are convinced that it

is realistic. By drawing upon socialism's inexhaustible potentialities and advantages, upon the live, creative work of the people we shall be able to carry out all that has been planned."

The party regards accelerated social and economic development as its *long-term, strategic line* aimed at fundamentally renewing the entire material and technical basis through the use of the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution; perfecting social, in the first place economic, relations; profoundly changing the content and character of labour, and the people's living standards and cultural level; and vitalising the entire system of political, public, and ideological institutions. Having advanced the concept of acceleration, the party told the people clearly and definitively how and through what this will be achieved.

First, in perfecting socialism's economic system it will be necessary to give new and powerful impulses to the growth of the productive forces, to scientific and technological progress, and set the colossal potentials of the country's economy into motion.

Second, in linking the rise of the people's living standard and all-sided concern for people with consistent compliance with the principles of social justice, there must be a vigorous and robust social policy.

Third, in deepening democracy, steadfastly promoting socialist self-administration by the people, and extending publicity in the life of the party and society, scope must be given for the initiative and independent activity of each working person.

Fourth, in linking ideological and organisational work more intimately with life's actual needs, this work must be brought close to each individual and directed towards the surmounting of difficulties, the practical fulfilment of the tasks confronting us.

The party's economic line and social policy, all its practical work in organising and mobilising the people to carry out the tasks involved in the building of communism, and all its work in educating the people ideologically and politically is directed towards the attainment of these aims.

In order to accelerate social and economic progress there have to be meaningful changes chiefly in the decisive sphere of human activity, the *economy*, in which there must be a drastic growth of development rates.

Stably high development rates have always been a characteristic of the Soviet economy. Using the advantages of its planned system, advantages that ensure stable growth rates, the party and the people have rapidly achieved outstanding progress in all areas of economic and social construction. The Soviet Union has a highly developed economic complex, a powerful production, scientific, and technological potential, skilled workers and highly trained scientists and engineers capable of tackling the most difficult tasks. In many indicators of production, science, and technology the Soviet Union firmly holds leading positions in the world. It is now the world's largest producer of oil, gas, pig-iron, steel, cement, mineral fertilisers, tractors, and many other items.

However, during the past decade there has been a tendency towards a slow-down of the rate of economic and social development. To halt this tendency and achieve a significant acceleration of economic growth rates it is vital to ensure economic growth on a fundamentally new technical, organisational, and economic level, to shift the economy to the highroad of intensification; to move into first place in the world for the productivity level of social labour, the quality of output, and production efficiency; to build an optimally structured and integrally balanced economic complex; to raise significantly the socialisation level of labour and production. Precisely this is the main objective of the party's economic strategy of ensuring the transition to a more highly organised and more efficient economy with all-sidedly developed productive forces. The production potential is to be doubled and qualitatively renewed from top to bottom as early as by the beginning of the next century.

The party's economic strategy concentrates on achieving a *cardinal acceleration of*

scientific and technological progress. The objective is to ensure a new technical reconstruction of the national economy, the rapid renewal of the production apparatus with the use of advanced technology, and the enlargement and effective utilisation of the scientific and technological potential.

On this foundation there is to be a further rise of labour productivity. A major target on the road to higher labour productivity in the course of 15 years is that it is to be increased by 130-150 per cent. It is the party's aim to draw upon scientific and technological progress to ensure the rational utilisation of natural resources, raw and other materials, fuel, and energy at all stages of production and consumption.

As the party sees it, one of the central objectives of its economic strategy is to secure the utmost improvement of the technical specifications and quality of output, so that it embodies the latest achievements of scientific thought, is consistent with the most exacting technical, economic, aesthetic, and other consumer requirements, and becomes competitive in the world market.

All this will require modifications in structural and investment policy. These modifications, it was said at the congress, will shift the focus from quantitative indicators to quality and efficiency, from intermediate to end results, from augmenting productive assets to their renewal, from building up fuel and raw materials resources to improving the ways and means of using them, to the accelerated development of science-intensive industries, of the production and social superstructure.

The new tasks in the economy cannot be tackled without a major restructuring of the economic mechanism. This means substantially increasing the productiveness of this mechanism through a consistent application of the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, expressing the unity of both its elements — enhancement of the efficiency of centralised management and a considerable extension of economic independence, of the responsibility of amalgamations and industrial facilities.

In parallel, there will be more emphasis on the economy's social orientation and a steady turn towards the ever fuller satisfaction of the Soviet people's growing requirements. Everything that is to be achieved in accordance with the party's economic strategy must ultimately ensure a continuous rise of the people's living standard and cultural level, an uninterrupted advance towards "*full well-being and free, all-round development for all the members of society*".¹ This has always been and remains the party's programme aim.

The CPSU's *social policy* is linked inseparably to its economic strategy. The party regards this policy as a powerful lever for speeding up the country's development, promoting the people's labour and socio-political activity, moulding the new citizen, and asserting the socialist way of life as a major factor of society's political stability. The basic aims of social policy are: a constant improvement of the people's living and working conditions; a steadily fuller implementation of the principle of social justice in all areas of social relations; the drawing together of classes and of social groups and strata, and the surmounting of the essential distinctions between labour by brain and labour by hand, and between town and countryside; closer relations between nations, the strengthening of fraternal friendship among all the nations and nationalities inhabiting the country.

The purpose is to raise the living standard of the Soviet people to a qualitatively new rung, to ensure a level and structure of the consumption of material goods and social and cultural services that would be in keeping with the interests of forming a harmoniously, culturally developed individual, and to create the conditions under which the abilities, gifts, and talents of each person would unfold to the fullest possible extent. The volume of resources used to satisfy the people's requirements is to be doubled within the next 15 years.

The party attaches cardinal significance to reinforcing the creative content, collectivist character, and efficiency of labour. For this purpose it considers that there must be a significant reduction of manual labour, a visible decrease and, in the long

term, abolition of monotonous and arduous physical and unskilled labour. By the year 2000 it is planned to reduce the proportion of manual labour in production to 15-20 per cent.

The population's real incomes will rise in parallel with the growth of the country's economic potentialities. It is expected that within the next 15 years they will rise by 60-80 per cent. This will be fostered by an improvement of the system of remuneration, a rise of wages, and a growth and improvement of the distribution of social funds. The population's growing demand for diverse high-quality consumer goods is to be satisfied in full, there is to be a further growth of trade and public catering outlets, and steps are to be taken to build up a modern services industry.

The party attaches special social significance to speeding up the solution of the housing problem. By the year 2000 practically every Soviet family will have a separate dwelling — apartment or house. Housing space totally no fewer than 2,000 million square metres is to be built within the next 15 years.

A series of measures is planned to provide the Soviet People with more health protection facilities, improve the care extended to mothers, satisfy the requirements of young people more fully, and give labour and war veterans greater material insurance.

The CPSU sees unflagging concern for resolving the social problems of labour, everyday life, and culture, for the interests and requirements of the people as a duty of all governmental and economic bodies and of public organisations.

It is the view of the CPSU that no acceleration of the country's socio-economic development is conceivable without the utmost unfolding of *socialist democracy*, without the perfection of society's *political system*. It is doing everything to ensure socialist self-administration by the people to the fullest possible extent and is the leading force and guarantor of this process.

In keeping with Lenin's postulate that "living, creative socialism is the product of the masses themselves",² the party considers that it is vital to ensure the effective utilisation of all forms of representation and direct democracy, the steady extension of the people's participation in the drawing up, adoption, and implementation of governmental and other decisions. Accordingly, the CC Political Report and other documents of the congress define the main areas for improving society's political system and the steps to be taken to vitalise the Soviets of People's Deputies, the trade unions, the YCL, all public organisations, the work collectives, and people's inspection bodies.

It is acknowledged that there has to be an efficient system under which local government executive committees, members of the judiciary, ministers, and heads of other administrative bodies would report regularly to work collectives and meetings of the population, and various forms of inspection of the operation of the administrative apparatus would be used by the people.

In order to give the trade unions, the YCL, the creative unions, the voluntary societies, and the women's organisations a still larger role the congress found that there has to be a widening of the range of issues that governmental bodies can resolve only with the participation or prior agreement of the relevant public organisations, and that these organisations should have the right to halt the implementation of administrative decisions.

The party gives special attention to the development of all forms of direct democracy, chiefly to enhancing the role of work collectives, the creation of an atmosphere of socialist mutual assistance and exactingness in them, and to fostering in the working people the sense of being the unchallenged masters of production. In this context the task has been set of achieving a cardinal improvement of the mechanism of implementing the democratic principles and norms enshrined in the Law on Work Collectives, extending the range of matters on which the decisions of work collectives are final, and giving general meetings of factory and office workers a larger role to play. The recommendation to set up councils of work collectives and of gradually extending

the electivity of executives at industrial facilities has been accepted.

The party feels it is important to continue improving the practice of nation-wide discussions of and voting on major issues concerning the life of the country, of the population discussing the drafts of decisions to be passed by local government bodies, and of making better use of other channels for the promotion of direct democracy: meetings of citizens, voter mandates, the mass media, letters from working people, and all other means of learning public opinion. Fundamental importance is attached to extending publicity in the work of government and other bodies, to keeping the population informed about the decisions being adopted by these bodies and about how these decisions are being carried out.

The decisions of the congress envisaged a steady strengthening of the legal foundation of the life of state and society, strict compliance with laws, the extension of the Soviet citizens' rights and freedoms, and the reinforcement of the guarantees of these rights and freedoms.

The 27th Congress provided further compelling evidence of the CPSU's genuinely internationalist character. At the Kremlin reception for foreign guests, Mikhail Gorbachov stressed that whatever domestic or foreign policy question the party works on, it always regards itself as an *inalienable component of all the revolutionary, democratic, and progressive forces*. "We take into account," he said, "the fact that each of our successes, every victory in the struggle for the aims and ideals of the October Revolution reinforces the potentiality of peace and social progress."

The CPSU sees its prime international duty in doing everything to strengthen friendship and promote and perfect the Soviet Union's links to the countries of the socialist community. Noting that new positive qualities have appeared in the relations with fraternal countries since the April (1985) Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the congress reiterated that the soul of political cooperation among them consists of interaction between ruling communist parties, of the improvement and renewal of its forms and methods, which allow for prompt consultations on the entire range of problems of socialist construction.

The CPSU champions open relations with all communist parties, and with all countries of the socialist world system, and welcomes every step that draws them closer together and every positive change in the relations between them. The Resolution adopted by the Congress on the CC Political Report notes with satisfaction that there has been an improvement of the USSR's relations with its great neighbours socialist China, and points out that despite the distinctions in the approach to some international problems there are immense potentials for cooperation between the two countries for whose peoples the most cherished ideals — socialism and peace — are indivisible.

In considering questions related to the *international communist and working class movement*, the congress noted that the conditions under which Communists work change rapidly and that new problems arise that require the ability to reassess much on the basis of Marxist-Leninist theory and take objective realities into account scrupulously. One of these is the diversity of the communist movement and of the tasks confronting it. This sometimes leads to disagreement and divergence. The CPSU does not dramatise the fact that among communist parties full unanimity does not exist always and in everything, but neither does it regard diversity as a synonym of divergence in the movement. The CPSU continues to do everything in its power to foster the consolidation of class solidarity and equitable cooperation among all the communist and workers' parties in the world for the sake of the main things that unite them, namely, peace and socialism.

An unusually wide spectrum of revolutionary democratic, socialist, social democratic, and labour parties was represented at the 27th Congress. Also present were representatives of the main public anti-war movements and currents. The CPSU's staunch solidarity with the forces of national liberation and social emancipation, and

its policy of closely interacting with socialist-oriented countries and the non-aligned movement were stated clearly at the congress. Practice shows that despite the deep ideological differences between the Communists and the Socialists, an unbiased study of the postures and views of each other is useful to both sides, chiefly in the context of further vitalising the struggle for peace and international security.

The CPSU believes that *the tendency towards a change of the alignment of forces on the international scene in favour of peace, reason, and goodwill is enduring and in principle irreversible*. It is within the power of the world's forces of peace and progress to neutralise the military threat emanating from imperialism, to halt the world's slide to the brink of a nuclear abyss, to prevent outer space from being turned into a battlefield.

The 27th Congress of the CPSU drew a conclusion of immense theoretical and practical significance, namely, that today not only a nuclear war but the arms race as well cannot be won, that the confrontation between capitalism and socialism can proceed exclusively in the form of peaceful competition, of peaceful rivalry.

For that reason, the congress noted, the principal direction of the party's efforts on the international scene will continue to be the struggle against the nuclear threat and the arms race, for the preservation and consolidation of world peace.

A creative analysis of the state and prospects of present-day world development has brought the CPSU round to the conclusion that it is crucial to find ways for closer and more productive cooperation with governments, parties, and public organisations and movements that are in fact concerned about the destinies of peace in the world, with all peoples in order to build an *all-embracing system of international security*. The congress formulated the fundamental principles of such a system, in which military, political, economic, and humanitarian aspects are fused for the first time. These principles are quite rightly seen in the world as a new word in international politics. They stem logically from the provisions of the CPSU Programme, and are entirely consistent with our concrete foreign policy initiatives, the most important of which was the Statement of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee of January 15. In this statement the Soviet Union suggested addressing the entire range of disarmament problems, concentrating in the first place on the abolition of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. It suggested a phased plan of action, strictly scheduled in terms of time. The congress pointed out that the efforts to carry out the programme spelled out in the Statement must be the central direction of Soviet foreign policy in the coming years.

The CPSU's course on the international scene springs from the humanitarian nature of socialist society. It is inseparably linked to the party's basic, strategic aims in the country and expresses the unanimous aspiration of the Soviet people to engage in creative work, to live in peace with all nations. The 27th Congress compellingly reaffirmed that socialism and peace, that peace and creative work are indivisible.

All of the work conducted by the CPSU and the plans mapped out by it are eloquent evidence that it is the political vanguard of the people in the true sense of the word. In the new historical conditions, when the country is confronted by important tasks, the CPSU, naturally, *has a growing leading role to play in the life of Soviet society*. This springs from objective domestic and international factors that are clearly marked out in the new edition of the Party Programme and are constantly taken into account in policy and in the day-to-day work of directing communist construction.

All of the congress documents proceed from the fact that the factors of acceleration can only be mobilised by a party that is motivated by the interests of the people, has a scientifically substantiated perspective, and by its work asserts its confidence that the aims it has set will be attained. The party can fulfil new tasks successfully if it is in continuous development, free of the "infallibility" complex, critically assesses the achieved results, and clearly sees what has to be done.

The present stage is one of society's qualitative transformation, and it dictates the need for constantly enhancing the political, organisational, and ideological level of the

party's work among the people, for perfecting the style and methods of its leadership of communist construction. This requires a substantial restructuring of all of the party's work. The essence of this restructuring is that every party organisation should be active in implementing the party line and live in an atmosphere of creative quest. This restructuring can only be accomplished through the efforts of all the Communists, the utmost promotion of democracy within the party itself, the application of the principle of collective leadership at all levels, and the promotion of criticism and self-criticism, control, and a responsible attitude to the work at hand. This is being ensured by the relevant guidelines adopted by the congress, the provisions on party building in the new edition of the Party Programme, and the amendments introduced into the Party Rules. These reinforce and enlarge upon the Bolshevik principles, worked out by Lenin and tested in practice, of party building, the style and methods of party work, and the moral norms governing the behaviour of Communists. The CPSU regards strict compliance with and the consistent implementation of these principles as a vital condition of the success of all its work.

The party's development at the present stage, as was distinctly demonstrated by the congress, is characterised by the further growth and strengthening of its ranks and by the perfection of inner-party relations in keeping with the principle of democratic centralism.

The party's strength and its roots in all strata of the population are growing steadily. During the past five years it has admitted nearly 1,600,000 new members and now it is 19-million strong. In terms of its social composition, 45 per cent of the party's members are factory workers, 11.8 per cent are collective farmers, and 43.2 per cent are white-collar workers, chiefly engineers, technicians, scientists, creative intellectuals, members of the teaching and medical professions, and cultural workers.

By and large, the party's composition is formed and its ranks grow in accordance with the Rules. The CPSU considers that in its social composition the leading place should be held by workers. This is entirely in keeping with its class nature and people's character. In terms of per hundred new members, 59 per cent or just under two-thirds are workers, and 26 per cent are trained specialists working in different branches of the economy, while of all those admitted four-fifths are young people and roughly one-third are women.

Having noted the positive changes in the party's composition, the congress made it clear that the process of admittance to membership required further upgrading in all party organisations, set the task of showing tireless concern for the purity of the party ranks, of dependably closing the party to uncommitted persons, and stressed the importance of an unflagging struggle for the purity and integrity of the party member. By enhancing the responsibility of party members to the utmost and making stricter demands for compliance with party discipline and the unequivocal fulfilment of the Party Rules by every member, the CPSU proceeds from the premise that there is no vanguard role of the Communists generally, that this role is expressed in practical deeds.

The congress drew the attention of all party bodies to the consistent implementation of the principle of collective leadership. The party sees this as a key condition for a healthy life in each party organisation, for the adoption of considered and substantiated decisions. It strives to ensure the further enhancement of the role of plenary meetings and bureaus of party committees, and of party meetings as collegiate leadership bodies, and create in them an atmosphere of free and business-like discussion of problems.

As was noted in the CC Political Report, we will not move forward a step if we do not learn to work in a new way, do not put an end to inertness and conservatism in any of their forms, if we lose the courage to assess the situation realistically and see it as it actually is, to call things by their names, and judge everything openly. In this context the congress noted the need to promote criticism and self-criticism, step up the efforts

to remove window-dressing, complacency, and smugness. In the party, the Political Report states, there should be no organisation outside the pale of control and closed to criticism, not should there be leaders fenced off from party responsibility. This requirement is recorded in the new edition of the CPSU Programme and in our Party Rules, and henceforth is an immutable law of the life of the entire party and of each of its organisations.

The congress focused much attention on questions related to improving the style of work. The style that we need today is concreteness, a businesslike attitude, consistency, unity of words and deeds, the choice of the most effective methods and means, careful consideration for the opinion of people, and skillful coordination of the actions of all the social forces. The party is doing everything to assert precisely this style ever more firmly in its work, in all areas of state and economic administration. A responsible role is played here by primary party organisations, of which there now are over 440,000 in the CPSU. The congress directed party committees to rely constantly on these organisations, to promote independence in work, to ensure that each party organisation lives a full-blooded life characterised by openness, publicity of plans and decisions, humaneness, mutual exactingness of Communists, and their tireless concern for the common cause.

The party links better and more efficient leadership and the successful fulfilment of all tasks indivisibly to the further improvement of work with cadres, to the utmost promotion of their initiatives and responsibility. Of late, many sectors of party, state, and economic work have been reinforced with cadres, and many new, energetic people, who think in modern terms, have been appointed to high positions. Having unanimously approved the measures taken by the Central Committee to improve the qualitative composition of cadres and to replace persons who have compromised themselves or failed to measure up to present-day requirements, the congress made it binding upon all party organisations to continue pursuing a principled personnel policy consistently and perseveringly, to ensure unqualified compliance with the Leninist principles of selecting and assessing cadres in accordance with their political, professional, and moral qualities.

The party considers that it is imperative to continue pursuing the line of combining experienced and young cadres, improving the organisation of work with cadres, training a dependable reserve for promotion, and giving more publicity to decisions related to cadres.

The CC Political Report clearly and lucidly defines the essence of party leadership. It notes that the party provides political leadership and defines the general prospect for development. It formulates the main tasks in socio-economic and cultural life, selects and places cadres, and exercises general control. As regards the ways and means of resolving specific economic and socio-cultural questions, broad freedom of choice is given to every management body, work collective, and economic cadres. While improving the forms and methods of leadership, the party is emphatically opposed to confusing the functions of party committees with those of state and public bodies.

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The 27th Congress of the CPSU enriched the Communists and all the Soviet people with new ideas, and gave them clear-cut guidelines on what and how things should be done to accelerate the country's social and economic development. The decisions adopted by the congress and the plans of communist construction mapped out by it were warmly approved by the party and the people, generating a universal political and labour upturn. The party now sees its duty in ensuring their consistent implementation, in turning the energy of plans into the energy of concrete actions.

The Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee charted concrete measures aimed at fulfilling the Resolution of the 27th Congress and the guidelines spelled out in

the CC Political Report to the congress. It stressed the need for promptly drawing all the elements of the Soviet political system into energetic efforts to carry out the important tasks set by the congress. A series of measures has been defined for resolving key issues of economic development, social policy, state construction, and ideological work.

It is envisaged, in particular, that every branch of the economy and every enterprise draws up long-term programmes for the renewal of production, that the necessary steps are taken to improve planning, that the branch and territorial elements of economic management are correctly combined, and that a law is passed on the quality of the output. Great attention was devoted to the implementation of the party's social policy.

As Mikhail Gorbachov noted, any plans we make will hang in limbo if people remain indifferent, if we fail to awaken the labour and social activity, energy, and initiative of the people. In line with these injunctions, the party organisations are giving wide publicity to the documents of the 27th Congress of the CPSU so as to bring home to every Soviet citizen the spirit and substance of its decisions. This is not a question of explaining the fundamental provisions spelled out by the congress but of efficiently organising the implementation of its decisions.

In discussing the work of the party's highest forum, all party committees and primary organisations and all work collectives are drawing up and implementing measures to carry out the plans for the current year and the 12th Five-Year Plan as a whole, step up production on the basis of the achievements of science and technology, of advanced knowhow, and reinforce discipline, order, and organisation. Already today this is yielding fruit, exercising the most positive effect on economic and cultural construction. Thus, penetrating ever deeper into the minds of the people and winning them, the ideas put forward by the congress are, to quote Marx, becoming a powerful material force.

The CPSU has entered the postcongress period more organised, united, and more efficient than ever before, with a well-considered long-term policy. Whatever the magnitude and complexity of the tasks confronting it, the party, relying on socialist society's huge potentialities, on the creative energy of the people, is determined to carry out all it has planned and mapped out.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 54.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 288.

Behind the Facade of 'Partnership'

Franz Muhri — Chairman, Communist
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The new Programme of the Communist Party of Austria (1982) contains a comprehensive scientific analysis of state-monopoly capitalism and its distinguishing characteristics in our country. This enables the party to shape its strategy and tactics and its long-term orientation on an objective basis. "Social partnership" is an important aspect of Austrian capitalism and a form of its domination.

It is kept up irrespective of the alignment of forces in parliament or the composition of the government. In recent decades, Austria has been administered by a coalition government of the two major parties, the Austrian People's Party (APP) and Socialist Party of Austria (SPA), or by a government of one of them. Power today is in the hands of a coalition of the SPA and the rightist Liberal Party of Austria. All these governments have invariably used "social partnership" as a cover for the unrestricted

rule of the bourgeoisie.

What is "social partnership"? It is at once a policy, an ideology and an organisational mechanism based on the idea of "transformed" capitalism. Its adherents claim that the earlier antithesis between labour and capital has disappeared and that while clashes between the interests of the workers and those of the employers still do occur, they are immaterial in the light of the fact that labour and capital have "common" supreme economic interests. This implies that the notion about the inevitability of the class struggle in its basic forms — economic, political and ideological — is outdated, for even where this struggle is carried on, it takes very mild forms. All disputes have allegedly been transferred from the streets to the negotiating table, at which spokesmen of employers' associations, trade unions, the government and workers' chambers reach compromises and agreements. This way of thinking and acting has found expression in the formula "We are all in the same boat".

"Social partnership" has brought into existence diverse agencies which neither legislation nor the Constitution provides for. It is these agencies that actually make decisions on many key aspects of economic and social policy and labour legislation, whereupon parliament perfunctorily discusses and approves relevant draft laws. This supreme legislative body (according to the Constitution) is reduced to an executive instrument of "social partnership". The right to parliamentary democracy, already nominal, is eroded and curtailed still further.

The tendency to curb the working people's democratic rights manifests itself in various spheres of public life. Decisions on important matters are made by a narrow group, without discussion at lower level and without ordinary working people being informed beforehand. The workers are denied participation in management in any form, which also means limiting trade union democracy. The trade union leadership often seeks and reaches agreement with the employers and the government without consulting the unions, union delegates or enterprise council members. In this way the workers are induced to stay passive and made to believe that decisions are taken "at the top" while "those below" are powerless to do anything.

The CPA Programme describes the present situation as follows: "The majority principle is disregarded in the sphere of 'social partnership'. 'Consensus' in its non-elected bodies becomes a guideline for elected bodies. Parliament and legislation are demoted to the status of an agency carrying out instructions. The results of the elections are falsified and the will of the majority is distorted. Parties whose common platform is 'social partnership' pretend in seeking votes that there are unbridgeable differences between them, especially over economic and social policy. However, they all give their blessing to guidelines for 'social partnership' in economic and social policy. The monopolisation of important decision-making restricts or even prevents democratic debates on these issues in public."¹

Advocates of "social partnership" are trying to discourage the workers from showing solidarity, to dim their class consciousness, in order to strip the trade unions of class autonomy and subordinate the interests of labour to those of capital. Hence the assertion that workers and employers should have common aspirations, since they are primarily "partners". This ideology and practice not only imply renunciation of the struggle for a different social system, for an end to exploitation and capitalist power, for a socialist future, but amount to a bid to dissuade the working class even from seeking positive reforms.

How did the "social partnership" system develop and consolidate itself? What prerequisites for it were there?

From the 1950s onwards Austrian capitalism, having overcome postwar difficulties, passed through the longest and most important phase of favourable development marked by the highest growth indices ever. This enabled the capitalists to make maximum profit. It also enabled the working people to secure a higher standard of living without recourse to major class struggles. This was undoubtedly a result of the

structural weakness typical of the Austrian bourgeoisie.

Under Nazi occupation, the key levers of the Austrian economy were in the hands of German monopoly capital. After Nazi rule had been ended and Austria freed and re-established as an independent state, German property was nationalised, and a strong public sector came into being. And while the period after 1945 saw capitalism in our country develop and gain strength, we still have no highly concentrated and powerful monopoly capital unlike other industrial countries of the West. Besides, there is the impact, now as in the past, of the geopolitical situation of Austria as a state bordering on the world socialist system, which emerged after World War II. It is a factor which prompts our bourgeoisie to tread softly. Furthermore, the Austrian bourgeoisie takes into account the experience of the class struggles of the 1920s and 1930s, which suggests that it is better to effect reforms and make some concessions to the workers than to wait until they fight their way to the same reforms, feeling confident of their strength and having achieved closer class solidarity. The bourgeoisie's consent to improve the working people's conditions — a consent prompted by these calculations — was used politically and ideologically to justify "social partnership".

What served to establish this form of capitalist domination in our country was changes in the views of the Social Democrats, who have always exerted notable influence on the working class and trade unions. In the First Republic the Social Democrats were in opposition to the bourgeois state nearly all the time, but ever since 1945 they have been participated in Federal, provincial and communal government. They played an important role in the management of enterprises and banks, particularly in the public sector. All this has contributed to the formation of a group of functionaries enjoying great privileges and huge incomes. This largely bourgeoisified group is an exponent of the ideology of class cooperation and the mainstay of the state-monopoly system based on the drive for profit.

What we have in this case is, unlike the traditional "labour aristocracy", a new quality. In both the SPA and the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions, the group of functionaries in question is committed to a policy of cooperation with capital, which would have been impossible without it.

A further factor was that the period of Nazi dictatorship did not only material but enormous political and moral harm to our country. Fascist ideology was also promoted in Austria, with extreme anti-communism as its chief component. Anti-communism today is the reverse side of "social partnership". As a result, the workers' class consciousness has declined considerably.

The ideology of class cooperation benefited unquestionably from a fact already mentioned: a long period of favourable trends in the capitalist economy was coupled with an improvement in the working people's condition. The opinion "We have never been so well off as now" was widespread and still is. There is a real basis for it, since at all earlier stages in the capitalist development of Austria the working people's material position was much worse. This made possible a deep and prolonged lull in the Austrian workers' class struggle; the latest major strike, known as the "October strike", took place as far back as 1950.

In the mid-seventies, when a protracted capitalist crisis set in, the objective conditions for "social partnership" changed. Ever since then, the economy has stagnated or shown very little growth. Capital can no longer make bigger profits while at the same time raising the standard of living. There is less room for manoeuvre in distributing the national product, and social conflicts take sharper forms. To offer the small top group opportunities for profit-making and maximum enrichment, the system forces the workers and other working people to resign themselves to a slipping standard of living.

Capital is out to gradually shift an increasing share of the burden of the crisis on to the working people's shoulders. To bring this about, it blocks increases in wages, which are lagging behind inflation, sharply raises taxes and rent, puts up prices and service

charges, encroaches on the people's social and political achievements, adopts tough measures for a capitalist rationalisation of production, and intensifies the exploitation of labour.

Recently capital mounted a campaign against the public sector of the economy with support from neoconservative reactionaries in the APP. The scandal over dubious transactions by firms of Foerst-Alpine, a major nationalised enterprise, and bad miscalculations in economic policy on the part of managers and the government are seized on as a pretext for running down and liquidating the public sector, for gradually transferring key economic positions to domestic and foreign private capital.

At the beginning of the crisis period, the ruling quarters could still boast that Austria, unlike other industrial capitalist countries, had no unemployment or hardly any. This was extolled as an achievement of "social partnership" and an "Austrian miracle". Afterwards the situation changed drastically. There came chronic unemployment, which now stands at seven per cent and hits youth hardest of all. Fear of unemployment is shamelessly exploited to put pressure on job-holders.

The fact that living and working conditions are deteriorating does not imply that "social partnership" has been seriously shaken. It has assumed new functions. In view of the decline in the standard of living of large sections of working people, it is now expected to keep them from protesting and to make them accept the need to shoulder more and more new burdens. Taking a realistic view of the state of affairs, we must admit that this stratagem still works.

The reason is that several decades of "social partnership" have weaned the working class from fighting. Today the bourgeoisified group of SPA functionaries integrated into the capitalist system is doing its best to continue the same policy although the situation has changed. It makes further concessions to capital, retreating under the attacks of reactionary forces. Right socialist leaders renounced the socialist perspective long ago; moreover, they are moving farther and farther away from their reformist traditions by renouncing reforms, joining in counter-reforms and playing into the hands of capital and the offensive against the working people's achievements.

The new situation provides additional and greater objective opportunities of resisting the class cooperation system, of pushing it back and eventually overcoming it. The CPA, continuator of the finest traditions of the Austrian working class movement, is the only party of the country which has taken an uncompromising stand against "social partnership" from the outset, and did it also when the economic situation was favourable. It has played a decisive role in averting a complete erosion of the Austrian workers' class consciousness. Nor is it slackening its efforts in today's new context.

What are these efforts? What processes are they accompanied by?

First, we are carrying on a political and ideological struggle against the policy and ideology of class cooperation. Drawing on the working people's experience, we are striving to make them increasingly aware that the main contradiction in our society is that between labour and capital. The latter does not at all treat the workers as partners; on the contrary, it is stepping up the *class struggle from above* against them, against all working people.

Second, ever larger sections of the working class show readiness to resist the attacks of capital, even though it has not yet come to major nation-wide actions in the enterprises. The Communist Party, which is the most enlightened and best-organised mobilising force, contributes its share to the launching of joint solidarity actions by labour. The purpose of these actions is to defeat the policy of running down and liquidating the public sector; to ensure that existing jobs are preserved and new ones created, especially for young people; to win a 35-hour week without cuts in pay; to bring about a tax reform in keeping with the working people's social interests and providing for higher taxes on capitalists; to secure higher real incomes and housing at accessible rent; to defend and extend social, political and democratic gains.

These demands have the support of working people in various parts of Austria,

which helps achieve definite results. To give an example, over 50,000 employees in Linz and Leoben held powerful demonstrations last January, demanding that the state should guarantee employment, refrain from transferring nationalised enterprises to private capital and help them overcome their current difficulties. This major action was launched in response to a joint appeal by enterprise council members belonging to the SPA, APP and CPA. We see the Communists' task in citing such cases to make clear the advisability of joint struggle and the possibility of bringing about concrete changes, infuse the working class with confidence in its strength and heighten its class consciousness.

Third, in connection with the changes which have begun and are also a result of our efforts, we note an incipient differentiation among the Social Democrats and in the trade unions. The tune in both milieus is called by the bourgeoisified group integrated into the system. In the new situation, too, it adheres to the principles of "social partnership" and helps shift the burdens of the crisis on to the working people. On the other hand, more and more functionaries, while remaining loyal to "partnership", declare for reforms likely to benefit the working people even under capitalism. As this cannot be achieved through class cooperation, some of them — a minority which is growing — clash increasingly with the entire "social partnership" system because it is out of keeping with the aims of working class and trade union policy.

The present situation is evaluated in the "Theses on the Trade Union Policy of the CPA" (November 1985), which says: "In the context of the crisis, the room for economic manoeuvre needed by a social reform policy is narrowing. The fundamental incompatibility of the interests of the working class with those of capital, and hence with a 'partnership' policy, is becoming more evident. This makes for polarisation and differentiation in the trade unions and enterprises. The gulf between the vast majority of trade unionists and the privileged top officers of the trade unions who cling to 'social partnership' is widening." The "Theses" also notes that the crisis generates contradictory processes in the working people's minds. The fear of losing one's job, resignation, disunity and adaptation are likely to give way to anger and to readiness to resist the crisis and attacks on one's rights. There is growing resistance among socialist trade unionists to the union technocrats' policy of seeking an end to the crisis at the expense of the working class. Differentiation has spread to Christian trade unionists. This is why the opportunities of pursuing a class trade union policy are increasing. "In the long term," the "Theses" points out, "development will turn on the crucial question whether the trade unions abide by social partnership or whether a policy of consistent defence of the working people's class interests can be brought about."

Fourth, to push back and put an end to "social partnership" is an important part of the struggle to preserve and extend democracy, for the workers' right to information, control and participation in management, for their influence on all important decision-making. In this respect, it is only through vast solidarity actions against "socialist partnership" that success can be achieved. Therefore the demand for greater trade union democracy should be seen as a condition for transforming the Austrian trade unions from vehicles of class cooperation into militant independent organisations pursuing a class-oriented policy.

Fifth, to push back and put an end to "social partnership", it is necessary to combat anti-communism, for the two belong together like the two sides of a coin. After all, anti-communism sees its mission in raising a wall between Socialists and Communists, in dividing the workers, in diverting their attention from the central class issue, from the need to act together. By painting the "terrible spectre of communism", lackeys of capitalism would like to discourage the workers from fighting for a better future, to make them accept capitalism as the "lesser evil". Anti-communism, which right-wing leaders of the SPA and the media daily peddle among the workers, is an important political and ideological pillar of the Bourgeoisie.

We realise that defeating the "social partnership" system is a long-term task. This

form of capitalist domination can be pushed back and eliminated, for in the long run growing contradictions between the interests of labour and those of monopoly will defeat all of the bourgeoisie's attempts to conceal them. Headway in this direction will depend to a very large degree on the communists' effort.

At the same time, it should be clear that to end class cooperation does not necessarily mean ending capitalist domination. The bourgeoisie is going to try with the backing of right-wing leaders of the SPA to evolve other forms of absolute domination. Even so, the destruction of "social partnership" will be a great achievement. Proceeding from this perspective, the CPA Programme states: "The Communists, who combat every variety of class conciliation, are directing all their energies towards ending unnatural 'cooperation' with capital. If the working class movement overcame it, this would be an important breakthrough in the history of our country, a turning point. It would release forces, awaken a new consciousness, and create new, far more favourable conditions for the struggle of the forces of social progress, democracy and socialism."²

¹ *Sozialismus in Österreichs Farben. Programm der Kommunistischen Partei Österreichs*, Vienna, 1982, p. 22.

² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

In Parliament, in the Trade Unions, and Among the Masses

Notes on Our Experience

Simon Reyes Rivera — First Secretary,
CC, Communist Party of Bolivia (CPB)

The political history of Bolivia has entered a new stage differing essentially from the previous stage. On August 6, 1985, power was assumed by the Right, who set out at once to implement plans made by the oligarchy and imperialism.

The way for this change was paved by mid-term elections held under the pressure of home reaction and Washington. During the election campaign, not one of the presidential candidates won the absolute majority required by the law.¹ In conformity with the Constitution, the National Congress elected one of the three leading contestants, Paz Estenssoro, to be President. The NRM achieved victory by securing the support of some parties and thereby undercutting Banzer's positions. During the above procedure in Congress — virtually a mere formality — the Communists and other left-wingers declared in accordance with their fundamental line that by dropping blank ballots, they were declaring against fascism and all other varieties of reactionary rule.

We are in the presence of a swing to the right, the CPB pointed out after analysing the situation. This change is due to a combination of factors, primarily the holding of mid-term elections in violation of the Constitution, the fact that Banzer and Paz Estenssoro spent millions on the campaign to indoctrinate the population, and lastly outright interference by the US administration, which funded the oligarchy's proteges. Besides, frauds and other unlawful methods were used.

In the atmosphere of mistrust, confusion and despondency that reigned shortly before the elections, the Left failed either to form a united front equal to winning a popular majority or to prevent the adoption of measures infringing the electoral rights of the peasants. During the elections, the CPB and other progressive parties

encountered numerous difficulties lessening the opportunities of every one of them and the Left as a whole.

On examining the new domestic political situation which shaped up after August 1985, the CPB made the following comment: "The democratisation process initiated by the struggle of the masses in October 1982 is being replaced by a reactionary process in the economic and political spheres. The executor of this process is the domestic oligarchy, with US imperialism inspiring and openly backing it. Their ultimate goal is to recompose a dependent or crisis-stricken capitalism based on plunder of our natural resources and on superexploitation of the Bolivian people."² The question arises: What produced this situation and how?

To ascertain the main reasons for the current backward trend, we must look back at the time when a government of the Democratic and Popular Unity (DPU) front took over. This political coalition was brought into being by stepped-up resistance to the Banzer dictatorship and expressed the interests of the working class, the peasantry, the middle strata and other population groups. It comprised the Left Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (LNRN), CPB, LRM and some other political alignments. They were at one on the need to bring about real changes and evolved a democratic, popular and anti-imperialist programme. This programme plus reasonably democratic and collective leadership earned DPU growing support among the people, with the result that it won a majority in three election campaigns.³ In July 1980, Luis Garcia Meza carried out a coup to prevent the National Congress from electing a DPU candidate to the presidency. In October 1982, DPU acceded to power after the defeat of the dictatorship and recurrent attempts to replace it with another; Hernan Siles Zuazo became President.

The DPU front won electoral victories and formed coalition government against the background of militant actions by the masses that lent the incipient democratic process a new tenor. However, socio-political contradictions and the allies' dissimilar approach to them led to vacillation, weakness and mistakes. To begin with, DPU failed to specify its programme and hence to take proper steps to end the crisis. Its economic policy remained strictly traditional. Besides, the measures adopted by it, such as a revision of the exchange rate of the peso and of the prices of necessities or wage increases, were not inherently interconnected. All this aggravated the crisis inherited from earlier regimes and made worse above all by military fascist dictatorships due primarily to an enormous external debt.

The economic crisis also had dire socio-political consequences. The situation became precarious, class contradictions grew, and it came to various, occasionally excessive demands affecting the interests of the people, the nation as a whole and individual regions.

On top of all this, DPU encountered increased difficulties, including a split in it (two months after the formation of the government) caused by the refusal of the LRM to meet its own commitments. The LNRN and CPB stayed loyal to them, but the situation made for the abandonment of the collective principle of leadership and helped President Siles Zuazo consolidate his power. With the passage of time and in spite of the LRM's return to DPU, the President's power became absolute.

We shared common political tasks with our allies but often found ourselves at a disadvantage. Our predicament was that while the participation of the CPB in the front lent it a different class quality, it did not play a guiding role. It was in this context that we had to gain new experience of participation in government, which was no simple matter.

Nevertheless, the concept underlying DPU, the front's programme goals, its ability to mobilise the masses and the very fact that the oligarchy and imperialism put up resistance prove the Communist Party's policy of alliances correct. Practice has shown us, however, that a coalition is doomed to fail if its programme is due to historical circumstances only put into effect "from above", by the government. All this has a

negative effect on relations between the government, on the one hand, and the working class and popular movement, on the other.

The Fifth CPB Congress (February 1985) told the working class and the people self-critically that the party's role in the implementation of the DPU programme had been inadequate. It also noted that the Communists had been unable to properly uphold their approach to key issues, such as economic policy. The assessment made by the Congress, while far from being incisive and comprehensive enough, was self-critical, especially with regard to our activity in the government.

In addition to the negative effects of the government's miscalculations, there is no doubt about the destabilising role of the Right but above all of the US Embassy. Forces hostile to the democratic process mounted an offensive, using both the NRM and NDA, which commanded a parliamentary majority, as well as the private sector, in which oligarchic economic groups have a decisive say. We should certainly have foreseen their actions. Therefore, the coalition government is to blame, as we have repeatedly stated, for the fact that no blow was dealt to the oligarchy (its interests, centring mainly on banking and large-scale imports, also extended to so-called medium mines and agro-industry), which is closely associated with the transnational companies virtually controlling the country's economy. The government's socio-economic measures proved ineffective and failed to meet the pressing needs of the people. As for the already low standard of living, it kept on sinking under the impact of the crisis.

Even a brief analysis of earlier events and the activity of the DPU government is enough to understand the results of the July 1985 elections and the subsequent change in the domestic political situation. Disillusionment and dissatisfaction with the regime's helplessness, a deepening crisis and an unenviable plight prompted large sections of the population to search for a way out which proved wrong.

Under the influence of a sustained propaganda campaign orchestrated by the United States, at a time when the subjectivist and dogmatic slogans of the ultra-Left rang out more and more loudly, many voters began to lend ear to the demagogical promises of Paz Estenssoro and Banzer. Both of them skilfully exploited the frustration and despair of the working people due to the economic crisis, and the concomitant social and political mood. The NRM and NDA seized promptly on the confusion of the masses to win them over. It was ultimately the Right and imperialism that benefited from the DPU government's abortive policies, division and disunity among democrats, their weakness and the narrow scope of their activity. Reactionary candidates, promising the people to end the crisis and putting the blame for the grave domestic situation on those guiding the democratic process, went into action to regain power.

In examining the political processes underway in Bolivia and certain aspects of the economic situation here today, one should remember that ours is a backward capitalist country dependent on US imperialism. This is the chief obstacle to its independent development and makes our economy highly vulnerable, since it is based in the main on export of oil, gas and mineral raw materials, primarily tin ore. The economy of the republic is in a state of permanent instability. This is due to the activity of the transnationals controlling trade in raw materials. US pressure tells for its part. Having about 200,000 tons of tin left from the years of World War II, the United States keeps prices down or lowers them, placing tin on the world market or declaring that it plans to do so.

The external debt is another unquestionable factor of dependence. It accumulated under Banzer and has reached proportions making its repayment to the insatiable creditors impossible. Bolivia's debt amounts to \$5 billion today. This amount may seem small at first sight. But as our country's foreign exchange earnings are modest, the debt puts a backbreaking burden on our national economy (if account is also taken of interest). In 1984, the 57 per cent export earnings, which approximated to \$700 million,

were spent on interest payment.⁴ Due to the country's critical situation, this blood-letting had a ruinous effect on the condition of the working people, whose pay was not adjusted to growing prices.

The case of Bolivia is a dramatic indication that the debt burden is becoming a crisis factor, causing economic stagnation, primarily in production, and a steady decline in the standard of living. At the same time, the debt undoubtedly affects the possibilities of furthering the democratic process. After all, the granting of credits is made conditional on the application of remedies and concepts of the IMF. Now the IMF, being an instrument of imperialism, is intent on stepping up the exploitation of underdeveloped countries and on making them more dependent.

With reference to the economic, social and political factors which have influenced the situation in our country in one way or another, we emphasised the mistakes and weak spots of the DPU government. Along with this, our party pointed out, the democratic process and the government's activity had certain positive qualities. From 1982 on, repeated initiatives were taken with a view to searching jointly for likely and acceptable solutions to the problem of the external debt. They proved fruitless, however.

When, in May 1984, the debt burden became particularly intolerable, the DPU government adopted, under pressure from the working class movement, the vastly important decision to refuse debt payment to foreign private banks (while at the same time continuing to meet its commitments to the governments and international organisations which had granted credits on conditions differing from those of private banks). It is private credits that are tightening the noose around the Bolivian economy, which is also the case with other Latin American countries. The unilateral adoption and implementation of this decision by the government met support among the trade unions and the masses. The Communists, who invariably give priority to care of the pressing needs of the nation, have always considered this measure right in spite of the threat of blockade and embargo. As for the present government's readiness to cooperate with the IMF, it may result in an essentially anti-national agreement.

In the pre-election period, the CPB and other left organisations made clear that the alternative proposed by the Right, far from ending the crisis, would result in shifting all its burdens on to the working people's shoulders.

So it did. No sooner had mid-term elections been imposed than the connection between US imperialist policy and the line of Banzer and Paz Estenssoro as presidential candidates came out. They had US backing, since the platform of either, set out in the press, was in keeping with the intentions of imperialism and reaction. Furthermore, at a forum sponsored by the Confederation of Private Entrepreneurs, the two leaders vied with each other in boasting of their ability to loyally serve oligarchic groups.

The bid of the Right to exploit the election campaign for a comeback brought about demands for postponement of the elections. But the White House and the US Embassy openly expressed displeasure⁵ and offered to "help" organise the election campaign to the point of supplying equipment to count the votes, such as had been used in El Salvador.

The loss of prestige by the Siles Zuazo cabinet and its political consequences put the democratic forces in a difficult situation. The Communists considered that the elections had been set for what was a most complicated period for the Left. Two trends emerged among the left forces. Those adhering to one trend (nearly all small Trotskyist groups, a section of the Socialist Party, the group which had broken away from the LRM and had its representatives in the Union of Bolivian Workers/UBW, as well as Juan Lechin's party⁶) proposed to boycott the elections, saying that they could provide no solution. The exponents of the other trend — the CPB and some other organisations — insisted on joining in the election campaign, for they saw it as a means of defending the democratic gains and interests of the working people, peasantry, of the people as a

whole. They considered that the election campaign should be transformed into a political forum to be used for preventing a backward drift even in adverse conditions.

The facts (which are certainly not limited to electoral problems) have proved our position correct. The CPB goes on operating and fighting at all levels. It is represented in parliament, if by fewer members — like its allies. There is no doubt, however, that the election returns were favourable to the Left as a whole. The Communists and their coalition partners collected fewer votes, chiefly because of their participation in the government. But then the non-governmental parties, too, suffered considerable setbacks.

The elections did bring about a swing to the right. This occurred at a time when the population was in a particularly sore plight owing to the crisis and expected to find a way out. It is now obvious to everyone that the Right cannot offer any solution.

Reaction's plans as embodied in the so-called new economic policy of the Estenssoro government have shown the fears of the Left and democrats to be justified. The main principles of this policy are spelled out in a presidential decree dated August 29, 1985.⁷ The only new element is its name. A similar policy was tried in Chile, Argentina and other countries of the continent but produced no real solutions. It is a set of neoliberal concepts combined with recommendations of the IMF which serve oligarchic and imperialist interests and not Bolivia or its people.

Such a policy in say, our country, where the state controls the greater part of the economy (mining, oil, gas, tin, etc.), means subordinating key industries to private capital, with the market conditioning economic development. As for the state, it is only entrusted with the role of supervisor of a policy benefiting big exporters and importers, bankers and other oligarchic groups (plus their regional alignments) associated with imperialism. The nation's property is being squandered through decentralisation (as in the case of the Mining Corporation of Bolivia, one of the country's major production units), liquidation (as in the case of the Bolivian Development Corporation), lease, sale, and so on, in the interests of transnationals, which gear their investments primarily to plundering natural resources. Cuts in appropriations for the nationalised mining industry will likewise have a ruinous effect.

Unchecked export of raw materials deals a crippling blow to Bolivia's non-ferrous industry (whose creation may be regarded as an achievement of our people), for there is a danger that it will be taken over by foreign companies. This, in turn, imperils the future of the country. Freedom of import and export is detrimental to our industry, primarily medium and small-scale industry, whose output certainly cannot compete with imports from more developed countries. This may result in the suspension and rundown of production, and hence in greater unemployment. Furthermore, unchecked capitalist concentration, the transfer of resources to trade and finance, or spheres where speculation is rife, and the growing flight of capital tend to deform the structure of the economy. Lastly, the authorisation of unhampered sale and purchase of dollars virtually legalises earnings from drug trafficking, for the banks now accept them without any control or restriction.

This policy is disastrous to the people. It is increasing the burden of crisis and hunger, and is a cause of superexploitation. The social gains of labour, above all those won by the trade unions in bitter struggles and written into the Constitution and social legislation, are flouted. The introduction of freedom of hire enables the employers to effect massive dismissals,⁸ to impose tougher conditions onto job applicants, oppress workers, to sign or terminate contracts without social insurance and in violation of the law.

The subsidies on four necessities that were paid to miners have been abolished, speculation is growing and so are prices, wages are frozen or whittled down. Their purchasing capacity is falling under the impact of inflation, which persists contrary to official propaganda allegations. Important democratic gains, such as a mobile wage scale and worker participation in the management of mining enterprises of the public

sector, have been nullified. Transport and medical service have deteriorated.

All this is a result of the IMF dictates embodied in a "new", retrogressive economic policy backed up with corresponding political measures. These also add up to a system of imperialist domination and plunder, with the oligarchy directing a regrouping of the economic, social and political forces of capitalism in an attempt to entrench itself for a long time to come and to block whatever may lead to changes badly needed by the nation.

In implementing this political plan directed against labour and the national interest, the government sees repression as the chief method. This is why it has declared a state of siege. To impose the measures in question, it also uses parliament, in which the NRM and NDA are in a majority. This last fact was made the basis for a political pact between Paz Estenssoro and Banzer aimed at ensuring the pursuit of a pro-imperialist policy, guaranteeing the regime's stability and eventually handing power to Banzer.

However, there is something more than the use of force. The regime plans to modify national institutions, primarily the Constitution, to delete from it provisions incompatible with the policy of the Right, above all those proclaiming civil rights and freedoms, recognising the working people's achievements and defending the sovereignty and national wealth of the country, and to pass a law on political parties with an eye to complicating the activity of the Left. It also plans to reorganise the state apparatus in order to pursue its anti-national and anti-popular line the more effectively.

Protests against Paz Estenssoro's economic policy began as soon as it was announced. The general strike and the ensuing hunger strike, called by decision of UBW, took place in a most difficult situation compounded by the state of siege. They showed the might of the proletariat led by the miners as well as the real potentialities and differing militancy of the diverse trade unions affiliated to UBW. They also revealed the role of the national trade union leadership before and after Paz Estenssoro's announcement of his economic programme.

Although the unions failed to make the government revise its current policy, the working class movement preserved its unity and its organisations (contrary to the regime's attempts to split or replace them). The unions' decision to stop the strike led to a dialogue with the government on the measures and ideas proposed by them⁹ as well as to the release of political prisoners and the return of exiles. The working people's struggle showed that they can offer resistance but must reinforce their organisations and formulate their demands in more specific terms. It also demonstrated the resolve of labour to maintain its social achievements, safeguard the national wealth and keep the public sector as a source of jobs and the mainstay of economic development.

On the other hand, the strikes brought out the inability of the democratic forces to defeat or alter the policy imposed by the IMF. This naturally gave food for thought. We frankly stated our opinion, in particular from the rostrum of UBW, saying that the struggle against Paz Estenssoro's policy — a struggle involving the Communists — was unquestionably correct. It is evident, however, that this struggle was carried on without regard to some aspects of the new situation and in the same forms as before. Yet it was not directed against the DPU government (which had never resorted to repression against working people) but against an adversary prepared to go to extremes.

In the course of the ideological controversy underway in the trade unions, we noted that in resisting the economic measures of the oligarchy and imperialism, the trade union movement was handicapped by a certain fatigue. Its energy was wasted shortly before the events in question, when it began to fight the Siles Zuazo government, seen by the top leadership of UBW as the chief enemy of the working class. The leader of this organisation, Juan Lechin, wrongly considered that the purpose of the strikes was to bring about the resignation of the President and the replacement of the government with "left" rule, or, in other words, a government of his own backers. As for us, we

took a different stand at the time, for we held that a rupture with the government would play into the hands of the Right. The Right was out to undermine the democratic process (by taking advantage of the elections and threatening to stage a coup) as well as to nullify the opportunities which the working class and the popular movement could and needed to use for defending their interests and achievements.

Bearing this in mind, the CPB disputed the competence of the UBW leaders, who had misled the trade union movement in spite of the working people's resolve to hold their ground in what was a hard contest. A detailed analysis of the past plus criticism and self-criticism will undoubtedly be prominent at the next UBW congress. They should help correct mistakes from a mature democratic position and adopt decisions in a class spirit aimed at strengthening the movement.

The influence of our party on the struggle of the working class and its unions manifests itself at all levels and in diverse forms. This was demonstrated by the latest (Sixth) UBW Congress, at which ultra-leftist attempts to isolate the Communists fell through. Experience has shown such attempts to be doomed, for the working class and popular movement satisfies itself more and more of the Communists' unshakeable loyalty to the interests and historic mission of the proletariat. But, of course, we will yet have to overcome many obstacles and to accomplish much. The Communist Party's principal achievement is its active role in the working class and trade union movement.

In estimating the likely trend of development in our country, we Communists take account of both internal and external factors. Here are some of them. Latin America has become an active anti-imperialist front in recent years. The leading place on this front is held by socialist Cuba, whose economic and cultural achievements are beyond question. The Sandinist revolution is gaining maturity and strength as it defends its achievements against encroachments from the "great northern neighbour". The fighting potential of the Salvadoran patriots resisting the puppet regime is growing from day to day. Most of the dictatorial regimes have fallen under the pressure of the masses. People on the continent are coming to realise the paramount importance of joint action for the remittance of the backbreaking external debt, for a just international economic order.

To preserve and consolidate peace is of primary importance for the further development of liberation processes. The socialist community is a dependable guarantee of peace today. The recent 27th CPSU Congress showed again that socialism and peace are inseparable. The numerous peace initiatives of the Soviet Union set a task of the greatest historic significance: delivering humanity from a nuclear nightmare by the year 2000. They meet support among the peace forces of the planet.

Such is the international background against which the political situation in Bolivia is shaping up. In analysing it, we must bear in mind not only passing factors but the chief task.

Bolivia needs far-reaching political and economic changes to really end dependence and backwardness. The objective need to change the present situation faces all the democratic and left forces willing to fight steadfastly against the oligarchy and imperialism, take political power into their hands and carry out a popular anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist programme with the support of the masses. This is a task for the working class as well as for the peasantry, the middle strata and the working people generally, who seek a better future. The parties expressing the interests of these social forces need to unite and take proper organisational shape. But we must proceed from the actual possibilities and take account of existing difficulties. During the latest elections, the Communists planned to establish a common front against the Right but failed due to differences in the approach to the solution of the problem. This explains why we succeeded with great difficulty (and at the price of losing much valuable time) in putting forward a joint candidate of only the CPB and LRM — Free Bolivia and in forming a United People's Front. However, the Front is not yet the kind of organisation we aspire to; it is merely bringing us close to the formation of a broad

alliance capable of effecting changes.

As the regime's policy is at loggerheads with the interests of the people and nation, we may expect social explosions to be brought on by the working people's effort to secure an improvement in the intolerable conditions of their life and to regain rights and freedoms trampled underfoot. In striving to defeat the political plans of the Right and to foil the measures which it is implementing on instructions from the IMF, we want to bring about a balance of forces favourable to the new democratic process pointing in the direction of anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic changes.

The present domestic situation is by no means an indication of our complete defeat. We see it as experience that gives us strength and helps us adopt correct guidelines. It is from this standpoint that we are carrying on both preparations for the party's first extraordinary congress and our current work. We are working to organise the masses again and to ensure that they have a leadership which can safeguard them against deviations and mistakes benefiting the reactionary plans of the NRM, NDA and a section of the army.

When the miners and other workers, the masses in town and countryside, have learnt to identify their adversary, who is operating from both rightist and ultra-leftist positions, and to detect the chief enemy, they will be able to stop the current backward trend and usher in a new democratic process meeting the historical aspirations of all working people. The struggle ahead binds the Communists to see to it that the goals and necessity of the policy of alliances are realised and diverse forms and methods of action mastered. This will assure the masses of victory.

¹ The Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (NRM), a right-wing party led by Victor Paz Estenssoro, polled 26.4 per cent of the vote; Nationalist Democratic Action (NDA), the most reactionary organisation, led by Hugo Banzer (who in 1971 staged a coup and established a brutal fascist dictatorship), 28.5 per cent; and one of the three groups into which the Left Revolutionary Movement (LRM) has split, namely, the group closely associated with social democracy, 8.8 per cent (*Hoy. Edición Internacional*, August 8, 1985).

² *Unidad*, November 9, 1985.

³ For details, see *WMR*, No. 10, 1985, pp. 49-55. — *Ed.*

⁴ "La deuda externa", *Foro Económico*, La Paz, No. 4, 1985, p. 18.

⁵ *Presencia*, June 10, 1985.

⁶ Party advocating anarcho-syndicalist and ultra-leftist concepts. — *Ed.*

⁷ *Hoy*, August 30, 1985.

⁸ "Recent weeks have seen the dismissal of 2,245 working people." This fact, disclosed by our newspaper, *Hoy. Edición Internacional*, on December 18, 1985, speaks for itself. "About 50,000 employees of the private and public sectors are to lose their jobs by May 31, 1986," we read in the same issue.

⁹ However, the government ran talks into a blind ally and then stopped them altogether.

On the Agenda: Democratisation

Gilberto Vieira — CC General Secretary,
Colombian Communist Party

Colombia is heading towards a grave political crisis threatening not only the foundations of the traditional bipartisan system but also the long-obsolete Constitution, which will see its centenary this year. Political and social contradictions are inordinately strained, and this, on the one hand, allows winning some democratic gains and, on the other, fosters a regrouping of the most aggressive militarist quarters and the most reactionary wing of the local oligarchy.

This was preceded by a situation in which the 13th Congress of the CCP (November 1980) advanced a slogan calling for a struggle for democratisation: our country was ruled by the most brutal government of recent years, a government headed by the military despite its façade of bourgeois democracy. In its political resolution the

congress noted that a state structure incompatible with the principle of government by the people was being created in Colombia. While both the reactionary and the militarist circles are endeavouring to intensify harassment and establish a more repressive dictatorial regime, the advanced forces of the people are demanding a genuinely democratic alternative that would open new opportunities for national development.¹

"Limited" Democracy

The party has raised the question of a democratic alternative, its point of departure being that in Colombia bourgeois democracy is severely limited and, possibly, the most prejudicial in the capitalist world.

Colombia continues to be dominated by two parties, which we call traditional: the Conservative and the Liberal that were formed after the nation won liberation from Spanish colonial tyranny. These are the forces that determined Colombia's life in the past century, fighting for power in innumerable civil wars. In the present century, with the development of capitalism, both these parties became basically tools of the big bourgeoisie, while in 1957, after the fall of the military dictatorship then in power, they constitutionally enshrined their cooperation in administering the country. A skilfully stage-managed plebiscite (our party was functioning underground) legalised an "amicable" system of shared responsibility by the Liberal and Conservative parties for the leadership of the executive authority. The joint administration of Colombia by these parties was formalised in the Constitution and other laws.

For almost two decades the Colombian Communists have been heading the people's courageous struggle against this oligarchic system. It began to be changed gradually as a result of actions by democratic forces and of the disaffection of the people (at elections this was expressed by the large number of abstentions from voting). An outcome of this process, called "gradual restructuring", was that beginning in 1970 it became possible to elect municipal councillors not only from among Conservatives and Liberals but also from members of other political organisations, while since 1974 members of parliament do not necessarily have to belong to the traditional parties.

However, Article 120 of the Constitution, obliging the President to administer the republic at all levels of authority with the "corresponding and fair" participation of ministers and officials belonging to one of the two parties, remains in force. More, the Constitution still defines the state institutions and administrative bodies controlled entirely by them. These include, for instance, the judiciary and, what is worse, the electoral apparatus. In other words, in Colombia there cannot be judges and senior officials of the judiciary who do not belong to either the Liberal or the Conservative Party. These offices are divided equally between these parties. The same concerns the electoral councils, whose functions are to supervise elections, organise them, and count the votes.

This anti-democratic system is the most serious obstacle to any reform of the state structures and to any advance towards democracy. This has brought our party round to the conclusion that nothing less than democratisation will allow Colombia to extricate itself from the crisis now besetting its institutions.

The 13th Congress of the CCP identified the democratic forces capable of halting the offensive of the reactionaries and opening a new chapter of the struggle for government by the people. These are the forces that turned the 1982 elections essentially into a debate to determine whether the country would seek a peaceful way out of the crisis. The oligarchy candidates had to take part in it. This debate, started by the popular opposition, was subsequently called the "peace dispute" and its outcome was that the Betancur government, to the surprise of many people, began to take steps to halt the armed struggle among Colombians and urge a peaceful settlement in Central America, thereby unquestionably ushering in a new stage in our political life.²

On the international scene Colombia backed Argentina's just stand relative to

British colonialist rule of the Malvinas, joined the non-aligned movement, and was active in helping to form the Contadora group. All this differed radically from the tradition of following the North American course.

In domestic affairs of the amnesty law and the negotiations with the armed groups led to a cease-fire first with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (RAFC), the oldest and most powerful guerrilla formation in the country, and then with the April 19 Movement (M-19), the People's Army of Liberation, and the Workers' Self-Defence. The National Liberation Army was the only guerrilla formation that refused to sign the cease-fire agreement. Regrettably, it does not have a united command and is split into many rival groups.

The cease-fire led to the emergence in Colombia of a powerful movement for a democratic peace aimed at putting an end to the armed collisions that have been taking place for more than 30 years between government troops (chiefly, the army and the police) and the intrepid guerrilla units linked inseparably to the peasant masses.

In keeping with the cease-fire signed with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the government undertook to put the most urgent democratic reforms into effect. However, the Betancur administration has been doing nothing about reforms but talk. The debates ended with parliamentary majority (currently it consists of Liberals united with some reactionary Conservative circles) refusing to permit the most significant of these reforms to be enforced. For instance, extremely important bills moved in parliament by the Communists and concerning the agrarian, urban and electoral reforms have been held up and pigeon-holed. The proposed electoral law was subjected to particularly savage attacks by the reactionary parliamentary majority, which has, of course, the backing of the oligarchy, in the first place of the big landowners, stock-farmers, bankers, and most influential industrialists. Essentially speaking, these are the main forces opposed to any reforms. We know that they are supported and prompted by North American imperialism, which sees in Colombian "limited democracy" the model that it would like to impose on the whole of Latin America.

The government is, in a sense, washing its hands, declaring that it has fulfilled its obligation, having offered and facilitated reforms. But, in fact, it has only demonstrated its inertia. The only reform that it really wanted was that there should be general elections of mayors. Such elections are held in all Latin American countries except Colombia, this being evidence of how incredibly backward the country's state institutions are in terms of democracy.

The debates over the general elections of mayors have developed into a central problem, which has taken up practically the last two years of the Colombian parliament's work. Several times the bill was on the verge of being jettisoned on account of obstructions from the majority. Ultimately, thanks to the concessions made by its defenders (including the Communists), it was passed with the proviso that it would come into force not earlier than in 1988.

We write of this in detail in order to show the extent to which the Colombian oligarchy opposes even the most modest political reforms. The example we have given indicates that the struggle for democratic changes will probably be even more acute than was supposed by the Communists at their congress in 1980. But it must be noted that the appeal for democratisation issued at the congress had a huge response, being welcomed by large numbers of the people and even some officials of the Betancur administration.

Offensive by the Military

The military are conspiring against the armistice with the principal guerrilla groups. This is a conspiracy of senior army officers and does not reflect the feeling of all servicemen. The first step made by the conspirators was to try and erode the foundations of the cease-fire agreement by orchestrating clashes between army units

and guerrillas and stage-managing innumerable provocations and the assassination of people's leaders, especially veterans of the armed struggle who had gone over to legal political activity.

The M-19 movement succumbed to these provocations of the reactionary officers, finding it impossible to comply with the armistice. This was announced by its leadership last July and backed up with the resumption of hostilities. At first these were joined only by individual groups in the central mountainous regions, but then, regrettably, prominence in M-19 was gained by adventurers, who urged "bold" actions that get clamorous publicity but boomerang as disastrous political miscalculations. An outcome was the fatal mistake of seizing the Palace of Justice, which houses the Supreme Court and State Council of Colombia. The M-19 leaders did not take into account the political changes that had occurred in the country over the past few years. Their action fell in with the most cherished desire of the reactionary army elite, which was only looking for an excuse to start a bloodbath. The finale was a tragedy in the real sense of the word: all who had stormed the Palace died, as well as 11 members of the Supreme Court, including the most democratic and progressive members of that body.

These dramatic events showed that the military are playing a sinister role in Colombia and acting on their own, independently of the executive power, disregarding the head of state. Some people equate actions of this kind to a coup, although in fact they are nothing less than a display of Colombian militarism's aggressiveness and its determination to act over the heads of the President and the government, using them solely as a civilian façade for the regime.

The Communist Party sharply criticised not only the M-19 action but also the stand taken by Betancur, who turned down a dialogue with the guerrillas during the Palace's siege. But our indictment is levelled most of all at the reactionary officers, chiefly Minister of National Defence Vega Uribe, believing that the carnage was planned in advance to show what was being prepared for the guerrilla movement and, at the same time, to intimidate all the people fighting for genuine democratic changes in Colombia.

The storming of the Palace of Justice was the turning point that seriously complicated the political situation in the country. Having felt their strength, the military started a reign of terror. On the pretext of ferreting out M-19 militants the police attacked the Siloe residential district of the town of Cali, killing people, including elderly persons and children, without discrimination. The provocations against guerrilla units were resumed. A military camp of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia in the vicinity of Uraba was attacked by aircraft — 22 persons died. On the next day four persons died and many more were wounded after grenades had been thrown at a trade union meeting of banana plantation workers.

These events triggered off wide popular protest, including a general strike in Uraba district. The actions of the local guerrillas were denounced by members of the judiciary, including judges and officials, significantly deepened the people's disaffection with the military.

The Communist Party and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia are exposing to the country and world public opinion the plans of the military code-named Operation-85 and the Condor Plan as part of reaction's general offensive.³ It should be borne in mind that the military intelligence carries out some of its actions under cover of the so-called Ricardo Franco group, which claims it is acting in the name of the RAFC. This group is responsible for the attempts on the lives (fortunately these were not fatal) of members of our party's Executive Committee Hernando Hurtado, Jaime Caicedo, and Alvaro Vazquez. Moreover, it directs the dirty propaganda campaign aimed at smearing the Colombian guerrilla movement. All this has been corroborated by the savage treatment meted out on instructions from the group's ringleader Jose Fedor Rey (alias Javier Delgado) to 164 guerillas. They were tortured and then shot as "agents of the military intelligence" who had allegedly infiltrated the group. As a

matter of fact, the entire group consisted of not more than 200 persons.

Regrettably, there have been assassination attempts that ended fatally. Many Communist, people's and democratic leaders have been killed. The hired killers, who acted as agents of the army's special services, did not even try to cover up their trail.

The Condor Plan and Operation-85 were divulged by a military intelligence officer, who disclosed them to not only leaders of the RAFC but also to members of the governmental Peace Committee at one of its sittings early this year.⁴

In its courageous and tireless struggle against militarism over a long period of time, the Colombian Communist Party has been denouncing the criminal policy of repression directed by the North American Military Mission, which operates permanently at the headquarters of the land forces and whose offices are adjacent to the officers of the Minister of National Defence himself.

Of course, we distinguish the trends in the Armed Forces and condemn not the military generally but only the reactionary military, although it is sometimes hard to draw a distinction between them. The Communists are aware that among the officers there are those who enjoy considerable prestige and personify the essence of the new democratic and patriotic process. A notable example is that of the presently retired General Jose Joaquin Matallana, who has won immense prestige in the Colombian Army. He has now adopted a progressive stand: he exposes the Colombian Army's dependence on the Pentagon, holding that it should not participate in the inter-American military conferences held under the aegis of the USA, speaks in defence of the armistice with the RAFC and other guerrilla groups, and suggests democratic reforms. His example shows that in the army there are circles opposed to the policy pursued by the army elite and its subservience to the North American Military Mission.

The CCP's 14th Congress noted that the Communists are hoping there will be progressive changes in the nation's Armed Forces, changes that will put an end to their dependence on the Pentagon. It is only in this case that our army will be able to play the role of defender of national sovereignty released from the fascist orientation and from the performance of the shameful police functions imposed on it by the oligarchy. The congress stressed that the Armed Forces had to be democratised in the real sense of the word, to be purged of persons who have compromised themselves with participation in torture and with membership of terrorist paramilitary gangs.⁵

Patriotic Union

The Patriotic Union is a new extremely interesting political element of the present situation in Colombia. It was formed on the initiative of the RAFC, following the signing of the armistice, as a broad front to achieve, the much-needed democratisation and political and social reforms. It unites a number of veteran guerrillas from the RAFC, members of the Workers' Self-Defence, the two Fronts of the People's Army of Liberation that subscribe to the armistice, and members of lower organisations of the Liberal and Conservative parties. From the day the Patriotic Union was founded the Communist Party has been active in its work.

Last November the Patriotic Union held its first national congress, which adopted the PU's basic programme and elected its leadership, the National Patriotic Junta. The new organisation swiftly sank roots in rural areas. In the towns its influence is also growing but at a slower rate.

The PU's success sowed panic among the section of the military that is hardening its policy of provocations and repression. With elections round the corner these circles called up over 6,000 reservists into the army in an effort to reinforce their positions. The most reactionary bosses of the traditional parties are extremely worried and have been having recourse to various manoeuvres in an effort to prevent people from voting for the Patriotic Union. At the parliament's sittings last year they tried to bring in a law invalidating votes cast for the PU and charge it with "armed proselytism". In other words, the guerrillas are charged with getting the people's support through armed

intimidation.

In rejecting this lie, the Communist Party has declared that there is no "armed proselytism" in Colombia but that there always has been armed intimidation used as a weapon against the people's movement by official quarters and by the criminal groups in the employ of the big landowners.

The ignominious failure of this reactionary bill in the House of Representatives must be named as an achievement of Colombian democracy, for it unquestionably shows that the progressive forces have potentialities.

A plenary meeting of the CCP Central Committee last January noted that in this situation, which is characterised by fraudulent manoeuvrings, repression, and the very fact that the election campaign is being conducted in a state of siege, the Communists have little contacts with large sections of the population. The plenary meeting recommended greater flexibility in concluding alliances and choosing partners prepared to fight the violence that has been unleashed, and striving to achieve a democratic peace, ensure compliance with the ceasefire agreement, and defend the interests of the working people. Moreover, it was noted that the influence being won by the Patriotic Union throughout the country will help to add significantly to the number of votes cast in favour of democracy.⁶

A point to be made is that the broad front of democratic and anti-imperialist forces, whose foundations are being laid with the help of the Patriotic Union, is being created not only for participation in the elections. It has longer-term prospects and, we hope, that immediately after the election campaign it will become, relatively quickly, a major factor of Colombian society's life.

Policy of Unity

Our party is pursuing a policy aimed at achieving political unity, an expression of which is, above all, the further growth of the Patriotic Union. This is also the aim of the work being conducted by the Communists in the trade unions and in all areas of society's life.

As regards the trade union movement, it is the purpose of the CCP to ensure unity of action by the working class and put an end to the fragmentation that is the principal weakness of our revolutionary process, a weakness that the local capitalists and Washington are skilfully utilising. The party has always adhered to a policy of unity, although in the past circumstances created by reaction compelled it to support the formation of an independent trade union association, the Colombian Confederation of Workers, which has united the most militant and advanced trade unions that developed into the principal base of the struggle for working class unity.

We are working to unite peasants, various mass movements, marginal strata, and women with their many organisations. Unity is also vital to the creative intelligentsia and to students, who are trying to find a way out of the crisis triggered by ultra-leftist sentiments that had until recently been predominant among young people. Large numbers of religious people taking a democratic or revolutionary stand are also looking for unity. Their spokesman was the priest and guerrilla Camilo Torres Restrepo, who died at the hands of the police. There are priests working militantly in the Patriotic Union, and some of them are members of our party.

At its plenary meeting in January the Central Committee stressed that the situation demands uniting the various democratic trends with political schools in the country's armed guerrilla movement. Our experience of drawing closer to them has, on the whole, been productive. This course should be continued but, naturally, it cannot prevent criticism of errors such as made by the M-19 leadership in signing an alliance with the Rey group of agents provocateurs.⁷

The Communist Party is well aware how important it is to explain to all armed detachments the need for an armistice between the guerrillas and the government, for this would mean recognition of the guerrillas as an authoritative side not only by

political leaders but also by the law and the judiciary. Proceeding from this premise, our party saw as erroneous the activities of various groups of the National Liberation Army that refuse to end hostilities, and also of comrades in M-19, who succumbed to provocations and began hostilities at a time when this was what the military desired. Clearly understanding the essence of developments, we nevertheless seek to maintain a dialogue and relations with all the partisan groups, including the National Liberation Army, which had not laid down arms, and M-19.

The Communist Party demanded that despite the hostilities conducted by M-19 the government should resume negotiations with that organisation and renew its offer of a cease-fire and of M-19 joining the efforts of the forces working for democratisation.

Prospects

The economic crisis in Colombia, as in all the other Latin American republics (with the exception of socialist Cuba and Sandinist Nicaragua), is seriously affecting the living standards of the working people and aggravating class conflicts. In our country working class actions are increasing in the form of strikes or demands for better working conditions, while in many cases (this being specific to Colombia) they develop into civil disobedience action. These are very broad in terms of the number of participants and embrace whole regions, mobilising the most diverse strata of society to address concrete problems.

Crisis phenomena in the economy may intensify or abate, depending on the situation. At present they have been somewhat moderated on account of the rise in the price of coffee, which is the nation's main export product. This price rise is due to the severe drought that struck Brazil and destroyed 50 per cent of the coffee crop. Coffee prices may continue to rise.

As regards the political crisis, in Colombia it is permanent and general: the republic's development is being increasingly slowed down by the regime's obsolete institutions, the absolutism of the presidential power and, chiefly, the predominance of the bipartisan system. For this reason the crisis will go on growing, while at the presidential elections it may develop into mass actions and political confrontations. The Communist Party is certain, of course, that there is a democratic way out of the impasse, and it continues to feature democratisation as its main slogan. We believe that in Colombia there are large forces seeking to establish government by the people. They have large reserves, and if we manage to unite their actions, the plans of the military and the reactionaries will be disrupted. The Communists are aware that serious difficulties are inevitable but that there is a democratic way out of the present situation, and this is precisely what our party is consistently fighting for.

Of course, those who fear a democratic outcome are strong and their reactionary designs cannot be discounted.

There are two ways for carrying out the plans of the military and the extreme Right. One is by an armed rising, in other words, the classic Latin American way of establishing a despotic terrorist regime. However, this does not meet with the present situation, runs counter to the aspirations of the overwhelming democratic majority of the Colombian people, and comes into conflict with a factor whose political significance can hardly be overestimated: the existence of a guerrilla movement in Colombia. There is now a cease-fire with this movement, but it has struck deep roots in the country. In the event a reactionary coup is attempted, the guerrillas will step up their actions and mobilise popular support. This is realised by the local guerrillas and has to be reckoned with by the US imperialist strategists.

The other option of the reactionaries and the military is to win power in a relatively legal way at the coming presidential elections by supporting circles of the ultra-Right, notably those headed by the conservative presidential candidate Alvaro Gomez Hurtado. In his party he represents forces opposed to those in whose name the President is now trying to act.

All indications are that the military want an authoritarian government with a pseudo-democratic façade. Genuine people's forces would unite against such a regime, and the country would unquestionably face difficult times. There would most likely once again be social battles and armed collisions, which marked previous stages of Colombian history.

Plans of this sort were dealt a heavy blow at the elections to legislative bodies on March 9 of this year, for they demonstrated that A. Gomez Hurtado commands less support than Virgilio Barco, a technocrat and centrist politician with close ties to the USA. The nominee of the "New Liberalism" trend, which arose in the Liberal Party and was threatening to take votes away from the party's main candidate, was withdrawn, while the Patriotic Union made significant headway despite repression and election rigging.

Growth of Democratic and Peace Forces

The military and reaction are obstructing the process of democratisation currently unfolding in Latin America. This process began in countries of the Southern Cone, with the widely known events in Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil. In this context, the actions of the reactionary army elite, which is trying to block Colombia's democratisation, are totally at variance with the present tendency towards strengthening peace and easing international tension.

We know that our struggle is part of the mounting revolutionary process on the continent. It inspires us with profound optimism, despite the difficulties caused by the actions of the military, who are trying to hinder a democratic way out of the crisis gripping the nation. The growth of the people's anti-imperialist forces in the region will continue to influence developments in Colombia. In turn, our experience, which has its own specifics, is proving useful in other Latin American states, where the firmness of the CCP's stand in combination with its policy of employing all forms of popular action enjoys considerable respect. As time passes this experience attracts increasing attention among fraternal parties and peoples as being distinctive and quite instructive for other countries of Latin America.

The struggle of the continent's peoples for their future, a struggle to which the Colombian Communities also contribute, is raising the question of forming a close-knit Latin American anti-imperialist front unparalleled in magnitude and breadth. I have in mind chiefly the campaign, widely supported, against the unbearable external debt burden, a campaign perspicaciously started by Fidel Castro. There is a huge response to his proposals in all countries of the region, including Colombia. In Colombia, too, the consequences of the external debt are affecting the living standard not only of the workers but of the entire population.

The Colombian Communist Party is patriotic and consistently internationalist. It invariably displays solidarity with the struggles of fraternal parties and peoples. Today we are ourselves appealing to communist parties for an intensification of solidarity actions on an international scale with the purpose of exposing the criminal designs of the military in our country. We believe that the various solidarity actions (depending on the potentialities of each party) will be of invaluable assistance to us in isolating the military and cutting short their criminal plans against the democratic movement generally and the Colombian Communist Party in particular.

We are patriots and internationalists and therefore, as was stressed at the January plenary meeting of the CC, know that every step that improves the international situation being compounded by the militarist hysteria of the USA's most aggressive quarters will be not only a blow to the enemies of detente but also a contribution to our own struggle for the democratisation of Colombia.⁸

In this context it would be hard to overestimate the unwavering support, expressed at the 27th Congress of the CPSU, for the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples for peace, democracy, social progress, and national independence, for general nuclear

disarmament and the establishment of normal, healthy relations among all countries. We are gladdened and inspired by the new constructive plans of the Soviet Communists to ensure the utmost perfection of socialism and accelerate its development. This will further change the balance of strength in favour of peace, which is so vital for the radical changes awaited by humankind today.

¹ See *Apertura Democrática para Colombia. Documentos del 13° Congreso del PCC*, Bogota, 1980, pp. 47-48.

² See "Documentos del 14° Congreso del Partido Comunista Colombiano", *Punto de vista*, No. 15, 1984, p. 13.

³ Operation-85 calls for attacking individual units of the RAFC and its main headquarters in order to draw the guerrillas into hostilities and compel them to violate the cease-fire. The Condor Plan envisages acts of terrorism — the assassination of leaders of the Communist Party, people's organisations, and democratic associations, and the bombing of premises of the CCP and its youth sections, the trade unions, and the Patriotic Union (see below). Execution of Operation-85 has been assigned to regular army units, and of the Condor Plan to the secret services of the army and police.

⁴ *Voz*, Nos. 1368, 1369 and 1370, 1986.

⁵ *Punto de vista*, No. 15, 1984, p. 15.

⁶ *Voz*, No. 1369, 1968, p. 15.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

the party

The Communist Alternative

James Stewart — General Secretary,
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Opening the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of Ireland (January 31-February 2), National Chairman Michael O'Riordan described it as a very important event in the history of the party, perhaps as momentous as the "Unity" Congress of 1970.¹ The 19th National Congress was held soon after the conclusion of the Hillsborough Treaty between the governments of Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland (November 1985) which was an embodiment of the imperialist approach to the problems of the divided island,² aimed at expanding outside interference, increasing repression and maintaining divisions among the working people. The congress enabled the Communists to expound and explain to the Irish people a truly democratic alternative to the imperialist conspiracy.

The delegates who arrived in Belfast represented an impressive sampling of the cities and counties of all Ireland. More than half were under 40 years of age, and there were many women among them. The composition of the delegates reflected our party's broad participation in the trade union and active democratic movement for the interests of working people. Communists hold important posts and offices in 34 trade unions, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Student Union. Members of the national leadership of trade unions and other 37 civic organisations were represented at the congress. Our party is a prominent element of the social and political fabric despite spanning two states, two governments and two cultural traditions — a unique position.

A broad, democratic discussion of the draft resolutions was held prior to the congress; 246 amendments were proposed to improve the party's work.

The four years that have elapsed since the previous congress have borne out our analysis of world events. Imperialism, particularly US imperialism, has mounted a counter-offensive to offset the exacerbation of its general crisis. Imperialism has been striving to bolster its disintegrating international positions, to establish a new form of hegemony based on escalating nuclear intimidation, assault working class organisations, reduce state expenditure, abolish the public sector in the capitalist economies, subjugate Third World nations and undertake systematic attempts to destabilise the socialist countries.

By steering such a course, the right-wing quarters in the United States, Great Britain, the FRG and other capitalist countries grossly violate the norms of bourgeois democracy and conduct an all-out assault on the positions won by the people over the postwar years, especially on the rights and freedoms of the trade unions. Instability, unemployment, financial upheavals and brinkmanship are typical of these countries. Within the EEC unemployment has risen in excess of 20 million, while Northern Ireland and the Republic were hit particularly hard. Government expenditures in the fields of social welfare, medical care and education are diminishing steadily in the capitalist world, while spending on armaments and on the apparatus of repression has increased virtually everywhere.

Simultaneously with the assault on the working class, the US-led imperialist quarters have launched a counter-offensive against the forces of national liberation. Reflecting this course of monopoly capital are US policies in Latin America, the US moves against Nicaragua and support for the reactionary regime of El Salvador, the Israeli aggression in the Middle East, the strategy of destabilising Lebanon, the denial of the Palestinians' sovereign rights and practical support of the racial regime in South Africa.

US imperialism and its NATO allies are trying to subvert the countries of living socialism, exhaust their economies and bridle their advance by forcing them to divert considerable resources to defence and military needs. The escalation of this endeavour is producing a new wave of tensions. The risk of nuclear war poses the gravest threat to all nations, to their future and to civilisation itself. This risk is rooted in the ambition of the US administration to step up the nuclear arms race and thus achieve superiority over the Soviet Union and dictate its terms to the socialist world. Today, an even greater obscenity is being planned — the scheme to extend imperialist blackmail to outer space and threaten the socialist countries with Star Wars. This means that in the decades to come the United States will doom mankind to live under the sword of Damocles, facing the nightmare of unprecedented disasters. It is now obvious more than ever that capitalist nations are building up the awesome potential of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction to intimidate and blackmail the socialist countries. The responsibility for the origin, development and continuation of the arms race lies with the imperialist powers, clearly.

Despite all these efforts however, imperialism cannot expect to win. In the face of the growing war threat, the most active and powerful peace movement of the postwar period has developed. As our 19th National Congress stated, those forces in the world which sincerely want peace draw encouragement from the fact that the Soviet Union and the socialist community represent the strongest bastion in the struggle for nuclear disarmament and world peace. The congress warmly welcomed and fully supported the proposals made by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on January 15 which contained specific plans for completely ridding our planet of nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

Two major obstacles are blocking the way to universal peace. One is the US ambition to achieve nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union and the entire socialist

world and to secure a capability for delivering a first strike with impunity and without retaliation. The other is the insatiable thirst for profit typical of the giants of the military-industrial complex that command the policies of the NATO countries, particularly of the United States. These are the dynamics that compel the Western attitudes and that are totally alien to the socialist countries which press on to perfect their societies and to secure a peaceful world in which to do it.

Considered and adopted by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the plans to accelerate the socio-economic development of Soviet society demonstrate the socialist system's commitment to peace and its advantages over capitalism. The Irish Communists had an opportunity to get acquainted with these plans even before our forum. We saw that the Soviet Union was tackling the problems of our age in a planned scientific manner firmly based on meeting the needs of the working people and by mobilising their creative abilities and experience in developing and enriching socialist democracy. It was natural for the delegates of our congress to acclaim it.

The socialist countries' dedication to the building of communism and their numerous proposals and initiatives on curbing the arms race and strengthening universal security demonstrate their commitment to peace and rejection of a "competition" for military superiority with the capitalist West. But since their peace proposals are rejected out of hand, the counter-measures they undertake in the field of security are completely justified and essential for defence against a deadly first strike. We said clearly at our 19th National Congress that we are confident in the policies of the socialist countries because we understood and applauded their aims. We are convinced that a peaceful world is the only arena for settling the historical dispute between capitalism and socialism.

The central tasks that are more important than any other are to prevent the United States from attaining superiority, to avert the threat of nuclear war and to keep the imperialist sharks from getting fat on profits and dooming millions of people to hunger and poverty. These tasks cannot be solved by governments alone. The people must raise their voice and demand that the governments improve the international climate, that they halt and then unwind the escalation of armaments. The popular masses are taking increasingly large-scale action to block the programmes of war preparations. The movement of protest against war can well be made permanent, and no effort should be spared to involve all sections of the population in it. The insistence of the public clamour grows for an end to the insane stockpiling of weapons which may eclipse our lives. Now that the future of the world is hanging in the balance, no neglect, no slackening can be forgiven in the great struggle for a peaceful world.

Apart from topical international issues, the 19th National Congress of the CPI devoted much attention to an analysis of the new domestic situation which resulted from the signing of the Anglo-Irish Hillsborough Agreement. Under the terms of the treaty, the Republic of Ireland is to play a role in the prosecution of security requirements in Northern Ireland and "advise" the British authorities on questions related to the Catholic population — to somewhat improve the position of the more amenable and politically "moderate" section. For its part, Britain will now "advise" the Irish government on all questions related to the border areas and on such other matters as are deemed necessary to secure the whole island and its place in the Atlantic Community.

It is noteworthy that the treaty does not extend to any Irish role in the internal or external affairs of Britain. Nor does it presage any movement towards the country's reunification. This is confirmed by the latest British statements to the effect that reunification is conditional upon the assent of the Unionist majority and the recognition by the Irish government of Britain's "right" to rule the northeastern part of the island and to maintain her continued presence there.

The Hillsborough Agreement is added proof that British imperialism strives to

perfect the apparatus of a military resolution to its problems. Acting on behalf of its US sponsors, imperial Britain tries to embroil Ireland, the westernmost outpost of Europe, in the fabric of NATO. With the recent adherence of Spain and Portugal to the EEC to "close the ring", it is time to woo Ireland, a member of the Common Market, not only into greater European political cooperation but also into a fuller contribution to the "defence of Western Europe" — that is, into NATO itself. With a compliant bourgeoisie in Ireland mesmerized by short-term advantages of membership in the EEC, the trap is sprung.

In the Hillsborough Agreement we have a partnership about security, first and foremost local security. Later, the issue is sure to extend to wider security, and fuller Irish commitment to the struggle against anti-imperialism will be demanded. The partition of our island allows not only British imperialism but also the US and other NATO countries to put pressure on the Dublin government, thus continually threatening Irish neutrality. Without a sterner struggle in Ireland for its continued neutrality, independence and withdrawal from the EEC, the ruling quarters will meet the imperialist demands. Conversely, the major contribution Ireland can make to world peace is to strengthen Irish neutrality and to halt British imperialism's programme which is aimed at drawing the whole of Ireland into the NATO war bloc.

As a result of the Hillsborough Agreement, Britain has secured recognition — for the first time by any Irish government — of her "right" to be present in and to govern the northeast part of the country. The agreement also opens the door to further British interference in the internal and external affairs of Ireland. The promise of 250 million dollars in loans and credits and of further benevolent assistance from the EEC has already compromised some international stances of Ireland to the benefit of imperialism. Banking on the complete eventual intergration of our country in imperialist policies, Britain has sacrificed its loyal Irish garrison of 65 years — the Unionists of Ulster, brought up from the cradle on hatred for all things Irish and for the Irish people who are readily labelled as suspect for the sole reason that they are Catholics.

The Unionist guardians of British interests in Ireland responded to the agreement first with suspicion and then with outright hostility. They have refused to partake in local government and to otherwise cooperate with the "betrayers of Perfidious Albion". The leaders of some of the Unionists inexorably head for a policy of Unilateral Declaration of Independence, short-sightedly seeing it as a viable alternative. They are hazarding all on a threatened confrontation.

The Unionists have every reason to react in this way. They realise that the thrust of the new accord deprives them of precisely the condition of their uninterrupted governance of Northern Ireland since 1922 — their unbridled use of religious sectarianism as an alternative to meeting the social concerns of working people. This helped them to exploit both the Catholic and the Protestant parts of Northern Ireland's divided society.

The Hillsborough Agreement has been rejected also by the Republicans, the Communists and other democratic forces, but for completely different reasons. They see the accord as an abandonment of national interest and sovereignty, a violation of the Republic's Constitution and an ominous step on the way to renouncing the traditional neutrality of Ireland. It is certain that if other options are not chosen, Northern Ireland, and perhaps the whole of Ireland, must expect a further period of tensions turmoil, death and destruction.

As the 19th National Congress reiterated forcefully, the Communist Party of Ireland is working to create an anti-imperialist movement based on working class unity and led by the working class. In the era of state-monopoly capitalism, only the working class can ultimately carry through successfully the anti-imperialist struggle. This movement could consolidate all forces which are ready to oppose British imperialism. One must

admit that the necessary unity and the leadership of the working class are yet to be attained.

Our programme is based on the protection and extension of Irish neutrality — on the demand for a declaration of intent by the British Parliament that it will withdraw from all interference in Irish affairs: military, political and economic, and allow the people of Ireland to determine their own future. Therefore, the Communist Party demands that Britain openly proclaim her intention of leaving our island, set a firm deadline for the withdrawal, conduct the necessary preparations and take other steps for a smooth and uninterrupted transition.

We are addressing this call not only to the government of Britain — which would be a fruitless exercise — but also to the British working people, their organisations, trade unions and political parties that claim to represent their interests. In other words, our call is addressed to the British people who are forced to pay for London's policy and send their sons who risk their lives as soldiers in Northern Ireland. It has long been recognised that solidarity of the working class in Britain is a crucial factor in the winning of Irish independence. Marx and Engels in their writings on Ireland prescribed this solidarity to the English working class as the precondition of their winning freedom for themselves in England. However, the British workers failed to display such solidarity at the outset of the civil rights struggle in Northern Ireland, thus paving the way for the intervention of the British Army and for the aggravation of the political struggle. Then came the prolonged military attrition which blocked all avenues of progress for so long. The experience of recent years confirms that the solidarity of the British workers is essential for success, and this is why its importance was stressed in our 1962 programme "Ireland's Path to Socialism".

The transitional period must end with the transfer of power and sovereignty to an all-Ireland government, to be formed in the course of elections held throughout the nation. This calls for the dismantling of the apparatus of oppression, including the Ulster Defence Regiment, the biggest regiment of the British Army serving only in Northern Ireland, for radical reform of the police service, for the adoption of a comprehensive Bill of Rights in the North and for the repeal of repressive legislation in the Republic. Our programme also stipulates that a regional assembly be set up in the transitional period with broad powers to administer Northern Ireland and with a direct say in the evolution of all-Ireland judicial and political structures. The regional assembly is to be vested with special fiscal and economic powers necessary for the implementation of a radical anti-monopoly programme of development. The assembly is also to have jurisdiction over social policy and social legislation.

In the earliest phase of the transition the new structures should be formed so that subsequently, their ultimate shape could be decided by the whole people of Ireland. It is also important to provide for a financial arrangement, including a contribution from London, in order to minimise economic disruption in the socio-political changeover and, specifically, to prevent any decline in the living standards of the working people both in the South and in the North. Such a settlement must fittingly be on a scale commensurate with the damage Britain has inflicted on Ireland over the centuries. This would establish the possibility for a wider reconciliation between the two countries and the prospect of a useful cooperation in the future.

The answer of the Communist Party of Ireland to the imperialist agreement at Hillsborough is in line with the party's 1962 programme whose development we have been pursuing over the past 24 years. In that document is asserted the declaration that "between the national liberation of Ireland from all vestiges of imperialism and the social liberation of the working people from the yoke of capitalism, there is no contradiction. For the working class the elimination of all obstacles to the economic development of both parts of the country and the achievement of a united people and a united Irish nation, is a necessary task which it will carry out in order to achieve

Socialism." The 19th National Congress has mapped out specific ways for attaining the long-term goals of our programme.

¹ The congress at which the Communist Party (NI) and the Irish Workers Party merged to form the Communist Party of Ireland.—*Ed.*

² After Ireland became a dominion in 1921 the northern part of the island remained part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.—*Ed.*

Annals of Courage Unbroken by the Inferno of Ansar Camp

Rafic Samhoun — CC Political Bureau
member, Lebanese Communist Party (LCP)

The Arab peoples are bound to pass on from generation to generation the story of Ansar prison camp as one of the most sinister symbols of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. While strongly condemning the crimes perpetrated by the Nazis in Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Oradour, the Israeli rulers resorted to equally brutal and criminal practices in Ansar. They did so to intimidate the Lebanese people, all patriots, and to put an end to their legitimate struggle in defence of the sacred soil of their country.

However, Ansar camp will also be mentioned as a magnificent symbol of heroic resistance to Israeli occupation. Its inmates, with Communists and their supporters in the lead, added an unforgettable chapter to the history of our people and their struggle against the Zionist invaders. By showing unexampled fortitude under atrocious tortures and carrying out courageous actions against their jailers, they transformed the camp into a bastion of patriotic resistance to the enemy and won the admiration of the people of Lebanon and other countries.

Let facts and prisoners' letters and statements tell what happened in Ansar camp.

Ansar was one of the largest detention camps which the Israeli military began to set up in Lebanon immediately after invading it on June 4, 1982. The invaders enclosed a vast area with barbed wire and built around it watch-towers equipped with searchlights. They divided the camp into 30 sections, with 20 tents in each. There was also a special section called the 'interrogation pit' where inmates were tortured.

The number of prisoners varied from 6,500 to 10,000 — Lebanese and Palestinians from urban and rural communities of southern Lebanon, highland areas of the country, the western part of Bekaa Valley, and Beirut. The inmates were aged from 13 to 73 years. There were people of the most diverse professions and convictions. One came across workers, peasants, doctors, engineers, journalists, university lecturers, students, religious leaders, handicraftsmen. Some of them belonged to Lebanese or Palestinian patriotic parties or other organisations.

Before finding himself in the camp, every detainee was interrogated in special Israeli centres. They were beaten and subjected to electric shock. To break them morally, they were denied sleep, put in a cell two metres long and 70 centimetres wide, thrown into a pit dug beforehand and threatened to be buried alive. "Communists," Comrade Elias says, "flatly rejected all charges brought against them, and refused to answer questions. Interrogations were generally coupled with offers of collaboration. Any detainee who talked was immediately transferred to Israel for further investigation." And anyone who refused to talk was assigned a number as a substitute for his name and

sent to his final destination, Ansar.

Interrogations continued in the camp. "Whenever the invaders happened to know," Comrade Ahmed says, "that the detainee was a Communist and had been educated in, say, the Soviet Union, they asked him numerous questions about where he had studied and with whom, what his fellow-students' impression of life in the Soviet Union was, what the teachers' names were, what had been discussed in the lecture-hall, and so on. The Israelis were interested in the most minute details. They also wanted to know whether the detainee belonged to a Lebanese or Palestinian political or military organisation, whether he knew anything about other members of the organisation, about combat operations carried out by Lebanese patriots."

Besides, every prisoner was made to fill out a detailed form concerning his ideas, religious concepts, mentality and private life. Also, he had to write his biography from the age of six years to the day of his arrest. He was showered with questions such as these: "Do you like anybody? Does your father beat your mother? What are you keen on? Have you ever been abroad? Are you a trade unionist? What school have you attended? Was it a Moslem or Christian school? Do you like to live side by side with Christians? What is your attitude to Islam? What do you think of communism? What is your attitude to Egypt? And to Iraq? Would you say that PLO members are courageous people or cowards? Are the 'Israel Defence Forces' strong or weak? Do you like to watch bullfights?"

The nature of the questions left no room for doubt that the invaders were out to make Ansar and other camps set up by them a Zionist laboratory for socio-psychological experiments, with the inmates as guinea pigs. There is also reason to presume that the forms and interrogations were aimed at studying the Arabs' mentality and ascertaining their development level in various spheres, in the same way as the Nazis had done in evolving their classification of peoples.

Every detainee about to be interrogated was tied hand and foot and left in his cell without food for two days. He was not allowed to sleep; the guards kept him awake by dousing him with water, harassing him all through the night, making him listen to the screams and moans of prisoners under torture. The idea was to break him morally even before he was questioned. Anyone who refused to talk was savagely beaten and then the torturers proceeded to apply frankly barbarous "investigation" methods, such as squeezing his genitals with a pair of special pincers (most victims fainted as a result). Thereupon the torturers doused the prisoner with water and subjected his ears, tongue or genitals to electric shock (this last torture usually resulted in sterility).

The Zionists' array of tortures is virtually inexhaustible. In winter they tied the naked victim to a wet bed or to the bars outside the window and left him in that state for 24 hours or more. In summer prisoners were put in a sheet-iron cage with a floor bristling with jagged nails, and made to stand there barefoot for hours or even days. From time to time they beat the cage with iron rods, making a deafening noise. One had the impression that they wanted to find out how much noise the victim could stand. The Zionists also used moral tortures, especially when they could wrest no confession. For instance, they threatened the prisoner to bring his wife, sister or fiancée to the camp and if the threat did not work, they actually brought her and raped her in front of him.

Many of those who went through the inferno of Ansar are invalids now. Others have gone mad, are seriously ill, or died.

Zionism fully revealed its man-hating nature in Ansar. Guards repeatedly opened fire on detainees or set watch-dogs against them. Those sadists buried several prisoners alive. Whenever the inmates tried to put up organised resistance the guards used tear, asphyxiating or nerve gas, causing dizziness, nausea and coma and paralysing the victims' will. Occasionally a detainee was made to strip and was sprinkled with insecticides. The Zionists had borrowed from the Nazis' arsenal a device called "hunt". They drew a white line along the fence, and then the "hunters" on the watch-towers

were free to use their noiseless rifles equipped with telescopic sights against any prisoner who crossed the line. "Every Sunday the camp becomes a real shooting-range," wrote a prisoner in a letter dated January 21, 1985. "Bullets whistle over our heads from morning till dark." What is more, the Israelis generally used explosive bullets. "After every operation by the Lebanese Resistance," one of the survivors of Ansar said afterwards, "the guards woke us at the dead of night, dragged us out of our tents and began to taunt us. Afterwards they brought to the camp relatives of Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon and said, pointing to us: 'Here are your children's murderers. Give them hell, hit them!'"

The invaders deliberately starved the detainees. The amount of food delivered for the inmates fell short of the barest minimum. It was distributed among the tents in meagre portions, which was also intended to provoke quarrels among the prisoners. From time to time water supply was cut off. Due to plainly deliberate measures by the authorities, the camp was in an appalling sanitary condition, and therefore flu, tuberculosis, typhus, dysentery and other diseases were rife.

Notwithstanding inhuman conditions and tortures, the Ansar inmates held their own against their jailers. They were undaunted by bullets, and their chief weapon against refined tortures was an unshakeable will. As for the enemy's attempts to divide the prisoners, they were defeated by unity, which became the motto of every prisoner no matter what social environment, political party or organisation he belonged to. Their resolve and unity enabled them to carry on a sustained struggle in the camp, to launch protest actions, and occasionally to revolt. In some cases the Zionists, though armed to the teeth and equipped with the most up-to-date means of coercion, were afraid to enter the area of a section in revolt and had to negotiate with the insurgents.

Initially disobedience among the prisoners was individual. Subsequently the more progressive prisoners, above all Communists, began to search for ways of making it collective. Such resistance is certainly harder to crush, and besides, it has a strong effect on both the prisoners and their jailers.

The Communists suggested that forms of protest holding the greatest promise of success be devised. At the same time, they organised educational groups in cooperation with members of some other forces. The emphasis in these groups was put on building up the unity of all prisoners and on drawing every one of them into the common struggle. The prisoners brought out underground newspapers and prepared posters and streamers for protest and other actions, using cartons, sackcloth and tent canvas.

Much was done to raise the inmates' morale. They decided to avoid as far as possible all talk about their families, children, fiancées, any emotive topic, and helped one another overcome frustration. Those who had a particularly hard time got moral help from their fellow-inmates. The prisoners divided on a strictly fair basis the food supplied to them, the healthy sharing their rations and medicines with the sick. All of the invaders' attempts to single out a group of prisoners by granting privileges were rejected. Talks with the camp authorities were entrusted to chosen spokesmen. Afterwards the inmates formed a united committee, a move in which the Communists played an important role.

The tactic of uniting forces advocated and pursued by members of our party, its supporters and other politically enlightened prisoners contributed to the resolve and staunchness of their fellow-inmates and to their confidence in victory over the enemy.

Collective disobedience to the invaders took diverse forms. At first the prisoners, having reached agreement among themselves, began late in the night and in all sections simultaneously to beat their bowls and mess-tins or to sing patriotic songs in chorus. Later on they moved to other actions, such as collective refusal to take food in protest against starvation, the frightful inadequacy of sanitation and medical care and barbarous treatment by the guards. In some cases prisoners set fire to their tents, destroyed all that they could lay hands on, attacked their jailers or even disarmed them. Repeated attempts at a collective escape were made. In spite of the restrictions imposed

upon them, the prisoners marked Lebanon's Independence Day, the anniversary of the Palestinian revolution and the founding of the LCP, the anniversary of the death of Kamal Joumblatt, the patriotic leader, and other memorable dates. Many of these actions ended in a clash with the guards, who opened fire, injuring or even killing prisoners. However, there were also casualties among the invaders.

Altogether the Ansar inmates launched more than 30 actions. It is impossible to give an account of all those actions, so I will confine myself to a description of how preparations for an escape were made and how the inmates celebrated the 60th anniversary of the LCP.

Originally attempts to escape were made by cutting holes in the fence. After the invaders had added barbed wire, the only choice left was to dig underground passages leading out of the camp. The first attempt failed, for on August 2, 1983, or two days before the planned escape, the Israelis discovered the six-metre-long underground passage. However, this did not discourage the prisoners. The next passage was dug by 73 of them. It was 2.5 metres deep and 27 metres long. Four men succeeded in regaining freedom on that occasion but a fifth prisoner was caught in the barbed wire and attracted the guards' attention. In this way the escape of a large group of prisoners, who had been preparing for it over a long period, was foiled.

After this incident, the invaders transferred the camp to Wadi Jahannam ("Hell Valley"), which lies between two low mountains. The tents there had cement floors. Prisoners used even spoons and forks to break the cement open. One day prisoners who had dug an underground passage 12 metres long were stopped by the rocky base of one of the two mountains and so could get no farther. Nevertheless, they made another attempt. They set the escape for May 17, 1984, the anniversary of the signing of the traitorous Lebanese-Israeli agreement sponsored by the United States. This time the escape succeeded. The operation was led by Ahmed Ali Ramadan, a Communist. He lost his life while covering his comrades.

Prisoners' revolts and repeated escapes kept the invaders in a state of permanent tension and wore them out psychologically, as did resistance actions by patriots throughout the occupied territory.

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of the LCP on October 24, 1984 demonstrated the prisoners' moral strength and unity. The Communists began preparations for it several days in advance. A date was set for the planned rally, slogans were formulated and speakers chosen. The slogans were painted with toothpaste on cartons. Letters giving detailed instructions were tied to stones and thrown from one section to another. The anniversary issue of *Ansar*, an underground magazine, spelled out the significance of the event. It told the prisoners how they could resist the invaders, and stressed the importance of joint action both in and outside the camp for freeing the seized territories and bringing about the triumph of the national cause.

Here is what an imprisoned sheikh, Youssef Musulmani, wrote from the camp to Moustapha Maarouf Saad, a noted patriotic leader, about the events of that day: "Dear brother Maarouf, I want to tell you what happened on October 24, 1984, the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Lebanese Communist Party. It was Wednesday. At 2.35pm an Israeli officer came to our section and told us to take down an anniversary poster and to lower the red flag raised over the platform built for a rally. 'We'll take down everything when the rally's over,' we replied. The officer insisted but we were determined to leave everything intact until after the celebration. At last he lost his patience and walked away. And then I proposed to open the rally. Several men spoke. I spoke on behalf of the Islamic Patriotic Resistance. While I was speaking, the section commander arrived with 350 soldiers. They surrounded the section and made ready to act. But we did not budge. When the soldiers broke into the section, everyone stayed where he was and kept listening to my speech. Stopping about three metres short of the platform, the Israelis hurled tear-gas grenades and opened fire to disperse us and foil the rally. They succeeded only when we could no longer breathe on account

of that terrible gas. And then Moslems, Nasserists, Communists, Lebanese and Palestinians all flung themselves on the enemy and drove him away . . . The remarkable thing is that we succeeded in completing the celebration. The enemy mounted another four attacks but they all failed. The prisoners' will won the upper hand. Our resolve at once frightened, enraged and amazed the enemy. It was a fine spectacle indeed when all prisoners rose to repeat after me: 'Prisoners of Ansar, unite' . . ."

It was not only through open protests and other actions that the prisoners furnished proof of their staunchness. They created excellent works of art. Many of them made fine handicraft articles in the national style. Others wrote stirring poems and short stories which were subsequently smuggled out of Ansar to be printed in Lebanese publications; still others made figurines and drawings dedicated to their struggle in the camp and to freedom and their country. All these creations were displayed afterwards at an itinerant exhibition in Lebanon and elsewhere as symbols of heroic resistance to the Israeli invaders.

Our people, including those who were seized and sent to Ansar, showed by their deeds that they are stronger than the invaders with their sadistic tortures and barbed wire. The day came when Israel had to abolish Ansar camp under the pressure of patriotic resistance in the camp and throughout the occupied territory. Most of the prisoners were set free. But the aggressors transferred many others to prisons in Israel or prisons built by them in Atlit, Askalon, Al-Khyam and elsewhere in the occupied southern part of Lebanon. In these prisons they continue harassing and torturing the inmates.

So let all fair-minded people on earth speak out to denounce the Nazi practices which the Zionists use before the eyes of the world, and to demand the immediate release of all the prisoners displaced from Lebanon and languishing in Israeli jails to this day!

new experience

Our Interviews Looking for Modern Approaches to the Young

Leszek Miller — Head of PUWP CC
Department for the Affairs of Youth,
Sport and Tourism

How important an element of your party's activity is work with young people now, at the phase of the socialist renewal of the Polish society?

The Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) regards this line of its activity as one of the most important ones. Such an approach is dictated by life itself. We are among the "youngest" societies in Europe: more than one-half of the Poles are now under thirty. Besides, the young generation responded most acutely to the crisis phenomena of the

early 1980s, to the mistakes in the party's economic and social policy, and to the failings and shortcomings in its ideological-education work. That is the section of the population on which the adversaries of socialism concentrated and scored some short-lived successes. But they miscalculated over the long term, because they failed to reckon with the results of the party's many years of effort in the communist education of the young.

The problems now facing us are not as acute as they were five or six years ago, but they are still very serious. The party attaches primary importance to their solution. After the Ninth Extraordinary Congress of the PUWP in 1981, a standing commission on the affairs of young people was set up under the Central Committee, and similar groups were formed in the provincial committees. The Ninth Plenary Meeting of the PUWP CC was held in July 1982 to analyse the Communist's work in this field, and adopted a decision to exercise special control of the pertinent activity of party organisations. The question of work among young people is now annually discussed on the level of provincial committees and regularly considered at meetings of the CC Political Bureau. The 24th Plenary Meeting of the PUWP CC, which was held in February 1986, considered the problems arising from the functioning of the system of secondary and higher education, and summed up the results of the party's efforts in fulfilling the decisions of the Ninth Plenary Meeting. It emphasised that the main line of the party's policy in this field was the moulding of the socialist and internationalist consciousness among young people, the shaping of a creative attitude to the reality, and intolerance of any manifestations of social injustice.

The party's approach to the young generation takes into account the fact that it is not homogenous socially, and includes a thorough analysis of the mind set of the various age groups and the frame of mind among young workers, farmers and students so as to create the most favourable conditions for realising the interests and aspirations of the various groups of the young generation, and for making them socially more active. Such an analysis provides the basis for the formulation of concrete policy. The exodus of young people from the PUWP has been halted by the measures the party has taken since 1982 and by the general re-establishment of its authority, so that there is now a gradual increase in the number of young people joining the party. Since April 1984, 46,000 young men and women under 29 have joined the PUWP, and this age group now averages over 50 per cent of the annual new membership.

What is now the state of the various strata of Polish young people with a view to possibly enhancing party influence on them?

Let me start with our main reserve, the young workers. In 1980 and 1981, some of them succumbed to Solidarity's demagogic slogans and joined its ranks. It is now safe to say, however, that in the main we have managed to overcome this process. Over the past several years, young workers have been more active socially and in production. More and more of them are joining the party. They now make up over 30 per cent of trade union members, and are prominent within the worker's self-management system and on the committees of the Patriotic Movement of National Revival.

The rural young were less affected by the crisis phenomena, which is why they came under much weaker influence from the counter-revolutionary forces. The PUWP is exercising its guiding role through Communists who are members of the Union of Rural Youth and other youth organisations operating in the countryside. They act as initiators in introducing modern methods of production, invite young men and women to take a more active part in territorial and cooperative self-administration, and make a contribution to its development. However, not many young peasants still join the party.

The PUWP suffered its heaviest losses in the early 1980s among students, some of whom took an overt anti-party stand. The ideology alien to socialism has its deepest roots among the students, who were swayed by views characteristic of the intelligentsia as a whole, but these views were much more actively expressed because young people

naturally tend to be intolerant and radical in assessment and action. The party's vigorous measures to improve the situation are now beginning to produce results. Here, students and teachers who are party members have a big role to play. They explain the PUWP's policy through various scientific circles and debates, seeking to stimulate an interest among young people in the social sciences; they insist on higher levels of tuition and the introduction of new subjects relevant to the solution of acute economic and social development problems. The activists have managed to stem the process of degradation in the higher schools, and to raise their educational role. In 1985, for the first time in the past five years, the number of party members at the higher academic institutions has been stabilised. Just now, 25.7 per cent of the teachers were PUWP members, but the influx of new members into the party from the higher schools, especially from among the students, is still very small.

The programme for improvements at the higher schools, which the party has worked out, provides for raising the quality of instruction and ideological education work, closer contacts between tuition and the society's actual problems, broader opportunities for young men and women of worker and peasant stock in obtaining a higher education, and the development of student self-administration. By means of these and other measures, the PUWP expects to overcome the remaining negative trends in the midst of the students, including their passive attitudes and indifference to politics, which will be found among some of them.

We also intend to give more attention to school education, to the training of tutors for the rising generation, and to the raising of their socialist consciousness. We believe that the teaching of the social sciences, especially of history, needs also to be extended at the secondary schools, that its quality should be improved, and that elements of self-administration need to be introduced more boldly to develop among teenagers a sense of social responsibility.

There are four youth associations in Poland recognising the PUWP's leading role in the society. Why is that so? What is the state of the Polish youth movement as a whole, and how active are the Communists in its ranks?

The youth movement has developed a peculiar structure because of the national features of the revolutionary process: there are several organisations within its framework. But on the whole, it is ideologically united, and this, as you quite rightly pointed out, is determined by the recognition of the leading role of the political vanguard of the working class. Thus, in December 1982, all the four organisations — the Socialist Youth League of Poland, the Union of Rural Youth, the Union of Polish Harzlers, with a membership mainly of children and teenagers, and the Union of Polish Students — signed a joint declaration on cooperation, stating their resolve to strengthen the ideological and political unity of the young on the basis of socialist principles. The organised youth movement now involves 28 per cent of Polish young men and women. The SYLP is the most massive one, with nearly two million members, while the student's union has only 52,000 members, or just 15 per cent of the total number of students and young teachers. The party regards all the four socialist youth associations as being equal, and scrupulously respects their organisational independence.

During the crisis, the youth movement was in the forefront of the contest for choice of way in social development and was put to a very hard test. There were, of course, highly difficult moments in the course of this confrontation, but the movement as a whole has become stronger and more experienced. The ideological level of many members of the unions has been raised: they have learned how to carry on political struggle, and to express in concrete terms the programmatic provisions of their organisations in accordance with the actual situation and the requirements of the young. So, the movement is steadily — if slowly — increasing its influence.

It has to develop in a situation in which the Catholic Church remains an influential public force. The party's policy envisages a principled struggle against its philosophical

and ideological doctrine, and the observance of the principle of separation of church and state, and freedom of religion. The PUWP has resolutely opposed any manifestations of clericalism, the use of the feelings of believers for political purposes, and any attempts to violate the secular character of education. But as the Polish realities have shown, the religious world-view does not necessarily imply a negative attitude to socialist change. We believe that young people whom faith in god does not prevent from taking a truly patriotic and civic stand can have an active part in public life.

The PUWP is now looking for fresh approaches, forms and methods of work with the rising generation. The Communists seek to make it more attractive, more flexible and more understandable for Polish young men and women, and to show them that the party's efforts are aimed to bring about an actual improvement in their living, working and leisure conditions, and to provide greater opportunities for spiritual and physical development, and realisation of young people's proposals for improving the economic and political system.

In working on these lines, the PUWP relies above all on the young Communists, each of whom has the duty to work in a youth union. The party's leadership of the movement is effected mainly through the young members of the PUWP, who have played an important part in formulating the draft decree passed by the Sejm on greater participation by young men and women in every sphere of public life, and have done much to explain the party's policy and to consolidate the youth movement.

The ongoing discussion of the PUWP's draft programme to be adopted by the party's forthcoming congress, is of great importance in this context. The discussion has involved sharp and lively exchanges, with young people taking a most committed stand. That is quite natural because the party programme opens up broad prospects for the country's development and determines its character and ways. It is, after all, the young who have the greatest stake in the future, in which they will have to live and work.

Research Activities of the CP Canada

Gerry van Houten — CC member,
CP Canada

You are the Research Director of the Communist Party of Canada. What does your department do? How has the Communists' research activity been developing?

The ideological struggle in the world arena and within the capitalist countries was sharply exacerbated in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A concerted ideological attack on socialism was launched not only by the right-wing forces, but also by various ultra-leftist organisations camouflaging their hostility for our movement with diverse pseudo-revolutionary catchwords. The edge of this attack in Canada was directed against the Communist Party, which has always taken a consistent stand for the principles of scientific socialism, and has always striven to spread the ideas of Marxism-Leninism among the working people.

In order to be equal to the new tasks facing us and to fend off the onslaught on the CPC's principled political and ideological positions, its leadership decided to set up a research department. It was formed in February 1977. Its first major task was the provision of materials and documents for the writing of *Canada's Party of Socialism: History of the Communist Party of Canada. 1921-1976*, under the supervision of a

pecially appointed History Commission, made up of the party's best researchers and directly responsible to the CEC. It had become especially necessary in view of the appearance of a string of rightist and leftist books defaming the history and activities of the CPC and playing down its considerable contribution to the Canadian working people's struggle for the solution of social and national problems, for an independent foreign policy, for peace and disarmament. Other studies by the Research Department deal with the vital requirements of the practical struggle of the Canadian working class and its political vanguard.

The Research Department has now turned its attention to the main factors having an impact in the development of the anti-monopoly movement on Canada. In particular, it has done research in the areas of the capitalist economic crisis in Canada, the social and economic impact of the scientific and technological revolution, the changing structure of the working class, the trends in state-monopoly capitalism in Canada, and various aspects of the social activity of the working masses.

The Research Department is likewise engaged in the scientific analysis of questions pertaining to the interests of the Canadian nation as a whole, thereby making a contribution to enhancing the party's authority as a national political force. Important conclusions have been drawn from its analysis of the ties between the country's arms industry and the US military-industrial complex, and the trends in the political and economic relations between Canadian monopoly capital and US imperialism. Thus, having made a study of the consequences that free trade between Canada and the United States would have for the country, we reached the conclusion that it would undermine Canada's independence and sovereignty and cause the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs, in addition to substantially lowering the living standards of Canada's working people.

How is your day-to-day activity arranged? How do you cooperate with the country's scientific community at large?

We regard our department as an ideological and theoretical instrument of the CP Canada. That is why we try to tie in research with our educational work. The results of our studies are discussed at seminars, classes and courses, which help to deepen the ideological and theoretical understanding of Canadian Communists, and give them a deeper insight into the current requirements and tasks of the present stage of the revolutionary struggle. This is especially important for those who have recently joined the CP Canada and do not yet have the experience to sort out the essentials and complexities of the political struggle and to deal with the highly refined bourgeois propaganda. Some of our studies are published in *Communist Viewpoint*, the CPC's theoretical journal.

We are aware of the importance of broader contacts with the public and with scientists who are known for their progressive views and who are truly concerned with the country's problems. That is why we seek to involve in our studies not only scientists who are members of the party, but also those who take a democratic stand, and also trade union leaders and university lecturers. We have had a particularly fruitful relationship with the Center for Socialist Education, a Marxist institute based in Vancouver.

The CP has no immediate plans at present to set up its own research centre. However, there can be little doubt that, as the demands of the class struggle on the Communist Party grow, and along with it, the party's membership and influence, the time will come when such a research centre will become necessary.

Documents

THE PHASE OF STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

The collapse of the fascist dictatorship, which used terrorism and repression to stay in power for more than ten years, is regarded by the CPU Uruguay as a historic victory for the working people and for the entire nation. The final resolution of the CPU national conference in December 1985 says that the existence of a strong communist party is a necessary condition for deepening the process of national revival, fulfilling the formidable tasks of consolidating the recently re-established democracy, and successfully fighting for the establishment of a popular government of the Broad Front.¹

The working class party has invariably fought for the people's social and national interests and for democratic rights and freedoms. The CPU, forced to re-establish its organisational structure after long years of work in the underground, has started vigorous activity and is now one of the leading political forces in the ongoing changes. The Communists have made a contribution to this process by openly voicing their opinions, and putting forward concrete proposals for solving the most important problems.

The dictatorship was brought down by the efforts of the Uruguayan people as a whole. The Communists were in the front ranks of the fighters. They have lost thousands of their heroic fighters, who have disappeared, have been imprisoned and tortured, and forced into exile.

That is why more people now heed what the Communists are saying, than in the past. The majority of the people now look to the party, and thousands of Uruguayans are joining its ranks, says the document.

The resolution contains a call on the workers and other working people, on youth, on men and women in town and country to join the Communist Party, if they have the country's future at heart.

¹ A unitary organisation founded in 1971 by the CPU, the Christian Democratic Party, the Socialist Party of Uruguay and other left-wing groupings.—Ed.

In the Mirror of the Press

Rinascita

EXCHANGE OF PARTY CARDS: THE MESSAGE

Rinascita, the theoretical weekly of the Italian Communists, has published several times on changes in the party's numerical and social make-up over the past ten years, in connection with the annual exchange of party cards.

It says that from 1976 to the end of 1985, there was some reduction in the party ranks: from 1,814,000 to 1,593,000. It stresses that there is a similar process in the other Italian parties, including the Christian Democratic Party, in view, among other things, of the decline in the population's political activity that has been in evidence over a period of many years, a process for which the ruling circles are directly to blame. Political scandals, corruption and the inability to solve problems which are of vital importance for the population, such as unemployment, have caused growing mistrust among broad masses of people for political parties as such, and for their methods. People often see no difference between the ruling and the opposition parties, and this

has also had an effect on their attitude to the ICP.

Another reason for the reduction in the party membership, the journal says, is the refusal on the part of many new members to exchange their party documents in the course of the annual drive, i.e., their actual drop-out from the ICP. That has occurred because far from all of them regarded joining the party as a well-considered and responsible step.

The data on the ICP's social structure show that 42.7 per cent of its membership are workers, including those employed in agriculture. Peasants and tenants make up 3 per cent of the membership, urban middle strata — about 19 per cent (of whom 6 per cent are employees and managerial personnel), the rest being old-age pensioners (21 per cent), housewives (7.5 per cent), and so on.

The weekly also notes that there is a relative ageing of the ICP membership: only 10.3 per cent of its members are now under 29. There has been a simultaneous growth in the over 50-age group, which now accounts for nearly one-half of the party membership. This process is largely due to the difficulties in getting young people to join the party, but *Rinascita* says that there are also some encouraging aspects. Thus, the 1984 elections to the European Parliament showed that the ICP's political line is supported by the young generation, for most voters aged 18 to 34 voted for the party ticket.

A Personal Impression

THE MOST NECESSARY WORK

It was a relief to find oneself in the twilight of the hut after the blinding, scorching rays of the noonday sun. There was a smell of dry straw and some kind of herbs. I sat on something that looked like a bench and interviewed two young peasants, Abraham and Avano. Both were family men and the fathers of children: Avano had two, and Abraham one. Seven months ago, they were brought by tractorcade together with hundreds of other peasant families from the province of Shewa, to this village of Baro Abol, which lies in Gambela district in Ethiopia's westernmost province of Illubabor. My first question was:

"What made you leave your native place?"

"Hunger. The soil there is all but barren, and besides we had no rain for several years running. The fields were scorched, and no crop could be taken in. Our animals began to die off, and the people were down to their last crumbs. Everyone, especially the children, were getting weaker by the day, there was a spread of disease and funerals became a daily occurrence.

"It is not easy to get used to the new place, of course. Everything around is unusual and strange, even the air is more humid and we find the breathing harder. But we have gradually settled down and got used to it. We have now taken in our first crop. It is true that it is not large enough to keep us going without help from outside, but it is now up to us. We feel that we shall be on a firm footing in a couple of years."

These two young peasants were a part of the many thousands of settlers who had to leave their native places after the terrible drought. The causes, scale and consequences were already described on the pages of *WMR*.¹ Here are a few more facts which I got at the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission of the Government of Socialist Ethiopia.

For nearly 90 per cent of Ethiopia's inhabitants, cropping and livestock-breeding are the sole source of livelihood, and as a report recently put out by the Commission says, "due to misuse of the natural resources in the area, because of poor agricultural

practices, deforestation, over-grazing and lack of soil and water conservation practices, the productivity of the agricultural lands has seriously diminished to the extent that farmers are failing to produce enough on which to subsist even in normal production seasons". Here are some concrete figures: in a normal year, the crop assures farmers in the province of Sidamo of a daily diet of 174 grammes of grain, in Eritrea 247, and in Tigray 287. That is very much less than the minimum, and so help must be got from outside. And that is the situation, one has to stress, in a normal, i.e., more or less favourable-weather year. When drought descends for several years running, the situation becomes disastrous.

Because it was practically impossible in the foreseeable future to raise agricultural production in the areas where the ecological balance had been heavily upset and natural resources depleted, the government of socialist Ethiopia had to start a campaign for the resettlement of some of the people from these areas to lands — mainly in the western and southwestern parts of the country — which make it possible to engage in productive labour. Strictly speaking, the resettlement began spontaneously: the hungry people abandoned their barren fields and fled wherever they could. The Workers' party of Ethiopia and the government turned the process into an organised one. They drew up plans for the transportation and settlement of 370,000 families in new places. By September 1985, almost 183,000 of them — which means over half a million people — had been settled in the new places.

These figures give an idea of the scale and complexity of the problems arising from such a sharp turn in the life of vast masses of people. On a tour of Gambela, together with a member of the WPE district committee Solomon Alemu, I got an idea of the problems being tackled in practice, and how this is being done by the party and government agencies. Alemu is a member of the Marine Transport Administration, and arrived here from Addis Ababa only a few weeks earlier with a group of 2,000 party members who had been assigned to help combat the effects of the natural disaster. After eight months of intense efforts, the members of the first contingent had gone home, to resume their work and studies.

"The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, the ministries of agriculture, building, public health and others are taking part in the resettlement campaign," Solomon Alemu told me. "Their activity is directed by party bodies at every level, down to the villages, where the evacuated inhabitants are being settled. At least three party members are assigned to such a village, which has an average of 500 families, or 2,500 persons. A five-man party committee operates on the level of the Refugee Centre, which deals with several villages, and a 22-member WPE district committee — on the scale of the district."

"What do these agencies have to deal with?"

"The primary task," says Alemu, "is to help the resettlers to arrange their life in the new place. We start by telling them about their surroundings, the nearest wood, river or spring. Nature is remarkably generous in these parts. While the northern areas repeatedly suffer from drought, here there is never any lack of water: the rains are abundant and never late, the rivers do not dry up, and the greenery is not burnt out. These lands have never been either hoed or ploughed, and specialists believe that they will yield high crops even without any special agronomic techniques. But there is a limit to the fertility of the soil, and it does not take long to undermine it with the traditional farming methods. This tragic experience should not be allowed to recur. The people need to be trained in advanced agronomic techniques, ways of improving the farmland, protecting soils from erosion, and protecting and restoring the forests. After all, the settlers have come here for good. This is where they will have to live and work, and to rear their children and grandchildren."

"What is the attitude of the native population? Is there any frictions?"

"The vast expanses of this part of the country are sparsely populated. There are enough unused lands to go round, especially since the local people are not engaged in

farming but in fruit gathering and hunting. They welcomed the new settlers with open arms and helped them to settle down, to cut timber, build their huts and clear the lands. But there are, of course, some problems. It will take time to gain a better knowledge of one's new neighbours with their customs and traditions, and to get to understand each other — they all speak different languages. The benefit here is a common one. The newcomers are in need of goodwill on the part of the local inhabitants, and the latter, for their part, could be involved in farming, which would be a step forward in their development."

Alemu admits that the members of the district committee often lack experience in tackling the problems that arise. But it was even harder for those who came in the first contingent of party activists, because they had to start from scratch.

Alemu himself is responsible for ideological work at the district committee. I asked him what that involved.

"In our conditions, everything that is done to save the people from starvation and to enable them to live a normal life, to work productively gives them a sense of confidence in the future. That is the most necessary party work. After all, all the practical undertakings and real concern for human beings are more convincing than any amount of speeches. But we do not underestimate the importance of explanation and dissemination of knowledge. We explain the party and government policy to the peasants, and try to lay the foundations for future youth and women's organisations and peasant associations in the villages where the conditions for these are ripe."

The party members rely in their work on activists, mainly those who took part in the national campaign to combat the effects of the natural disaster, which is called *zemetcha* (an Amharic word literally meaning "mobilisation for war"). We met them in the resettler villages. They were mostly young people — students, teachers, office workers and members of youth and women's organisations. They live in close touch with the peasants, and apply in practice the knowledge they have obtained by working as agronomists, teachers, nurses, medical attendants and administrative and managerial personnel. They help to wipe out illiteracy among the adults and to teach school-age children. They have hardly any opportunity of closing in upon themselves in their specialist field. A teacher, for instance, explains to the women how best to feed their children, to observe the elementary rules of hygiene, while a nurse providing care for her patients uses the opportunity to teach them to read and count.

Young agrotechnicians who were mobilised within the framework of the *zemetcha* campaign said that they taught the resettlers new and more rational methods of soil cultivation, and took pride in demonstrating the sheaves of the first crop carefully stacked on planks raised above the ground. One of the young people said: "While helping these people to arrange their farming, we simultaneously try to get them to think about the advantages of collective labour, so suggesting the idea of setting up a cooperative.

The resettlers are, of course, in very straitened circumstances. Alemu says: "The vast majority of them are people gravely exhausted or very weakened by hunger and disease. Not all of them make it to the southern and western provinces. But in any case they cannot be left in the north, because over there they are sure to starve to death.

There is also a shortage of farming implements, medical facilities, clothing and even of foodstuffs. But the main thing is that they now have faith in themselves, and feel sure that they can overcome the difficulties and start a better life on the new lands, which will no longer be a miserly and merciless foster parent, but a generous and loving mother. And perhaps the best thing is that this faith — even if still an unconscious one — is expressed on the faces of the children, groups of whom are the first to run out to meet us in the road, their eyes sparking with curiosity and adventure. What a striking contrast they presented to the large, dull, and prematurely aged eyes of the emaciated children whose photographs were carried round the world by the mass media. The

most humane task for which the Workers's Party of Ethiopia is mustering the people is to restore to the children their childhood, their hope and their joys.

Vladimir Morozov
WMR staff member

¹ See "Hunger in African and Asian Nations: Problems Await Their Solution", WMR, No. 2, 1986.

In Brief

BRAZIL

The Brazilian Communist Party has reaffirmed its decision to participate in the elections for the National Congress due in November 1986. It considers that this will help unite all the political and social forces striving to promote the democratisation process.

COLOMBIA

The Left scored considerable gains in the parliamentary and municipal elections last March. The Patriotic Union, a coalition which includes the Communist Party, won over 300,000 votes. It now holds 14 seats in Congress (against two Left seats in the past).

FRANCE

In the elections to the National Assembly held last March, the French Communist Party won 9.8 per cent of the vote (over 2,700,000 of the total), which secured it 35 seats. An overall majority was polled by the right-wing parties (291 seats). The Socialist Party and the coalition of left-wing groups to which it belonged collected 31 per cent of the vote (215 seats). The pro-fascist National Front won election to the Assembly for the first time by polling 9.7 per cent of the vote. Describing the outcome of the elections as a victory for the Right *l'Humanité* stresses that, even so, the Right was unable to fully realise this plans and remove the Communists from the national political scene.

HAITI

Rene Theodore, General Secretary of the United Party of Haitian Communists, has returned to his country after many years of political exile. Thousands of people welcomed him at Port-au-Prince airport. He addressed a mass rally and took part in the opening of UPHC headquarters in the Haitian capital.

ITALY

The Communists have held a national meeting on the problem of unemployment among women. Speakers pointed out that in 1984 as many as 17.7 per cent of Italian woman were unable to find a job. They proposed steps to remedy the situation and stressed the need to step up the women's movement, particularly their struggle in defence of social and democratic achievement and for equality with men in all public spheres.

POLAND

The CC PUWP decided at its Plenary Meeting last March to call the Tenth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party on June 29, 1986.

PORTUGAL

Leadership members of democratic parties have held bilateral consultations on the domestic political situation in the wake of the recent presidential elections. The delegation of the Portuguese Communist Party met with delegates of the Portuguese Democratic Movement, the Greens and the Democratic Renewal Party. For the first time in seven years, consultations took place between noted leaders of the PCP and the Socialist Party.

VIETNAM

Within the framework of preparations for its regular Sixth Congress set for late 1986, the CC Secretariat of the Communist Party of Vietnam has decided to carry out a campaign of criticism and self-criticism and called on all party members to join in. The purpose of the campaign is to draw conclusions and lessons from the experience gained by the CPV since its Fifth Congress (1982).

exchange of views, discussion

Intellect Against the Insanity of Star Wars Collective Interview with Prominent Scientists

The prospect of weapons deployment in space has alarmed world public opinion greatly. The US programme to develop space strike systems has confronted mankind with the acute question of how the results of the scientific and technological revolution are to be used. The documents of the 27th Congress of the CPSU describe it as a major issue of the current socio-political struggle. The choice is between only two options: either advances in science and technology will bring abundance into the world and create material conditions for social prosperity and all-round development of man, or the things man creates by hand and by brain will increasingly turn against him and threaten the very survival of life on Earth.

What is the position of scientists, these movers of the scientific and technological revolution? *World Marxist Review* has asked prominent scientists to share their views concerning the problems created by the US plans to deploy weapons in outer space, the Star Wars plans. *WMR* received replies from Professor **Linus Pauling**, Nobel Prize winner (USA); Professor **Dorothy Hodgkin**, Nobel Prize winner (Great Britain); Professor **Yevgeni Velikhov**, Vice-President of the USSR Academy of Sciences; Professor **Peter Starlinger** (FRG); Professor **Albert Jacquard** (France) and Dr **Allan Din** (Stockholm

International Peace Research Institute). Following are their slightly abridged replies.

World public opinion began to discuss militarisation of outer space as a very real threat to mankind as soon as President Reagan put forward his Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). What do you see as the specific danger of Star Wars' implementation?

Linus Pauling. At the present time, because of the existence of the nuclear deterrent, war between the Soviet Union and the United States has become unthinkable, has been ruled out . . . We should recognise that the first step has been taken to eliminate war from the world . . . The Star Wars doctrine is a threat to world peace, in that developments along this line might seem to destroy the significance of the nuclear deterrent and to make war between the nuclear powers conceivable . . . We should be striving to stabilise the nuclear deterrent and to decrease the amounts of money spent . . . on armaments. President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative is a way of increasing the waste of the world's wealth on militarism.

Dorothy Hodgkin. I'm against SDI. It is most expensive and it won't work, so it's a total waste of money which is needed elsewhere. I think, if you want to get rid of nuclear weapons, as Reagan says he does, you just get rid of them. You don't have to have all this tremendous apparatus in space.

Allan Din. The Strategic Defence Initiative is likely to exacerbate the offensive arms race and to reduce crisis stability.¹ To make nuclear weapons impotent requires a novel, more radical approach.

Peter Starlinger. Militarisation of outer space is referred to as a defensive project, allegedly designed to make nuclear weapons useless by ensuring 100 per cent protection of people and cities. However, most scientists and even high-level US administration officials estimate that such defence is not feasible. And with the absence of 100 per cent protection, the creation of this defence system will increase, not reduce the numbers of offensive nuclear weapons. As a result, the stability of coexistence of countries with different social systems will diminish. And so it would be more correct to decipher SDI as a strategic destabilisation, not defence, initiative.

Albert Jacquard. To try and defend itself, the United States is launching a long-term programme to ensure acquisition, by the end of the century, of the capability to destroy enemy missiles even before they reach American territory. That is a tempting objective, but the idea itself is as short-sighted as the construction of atomic-proof shelters. Suppose that US territory, has really become off limits to missiles—but it is sure to be affected by the nuclear winter caused by a conflict in which other nations will be involved and destroyed. Two weeks later, the Americans will also see night in broad daylight, the temperature of the air will drop to 23°C below zero in the United States too, radioactive fallout and ultra-violet rays will affect the Americans too. Others will be killed six or seven times over and the Americans, 'only' three or four times. Is it really an attractive prospect? No matter what national colours grace nuclear weapons, they are targeted not on New York or Moscow but on man, on the entire human race.

Yevgeni Velikhov. I see SDI as a self-serving attempt by the US administration to find an acceptable loophole to escape the existing nuclear balance between the USSR and the United States, between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty. Strategic parity prevents Washington from using its huge stockpile of weapons for either political or military purposes. The situation of 'nuclear stalemate'—a balance of strategic capabilities in which neither side can win a nuclear war even if it is the first to launch it—calls into question the use of armed forces as a viable political instrument and, logically, negates the idea of the need to continue perfecting means of warfare.

The idea of Star Wars reflects the desire of the US ruling quarters to secure decisive military superiority by creating a 'comprehensive shield against missiles'. It is, however, obvious to experts, including those who are SDI advocates, that even a scientifically and technologically perfect large-scale anti-missile system cannot guarantee complete protection from ballistic missiles or space strike weapons. Technologically, a weapon capable of intercepting one missile or warhead is feasible. But this is not tantamount to the creation of a reliable defence system impervious to any enemy attack. SDI can only partially shield this or that area from retaliation. This being so, the offensive arms race will intensify sharply and nuclear capabilities will increase—which, incidentally, is not denied by Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger, an ardent supporter of SDI.

There is yet another consideration. Deployment of weapons in outer space will reduce the level of security all over the world. Space strike systems with ballistic missiles to intercept enemy warheads can, upon certain modification, destroy targets on the ground, in the sea, in the air—anywhere. Work in this direction is already under way in the United States. Here is what the development of such systems will lead to. Today, there are no weapons in outer space threatening the USSR, the United States or any other country. But the creation of space systems capable of hitting aircraft, sea-going vessels and especially command and control centres which are supposed to be sufficiently immune will destabilise the entire situation.

The claim that SDI will make nuclear weapons useless appears to be aimed at the gullible. The fact that nuclear weapons dominate in all types of armaments is, unfortunately, a reality we will have to reckon with for a long time to come. These weapons are too powerful to be dropped so easily from the balance sheet of strategic forces and brushed aside as useless.

The sponsors of SDI assert that the Star Wars project is essential for progress in science and technology and that military space research is therefore inevitable. What do you think about it? How do you view the relationship between science and politics today, at a juncture on which the future of mankind depends to a great degree?

Dorothy Hodgkin. I doubt whether this is necessary for progress. And even though tremendous sums are earmarked for these purposes, the effect is almost always not as significant. The direct route, the route of peaceful research, is more productive. You see this very well in the field in which I'm particularly interested—molecular biology. I mean the enormous list of developments which have been produced by precisely this type of research, and not at such great cost, too.

Linus Pauling. Some advances in science and technology might result from investigations in connection with Star Wars. Similar advances, however, could be made at far smaller cost if the Strategic Defence Initiative were to be abandoned and the money saved be used, in part, for the support of research in basic science.

Allan Din. Military space research promotes advances in science and technology, but at the price of a higher risk for nuclear confrontation. This latter may however be avoided by a judicious use of science and technology for arms control and verification.

Peter Starlinger. There is no doubt that SDI will speed up research *in the military sphere*. But there is nothing in the entire history of science to indicate that such research promotes advances in civilian sectors. Today it is already imperative to keep military programmes from diverting resources from civilian projects to a degree at which dangerous imbalances may result in the development of research and subsequently, in the national economy. In future, great investments in science will require that special attention be paid to this task.

Albert Jacquard. The way some politicians respond to the growing nuclear threat could be described as 'surrender' and the conduct of the would-be victims of a possible catastrophe, as 'resignation'.

Conscious will was, of course, at the root of it all. Roosevelt agreed to the Manhattan Project under great pressure from a group of physicists, including Einstein; they feared that the Nazis could create atomic weapons. The nuclear explosion conducted by the USSR in 1949 was the result of the Soviet leaders' desire to end the US monopoly in this field. But as far as subsequent developments are concerned, the impression is that moves of one side dictated the moves of the other side; it was a vicious circle, and the actors of the drama were puppets manipulated by forces beyond their control.

The French 'strike force' offers a very instructive example. What historian can point to the person or persons who made the decision to provide our country with nuclear weapons? France exploded its first atomic device in 1960, when General de Gaulle was President, but he merely continued an adventure begun long before him. As early as 1958 the government of Felix Gaillard announced that France will have 'the bomb', although at the time of the announcement it was already a *fait accompli*. An analysis of subsequent developments makes it possible to state that the responsible persons who succeeded one another not so much made decisions as agreed to keep up a process already under way, for to terminate this process would have meant to really make a decision.

It is worth recalling that in 1952 the French armed forces' General Headquarters set up a 'special arms command' which was to study the conditions for the production of atomic weapons and to secure the necessary resources. At first it was a purely technical move taken by officials so as to prepare a sizable file and have it on hand by the time the politicians showed an interest in the matter. Then there would be nothing left for the politicians to do but to admire the thorough job and to give the go-ahead to continued research, at first theoretical, then more specific and finally, comprehensive. That was exactly what happened.

This process can be likened to the way a tiny cell, having been affected by an error of regulation or having accidentally started a new metabolism, multiplies uncontrollably and creates a tumour which spreads throughout the organism and finally destroys it.

Viewed in global terms, the nuclear system is a precise equivalent of such a cancerous growth. The countries taking part in nuclear proliferation are its metastases.

Yevgeni Velikhov. A great deal depends today on a correct relationship between science and politics. Politics is clearly the leader here. But, as Lenin noted, science, too serves the interests of the class struggle.² This is what underlies the interaction of politics and science. Many scientists are now aware of their responsibility for the future, and they oppose the deployment of weapons in space. But there are also opportunists who are working to implement projects that threaten mankind.

And, since politics has primacy here, politicians must realise that the prospects offered to the world by SDI are quite grim. All agreements on outer space in force to this day were reached when space around Earth was explored peacefully. Will it be possible to negotiate anything when outer space becomes a theatre of military rivalry? I doubt that. Space will be transformed into a shared military base where laws of physics will shuffle weapons of different nations into such disarray that there will be more than enough cause for conflict. I don't think I really have to elaborate on the consequences of such conflict for people on Earth.

What do you think can be done to prevent militarisation of outer space?

Linus Pauling. What needs to be done is making a treaty between the United States,

the Soviet Union, and other governments to stop the militarisation of outer space.

Dorothy Hodgkin. As far as the Pugwash Movement³ is concerned, all we can do at the moment is just what we are doing. We had a conference in London just before Christmas 1985 with a number of experts on outer space who came from different countries. They went through the various aspects of what might happen should SDI be realised, and they said it was unlikely this thing would work. And I think we must mobilise experts to influence governments so as to prevent deployment of weapons in space.

I think Gorbachov's plan is very good. It's been debated for years how you can safely eliminate nuclear weapons without prejudice to the security of any country, without leaving any nation in a dominating position. So now the proposal is that it should be done gradually. If you really want to work together, do it gradually, and at every stage of the reduction you'll feel safer, you'll come to know each other better, trust each other more. This is one of the things we in the Pugwash Movement have believed for a long time.

Allan Din. Militarisation of outer space can only be prevented by a comprehensive approach, whereby not just direct weapons, like killer satellites and beam weapons, but also indirect weapons, like communications and navigation support systems, are to be eliminated or controlled. Military systems like intelligence and verification satellites which enhance crisis stability may be permitted but could eventually be placed under the control of an international agency.

Peter Starlinger. Militarisation of outer space runs counter not only to the interests of most people but also to the proclaimed purposes of all governments. Contradictions between social systems can only be settled peacefully. An armed conflict would destroy everything. We must explain it to people that militarisation of outer space pushes us closer to nuclear war. I am convinced that having grasped that, they will eventually bring such pressure to bear on all governments that the latter will begin negotiations on disarmament, on reasonable and verifiable agreements in which all participating countries will be equal.

Albert Jacquard. Mankind is at the mercy of a malignant tumour which is weakening it today and will kill it tomorrow if allowed to spread. This is not a gratuitous statement intended to shock. Unfortunately, it is true, and the reality is so far beyond our power to comprehend it that our brain shuts itself off and refuses to face the apocalypse which is already here, right in front of us and so close that it stuns us into inaction.

The time has come to change our attitude. Scientists of diverse views and representatives of all countries are sounding the alarm. Effective popular pressure is our last hope. By himself, each may be powerless, but acting together, we can change history. Let us recall a Chinese proverb: 'A snowflake is small, but in a snowstorm, millions of snowflakes pile up on a tree and can bend and uproot it.'

Yevgeni Velikhov. We need bold political initiatives and decisions. Mikhail Gorbachov's plan for a phased elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons by the year 2000 provides a good, feasible basis for joint efforts by the USSR, the United States and all other countries to remove the nuclear threat and curb the race in all types of armaments, including space weapons.

Naturally, the popular masses cannot stand aloof from the process of disarmament. Unfortunately, American public opinion holds a mistaken view of the consequences the implementation of the SDI project will bring. This is dangerous for all people. It took four decades for the United States to grasp the impossibility of securing global superiority with the help of nuclear weapons. It is now being dinned into the heads of the Americans that this objective can be attained with the help of SDI. I have no doubt that the chauvinistic euphoria will vanish as soon as space weapons of another nation appear over their heads. They will realise that Washington made a great

mistake by launching an arms race in space, but it will be too late. The time to act is now. The international community must not be drawn into dangerous and reckless ventures that threaten human survival itself.

In recent years, many prominent scientists have been increasingly active in the broad civic movements that oppose the arms race and work for peaceful international relations, for constructive joint action by all nations to solve the key problems of our age. How do you see the degree of responsibility scientists now bear to society?

Linus Pauling. Every great problem in the modern world involves science to a greater or smaller extent. Scientists have an understanding of science that is greater than that of their fellow citizens. I believe that scientists have the obligation to help their fellow citizens about these matters and to express their own opinion about them.

Dorothy Hodgkin. There is a lot of sides to the relationship between scientists and society. One has to work fully concentrated on the problem one is tackling. I think scientists must be allowed that, because you can't do the most important things without a degree of concentration, without cutting off everything else for the moment. But if you then find that you have made a very important discovery that may have an influence on people's lives, I don't think you can be indifferent if it is used to harm people, not the way you wanted.

Allan Din. The responsibility of scientists lies in understanding the interdisciplinary technical and political issues of the arms race and, subsequently, to make their analysis available to the general public as a counterweight to the biased arguments presented by the military-industrial complex.

Peter Starlinger. Everyone must help to prevent war. Scientists have no right to stand aloof, all the more so because modern types of armaments are developed by scientific methods. Therefore, scientists are the first to learn about the threat posed by the latest systems of weapons. It is their duty to share this knowledge with others. This is what many scientists in the Federal Republic declared in the Maintz Appeal: 'We pledge to continue our research into the political, military and technical conditions essential to preserving and safeguarding peace, and to make public the results achieved. We ask that all scientists personally contribute their knowledge and conclusions to a businesslike discussion that will clarify matters and extend the discussion beyond the traditional framework.' Acting in this spirit, we have held several major congresses in the Federal Republic, attended by our foreign colleagues. We are continuing our efforts in this direction: all colleges and universities of our country marked a Peace Week last November.

Yevgeni Velikhov. I think that the social function of a scientist is to be able to analyse realities and to speak honestly to express one's own understanding of what is happening. The Committee of Soviet Scientists in Defence of Peace, Against the Threat of Nuclear War has conducted a series of studies dealing with international security and made its opinion public. It is not propaganda, not an opportunist position but a very thorough substantiated point of view. For example, our stand with regard to SDI has remained unchanged since April 1983, when we held an all-round discussion of militarisation of outer space and expressed our views in the Appeal of Soviet Scientists. Its assessments and conclusions remain valid today. We have discussed them repeatedly with our colleagues in Europe and America. In fact, we are now even more convinced that the response to the US proposal on the deployment of weapons in space must be universally negative. I hold that it is the foremost task of scientists to provide extensive information to their governments, to their fellow citizens and to the concerned sections of the public in other countries about the consequences of militarising outer space.

¹ This term is used in Western political science to denote international crisis situations short of armed conflict.—*Ed.*

² See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 327-328.

³ A civic movement of scientists for peace, disarmament, international security and scientific cooperation. The movement was sponsored by Albert Einstein, Frederic Joliot-Curie and Bertrand Russell in 1955. The first conference was held in Pugwash, Canada in 1957.—*Ed.*

The General Crisis of Capitalism: Economic Features

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THE instability of the economy of state-monopoly capitalism (SMC) sharply increased and the crisis of its political structures became more acute in the 1970s. A special role was played here, we believe, by the crisis of the forms of SMC relations of production which had been preponderant until the recent period. These relations have run into an impasse which is most importantly indicated by the grave complications of the reproduction (basis) processes, as will be seen from the worsening conditions for the realisation of capital and the slow-down in the pace of economic growth in the leading capitalist countries. Similar trends are gathering momentum in the 1980s, and this suggests that the general crisis of capitalism is entering a qualitatively new state.

It is of great interest for the working class and communist movement, for the forces of social emancipation and national liberation, the mass democratic movements—for all those who seek to consolidate the foundations of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems and to solve vitally important social and global problems—to analyse these qualitative changes and the contradictory dialectics of the deepening crisis of the capitalist system and the response to it on the part of the ruling circles. Since it is impossible to shed light on every aspect of this matter in one article, we shall have to deal mainly with the crisis trends characteristic of the SMC reproduction mechanism so as to bring out the new features of the general crisis of capitalism and to delineate the potentialities and limits within which imperialism could adapt to them.

Sources of Contradictions and New Trends

The general crisis into which capitalism has been plunged at its imperialist stage is a period of the immediate 'collapse of capitalism in its entirety and the birth of socialist society'.¹ This society has now developed into a world system and has inaugurated the era of mankind's transition to the communist socio-economic formation, while the exploitive capitalist world has historically passed its peak.

Within the set of factors behind the instability of the capitalist system, two have a special role, and they are characteristic of SMC in the 1980s.

First, since *internal* SMC contradictions continue to be the crucial source of SMC development, they keep adding altogether new crisis phenomena to its conflict upheavals, among them the crisis of the structure of the capitalist economy, and energy and other resources on the national and international levels which is being actively stimulated by scientific and technical progress. Such factors sharply deepen

the antagonisms of the 'magic polygons' which take shape from the opposition of consumption and savings, wages and profits, inflationary growth of prices and balances-of-payments, government debts and budget deficits, and so on. As a result, a deep crisis descended in the late 1970s and the early 1980s on the mechanism of SMC *regulation* of social processes which used to help capitalism to adapt to the changing situation of the earlier decades. This is what induces a modification of organisational forms, social tactics and political strategy.

A similar break already took place as a result of the Great Depression of 1929-1932, when the capitalist system was forced to link state policy with economics in order to survive. SMC regulation of the economy had an influence on the concrete processes in the deepening of the general crisis of capitalism at its first stage. There is now once again a change in the forms of such regulation, and this tends to add new long-term features to the crisis.

'The conflict between the vastly increased productive forces and capitalist production relations is becoming ever more acute. . . No "modifications" and manoeuvres by modern capitalism . . . can overcome the acute antagonism between labour and capital, between the monopolies and society,'² says the new edition of the CPSU Programme. The historically doomed capitalist system cannot escape from the state of all-pervading crisis because of its inner contradictions.

Together with the drastic complications of the reproduction process there has recently been a sharpening of social contradictions in the industrialised capitalist countries in consequence of the unprecedented growth of mass unemployment, the anti-social policy of neoconservatism, and the emergence of the 'new poor'. The spreading social conflicts intensify the crisis in ideology and policy and of the whole superstructural apparatus, while reducing the reserve for economic, social and political manoeuvring.

The second specific factor determining the features of the general crisis of capitalism is that imperialism, in confrontation with the policy of peace, tends to run into a fundamental conflict with the vital interests of mankind as a whole, and this adds another feature to the general crisis of capitalism. As General Secretary of the SUPG CC Erich Honecker put it, 'the crucial issue today is whether the arms race will be stepped up along every line and the danger of war increased, or whether stable peace for all will be ensured'.³

The forces of reaction and militarism in the United States and other imperialist countries are seeking a way out of the crisis through a policy of military gambles and a strategy aimed to destroy socialism. By contrast, the sober-minded leading circles of the bourgeois world do not turn a blind eye to the fact that there is a narrowing-down of the sphere of imperialist domination, a worsening of the *external* conditions for the existence of imperialism in view of the radical change in the balance of forces in the international arena in favour of the peoples fighting for social progress and peace. From decade to decade, these circles have witnessed the strengthening of the socialist countries' economic potential and international influence, their attainment of military-strategic parity, now the basis for maintaining the peaceful coexistence of the two systems. Also clear is the growing role of the national liberation and democratic movements, which have manifested themselves as a qualitatively new factor in the anti-imperialist struggle. There is a growing awareness among broad masses of people in the capitalist society that the handover of economic priorities to military-industrial complexes, i.e., to small groups of monopoly capital, harms the productive forces, distorts their economic structures, and deepens the crisis phenomena in the economy. This undermines the foundations of the capitalist system as a whole.

Capitalism is now faced with the daunting problem of revising its foreign-policy strategy of war and peace, and with the need to recognise the policy of peaceful coexistence of the two systems, something that must inevitably affect many aspects of

the capitalist economy and social policy. External conditions, therefore, likewise fix a critical point in the dynamic of the SMC. Together, the internal and external factors carry to an extreme the instability of this central core of the whole capitalist system.

As a result, the historical prerequisites of the decay of the capitalist mode of production and the deepening of the SMC crisis are superimposed on each other, so predetermining the *features* of the general crisis of capitalism, which have taken shape since the late 1970s, and which have characterised its movement since the early 1980s. The urge of monopoly capital to preserve the conditions in which it functions impels it to resist the historical law-governed tendencies leading to the decline of the capitalist social system, and to adapt its 'internal' forms and 'external' behaviour to the objective changes in the world. The SMC's adaptation to the worsening conditions of its existence in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism testifies to the capitalist system's historically defensive positions, and in this sense the present phase of the general crisis is similar to the earlier ones. But its specific features are manifest in the reproduction problems of the capitalist mode of production now being generated by the scientific and technical revolution (STR), the internationalisation of production, and the growth of the productive forces as a whole.

SMC Regulation Modernised

The productive forces of capitalism develop under the uncontrolled impact of the STR, the anti-social orientation of the capitalist relations of production, and the internationalisation of production. In the past decade, this has sharply exacerbated the traditional contradiction between the 'qualitative and quantitative' proportionality of reproduction and the SMC's incapacity to regulate the distribution of labour and capital, most notably the regulation of sectoral proportionality, which is vitally necessary for the development of reproduction processes.

As the extensive and protracted depreciation of amortised capital has not been duly paralleled by its accumulation, structural crises have intensified in the sphere of material production. Cyclical fluctuations of production have been sharply exacerbated, breaking out spontaneously and running for longer periods than in the past. The cyclical crisis of 1974-1975, the heaviest since the 1930s, and the subsequent prolonged recession of 1980-1983 did lead to a destruction of vast masses of 'unprofitable' capital. They failed however to fulfil the whole of their purgative and regulative function, so that there was no general or noticeable economic recovery to give the crucial impetus to the general growth of incomes.

Investment processes in the United States, Japan and especially Western Europe have been extremely flabby and unstable over the past decade. The law of the vicious circle held sway: cyclical recessions haphazardly stimulated structural modifications which raised the level of accumulation; chaotic structural shifts (the growth of some and the decline of other sectors of the economy) did little to develop the industries which create the surplus-value and on which the rate of the real accumulation of capital depends.

All these complications are compounded by the interlacing of structural, cyclical crises of production, with the crisis of the credit and financial sphere. The relative overaccumulation of money capital is increasingly in excess of direct investments in 'productive' capital, i.e., in the enterprises which deliver the material goods and yield the surplus-value. The inflation and stagflation which have developed concomitantly, despite some slowdown in the growth of prices in the leading Western countries in the 1980s, have defied government and monopoly control, and have continued to be the main risk factor in investment decision-making. Apart from inflation, the bloated international money markets, the speculative financial deals, and the dangerous build-up of government-budget deficits in the imperialist countries create substantial

impediments to the operation of credit-and-money mechanisms and world trade.

Capitalist production is also faced with new contradictions between labour and capital. Man's direct dependence on machines and on routine mechanical operations is reduced by scientific and technical progress, and this gives the individual opportunities for creative self-expression. But contrary to all this, SMC intensifies the working people's subordination to capital's regulations, and makes them totally dependent on the structural and cyclical crises, the negative effects of the technical re-equipment of production, and the incapacity of bourgeois policy to carry out any genuine modernisation. In the *new social situation*, the contradiction between the potentialities of social progress and the actual condition of the masses is sharply aggravated, so deepening the crisis of the system.

In world economic ties, the TNCs' expansionism tends to undermine national economic policy priorities, to expand the spheres of rivalry, and to sharpen the conflicts between groups of capital, between the imperialist powers, and especially between the less developed and the industrialised countries. The international SMC regulation mechanism and the corresponding relations of production do nothing to invalidate the operation of the laws of capitalist production, being bent to its economic and political contradictions and stamped with the exacerbating antagonisms between labour and capital.

The global tasks presented by the STR, by the depletion of natural resources and the destruction of the environment have recently made SMC problems more acute. Capital cannot expect to have any long-term or stable conditions for maximising profits, accumulation, supply of labour, etc., without integrating science and production, and optimising the relation of energy sources and infrastructures. The leading circles of the capitalist world are seeking a way out of the situation mainly by way of modernising the two supporting structures of the system, the *monopolies* and the capitalist *state*, in an effort to gain organisational advantages over the working class movement.

The main forms of monopoly, the capitalist concerns, seek to concert their action, through intersectoral agreements, to cooperate more closely in exploiting national and other countries' producer resources, and to accept mutual compromises in the fight for new marketing outlets. There are ever more mergers and takeovers of companies and financial groups, wider-ranging stock market speculations, farther-flung international money markets, and 'risk' capital for the latest hi-tech ventures. On the company level, this is attendant with more flexible methods in the exploitation of labour, management and marketing.

As the conditions for the reproduction and realisation of capital are internationalised, the role of the transnational corporations (TNCs) tends to grow. Their headquarters in the 'metropolitan countries', are still, as a rule, the controlling centres and a reliable 'hinterland'. There is likewise ever more active use of new forms of inter-connections 'without property', such as co-production agreements, long-term consortia, technology exchange agreements, mutual industrial and banking services agreements, and the most diverse information services.

The functions of the capitalist state are likewise modernised through changes in political priorities, economic regulation methods and relationships with the monopolies. The Keynesian approach to high growth rates through an expansion of aggregate demand, coupled with the tactics of social reformism, prevailed until the 1974-1975 crisis. This has now given way to what is known as 'supply-side' economics, which calls for a reduction of taxes on monopoly profits, slower inflationary growth of prices, economies on social spending, and so on. This, leading SMC circles hope, will help the capitalist economy to develop independently of short-term cyclical fluctuations in production. Here, the state is to act as selective stimulator of scientific and technical progress and key technologies, ensuring favourable conditions for

operations by privileged hi-tech-linked groups of monopoly capital. This is being done mainly by denationalising some industries or enterprises, and setting up mixed, state-monopoly property.

On the scale of the world economy, capitalist internationalisation, once concentrated mainly in circulation (trade, export of capital and monetary relations), is now being firmly established in production, including research and development. Here, the capitalist state has the same ancillary role, helping the TNCs to adapt to the internationalisation of production and capital. This process has now entered upon another round of rapid expansion under the impact of the STR.

Capitalism is no longer capable of creating within the framework of its system a normally functioning global economic mechanism on an interstate basis or by means of some kind of 'world government'. Some capitalist countries and international organisations act as partners of transnational monopolies. World capitalist relations of production are shaped, therefore, both on the basis of *transnational capital*, and on an *interstate basis*, and also with the aid of *international capitalist institutions* (such as the IMF, the IBRD, the OECD, GATT, the regional EEC, etc.). Ever more multilateral ties, together with acute internal contradictions have been developing between the *state* and *private monopoly* units of international capitalist relations of production and also between the individual elements of the capital internationalisation structure.

In these conditions, the *military factor*, which has always had the leading role in imperialist policy, has become the *priority* condition for the functioning of its whole system. The arms monopolies, their allied banking corporations and the government military machine now determine not only the policy but also the socio-economic basis of this system. The ultra-reactionary circles, for their part, rely on the economic, scientific and technical potential of the military-industrial complex, which binds together the politics and economics of imperialism.

State economic policy and SMC structures and objectives, especially in the United States, are increasingly determined by the interests of the military-industrial forces, so giving obvious advantages to those who carry on the arms race. That was made perfectly clear by the protracted depression of 1980-1983, when the decline in the rate of gnp growth in the United States, the FRG, and Great Britain, as compared with the 1975-1979 period, was attended by a rapid increase in military outlays and the flourishing of the companies involved. The efforts of the United States to build up a kind of world-wide military-industrial complex by using its leadership in NATO, and NATO's in the capitalist world, is another central aspect of this process. Through military channels it has been intensifying its influence on its allies' policies and economies, relying on the intensive use of science and technology for military purposes. With the passage of time this influence has increasingly spread to some less developed countries as well.

We find, therefore, that the law-governed internal economic expansionism of monopoly capital, which makes SMC politically aggressive, continues to operate fully, ensuring, for its part, the economic prosperity of the military-industrial complexes and feeding their internationalisation trend.

The wide range of instruments by means of which SMC has adapted itself to the economic, technical and political conditions of the world over the past decade is designed to bolster the positions of capitalism in the 1980s and 1990s, but this strategy cannot ease the general crisis of the system.

The Strategy of 'Adaptation'

The ruling circles of the capitalist countries strive to solve the crisis problems of adapting to the changing conditions either through 'force' or 'reform', as Lenin pointed out in his day. The social-reformist and bourgeois-liberal 'adaptation'

scenarios look to expanded capitalist reproduction on 'social springs'. The now prevalent conservative scenario is designed not so much for such compromise methods of reformism, as for confrontation with the countervailing factors, for *resisting* the law-governed uniformities of social development.

But it would be a mistake to assume that no account should be taken of this adaptation by capitalism, just because it has no historical prospects before it. Indeed, the task is to reckon with the strong and weak aspects of the strategy of imperialist manoeuvring, and to organise mass resistance primarily to the most odious and reactionary 'adaptation' scenarios. That does not mean supporting the illusion that the general crisis of capitalism can be eliminated or reduced in depth. Rather it only involves efforts to democratise the conditions of the social struggle by the masses within the framework of the general crisis and its development in an atmosphere of peaceful coexistence between the two systems.

This is precisely the task stemming from the situation of the 1980s, as imperialism seeks to adapt itself to the realities mainly in aggressive economic, social and political forms. SMC is now essentially trying to bridge the gap between the objectives and the potentialities of the capitalist system, and to make it more efficient, a strategy reflecting not only a definite set of objective processes and contradictions, but also the subjective interests of the reactionary section of the monopoly bourgeoisie. Its main objective is to consolidate the world capitalist system and to give its economic and political power a potential that would drastically change the world balance of forces in favour of imperialism, a scenario designed to ensure reproduction processes through the creation of a more intricate and refined system for exploiting the working class nationally and internationally.

Although the historical limitations of such efforts are an incontrovertible fact, capitalism has nevertheless achieved some concrete results. Capital is now able to speed up scientific and technical progress to some extent by modernising the monopoly structures, taking some state measures to regulate economic processes, and redistribute the national income in favour of the monopolies in the leading imperialist countries, notably the United States. This helps to remodel production structures, improve some efficiency indicators and so on. This opens up for some groups of finance capital, mainly those involved in the arms race, opportunities for expansion and growth, so that they find themselves in a buoyant mood of technological optimism and political and social adventurism.

However, the policy of suppressing the working class movement, mass unemployment and curtailed consumption puts a social time-bomb under all these changes. The conservative line has forced the working people to carry on struggle for their interests in more trying circumstances, as their economic condition is worsened absolutely and relatively. But the organised working class movement and its revolutionary potentialities cannot be suppressed. Indeed, the neo-conservative strategy is being deprived of mass support in some of the leading capitalist countries, and this tends to erode the reactionary forces' political domination.

Capital does, of course, benefit from some changes in SMC structures, such as greater scope for manoeuvre and more favourable conditions for its realisation, as a result of intensified concentration and centralisation within individual countries and in the capitalist economy as a whole. But here again it has to pay a price by accepting risks, since the emergent forms of monopoly cooperation merely complicate but do not change the dialectics underlying the contest of the centrifugal and the centripetal tendencies, and the policy of adaptation and struggle within the world capitalist economy. Despite its organisational modifications, the contradictions between the haphazard market production and the need to regulate it (the state—monopoly—market problem), between supply and demand (the problem of realisation), and between labour and capital remain in full spate. This shows that the capitalist

relations of production can be adapted in no more than a limited manner to the growing socialisation of production and development of the productive forces. The lop-sided, class-limited, profit-oriented modernisation of monopoly structures and state functions is absolutely incapable of resolving such deep-seated antagonistic contradictions. It spins off a mass of new contradictions and intensifies the bitter competitive fight between numerous groupings of the ruling capitalist class, causing conflicts between high and traditional technology, and between state and monopoly regulation of social processes.

These tendencies are evident, for instance, in the competition between the United States, Western Europe and Japan in the fields of high technology, investment markets, etc. This competition is being increasingly exacerbated by the uneven gnp growth and pace of technical progress, and frequently looks like economic warfare. The internationalisation of production and capital generates an intricate web of infighting, competition between 'models' of protectionism and integration, and an extremely fluid relation between the state-monopoly forces. Here, the US urge to make the imperialist forms of internationalisation serve its own interests keeps running up against constant resistance from the other regional centres, and into a contradiction with the global trends of development, so sharpening US relations with the Third World countries to an extreme.

It is important to note finally, that the central task of the present strategy of social confrontation—that of rolling back or even destroying socialism in the world arena—has proved to be a complete fiasco in the 1980s, as it did in the past. The forces of socialism are growing, the arms race policy is moving into an impasse, while the policy of peaceful coexistence of the two systems is getting ever greater support from the revolutionary and national liberation movements, and the peace circles in the imperialist countries.

The analysis of SMC's conservative strategy shows that it is hammered out in the competitive fight between the monopolies and the imperialist centres of power, each of which looks to its own private interests. That is why their adaptation to the new conditions assumes a multitude of forms, while its central line is crystallised in the fight for leadership in say, the 'individual' US, or 'collective' models of imperialist domination.⁴ Subjective factors, such as the differing international experience of the leading bourgeois circles, their capacity to make a realistic assessment of the political and economic trends, and their conceptual positions also have an effect. The strategy of adaptation is ultimately a combination of the national and regional, political and economic objectives of the various factions of the bourgeoisie in our days. It is largely determined by the objective law of the uneven economic and political development, because SMC in the various countries has been shaped at a differing pace and with a different degree of intensiveness.⁵ As the state-monopoly trends in the internationalisation of capital were intensified and the uneven development and rivalry between the 'three centres'—United States, Western Europe and Japan—were further sharpened, they became interconnected and interacting elements of inter-imperialist relations.

The emergence in the past few years of 'mixed' scenarios,⁶ reflecting the cross-current interests of neo-conservative, bourgeois-liberal and social democratic circles, has become an important aspect of the bourgeois strategy of adaptation. These scenarios have yet to play the leading role, but they have also attracted the attention of the Marxists by the power systems, the managerial methods and the SMC reproduction mechanism they imply. Here, the working class has before it the prospect of switching capitalism from the conservative policy of 'adaptation' to forms of social development more preferable for the democratic forces. The conservative line of adaptation in the early 1980s only delayed the solution both of long-overdue and of new problems, and has made the capitalist system more unstable. The overriding

situation is that the strategy of capitalism's adaptation cannot overcome either the objective contradictions and limitations to its own internal development, or the new world-wide balance of forces. The law-governed uniformities of social progress at the end of the twentieth century operate in favour of world socialism, the working class and communist movement, the peoples of the newly liberated states, and of all the other democratic forces fighting for peace and social progress.

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 130.

² *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (A New Edition), Politizdat, Moscow, 1986, pp. 13, 17 (in Russian).

³ *Neues Deutschland*, Berlin, May 24, 1985.

⁴ See H. Heininger, L. Maier, *Tendenzen und Widersprüche der Internationalisierung des staatsmonopolistischen Kapitalismus*, IPW-Berichte, Berlin, Parts 2, 3, 1985.

⁵ H. Bonk, K. Franke, W. Raff, *Friedenssicherung und Abrüstung—zentrale Fragen des Kampfes im staatsmonopolistischen Kapitalismus*, Berlin, 1984, p. 41.

⁶ I. Späth, *Wende in die Zukunft. Die Bundesrepublik auf dem Weg in die Informationsgesellschaft*, Hamburg, 1985; W. Roth, *Der Weg aus der Krise-Umriss einer sozialökonomischen Marktwirtschaft*, Munich, 1985.

viewpoints

Labour and Consumption: Socialist Principles

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MANY countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) now feel the need to accelerate their economic development by making fuller use of the potential advantages of socialism, and it is their collective experience that better use of social factors is a good way to produce such an effect. Serious attention to the solution of this problem is being given by the fraternal parties of our community.

What are these factors? They are man, with his historically shaped capabilities and motivations, and also the conditions in which man operates, among them the methods used in the management of labour and social activity, the forms in which people are involved in the production process, the criteria and means used in concerting social, collective and individual interests, etc. Better use of these factors under socialism signifies, therefore, development of the human individual, creation of an optimal social-organisation environment, and refinement of the system of incentives to labour.

An effective social mechanism capable of markedly accelerating social progress is

in the making. Creation of a system of effective methods is, we believe, the touchstone of its maturity, provided these methods make it possible: to harmonise the interests of individuals, labour collectives and various social groups with those of the state and of the whole people; to use the differences and non-antagonistic contradictions between the individual elements within the system of interests in such a way as to induce the bearers of individual and collective interests to act vigorously along the lines required by the society as a whole;

to develop initiative, more broadly to involve the working people in the management of production, to enhance the responsibility of collectives for the drafting of plans, for economic decision-making, and for the economic and social development of enterprises, and to encourage the search for and marshalling of internal reserves;

to invigorate all the units of management so as to make economic progress more balanced, to make fuller use of the latent sources of economic growth, and to secure sustained development not only of production but also of the other spheres of social life;

to prevent social tension and conflict, and to eliminate them whenever any may arise for this or that reason.

The 27th Congress of the CPSU, which laid down the acceleration of the country's economic and social development as the main strategic conception, stressed the key importance of scientific and technical progress in intensifying production. Here, said General Secretary of the CPSU CC Mikhail Gorbachov, the living creative effort of the masses—the industrious and talented Soviet people—is the crucial factor. The pace of our advance is increasingly determined by the people's general education and professional standards and their work ethic.

Apart from the individual's ideological, moral and ethical qualities, an important role belongs in this context to a healthy social and psychological climate within the collective, a workmanlike atmosphere, and concern for the working people's every day conditions.

Invigoration of the human factor under socialism is a key component part of mass political work by the fraternal parties, of the CMEA countries and all related organisations. But education or persuasion cannot alone help to shape the communist world-view or a firm stand in life among broad strata of the population, for success here is very largely determined by the masses' own experience, and in particular, by their assessment of economic progress.

The characteristic feature of the socialist society today is a sharp enhancement of the interconnection and mutual influence of all its spheres, so that social factors, increasingly influence economic development, and are, in turn, themselves dependent on it. Thus, the reproduction of the necessary quantity of high-quality labour-power requires much investment in the social infrastructure.¹ The amount of money a society can afford to appropriate for these purposes at every given moment is determined by economic efficiency.

Which is the unit within the relations-of-production system that can give the strongest impetus to economic development and to accelerate it? In the immediate future, it will evidently be the relations of *distribution* and their refinement, with a fuller realisation of the principle of remuneration according to labour. This is now the cardinal condition which makes it possible to enhance the role of *consumption* as a stimulator of output. Below we consider some of the relevant problems.

The 'from each according to his ability' principle tends to become ever more important in the present conditions for the dynamic development of the socialist economy. Its correct application should act as a powerful 'motor' in our advance, and induce men and women to tap their spiritual and physical capabilities to the full. What is important here is, of course, not only distribution according to labour, but also the

working person's readiness to join in developing the socialist society, satisfying the individual's need for creativity, social recognition, etc.

The role of ideological, moral and other factors reflecting the people's ideological and political commitment and consciousness, will tend to increase, but not so fast or so noticeably as to make the tendency the basis for relaxing material incentives, which will remain dominant throughout the foreseeable future. After all, far from declining, the people's requirements in the goods of life have been rapidly growing. Besides, an increase in 'non-material' interests has the feedback effect of creating additional demand for various goods and services.

Furthermore, the traditional type of material incentives implies that additional labour inputs are rewarded in cash terms. However, this form of inducement is not suitable with some types of automated production. What then is the answer? It lies, evidently, in offering the working person a system of incentives in a package of forms: pay levels, working conditions opportunities for professional and business advancement, improvement of housing conditions, and so on. It is true that it is not easy to make effective use of some of these factors. It is well known, for instance, that workers put an ever higher value on good working conditions, but these cannot be modified in accordance with every individual's attitude to work and output; modern production being what it is, those who attain especially high performance cannot be transferred to other, better conditions. To make successful use of the whole package of incentive instruments, management personnel need to display flexibility, ability and—most importantly—readiness to use the whole range of available forms and methods to stimulate interest in work.

To improve the system of material incentives it is necessary, first, to refine the measure of labour, and second, to establish a more precise correspondence between it and the measure of consumption. That is the only way to induce men and women to work with the utmost efficiency, to raise their social activity, to assert the principles of socialist justice intrinsic to our system, and to maintain a healthy moral and political atmosphere.

Under the present level of socialist economic development, improving the measure of labour means above all *enhancing the working people's material stake in the final results of production*. Rewards cannot take account only of the quantity and quality of the labour expended, in abstraction from whether the society accepts the product so turned out as useful, and from the requirements it goes to satisfy. That idea becomes ever more meaningful and is being gradually translated into practice.

There is a need to strengthen the link between pay levels and individual and collective performance. Hence, the tendency to make incentives funds at individual enterprises dependent on their contribution to increasing the national income, and here economic theory and practice still have to solve a number of problems. For instance, how is one to make the remuneration of the individual worker a better reflection of the performance by the whole collective? How is one to give the enterprises more autonomy in the remuneration of labour without upsetting the principle of equal pay for equal work on the scale of the society as a whole? The latter problem is of fundamental importance because the socialist economy ultimately rests on the foundation of the whole people's property in the means of production. The prospect for the development of wage-rate systems, control over the movement of wages, and other similar questions also need to be studied.

The correct proportion between the measure of labour and the measure of consumption is often upset by levelling, the result of a false perception of social justice. Together with the sense of social satisfaction, the sense of social justice is highly valued under socialism: both are important, even if intricate, criteria of social progress generally. Dissatisfaction may now and again spring from no objective cause and, as we have said, under the influence of unrealistic notions among individuals and

groups of working people concerning the justice of their claims, because of the failure to comprehend rights and duties as a single whole, etc. If a high level of social satisfaction is to be attained, it is important, therefore, not only to manage distributive and other economic and social processes in the light of scientific knowledge, but also purposefully to shape public opinion in overcoming any illusions and misconceptions.

Let us bear in mind that the whole people's property in the basic means of production creates the objective prerequisites for establishing social equality, because one and the same measure—labour—is used to assess the right of all the working people to take part in consumption.² But since individuals inevitably expend different quantities of labour in practice, inequality in consumption continues to exist at the lower phase of the communist formation. Any attempts to reduce it by means of various element of egalitarianism in distribution do not consolidate social equality, but merely prevent social labour productivity from rising and slow down the development of the productive forces. This ultimately does nothing but slow the pace of our advance towards complete communist equality. That is why it was said at the 27th Congress of the CPSU that state policy on wages should be designed to ensure that wages strictly accord with the quantity and quality of labour, and to prevent the payment of any unmerited bonuses or other rewards, since these add up to amounts in excess of what has been actually earned.

On the eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin stressed that "until the 'higher' phase of communism arrives, the socialists demand the *strictest* control by society and by the state over the measure of labour and the measure of consumption".³ He believed that one of the main economic functions of the socialist state is to resist any levelling-down, and the obtaining of any unearned income in contravention of the principles of our system. As the socialisation of production comes to demand of the working people every greater discipline, responsibility and initiative, control must also become more precise and qualified.

It is now no longer enough to take into account the quantity of the labour expended; it is even more important to reckon with its quality. The working person is expected to do more than merely perform his duties thoroughly, but also to take an active part in rationalising and renewing production, for this can give strong impulses to faster scientific and technical progress.

There are still many outstanding problems along the way to greater correspondence between the measure of labour and the measure of consumption, and one of these is the need for greater income differentiation so as to make the material incentives for labour act with greater effect. The point is that income differentials are now and again substantially irrelevant to the actual correlation between individual performance. A more precise assessment of a person's actual merits may in some cases help to improve incentives, even without deepening the existing differentiation, but since the incomes of the main mass of the working people in our countries have been levelled out to a fairly large extent, more consistent practice of the principle of distribution according to labour will most probably require an increase in the 'spread' of remuneration for labour depending on its quality. One can well understand that not everyone will readily accept such measures, but they are necessary for the further progress of the socialist economy. It is important, therefore, to specify the socially acceptable scale of income differentiation so as to make it provide greater inducements to disciplined and high-quality labour. Nor has an answer been as yet found to this question: is it permissible to reduce the incomes of those working people, or even whole groups of them, where they are now higher than their actual input into social production, i.e., where they have not been actually earned?

There are various obstacles to effective stimulation by means of distribution:

enterprises, for instance, frequently go the way of least resistance and increase payroll funds by raising the prices of their products without good reason, lowering product quality, and manipulating the product mix. While turning out products which yield a larger profit, they often stop making socially necessary but less profitable goods. One of the purposes of improving the economic mechanism in the CMEA countries, therefore, is to create an economic environment in which economic units would be unable—solely for their own benefit—to soften state assignments and to get these set with an eye to the level attained by the enterprise.

'Soft' plans, which are easily fulfilled and overfulfilled, slow down the pace of economic development. Production can be truly intensified only if managerial personnel are unable to cover up the poor performance of their enterprises by means of various subsidies, exemptions and privileges, and if they are in no position to dictate their terms to consumers, raise product prices without good reason, and alter the product mix to suit themselves. Only when the economic demands on production collectives are truly high, their relative autonomy induces socially useful initiatives and encourages the quest for new technical and technological solutions, a more thrifty attitude to social property, and an unwillingness to countenance managerial incompetence or bureaucratic practices.

The gradual elimination of the labour-power shortage could have a big part to play in improving distribution relations. Let us bear in mind that socialism rejects, as a matter of principle, the concern induced in the working people's minds for their jobs under the pressure of less-than-full employment. Socialism counters the capitalist practice with a new and humane system of incentives for work. An urge to make more efficient use of labour-power in accordance with the principles of our society has recently been in evidence in the fraternal countries. The chronic shortage of labour-power in production merely distorts the character of distribution, whereas these hindrances are eliminated by a well-balanced supply of labour resources.

Such a favourable environment can be created by a rational organisation of labour, a higher moral prestige for earned income, and so on, with special emphasis on social and political exactingness, responsibility and discipline. Even the most thoroughly considered procedure for the provision of material incentives is bound to 'sputter' if the society and the state fail to combat most resolutely any breaches of existing law, attempts to justify the inefficient work of individuals or establishments, and to assess their activity in a spirit of cronyism or in the light of local interests. No amount of bonuses, extra pay or coefficients can be a substitute for the capability of managerial personnel to take the necessary—even if unpopular—decisions, to draw resolute conclusions with respect to worthless personnel, and so on.

Distribution relations under socialism include a system of social rights and guarantees ensured by payments and benefits from social consumption funds.⁴ This system is also in a state of flux, and shows signs of various contradictory processes.

There is a growth in the objective importance of these rights and guarantees, because the communist and workers' parties of the fraternal countries have been working purposefully to consolidate the foundations of the socialist way of life and to enhance the sense of social satisfaction (by various means, including the consistent elimination of lower-income groups). The payments and benefits from social consumption funds have, meanwhile, come to play a seemingly lesser role in the working people's scale of values, because they have gradually become habitual. But the population would certainly show a negative response to any attempt to narrow down their functions or to reduce the funds being appropriated for these purposes.

Another contradiction is that social funds can now no longer be increased as fast as one should like, because the people's requirements tend to grow faster than the potentialities for satisfying them. Now that our people's basic vital needs have in the main been met, those of them which have up to now been provided either fully or

partially free of charge, i.e., have not depended on remuneration by labour and have not constituted a material incentive now tend to come to the fore.

That is why it is apparently appropriate to concentrate the use of social consumption funds on tackling the truly top priority social tasks, while discarding from satisfaction some of the requirements which the working people, with their present living standards, are capable of ensuring from their own cash incomes. For instance, payments and benefits to strata of the population which are actually in need of the society's assistance will, of course, go on being made available, while there should probably be greater differentiation of the other forms of allocating social funds. Thus, the view has been expressed in the USSR that those who are gravely ill should go on receiving accommodation at sanatoria free of charge, while healthy people are quite capable of paying for their holiday accommodation out of their own budgets. The involvement of personal funds will make it possible not only to meet more fully the requirements earlier provided free of charge, but also to enhance the stimulating function of remuneration according to labour.

The more effective use of the growing social consumption funds was considered at the 27th Congress of the CPSU. It was emphasised that these are not charity funds in any sense. There is a need to keep them purposefully ensuring the citizens equal access to education and culture, equalising the conditions for the upbringing of children, and assuring those who for various reasons require lump-sum or constant assistance of an adequate living standard. But while distributing these funds, one should not entirely ignore such a task as the encouragement of skilled and honest labour.

Which correlation between incomes from payroll funds, on the one hand, and social consumption funds, on the other, is most rational at the given moment depends on the economic situation and on the number of social and political factors, but it is important, we believe, to maintain the leading role for the labour-distribution funds in any case, and to enlarge the basis on which material incentives are provided. The working people's production activity can also be tangibly stimulated through social funds at the enterprises. It would, evidently, be useful to tie in their magnitude more closely with the efficiency of the given economic unit.

The stimulating function of wages is clearly evident when the level of actual consumption more or less precisely accords with income. After all, the working people judge of the changes in their living standards not only by the amount they collect on pay day. The important thing is what it can buy, whether goods of the desired quality are on sale, whether there is a wide choice of them, and whether the provision of paid services is adequate.

It is important consistently to apply the socialist principle of distribution not only with respect to wages, i.e., the cash form, but also to consumer goods as well. The supply of goods and services is the final element in the system of material incentives, for it brings together into a single whole labour inputs, remuneration of labour, reproduction of labour-power, and satisfaction of human needs. An improvement of the state of the market is an important factor in perfecting distribution relations.

Ample supply helps to optimise the differentiation of cash incomes and actual consumption. Erratic supplies or less than adequate satisfaction of demands gives an advantage not to those who have worked honestly—and so have earned more—but to those who have direct access to the channels along which scarce goods are distributed (those who work in the marketing network and the services, those who have more spare time, and so on).

Short supply distorts the structure of consumption, giving prevalence to the 'here-and-now' motivations for purchases, so that the consumer's decisions tend to become less rational: it is a part of human nature to regard unmet requirements as the most important ones and to exaggerate them. Besides, as we are well aware, efforts to

obtain some types of goods often spring not from an actual need of them, but from considerations of prestige, from a desire to have that which only a few other people have. Shortages of goods tend to generate elements of conspicuous consumption and amassing of luxuries, all of which are alien to our society. The efforts being made in the socialist community countries to balance out the consumer market are designed, therefore, to promote the shaping of the socialist way of life.

The absolute level of cash incomes of the overwhelming part of the population in the European zone of the socialist community is now fairly high, although their dynamics have differed over the past decade. Under these conditions, the saturation of the consumer market tends to be an independent factor of material well-being. Improvement of supply becomes a substantial reserve for raising the working people's living standards, and the task of balancing our effective demand with the supply of goods and paid services acquires new economic, social and political aspects, for it involves not only satisfaction with the conditions in which incomes are realised, but also greater interest in raising labour productivity and accelerating economic development.

What is more, the level of real consumption has an effect on the social climate in the society as a whole. Thus, surveys taken by the Czechoslovak Ministry of Trade show that the populations tends to judge about the overall economic situation in the country above all by the balance of the domestic market. Inadequate satisfaction of effective demand could hamper the use of consumption as a factor accelerating economic growth and distort the notions concerning the priority of values (individual or social) and of the pace of social progress.

The actual state of the domestic market in the countries of our community is now diverse: in some of them there is a shortage of meat and meat products; in others, a shortage of passenger cars and cultural and everyday goods with new technical properties. The ruling communist and workers' parties and the governments of the fraternal countries are working to solve these problems as soon as possible.

If the market is to be balanced in terms of volume and structure, the real scale of the requirements of the various goods must be correctly assessed. That is not so easily done, because with the shortage of some goods, on the one hand, and with excess effective demand, on the other, there may be, as we have said, an exaggerated notion of the requirements for various types of goods. Thus, a list of prospective buyers of passenger cars drawn up in Czechoslovakia in the late 1960s led to a vastly overstated assessment of the unmet demand for personal cars, so that when the supply of cars was sharply increased, as a result of the measures taken in 1971 and 1972, car purchases were actually made by only one in five of the applicants. The system of preliminary applications and normed distribution was abolished.

As the consumption of the most necessary goods draws close to saturation, the working people begin to make new demands on the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of their living standards. There is, for instance, a growing interest in consumer services which help to provide greater comforts and more leisure time. It follows, therefore, that the optimal balance between the consumption of goods and services nowadays suggests an increase in the share of the latter, and this appears to be appropriate because a switch of a part of the effective demand to the services helps to balance out the domestic commodity market, ease the pressure on it, and so reduce the shortages. A similar effect is produced by the capacity of the services to renew consumer goods, to prolong their service life, and so to preserve the wealth the society has created.

For the time being, paid services account for a relatively small share of the total incomes of the population in the socialist countries. It tends to increase slowly, and even to shrink in some periods. Thus, it stood at 9.4 per cent of the family budgets of industrial and office workers in the USSR in 1970, and at 8.9 per cent in 1984 (without

rent and communal services, respectively, 5.8 and 6.2 per cent). Specialists assumed that in the Soviet Union, the figure should have come to at least 11-13 per cent. The 1985 Comprehensive Programme for the Development of the Production of Consumer Goods and the Services from 1986 to 2000 provides for an increase in the volume of paid services by 110-130 per cent, including those in the 12th five-year period—by 30-40 per cent.

A number of factors, including the need to retool production, tend to limit the potentialities for the further growth of consumption in most countries of our community in the near future, while the economic effect of the measures aimed at intensification, improvement of economic management and surmounting of these limitations can make itself felt no more than gradually. That is why, the ruling parties of the fraternal countries devote much attention to their system of priorities when drawing up their social programmes. These are seen as the requirements whose satisfaction tangibly improves the social climate in the society without requiring any additional material outlays. This means, above all, the working people's greater involvement in management and everything that is connected with the development of their capabilities. Moreover, the available funds are allocated in accordance with the scale of priorities—as they are perceived by the society.

Most CMEA countries assign top priority to solving the housing problem, improving the quality of public health services and education, and developing some types of paid services. Scientists and practitioners are simultaneously working hard to find the most effective ways to use the already created social infrastructure and to put in more funds for its development.

The socialist society seeks to raise the people's material well-being to the utmost, but it cannot passively follow the ups and downs of market demand for goods and services. It exerts an active influence on the structure and content of requirements, shaping the socially warranted correlation between the various types of incomes, between individual and collective consumption, working and leisure time, etc.

The socialist ideal rejects the cult of things, which turns the urge to obtain this or that good into an end in itself. Satisfaction of material requirements in the new society is designed to promote the individual's full development. As our system is perfected, the traditional requirements in food, clothing, housing, etc., are extended and enriched, but there is a simultaneous growth of human and cultural interests, and an urge to make rational use of one's leisure and to develop one's creative capabilities and endowments.

All of this sets before the fraternal countries' social sciences and planning agencies the pressing problem of working out a model of socialist consumption as a kind of reference point helping to shape the market supply of goods and services on more rational grounds. It is important, in particular, to establish an optimal correlation between the quantitative aspects of living standards (growing incomes and consumption) and their qualitative aspects (better working conditions and environment, a longer life span, especially the socially active part of it). The meaning of all this does not amount to narrowing the consumer's latitude of choice or imposing anything on him. The whole point is to help our men and women to escape from the captivity of things and to develop within themselves requirements of a higher order.

Creation of production conditions most appropriate to the requirements of the human organism and the individual's all-round development is the basic criterion for improving the material and technical basis of socialism. That is why the most serious attention is now being given in the countries of our community to reducing the share of manual, arduous and noxious labour, and enhancing hygiene and safety. More and more funds are being allocated for ecological purposes.

The social programmes worked out by the fraternal parties and realised in the socialist community countries are aimed to enhance the working people's production

and social activity, and to enable the individual to develop in every possible way. Participation in management, working and living conditions, level of consumption, education, and physical and spiritual culture, are increasingly becoming an object of conscious creative effort.

¹ By social infrastructure is meant the aggregation of the structural departments of the national economy ensuring the vital activity and reproduction of the population, but not directly involved in the production of material goods in the form of material things. It includes such industries and services as public health, education, housing facilities, passenger transit, recreation facilities, cultural establishments, retail trade, consumer services, environmental protection, and so on.

² The distribution of social consumption funds is considered below.

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 470.

⁴ These are funds allocated by the socialist state for the development of free education, public health services, grants, pensions, allowances, annual holidays, child-welfare establishments, etc. By means of these funds the state exerts an influence on the structure of spending and consumption for the purpose of bringing about the earliest approximation and equalisation of the economic and social conditions of the members of the society.—*Ed.*

Committed to Peace and Good - Neighbour Relations

Nguyen Co Thach — Alternate member,
CC Political Bureau, CPV, Minister for Foreign
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The course of history is making constructive international cooperation more and more imperative. This idea, expressed once again in the Political Report of the CC CPSU to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was supported by many foreign guests of the Congress. A number of speakers stressed the urgent need to eliminate tensions in Southeast Asia by peaceful means and on a fair basis and to promote mutually beneficial good-neighbour relations between the countries of the region. 'The world needs peace,' said Le Duan, General Secretary of the CC CPV. 'Peace is a necessity in any area of any continent or ocean. . . The time has come for the states of Indochina and ASEAN to start a dialogue in Southeast Asia in order to settle their differences. Vietnam is working steadfastly for this in close unity with Laos and Kampuchea. Southeast Asia must be a zone of peace, stability, friendship and cooperation.'¹

WMR has asked Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach of Vietnam to spell out the essence of his country's foreign policy at this stage and the connection between it and the policy of the other Indochinese countries.

We ought apparently to begin with the main principles of Vietnamese foreign policy.

The international activity of our party and the state expresses the Vietnamese people's aspiration to live and work in peace, to build a socialist society, to defend freedom and independence and the achievements of the revolution. In framing our foreign policy, we proceed from Marxism-Leninism, which Ho Chi Minh developed with due regard to our conditions, and dialectically combine the principles of socialist

patriotism and internationalism in pursuing it.

Any unbiased person who knows, at least in a general way, the truly dramatic history of our country is bound to appreciate the sincerity of the peaceful aspirations of the Vietnamese people. For centuries foreign conquerors tried repeatedly to subjugate our country, to annex its territory. And each time the freedom-loving Vietnamese were compelled to break off their peaceful labour and fight them. As far as we are concerned, those were just, defensive wars for our right to remain masters on our own soil and shape our destiny as we saw fit.

From the mid-nineteenth century on, big capitalist powers treated Indochina as an object of colonial conquest. France lorded it over the peninsula for nearly a hundred years. During World War II, they were succeeded by the Japanese. The defeat of Hitler fascism and Japanese militarism made it possible for the revolution in Vietnam to triumph in August 1945. The people's state set about effecting democratic changes. We were enabled to live in peace and security and to achieve social and economic progress. However, this trend was not what world imperialism and reaction had bargained for. All four postwar decades were a period of severe trials for us.

No sooner had the Democratic Republic of Vietnam been proclaimed than the country was invaded by the French, who sent an expeditionary force to restore their power. After the defeat of the French invaders and the signing of the 1954 Geneva agreements on Indochina, it was the United States that tried to occupy our country. Pursuing a neocolonialist policy, it started a war of aggression in Indochina. The US army used enormous combat power against our people, including five times more bombs and shells than throughout World War II. The US aggression caused untold hardships to Vietnam and took a heavy toll of life among civilians. This time, too, we held out and won, as you know. Our country regained its independence and unity.

But even after expelling the US invaders, we were unable to fully enjoy the fruits of long-awaited peace. In the latter half of the 1970s, the terroristic Pol Pot clique, which had seized power in neighbouring Kampuchea and was instigated from without, embarked on military confrontation with Vietnam. In 1979, an armed attack on us was mounted by China, which carries out combat operations on the Vietnamese border to this day.

These and many other circumstances indicate clearly enough, I believe, what our people want. They want peace and nothing but peace, nothing but normal conditions in which they can revive their country and build a happy life.

What tasks does Vietnam set itself as a participant in the world-wide peace movement?

We see the fight for peace as inseparable from the struggle for national independence, democracy and socialism. The stronger the positions of world socialism, the international communist and working class movement and the national liberation forces, the more surely imperialism's attempts to provoke armed conflicts in various regions, including Southeast Asia, will be foiled.

The gains of the Vietnamese revolution and the whole of social progress in this century would have been impossible but for the Great October Revolution in Russia, which initiated the transition from capitalism to socialism. Unlike imperialism, which is trying to check the march of history by force and to bring back the past, socialism has never linked its future of its own accord with military solutions of international problems projected into the past.

Humanity owes it to joint actions by the socialist countries and the peace forces everywhere that there has been no world war for four decades now. This gives hope that in the future, too, it will be possible to settle differences between countries and social systems by political means.

However, there is no overlooking the fact that we are confronted with a formidable danger, the threat of a nuclear war that could destroy all life on earth. The international situation today is worse than ever due to the dangerous policy of bellicose right-wing capitalist groups led by US imperialism. They are out to upset the existing military strategic balance between the Soviet Union and United States, to extend the arms race to space and to impose their will on sovereign states by grossly interfering in their internal affairs.

The most pressing task facing humanity is to stave off a nuclear catastrophe. The Vietnamese people, who are at the forefront of the struggle against imperialism and for world peace, likewise consider this their goal. This is why we wholeheartedly support the proposal to abolish all nuclear weapons by the year 2000 made on January 15 last by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CC CPSU. In greeting the 27th CPSU Congress on behalf of the CPV, Le Duan, General Secretary of our party CC, stressed that 'this programme, if put into effect, would give humanity as it entered the twenty-first century hope that it would live in a world free from the threat of deadly weapons, in a world where war had ceased to be a means of settling international disputes'.²

In carrying on their revolutionary struggle and in striving for freedom and independence, the people of Vietnam have always had the support of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. How would you describe these relations today?

Yes, our people have always enjoyed the support of the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, of all fair-minded people of the globe. This support is also most valuable today, when Vietnam has yet to heal its wounds and when aggressors from the north deliver in collusion with imperialism and reaction telling blows to Vietnam and the two other Indochinese countries. They stick at nothing in carrying on refined subversion in the political, economic and military spheres.

Still closer cooperation with fraternal countries is a factor of vast importance in implementing the programme for building a new life in Vietnam. These international relations are based on the principles of sovereignty, equality, friendship, fraternal cooperation and mutual assistance.

With Vietnam's entry into the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance in 1978 and the signing of treaties of friendship and cooperation with several socialist countries, relations between Vietnam and fraternal countries gained in breadth and depth. Of paramount importance to us is the decision adopted by the Moscow Economic Summit in June 1984 to accelerate the process of gradually raising the economies of the CMEA countries, primarily Vietnam, Cuba and Mongolia, to the same level as has been achieved by the European members of the community.

Soviet-Vietnamese economic ties play a special role at this stage. They have a beneficial impact on most of the key economic fields of the republic. Under the current five-year plan, the Soviet Union assists Vietnam in designing and building roughly 100 projects. We are also cooperating intensively with other community countries. Our machine-building, forestry, light and food industry, and agriculture are developing with their aid. All this helps us in accomplishing three revolutions: in social relations, in science and technology, and in ideology and culture.

Le Duan's visit to Moscow in June 1985 was a very important event. The joint Vietnamese-Soviet declaration adopted on the occasion points out that 'the two sides will continue steadily strengthening the bonds of close friendship and cohesion between the CPSU and CPV. Such is the fundamental and invariable line of the CPSU and CPV, of the Soviet Union and Vietnam, a line reflecting the will and aspirations of the peoples of both countries.'³

The comprehensive alliance of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea is becoming closer and closer. What are the pressing tasks which the community of the three Indochinese countries is fulfilling?

Our peoples have much in common. A joint struggle against enemies, the joy of independence and freedom won, the distress and suffering experienced by them have united them throughout centuries. They are now linked by a common aspiration to maintain their revolutionary achievements and to make social and economic progress.

The conference of top party leaders and statesmen of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Lao People's Democratic Republic and People's Republic of Kampuchea (1983), held for the first time in the history of our countries, noted that the special relations and solidarity interlinking our peoples are a result of revolutionary development in the three countries and a decisive factor in defeating their enemies and winning independence and freedom.

The fundamental principles of relations between the three Indochinese states are set out in jointly approved documents and are respected unfailingly. They provide for growing solidarity, cooperation and mutual assistance in national construction and defence on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism. All the problems of relations between our countries are settled by negotiation, in the spirit of respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference, mutual understanding, and respect for the legitimate rights of each country and the community as a whole. The governments of the three countries have committed themselves to combat all divisive enemy intrigues and to constantly educate their peoples in the traditional spirit of friendship and appreciation of their special relations.

This approach meets the interests of our nations and is in keeping with the substance of international agreements on Indochina, with the principles of the UN Charter and the non-aligned movement. Its implementation gives the lie to reactionary propaganda, which alleges that Vietnam plans to 'enslave' Laos and Kampuchea by establishing a so-called Indochinese Federation. Our enemies need these falsehoods because they would like to disrupt Indochinese solidarity and interfere in the internal affairs of the states of the region. But our peoples can tell the truth from lies. They know from experience that the alliance of our countries benefits every one of them, and so they do their best to consolidate it.

In recent years, the three Indochinese countries have taken a number of foreign policy initiatives. What response have they drawn from the ASEAN countries? In this connection, what is the outlook for durable peace and stability in Southeast Asia and for the settlement of the so-called Kampuchean problem?

I wish to repeat that in recent decades it is precisely in our region that a bitter struggle has been going on between the forces of national independence and socialism, on the one hand, and those of imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism and international reaction, on the other. The victory of the freedom-loving peoples of Indochina has altered the political situation in Southeast Asia. After the failure of US armed intervention, it became possible to live in peace with neighbours—witness the statements released by the ASEAN countries in the 1970s. But when, in 1979, Chinese troops attacked Vietnam, rightists in bourgeois countries of the region imagined that the revolutionary process in Indochina could be turned back, and therefore they allied themselves with the aggressor. This policy fell through. The peoples of Indochina are going from strength to strength, and the situation in Kampuchea is truly irreversible now.

Our position on the nature of relations between the three countries of Indochina and ASEAN is well known. We are convinced that these two groups of nations should settle all their differences by negotiation, in the spirit of good-neighbour relations, coexist in peace and friendship, cooperate, and prevent other countries from interfering in their affairs, from sowing discord between them or using the territory of one country against the territory of another.

Certain changes in the relations between the two groups of states *are* taking place. Ever since 1985, when a conference of the Foreign Ministers of the three Indochinese countries issued a declaration about the possibility of all Vietnamese troops being withdrawn from Kampuchea by 1990, a dialogue started between Indonesia and Vietnam as representatives of ASEAN and Indochina. We are certain that there are real opportunities for a political settlement of outstanding problems and for the achievement of peace and stability in Southeast Asia in general and Kampuchea in particular. What is required for their solution is, in the opinion of the majority of the countries and movements of the region, a mutually acceptable agreement on three points.

First, on the problem of withdrawing the Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. They are there under an agreement between the governments of the two countries. Their strength is being reduced as the strength of the People's Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea is built up. This is a continuous process going on from year to year. The forces of the emigres' so-called coalition government, whose core is made up of remnants of the Pol Pot clique, have lost support in the country and only keep going with foreign aid. Had there been no such aid, Kampuchea could defend its soil by itself.

Although interference in Kampuchean affairs by imperialism and reaction is continuing, it is unquestionably the revolutionary forces that are more and more successful. Hence a situation may gradually shape up in which all Vietnamese troops are pulled out of Kampuchea and the republic can safeguard its sovereignty with its own forces.

But there is another possibility of solving the problem at an early date. It is discontinuance of foreign military aid to the Pol Pot clique. If this came about, the parties concerned could reach agreement more speedily on a political settlement of their differences. The three Indochinese countries prefer the latter solution but reserve the initiative of implementing the former.

A second problem is that of attaining national concord between Kampuchea and the opposition forces. Vietnam takes a positive view of Kampuchea's declared readiness to negotiate this problem with diverse Khmer opposition groups or individual leaders of the same orientation provided the Pol Pot clique, which is guilty of a genocidal policy, is kept out. This is an internal affair of Kampuchea to be settled by the Kampucheans themselves. Should a solution be found, the parties concerned could discuss in common questions relating to a new constitution as well as to how they should proceed to build up Kampuchea's independence and sovereignty.

Third, the creation of a zone of peace, stability, friendship and cooperation would largely depend, besides the circumstances I have mentioned earlier, on progress in negotiations between the countries of Indochina and ASEAN. We believe it would be advisable to call an international conference on peace and stability in Southeast Asia involving all the countries of the region and the permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea sincerely seek good-neighbour relations with all countries irrespective of their political systems. This invariable position was reaffirmed last January by the 12th Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the three countries.

Now as before, the peoples of Indochina consider it necessary to re-establish

friendly relations with the Chinese people. Although the situation on the Vietnamese-Chinese border is poisoned by the hegemonistic and expansionist plans of international reaction, Vietnam has persevered in its efforts to bring about a peaceful settlement and repeatedly proposed to China negotiations with a view to normalising bilateral relations. Vietnam has been doing all in its power to pave the way for fruitful negotiations. Our proposals for a cease-fire on the border during national holidays and for the repatriation of Chinese prisoners of war are evidence of Vietnam's goodwill and the sincerity of its intentions.

The states of Indochina also wish and are willing to do all they can for the establishment of good-neighbour relations with Thailand. All three declare together and severally for talks and a treaty with Thailand on the principles of peaceful coexistence, mutual non-aggression, non-interference, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity within existing frontiers, and refusal to make one's territory available for activity directed against third countries.

We are also willing to maintain relations with the United States provided they are based on equality and mutual benefit. Specifically, we propose to the United States high-level talks to bring about a fundamental settlement of the problems of that country's citizens who have been missing since the war, as well as of other problems of interest to both sides. We think this would also help restore peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

The imperialist powers persist in their policy of isolating the three Indochinese countries. What are in your opinion the possibilities of extending their international relations in these circumstances?

Imperialism has resorted to the policy of isolation for a long time and still uses it against all socialist countries. Capitalism saw the rise of the new social formation as an 'error' of history to be 'corrected'. International reaction, trampling law and morality underfoot, opted for armed intervention, economic blockade, subversion, sanctions and 'punishment', rejecting all cooperation. But nothing could prevent the new system from establishing itself or its historical right to existence.

For years the Soviet Union was alone, ringed about with imperialist powers. After World War II, this blockade was pierced and socialism became a world system. The international relations of the Indochinese states have been developing on similar lines. During the war which the United States waged against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, we were recognised by only a dozen states; by contrast, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam now maintains diplomatic relations with more than 100 countries and the People's Republic of Kampuchea, with 35. The SRV has been a UN member since 1977. It takes an active part in the non-aligned movement.

We have loyal friends and reliable allies. Imperialism's 'economic blockade' against Vietnam has miscarried.

Vietnam is confidently following its own path. We side with those who are fighting against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, apartheid, racism and Zionism, with those who stand for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism. Analysing the past, we look ahead with confidence, feeling certain that this struggle will end in victory.

¹ *Nhan Dan*, February 27, 1986.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Pravda*, June 30, 1985.

Defending Democracy and Fighting for the Working People's Rights

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Luis Emilio Veintimilla — member,
CC CPE

ECUADOR has been an arena of social conflict ever since early 1986. Student unrest swept the country in mid-January, portending an outbreak of popular anger. Working people and members of the urban and rural middle strata held powerful demonstrations against the anti-patriotic policy of the administration under President Leon Febres Cordero, who has won notoriety on the continent by cringing to US imperialism, squandering the nation's wealth and cracking down on the working class and other mass movements. All progressive and revolutionary forces in the republic are rousing themselves to action, with the Communists at the forefront of struggles for radical change. Our party sees a peculiarity of these struggles in the fact that, as well as making everyday demands (for guaranteed democracy, for the right to work, medical service, land, housing, the defence of human dignity, political and trade union freedoms), they help implement a vast anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic and democratic programme whose purpose is to provide the basis for genuine independence and sovereignty and the prerequisites for building socialism.

The national liberation movement in Ecuador is inseparable from the world revolutionary process. This is an inspiration to us and gives us new strength in our fight for the people's radiant future.

In setting itself such far-reaching goals, the party proceeds from a sober assessment of the domestic situation and the experience gained over the years. In May 1986, it will be 60 years since the founding of the Communist Party of Ecuador, militant organisation of Ricardo Paredes, Enrique Gil Gilbert and Pedro Saad.¹ The CPE is arriving at this memorable date full of vitality, steeled in the day-by-day struggle of the masses, who are steadfastly paving the way for progress. Our party derives strength and energy from the people, from their traditions and culture, as it enters the seventh decade of its existence. It is fighting perseveringly to translate the working people's aspirations into reality, and its heart is beating in time to the hearts of those on the planet who are proudly carrying the banner of peace and communism.

The CPE (called the Socialist Party of Ecuador—SPE—until 1931) is a product of the historical development of our nation. It has absorbed the experience of the people's struggle at the anti-feudal and bourgeois stage ushered in by the 1895 liberal revolution and in the epoch of imperialism and victorious proletarian revolutions. The year it was founded, the SPE joined the Communist International. Having taken a firm stand for internationalism and against reformism and nationalism, it rapidly gained strength and ideological maturity. Its members acquired a deep knowledge of Marxism and applied it in practice with due regard to national peculiarities. The SPE was renamed the Communist Party of Ecuador at its Second Congress.

Having consolidated itself politically, the CPE began to play a notable role in public life. The revolutionary doctrine adopted by it became a powerful instrument in the struggle for social progress, democracy and socialism. 'This is why,' our Programme stresses, 'a prerequisite for the revolutionary transformation of the

country and for advance to the construction of a just society free of the exploitation of man by man is to strengthen the Communist Party of Ecuador ideologically, politically and organisationally'.²

Last January Febres Cordero led a large group of employers on a publicity trip to the United States. It was the 'lamb's'³ third appearance in slightly more than one year before its 'northern shepherd'. During the visit, the President literally brought the country under the hammer. He made statements unfit for the head of a sovereign state and committed himself, among other things, to safeguard transnational companies against political risk. Under treaties with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), he solicited direct foreign investments. He backed the 'Baker Plan'⁴ and asked for a \$400-500 million credit. IBRD President Alden W. Clausen, who had visited Ecuador shortly before, said that, unlike other debtor countries of the Third World, Ecuador offered exemplary conditions for the implementation of the plan. No wonder Ronald Reagan described his Ecuadoran counterpart, who had said that the two nations had 'coinciding historic goals', as a champion of 'free enterprise and democratic ideals'.

In terms of external debt, Ecuador is among the first ten Latin American countries and ranks sixth in per capita share of the debt. Febres Cordero claims that he has secured a rescheduling of 95 per cent of the total amount of the debt. Actually his only 'achievement' is a rescheduling of amortisation payments; they are now due in 1988, the year when his term in office will expire. The present administration plans to base the burden of the external debt by attracting direct foreign investments. It expects to obtain \$540 million by late 1988. Yet its own estimate says that in 1988 the debt will amount to \$8,837 million, which means that the expected funds would make up a meagre 6.11 per cent of the aggregate debt.

In a bid to secure greater foreign investments, the President declares for giving transnational capital access to all economic fields. This purpose is to be served by a series of laws, including laws in violation of the decision of the Andean Group⁵ on regulating the flow of foreign capital and its functioning in the region. In other words, the common interests of Latin American integration have likewise been sacrificed in a drive for unilateral advantages.

Paradoxically, Ecuador is an exporter of capital despite a chronic balance-of-payments deficit due to foreign dependence. In the past five years, its export of capital exceeded foreign investment by a considerable margin, with unequal exchange robbing the republic of \$4,560 million.

A sharp decline in world prices for crude oil, which accounts for 70 per cent of the country's exports and half of its revenues, forced Febres Cordero to devalue the sucre once again. This means that the people, who had never benefited from oil revenues either during booms or in times of crisis, will get a new burden as a consequence of the subjection of the Ecuadoran economy to transnationals and of external debt payments.

The economy is becoming transnationalised at a fast pace. Operating in the republic in 1984 were as many as 124 transnationals. The government favours greater 'cooperation' of this kind, primarily in oil production, and this is the most striking indication of its anti-patriotism. By denying the Ecuadoran State Petroleum Corporation (CEPE) financial support, it has enabled transnationals to make profit by exploiting our people's natural resources. Last year all prospecting for new deposits was suspended, and oil extraction was kept up through superexploitation of known deposits contrary to the technical standards of the National Hydrocarbons Administration. This policy is part of the conspiracy against OPEC. Ecuador has ignored the oil production quotas established by OPEC; it voted for their abolition at the OPEC meeting last December. Earlier the Ecuadoran government had favoured the country's withdrawal from OPEC and the formation of a separate organisation

for Latin America.

The President proceeds like a traitor by allowing transnationals access to CEPE's long-range prospecting plans, thereby diminishing the risk which these octopuses run investing in this industry. At the same time, he restricts the activity of the corporation, preventing it from assuming the management of the CEPE-Texaco combine, which accounts for 80 per cent of oil output and 90 per cent of the proven oil reserves. This is how matters stand although the CEPE holds a controlling interest in the securities of the combine.

Added to the above is the recent exposure made by General Rene Vargas Pazos, who disclosed that the oil transnationals have contrived to include in the contracts signed by them with the government a provision allowing them to derive extra profit in the form of interest on invested capital (by using service charges) and exempting them from tax on this part of their earnings.

The President's zeal in meeting his commitments to transnationals has a negative effect on the plight of small proprietors in town and countryside, who have been driven to despair. Scant funding by the state does not help. The Seventh Congress of the Federation of Agricultural Workers of the Littoral (1985) made the following statement: "When a small fraction of the credit did reach the peasants through cooperatives, its terms turned out to be so harsh that at present they simply cannot pay their debts. To avoid complete ruin, they have asked for a rescheduling of payment . . . The peasants must be freed from the debt noose of official creditors . . . who are very exacting and severe in regard to small proprietors yet very flexible and lenient towards big ones."⁶

As regards the agrarian reform, the government has opted for running it down and guaranteeing the preservation of large-scale private property in land. It grants concessions in a vast area in the east of the country, where plantations of the oleaginous African palm are being laid out. This is disrupting the way of life and social organisation of precisely those Indian communities which belong to the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuadorian Amazonia⁷ and vigorously resist the extermination of ethnic groups and merciless exploitation on the part of domestic and foreign enterprises.

Febres Cordero's foreign policy is extremely reactionary and links up with that of imperialism. In Latin America Ecuador is the chief opponent of a collective rescheduling of the external debt. It ignores the decision of the Andean Group mentioned earlier, and is playing the role of a fifth column inside OPEC. Following groundless accusations against the Sandinists and a disgraceful slander campaign against members of the Nicaraguan diplomatic mission accredited in Ecuador, the present administration severed relations with that Central American country. The Ecuadoran embassy in Delhi has virtually suspended its activity. By contrast, Sikh separatists have installed themselves in Quito, where they have been allowed to open the so-called Khalistan House. At one of the latest OAS meetings, the stand taken by Ecuador blocked the adoption of a resolution condemning the Pinochet regime. The government tried to establish trade relations with South Africa and to help the racist regime open a trade mission in Ecuador. It refused to send a delegation to the conference on the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Latin American economic system and hailed the massacre which the Colombian military staged after guerrillas had taken the Palace of Justice.

Thus there are plenty of facts revealing the extremely reactionary trend of the foreign policy of the present cabinet. Febres Cordero's visit to Cuba had all the stronger repercussions both at home and abroad because it contradicted the whole line of his cabinet.

The CPE considers that the consolidation of diplomatic relations between Ecuador and the first socialist state in the Western Hemisphere is objectively in keeping with

the policy of peaceful coexistence and conducive to the defeat of the imperialist blockade of the Cuban revolution. We realise, however, that the government took this step for two reasons. First, it wanted to regain, at least in part, its public image on the continent, which it had tarnished by complicity with imperialism and betrayal of the common interests of Latin American countries, intended to secure more favourable conditions when it came to rescheduling the external debt. Second, the government wished to prove to the Ecuadorans that it is 'democratic' and so to accuse the opposition of blindness and failure to appreciate national interests. It is our opinion that these aims were not achieved even though the visit caused some confusion among a section of the revolutionary and democratic forces of the country.

Meanwhile the domestic situation is most disturbing. The introduction of a neoliberal economic development model has aggravated the traditional problems of Ecuadoran society. The working people are hit hardest. Official statistics, which do not always reflect the actual state of affairs, set urban unemployment at about 10 per cent of the workforce. Partial unemployment is the lot of 45 per cent of townspeople and 55 per cent of the rural population. Late in 1985, 200 enterprises found themselves on the brink of bankruptcy, which threatened the dismissal of over 30,000 workers. The child mortality rate has risen to 64 per thousand. As many as 47 per cent of Ecuadorans are chronically underfed. Disease, lack of housing, illiteracy and crime still plague our people, whom today's regime dooms to backwardness.

Experience has shown that it is impossible to follow a neoliberal policy without resorting to force and state terrorism. This, in turn, makes for the despotic, authoritarian, extremely repressive and corrupt character of the regime. Persecution and torture, violations of human rights and individual freedoms, are a common occurrence (things have gone so far that even the Inter-American Press Association, an anything but progressive organisation, has twice asked the President to guarantee freedom of the press). Rightist paramilitary groups are operating with impunity, spreading fear and provoking instability. The Constitution is systematically flouted by a parliamentary majority which is a product of a subsequent back-stage deals rather than of an electoral victory.

The President has brought Congress and the Supreme Electoral Tribunal under his control and put his men in the Supreme Court of Justice. He now wants to extend his control to the Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees and is concentrating on a revision of the Constitution with a view to securing even greater powers in order to issue emergency decrees curtailing civil and political rights, including habeas corpus. By manoeuvring skilfully, he has contrived to bring about the modification of the electoral law and to prevent partial elections for Congress as well as for cantonal and provincial councils, set for January. The government plans to use the time gained in this way for having the Constitution amended in order to prolong the MP's mandate for two years and preserve the present balance of parliamentary forces in this way.

Needless to say, the people resist this line. Prominent in their struggle are three national trade unions.

The Confederation of Ecuadoran Workers (CEW) sprang up in 1944, after bitter struggles for the overthrow of the dictatorship of President Carlos Arroyo del Rio, a protege of the oligarchy. The rise and formation of the Confederation were part of the world-wide battle against fascism that was going on at the time. It adopted a class, revolutionary and internationalist position from the outset as an organisation rallying large sections of working people. The Catholic church had its own trade union organisation the Ecuadoran Confederation of Christian Trade Unions, which was founded in 1938 and renamed the Ecuadoran Trade Union Centre of Class Organisations (ETUCCO) in 1972, after a certain evolution. This very name is a reflection of the changed platform of this national union even though its orientation

remains Christian Democratic. A third major national union is the Ecuadoran Confederation of Free Trade Union Organisations (ECFTUO) founded in 1962 under the influence of American syndicalism. Being a proponent of the latter's ideas and openly advocating anti-communism, the ECFTUO has opposed the CEW ever since it came into existence.

The 1970s saw a growing trend towards unity in the trade union movement, which was a result of both the consistent class line of the CEW and of internal changes in the other two labour organisations. In these, left sentiments began to gain ground, and their increasing leverage won them positions in the leadership. Differentiation resulted in some of the ETUCCO members remaining Christian Democrats while its left wing allied itself with the CEW. A split occurred in the ECFTUO as well; most of its affiliates began to move to class positions.

At the turn of the 1980s, the struggle for unity culminated in forming the Unitary Front of Workers of Ecuador, which comprises the three major labour organisations and has a common leadership and a single anti-imperialist, democratic and anti-oligarchic platform.⁸

With the consolidation of capitalist relations, the numerical strength of the working class grew noticeably, and its composition underwent considerable qualitative changes. This increased the role of the proletariat in the solution of national problems. The federation of oil, electricity and building workers, as well as other particularly 'proletarian' labour organisations, won tangible influence in the trade union movement, which largely determines the political climate in society.

In recent years, the increased militancy of the masses has earned the CPE still higher prestige among the workers. Our party owes this both to its initiatives, such as its effort for the unity of the three labour organisations (their joint programme has been worked out in the main by the CPE), and to the growth of the party membership among the proletariat. To be sure, the ETUCCO and ECFTUO still betray many anti-communist and anti-Soviet prejudices as well as leftist sentiments. Nevertheless, our common strategy for unity enables us to find ways and means of carrying out joint actions. This is demonstrated best of all by the numerous strikes and nation-wide actions sponsored by the United Front of Ecuadoran Workers against the government policy of submission to the dictates of the IMF.

The peasant movement, which assumed large proportions in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s, is visibly lagging behind the working class movement in view of today's crisis. Our difficulties include the fact that right now not all members of the middle strata realise that the proletariat's struggle also expresses their interests. Even so, many of them join in mass nation-wide actions, which are occasionally supported by whole organisations, such as those of small traders, the Confederation of Civil Servants, National Union of Drivers or National Union of Educational Workers.

The Indian movement in Ecuador is most varied. There is a visible difference in social development and consciousness between the indigenous population living on both sides of the Andes and that living in backward Amazonian communities. Communists are active among the Indians. It was the CPE that helped form the early 'Indian trade unions' in the 1930s. Their rise was necessitated above all by the need to defend Indian communities and the lands belonging to them and to bring about an agrarian reform that would end the latifundium system. However, Communists did not do enough to draw large sections of the Indian population into everyday struggle, as Rene Mauge, General Secretary of the CC CPE, pointed out self-critically at a scientific seminar in Quito (1985). At present the party is making a special effort to fill this gap.

Our party realises that achieving unity is the overriding problem of the country's progressives. The Left consists of three main alliances today. First among them is the Left Broad Front (LBF) comprising the CPE, the independent Left and some other,

smaller organisations. Then comes the Socialist Front (SF); it groups the former socialist and revolutionary socialist parties as well as people associated with the ECFTUO. The LBF and SF differ on important issues, such as the definition of Ecuadoran society, the goals of the revolution, and hence ways and means of achieving them. The third coalition is called the Popular Democratic Movement (PDM). It has taken shape around the so-called Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, a group which broke away from the CPE in the 1960s under Maoist influence. Although the PDM has yet to shed its anti-communist and anti-Soviet prejudices, the coalition today makes common cause with other left forces against the anti-popular policies of the present regime, and takes part in national strikes sponsored by the United Front of Ecuadoran Workers. Formal statements by the PDM are evidence of its political will to contribute to efforts towards strengthening and uniting all democrats.

The diversity of the programmes of the Ecuadoran Left certainly makes unity hard to achieve. Nevertheless, we Communists consider that objective conditions have shaped up in the country which would make it possible to notably intensify the process of uniting all supporters of progress if used in a revolutionary manner, resolutely and courageously.

This approach is perfectly timely in the light of the fact that unity is already a reality in Congress. The LBF, SF and PDM, as well as national reformist and social reformist groups, have united into the Progressive Parliamentary Coalition. The Communists believe that it should form the basis for a broad progressive people's bloc capable of uniting the masses to prevent a dangerous drift in the political situation and to solve acute problems engendered by the crisis; this could be done by forming a people's democratic government guaranteeing the implementation of revolutionary changes.

At the same time, the party is working to strengthen the unity of the working class and to raise it to a higher plane, using the positions which Communists have traditionally held in the CEW, the most influential labour organisation in our country.

On overcoming many mistakes and sectarian sentiments (which came after the Tenth Congress, held in 1981), the CPE undertook the difficult but necessary process of bringing into being a solid democratic, anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist bloc, a process attended by many dangers. To accomplish this task, it is necessary to strengthen the structure and step up the activity of the LBF as the core of even larger future alliances which should enable the people to come to power.

Our entire effort must contribute to the search for a democratic solution based on a powerful mass movement. This solution necessitates changes in the socio-economic structure and nature of the state itself.

We consider refusal to pay the external debt a major component of our strategy. Fidel Castro raised this extremely serious question in time; he advanced a proposal meeting the requirements of the revolutionary and democratic movement on the continent. We think this approach makes it possible to give a new spur to closer unity and to step up the struggle against neocolonialism and for the integration of Latin America, which is a task going beyond national bounds.

One-time colonial powers pump money out of developing countries to meet their own balance-of-payments deficits and to fund militarist programmes. This is why the struggle for non-payment of the external debt is becoming a battle for an end to the arms race, for the abolition of nuclear and chemical weapons, for a new international economic order.

In the present context, the Communists' struggle is daily becoming more difficult and intense. The CPE greets its 60th anniversary by vigorously resisting a reactionary government which is carrying on an anti-popular economic policy imposed by international finance capital. But we are looking ahead with optimism, for the CPE is

made strong by an advanced ideology and by its resolve to be at the forefront. Marxism-Leninism equips us with a scientific world-view serving as a guide to the revolutionary transformation of society. Nor do we disregard the tremendous experience of the international communist movement, which history itself continues extending and renewing and which is always open to creative assimilation by any party.

This was exemplified by the recent 27th Congress of Lenin's great party. We fully subscribe to the words of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, who stressed that "the Party can resolve new problems successfully if it is itself in uninterrupted development, free of the 'infallibility' complex, critically assesses the results that have been attained, and clearly sees what has to be done".⁹

Looking back we say confidently that the Communist Party of Ecuador is consistently defending the interests of its people, from whom it sprang six decades ago, and that it contributes its share to the great cause of the world revolution in spite of past miscalculations and shortcomings.

¹ Noted leaders of the Communist Party and working class movement of Ecuador.—Ed.

² *Programa y Estatutos del Partido Comunista del Ecuador*, Guayaquil, 1977, p. 22.

³ "Cordero" is Spanish for "lamb".—Ed.

⁴ The plan, drawn up by US Secretary of the Treasury James Baker, provides for the granting by private banks of credits to 15 developing countries, including Ecuador, on condition that they will fully submit to the dictates of US capital. This policy is bound to put a heavy burden on the working people.—Ed.

⁵ Regional economic alignment formed in 1969 on the basis of the Cartagena accords and comprising Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.—Ed.

⁶ *Reforma Agraria Democrática, Ahora!*, Guayaquil, 1985, p. 10.

⁷ The Indian nationalities approximate to 40 per cent of the population of Ecuador.—Ed.

⁸ For details, see Luis Emilio Veintimilla, "Paving the Way for the Future", *WMR*, No. 2, 1984.—Ed.

⁹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 88.

A Political Report FRG: Dissent Outlawed

Sergei Yastrzhembsky — WMR staff
member

THE valley of the Rhine has long been famed for its picturesque scenery and stately buildings, its choice wines, and ancient and economically mighty cities. One of these is Mainz, once the seat of electors and archbishops, and now the administrative and economic centre of Rhineland-Pfalz. On my way down there, I learned from my guidebook that one of its prominent sights was the ancient Romanesque St Martin's Cathedral, with its six towers, that it was here that type-setting was first invented in Europe by the mid-15th century printer Johannes Gutenberg, soon followed—in 1477—by the founding of one of the first German universities. In short, Mainz has some very good reasons for being a major tourist attraction.

But I was not going there to enjoy the beauties of the Rhineland or to see the sights. Mainz got into the headlines following an event which caused alarm and indignation among West German democratic opinion: at the end of 1984, the provincial authorities resorted to the unconstitutional practice of *Berufsverbote*—jobs ban—to deprive theologian Ulrich Foltz of his right to teach a school course in the history of the arts. The school doors were closed to him because, as a member of the Federal Board

of the German Peace Union (GPU),¹ he had opposed the deployment of new US nuclear missiles in the FRG, and had called for goodneighbourhood and friendship among nations.

I met Foltz at the GPU's provincial branch, and we had a talk in a room with piles of freshly printed booklets, magazines, handbills and placards calling for defence of peace, for efforts to rid the FRG of nuclear and chemical weapons, to prevent the militarisation of space, and to promote disarmament in East and West, all ready for distribution. Ulrich, 33, is married and has a small daughter. He was born into the family of a clergyman, studied the history of the arts and theology at Mainz University, and upon graduation became a trainee teacher at one of the grammar schools. He is a practising Christian, and a consistent opponent of war, militarism and the arms race. It is not surprising, therefore, that he is a member of the GPU leadership and is involved in the peace movement, like many thousands of other Christians.

"The trouble began in my first year at school,"² Foltz recalled. "In April 1981, I was summoned for an interview at the district branch of the Department for the Protection of the Constitution, where I was told that membership of the GPU was 'incompatible' with the status of teacher. I found it altogether impossible to prove the absurdity of such an approach, for ours is, after all, a perfectly lawful organisation, which is well-known in the FRG and abroad. The first warning was followed by another, and at the end of 1984 I was notified that my probation period was not to be extended, which was tantamount to dismissal and a ban on my teaching activity."

But how did the authorities justify such a serious decision?

By way of reply, Ulrich handed me a 16-page bill of indictment describing in detail all his 'unlawful' acts. Having seen it with my own eyes, I was convinced that it was not an extract from Ray Bradbury's famous anti-utopia *Fahrenheit 451* (where, incidentally, its protagonist, a fire-fighter, finds himself 'banned' in a totalitarian and militaristic society), but an official order issued by the authorities of a state claiming to be one of the bastions of 'freedom and democracy'. So, what was it that Foltz had done wrong?

The document says in so many words that the official's membership of the GPU 'gives ground for serious doubts about his loyalty to the Constitution'. The charges against the GPU are justified by the authorities on the ground that it maintains 'multilateral ties' with the 'unconstitutional German Communist Party', takes a similar stand on the issues of war and peace and, in particular, believes 'scrupulous observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence to be a condition for the preservation of peace'. The teacher is also accused of 'displaying a readiness to cooperation with the Communists', 'giving preference to extra-parliamentary struggle' in opposing the deployment of US missiles. Another thing the Christian Democratic authorities of Rhineland-Pfalz do not like is that Foltz's political credo proceeds from 'demands for peace, detente, disarmament and friendship among nations', which, it turns out, 'are borrowed from the Marxist-Leninist ideology'. It goes on to say that by his public condemnation of the practice of *Berufsverbote* he has 'discredited the Federal Government at home and abroad'. Finally, his 'resolute statements against so-called anti-communism should be imputed to the official as a fault, rather than credited to him as a merit'.

Virtually every point of the 'indictment', which is here quoted word for word, is a blatant mockery of the constitutional rights of the citizens of the Federal Republic. After all, the Preamble to the country's fundamental law emphasises that the population is called upon 'to serve the cause of peace throughout the world'. It would appear that Foltz, as citizen and GPU activist, had effectively put that constitutional provision into practice. But it is precisely the young theologian's peace-making efforts that are declared to be unconstitutional! One cannot help recalling what Montaigne,

the 16th century French humanist and philosopher, once said about 'the voice of the law being drowned out by the rattle of weapons'.

Consider Article 5 of the FRG Constitution, which says: 'Everyone shall have the right freely to express and to disseminate his opinion orally in writing, and figuratively . . .' Why then is Foltz being charged with the fact that the demand for peace and detente 'runs like a red thread' through all his statements? What is more, the 'champions of the law' cynically admit that he 'was not seen to be disseminating his own political views among the schoolchildren'.

"The designation of the GCP as an 'unconstitutional organisation' does not hold water either," says Ulrich. "It is the Federal Constitutional Court that is alone entitled to designate parties and organisations acting in West Germany as 'hostile to the Constitution', and everyone in the FRG knows that no such ruling has ever been handed down with respect to the GCP. As for my cooperation with members of the Communist Party within the GPU, I have, as a Christian, often debated with them on philosophical matters, but within the peace movements I am resolutely opposed to anti-communism, because I know that on such a basis it is impossible to safeguard the sacred gift of life on the earth!"

One also has to agree with Ulrich in that it is not his activity as a peace fighter, but the attempts by the 'judges' to brand the policy of peaceful coexistence as illegal that directly harm the prestige of the FRG.

"After all, if one accepts this line of logic," Ulrich continued, "international documents like the Helsinki Final Act, the treaties on the principles of relations between our country and the socialist states, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which were signed, among others, by the FRG's top leaders, would also have to be branded as hostile to the Bonn Constitution!"

It is clear, frankly speaking, that the right-wing forces want to put Foltz down by way of example, so as to discredit the very idea of fighting for peace, to intimidate the numerous participants in the struggle, and to prevent the West German peace fighters from overcoming anti-communism in their ranks.

There is wide public indignation in the FRG over the unlawful acts of the authorities. Solidarity with Ulrich has been voiced by his pupils, his fellow-teachers and by numerous organisations of peace fighters. Evangelical clergymen and the SDPG group in the Rhineland-Pfalz Landtag have demanded the teacher's reinstatement. He still nominally has the right to appeal against the decision.

"I have filed my appeal," Ulrich told me in conclusion, "but it will probably be turned down. I have also tried to act through the administrative courts. But the case could drag on for years, since the magistrates have no reason to act in haste."

Indeed, the teacher's condition is unenviable, and he can hardly expect the West German goddess of justice to take a favourable view of his case. Still, one should very much like to believe that the truth will out, and that the glory of ancient Mainz, one of the centres of humanism in the epoch of the European Renaissance, will not be blemished by the disgraceful repression of an honest man.

Every case of *Berufsverbote* victimisation brought to mind the history of medieval Western Europe, when every element of dissent was put to the flame on orders of the 'Holy' Inquisition. That was centuries ago, but the sparks from the Middle Ages keep igniting bonfires in various Western countries in our own day, singeing those whom the witch-hunters in power decide to suspect of dissent. The FRG offers a most pertinent example.

We had a discussion of this with Sepp Mayer, a member of the GCP Secretariat, and Uwe Post, a member of the Board, at the Dusseldorf headquarters of the Communist Party. They were unstinting of their time in explaining the nuances of the political situation in the country and analysing the *Berufsverbote*.

"The practice of persecution for democratic views has now flourished in the FRG

for 14 years," said Sepp Mayer. "The signal for putting down the 'heretics' was sounded by the Decree on Radicals, which was adopted on January 28, 1972, by the prime ministers of the provincial governments, and which legalised the procedure of loyalty checks for state employees. The purposes of the authorities were transparent from the outset: to remove Communists from government institutions; to slow down the development and to check the extra-parliamentary democratic movements; and to intimidate the public, above all the young, by getting them to display absolute loyalty to the ideological and political tenets of the ruling class."

Since the passage of the Decree on Radicals, 3.5 million West Germans have been subjected to the humiliating procedure of loyalty checks, with thousands of them suspended, dismissed from their government jobs, and not reinstated because of their convictions. Among them are men and women of the most diverse occupations: higher school and secondary school teachers, physicians, postal workers, railwaymen, lawyers, architects, sociologists, secretaries of government and scientific establishments, customs officers and employees (including officers) of the Bundeswehr.

The notion of *Berufsverbote*, the comrades told me, includes a wide range of techniques for discriminating against undesirable persons for political motives. Depending on the concrete case, the authorities may resort to disciplinary measures, cut salaries (up to 50 per cent), suspend from work, refuse employment or enrolment at higher schools, and finally, dismiss the 'recalcitrant' official. Nowadays, it is membership in the Communist Party or any other democratic organisation, participation in anti-missile demonstrations or trade union rallies, distribution of leaflets, tourist trips to socialist countries, and even the use of the term *Berufsverbote* by the official concerned that more often than not serve as ground for initiating a disciplinary inquiry.

Uwe Post drew my attention to a telltale point: "Since 1972, the practice of *Berufsverbote* has ranged over a wide spectrum, and has been applied with differing intensity and toughness. The job bans broom was wielded most sweepingly when large public movements emerged in the country and the barometer of domestic political life indicated 'storm'. The latest wave of purges rolled across the country after the right-wing coalition government headed by Helmut Kohl came to power in March 1983."

Was that a coincidence? It was, of course, no such thing, for the peace forces movement reached its highest peak in the FRG's history precisely in 1983. In an effort to reduce and damp down the population's anti-missile protest, the Bonn authorities attacked the peace fighters with a spate of police and judicial repression, while the reactionary circles used the job bans to settle scores with those who most actively resisted the official offensive against the working people's trade union and social gains.

The new elements introduced into the practice of *Berufsverbote* have crystallised with the passage of time, and I learned many interesting things about this at the Hamburg branch of the Federal Down With the Jobs Bans Committee, where I had a conversation with one of its leaders, Hannes Hollaender.

First, a few words about the committee itself. It emerged during the preparations for the first international conference against the *Berufsverbote*, which was held in Hamburg in 1973. The movement itself, Hollaender explained, is in the form of a pyramid: at its base, there are hundreds of local initiative groups of solidarity with actual bans victims; in the middle are the provincial branches; and the Federal Committee is at the top. It includes, as its individual members, representatives of

various public, and political bodies, including the Spartakus Marxist Union of Students, SDPG Young Socialists, members of the GPU, the Greens, the GCP, the German Union of Journalists, the Association of Democratic Lawyers, and so on. The committee leadership seeks to support the activity of the grassroots units, whose numbers keep changing (with the number of inquiry cases); it collects reports of harassment by the authorities of 'undesirable persons' throughout the country; presents these facts to the population of the FRG and to international opinion; and arranges protest conferences.

We discussed the characteristic features of the job bans today.

"The new qualitative factor," Hollaender said, "is the absence, in contrast to earlier years, of any common line in applying the bans in the provinces run, on the one hand, by the Social Democrats, and by the CDU/CSU, on the other. In the former (such as the Saar, Bremen, Hamburg and Hessen), there are signs of a departure from the unconstitutional practices under the pressure of the democratic forces, and as a result of the changed attitude to the Decree on Radicals on the part of influential circles of social democracy itself, but in such strongholds of the Right as Lower Saxony, Baden-Wurttemberg, Bavaria and Rhineland-Pfalz, the bans policy has, on the contrary, been decidedly toughened up.

How is that expressed in practice? Earlier on, for instance, disciplinary inquiries were conducted under the cover of charges of 'insufficient loyalty to the Constitution', but now a craftier term has been given currency: 'hostility to the Constitution' which makes it possible to take tougher action on the plea of national security. Under the pretence of ensuring it, the authorities expel Communists and other democratic-minded officials from state institutions, and they are always labelled by the rightists as 'risk factors' and 'potential traitors', for whom there is no room in state agencies.

The second feature is that the administrative and judicial repression is being directed against a wider circle of persons: not only Communists, but also peace fighters, trade unionists, left-wing Social Democrats, and Green Party activists. Indeed, that is precisely what the GCP has warned of all along: the bans have now hit all the democratic forces, and not the Communists alone.

The third feature is the extensive use by the authorities, as a pretext for harassing officials, of the inclusion of their names on the GCP ticket, a fact which in itself signifies that a definite section of the citizens are effectively deprived of passive electoral rights, which FRG law denies only to lunatics and hardened criminals.

The offensive launched by the 'champions of democracy' from the Kohl government against the rights and freedom of citizens is not, of course, confined to the job bans, which are only the tip of the iceberg of a ramified system of measures being systematically effected by the right-wing forces. The comrades I spoke with were unanimous that the activity of the police and the special services, which have covered the country with a web of pervasive surveillance, has acquired unprecedented proportions. The latest computer devices are widely used to shadow 'suspects'. More than 18.5 million files on West Germans are already on electronic index at the Department for the Protection of the Constitution, military intelligence (MAD), and other similar services.

What is more, the ruling parties intend to take yet another step in transforming the FRG into a 'state under surveillance' by pushing through the Bundestag a package of seven bills providing for closer surveillance of citizens. These would give the police greater powers in banning any demonstrations; simplify surveillance and detention of participants; officially establish cooperation between the authorities, the police and the special services; and empower MAD to exercise functions similar to those of the

Department for the Protection of the Constitution.

The more I heard about the scandalous facts of undemocratic operations by the West German authorities the more I was put in mind of George Orwell's futurological exercises. The author of *1984*, a bestseller in the West, could hardly have foreseen that many of the repugnant features of the supertotalitarian society which he invented in the late 1940s and in which citizens are totally denied the right to identity, would be translated so swiftly from utopia into reality.

The 'new wave victims' is the name given here to compatriots subjected to administrative and judicial repression for dissent since March 1983. The case of Folz, which epitomises the lot of hundreds of peace fighters, has been described in some detail, and it would be unfair not to say more about the Communists, the most numerous group of victims of political genocide in the FRG.

I met with some of them: in Hamburg, with the customs officer Uwe Scheer, and in Hannover, with teachers Anke Pfitzner, and Karl-Otto Eckartsberg. They differ in age, experience and professional record, but there is much in common to their personal tragedies. They are all long-standing members of the GCP, and have all run on the GCP ticket in communal and district elections over the past few years, and that is what provided the pretext for accusing these officials of being 'untrustworthy' and for initiating an inquiry into their 'fitness' for their official posts.

Disciplinary inquiries were started against Pfitzner, Scheer and Eckartsberg after the 1981 communal elections on suspicion of their being in breach of political loyalty to the Constitution. The only charge was running on the GCP ticket. The inquiry dragged on for months, being an endless round of exhausting interrogations (Scheer, for instance, was once interrogated for seven hours running). How such interrogations are conducted can be seen from a report in the bourgeois magazine *Stern*, to which my attention was drawn at the Down With the Job Bans Committee.

The place is Augsburg, and the interrogation of U. Hausladen, a non-party teacher, is being conducted by government councillors Herzer and Krueger.

Herzer: Is there anything critical that you can say about the GDR?

Hausladen: Shortcomings that lend themselves to criticism can certainly be found in any country. But I have not studied the laws of the GDR, and I can judge only about the things I know.

Krueger: You know very well what we are asking you about. Don't pretend to be a simpleton. The communist threat was being spoken of . . . throughout the electoral campaign. You must have turned a deaf ear to that.

Herzer: What do you mean by the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Hausladen: It is a scientific concept. I have not studied it.

Herzer: Still, you can tell us something about it, the term, after all, speaks for itself.

Hausladen: It is a concept which occurs mainly in Marx and Lenin. . . .

Herzer: Ah-ha, we've finally got to the gist of the matter. Frau Teichmann, put this down "I am an advocate of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as Marx and Lenin saw it."³

The testimony of Scheer, Pfitzner and Eckartsberg was grossly distorted by the present-day herzers, who brought trumped-up charges against them. And here one point should be noted. The interrogators wanted to know about Scheer's activity in the GCP, his public work among tenants, whether he read *Unsere Zeit*; Eckartsberg was drilled on his attitude to the 'Afghan question', the political system in the GDR, and the crisis events in Poland. But throughout the inquiry no one at any time raised the question of the officials' fitness for their jobs, although the whole point was to prove that they were 'unfit' for their jobs. The question was not raised because the interrogators were perfectly well aware of the high qualifications of these men whom the authorities found unsuitable, but who had complimentary references from

their immediate superiors, fellow-workers, parents and schoolchildren (in the case of teachers). But then virtually each 'accused' was given a chance to keep his job. Eckartsberg recalled: "The magistrate told me flatly that if I left the party I could hope to keep my job."

So, the department whose terms of reference are scrupulously to abide by the letter of the law is itself in breach of the individuals' constitutional rights, overtly black-mailing progressive-minded citizens and seeking to force them to disavow their convictions. Meanwhile, there are cases of persons with other political views who have even been caught committing punishable offences, but who continue to enjoy the favours of the FRG's goddess of justice. People in the FRG often recall that Minister of Economics, Count Otto Lambsdorf, who turned out to be involved in a scandal caused by Flick's unlawful funding of Bonn's ruling parties, continued in his government post for a long time.⁴ Let us also recall that *Berufsverbote* have never been applied in a single case against officials preaching the Nazi ideology—eloquent evidence of whose rights and interests bourgeois democracy cherishes and protects!

This was a subject repeatedly brought up by those with whom I spoke during my numerous meetings. They naturally laid emphasis on the flawed political and juridical practice of *Berufsverbote*, with their harmful effects on the moral climate in the country. But one also sees the personal aspects of the problem when coming into contact with those who have fallen victim to the witch-hunt: behind every ban one inevitably finds a broken human life. It is a broken one because it affects highly skilled officials who have been removed from their posts despite having honestly done their professional duty; capable university graduates deprived of the possibility of finding work; honest and law-abiding citizens put on a par by the authorities with persons committing crimes against the state and criminal elements. Nor should one discount the material aspect of these tragedies, for most of these men and women have families. An official dismissed on charges of violating the constitution loses the right to work in his special field, and it is very hard to retrain for another occupation for people who, like Pfitzner or Scheer, have been working in their jobs for decades: there are both their age and the glut on the labour market. The 'untrustworthy' label sticks to a man for the rest of his lifetime and slams shut many doors before him.

These men and women have to waste much effort, nervous energy and health to prove the absurdity of the charges levelled against them, while their families keep suffering in the process.

"Nominally, I have not been dismissed, but I have been suspended from my duties with a sharp cut in my salary," Scheer said. "This has at once affected the family budget. My wife has had to take on a job of night nurse, but that still falls short of our earlier budget. I now often have nightmares. I become irritable even with my children, who, of course, also feel the strain and instinctively sense the trouble."

Uwe showed me some of his sons' drawings, and I must admit that I was amazed at what a far cry they are from the colourful and happy emotions associated with the carefree world of childhood.

It is very, very hard not to break down, not to lose heart, and to keep going in the situation in which Pfitzner, Scheer and Eckartsberg have found themselves. But they have displayed an enviable steadfastness of spirit and are fully resolved to go on fighting in defence of their good name, and to prove that the charges levelled against them are groundless. They are making thorough preparations for the forthcoming judicial proceedings, taking a vigorous part in the acts of solidarity with job bans victims and explaining to others that it is part and parcel of the overall right-wing onslaught against democracy in the country. And the main thing is that all three declare their readiness to keep running on GCP tickets, if the party should so require.

Can *Berufsverbote* be successfully fought? Can the democratic forces put an end to political arbitrariness and defend the victims of the authorities? Will they not be

crushed by the state repression machine? These questions are of great importance for thousands of human lives and also for the success of the struggle against the policy of the 'swing to the right' in the FRG.

Before trying to answer these questions, let me cite some facts from the mass media on the strength of my own impressions: the Social Democratic government of the Saar headed by O. Lafontaine, has lifted the notorious Decree on Radicals on its territory; in Bremen, Hamburg and Hessen, all the teachers have been rehabilitated, and they have been allowed to teach at school; the Federal Disciplinary Court has handed down acquittals to a group of Communist postal workers accused of dereliction of duty. All of these fairly recent events—undoubtedly encouraging for the progressive public in the FRG—have given a positive answer to these questions.

Analysing the causes of these successes, however, modest they may be, the comrades emphasised the outstanding contribution by the German CP to the fight against the bans.

It is natural for the Communists to play an active role in resisting *Berufsverbote*, for they are the first to be earmarked for being driven into a kind of political ghetto, with the party deprived of its deputies on the local organs of power and even of candidates in the elections. It should be admitted that such tactics by the reactionary forces have had some effect in several provinces.

In this context, I recall a conversation I had in Hannover (the capital of Lower Saxony) with Barbara Wille, who deals at the GCP district committee with *Berufsverbote* problems, and her assistant Ferdinand Feist.

"Over here", Barbara said, "the right-wingers are hounding the dissenters with especial zeal. After all, Lower Saxony has the longest border with the GDR, and it also has the largest NATO firing ground in the FRG. So the authorities have to try harder. As a result, the party has additional difficulties with recruiting new members; fear of repression tends to paralyse a sizable part of the population."

"Hannover is not, of course, an exception," Feist added. "The public atmosphere in some parts of the FRG is so infected with anti-communism that one has to display considerable courage even to distribute our party newspaper *Unsere Zeit* in the street. The Communists are the first to be fired from enterprises, they are being hounded at the offices, smeared by the Springer press, and tagged 'enemies of the state' and 'fifth columnists'. In short, CP membership holds no promise of financial gain or position: indeed, it holds the prospect of much trouble. That is why if someone joins the party, it means that he or she has given thorough consideration to what they are doing."

Comrades in Dusseldorf and Hannover said that the GCP's struggle against *Berufsverbote* is being carried on along three main lines. First of all, being a key component of the Federal Down With the Job Bans Committee, the Communists take part in organising all its acts: international conferences, protest marches and rallies, 'warning vigils' in front of government buildings, and the setting up of public solidarity funds (the Hannover fund, named after Heinrich Heine, has alone handed over to job bans victims about 600,000 marks).

"We start a public campaign of solidarity with every job bans victim, and initiative committees are, as a rule, set up for the purpose at the person's place of domicile," Barbara said. "The fact of persecution is reported in the democratic mass media, and handbills are printed in support of the victim. Protests signed by political and public figures, scientists and lawyers are sent into various government agencies and the courts. The party provides its members with political and legal consultations and advice on how they should behave in court."

Finally, for 14 years now, the democratic forces and the GCP make a point of drawing the attention of international opinion to these disgraceful job bans practices. Sepp Mayer said: "We attach priority to our contacts with the fraternal parties, which

have done very much to alert public opinion in their own countries. Petitions coming in from abroad and demanding an end to the repression, protest rallies in front of West German embassies, action during visits by official FRG delegations, and many other forms in which international solidarity is manifested have again and again nullified the authorities' attempts to persecute unsuitable persons.

"What we also regard as a major success is that the authorities' policy has been subjected to criticism at sessions of such international bodies as the UN Commission on Human Rights and the European Parliament, which heard the *Berufsverbote* question and also the International Labour Organisation, which has set up a special commission to study the problem."

The Communists note that the latest achievements in the struggle against the job bans are also undoubtedly connected with changes in the stand of influential social democratic forces, whose leadership, it will be recalled, bears much of the responsibility for the Decree on Radicals. But international and domestic political developments since then have had a substantial impact on many of the views of SDPG members. Finding itself in the opposition in 1983, the party distanced itself from the right-wing forces not only on some international issues, but also on some key internal problems, and this will be seen from the Lafontaine government's decision on the job bans.

No one is any longer surprised, I was told, when Social Democrats, like Gerhard Schroeder, a candidate for the post of prime minister of Lower Saxony, act as lawyers for Communists in judicial proceedings, that they take part in the work of local solidarity committees, sign protest petitions, and criticise the unconstitutional practices as members of provincial assemblies. Now and again they even cooperate with the Communists within the framework of the anti-job bans movement. The decision of Saar SDPG leadership to repudiate the job bans policy is generally regarded by the FRG public as an expression of civic courage. If other provinces run by Social Democrats were to follow suit, it would give a tangible impetus to the democratic forces' action for the complete abolition of the Decree on Radicals.

I had already returned from the FRG, when I learned of another major victory for the fighters against the job bans: Karl-Otto Eckartsberg has been cleared of the charges. The first time an official dismissed for Communist Party membership has won his case in a court of second instance. But the movement for abolishing the jobs bans, for the observance of legality and justice and for the complete rehabilitation of the victims of the Bonn 'champions of human rights'—Anke Pfitzner, Uwe Scheer, Ulrich Foltz, and many others—continues unabated, with growing support and solidarity from democratic public opinion in its entirety.

¹ A political party from 1960 to 1983; since then a public body enjoying influence and authority among the FRG's peace forces.—Ed.

² In order to obtain 'life tenure' in any office (including that of school teacher) every state employee has to go through a period of probation.—Ed.

³ *Stern*, July 20, 1978.

⁴ For details see *WMR*, No. 2, 1985, pp. 111-112.—Ed.

Topical Notes

What's Behind the Show - Window?

PUBLIC attention is focused on a boutique in Haute Sauveniere Street in the city of Liege, Belgium—and for a very good reason! There's a live dummy in one of its

show-windows, which is fitted out like a bed-sitter, with armchair and TV set included. There's a man in there, living as he would at home, for all the idlers to gape at and to attract potential customers. The New Jeans Discount company is pleased with the advertising gimmick and pays its exhibit 600 Belgian francs a day (just enough to have a meal and use the change to buy a newspaper), and generously allow him to leave his 'workplace' for one hour to have a wash and a bite of food.

The dummy himself spends a part of his break being interviewed by numerous reporters craving to write up on the latest candidate for the famous Guinness Book of Records. The dummy's name is Edouard Cockx, he is 36, and has been jobless (like his wife) for three years. He is not entitled to any unemployment benefits, and his present job, together with the ridiculous wage, is better than nothing. After all, the shop manager admits that there were 300 applicants for this less-than-desirable place. The owner of the shop says: 'My clients find all this highly attractive.'

The Liege merchant's new idea was reported in *Le Drapeau rouge*, the newspaper of the Belgian Communists, just when the Western press carried all kinds of surveys, statistical reports, commentaries, diagrams and graphs on the results of the capitalist countries' development in the first half of the 1980s, and let me say right away that their authors were a close second to the wily Liege merchant with his novel approach to the hard sell.

Here is how the effort looked in *Le Monde*. It tried to present its social show-window in such a way as to make the public less agitated, not to say happy, over the economic results, since the talk about a new upswing, new stabilisation, etc., is less and less credible. The paper commented on the figures issued by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which leave no doubt at all that the economic recovery in evidence in the United States in 1983 and 1984 (hastily declared to be something of a 'miracle') is clearly fizzling out: last year, US industrial growth dropped sharply once again. However, *Le Monde* delicately calls that a 'soft landing' or even a 'maturity phase'. The overall state of the OECD countries' economy is designated most ambiguously as a 'pause'.

One may well ask: a pause between what and what? Some French and US economists claimed that up until recently there was a 'sensational upswing' on the wave of Reaganomics (which, let us note, did not quite percolate to all the EEC countries). But what is one to expect after the 'pause'? There is no answer.

The comments about some 'interrupted spiral' of inflation are especially cheering: the anti-inflationary efforts of most industrialised capitalist countries have allegedly yielded fruit. A closer look at the facts shows that prices continued steadily on the way up (by an average of five per cent a year), but 'not faster than they did in 1984'. When these much-vaunted efforts are considered in greater depth, it turns out that the OECD governments combated inflation by curtailing the wages of the very people who suffered most from the high cost of living.

Bourgeois press assessments of the state of employment in the leading capitalist countries are likewise shot through with an urge to embellish the real picture: 'even the United States under Ronald Reagan has proved to be unable to repeat its great feat of 1984' (i.e., the feat of reducing the number of officially registered unemployed to seven per cent of the active population). Plainly put, this means that the millions of 'ordinary' and 'discouraged' unemployed (i.e., those no longer entitled to unemployment benefits) in the United States have the satisfaction of knowing that their numbers did not grow as fast as they did, for instance, in the European Ten, where the reserve labour army in the twelve months of 1985 was increased by another 400,000 persons. In January, they were joined by three million more Spaniards and Portuguese, so raising the number of jobless in the enlarged EEC to a total of 15.8 million.

One in seven able-bodied citizens is registered with the Belgian National

Employment Service, to say nothing of men like Edouard Cockx, who have lost all hope of getting a job through the labour-exchange. Indeed, even in the FRG, which is relatively well off as compared with the other EEC countries, unemployment in December 1985 reached a postwar high—9.2 per cent of the able-bodied population. It is not surprising that, according to a survey published by the West German magazine *Stern*, almost two-thirds of FRG citizens do not believe that the unemployment problem will change for the better.

Bourgeois economists appear to be trying to habituate the population of the capitalist countries to the idea that there is nothing extraordinary about unemployment, inflation and pauperism, and that the only thing that can be done about them is to prevent them from getting out of hand. Indeed, there are instant cries of 'economic miracle', a 'new dynamism' and so on, whenever there happens to be a temporary lull in their growth.

Meanwhile, they try to turn a blind eye to the unpleasant facts and figures which fail to fit into the cosy talk of the miraculous power of 'Reagonomics'. One of these facts is that whereas one in seven US children lived in poverty under the Kennedy administration, today it is one in five. That is only one of the deplorable results of the economic 'liberalism' being practised by the White House.

Le Drapeau rouge correspondent who reported on the live dummy show-window drew a parallel with the period of the Great Depression, when poverty was widely exploited for the purposes of advertising. "Thousands of Liege residents walk along Haute Sauveniere Street. Are they aware how such 'work' humiliates and twists human nature?" he asks. But is it not an affront to the millions of unemployed, homeless and 'new' and 'old' poor to have the bourgeois press paint hypocritical and self-complacent pictures of affluence in its efforts to decorate ever more gaudily the economic and social show-window of the capitalist world in the 1980s?

Serge Dim

surveys, information and mail

From Our Mailbag

Realistic Basis of Concerted Action

This letter is from **Gunther Wilke**, a participant in the Action Conference of the FRG Peace Movement held on February 1-2 in Bonn. This conference focused on issues related to stepping up the struggle to remove the nuclear threat, for effective public action in defence of peace.

In publishing this (abbreviated) letter, *WMR* is motivated by the belief that the problems raised in it are of interest to its readers.

... I should like to tell you of my impressions of the conference, which was a notable event in the struggle for a peaceful future and disarmament in our country.

It was often difficult to reach a consensus at previous conferences of representatives of the diverse socio-political forces in the peace movement. But this conference was noteworthy on account of their striving, despite all distinctions, to demonstrate our movement's unity of political will and ability to act effectively. This was expressed also in the resolution adopted in connection with Mikhail Gorbachov's Statement of January 15 of this year.¹ This resolution demanded a constructive response from the FRG government to the Statement.

'In order to create conditions conducive for mutual efforts in the disarmament process it is vital to lay the beginning for the withdrawal of the Pershing II missiles already stationed by renouncing the deployment of the cruise missiles planned for March 1986 at Hunsrueck,'² this resolution declares. 'It must be publicly demanded that the USA cease all its nuclear tests in reply to the Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests, and abandon the SDI and the plans for building a West European anti-missile defence.'

I was greatly impressed by the unanimity of the voting for this resolution, although various views were articulated during the debate. For instance, Achim Maske, of the FRG Committee for Peace, Disarmament and Cooperation, spoke of the inspiring prospect being opened up by the Soviet three-phased disarmament plan. Fulfilment of this plan would draw the line for the process that began four decades ago at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and is threatening humanity's existence. The peace movement, he declared, can and must use the Soviet proposal for intensifying pressure on the Federal government.

Andreas Zumach, representative of the Christian Peace Service Atonement organisation, insisted that the USA should constructively respond to the Moscow initiatives, chiefly to its unilateral and then prolonged cessation of nuclear tests, and take the corresponding steps in reply. He spoke highly of the latest Soviet proposal. However, he said that this could not be the sole basis for joint efforts in defence of peace, declaring that this would narrow the actions of the West German peace movement.

Only a few of the 700 participants in the conference withheld support for the resolution on the Gorbachov initiative. They said that because of the USA's negative attitude to the Soviet initiatives they did not believe there could be progress at the Soviet-US talks. They said they were apprehensive that the Soviet proposals would generate feeling that, they claimed, would debilitate the ability of the peace movement to mobilise the people.

Wolfgang Gehrke, member of the Presidium of the GCP Board, said in reply to this: "Gorbachov's initiative is in keeping with the demands of the peace movement in our country." These words were met with applause, including from those who usually refrained from supporting the GCP. It must be noted that Gehrke expressed the view of those who immediately, upon the first reading of this proposal, saw in it, what we have always wanted to achieve, for the sake of which a significant effort had been expended, namely, a concrete way of resolving in the immediate future humankind's main problem, that of removing the threat of a nuclear war.

In its many statements the peace movement in the FRG reaffirmed again and again the belief that more weapons did not signify greater security. All the participants in the movement are profoundly convinced of this. For that reason, in comparing the Soviet peace plan, which rejects nuclear armaments and the militarisation of outer space, with the Reagan SDI programme they have drawn the conclusion that the American concept of peace leads to destabilisation rather than to stability. The SDI signifies a further stockpiling of armaments.

Immediately after our conference the SDP Parliamentary Political Press Service

wrote that the debate over the Soviet proposals, notably over the shift of accent to the SDI, was not abating. It was pointed out that "possibilities are opening up for the peace movement to come down once more from its ivory tower and reinvigorate its old and new supporters".

Let me make the point that the peace movement in the FRG has never been in an ivory tower. After Pershing II missiles were deployed against the will of the majority of the people, some of the people in the movement felt disappointed, and this sense must be overcome. In fact, it has been overcome. The Soviet initiative has given the West German peace movement a fresh impetus.

At the conference I was one of the representatives of the Committee for Cooperation in the Peace Movement in the northern-most land of the FRG—Schleswig-Holstein. We did not go to Bonn with empty hands. In our Committee we had substantively discussed the Gorbachov plan. It is indicative that of the 15 parties and organisations of 22 cities represented on our Committee, only one abstained from subscribing to the resolution in support of the new Moscow initiative. This document noted: 'There is no reason for the Americans to reject a bilateral moratorium; if they seriously want to reinforce stability, there are no grounds for not accepting the Gorbachov proposal. It would save enormous resources for the people of the USA and for the peoples of the countries dependent on it.'

This is the first time that a Soviet initiative received clear-cut wide support in our country. And it was the first time that the Action Conference of the FRG Peace Movement gave such a favourable assessment of a Soviet peace plan.

Formerly, we Communists had to contend with attempts to express equal distrust for both the great powers. The calls for Easter peace marches this year distinctly stated that the policies of the Washington administration were the chief reason for the arms race. The next round of discussions in the peace movement was unanimously defined at the February meeting. It was decided to hold another conference with just one item on the agenda: the Gorbachov plan. This decision meets with the common desire to consider the Soviet initiative in detail, a desire that is as strong as the will to act expressed in the call for participation in the action of the peace movement on October 11, 1986 at Hunsrück under the motto: 'To Win Peace There Must Be Action!'. This autumn action, like the traditional Easter marches and the activities of natural scientists and physicians will help to bring home to all people our movement's demand that the FRG should not be involved in space armaments research and development; that Pershing II and cruise missiles should be withdrawn from our country; that the Bundeswehr should be prevented from being armed with offensive weapons; that the plans for militarising society should be stopped; and that there should be an end to the export of armaments and to oppression of Third World peoples. These five points, adopted at the close of 1984 in Cologne as an integral guideline of the national peace movement, will continue to define the movement's actions in the immediate future.

At the conference it was constantly felt that the peace champions of the FRG saw their strength in unity of will and action. This was reflected, in particular, in the report delivered by Andreas Zumach. He spoke in categorical terms against those who once again demanded the expulsion of Communists from the movement. Such an expulsion is out of the question, he declared. Anti-communism would signify the beginning of the end of our struggle. These words were greeted with applause. Members of the GCP are seen as an inalienable component of the broad peace movement. They are seen as a force asserting their militancy and political maturity, as an integrating factor. Many of us have already seen that concessions to anti-communism, which is being fanned by the mass media, play into the hands of the peace movement's opponents rather than benefit it.

The Communists are in favour of the Hunsrück autumn action of the peace

fighters. At the conference Wolfgang Gehrke said that this major action of 1986 should serve as a signal for a new campaign against the SDI. He was applauded when he said that it was time our movement joined in the campaign for the Bundestag elections scheduled for 1987. Peace, he stressed, must be the central issue at the elections as well.

The peace movement has charted far-reaching plans for 1986. The adopted decisions are soon to be discussed by regional and local initiative groups and by parties and organisations. At these discussions the Gorbachov proposal will most certainly be accorded an important place. It unquestionably gives a new impetus and formulates aims that are consistent with the will of the overwhelming majority of our people. Will the world be made free of nuclear weapons by the year 2000? In the final analysis, this will depend upon the peoples, on their energy. The appeal of the Bonn conference—'To Win Peace There Must Be Action'—is addressed to them in the first place.

Of course, in my letter I have only touched upon some matters considered by the conference.³ Much more could be written about the atmosphere that reigned for two days at the sittings in Bonn. In reporting the proceedings at this meeting, one of the newsmen noted the new self-awareness of its participants. I can only agree with this. And I may add that this self-awareness springs from unity of will and action. In any case the FRG peace movement is unfolding its work with renewed optimism.

¹ The Soviet programme for the destruction of all nuclear and chemical weapons everywhere by the year 2000 is dealt with in some detail in *WMR*, No. 3, 1986.—*Ed.*

² A US military base near Hasselbach.—*Ed.*

³ The letter stated that the conference passed some other resolutions—one in support of the West German trade unions in their fight against the planned curtailment of their right to strike, and another in solidarity with the liberation struggle of the peoples of Southern Africa.—*Ed.*

Dushmans: Who Are They?

The bourgeois press styles them 'mujaheddin', meaning 'fighters of the faith'. President Reagan speaks of 'patriots' fighting a war for the liberation of the Afghan people. But in Afghanistan they are called dushmans, the Afghan word for bandits. Who are they in fact?

From Recent History

A national democratic, anti-feudal, and anti-imperialist revolution was ushered in Kabul on April 27, 1978 under the leadership of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. This took place in a country with a backward economy and archaic social relations. The revolution swept away the feudals and their myrmidons. The nation embarked upon fundamental changes in its socio-economic, cultural, political and social life.

These progressive changes in Afghanistan encountered fierce counteraction from internal and international reaction led by ruling circles in the USA. As early as 1978 Washington began forming a counter-revolutionary Afghan front. It counted on monarchist emigres, untra-right Islamic and nationalist, and also left-extremist groups and organisations. The imperialist powers began financing them lavishly. It is estimated that foreign aid to the Afghan counter-revolutionaries amounts to 1,000 million dollars annually. A large proportion of this money comes from the USA, the

rest is provided by some other NATO countries and also by Japan, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and China.

These funds are used to reinforce existing and set up new counter-revolutionary organisations, maintain their paramilitary camps and bases, and train and arm gangs, whose formation from the outset has been the work of the intelligence services of imperialist states and some Asian countries. Thousands of Afghans, deluded by insidious propaganda, left their homes and crossed into foreign countries, chiefly Pakistan, where they were put into tent camps. These frightened, desperate, and impoverished people became the source of recruits from the ranks of the 'fighters of the faith'.

The first mercenaries—from the USA, Britain, France, Iran, and Saudi Arabia—appeared in Peshawar, capital of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, a city that was turned into a hornet's nest of the Afghan counter-revolution. Many of these professional killers had acquired considerable experience in the dirty wars against the patriots of Vietnam, Congo, Rhodesia, and Angola.

Large supplies of arms began arriving for the counter-revolutionaries in 1978. These were transported via the intelligence centres set up by US intelligence agencies along the Pakistani-Afghan border. A very active role in organising deliveries of weapons was played, in particular, by Zbigniew Brzezinski, then the national security adviser to the US President.¹

The direct preparations for war were assigned to CIA experts headed by Louis Dupree. They formed groups of terrorists and saboteurs for infiltrating into Afghanistan and organised their training.² About 120 training camps were set up for this purpose in Pakistan with the participation of US secret agencies. In these camps American, French, British, Israeli, Egyptian, and Pakistani instructors trained 'fighters of the faith' to handle weapons and explosives and employ unscrupulous methods of terror. Since 1979 there has been in Islamabad a regional CIA headquarters that coordinates spy, terrorist, and military operations in Afghanistan.

In parallel, the psychological brainwashing of the population is conducted through radio propaganda, leaflets, and brochures urging subversion, opposition to the government, and acts of terrorism in Afghanistan. In one of these brochures the assassination of a member of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is equated to 30,000 prayers to Allah.

In early 1979 the preparations for war entered their final stage. The US administration ceased economic aid to and cut down trade with the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. In February President Carter spoke on the CBS network, openly threatening to use military force to protect 'vital US interests' in the Middle East. Soon afterwards, thousands of rebels moved across the border into Afghanistan through passes prepared in advance. The counter-revolutionary units were reinforced by Pakistani military, some of whom even led the gangs.

In the Lair of the Counter-Revolution

The undeclared war that the USA is fighting against the Afghan people with the hands of Afghans has gone on for seven years. Committed to it at present are more than 80 counter-revolutionary groups and various organisations based in Pakistan and partially in Iran. The leaders of these gangs are scions of wealthy feudal families and prosperous members of the clergy. The following examples disclose the make-up of the leaders of some of the most active counter-revolutionary groups fighting the people's government.

Gulbuddin Hekmatyar heads the 'Islamic Party of Afghanistan'. He established links to the CIA in the 1960s, and as a chieftain of the fanatic Moslem Brothers group

tried to galvanise survivals of the Middle Ages. He was personally involved in acts of terrorism. He was imprisoned in 1970 for the murder of a student, but his chiefs from US intelligence agencies soon arranged his release.

Following the overthrow of the monarchy, Hekmatyar formed a group in Pakistan for brigand actions against the Afghan people. New gory deeds augmented his record of 'exploits'. One of these was the burning alive in 1975 of three rural inhabitants in Kunduz Province.

At the close of 1978 he became head of the 'Islamic Party of Afghanistan' and at bases in Pakistan with unstinting aid from the USA he formed the numerically largest gang. Among its crimes are explosions in four restaurants in Kabul, burning alive of the inhabitants of Meyen Posht village and the destruction of fifteen hundred schools and hundreds of hospitals, bridges, and mosques. Hekmatyar is personally guilty of the murder of many Afghans. An illustration of this is the execution of 120 persons for refusing to join in the armed struggle against the people's government.

Posing as a 'fighter of the faith', Hekmatyar's main pre-occupation is to enlarge his own wealth. His money comes from extortion, robbery, the sale of stolen goods and also of weapons supplied to bandits, and of narcotics. He misses no opportunity to pocket money sent from the UN to aid 'Afghan refugees'.

Self-interest and sadistic cruelty are traits of other dushman chiefs. **Sayed Ahmad Gilani** heads the 'National Islamic Front of Afghanistan'. A hereditary aristocrat, he was personally close to the king when the monarchy was in power. A big landowner, he had a monopoly on the sale of French Peugeot cars in Afghanistan and owns villas in London and Peshawar. He served in the British intelligence and then became a CIA agent. After the April revolution he fled to Pakistan, where he formed a bandit group. The chiefs of his gangs have the job of collecting information about people cooperating with the lawful government, including religious personalities, and then killing them. Gilani is supported by monarchists.

Another monarchist, **Subghatullah Mojaddedi**, heads the notorious 'Front for the National Liberation of Afghanistan'. He likewise comes from the higher feudal-clerical aristocracy. Prior to the revolution he owned a little under 2,000 hectares of land.

Harahati Enqelabi Islami ('Islamic Revolutionary Movement') is headed by a well-known theologian and big landowner named **Mawlawi Mohammad Nabi**. Under the monarchy he cooperated with secret services. He was accused of embezzling large sums of money from the funds of his own party. He has links to Mossad, the Israeli military intelligence agency. This 'champion of morality and the preservation of the purity of Islam' promises to save the Afghan people from 'capitalism, atheism, and communism'.

Iamiat Islami Afghanistan ('Islamic Society of Afghanistan') is headed by Doctor of Theology **Burhanuddin Rabbani**, who in the past was a big landowner and an exporter of carpets. In the name of a figure-head he has a large account in the Bank of Oman. As well as assassinating innocent people, causing explosions, and engaging in arson, the gangs of this theologian-terrorist smuggle narcotics into Iran and stolen lapis lazuli into Pakistan.

It may be said that the counter-revolutionary organisations of the 'fighters of the faith' have a common platform—the overthrow of the people's government. Taking advantage of the almost general illiteracy of the population, of the people's faith in religion and their centuries-old habit of obeying the khans, tribal chieftains, and landowners, they use the cover of defenders of Islam. To them Islam is not so much a religion as a special way of development, differing from capitalist and socialist development, with priority for divine laws. Hence the call of the counter-revolution for a struggle for the country's liberation from the 'godless government', for the establishment of Islamic norms in Afghan society.

The ringleaders of the counter-revolution adroitly adapt religious dogmas to the defence of the interests of the exploiting classes. Thus, for instance, they keep claiming that the land reform is injurious to Islam. Their propaganda emphasises that there must be peace between classes. Account is taken of the fact that tribal and clan traditions overshadow the essence of the feudal exploitation that prevailed in Afghanistan before the revolution. An objective of the 'fighters of the faith' is to antagonise the people against progressive socio-economic changes.

The common ill feeling of the dushmans for the April revolution does not preclude acute contradictions in their own camp generated by national-ethnic heterogeneity, affiliation to various schools and sects of Islam, personal interests, and rivalry among chieftains. A factor here is also the clash between the programme guidelines of the different gangs. Some want Afghanistan to be an 'Islamic republic', others talk about defending the population against infidels, and still others hope to see the return of the monarchy. The contradictions often erupt into armed clashes.

In this situation the countless attempts to unite the large counter-revolutionary organisations yielded nothing for a long time. Under pressure from the CIA, which endeavours to coordinate their operations, the 'Islamic Alliance of Afghan Mujaheddin' was set up in Peshawar in 1984. It consists of seven organisations, including those led by Hekmatyar, Rabbani, and Gilani.

The leaders of the counter-revolution hope to use the alliance to receive additional foreign aid. However, it is an open secret that the distribution of foreign aid has always been the main bone of contention. *The Washington Post* reports that so far the members of the alliance have failed to establish either political or military unity. More, during a debate on joint strategy seven leaders of the Iamiati Islami Afghanistan were shot and killed by Hekmatyar aides.

Their Weapon Is Terrorism

Whatever the differences between them, the counter-revolutionaries employ similar methods of struggle: terrorism in its most gruesome forms. Thousands of innocent people have died at their hands in the seven years of large-scale brigandage. The dushmans are odious butchers, nothing less. They spare neither women, nor old people, nor children. Killings follow sadistic torture, monstrous acts of violence. The cutthroats receive payment according to a tariff for each crime—murdering a schoolteacher or mullah, a party or government official, a doctor, an artist, or a soldier, burning down a school or hospital, blowing up a bridge, or an act of sabotage at an industrial facility.

Suffering defeat in direct collisions with the Afghan army, the mercenaries of international reaction commit atrocities such as the poisoning of the students of a girls' school in Kabul—a hundred girls between the ages of 15 and 18 were the victims (14 of them died). Or they plant bombs that explode in a cinema in the centre of Kabul during a showing of a film for children, in the Kabul airport, in a trolleybus at the rush hour, or a crowded bazaar square.

While proclaiming themselves defenders of Islam, the 'fighters of the faith' kill clergymen and destroy Moslem relics. They exploded a bomb in the mosque of the Kabul Polytechnical Institute, threw a hand-grenade into the courtyard of the Dar-ul-Hefaz college, exploded a bomb in a hotel for pilgrims at Mazar-i-Sharif, site of the grave of Khalif Ali, the central place of worship of religious Afghans, and coldbloodedly fired a missile into the crowded courtyard of the Herat mosque, which is one of the most revered by Moslems. Hundreds of members of the clergy, including the head of Kabul's central mosque, Maulan Abdul Hamid,³ have perished at the hands of dushman terrorists in the undeclared war against the Afghan people.

US advisers are directly involved in these atrocities. The diaries of a man named Charles Thornton, who was killed in a clash between rival gangs in Shahvalikot County, Kandahar Province, were published not very long ago. In them Thornton relates how he and other CIA 'experts', who had come to Pakistan in the guise of doctors and journalists, supervised the military training of dushmans, and planned the barbarous destruction of a civilian aircraft of the Afghan Airlines with a US-manufactured missile. Fifty-two persons, with women and children among them died.

Two captured bandits told newsmen at a press conference that acting on instructions from American advisers dushmans, disguised in Afghan or Soviet army uniforms, attacked peaceful villages, one of which was the village of Alisangi in Paktia Province (as everybody knows, a limited contingent of Soviet troops is stationed in Afghanistan at the request of the country's government). The Americans filmed this outrage by the 'fighters of the faith' and then showed the film on Western television networks as 'first-hand evidence' of actions by Afghan and Soviet troops against the civilian population.

Furthermore, ghastly attempts have been made to use chemical weapons in Afghanistan (with the accompanying slander against the Soviet Armed Forces). Testimony of this is provided by US-manufactured chemical bombs captured from the badits and instructions signed by 'Islamic leaders' on how these bombs were to be used against the population.⁴

Authentic documents disclosing the crimes of the dushmans and their close links to official agencies in the USA and other NATO countries have been published in Kabul.⁵

The bandits are doing their utmost to destabilise the Afghan economy, paralyse transport and communication, and interrupt industrial production. In the course of the undeclared war they have demolished 1,814 schools, and 31 hospitals, devastated 906 peasant cooperatives, and destroyed 41,000 kilometres of communication lines, many bridges, and much else. The direct material loss amounts to 35 billion afghanis, a sum equal to more than three fourths of all state investments in the Afghan economy in the course of 20 years preceding the 1978 revolution.

Masks Are Torn Off

The objective of this large-scale terror is to destabilise the situation in the country, frighten the population, and undermine its faith in the government's ability to bring life to normal. However, far from everything occurs in accordance with the scenarios of the dushmans. They are feared and increasingly hated. Afghans do not wish to live in constant fear of raids, the forcible pressing of young men into bandit gangs, the threat of being drawn into savage bloody clashes between diverse groups and parties. Even many of those who in the beginning were actively opposed to the revolutionary government are growing embittered against the 'fighters of the faith'. The desertion rate among the dushmans is rising, and often entire units surrender.

In an effort to halt this trend, Washington is increasing financial and other, including propaganda, aid to the Afghan counter-revolution. Bandits who have surrendered speak of an 'Afghan Information Centre' set up recently in Pakistan with the direct participation of the CIA. This centre's principle assignment is to publicise actions of rebels on Afghan soil (while concealing the criminal character of these actions) and manufacture 'irrefutable evidence' about brutalities by the Afghan army against civilians.

However, it is impossible to hush up or justify the atrocities of the dushmans and describe the actions of the USA in fanning this undeclared war as 'humane assistance

to Afghan refugees'. The Committee of Patriotic Afghan Citizens Residing in Pakistan recently sent a letter to President Ronald Reagan, declaring: "You are professing to be a champion of human rights and urging the restoration of peace in the region. But in fact you are doing all you can to inflame . . . aggression against Afghanistan and giving ruthless bandits and murderers more and more funds and weapons. The condition of Afghan refugees . . . on account of your activities is growing from bad to worse. They have learned for themselves the cost of the 'defence of human rights' that you use so adeptly, dealing in the blood of defenceless people. They despise you. The Committee of Patriotic Afghan Citizens Residing in Pakistan declares that Afghans do not need your adventurist assistance. It is used against the Afghan people and against refugees."⁶

The revolutionary process in Afghanistan continues. The successes of the people's government in economic, social, and cultural development are attracting the support of ever larger sections of the population. The leadership's steps to widen the socio-political base of the Afghan revolution are likewise yielding results. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the republic's government want a constructive dialogue of the different public and political forces, including those that still maintain a negative attitude to the radical changes in the country. The Revolutionary Council recently appealed to all Afghans to cooperate in the interests of national renewal and cease the blood-letting. There has been an affirmative response to this appeal from the people. The process of social transformation is being joined by further strata and groups of Afghan society. The dushmans are losing support in the country and are increasingly counting on intervention from without.

The Afghan revolution has a thorny road, but its development completely overturns the calculations of the Afghan people's enemies on putting back the clock.

Working Group of the WMR Commission
on Scientific Information and
Documentation

¹ *Time*, June 11, 1984, pp. 10-13.

² See, *The Secret War of the CIA Against Afghanistan*, Kabul, 1984, pp. 8-10.

³ See *Martyred for the Cause of the Truth. The True Moslems Murdered by the 'Mujaheddin'*, Government Printing Press, Kabul.

⁴ See *Chemical Weapon: Who Resorts to Its Use?*, Kabul, 1984.

⁵ See *Enemies' Grim Faces Unveiled*, Kabul, 1984.

⁶ *Haqiqati Enqelahi Saur*, June 10, 1985 (in Pushtu and Dari).

Diary

WMR delegations have attended congresses of fraternal parties: the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel, the 11th Congress of the Communist Party of San Marino, the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Ireland, the Third Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of India, and the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

Besides, several groups of the WMR Editorial Board and the Editorial Council members attended the 27th Congress of the CPSU.

* * *

A delegation of the Workers' Party of Korea, including deputy editors-in-chief of the

WPK theoretical and political journal *Kennroja Ri Dzongnam* and Hjon Mjong Dzun, visited the *WMR* editorial office to discuss further cooperation between the party and *WMR*.

In Memory of Moses Mabhida

THE international communist, working class and national liberation movements has suffered a great loss. After a long and grave illness, Moses Mabhida, general Secretary of the South African Communist Party and National Executive Committee member of the African National Congress of South Africa, died on March 8, 1986. The heart that ceased to beat was that of an ardent patriot and internationalist, an outstanding political leader of the South African liberation movement, of the revolutionary struggle against the sway of capital, for socialism.

Moses Mabhida was born at Thornville, Natal, on October 14, 1923. The links that bound him to the African National Congress and the working class movement were forged during his school years. In 1942 he joined the South African Communist Party (SACP). He played a big part in the preparations for the historic Congress of the People (1955) at which the Freedom Charter was adopted. As a well-known trade unionist, Moses Mabhida participated in the First South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in Johannesburg (1955) and was elected one of the four SACTU vice-presidents. During periods of intense mass activity, he was at the heart of every campaign. In connection with the new wave of terror (the Sharpeville massacre) and the imposition of a state of emergency by the racist regime, Moses Mabhida was ordered by his comrades to leave the country and organise solidarity actions abroad. He represented SACTU at the World Federation of Trade Unions and was active in Umkhonto We Sizwe (The Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the ANC. Moses Mabhida was elected SACP General Secretary in 1979.

A true patriot and a dedicated Marxist-Leninist, Moses Mabhida was firmly committed to proletarian internationalism. He was a modest and gentle man, but possessed of an iron will. He attended many conferences and meetings of the communist and workers' parties. His articles often appeared in *World Marxist Review*.

The image of Moses Mabhida, a great and courageous fighter against racism, apartheid, national and social oppression, will live forever in the hearts of the Communists and all those upholding the ideals of freedom, democracy and social progress.

In Memory of Seydou Sissoko

THE international communist, working class, and national liberation movements have suffered a heavy loss. After a grave illness, Seydou Sissoko, Chairman of the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour dies on March 10, 1986. An ardent patriot and internationalist, an indefatigable fighter against imperialism, for the cause of the working class and all other working people, for socialism has passed away.

Seydou Sissoko was born on September 6, 1929 into the family of a worker in Senegal. After receiving an education he became a schoolteacher. He was active in the struggle against the French colonialists. He was one of the founders of the Senegal

Party of Independence and Labour, the first Marxist-Leninist party in Tropical Africa. After the party was banned in 1960, Seydou Sissoko first as Deputy General Secretary and then, from 1967 onwards, as General Secretary of the party Central Committee courageously continued the struggle in the face of the difficulties of working under illegal conditions. With the lifting of the ban in 1981, he directed the work of forming an integral front of national-patriotic, anti-imperialist forces in Senegal. At the party's Second Congress in 1984 he was elected Chairman of the SPIL.

Seydou Sissoko traversed a hard road of class and anti-imperialist battles, devoting himself unstintingly to the struggle for national liberation and social emancipation. He did much to disseminate the theory of Marxism-Leninism in Africa, making a large contribution to the elaboration of the strategy and tactics of the Senegalese Communists and militating for unity in the international communist movement. In the course of many years he contributed articles to *World Marxist Review*.

Communists and all other fighters for national liberation, democracy, peace, and socialism will everlastingly cherish the bright memory of Seydou Sissoko.

the book scene

A Rebellious Island Comes Alive Again

Patrick E. Bryan, *The Haitian Revolution and Its Effects*, Heinemann Educational Books, Kingston—Port of Spain—London, 1984, 56 pp.

AFTER many years of brutal oppression and repression by the tyrannical Duvalier dictatorship—a regime reared and nurtured by United States imperialism—the people of Haiti are once again in revolutionary upsurge for their economic, political and civil rights. The course of development in that Caribbean island has, inevitably, as Lenin pointed out in analysing the salient features of the revolutionary situation, reached the stage where the masses are no longer content to live in the old way and the ruling oligarchy, no longer able to rule in the old way.¹ Unprecedented protest actions resulted in the flight of the dictator and the closest members of his entourage. Events are still however to show the extent to which the changes forced on the ruling circles by the activity of the masses will in fact meet the real needs, interests and aspirations of the people.

Last year, when the movement against the Duvalier dictatorship was already gaining ground and the regime and its US backers began to manoeuvre with promises of so-called democratic reforms, the General Secretary of the CC of the United Party of Haitian Communists (UPHC) Rene Theodore warned: "The Duvalier dictatorship may well give way to other forms of government that would perpetuate a regime docilely meeting the interests of foreign capital."²

As we are witnessing blatant attempts to rob the Haitian people of the fruits of their just struggle, we would do well to recall the rich revolutionary tradition of that rebellious island—specifically, the national liberation uprising of 1791-1804. It is the subject of *The Haitian Revolution and Its Effects*, a new book by the historian Patrick Bryan of the University of the West Indies (Jamaica). His brief but highly informative and thought-provoking study is aimed primarily at young readers and has recently been included in the syllabus for secondary school students in the English-speaking Caribbean.

It will be recalled that many bourgeois authors, ignoring the progressive changes that have occurred in the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean, have invariably interpreted Haitian history solely from the point of view of the island's former colonial masters and the local ruling elite. These authors have referred scornfully to the participants in the popular action against slavery and colonial rule while glorifying piratical pillagers like Henry Morgan as the real heroes of the people. Bryan's book rejects this stereotype of bourgeois historiography. Rather, it falls into one category with the works of those Caribbean historians who analyse past events from the viewpoint of the oppressed peoples. Drawing from authoritative historical sources, Bryan presents a realistic image of colonial society in the late eighteenth century, traces the activities of the motive forces and the course and triumph of the Haitian Revolution.

The island of Hispaniola, which is today shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, was the first territory in the Americas to be colonised by European powers. Before the arrival of the expedition of Christopher Columbus in 1492, the entire island was called Haiti which, in the language of the Taino Indians who inhabited it, meant 'mountainous'. This indigenous population of some 600,000 was virtually exterminated first under Spanish and later, French rule. By the eighteenth century the island had become the main producer of sugar and coffee in the Caribbean and the centre of the French colonial administration (see pp. 1-4).

The author demonstrates that the present social structure of Haiti, like that of the other islands and mainland territories of the region, has its roots in the colonial patterns that existed at the time European powers seized and settled the first overseas territories. As the sugar and coffee developed, so did the trade in a 'live commodity'—in Africans who were brought in as slaves to provide free labour for the estates under the most extreme measures of coercion. The society based on the ruthless exploitation of the slaves to maximise the wealth of the white overlords necessitated a structure built on racist ideology and a stratification on lines not only of class but also of race.

The top rung of the social ladder was occupied by the *grand blancs*—members of the French nobility, owners of large estates, colonial administration and military officers. These held a monopoly on political power. Then came the *petit blancs*—small property owners and poor whites who depended on the large property owners for a livelihood. Originating in unions between white slaveowners and African women, there emerged the group of mulattoes, or 'free people of colour', for the fathers sometimes granted freedom to the children of such unions. Some of this group also came to own substantial property—a factor which allied them on many occasions with the big property owners against the slaves, although the mulattoes were subject to the racist practices and laws.

The Africans were by far the largest and the most oppressed social group comprising, by the end of the eighteenth century, some 86 per cent of the Haitian population. Here is a graphic description of their condition: 'Exhausted from work all day, sometimes up to midnight, many slaves did not bother to cook their meals and ate their provisions without cooking them. The rations were so scanty and distributed so irregularly, that sometimes they passed half the week without eating' (p. 10).

The brutal oppression the slaves were subjected to is illustrated in Bryan's quotation from another book, *The Black Jacobins*³: 'There was no ingenuity that fear or depraved imagination could devise which was not employed to break their (the Africans'—*E.T.*) spirit and satisfy the lust and resentments of their owners and guardians—irons on the hands and feet and blocks of wood that the slaves had to drag behind them, . . . the iron collar. Whipping was interrupted in order to pass a piece of hot wood on the buttocks of the victim; salt, pepper . . . were poured on the bleeding wounds. Mutilations were common' (p. 12).

But it is a law of social development that no matter how serious and sustained the repression, the people will resist. Of course, the prospects for success or defeat of the people's struggles are conditioned by many factors, the international balance of class forces no doubt being a most important one. And so, the French Revolution of 1789-1794, particularly the period of the rise of the Jacobins, did much to help the Haitian people to achieve their goal—the abolition of slavery and the proclamation of political independence.

There had been slave rebellions in Haiti before—in 1724, 1730, 1734 and 1740. This was typical of all colonised slave societies. But the Haitian slave revolt of 1791 was the largest, the most convulsive and the most protracted in the West Indies and developed into a true national liberation revolution under the legendary Black leader François Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture. The son of a slave and a slave himself who learned since childhood what brutality and injustice meant, he proved to be a skilled general, organiser and politician. For example, he was quick to recognise and act on the possibilities for alliance with the commander of the armed forces sent out to Haiti by revolutionary France. This helped to considerably consolidate the positions of the rebels. Revolutionary Haiti was the only territory in the era of the rise and consolidation of the colonial system where the people's struggles resulted in the defeat of the colonial oligarchy, the abolition of slavery and the attainment of political independence.

Considering the past and present role of the United States in Haiti, one should note that the US ruling class, having thrown off foreign domination just a few years before, sent weapons to the Haitian planters. The big planter class found ready allies in their class brothers in North and Central America, as well as in all the colonial powers who combined to put immense military and economic pressure on Haiti, each seeking to grab the territory for itself.

But even at that time of trial, the new state tried to help other Latin American nations in their struggle for independence by sending them ships, arms and money. Haitian volunteers marched among the fighters of Simon Bolivar, the liberator of Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador. Haiti gave moral and material support to the various abolitionist organisations in the Caribbean and became a refuge for the slaves and all oppressed people who fled there from the neighbouring territories.

The colonialists and the local oligarchy could not allow this example to survive. Military aggressions against Haiti combined with diplomatic isolation were numerous. But the attempts to destroy the first independent republic of Latin America by force failed. However, the economic weapon, known so well to modern-day new states, proved more effective.

During Restoration, France levied on its former colony an indemnity of 150 million francs as compensation to the plantation owners for the confiscated land and other property. This was the origin of Haiti's external debt, which later increased manyfold due to the extortionist terms of trade with the United States. Haiti's situation was constantly aggravated by the economic blockade and provocations of the imperialist powers. All this led to political instability, countless coups d'état and mass poverty.

Haiti's external debt later served as the pretext for the direct intervention and occupation of the island by US troops. In accordance with the Monroe Doctrine, the

US ruling quarters 'pronounced that the inability of a Caribbean nation to pay its debts, where such debts might provoke European intervention, was enough cause for intervention by the United States' (p. 47). In July 1915, seizing on yet another coup in Haiti, the United States sent the Marines to the island. From that time to 1934 Washington was to openly conduct the political, economic and social affairs of Haiti. The country was totally dependent on US monopolies.

The emergence of the sinister figure of the dictator Duvalier in the 1950s was the logical outcome of US domination. For about thirty years, the country was to be under the boots of the 'President-for life' Duvalier family—to keep Haiti safe for US interests.

It is now clear that the broad popular forces that have toppled the Duvalier regime will not be satisfied with 'cosmetic changes' which leave Duvalierism intact.

"We are calling on the Haitian people to rebuff imperialist manoeuvres," Rene Theodore, General Secretary of the UPHC Central Committee, has said. "And so the struggle must be continued and more resolute demands made for political, economic and social reform. The movement should consolidate its organisation and mobilise to secure the formation of a government which would meet the people's interests."⁴

Having risen to the struggle against the dictatorship, the Haitians took to the streets of their cities and villages under the same red-and-blue flag the insurgent slaves of the rebellious islands once lifted up in the struggle for freedom. The Haitian people are drawing on their revolutionary heritage to fight against those who would like to keep them in poverty and neocolonial serfdom.

Elean Thomas

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¹ See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 213-214.

² Rene Theodore, 'Haiti's Communists Are Fighting for Democracy', *WMR*, No. 7, 1985.

³ C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins*, Vintage Books, New York, 1963.

⁴ *l'Humanité*, February 1, 1986.

'They Would Crucify Him Again'

Raymond Bonner, *Weakness and Deceit*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1985, 408 pp.

EL SALVADOR . . . This name reminds one of the tortures, murders and other terroristic methods used by the government against its own people. It is also associated with the dauntless, courageous people who have never stopped fighting for liberation as they followed the path opened by Farabundo Marti, their national hero.

Raymond Bonner, a former correspondent of *The New York Times* in El Salvador, gives a detailed exposé of the horrors that are part of the Salvadorans' daily life. It combines an eyewitness account with an in-depth analysis of the problems of a country he knows well.

Bonner does not confine himself to a graphic picture of recent events in that small Central American state but provides a background to the civil war going on there. In examining its origins, he quotes a passage from the notes of R. A. Harris, a former US diplomat. Here is what Harris wrote half a century ago: 'About the first thing one observes when he goes to San Salvador is the number of expensive automobiles on the

streets . . . There appears to be nothing between these high priced cars and the ox cart with its bare-footed attendant. There is practically no middle class between the very rich and the very poor.

'From the people with whom I talked I learned that roughly ninety per cent of the wealth of the country is held by about one half of one per cent of the population. Thirty or forty families own nearly everything in the country. They live in almost regal splendour with many attendants, send their children to Europe or the United States to be educated, and spend money lavishly (on themselves). The rest of the population has practically nothing' (p. 16).

Social contrasts in El Salvador have hardly changed in the past decades. Figures for 1983 show that only six per cent of the economically active population earned more than \$240 a month while a market basket of basic goods cost \$344 a month (see p. 17). In the late 1970s, a handful of landed proprietors owned 78 per cent of the cultivated land area, planted mainly to coffee, cotton and sugar cane. 'To survive, peasants coax corn, beans and vegetables from the depleted soils of their plots, frequently situated on seemingly vertical hillsides. They don't own the land; they only work it as sharecroppers or renters. More than 90 per cent of these parcels are smaller than twelve acres, but twenty-two acres are necessary to provide subsistence for a family of six . . . But those with even tiny plots are fortunate; nearly half of all Salvadoran peasants have no access to any land' (p. 19). As a result, three out of every four peasant children suffer from malnutrition (ibid).

Naturally, the people refuse to resign themselves to their appalling condition. Tracing the history of the liberation movement in El Salvador, the author mentions the 1932 uprising against the oppressors. It was put down and its legendary leader, Farabundo Marti, was executed. Bonner has no doubt that the roots of the Salvadorans' insurgency lie in merciless exploitation and repression. 'The root of all violence is institutional violence,' said Archbishop Oscar Romero, a noted religious leader who emphatically condemned the situation; he added that 'the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer' (p. 43).

The Archbishop's stance was not accidental. In El Salvador today, the church is speaking out against the numerous killings and other crimes of the state. This is a new phenomenon in Latin America which began to develop in the 1960s and now finds expression in the concept of 'liberation theology'. The changed attitude of the clergy to the movement of the disinherited masses is all the more noteworthy since 'for centuries an unholy alliance of the church, the state and the money ruled throughout Latin America. The sword and the cross were indistinguishable' (p. 66).

The resolute opposition of the church angered the Salvadoran junta and led to the persecution of clergymen. Many of them, including Archbishop Romero, were murdered. 'And if Jesus himself were to cross the border at Chalatenango, they would arrest him. They would crucify him again . . .' (p. 65). This comment on the situation in the country was made by Father Grande, an uncompromising opponent of the regime, at a meeting in the village of Apopo. It was one of his last public statements, for he was murdered by 'death squad' bandits shortly afterwards.

The brutality of the Salvadoran junta towards dissenters has enjoyed Washington's approval. It was only natural that the junta celebrated Reagan's victory in the 1980 elections. Nor did the White House disappoint it. One of the first acts of the new US administration was to replace many diplomats with experience in Latin American affairs by persons notorious for their brutality in Indochina. Thomas O. Enders, who had ordered the bombing of peaceful Kampuchean villages, was appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. The US government sabotaged all efforts by Latin Americans towards a negotiated settlement in Central America, alleging that the current conflicts in the region are a result of Soviet-Cuban 'penetration' and part of the 'global East-West conflict'. This assertion was also used

to justify arms deliveries to the Salvadoran regime. In short, Washington gave the junta the green light to escalate terror. Bonner quotes a US diplomat as saying that the Salvadoran military, being safe under US protection, felt that they could 'get down to some serious killing' (p. 212).

El Salvador's army grew fast in the 1980-1985 period and is more than 40,000 strong today. Bonner notes that the junta owes this to Washington, whose support has increased strikingly, above all in recent years.

To justify its interference in the affairs of other countries, the White House refers to the need to 'protect' the lives of US citizens, as the invasion of Grenada for one showed. The case of El Salvador suggests, according to Bonner, that actually the fate of US citizens, especially those opposed to Washington's policy, does not worry the State Department. In December 1980, four American nuns were raped and murdered by ultra-right terrorists. The junta considered the nuns guilty because they had planned to tell the truth about events in El Salvador when they returned home, and had said openly that they were outraged by massive repression.

In recounting this heinous crime, Bonner names both its organisers and its executors, exposing Washington's attempts to shield the junta. 'The nuns were not just nuns,' Jean Kirkpatrick, former US ambassador to the UN, told a reporter at the time. 'They were political activists on behalf of the Frente' . . . and somebody who is using violence to oppose the Frente killed these nuns. I don't have any doubt about that . . . No, I don't think the government was responsible' (p. 80).

Backed by Washington, the Salvadoran junta persists in its genocidal policy against its own people. But it has failed to crush the people's spirit of resistance. The civil war years have seen guerrilla forces increase from 2,000 to between 9,000 and 12,000. The efficiency of the operations of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front is exemplified by the fact that between 1981 and early 1985 its combatants killed or wounded some 20,000 men and officers of the puppet regime.

The author gives highly interesting facts about the time which he spent with the guerrillas, marching with them and witnessing them in combat. His testimony refutes the bourgeois propaganda lie that insurgents are getting weapons from the Soviet Union and Cuba. Bonner writes that 'one country has been an important source of weapons for the Salvadoran guerrillas. It wasn't Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, or the Soviet Union. It was the United States' (p. 267). Patriots capture these weapons in battle. In some cases they buy from venal officers of the junta's army or from gunrunners in the United States itself.

The book devotes considerable space to the 1982 'elections' in El Salvador. Even persons close to official quarters, Bonner writes, admit that those who staged the electoral farce did not scruple to resort to fraud, such as padding the lists or tampering with ballots. Most important, however, was the fact that an atmosphere of terror prevented the patriotic forces from participating in the elections.

Contrary to the US administration's assurances, the 1982 and 1984 'elections' brought no peace to the people. New reports of brutal repression come in every day. Between June 14 and 27, 1985, as many as 96 people were killed by the 'death squads'.

The US bourgeois media would like to make public opinion believe that the army and the 'death squads' have nothing in common and that, indeed, the squads are a 'secret society' beyond the regime's control. Bonner refutes this allegation, in particular by quoting what Captain Ricardo Alejandro Fiallos, formerly of the Salvadoran army's medical service, told a US Congressional committee. "It is a greivous error," Fiallos said, "to believe that the forces of the extreme right, or the so-called 'Death Squads', operate independent of the security forces . . . The simple truth of the matter is that 'Los Escuadrones de la Muerte' are made up of members of the security forces and acts of terrorism credited to these squads such as political assassinations, kidnappings, and indiscriminate murder are, in fact, planned by

high-ranking military officers and carried out by members of the security forces. I do not make this statement lightly, but with full knowledge of the role which the military high command and the directors of the security forces have played in the murder of countless numbers of innocent people in my country" (p. 327).

Raymond Bonner is no Communist. Some of his assessments and conclusions are subjective. However, the facts honestly presented by him are a severe indictment of both the Salvadoran puppet regime and its masters, the US rulers, who are directly responsible for the death of thousands of Salvadorans.

Donald Ramotar

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¹ Meaning the Revolutionary Democratic Front, a political alignment comprising over 100 political, trade union and other mass organisations of El Salvador opposed to the puppet regime.—Ed.

New Books

M. Raginsky, *History's Judgment at Nuremberg*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1986, 207 pp. (in Russian).

THE author, who served as an assistant to the Soviet Prosecutor General at the Nuremberg Trial, recalls in his memoirs how Soviet experts conducted their fact-finding mission to gather information on Nazi atrocities and how reactionary quarters in the United States, Great Britain and some other countries tried to save Nazi criminals from retribution. Dwelling on the legal aspects of the work performed by the International Military Tribunal, Raginsky stresses that the issue of responsibility and punishment for war crimes remains topical to this day. 'The Nuremberg Trial,' he says, "has gone down in history as an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and anti-militarist trial . . . The International Tribunal passed a sentence not only on the Nazi chieftains but also on all forces who were and still are bent on war. This is where its great significance for today's world lies."

Ngueyn Khac Vien, *Southern Vietnam (1975-1985)*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Hanoi, 1985, 435 pp.

The decade that has elapsed since the victory over the US aggressors has produced major changes in the southern areas of Vietnam. This part of the country is being rapidly integrated into the nation's socio-economic fabric. New industrial enterprises are being built, and the number of schools and hospitals is growing. Some 50 per cent of all peasant households have united to form cooperatives. At the same time, the difficulties caused by the long period of neocolonial rule are making themselves felt. The author reminds the reader of the grave economic, social and environmental consequences of the war and emphasizes the need to combat the social ills inherited from capitalism. Appreciation is expressed of the assistance provided by the Soviet Union in the rehabilitation and development of the Vietnamese national economy, specifically, in the south of the country.

Brüder, in Eins nun die Hände. 40 Jahre Sozialistische Einheits-partei Deutschlands (Brothers, Let Us Join Hands. 40 Years of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany), Dietz, Berlin, 1986, 112 pp.

This pamphlet, prepared by the Karl Marx Higher Party School of the SUPG Central Committee, is devoted to an important landmark in the history of the German working class movement—the Unification Congress of Germany's Communist and Social Democratic Parties. The authors trace the developments that led to the convocation of the congress, the joint action taken by the Communists and the Social Democrats after the liberation from fascism, and the CPG efforts to heal the rift that split working people. The pamphlet stresses that the people of the GDR are faithful to a fundamental behest of the Unification Congress—they are fighting to prevent war from breaking out on German soil ever again.

Carlos Mendoza, *Teoria de la capitalista de la renta tierra. Genesis de la renta capitalista de la tierra y del arrendatario* (The Theory of Capitalist Land Rent. The Genesis of Capitalist Land Rent and of the Land Rent System), Anteo, Buenos Aires, 1985, 108 pp.

The question of land rent is among the most topical and complex problems of modern capitalist political economy. Drawing on the relevant part of Marxist-Leninist theory, the author, an Argentine scholar, uses facts to highlight the essence of land rent and its close connection with fluid economic indicators such as wages, the employer's profits, accumulation of capital and taxation. The monograph stresses that Argentina is badly in need of a profound restructuring of its socio-economic system; a progressive solution of the land rent problem is to become an integral part of the transformations that must be carried out.

Jean Vincent, *Raisons de vivre* (Reason for Living), Editions de l'Aire, Lausanne, 1985, 268 pp.

The author is Honorary Chairman of the Swiss Party of Labour and its former General Secretary. He has been active in Swiss politics for more than 50 years, and from 1947 to 1980 he represented Geneva, his home town, in the Federal Parliament. The veteran shares his reflections on the path he has traversed and recalls the party's emergence and participation in the anti-fascist struggle, as well as the vicious persecution Communists were subjected to during the cold war years. He also deals with the way the SPL charts its strategy today and with the debates and discussions that have occurred in this connection. The history of the party is viewed against the background of important domestic and international developments.

Alexander von Pechmann, *Konservatismus in der Bundesrepublik. Ideologie und Geschichte* (Conservatism in the Federal Republic. Ideology and History), Marxistische Blätter, Frankfurt on the Main, 1985, 188 pp.

When the CDU/CSU conservative coalition returned to power in the FRG after spending many years in opposition, its leaders were lavish with promises of high living standards for all social strata. In actual fact, however, the position of West German

working people has deteriorated considerably since then. Tracing the history of West German conservatism from Adenauer to Kohl, the author notes that no matter what form it takes, its class role remains unchanged—it is to justify and defend the capitalist social order and to serve the interests of monopoly capital. This social mission is what shapes the conservative strategy and tactics today. The book offers a thorough and well-substantiated critique of the 'basic values' of this reactionary ideological trend.

Against Repression and Persecution

END ARBITRARY ACTIONS

ON March 3, 1986, the daily *Cumhuriyet* reported that a military court of higher instance had definitively confirmed the sentence passed on Hulak Seckin Meric, editor-in-chief of the Turkish edition of *World Marxist Review*, which was printed in Istanbul until banned with the declaration of martial law (1980). He is to be held in prison for seven and a half years and exiled for another two and a half years, with loss of civil rights, for publishing two articles by the CC General Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey.

Cumhuriyet adds that currently there are 27 journalists in jail. They have been sentenced by various courts to a total exceeding 3,000 years' imprisonment. In other words, while the media in the capitalist West try to mislead world opinion by means of false stories about the so-called democratisation process in Turkey, the dictatorial regime persists in attacking the press.

World Marxist Review, published in 40 languages and circulated in 145 countries, is known to the international public as a champion of peace and the interests of labour. Its outlawing and the prosecution of those who bring it out are among the regime's arbitrary moves, such as the imprisonment of the 27 journalists and the disgraceful trials of Communists, leadership of the society of peace supporters, leaders of the DISK trade union federation and tens of thousands of other democrats now behind bars. Twenty-nine political executions have been carried out since the 1980 military coup; hundreds of people have been tortured to death during interrogation.

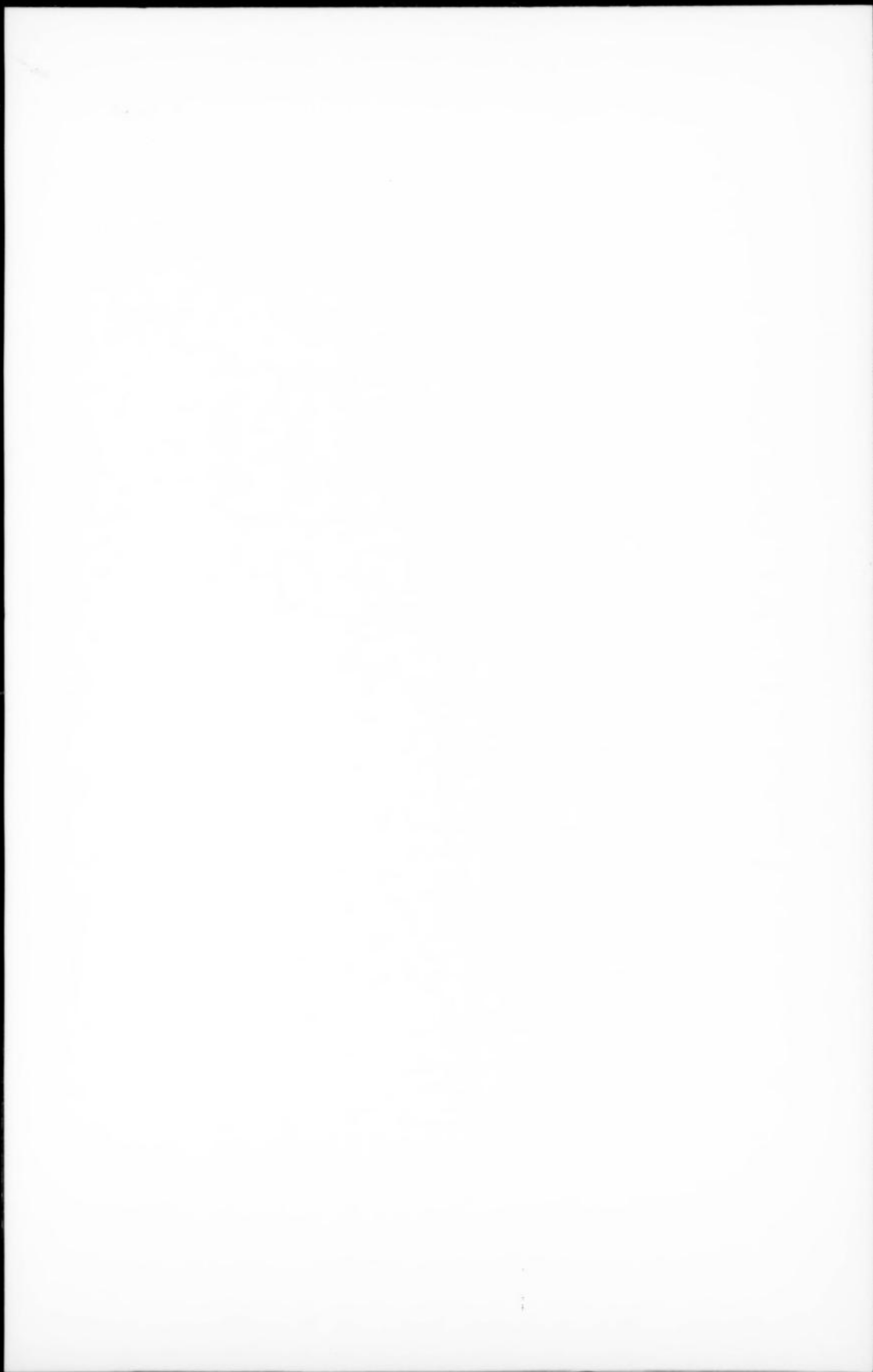
The Ankara regime reacts bitterly to the working people's growing militancy, exemplified by a mass demonstration that took place in Izmir late last February under the slogan 'For peace, bread and freedom'. Early in March, the authorities mounted new attacks on the press. On the pretext of 'protecting youth from harmful publications', the regime promptly enacted a law under which any publication may be banned or confiscated without a court decision even in the absence of martial law.

WMR told readers in its April 1983 issue about the Turkish regime's repressive measures against progressives and patriots. It noted that the Communists consider these measures illegal and demand the release of all imprisoned democrats. Most of the jailed journalists, including Meric, have been convicted under Art. 142 of the Criminal Code. This article, like Art. 141, was borrowed from Italian fascist legislation in the 1930s and envisages many years' imprisonment for propagating 'class domination' or being a member of an organisation having such an objective. Today even many bourgeois newspapers point out that these articles are not directed against the Communists and other left-wingers alone but against *all* progressive, *all* politically active citizens.

Life shows the dividing line in today's Turkey more and more clearly. On one side of the line are the accomplices of the more aggressive forces of imperialism and the oligarchy together with its dictators, its military junta and its 'civilian government', and on the other, all those who are against the dictatorship and declare for peace, human rights, freedom and life.

Ali Ileri

CC member, Communist Party of Turkey,
CPT representative on the journal



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