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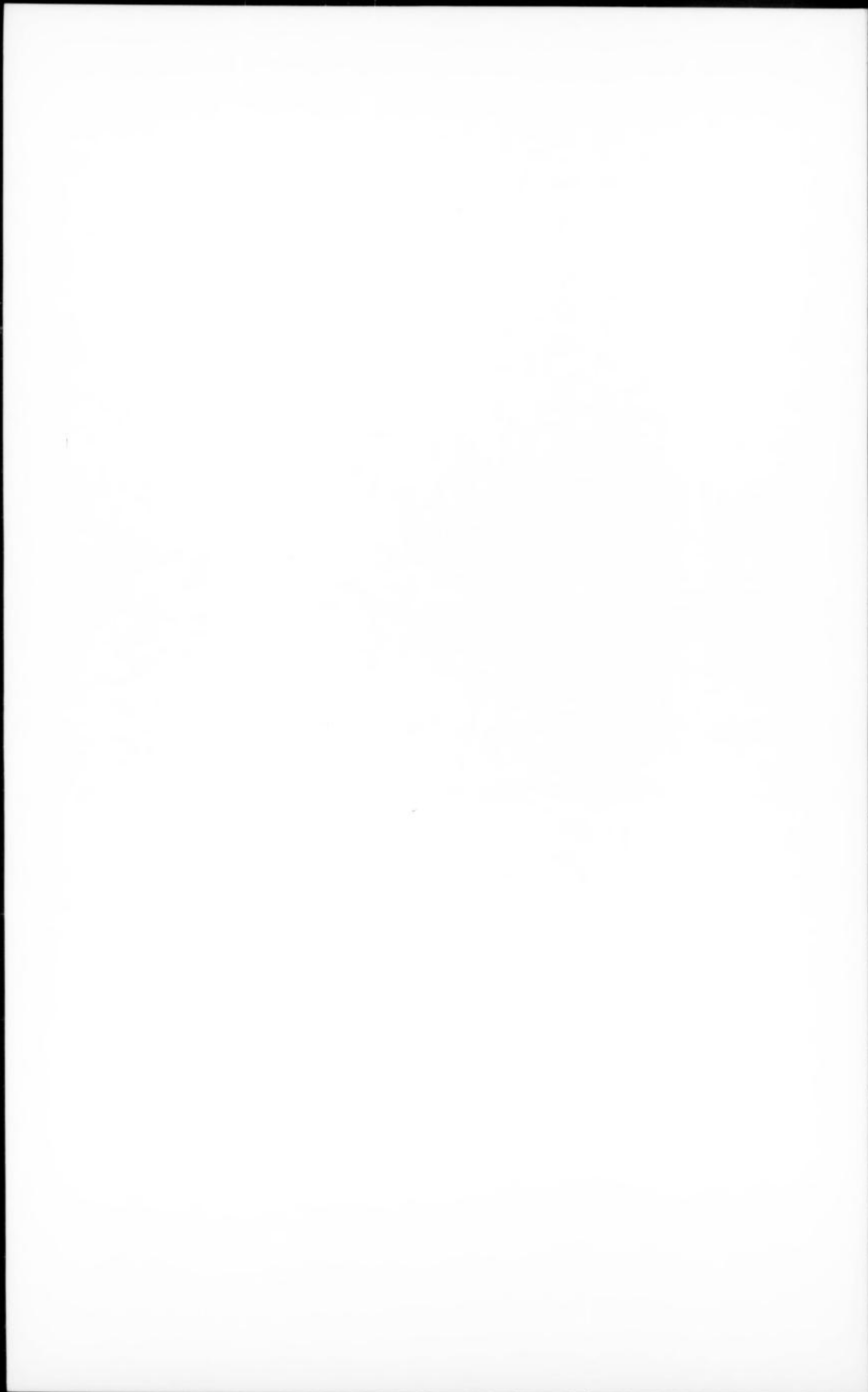
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Strategy of Ascending Development

Grisha Filipov – Political Bureau member,
CC Secretary, Bulgarian Communist
Party (BCP)

THE 13th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party was a significant event in the nation's life. With its sights on the future, it concretised and enriched the party's Programme for Building Developed Socialism¹ under the new conditions prevailing in the country and on the international scene and mapped out a long-term strategy for the further all-sided advancement of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

The congress proceeded on a high ideological, organisational, and practical level, in an atmosphere of wide publicity, creativity, initiative, and social optimism, in a spirit of exactingness, criticism, and self-criticism. It reaffirmed that the BCP was pursuing a correct policy. The proceedings were marked by a wealth of fresh ideas and an innovative approach to formulating and resolving pressing problems. This forum strikingly demonstrated our party's Marxist-Leninist maturity and the continuity of its profoundly class, internationalist foreign policy of peace.

The congress approved the BCP's line toward comprehensive cooperation and closer relations with the CPSU and the Soviet Union, which have entered a qualitatively new phase of development, toward upgrading its full-blooded and productive relations with the other socialist countries, and the further consolidation of our fraternal community.

Actually, the 13th Congress opened a new stage in implementing the general line endorsed by the CC Plenary Meeting in April 1956. Thirty years ago, under Todor Zhivkov's direct leadership, we surmounted the difficulties created by the personality cult and subjectivism, restored the Leninist principles of party life and leadership, and turned to address the objective regularities in the economy, in politics, in fact in all areas of life, the requirements of the Bulgarian people and the questions being asked by them. This opened up wide vistas for accelerating the country's development.

Between 1956 and 1985 the growth was 10-fold in the economy's basic funds, 8.4-fold in labour productivity, 8-fold in the national income, 3.3-fold in annual average wages and salaries, 4.3-fold in the population's real incomes, and 12-fold in the social consumption funds. The socialist way of life has been consolidated, culture, science, and education have made headway, the processes enabling every citizen of socialist society to become all-sidedly developed continued, and the consciousness and behaviour of millions of people increasingly came to be determined by Marxism-Leninism, by the integral social theory underlying the new society.

A notable contribution to these achievements was made by the eighth five-year plan (1980-1985). Despite the adverse climate and the subjective shortcomings in management the growth rate of our national income during those years was again among the highest in the world. This is what the past five years gave us the possibility of increasing per capita real incomes by 19.5 per cent, enlarging the social consumption funds by 31 per cent and building 343,000 new flats. Wages rose by an average of 17 per cent, the minimum wage was raised by 20 percent, the initial pay of young specialists

with a secondary school or higher education was increased by 20 per cent, the pay of doctors, teachers, and farm-machinery operators was brought up by 25-30 per cent, and of mining and power industry workers by 40 per cent. Minimum long service and old-age pensions were increased, the increase to such pensions being particularly large for peasants. The allocations for pensions were 42 per cent larger than in 1980. There was a 30 per cent rise of the additions paid to parents, and the additional paid leave for the care of small children was extended to two years. There was a 21 per cent increase in the volume of goods sold by retail outlets. Working conditions were improved. There was a further enlargement of everyday services, medical care, and facilities for holiday recreation, mass physical culture, sports, and tourism.

All this is evidence of Bulgaria's material and intellectual renewal. The resolutions passed by the 13th Congress create the conditions for the republic to become, within a short span of time, a highly developed socialist state capable of fittingly responding to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The scientific and technological revolution was in the focus of the proceedings at the congress. Todor Zhivkov said from this rostrum: "The main thing for us today is to promote the scientific and technological revolution and, on that basis, show the advantages of the socialist social system and socialist democracy and satisfy the people's material, social, and intellectual requirements more fully."² The target that we have set ourselves is not to overtake this or that country in terms of scientific and technological development but to move into advanced positions in this area. This is now our course. It is the party's new socio-economic strategy for the country's development up to the year 1990 and, further, up to the year 2000.

Growth rates are central to this long-term national strategy. Our aim is to accelerate socio-economic development, make it more dynamic, and keep in step with advanced socialist states in indicators not only of quantity but also of quality. The national income and labour productivity are to grow 2-2.5-fold by 1995 and 3-3.5-fold by 2000. High growth rates are now the cardinal condition for the accelerated building of developed socialism in Bulgaria. In them must be expressed the course toward furthering scientific and technological progress and on them will depend how the advantages of the socialist system will unfold. Consequently, the significance of the strategic objective of growth rates is not only economic but also political, ideological, and social. Its attainment will require substantial qualitative changes in production and the entire social organism, and readjustment everywhere — in the economy, in policy, in culture, in the way of life, and in social administration.

The party attaches considerable importance to giving shape to intensive reproduction. The task is to make the maximum use of what we have and is in the economic turnover, and work toward a greater saving of raw and other materials, fuel, and energy in keeping with the most advanced world achievements in these areas. In parallel, we have to build up a qualitatively new raw materials and energy base.

The accelerated development of science and the deepening of its links to production will be the locomotive of our progress. We plan to turn it into a universal productive force inexorably forwarding all areas of society's life. In line with the selective approach elaborated by the party, effort is to be concentrated mainly in fields of science most closely related to the development of principal structure-determining spheres of the economy and to our participation in the international division of labour.

There is to be a significant enlargement of the material resources at the disposal of science, the organisation and management of scientific work are to be upgraded, the no man's land between R&D and the practical implementation of its results is to be erased, and the line toward an ever closer relationship with the scientific and technological potential of the Soviet Union is to be continued.

The present scientific and technological revolution impels technological progress in the first place. By virtue of this the 13th Congress outlined an integral conception of the country's comprehensive technological renewal ensuring the needed growth rate of the

national income and labour productivity and enhancing the efficiency of the economy as a whole. This means not simply replacing morally obsolete machinery and technologies but also renewing morally outdated principles of production. An unprecedented transition from mechanical to non-mechanical technologies is currently under way. That is why we shall give priority to technologies radically reducing energy consumption and ensuring the production and use of new materials as well as electronic and biotechnological equipment.

Renewal in this area of science and technology is inseparable from the structural policy that in the ninth five-year period and in the period up to the year 2000 will allow putting important changes into effect: switch industry to science-intensive output requiring small outlays of energy and raw and other materials; significantly raise the automation level in production, making it more flexible and adaptive and boosting the efficacy of the entire chain of the aggregate reproduction process. The development of new strategic orientations ensuring the manufacture of output of the highest technical and economic standards is to be accelerated. This means that the principal criterion of our progress must be the attainment of the highest world standards in everything and everywhere.

The importance of engineering will grow steadily, with its progressive sectors given priority accelerated development. Much attention is also being devoted to the chemical and power industries and metallurgy.

In agriculture, too, provision is made for continuing the scientific and technological, or green, revolution. This must create the potential, to put it metaphorically, to feed not one but two or three Bulgarias.

Investments, designing, and construction are to be brought into line with the requirements of the scientific and technological revolution and the new rates of our progress.

Endorsed by the 13th Congress the Guidelines for Economic and Social Development envisage creating the conditions, by the close of the century, for taking the country's material and technological base to a qualitatively new stage consonant to the maximum extent with mature socialism and raising the level of labour productivity close to the highest in the world.

All this will be predicated on the further expansion of foreign trade and economic relations. We shall continue focusing much of our effort on carrying out the decisions of the 1984 CMEA economic summit held in Moscow and the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress up to the Year 2000. Fulfilment of the provisions recorded in collectively agreed documents will allow deepening the specialisation and cooperation of production in the fraternal countries, extending and reinforcing direct economic links, and continuing setting up joint ventures with socialist partners, notably with the Soviet Union. Cooperation with developing nations will expand. Moreover, we want mutually beneficial links, including production cooperation, with industrial capitalist countries.

Concern for the welfare of people is at the root of all the plans and work of the Bulgarian Communist Party. I have already mentioned the satisfaction of the people's vital requirements. Regardless of sex, religious belief, and nationality, our people enjoy full and equal political and social rights such as, for instance, the right to work. Significant progress in the social sphere permitted the 13th BCP Congress to chart new targets in this sphere and plan its further development, placing social policy on a qualitatively new level, which will signify comprehensively assessing how the individual shows his or her worth in all interrelated areas of social life, how the material and intellectual requirements are met. In other words, social policy will embrace everything that facilitates the individual's perfection and intellectual growth. As a result of this policy's implementation people will, from year to year, from one generation to another increasingly change from being the *object* of concern by state and society for their all-sided development to the *subject* of this many-sided process of

self-perfection, enabling them to show and apply their diverse capabilities to a much larger extent.

This social policy will rely on being put into effect vigorously by the working people, by the builders of the new system, enjoying all its advantages to the maximum. It "concretely and tangibly links together what a person gives to and receives from society".³ It is aimed at further consolidating and perfecting the socialist way of life, the comradely, collectivist relations among people. This is the only approach that ensures the assertion of the human factor as the motor of all-sided progress.

We shall continue developing the key principle of socialist society, in the name of which this society has been created and developing — the principle of social justice. In the People's Republic of Bulgaria citizens enjoy equality relative to the means of production and to work as the source and universal measure of their incomes. The economic foundation of exploitation of man by man has been abolished. In socialist Bulgaria today people stand shoulder to shoulder, not against one another.

The main area for the application of the principle of social justice will continue to be the distribution of material goods in accordance with the quality and quantity of the labour invested by every member of society, and this is incompatible with levelling, impingement on socialist property, and unearned incomes. The drive against negative phenomena of this sort will be conducted not from time to time, as a shortlived campaign. It will become part and parcel of the work of the party and the government in creating a situation consistent with the above-mentioned requirements. A person's labour contribution is the criterion for distinguishing between one who is decent and conscientious and one who is not. In society every person must occupy the place that he has earned by his personal qualities and deeds.

In this context considerable significance is acquired by the question of enhancing the role played by remuneration as an incentive and a mobilising factor. A system of remuneration is now being established whereby the wages fund will depend on the aggregate result of the labour of a work collective, and the individual's earnings will correspond to his or her contribution.

In parallel, social consumption funds, which include diverse benefits and allowances from the state, will be increased and used to a fuller extent. These funds help to straighten out the condition of the different social groups and strata of the population and are spent largely in proportion to social requirements. But their enlargement should not prevent the effective application of the principle of material incentives. In the documents adopted by the congress it is noted that the people's material and cultural requirements will be satisfied more fully and comprehensively in keeping, chiefly, with the growth of their purchasing power. In other words, the rise of the living standard will depend primarily on earned income. To improve the quality of his life a person has to work better and display his creative abilities. Material incentives are an effective way of promoting this attitude to work.

We want to enhance the nation's viability, the populations's capacity for work and creative longevity. This will be promoted by satisfying housing requirements, which is to be done in the coming years. Health facilities, where the physical condition of people is to be under constant observation and maintained at the proper level by different means, from physical culture to preventive medical care, are being set up at industrial enterprises and educational institutions. These facilities will help medical centres, economic establishments, and organisations concerned with labour protection, recreation, physical culture, sports, and tourism to coordinate the work on a higher level. Provision has been made for improving the demographic situation in the country — encouraging a higher birth-rate and reinforcing the role played by the family. Urgent youth problems linked to the conditions of life and the opportunities for showing their energy and abilities are to be addressed in their totality.

The 13th Congress of the BCP called for a higher qualitative level in socialist society's intellectual life. This is to be achieved through the integration of science,

culture, and education on the basis of the intrinsic unity of their aims and tasks.

Noting that artistic creativity is becoming an increasingly more active factor of all-sided social progress, the congress stressed that explicit communist ideological commitment, class and party criteria, socialist humanism, and historical optimism should continue to be constantly asserted and deepened in art and literature. The growth of the ideological level of art and literature should be closely coupled to the further assertion in them of the principles of socialist realism, the promotion of the professional skill of people engaged in the liberal professions, and the encouragement of a greater diversity of artistic styles and techniques.

The congress set important tasks also in education. Its main designation is to train cadres staunchly committed to communism, capable of actively fostering the scientific and technological revolution and, on that basis, helping to accelerate Bulgaria's socio-economic and intellectual development.

The new strategy, framed by the 13th Congress, for the country's further all-sided progress, envisions radical changes in society's basis and political superstructure. In the period since the 12th Congress the BCP Central Committee elaborated some key problems of socialist construction. These include: the upgrading of the relationship between the state and the work collective as the administrator of socialist property; the growing role of direct democracy in the system of socialist people's power; the further extension of the principles of election and competition in the promotion of cadres to the different levels of social administration; the extension and enrichment of the rights and duties of individuals, work collectives, and lower production units; the ways and means of giving the individual a more active role in management.

The new stage of social development is marked by an increasingly broader unfolding of socialist democracy and an enhancement of its efficacy. The question now is not simply of the people's participation in administration but of "self-administration, of a new, epoch-making advance in turning the working person and the work collective from the object to the subject of social administration".⁴ The purpose here is to create the conditions for a gradual transition from "power in the name of the people" to power exercised by the people themselves. We have adopted a new Labour Code in which a large role is assigned to principles of management in work collectives. The new element is that general meetings of factory and office workers (or meetings of their representatives), economic councils and team councils are no longer consultative organs of the heads of industrial facilities and offices. They are vested with the authority to direct the work of these facilities and offices jointly with the management. Personal responsibility and collectivism are thus combined more effectively in management.

There are now new elements also in the consistent implementation of democratic centralism in management. While qualitatively and quantitatively enriching socialist property, which is in constant development, our society is setting itself an innovative aim, that of reinforcing the role of central management bodies in formulating and resolving questions of strategy and of creating all the conditions allowing production, scientific, and managerial bodies of all other levels to function at top efficiency on the basis of socialist management.

This means that while managing the socialist property entrusted to them and being guided by the assignment given to them by the state, each such body has all the rights for, among other things, adopting decisions independently on planning, enlarging production, conducting research and experiments, making practical use of such scientific work and marketing output. Thus, in our social policy we shall be guided by Lenin's following precept: "Centralism, understood in a truly democratic sense, presupposes the possibility, created for the first time in history, of a full and unhampered development not only of specific local features, but also of local inventiveness, local initiative, of diverse ways, methods and means of progress to the common goal."⁵

Self-managing economic organisations will be the motor of our economic activity. In order to remove everything that hinders and fetters their work the higher echelons of state administration have been substantially restructured. Fundamentally new organs have been set up to replace many central ministries. These are the Economic Council, the Social Council, and the Council for Science, Education, and Culture. They are not concerned with day-to-day management, nor are they super-ministries. They are ancillary bodies of the Council of Ministers and allow ensuring a correct coupling of centralism and democracy, and the effective implementation of state policy in keeping with the requirements and interests of the entire economy rather than with departmental and parochial requirements and interests.

This will be the foundation for shaping horizontal and vertical relations between self-managing economic organisations, thereby permitting them to be the actual commodity producers along the entire chain of reproduction. The conditions will thereby be created for a more consistent utilisation of commodity-money relations in the economy; for finding in economic practice the correct combination of the law of value with the law of planned, proportionate development; for the efficient use of the plan as a basic instrument of managing social processes in the presence of socialist market.

Furthermore, there will be the possibility of organising genuine economic competition between socialist commodity producers and, by means of this competition, removing in the country itself and in the international market what Todor Zhivkov aptly called the hothouse conditions in which they are working. Once that is achieved every enterprise will have the possibility of effectively making the maximum contribution to attaining high rates of socio-economic progress.

In tackling these new problems of improving our system of management, problems that, if seen in a broader context, are related also to the sphere of the people's power, it will remain crucial to continue strengthening the socialist state and to show its democratic essence more and more fully. The 13th Congress noted that it is vital to continue drawing legislative and executive authority closer together, upgrading representative and direct democracy, combining them more harmoniously, and enriching the functions of the National Assembly, the State Council, the Council of Ministers, and the people's councils. Special attention is given to improving the work of the Fatherland Front, the trade unions, and the Dimitrov Young Communist League. Provision has been made for further reinforcing their significance as the social quarantors of the implementation of the party's new socio-economic strategy of promoting the scientific and technological revolution, further enhancing the role of the working person and the work collective, and developing socialist democracy.

The congress highly evaluated the contribution made by the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union to the building of mature socialism and the consolidation of the people's moral and political unity, and expressed the firm belief that this party would continue to be a staunch ally of the BCP in the administration of the country and in the building of socialism.

The profound changes in society's basis and superstructure projected by the party congress require a fundamentally new economic mechanism consonant with the new requirements I have mentioned. It is believed that under the influence of the state, economic conditions and norms will give economic units the incentive to foster scientific and technological progress, reduce labour, material, and energy outlays, and take steps to set high economic targets at the stage of drafting the plan.

It is thus a matter not merely of organisational or structural changes but of giving shape to more mature relations of production that would provide wider scope for the operation of the objective laws of the society being built in Bulgaria and of the scientific and technological revolution, and for bringing to light and using the colossal potentialities and advantages of existing socialism. In fact, we are talking of a major economic reform that is vital for the country's further all-sided development.

The 13th Congress of the BCP ushered in a new state of the development of the party itself. This is a stage witnessing the consolidation of the party's unity, the heightening of its guiding role in society as a result of the more marked scientific and transformative character of the party leadership, an improvement of inner-party life, especially through the accentuation of its democratic principles, and a further vitalisation of its ideological work. The congress documents indicate that qualitatively new elements have to be introduced into the forms, methods, and style of party work. Here special significance is being acquired by a political approach to decision-making in all areas of society's life.

In restructuring the party's work we shall rely not on extending and reinforcing directive methods but on giving a more pronounced scientific character to the work of central party organs, on encouraging initiative by party committees and organisations, and on a scrupulous study of public opinion.

The party's leading role will grow chiefly through the enhancement of the importance and responsibility of its lower organisations and a further vitalisation of their practical work. Every Communist should, to the extent of his knowledge and possibilities, actively contribute to the implementation of the BCP's socio-economic strategy.

The congress mapped out the course to be followed in improving the work with senior party and government cadres. It was stressed that in selecting and placing such cadres the long-term planning of the entire range of the party's work should be taken into closer account. Work with the reserve should be conducted more vigorously, the renewal and changeability of members of the leadership body should be practised more consistently, and those who have not justified the trust placed in them should be recalled.

The party regards more innovative and purposeful ideological work as a major factor in introducing radical changes in society's basis and superstructure and in improving the work of the party itself. The basic objective set by the congress in this area is to give the human factor a larger role to play in all walks of life. It is vital to give people a clear idea of what scientific, technological, and social progress means for every person. All government bodies and all social forces and organisations are oriented toward safeguarding the purity of our theory and ideals and continuing to weed out survivals of the past, negative phenomena, and formal and unconscientious attitudes to labour and social duties. Responsible attitude, greater orderliness, and discipline are the order of the day for all state agencies, social forces and organisations.

The party's strategy endorsed by the 13th Congress is a strategy of peaceful development. It provides every person with the point of departure for judging our unflinching determination to remain firmly in the front ranks of the world's anti-war front. We are wholeheartedly in solidarity with the Peace Programme of the CPSU and the new peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Treaty nations, and shall continue helping to remove the threat of a nuclear war, achieve disarmament, promote detente and consolidate international security, normalise the situation in the world, and promote fair and mutually beneficial relations among all countries.

The congress reaffirmed that the fraternal alliance and close interaction of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the People's Republic of Bulgaria with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have been and remain the cornerstone of our foreign policy. In its approach to basic sectors of domestic and foreign policy our party abides by the same stand as has been adopted by the CPSU. The strengthening of the unity and cohesion of the socialist community and the deepening and enrichment of friendship and all-sided cooperation with the parties and peoples of the countries of that community constitute one of the key directions of the foreign policy of our party and government.

A significant role in this work is played by Bulgaria's relations with the other Balkan states. We shall continue doing everything in our power to maintain in our peninsula a

climate of mutual understanding, promote a constant political dialogue, including a dialogue at summit level, ensure the implementation of the initiatives aimed at turning the Balkans into a zone free of nuclear and chemical weapons, and seek wide-ranging agreements with neighbouring states covering, among other things, the code of goodneighbourly relations, and also agreements on environmental protection in the region.

In its foreign policy Bulgaria attaches considerable significance to expanding and deepening cooperation with developing nations, especially with those that have adopted the socialist orientation. We shall steadfastly continue to pursue a policy of peaceful coexistence with industrial capitalist countries.

In its relations with communist parties, the BCP firmly abides by the principle of proletarian internationalism, in which revolutionary solidarity and respect for the full independence and equality of each party are closely combined. We stand for the steady deepening of mutual links promoting the unity of the international communist movement, for the strengthening of solidarity with the different currents in the working class movement, and for all-sided interaction with socialist, social democratic, and agrarian parties, with revolutionary democratic, national liberation, anti-war and anti-nuclear movements, and with international trade union bodies, youth, and women's organisations. We are bound to this policy by above all, the imperatives of our epoch, which are to preserve and consolidate peace.

It is only in conditions of peace and under the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party that millions of people of our country will carry out the large-scale socio-economic tasks set by the party's 13th Congress and achieve new and more impressive successes on the road to the great cherished aim — communism.

¹ Adopted at the Tenth Congress of the BCP in 1971. — Ed.

² Todor Zhivkov, *Opening Address and Closing Speech at the 13th Party Congress*, Sofia, 1986, p. 6 (in Bulgarian).

³ Ibid., p. 27.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

⁵ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 209.

International Solidarity: The Motive Forces

Jorgen Jensen — Chairman, Communist
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THE importance of international solidarity and cooperation between revolutionary, democratic and progressive forces in the fight against imperialism and reaction, and for peace and social progress has grown immensely in our day, since cooperation between political and social movements of differing complexions is an ever more necessary condition for the development of the world revolutionary process, resistance to capital's counter-offensive, and preservation of world peace.

Bourgeois ideologists and politicians are very well aware of the strength of the international working class stemming from its unity, as it rallies the other revolutionary and democratic forces. That is why the monopoly bourgeoisie seeks, on the one hand, to subvert the strengthening of anti-imperialist solidarity, to divide the working people of different countries, and to weaken the international communist movement, and on the other, to unite the capitalist world and to coordinate imperialist reactionary activity on a global scale under the banner of an anti-communist crusade.

The monopoly bourgeoisie has formulated goals rooted in class prejudice: to leave socialism "on the ash-heap of history", to maintain the system of the less developed countries' neocolonialist exploitation, to hit out at the working class and trade union movement in the capitalist countries, and to get the working people meekly to shoulder the burdens of the arms race, the crises, and the restructuring of production under the impact of the scientific and technical revolution (STR).

While standing up for its own interests, the international working class simultaneously carries on a struggle for the interests of progressive mankind as a whole. It takes a stand in support of the peoples' national liberation movements, in defence of democratic rights and freedoms, and against reaction, fascism and neofascism. The working class has the crucial role in resisting aggressive imperialist schemes, and threat of a global nuclear catastrophe, and, in backing measures to end the arms race, to effect disarmament, and to consolidate peace and security. The struggle to attain these goals gives it extensive opportunities for cooperation with its allies and for enlarging the social and geographical boundaries for joint action.

The fraternal solidarity of workers from different countries is based on their common interests. Historical experience shows that proletarian internationalism is a mighty and well-tried weapon of the working class and of the international communist movement, and that its objective significance springs from the fact that the workers of the world face a common class enemy, an enemy carrying on an international right to safeguard its positions. What Lenin said at the end of the nineteenth century still holds true today: "The unity of the workers of all countries is a necessity arising out of the fact that the capitalist class, which rules over the workers, does not limit its rule to one country... Capitalist domination is international. That is why the workers' struggle in all countries for their emancipation is only successful if the workers fight jointly against international capital."¹

Proletarian internationalism organically springs from the very substance of the communist parties' activity expressing the vital interests of the working class. The idea of solidarity determines their relations, the nature of their ties and cooperation with each other. The history of the international communist movement is inseparably linked with the development of proletarian internationalism and the growing cooperation of the revolutionary parties of the working class. Marx and Engels emphasised that the Communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only: "In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat."²

The spirit of proletarian internationalism pervades the fundamental document of Marxism known as the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which ends with the famous slogan: "Workers of all lands, unite!" It epitomises the class substance of internationalism as the proletariat's weapon in the fight against the system of capitalist exploitation, and for the creation of a socialist social system.

The Great October Socialist Revolution and the emergence of the world's first socialist state also signified a triumph for proletarian internationalism, whose principles were the basis of its domestic and foreign policy. For the working people of the whole world, the Republic of Soviets became the bulwark of the revolutionary movement, and a source of effective assistance in their struggle for social emancipation and national liberation. At the same time, the workers' international solidarity with the country where socialism first triumphed helped to establish the new social system.

The Communist Party of Denmark (CPD), which emerged in that period, took a principled international stand from the very outset. Beginning with the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920, Danish Communists have taken part in the activity of that international association of communist parties, wholeheartedly accepting the militant call of that period: "Support revolutionary Soviet Russia, and defend the new socialist society against encroachments by imperialism!" The

communists have earned considerable credit in taking part in the mass working people's action under the "Hands off Soviet Russia!" slogan, which then rolled across Denmark and other capitalist countries. Their revolutionary attitude and sense of proletarian solidarity were clearly voiced by the members of a CPD delegation which went to Moscow in the summer of 1921, and saw for itself the enthusiasm with which the new life was being built without capitalists and landowners, despite the incredible hardships following the imperialist and civil wars that had laid waste the country.

Members of the delegation reported on their visit in a pamphlet entitled *Danish Communists on Russia*, and said this about the Russian workers: "Their sufferings have turned them into heroes steadfastly bearing all the misfortunes and carrying on their struggle with the awareness that they are the vanguard of the historical struggle by the working class for its emancipation." The Danish Communists shared the communist ideals of the triumphant proletariat of the Land of Soviets, and reached this firm conclusion as a result of their visit to Russia: "It is the duty of the working class of the whole world to support these aspirations by overthrowing the decayed and corrupt capitalist system, to liberate themselves from the oppression of capitalism, thereby creating better conditions not only for Russia, but also for themselves and their descendants."³

The Great October Revolution not only revolutionised the working people of the capitalist countries, but also set in motion the oppressed masses of the colonial and dependent countries. And while their struggle did not pursue proletarian goals, it merged with working class action because it was aimed against imperialism. The rapid growth of the national liberation movement introduced an important addition to the Communists' traditional slogan, which rang as follows: "Workers of all lands and oppressed peoples, unite!" The national liberation movement became one of the streams of the world revolutionary process.

It pays to look at the tendencies and factors in our day which make the working people's international solidarity a necessary and organic element of political practice. Economic, social and spiritual internationalisation are processes which have markedly accelerated throughout the world over the past several decades. The development of the productive forces entails a constant expansion of contacts between the peoples and promotes their intercourse and interconnection. The STR has given a tremendous impetus to the internationalisation of economic life, and demands ever greater socialisation of production. These processes in the socialist countries help to consolidate the new social system, to bring the nations closer together, and serve the interests of the working people.

Under capitalism, the monopoly bourgeoisie seeks to use the same objective tendencies for its narrow class aims, and this is evidenced by the activity of the transnational corporations (TNCs), within whose framework the concentration of capital runs across the boundaries of states. Their influence extends to many regions: the US International Business Machines (IBM), for instance, has subsidiaries in 80 countries, including Denmark, and does not at all confine its operations to the economy. The result is a set of new features to the anti-labour policy of monopoly capital, which is trying to range the working people of different countries against each other. The TNCs activities have deepened the contradictions between labour and capital, and have increasingly internationalised the bourgeoisie's class struggle.

Integration processes within the capitalist system impelled both by the development of the productive forces and by the monopolies' drive for maximum profits are being stepped up at the stage of state-monopoly capitalism. One example is the European Economic Community (EEC), whose activity is completely geared to the requirements of international capital.

The monopoly bourgeoisie's urge to join efforts is, of course, dictated not only by economic, but also by political considerations. It would like, first of all, despite the contradictions, to coordinate its actions for preserving the capitalist system, and for

fighting socialism, and the working class, democratic and liberation movements. To the existing policy-coordination centres, such as NATO and the EEC, are added new forms for hammering out and implementing the common class strategy of imperialism, among them annual meetings of the leaders of the main capitalist countries, and the so-called Trilateral Commission, on which representatives of monopoly and government circles from the United States, Japan and Western Europe work out recommendations which are then, as a rule, taken into account in official policy.

The working people's international struggle also has some new phenomena. Problems which cannot be solved within the national framework but require international cooperation to resist the imperialist methods of imposing solutions from positions of strength have increasingly come to the fore in the recent period. These are: efforts to prevent a nuclear catastrophe and save our civilisation and life itself on the Earth; protection of the environment; the drive against disease, hunger and illiteracy; and the establishment of new international economic relations on a fair and equitable basis. While bourgeois politicians are always ready to hold forth on the "general interdependence" of countries and peoples, capitalism impedes a pooling of their efforts to tackle the global problems faced by mankind.

Even a cursory glance on the processes in the internationalisation of social life shows the rising demands on the international cooperation of the working class and the communist parties, and the need for all the revolutionary and democratic forces to take a common stand. The solution of urgent problems in social life and international cooperation largely depend on the level of their anti-imperialist cohesion and concerted action.

International working class solidarity and unity of action and cooperation of all the revolutionary forces continue to be the essence of internationalism today, as they were in the past. The Danish Communists have always been true to this guiding principle of proletarian internationalism. The CPD had a hard but instructive period in its history when right-wing revisionists split the party in 1958, claiming to be "honest and truly Danish Communists", which from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie meant that they were Communists no longer. The Socialist People's Party which they set up abandoned the class positions and began to play on the national feelings of some strata of the population. True Communists were faced with this option: to make concessions to the revisionists by sacrificing their own principles and so try to get on with them, or to continue to take a class stand. For all practical purposes, that was a choice between proletarian internationalism and anti-Sovietism, to which the right-wing revisionists were sliding. The true Communists' choice was straightforward, and it was for proletarian internationalism. The principle approach helped not only to preserve the party, but also to establish it as an important political force in the country.

The 25th Congress (1976), which adopted the present CPD Programme, declared: "Our ideology rests on the principle of proletarian internationalism, which is the basis for uniting the forces of the Communists."⁴ This firm conviction was reflected in a number of principled propositions of the programme, by which the Communist Party is guided in its practical activity. The Programme says: "The party regards the internationalism of the working class as the crucial force in effecting the further transition of the world from capitalism to socialism. The Communist Party of Denmark acts within the world communist movement to strengthen the unity of the communist parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and working class internationalism. That is why the party promotes the development of unity of action by the communist parties in the struggle against imperialism, and the further strengthening of ideological unity through joint discussions for the further creative development of Marxist thought in the light of the new problems of our day."⁵

The Danish Communists' active participation in the multilateral conferences and meetings of fraternal parties meets the spirit and letter of the Programme and of their internationalist commitments. One example is provided by the meeting of several

communist and workers' parties of European capitalist countries held on the FCP's initiative in Paris in the summer of last year to discuss the Communists' tasks in view of the deepening economic and social crisis of capitalism. We highly value the opportunities for broad exchanges of experience and consideration of theoretical problems and new issues provided by *World Marxist Review*, the fraternal parties' collective publication.

For us, internationalism now means — as it did in the past — solidarity with actually existing socialism. What the imperialist bourgeoisie would like most is to erode the sense of common interest of the working people in the capitalist world and the socialist countries; to prevent them from developing into practical action, and to keep anti-Sovietism, the central element in the ideology and policy of anti-communism, as the main instrument in its fight against socialism and the whole communist movement. It is a glaring fact that by trying to discredit the Soviet Union, imperialist reaction would like to reduce the influence of socialism as a whole, and to weaken the attractive power of communist ideas for the popular masses.

Bourgeois propaganda has engaged in falsifying the problems of socialist construction, blowing up the natural difficulties of its growth, and predicting "crises" of the Soviet economy throughout the history of the USSR in the hope not only spreading doubt among the workers in the capitalist countries about the possibility and usefulness of socialism and the relevance of its experience for them. The bourgeoisie has also wanted to distract the working people's attention from its own calamities generated by the contradictions of capitalism and monopoly policies, to isolate the working class and the Communists from the society's other democratic strata, and to divert them from the revolutionary struggle for socialism. Resolute resistance to anti-Sovietism and defence of existing socialism against bourgeois propaganda insinuations and slanders are dictated by the vital interests of the struggle for the working people's social emancipation.

The building of the new society — first in the Soviet Union and then in the other socialist countries — did not, and, of course, could not, have run smoothly, without hardships and contradictions to overcome, and many problems were created by pressure from the imperialist powers, which have striven, ever since the October Revolution, to prevent the development and consolidation of socialism by fair means or foul. Still, socialism has on the whole achieved remarkable successes, demonstrating the incontestable economic, social, political, ideological and moral advantages of the new stage in mankind's progress which lies beyond capitalism. The Soviet Communists' Programme for accelerating the society's economic, social and spiritual development, endorsed by the decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, is truly revolutionary and is a reflection of the historical optimism of the builders of socialism. It enables everyone who is capable of taking an unbiased approach to the reality to see and to appreciate the goals and prospects for the development of the advanced social system, despite the Big Lie of anti-Sovietism.

In the light of the innovative decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, bourgeois propaganda is clearly hard put in its primitive smearing of the Soviet people's life and portraying it as undemocratic, conformist, bureaucracy-ridden, censorship-stifled, and so on. Such a lampoon may not all have been accepted by most people in the West, but some of its elements must have been imprinted on their minds, and one should not underestimate the influence of the capitalist-owned mass media. Their claims, however, are increasingly at odds with the Soviet people's rising creative activity and initiative, the further extension of socialist democracy, and the flourishing of criticism and self-criticism, something that only truly free people can afford to engage in.

In his interview with the French Communist newspaper *l'Humanité*, Mikhail Gorbachov explained in depth and detail some of the key aspects of life in the Soviet society which bourgeois propaganda so loves to distort. All honest men and women and true democrats are provided with the truth about existing socialism by the

proceedings of the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the new edition of the CPSU Programme, and the spread of this truth is one of the most important forms of the solidarity of Communists and all other progressive forces with Lenin's country.

The peaceful foreign policy of the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union, has been a constant target of attack by bourgeois propaganda. The myth of "Soviet aggressiveness", launched right after the Great October Revolution, is still the core of all the anti-Soviet and anti-socialist campaigns. World reaction is clearly put out by the fact that the inhuman substance of imperialist policies, and the relevance of the initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries to mankind's interest are made most glaringly evident on the issues of consolidating peace, averting nuclear war, ending the arms race, and returning to detente. From that fact, we Communists believe, follows the abiding need to explain in every way and to support the peace-making initiatives of socialism.

This is a task which needs to be considered in greater detail. Bourgeois propaganda often accuses those who come out in favour of the Soviet Union's peace proposals of lacking patriotism and aligning themselves with Moscow, charges which are most often addressed to the Communists and participants in the peace movement. But no sooner had the Danish Social Democrats rejected the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe and started criticising Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative, which spells suicide for mankind, than they, too, were labelled as "Moscow's lackeys" by the right bourgeois politicians. For the same "sins", the ultra-conservatives in the FRG have been running down the West German Social Democrats as having lost NATO's "confidence".

So it turns out that it is patriotic to give the nod to Star Wars plans and take orders from Washington, but it is not patriotic to protest against US nuclear missiles in Europe and support proposals to rid Europe and the rest of the world of nuclear and chemical weapons, simply because these proposals come from the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. It is, of course, not only the Communists who reject this kind of twisted logic, although they are more conscious than are others of its class roots. Refusal to support socialism's peace initiatives would mean a concession to the anti-Soviet strategy of the monopoly bourgeoisie and a weakening of the general anti-war front.

The sympathies among broad masses of working people in the capitalist world for the peoples building socialism is a constant in international life today. These sympathies fed the powerful international campaigns of solidarity with the Vietnamese people's struggle against US aggression, and for their country's unification, and in defence of socialist Cuba against the attacks by US imperialism. These sympathies are now developing into solidarity with socialism's peace offensive and the plans to accelerate its economic and social development.

The working class and the other working people of the capitalist countries are constantly faced with the task of raising the level and enhancing the efficiency of joint action in defence of their vital interests and rights, and democratic and social gains. That is now all the more necessary in view of the fact that monopoly capital has been stepping up its exploitation by relying on the objective internationalisation of production, and making use of the STR, which has gone hand in hand with a massive elimination of jobs and growing unemployment, to intensify its pressure on all the working people. Regardless of national borders, the working people are faced with similar problems in employment, improvement of living and working conditions, and preservation of their social gains, and that dictates the need for joint or parallel action. Thus, international action committees have been set up within the framework of some TNCs to coordinate trade union positions in various countries and concert action by workers employed at the enterprises of one and the same TNC. Exchange of information helps them to take a firmer stand for their interests in negotiations with management. There are already many examples when a strike at one TNC enterprise

has led to solidarity strikes at similar enterprises of the same TNC in other countries.

Action in support of workers' struggle in this or that country is the traditional and popular way of expressing international solidarity, and this was strikingly exemplified by the wide-ranging campaigns of solidarity with the British miners who were on strike in defence of their jobs for a whole year (1984-1985). Their brothers in class in the capitalist and socialist countries of Europe and elsewhere staged many demonstrations and rallies, collected and sent to the workers and their families considerable amounts of money, food and clothing, and arranged holidays for their children. Participation in such action enhances the workers' class consciousness, asserts their sense of involvement in their just cause, and markedly invigorates the whole working class and trade union movement.

Action for common goals is ever more important for the working people of different countries. The Danish workers followed with a sense of great sympathy the West German metal-workers' struggle in 1984 for a 35-hour working week without any pay cuts. This is a meaningful problem both in the FRG and in Denmark, because a reduction in working hours, which is important from the social standpoint, could also bring about some increase in employment. The West German workers' partial success — the forthcoming reduction of the working week to 38.5 hours — helps the working people of other West European countries in their common fight for their interests.

The working class now has the task of defending the democratic rights it has won against attacks by monopoly capital, for even the limited bourgeois freedoms contain the power of the propertied classes, which have ever more often resorted to direct violence against strikers and fighters for peace and democracy. The trade union movement in Denmark was last year virtually deprived of the right to strike and to bargain with the employers; working conditions and wages in the new collective contracts were dictated by the authorities. The governments in France and the FRG are pushing through parliament anti-labour legislation sharply curtailing the working people's right to strike and providing the employers with more means for putting pressure on them. In Britain, the police have been given new powers enabling them to detain arbitrarily anyone who looks "suspicious".

Solidarity with the victims of police persecution and repression and the prisoners of reaction has always been and continues to be an organic feature of the working class movement, and the Communists have been in the front ranks of those who stand up in defence of the democratic rights of the working people and harassed fighters for peace and freedom. Thus, the Communists can be credited with the broad public support abroad of the movement in the FRG for abolition of the disgraceful job bans (*Berufsverbote*).

The internationalism of the working class is clearly manifested in its solidarity with various mass democratic movements. The proletariat's political and trade union organisations have displayed active solidarity with those who demand an end to the militarisation of the society, the policy of aggression and wars, racial discrimination, infringement of women's rights, the worsening condition of the younger generation, the corruption, and the monopolies' predatory attitude to natural resources and the environment. Cooperation with the most diverse strata of the population on these issues, which agitate people's minds, helps to extend the Communists' influence in the masses.

Anti-imperialist solidarity with the peoples liberated from the yoke of colonialism and taking the way of independent development is an important area of international affairs today. The newly liberated states' struggle for economic independence, and equality has assumed a qualitatively new character and scale, going beyond the borders of individual countries, as they demanded the establishment of a new international economic order. Its urgency is underlined by their vast external debt, a problem that cannot be solved without a restructuring of international economic relations on a fair, equitable and democratic basis. It is not necessary to argue the need for active support

of the Third World countries' struggle by the international working class, for their stand is on the whole anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist despite the different levels of development, the contradictions, and the often inconsistent policies. Their struggle helps to limit the influence of imperialism and to create favourable international conditions for action by progressive, democratic forces.

The imperialist powers are trying hard to establish control over the less developed countries to go on exploiting their natural resources and to use them as military and political bridgeheads. US neocolonialist policy and the fight against liberation movements are a part of the general strategy of "neoglobalism" envisaging the use of force and even downright massacres against undesirable regimes. Grenada and Libya have become the objectives of direct US aggression, while undeclared wars against Nicaragua, Angola and Afghanistan are being carried on by US mercenaries in an effort to overthrow the existing legitimate governments and wipe out their progressive transformations.

The movement of solidarity with the peoples subjected to aggression involves many countries of the world, representing a wide spectrum of political and social forces which are guided by general democratic tenets. The Communists' participation in acts of solidarity helps to give them a more explicit anti-imperialist tenor.

Preservation of peace, and prevention of a nuclear conflict that would leave neither winners nor losers in its wake is the chief concern of all the progressive forces in this nuclear age. Is it not indicative, after all, that the task of excluding war from the life of the society was formulated by the Communists, the most consistent fighters for peace and the security of the peoples? The threat to peace comes from imperialism, primarily US imperialism, which lays claim to world domination, and which has started an unparalleled arms race in the hope of attaining military superiority over socialism and then dictating its will to the peoples. While these hopes are illusory, the aggressive policy of US imperialism has brought about a marked growth of international tension, while the arms race may well run out of control. Never before has mankind been faced with such a terrible danger. But then, the real potentialities for preserving and strengthening peace, and creating a coalition of reason and common sense uniting all the peace forces of the globe have never been greater either.

Existing socialism, on which the fortunes of world civilisation depend, is the nucleus of this coalition. Far from all those who cherish a peaceful future have come to realise this truth, but it is bound to win the minds of ever larger numbers of people. By this purposeful activity, the Communists can promote a growing understanding of the socialist countries' role as the guarantor of peace capable of averting the threat of mankind's annihilation. The CPD's internationalist stand was clearly defined at its latest, 27th Congress (1983): "We make no secret of the fact that we have made our choice in the world-wide struggle between socialism and capitalism. We regard existing socialism and the Soviet Union's might as the crucial factor in the preservation of peace. We know that mankind's potentialities for gaining the upper hand over the forces of war depend on the existence and might of the socialist camp."⁶

The Soviet Union's programme for ridding the Earth of nuclear weapons and so also of the threat of annihilation is not just a piece of wishful thinking, but a concrete plan of action for the historically brief period until the year 2000. It provides for ensuring equal security for everyone through arms cuts and disarmament, and the total liquidation of all types of weapons of mass destruction. Socialism has once again demonstrated that its peace policy accords with the aspirations of all the peoples. By supporting socialism's peaceful line, the progressive, democratic forces act for the interests of the broadest popular masses. The Communists are true to their historical mission, rallying the working people round the programme for ridding the Earth of the arms burden, rescuing civilisation, and assuring mankind of a peaceful and better future.

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 109.

² Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 497.

³ *Danske Kommunister om Rusland*, Copenhagen, 1921, pp. 29, 6.

⁴ *Danmarks Kommunistiske Partis 25. kongres*, Tiden, 1977, 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 00. 74-75 (Supplement).

⁶ *Land og Folk*, May 13, 1983.

The Communists and Europe's Destinies

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ON account of the world economic, political, and cultural relations formed in the course of many centuries, European problems have never been an isolated phenomenon. They have strongly influenced the life of all humanity. Two world wars broke out in Europe, and it was the starting point from where the hordes of colonialists set out for Asian and African countries. The colonialists have now been replaced by the transnationals that have eclipsed the conquistadors of old in the dimension of their exploitation and in the indiscriminate use of the means of enslaving other peoples.

However, this is not all that gives Europe a distinctive role in the chronicle of humankind. In the history of the European democratic and working class movements there have been developments whose political and ideological impact continued to be dealt after the passage of many years. Europe resounded with the thunder of the first anti-feudal revolutions. It was the birthplace of the great liberative doctrine of Marxism. It was from here that seven decades ago the new, socialist civilisation began to assert itself in the world. To this day the Communists see their task in developing these glorious traditions, in multiplying the heritage of generations of fighters for justice, freedom, and progress. And while remembering our historical heritage we do not merely pay a tribute of respect to the past but feel a pressing need to have a profound understanding of the lessons of past years, of the new imperatives of the diversified, rapidly changing world.

A model of such understanding and analysis of the international situation and of the prospects for struggle stemming from it was set by the Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe held ten years ago in the capital of the GDR.

Delegations from 29 communist parties, who on June 29, 1976 filled the conference hall of the Stadt Berlin hotel, considered, as their statement declared, a "limited range of issues". However, upon closely rereading this final document we can say today, as we did at the time, that the range of these issues encompassed the most pressing, cardinal problems of the development of the continent's nations — the problems of struggle for peace, security, and social progress.

Ten Years Later

The Berlin conference was convened after the cause of detente had been marked in Europe by a series of major advances. Many state-to-state treaties and agreements in the spirit of peaceful coexistence had been concluded. Less than a year before the conference of Communists the signing of the Final Act in Helsinki successfully consummated the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. All this created conditions conducive to promoting new political, economic, and cultural relations, for building up the climate of confidence so vital for resolving the extremely complicated disarmament problems. In the final document adopted at the Berlin conference the communist and workers' parties declared unequivocally that "the policy of peaceful coexistence, active cooperation between states irrespective of their social system, and

international detente correspond both to the interests of each people as well as the cause of progress of the whole of mankind and in no way mean the maintenance of the political and social status quo in the various countries but on the contrary create optimum conditions for the development of the struggle of the working class and all democratic forces as well as for the implementation of the inalienable right of each and every people freely to choose and follow its own course of development for the struggle against the rule of the monopolies, and for socialism."¹

However, the Communists did not regard the positive changes in the European climate as some "miracle" or "gift from destiny". They saw these changes as the result of the enhanced activities of the people, of broad political and social movements. The outstanding role played by the socialist countries in preventing another world war and reinforcing international security was stressed at the conference. The delegates to the conference were far from harbouring illusions or succumbing to self-deception. While noting the certain progress in detente, they emphasised at the time "that world peace is by no means guaranteed as yet, that detente has not yet been stabilised and that serious obstacles still have to be surmounted on the road leading to lasting security and cooperation".² The communist parties identified the forces seeking to revive a climate of tension and confrontation in international relations and urging a return to the cold war policy that had split the continent into opposing military-political alliances.

While calling for vigilance relative to the intrigues of the enemies of peace and progress, the participants in the Berlin conference put forward a detailed programme of struggle for disarmament and security in Europe, for democracy and national independence, for the promotion of mutually beneficial cooperation and better understanding among nations. The parties represented at the conference declared that they were prepared to extend practical support to the forces of peace, national liberation, and social emancipation on other continents.

Subsequent developments reaffirmed the validity of this approach, the perspicacity of those who during the detente years had urged steps to prevent regress toward tensions and confrontation.

During the past decade, especially since the close of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, world imperialism's aggressive, militarist circles have been deliberately dismantling the edifice of relations between states with different social systems that had begun to form in the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act. In Washington they spared no effort to persuade the Europeans that detente was a "one-way street", that it had benefited solely the USSR and the other socialist countries and was, consequently, misconceived. To the accompaniment of assertions about a "Soviet threat" NATO decided to deploy American Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe.

It is hard to deceive the citizens of our city with arguments about the "errors of detente", about the futility of the understandings reached at the time. In the 1970s West Berlin felt, for the first time ever, that it was possible to be rid of the role of the "cheapest nuclear bomb" assigned to it by the various NATO headquarters. West Berliners had very keenly experienced the effects of the cold war, and they know what advantages are held out by the settlement of international problems by peaceful, political means. The quadripartite agreement on West Berlin, whose key provision states that this territorial entity does not belong to the FRG and would not be administered by it in the future as well, laid the foundation for improving the condition of our city's inhabitants in many areas of life.

Moreover, the quadripartite agreement and other treaties between socialist and capitalist states created the prerequisites to enable West Berlin to cease being a neuralgic tumor on the body of European politics, a constant source of tension, of international disputes and conflicts. Our own experience permitted us to draw the following conclusion at the Berlin conference: "The tactics pursued by aggressive quarters for many years, that of using West Berlin to roll back socialism and subvert the measures needed to ensure peace, have foundered. Above all, as life shows, this is

consonant with the interests of our city's population and also of all the peoples of our continent, for whom peace, detente, and security are vital."

The Old World's New Anxieties

Understanding of the advantages of peaceful coexistence and of the impermissibility of the adventurist balancing on the brink of nuclear catastrophe has sunk quite deep roots in the minds of Europeans. This is borne out by innumerable facts. The USA's NATO allies can no longer entirely ignore the unwillingness of steadily growing numbers of people to conform obediently to the orders of the Washington militarists, while business circles in these countries take into account the benefits that they got and continue to get from the expansion of economic cooperation with socialist states. The sanctions, quotas, and lists of strategic goods being imposed from across the ocean are no longer accepted by businessmen and political leaders with the meek submissiveness to which the American champions of "Atlantic solidarity" have grown accustomed.

We feel these sentiments in West Berlin as well. In 1963 when US President John F. Kennedy visited the city 300,000 inhabitants went out to welcome him as a "defender of peace and freedom". Fifteen years later the arrival of President James Carter got the attention only of officials. And in 1982 more than 100,000 West Berliners staged a powerful demonstration to protest against the visit to their city of the head of the US administration, against its arms race and confrontation policy, which is increasing the danger of nuclear war. Whereas Kennedy drove in an open car, the present incumbent of the White House preferred to use a helicopter.

Of course, we assess the achievements of the European peace and democratic movements soberly. It did not prove possible, for instance, to prevent the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe. But we are not ceasing our efforts to enlist new forces into the ranks of the peace fighters, for the need for unflagging joint actions against the war threat is bigger than ever today.

More and more Europeans are refusing to brush aside the instructive experience of struggle against the legacy of the cold war. Evidence of this is, among other things, the approbative response in all countries to the results of the USSR-USA summit in Geneva. As we noted at the eighth plenary meeting of the SUPWB Board, "Geneva has proved that imperialism cannot afford to ignore vital matters... Geneva showed the way to concrete disarmament. But this way will be opened up only if the US SDI programme is halted, as the peace movement in our city... demands. Before the Geneva summit, during, and after it, it became obvious that constructive proposals and resolute action for the maintenance of peace keep coming from socialism."³

The Statement made last January by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, the proposals in it for delivering Europe and the entire planet from weapons of mass destruction, and the foreign policy initiatives advanced by the 27th Congress of the CPSU and by the congresses of the communist parties of other socialist countries further reaffirmed the new system's peace mission. It is absurd to make any attempt to build the future of, our continent without, let alone in spite of the socialist countries. These are historical facts and they have to be reckoned with today even by those who for long years had hoped to "roll back" socialism. George Kennan, the well-known American diplomat who was never distinguished for goodwill toward communism, had recently, in pondering the balance of strength in Europe, to admit frankly that it is necessary, above all, to contain not the Soviet Union but the arms race.

It will be recalled that the idea of "containing" and "rolling back" communism underlay the formation of NATO, and that this led to Europe's division. In response, the socialist countries united in a defensive alliance as long as six years after the Atlantic bloc was formed. The Communists have never regarded this division, this apartness of East and West as normal. They have always urged looking for acceptable ways of easing and gradually ending the existing military confrontation. Needless to

say, success will come only from matching efforts taken in a spirit of respect for the continent's socio-historical realities.

Peace for Europe is peace with socialism, while for West Berlin this concretely signified, in addition, the development of lasting good neighbourly relations with the GDR. The irresponsible assertions of the CDU-headed West Berlin Senate that it is the mission of our city to show that the so-called German question remains open are incompatible with this approach.

Those who in the 37th year of the existence of the GDR still refuse to abandon the illusory calculation that the location of West Berlin can be used to question the sovereignty of the German socialist state are evidently unable to draw lessons from history. To use the advantages of our geographical location means, on the contrary, to take into account the requirements of the socialist market, which, in view of its planned and proportionate development, can be foreseen 10, 15, and 20 years in advance.

The thinking of European Communists, encapsulated in the Berlin document, proceeds from the fundamental significance of peaceful coexistence, disarmament, and security for tackling the Old World's innumerable problems — social, economic, trade, transport, demographic, cultural, and humanitarian. These cannot be ignored. But, for example, the environment, which is so worrying to Europeans today, cannot be bettered without the concerted efforts of nations, and this requires, as a minimum, a climate of confidence, which is inconceivable in a situation of mutual threats and an escalating arms race.

The "Europe of Monopolies" Versus the "Europe of Working People"

During these ten years capitalism has been unable to rid itself of the lacerating manifestations of its general crisis that were noted by participants in the Berlin conference: the many millions of jobless, the crisis of the monetary system, the increasing underloading of production capacities. It did not prove possible to spread the shortlived revitalisation of the USA economy of the early 1980s to any significant extent to the Common Market countries. Nor was any help forthcoming from the "neoliberal" and "dirigist" recipes of the bourgeois governments — these only added new hardships for the working people.

Capitalism's age-long ulcers are being inflamed by the impact of the scientific and technological revolution, whose advantages are used by the "Europe of monopolies" exclusively for its own benefit, consigning to the "Europe of working people" only the costs of the structural changes taking place in production.

While only ten years ago there were in West Berlin many people who believed that the relatively favourable economic situation of the postwar period would persist for a long time, today, all the effects of the crisis are visible: the declining living standard, the dismantling of the health services and the education system. Between 20 and 30 per cent of the family budget is now swallowed by rent. When the Berlin conference was in session there were 20,000 jobless in the city. Today there are three and half times as many.

When bourgeois economists speak of the future they usually make wild guesses, their only consensus being that unemployment will go on growing. West Berlin reconsiders its every annual budget as early as within six months. This is further striking evidence of the inability of bourgeois economists and political leaders to offer anything close to a dependable forecast for even half a year. How sharply this is in contrast with the spirit of confidence in the future, with the feasibility of projected plans demonstrated at the congresses of the communist parties of socialist countries!

On the threshold of the third millennium socialism looks to the future with optimism, while capitalist Europe is powerless to offer an attractive prospect for the working person. The following conclusion drawn by the Berlin conference retains its full significance: "The economic and social structure of capitalist society is becoming more and more inconsistent with the needs of the working and popular masses and

with the requirements of social progress and of democratic political development."⁴

As the Communists in other capitalist countries, our party is today working for a democratic way out of the crisis, in other words, for steps that conform with the interests of working people rather than with those of a handful of capitalists. At the centre of this work is the problem of protecting jobs. Unemployment does more than bring material privation to tens of thousands of able-bodied citizens. It is an indicator of society's moral crisis, of its degradation. It is unacceptable that in an age of space flights and high-tech computers here, in Europe, where miracles of civilisation have been created, millions of people are eking out a miserable existence on the brink of despair and hopelessness.

The working class and its achievements are today savagely attacked by transnational monopoly capital. However, despite the forecasts of bourgeois futurologists and despite the ongoing changes this class is not disappearing: new groups of working people are joining its ranks, and it is renewing itself, remaining the main locomotive of social progress.

Countering the Drift to the Right

Ever since the days of Metternich and Guizot the bourgeoisie has been trying to give the people a distorted notion about the Communists. Its spokesman used the bogey of communist "conspiracies", time and again proclaimed that Marxism was in "decline" and "crisis", and prophesied an early disappearance of the communist movement. The international relations of the Communists and their meetings and conferences have always been a source of special irritation to them. The bourgeoisie thereby acknowledged that it dreaded above all the cooperation among and the international solidarity of workers of different countries and their political parties. Nor did the prejudiced attention of the anti-communists bypass the Berlin conference.

Given all the individual slants of each of the biased interpreters of this conference, a common feature was their attempt to reduce its content to organisational and procedural issues and entirely ignore the series of initiatives and proposals produced through the collective efforts of 29 parties. The coordinated formulations in the final document speak for themselves: the Communists have been and remain an indispensable element of the multifaceted and powerful front of forces, without which no serious dialogue is conceivable today. The communist parties link the fulfilment of their programmes for safeguarding the vital interests of the working people and their plans for social reforms precisely with deliverance from the war threat, with disarmament and peaceful coexistence. These are the conditions under which the ruling communist parties would be able to make full use of the socialist system's immense advantages.

The adversaries of social progress crave to conceal from public opinion the true mission of the Communists, and to this end they are stepping up their efforts to isolate the communist parties, to push them to the margin of political life.

From their attempts of the 1970s to "smother communism in their embrace", from the calls to "upgrade" and "democratise" Marxism, to adapt it to the canons of the capitalist Establishment, our ideologico-political adversaries have now moved to increasingly active employment of crude and undisguised anti-communism.

In a situation in which a tide of neoconservatism has risen in some West European countries and in the USA, history is imposing a colossal responsibility on the Communists, on all the people affiliated to the left-wing, democratic movements. There can be no consistent resistance to the forces of reaction and war without them. The place held by the Communists and the influence they exercise in society are an indicator of the state of political affairs as a whole, of the breadth of democracy in society's social health, and a guarantee against any massive drift to the right. To forestall such a drift is in the interests of all left-wing circles, of all decent people regardless of their political, philosophical, and religious persuasions. Hence the

significance of the struggle against anti-communism. Today, in reminding people of the harm that anti-communism has always caused the movement for progress and peace, it would be appropriate to quote the Berlin document: "The communist parties do not consider all those who are not in agreement with their policies or who hold a critical attitude towards their activity as being anti-communist. Anti-communism has been and remains an instrument which imperialist and reactionary forces use not only against Communists but also against democratic freedoms."⁵

The Left Forces and the Challenges of the 1980s

The parties represented at the Berlin conference stressed that they were prepared to contribute to equitable cooperation with all democratic forces, particularly with socialist and social democratic parties in the struggle for peace, democracy, and society's progress.

The significance of this cooperation grows as the situation in the world steadily deteriorates through the efforts of imperialism's reactionary circles. In 1979, when on the insistence of the US administration NATO adopted its notorious double-track decision that opened the road for new American first-strike missiles in Europe, the communist parties sounded the alarm at once. In April 1980 came the laconic, compelling call from France's capital: "We, the Communists of all the countries of Europe, are ready for any sort of dialogue, consultation and joint action when it comes to the struggle for peace and disarmament. To this end, we want all the peace-loving forces to join together. We say to all, whatever our national origins, our convictions, our way of life — Communists, Socialists or Christians and believers of other faiths: 'Peace is our common heritage'!"⁶

An unprecedented anti-missile movement swept across the countries of Europe, and the Communists hold an honourable place in it. This movement mirrored the anxiety of the broadest sections of public opinion over the unparalleled threat to European civilisation, to the destiny, the future of humanity from the nuclear arms race being whipped up by Washington. The multifaceted, supraparty character of the mass actions for peace has become an important feature of present-day European reality.

At the same time, the facts indicate that the left-wing forces and the peace movement, of which the Communists have always been an integral component, have not exhausted all the potentialities for cooperation. The task is not to accumulate and cultivate disagreements but, while taking them into account, to look for a common denominator for interaction and cooperation on the cardinal problem of our day, the problem of preserving peace. This is the challenge of the 1980s, and the out-come of the historical confrontation between the "parties of war" and the overwhelming majority of humankind that wants a secure and happy life resting on confidence, mutual respect, and cooperation among all states depends to a large extent on how the left-wing forces, the democratic movement, and all the peace fighters respond to it.

The West Berlin Communists are working steadfastly in this direction. The SUPWB wholeheartedly supports the actions to facilitate such cooperation instituted by the CPSU, whose 27th Congress called for closer and more constructive relations with governments and socio-political organisations, and movements seriously concerned for peace in the world in order *to establish an all-embracing system of international security*. There was a wide response to the joint initiative of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Social Democratic Party of Germany for the creation in Europe of a zone free of chemical weapons. Moreover, we see as encouraging the fact that a working group of these parties held sittings in Bonn and Berlin on questions of disarmament, of averting the threat of war. The parties concerned urged the earliest conclusion of an agreement on Europe's total deliverance from intermediate-range missiles. They expressed confidence that an agreement on the full and controlled cessation of all nuclear tests would serve to ensure genuine nuclear disarmament, prevent the arms race from spreading to outer space, and end it on earth. The working

group has the mission of preventing new types of US binary chemical weapons from being stationed in Europe.

We Can Survive or Perish Only Together

Two military-political organisations are in confrontation and the forces of four of the five nuclear powers directly adjoin each other in Europe, and any change in the situation would at once be reflected in the overall international climate. The prospect of some West European countries being drawn into the realisation of the Pentagon's Star Wars plan holds out the danger that they will be involved in a qualitatively new spiral of the arms race with irreparable consequences to all humanity.

On the threshold of the third millenium Europe has piled up an abundance of explosive problems and contradictions. But in Europe there is also a powerful political, intellectual, and moral potential, which, if brought into play, could prevent the nuclear self-incineration of the human race. War is not a deadly fate threatening the peoples, but the work of human hands, and people can prevent it. And this is where we Communists have a special responsibility. We must lay bare the covert mechanism of the growth of the war threat, expose the forces nourishing militarism, and show the people effective ways of isolating these forces.

Every age brings with it its own problems and makes new deamnds. And those who wish to influence the ongoing changes actively — the Communists have always counted themselves precisely among such people — take with them into the future only what stands the test of time. In reflecting today upon the ideological potential that we got from the Berlin conference, it may be said with confidence that we shall go on contributing to the cause of peace, to the development of the struggle for security, democracy, and social progress in Europe.

While the Berlin conference was in session bourgeois propaganda unfoundedly gloated that our parties were unable to take into account the specifics of national tasks and the diversity of local conditions, that they were bent upon unifying and standardising the forms of their activities and their strategic concepts, hysterically asserting that some elements were "again hoping to regenerate an organisational centre" of the communist movement, to encroach upon the independence of parties. The Berlin conference left them bitterly disappointed. Given all the diversity of the conditions under which they function and given all the distinctions in their approach to individual problems, the 29 parties demonstrated that they could cooperate creatively and show class solidarity and unity of action.

Despite the hopes of our ill-wishers, the conference was not the "swan song of internationalism". The links between the parties continue to develop in various forms in conformity with the spirit and imperatives of the day.

The communist movement is international in origin and essence. Today when the internationalisation of capital and class struggle have reached unparalleled dimensions, the need for promoting and strengthening the relations between communist parties is growing rather than dwindling.

The significance of internationalism is mounting also on account of the international, in fact global, character of the nuclear threat overhanging humanity. Today nobody can any longer, as did Goethe's personage, remain complacently unconcerned while "far away the peoples are crossing swords and fighting". "It is only together that we can survive or perish", Mikhail Gorbachov noted. The interdependence of the destinies of individual countries and peoples, so perceptible in Europe, is a key factor of the work of the Communists.

The diversity of the communist movement reflects the diversity of the modern world. But it is not a synonym of disunity. The Berlin conference was far from being the only example of how, given respect for the opinion of each, it is possible to unite around common purposes in a spirit of internationalism. The distinctions in assessments resulting from national specifics, from a dissimilarity of conditions of work are an

objectively predicated characteristic. But in taking into consideration all specifics and views it is important to bear in mind that the surrounding world can be correctly understood and its make-up changed only on the basis of a common scientific world-view — Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin stresses that on this principled foundation it is vital to go on developing the links between the Communists of different countries, to deliberate and consult with each other more, and to coordinate efforts. This will help to show our distinctive identity and mould our unique and innovative role in the movement for peace and progress.

The changes, both external and internal, in the conditions under which the communist parties function indicate that the movement has entered a qualitatively new stage. This, as was stressed at the congresses of the fraternal parties, requires a reassessment of many notions and a bold, creative approach to European and world realities in keeping with the entire vast international experience accumulated by the generations of our predecessors. The ability to keep in step with the times and, while continuously readjusting, to remain true to the tested principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism has always been and will be testimony of the communist movement's viability.

¹ *For Peace, Security, Cooperation and Social Progress in Europe. Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe, Berlin, 29 and 30 June 1976, p.8.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³ *Information Bulletin*, No. 4, 1986.

⁴ *For Peace, Security, Cooperation and Social Progress in Europe, p.7.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

⁶ Quoted in *World Marxist Review*, No. 6, 1980.

Foul Play by the Pretoria Regime

Dan Tloome — Deputy Secretary General,
African National Congress (ANC) of
South Africa

THE liberation movement of the oppressed people has now attained unprecedented scope in our long-suffering country. Led by the African National Congress and its allies, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU),¹ the oppressed people have risen resolutely to crush the hated apartheid regime, wring power from the racists and create a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

We are fighting for national liberation and self-determination. In the case of South Africa, self-determination means first and foremost the destruction of the state which is based on white minority rule, dismantling of apartheid, and choice of a political system to replace it under which the people will themselves rule the country. No pressure, no manoeuvring by the racists will make us give up the course chosen by the ANC and its allies.

The oppressed people of South Africa conducted their struggle by non-violent methods for over 50 years. However, although this action was peaceful, the racist rulers that succeeded one another invariably and unhesitatingly used armed force against us. The choice favouring armed struggle became a compelling necessity. It was a historic response of the masses to the policy of racial oppression which deprived the African majority of its human and civil rights. As far back as 1965 the 20th session of the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution reiterating the inalienable right of the

oppressed peoples to fight for the liberation of their countries from colonial dependence, to actually exercise their right to self-determination. No government can be regarded as legitimate if it ignores the will of the governed. And if this principle is trampled underfoot, the people have the right to overthrow this regime using different methods of struggle, including armed resistance, and create a just system of government.

Apartheid is a total denial of equality, a violation of the principle of self-determination. South Africa's "Constitution" institutionalises the colonial status of the majority which is deprived of all rights. The political system is a variation of colonial rule under which the oppressed and the oppressors live in the same country. The regime is in mortal fear of any change that can effectively end this state of affairs. Officially, the government is republican, but there is no democracy. There are schools, but children are denied real education. There are hospitals, but the health of the oppressed people is terrible. There is wealth, but there is no just distribution. There are law courts, but people are powerless before arbitrary racist rule. The all-embracing system of apartheid makes it impossible to solve the growing economic problems, aggravates the already acute socio-economic contradictions and pushes unemployment and inflation higher.

"The solution to the problems facing our country lies in the establishment of a system of majority rule in a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa," the ANC and two leading trade union associations, SACTU and COSATU,² stress in their recent joint communique. "In the specific conditions of our country it is inconceivable that such a system can be separated from economic emancipation. Our people have been robbed of their land, deprived of their due share in the country's wealth, their skills have been suppressed, and poverty and starvation have been their life experience. The correction of these centuries-old economic injustices lies at the core of our national aspirations. Accordingly they (the people) are united not only in their opposition to the entire apartheid system, but also in their common understanding that victory must embrace more than a formal political democracy."

Today, many diverse social strata have joined the struggle. The people's political awareness has increased dramatically. The working class is not simply striving for higher wages and better working conditions: it demands a radical change of the socio-political system. The recent strikes in different industries and in various parts of the country bear this out. The workers are advancing extensive political demands, including the demand that the racist troops withdraw from the African townships. And there is more proof that the popular awareness is growing, that our struggle has risen to a radically new level. Spurred on by SACTU and COSATU, the working class is mounting sweeping actions against the apartheid regime. Demonstrators go out in the streets with ANC flags and red banners inscribed SACP.

An unprecedentedly powerful wave of mass resistance is shaking the very foundations of the apartheid regime. Realising that reprisals alone cannot quell it, the authorities are devising new tricks. Early this year the racist chieftain Pieter Botha even announced ostentatiously that South Africa had outgrown the "obsolete concept of apartheid". There was also propaganda fanfare over the "lifting" of the state of emergency in many areas of the country, imposed almost a year ago. But it was "lifted" only on paper: the army and the police are suppressing all anti-government protest on the same scale with the same brutality and continue to occupy African townships. Law and Order Minister Louis le Grange has promised to introduce, in the near future, new amendments to the notorious "security legislation" to toughen the reign of terror and oppression. In other words, the racist rulers are manoeuvring while keeping the essentially violent and terrorist methods of their rule unchanged.³

The powerful upsurge of the liberation movement has produced a grave crisis which affects not only internal structures but also the foreign policy pursued by the apartheid regime. The ruling elite was forced to revise its "defensive doctrine".

Pretoria's concept of "total onslaught" and "total strategy" was first formulated in the 1977 White Paper on defence. The underlying postulate of this policy is that the southern tip of Africa has virtually become the chief target of an "offensive by world communism directed from Moscow". The conclusion was that the countries of the region should unite under Pretoria's leadership so as to resist this onslaught. Brandishing the old bugbear of the "Soviet threat", the "total strategy" advocates imparted a very clear thrust to their foreign policy schemes: they were trying to devise a course which could ensure the long-term survival of the racist regime at a time when the liberation movement was gaining ground in Southern Africa and elsewhere on the continent.

South Africa's President Pieter Botha, notorious for his hatred of the African liberation movement, is the foremost advocate of this "new" foreign policy. During his term of office, the undeclared war against Angola assumed unheard-of intensity, and South African troops began to routinely invade Mozambique and other countries of the region. The South African stand on the illegal occupation of Namibia has become tougher than ever. Every military and political move made by the racists over the almost ten-year-long presidency of Pieter Botha bears his "personal hallmark".

Stripped of its propaganda wrappings, the essence of the "total strategy" concept does demonstrate a certain logic.

First, while drawing up this course, Pretoria's racist authorities were well aware that the neighbouring independent African states could hardly pose a threat to South Africa, a country wielding much greater economic and military power. The threat to the regime is purely internal: it is the internal war between the forces of liberation and the racist authorities that is intensifying within the country.

Second, since the internal and not external front was of decisive importance, the authorities frantically tried to expand their social base, announcing "reforms" one after another — naturally, none of them changing the essence of apartheid.

Third, to get a free hand in domestic matters, the racists had to somewhat touch up the repulsive image of the apartheid regime in the eyes of its independent African neighbours. By announcing the new course, the regime was thus trying to change the extremely negative attitude to it on the part of the world community.

Pieter Botha himself and his strategists maintain that this regional foreign policy is based on a trilateral corner-stone: on attempts to lure African countries into cooperation with the racist regime or force them to conclude an alliance with it; on barring the international community from involvement in the solution of regional problems (Foreign Minister Roelof Botha has recently echoed this view urging for a search for "purely regional" solutions to these issues); and on efforts to prevent or at least delay the severance of economic ties between African, particularly Southern African countries and South Africa.

A partial summing-up of these points should identify the emphasis and the priorities of the African policy pursued by the apartheid regime. On the one hand, it is a course of wooing and flirting with the countries of the region and, on the other, it is based on brute force. There is also the obvious intention of the racists to conduct their expansionist foreign policy mostly in Southern Africa and to apply to the neighbouring countries a broad range of openly force-orientated and neocolonialist "total strategy" tools.

Noisily hawking his foreign policy wares, President Botha has claimed that Pretoria is truly interested in observing "neutrality" towards both the East and the West, that its attention is focused on the Southern African region and that it intends to promote "subcontinental solidarity" which is to serve as a basis for the neighbouring countries' cooperation in vitally important spheres. As early as 1979 he even said in Parliament that his regime had initiated an era of close cooperation for the 40 million people south of the Cunene and the Zambezi. That same year a conference was held between government officials and big business tycoons at Johannesburg's Carlton Centre

where Botha advocated regular and official regional summits to devise a common approach to the attainment of "peace and prosperity". Furthermore, the racist leader advertises the establishment of a constellation of Southern African states" (CONSAS).

This "constellation" deserves to be mentioned in greater detail because it offers graphic proof of the expansionist and neocolonialist essence of the plans the apartheid regime is hatching in Southern Africa. The racists held that the formation of CONSAS was to pass through three stages. At the first, a "nucleus" was to be set up, comprising South Africa, the countries bordering directly on South Africa (except Angola and Mozambique, the "independent Bantustans" and possibly Malawi. At the next stage, the alliance was to expand and at the final stage, Zaire was supposed to be drawn into it too. The racists saw CONSAS above all as a bloc of Pretoria-led "anti-Marxist states". The aim was to restore the cordon sanitaire which existed before the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire and which was spearheaded against the liberation movement, to enclose Angola, Mozambique and other frontline states in a circle of hostile regimes, and to force all countries of the region to abandon their independent foreign policy.

Particularly great hopes with regard to CONSAS were pinned on developments in Zimbabwe where the racists and the imperialists were trying to hand power over to their puppet Muzorewa. A neocolonialist settlement in Zimbabwe was to facilitate a similar settlement in Namibia. Pretoria was thus drawing up a sufficiently detailed plan for reshaping our region as it saw fit. For all the ambitiousness of the scheme, the racist strategists obviously lacked realism.

The victory the people of Zimbabwe won in 1980 dealt a severe blow to the racist designs. Cooperation among independent African countries on a consistently anti-imperialist and anti-racist basis increased considerably during the first half of the 1980s. The establishment of the Southern African Development Coordinating Committee (SADCC), created to enhance regional cooperation in the interests of the member-countries' economic self-reliance and to resist neocolonialism, dealt the CONSAS scheme a mortal blow.

The successes scored by the national liberation forces of the region and the crisis of apartheid within South Africa abruptly heightened the racists' fears for the future of their regime. The more troubled they were by the developments in Southern Africa, the more heavily Pretoria relied on force in its foreign policy. The advent of the Reagan administration which proclaimed a policy of "constructive engagement" completely untied the hands of the racists: in the early 1980s the South African army conducted large-scale incursions into Angola and raids against Mozambique; a group of mercenaries even staged an abortive attempt to overthrow the government of the Seychelles.

Puppet terrorist gangs in Angola, Mozambique and Lesotho became more active after receiving new weapons from Pretoria. Agents of the racists committed a series of political assassinations in neighbouring countries; members of the African National Congress, prominent freedom fighters were among the victims.

It should be noted that in that period, Pretoria set its sights on the destruction of economic projects and of the infrastructure in the newly independent nations. Acts of sabotage occurred mostly on railroad lines, in ports and at power stations. South African soldiers raided Matolo, Maputo's industrial suburb. The damage done to the front-line states by South African aggression over the past five years is estimated at ten billion dollars. All this confirmed that the fascists were pursuing a large-scale strategy of economic destabilisation in order to paralyse independent countries and make them bow before their stronger neighbour. This strategy grew increasingly selective. Although Pretoria's secret services and their local stooges conducted a campaign of sabotage against all countries of our region, particular attention was paid from the outset to Mozambique, Angola and Lesotho.

Recent developments in Lesotho, a small enclave completely surrounded by South

Africa, have demonstrated again that the racists are always ready to resort to brute force if other methods fail to produce results.

Facts show that the racist offensive against independent Southern African countries did not abate even after Pretoria signed agreements with some of its neighbours in the mid-1980s. It was obvious that the apartheid regime had no intention of honouring its obligations. The agreements were merely another political trick to give the regime a semblance of respectability and to be used as a smokescreen behind which it would keep up its expansionist and subversive foreign policy. The racists did not for a moment refrain from training or supplying weapons and ammunition to the bandits from the so-called Mozambican National Resistance which was committing savage crimes against the people of Mozambique. South African troops continue to occupy vast areas in Angola; they also control the anti-popular UNITA led by the notorious terrorist Savimbi. Pretoria would like to make these criminal puppet organisations appear as a legitimate political opposition.

Using diplomacy in an effort to present a democratic and peaceful facade which would hide the actual racist and imperialist essence of the regime and which would help it to break out of international isolation, the South African authorities set great store by every new contact with African countries. The very fact that talks are conducted with a member-country of the Organisation of African Unity is hailed as a major political victory. The ANC consistently exposes this treacherous course conducted vis-a-vis Africa's independent countries.

The racists would dearly love to isolate by trickery the liberation movement throughout Southern Africa. They hope to involve the countries of the region in moves taken against the ANC; they also want to fragment and confuse the frontline states so as to undermine their unity and joint struggle. Finally, Pretoria is clearly irked by the road of equitable economic cooperation among free countries, the road chosen by the SADCC. The apartheid regime has not given up the hope of reviving the moribund CONSAS.

Not surprisingly therefore, the politicians and strategists of the regime are making it perfectly clear that Pretoria is vying for the role of a "mini-superpower", of arbiter and mediator in Southern African affairs. Should any neighbour recognise South Africa as having this status, the authorities will demand more, striving for continental hegemony. Veiled announcements to this effect have already been made by some of the racists. No matter how hard Pretoria tries to pose as a champion of some nations' "internal security" and as a "peace-maker", its regional diplomacy is in fact a cunning instrument of expansionist schemes.

We would like to lay particular stress on the fact that our movement does not want to see African countries drawn into the racists' political intrigues hatched by Pieter Botha with encouragement from imperialism. The ANC does not intend to provide the racists with a pretext for aggressive forays against the frontline states: they are the ones the Pretoria regime wants to blame for the internal crisis in South Africa. At the same time we hold that no front line state nor in fact any other African country can be safe as long as this aggressive and inhuman regime persists on our continent. Complete and total elimination of apartheid is in the interests of all nations and of world peace.

Conducting their policy of political and economic destabilisation against the neighbouring countries and, in the final analysis, striving to overthrow independent anti-imperialist governments, the South African ruling quarters have always relied on US support and have acted with Washington's tacit or open approval.

The Reagan administration, which declared a "crusade" against communism, invariably supports Pretoria in all its attempts to promote its hegemony and obviously encourages the racists' aggressive policy vis-a-vis their neighbours. The United States wants to preserve the racist regime as a mainstay of imperialism on the continent. Of course, this is not admitted publicly; instead, US propaganda uses the diversionary tactics of screaming about the "expansionist nature of world communism" and

spreading lies about the alleged Soviet involvement in the conflict in Angola. Washington would like these inventions to divert public attention away from those who are really responsible for the explosive situation in Southern Africa. But the real reason behind the US policy has been spotted by several newspapers in South Africa itself: they say it in so many words that the crisis of apartheid may endanger *US interests throughout Africa*.

The White House describes its policy towards the racist regime as "constructive engagement". In actual fact however, we are dealing with a barely veiled alliance between US imperialism and racism. "Criminals and collaborators" with the racists is how Winnie Mandela, the wife of our leader Nelson Mandela who has spent almost 23 years behind bars in South Africa, has characterised the Washington administration and the British government.

"Every day the blood of our children flows. While all this is happening, Reagan and Thatcher continue to call themselves friends of black people, while in effect they are friends of the racists," this brave freedom fighter has declared.

Washington's politicians claim that apartheid is "softening". The imperialist press has hinted repeatedly that Pretoria has already begun to abandon "classical racism". But in actual fact, brutal persecution of freedom fighters is continuing in South Africa. In 1985 alone, 25,000 people were subjected to reprisals for taking part in anti-racist demonstrations. The repressive services have murdered more than 1,100 activists. All this gives the lie to the demagoguery about apartheid "growing soft".

True, apartheid is verbally condemned in Washington; there is even talk about the need to revise this odious political system. The United States has recently imposed "limited" sanctions against Pretoria, allegedly designed to pressure South Africa into adopting a "humane" domestic policy. What these "sanctions American style" actually mean can be seen from the following example: the US President has prohibited the extension of loans to the South African government. But US loans to the racist administration itself amounted to only 7.1 per cent of the total volume of US loans to South Africa. Meanwhile, US credits to private South African companies increased from 500 million dollars in 1979 to 3.9 billion dollars in 1985.

Over the first six months of 1985, South African imports of US goods also declined somewhat — but even slightly "curtailed", they were worth almost 1 billion dollars. Conversely, instead of diminishing, the South African exports to the United States grew by more than 200 million dollars. Other sanctions imposed by the White House on the Pretoria regime appear equally ambiguous. Meanwhile, foreign transnational corporations, including US-based TNCs which have struck deep roots in South Africa, are operating unhampered in our country and gaining billions of dollars from the exploitation of our people. The South African authorities and the foreign companies cooperate closely in defending the political interests of the latter. It is no secret that the foreign monopolies operating in South Africa and in Pretoria-occupied Namibia maintain their own police forces that work hand in glove with the racist army and police. The corporations are virtually integrated into the political system of the apartheid regime. They are direct accomplices in its brutal crimes within the country, and they support South Africa's aggressive policy towards its neighbours.

Support on the part of international reaction can delay, though not for long, the final collapse of the apartheid regime. But no one can check the march of history, and the attempts of the racists and external reactionaries to stop the revolutionary struggle with the help of various tricks, deception, sabre-rattling and aggressive moves are doomed. These manoeuvres will inevitably founder on the unswerving resolve of our oppressed people to free their country and all mankind from the criminal system of apartheid.

In our efforts to attain this lofty goal, we rely on the solidarity of all progressive, freedom-loving and democratic forces throughout the world. The ANC greatly appreciates the firm backing it receives from the frontline states and other countries in

Southern Africa and from the Organisation of African Unity as a whole. The socialist community has supported the fighters against apartheid unflaggingly. This was borne out at the 27th Congress of the CPSU. From its rostrum, the Soviet people raised their voice as loyal and firm champions of the oppressed. Vast sections of the democratic public and the popular masses of capitalist countries are on the side of the South African people.

At a crucial juncture for South Africa, the ANC and its allies are stepping up all forms of struggle against the hated racist regime. The drive by the forces of progress against those of reaction is making steady headway. At this moment we reaffirm our support for the Nicaraguans and Palestinians and denounce the US which has committed direct aggression against independent Libya. Our movement is making its contribution to the common struggle for peace and international security, for the practical implementation of the principles trampled underfoot by international reaction and by the apartheid regime as one detachment of its shock troops.

¹ Established in 1955; virtually banned. — *Ed.*

² Established in 1985, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is South Africa's biggest trade union association with a membership of over 500,000. — *Ed.*

³ The racist pseudo-reforms are discussed in more detail in Alfred Nzo, "Manoeuvring Will Not Save the Racists", *WMR*, No. 12, 1984; and Oliver Tambo, "Storm Over South Africa", *WMR*, No. 1, 1986. — *Ed.*

the party

Communist Congresses—India Unity of Purpose and Action

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THE 13th CONGRESS of the Communist Party of India (held at Patna, Bihar State, March 12-17, 1986) was an impressive manifestation of the political and organisational cohesion in the ranks of our party. In this sense, it has indeed an important landmark in its history. Its two main documents — the Review Report, which dealt with developments during the last four years and the party's work since the 12th Congress, and the Political Resolution outlining the tasks of the party in the period ahead — were adopted almost unanimously, after a free and frank discussion. The Report highlighted the party's achievements over the past period but was at the same time sharply self-critical and pointed out failings and weaknesses in respect of mass movements, mass organisations and party organisation. It outlined a number of positive steps to be urgently taken in order to overcome the party's weaknesses in these vital spheres and render it capable of meeting the very serious challenges facing it in the critical period ahead, both nationally and internationally.

The intensive pre-Congress discussion on the two main documents throughout the party, at state conferences as well as at other levels, helped to achieve political-

organisational unity at the Congress itself. The more than 1,000 delegates representing nearly half a million party members showed a high party spirit; they were unsparing in criticising mistakes and determined to uphold and strengthen the unity of the party. That is why all speculations and forecasts about an "impending split" in the CPI which the bourgeois press made on the eve of the Congress proved to be utterly unfounded and foolish.

There were 36 fraternal delegations from communist and workers' parties, revolutionary democratic organisations and national liberation movements at our Congress. Another 43 parties, which could not send delegations, sent messages of greetings. It was a glorious manifestation of proletarian internationalism and a tribute to the internationalist traditions of the CPI, which has always been a firm and staunch contingent of the world communist movement guiding itself by Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

The 13th Congress of our party came at a time when the danger to the whole world and to our country from US imperialism and its policies of escalating the arms race, of going ahead with nuclear tests and the Star Wars programme, of military aggression and political and economic destabilisation in line with the doctrine of "neoglobalism", has sharply increased as compared with the situation that prevailed at the time of the last Congress at Varanasi. Never has India faced such a difficult and complicated situation in the entire post-independence period.

Humanity is threatened with nuclear annihilation as a result of the adventurist policies of the Reagan administration and its reactionary allies. Rejecting the realistic peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist community nations hailed by the non-aligned movement and other peace-loving forces throughout the world and refusing to take a single step in the direction agreed on at the Geneva summit, President Reagan persists in his Star Wars programme and nuclear tests. He is in a vain bid to gain military superiority over the Soviet Union and hence to achieve US imperialist world domination. The United States is implementing its doctrine of "neoglobalism" and diktat on a large scale against independent states and national liberation movements in Asia, Africa, Central America and the rest of the Latin American continent. The world denounced the recent act of state terrorism — the attack on Libya — authorised by the US President. There is a similar threat to Nicaragua, Syria, Angola and Afghanistan. The transcontinental corporations are on the neo-colonialist rampage, undermining the economies of Third World countries and even some industrial countries of Europe. The fatal debt trap is closing in on most of the developing countries.

In this context the struggle against the nuclear arms race and for world peace, against the Pentagon doctrine of "neoglobalism" and for a new international economic order, has attained new momentum and reached greater dimensions. This was reflected in, among others, the decisions of the recent non-aligned meeting in Delhi.¹

The Patna Congress hailed the 27th Congress of the CPSU as of world historic significance. The CC Political Report presented by Mikhail Gorbachov, the new edition of the Programme of Lenin's party and other documents of that historic Congress opened up new vistas in the struggle of humanity for peace, national liberation and social advance. They have raised to a higher political level, the significance of the interaction of the socialist community countries, the national liberation movements, the newly-free countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the non-aligned movement in the present dangerous situation. The 27th CPSU Congress made a most valuable contribution towards strengthening the unity and cohesion of the international communist movement on the basis of proletarian internationalism, taking into consideration the complexities of the present-day world and the diversity of conditions in which communist parties have to operate.

The stand that India has taken in the global struggle against nuclear war and against

the forces of imperialism, colonialism, racism and apartheid is of crucial international significance. India has been following the policy of non-alignment and peace. We support the struggles of peoples for national liberation, against imperialism, racism and colonialism. Our country pursues a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and opposing the arms race, nuclear weapons testing and the Star Wars programme. As a leading member of the non-aligned movement, India exerts a powerful influence on other non-aligned countries which helps to isolate aggressive imperialist circles.

This course of India's foreign policy is detested by the imperialists, particularly by US imperialism. Hence it is mounting pressure on India in every way, using political and economic means in an attempt to tighten its noose round our country's neck. It is particularly concentrating on the economic front with the aim of eventually weakening and subverting the foreign policy.

Certain sections of the Indian bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy preach the theory of "two superpowers", equating the United States and the USSR and advocating "neutrality" between the two great powers. They are putting out a spurious and false propaganda campaign alleging that only the United States, Western Europe and Japan can supply India with the modern sophisticated technology needed for its economic development. The aim of all this is to divert and sidetrack the people's attention from imperialist conspiracies and to conceal from them the plundering, exploitative practices of the transnational corporations.

The Political Resolution passed by the Congress takes note of all these facts. It expresses the party's resolve to widen and deepen the struggle inside India against the imperialist war policies and for peace. The CPI will take new initiatives in the coming period to unite all the anti-imperialist patriotic forces of the country, to step up the struggle against the policies of US imperialism of the nuclear arms race, the danger of nuclear war, "neoglobalism" and the US Star Wars plans and to back the peace programme and comprehensive peace initiatives of the Soviet Union. The party will step up solidarity actions in support of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean fighting against Reagan's policies of international banditry, military diktat and armed intervention, against racism and apartheid, for national and social advance. The Political Resolution stresses the decisive significance of this task. Closely linked with it, the resolution emphasises, is the importance of defending India's national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity and of counteracting conspiracies intended to destabilise our country to which US imperialism resorts by overt and covert means.

In the recent period, Washington has escalated its destabilisation operations against India. Among them are the massive arming of the Zia dictatorship of Pakistan with sophisticated weapons by the Reagan administration, the recent visits of ships of the US Seventh Fleet to Karachi, the establishment of US military bases in Pakistan, the training of separatist terrorist forces which are particularly active in the strategic border states of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, and lastly, imperialist support for Pakistan's effort to start making nuclear arms. Mention should also be made of the transformation of Diego Garcia into a major nuclear base in the Indian Ocean, the Pentagon's continuing naval manoeuvres there and imperialist-backed conspiracies in Sri Lanka designed to escalate the ethnic conflict between Tamils and Sinhalese, which the United States wants to use as a pretext for turning the island into its military base. All these militarist measures of Washington pose a grave menace to the national security and territorial integrity of India. The danger of nuclear conflict has come to the very doorstep of our country.

A further disturbing fact is that communal (both Hindu and Muslim fundamentalist), casteist and divisive forces are stepping up their activities all over the country, gravely endangering the unity of the working class and the democratic forces. There is every reason to believe that these subversive operations have the secret

backing of imperialist agencies. Although the ruling party, the Indian National Congress (I), is traditionally committed to secularism, the Congress government has lately taken certain steps appeasing communal and divisive forces, which have led to serious consequences. Policies of the central government which undermine the autonomy of the states, ignore the special requirements of backward areas and regions and deal with them in a high-handed manner help the forces of disintegration. Even apart from the pro-imperialist communal Bharatiya Janata Party, among the other bourgeois opposition parties also there are sections which actually lend support to divisive and fissiparous elements in their own narrow opportunist interests.

The Political Resolution takes serious note of these dangerous developments. It emphasises the party's task of uniting all secular democratic forces inside the country to combat communalism, casteism and separatism, all divisive forces of disintegration and destabilisation, and to safeguard the country's national unity, security and secular set-up.

Congress documents make a concrete in-depth analysis of the government's retrograde economic policies which threaten to undermine national self-reliance, to weaken the public sector, throw the country open to a "free market economy" and transnational plunder and aggravate social inequalities. Several steps have been taken over the past year in this disastrous direction. The capitalist West hailed them as a "break with the past" and welcome moves in the direction of "privatisation". The recent price hikes imposed by the central government, wholesale concessions to Indian monopolists and the multinationals, indiscriminate import liberalisation and computerisation, etc., are all symptomatic of the retrograde and anti-popular essence of these policies, which have evoked wide criticism in the country as a whole and even inside the ruling party itself. Indian scientists and technicians feel acutely discontented and frustrated because their initiatives are ignored while inroads from the West are encouraged. Inflation and unemployment are on a steep rise, lockouts and closures of industries have reached alarming proportions. There have been massive protest actions by the working class and other working people all over the country against the effects of these economic policies. As a result of these policies the crisis of India's national economy is being sharply aggravated. The whole process of economic planning and mobilisation of resources has run into grave trouble. And India is threatened with imperialism's debt trap.

The party Congress stressed the urgent need for political and mass struggles for the reversal of these policies. It has placed before the people a concrete national democratic alternative platform of policies as the only way to lift India out of the present crisis, promote national self-reliance and independent economic development, safeguard the living standards of the working masses and take our country forward towards carrying out the tasks of the national democratic revolution and towards the socialist goal. In this context, the Political Resolution emphasises the positive factor of the comprehensive cooperation that has been built up over the years between India and the Soviet Union as well as other friendly socialist countries. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation continues to provide a reliable foundation for such cooperation. The resolution draws pointed attention to the need for the people to be vigilant in order to ensure effective implementation of the far-reaching agreements signed by India with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in the past year.

The Patna Congress has pointed out that the task of fighting imperialism and right reaction and of moving the country in a left-democratic direction will be sharply posed simultaneously in the coming period. It has emphasised that these objectives can be achieved and the Party's central slogan of uniting all the left and democratic forces in the country in order to provide a viable alternative to the monopoly of bourgeois rule can be implemented only through a path of militant mass and political struggle. The Congress documents make it quite clear that the left and democratic alternative envisaged by the CPI can emerge only as the result of a radical realignment of political

forces in the country, bringing about a change in the balance of forces in favour of the working class, agricultural proletariat and peasantry. It is these classes and their alliance, built in the course of mass and political struggles that can play a pivotal role in drawing other democratic classes to their side and thus building up left and democratic unity. "The organised strength of these forces," the Political Resolution says, "will enable us to replace bourgeois governments by left and democratic governments. It is in this direction that we have to move the masses." We thus emphasise the class essence of the task of building up left-democratic unity. It is anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-monopoly and is based on worker-peasant alliance.

In the light of such a class analysis, the resolution gives primacy to achieving working class and trade union unity and pinpoints the key role the working class has to play in building up the worker-peasant alliance, for the struggle for basic socio-economic changes. It emphasises the task of forging trade union unity in action on the widest scale, and raising the role of the trade union movement, particularly in the public sector, to higher political dimensions to fight for peace, secularism, national integration and alternative economic policies. It notes that the struggle against the transnational corporations is closely linked up with the fight for a new international economic order.

Stressing the importance of left unity in building up of the left-democratic front, in the forming of worker-peasant alliance and in the struggle against US imperialism, the Congress documents attach special national significance to closer cooperation between the CPI and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in the present political context in India. While in the recent period, there have been some positive achievements in this regard, they are far from adequate to meet the needs of the situation. Negative factors and obstacles have arisen following from the sectarian, and narrow partisan attitudes of the CPI(M) leadership. The Congress charts out a realistic and practicable path towards overcoming these obstacles and achieving a breakthrough step by step. We appeal for joint action and an eventual merger of the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Centre of Indian Trade Unions² on the class principles recognised by both parties. It should be possible to form on the same basis united left-led mass organisations of peasants, youth, students and others.

The Congress reaffirmed our party's stand to the effect that reunification of the communist movement in India on a principled basis is our eventual goal and that we will work patiently and perseveringly to achieve it.

The Congress documents place crucial emphasis on the task of enhancing the independent strength and political role of our party and its mass organisations. This, in fact, is the key link which we have to grasp in order to be able to discharge our national and international responsibilities at this critical juncture, which is truly a turning point in many respects. All the tasks of building up a left and democratic alternative to bourgeois rule in our country and of strengthening India's international role in the struggle for peace hinge on this central factor. The party must overcome its shortcomings and expand rapidly enough, enhancing its independent political role, to meet the challenges of the present situation. The split in the Indian communist movement that came about in 1964 and the weakness of the Left today in many parts of the country act as the most damaging and negative factor hindering the emergence of a left-democratic alternative to bourgeois rule.

The Patna Congress declared that our party has a special and unique role to play in repairing this damage as early as possible.

Our party will have to strengthen the mass organisations of the workers, the peasants and agricultural labour on a vast scale. It has to make serious efforts to build strong political mass bases and a strong party, strive to build unity of the Left and act as the initiator and organiser of mass struggles against all forms of exploitation, oppression and social injustice. The Congress Resolution sums up this task in the following ringing words: "It is only by building and expanding the organisation of our

party with deep roots among the workers and peasants and engaged in struggles orientated towards the objectives set above that the CPI will succeed in bringing about the unity of the Left and draw all other democratic sections and classes of our people for replacing the bourgeois rule at the centre by a government of left and democratic unity. This can help facilitate the bringing about of a national democratic transformation with socialist orientation."

The Congress resolved to step up, broaden and deepen the peace campaign, uniting in it all the national patriotic forces in the country against Reagan's adventurist policies, in support of the Soviet Union's Peace Programme and its demand for an immediate end to nuclear tests. It decided to organise a nation-wide campaign and militant actions against the diversive forces of separatism, communalism and religious fundamentalism, against the INC(I) government's new economic policies, for the location and occupation of land illegally held in various states by landlords and for the granting of relief to the millions of the rural and urban poor living below the poverty line, that is, nearly half of India's population.

The 13th Congress of our party firmly upheld the Leninist banner of proletarian internationalism, as both its key documents and the numerous resolutions adopted by it indicate. They express support for and solidarity with the freedom fighters of Asia, Africa, Central America and the Latin American continent as a whole, with the peoples fighting against Reagan's policy of military threat, armed intervention and undeclared wars, and with the Communists and democrats suffering imprisonment and torture in the fascist dungeons of countries ruled by reactionary juntas and military oligarchies. All this rang out from the Congress rostrum and was acclaimed by the delegates. The Communist Party of India has thus once again reaffirmed that it is a staunch contingent of the world communist movement.

¹ Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the non-aligned movement; it drew delegations from about 100 countries. — *Ed.*

² Central trade union organisations of the CPI and CPI(M).

Panama Building Up the Vanguard Role of the Party

Luther Thomas — member, CC Political Bureau, People's Party of Panama (PPP)

THE EIGHTH PPP Congress, held on January 24-26, was a major event in the life of Panama's Communists. It adopted important decisions aimed at increasing the vanguard role of the working class party and at intensifying the political education of the people. Being a logical conclusion of the nearly nine-month discussion in the party of documents drafted by the Central Committee, the Congress concerned itself with problems of PPP strategy for the period ahead and declared for amending the party Rules and Programme in the light of new tasks and exigencies. The proposed amendments are to be approved by the party's next national conference. Speakers noted with satisfaction the progress made in implementing the guidelines of the two previous congresses for the advancement of the Panamanian revolution.

The Congress deliberated under the motto "For a party capable of defeating imperialism and the oligarchy. The more than 300 delegates representing all provinces met in the conference hall of the capital's Atlantico-Pacifico Palace. Present along with them for the first time in the history of the PPP were delegations of fraternal parties and

movements of Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, including delegations of the CPSU, the Communist Party of Cuba and the Sandinist National Liberation Front of Nicaragua. Despite the general tension prevailing in Central America, the arrival of foreign guests was made possible by the new conditions in Panama resulting from the process of change known as the Torrijist¹ process. The opening ceremony was also attended by a group of noted politicians and other public figures of the republic and by representatives of the ruling Revolutionary Democratic Party.

The Eighth Congress, the Central Committee pointed out in its report presented by Ruben Dario Souza, General Secretary of the PPP CC, is meeting at a juncture crucial for the whole international revolutionary movement, at a time when the threat to the very existence of humanity has grown immensely as a consequence of the aggressiveness of the US rulers. Our party considers that the situation on the planet today is more dangerous than it has ever been since World War II. US imperialism is feverishly escalating the arms race in a futile attempt to reverse the course of history and regain its one-time dominant positions. The Reagan administration pins special hopes on its notorious Star Wars programme, through which it would like to "upset the military strategic parity with capitalism achieved by the socialist system, gain decisive superiority in strength and impose the will of the United States on the world".² Washington's adventurist policy of state terrorism, of provoking and fomenting local conflicts and using force in Central America, South East Asia, the Middle East, Africa and other regions, has aggravated the danger of nuclear disaster.

At present the consolidation of the socialist community and the struggle of the Soviet Union and progressive forces generally for greater international security and cooperation are of fundamental importance for the destiny of nations. The Congress spoke highly of the Soviet package programme for the stage-by-stage abolition of nuclear arsenals by the year 2000 set out by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU CC, in his Statement of January 15, 1986. Many speakers stressed that the invariably peace-loving nature of Soviet home and foreign policy contributes to the balance "daily tipping more in favour of socialism and national liberation revolutions".³

The report gives much space to a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the situation in Panama and to Communist activity within the democratic, national liberation movement. The Torrijist process has been disintegrating in recent years, Dario Souza said. This has found expression above all in the gradual departure of those who assumed the leadership of the country after Torrijos' death⁴ from the goals and principles of the fight for national liberation and the advancement of democracy. The popular leader's death was an irretrievable loss, for the Revolutionary Democratic Party founded by him proved unable to continue implementing plans which largely coincided with the guidelines of our Sixth Congress (1980).

A first step towards scaling down the Torrijist process was the 1983 constitutional reform which abolished the National Assembly of Community Representatives and virtually helped the traditional parties of the oligarchy to power. On returning to the political scene, they mounted a massive attack on the social and economic achievements of Torrijism, with the result that a number of enterprises in the public sector were privatised as allegedly unprofitable or sold to transnationals. Measures of this nature fit perfectly into the plans of Washington, which wants to retain Panama at all costs as a strategic military base of the Penatagon and an appendage to transnationals, to keep it within a capitalist system affected by a deep general crisis. In pursuing a policy of plunder towards our country, the Reagan administration is prompted primarily by its own selfish interests.

The decline of the Torrijist process quickened with the accession of Nicolas Ardito Barletta, a protege of the oligarchy, former vice-president of the World Bank (IBRD), to the office of head of state. His close association with home reaction and his manifest willingness to come to terms with imperialism met widespread resistance among the

people. But while the people's struggle led to his resignation, it failed to bring about a revival of Torrijism as an official policy.

In assessing the present stage in the social development of Panama, we Communists consider that with the conclusion of the Torrijos-Carter treaties,⁵ our country completed the anti-colonial phase of its struggle and entered a period of struggle against neocolonialism, for the completion of national liberation and the establishment of people's democracy. The new phase of the revolution is characterised by intensified class battles which must in changed political conditions help bring about a democratic coalition. Substantive changes in the balance of forces and their regrouping are the order of the day now.

The disintegration of the Torrijist process shows that the national bourgeoisie can no longer lead the republic as in the past. The main social trends will be determined by a compromise between the nationalist petty bourgeoisie and the worker-peasant alliance, with the latter playing the leading role in the struggle for real people's rule and against imperialism. Therefore the PPP is going to work for the formation of a Democratic National Liberation Front, which presupposes the achievement of strategic mutual understanding between military men loyal to Torrijism and their political organisation, the Revolutionary Democratic Party, on the one hand, and the PPP and the rest of left parties and working peoples' organisations, on the other.

In line with their principles, the Communists declared for cooperation with the patriotic army officers who came to power in 1968. Our party has invariably held that in Latin America the army must side with the people — the working class, the peasantry and other motive forces of the national liberation revolutions on the continent. Foreign and home reaction is trying hard to disunite the people and prevent the formation of a bloc equal to leading the anti-imperialist movement, which now attracts large population groups (including believers) deeply interested in democratic and national liberation.

The Panamanian big bourgeoisie, reared by US imperialism and associated with it by common aspirations, refuses to reconcile itself to the loss of the commanding heights in politics and virtually backs the colonialists. It has never criticised the activity of the US administration in what was the Canal Zone, and today it rejects and sabotages government participation in the management of key economic fields, a participation so necessary for attaining economic independence. The oligarchy, which was in power for 65 years, proved unable to assure Panama social and economic progress, for its only interest is to boost the profits of private enterprises and the already fabulous fortunes of private individuals. Yet the advantages of state economic management are beyond question. They are exemplified by the socialist community, which daily registers new achievements. In the 68 years that have passed since the victory of the proletarian revolution, the Soviet Union has become a mighty industrial power and a guarantor of world peace. Socialism's achievements tie the hands of those who would not mind kindling the flames of a new global conflagration.

The big bourgeoisie is playing a treasonable role in Panama. Trying to stop progressive changes, it puts the blame for all current troubles on the Torrijists and rejects their policy of independent national development. The oligarchy complains of difficulties (such as the lack of acceptable foreign credits) and "privations" arising from the utilisation of internal accumulations. Yet Torrijos "promised nobody a path strewn with roses, an economic panacea or miraculous wealth".⁶ Yes, the leader of our revolution declared for social progress, national dignity, freedom and justice; but with a view to achieving these goals, he called on all patriots not to stop at obstacles, never to fear sacrifices; and to work selflessly and creatively for the good of the country, for the moral and cultural prosperity of the Panamanian people.

Instead of searching for alternatives and of extending diplomatic and trade relations with existing socialism, it was said at the Eighth Congress, the big bourgeoisie affirms that Panama cannot develop its economy on its own because it is dependent on a crisis-

stricken international market and hence fatally doomed to a precarious existence. This allegation is evidence of political ignorance or, at any rate, of a lack of determination to advance, trusting in the future and potential of the national liberation movement.

The big bourgeoisie has done nothing to put production on a sound basis, to raise the efficiency of factories by using the latest achievements of science and technology, and yet it declares that the state is a poor manager and that the investments made by it spell failure for Panama. This is a further instance of brazen sabotage of Torrijist process, which offered our country the prospect of delivering itself from the evils of capitalism and of making real national and social progress. "The Torrijos plan," the CC report says, "was both tactical and strategic. Departure from it brought the country to the brink of economic disaster."⁷

The above circumstances bind Panama's Communists to move to the direct fulfilment of a new big task, which is to build a strong and influential party. This task brooks no delay. We must strive to fulfil it in the face of imperialist plots and the disintegration of the Torrijist process. The Eighth Congress therefore warned the party membership against giving in to illusions or oversimplifying the problem, and called on to it to step up its efforts in the ideological and organisational spheres, abide by the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, renounce a primitive approach and overcome subjectivism and spontaneity.

It was pointed out at the Congress that the party is under sustained attack as an ideological and political leader of the working class, as its revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist guide. What is assailed is the general line of the PPP and its political and other activities. Attacks varying in form come not only from imperialism, the oligarchy or right nationalists but also from the so-called left Marxists who play into reaction's hands. They all assail the party's foreign and home policy and dispute its role and its very right to existence. Our enemies are united by a bid to divide the PPP. But our party is gaining in ideological and class maturity and consolidating itself organisationally as it fights.

The need to make the PPP a strong party meeting the exigencies of our times also calls for steadily improving the methods of training party cadres, for systematically winning more members in strategic areas, primarily among the workers and peasants.

Loans are one of the instruments used by imperialism for dominating and exploiting the peoples of developing countries. Panamanian society is burdened with a debt in excess of four billion dollars, so that with a population of two million, every Panamanian may be said to owe not less than 2,000 dollars to monopolies. Nor must it be forgotten that as a result of various shady deals, the lion's share of the funds obtained in the form of loans has landed in the safes of transnationals operating in Panama. One of these is the consortium which has built an interoceanic pipeline in the west of the country, between the Chiriqui and Bocas del Toro provinces.

The Eighth Congress endorsed the party leadership's conclusion that "Panama must uphold its international credit but not by submitting to the dictates of the US administration, the IMF, the IBRD or other transnational banking agencies..."⁸ What must be repaid is only that part of the debt which the Torrijos government used for the real development of the country.

It is the Panamanian Communists' firm opinion that our country should repay loans invested in the service sector, the construction of medical institutions, schools, water supply facilities and the extension of the telecommunications network, which has reached the most distant corners of the country. This also applies to the money used for building hydroelectric and thermoelectric power stations, since without electrifying the whole territory of the republic there is no consolidating the public sector, a task to which General Torrijos devoted constant attention. But imperialism and the oligarchy, mislead world opinion by distorting our stand on this issue and alleging that it runs counter to Fidel Castro's proposals.

Traitors to the country claim that sugar refineries and cement works owned by the

state are unprofitable. But how can anyone talk of profit at a time when imperialism has sharply reduced Panama's sugar and cement quotas on the world market? How can a national communications enterprise be profitable since the most sophisticated technology is owned by transnationals, such as Tropical Radio, while the National Telecommunications Institute is compelled to pay exorbitant taxes on all imported plant although it now gets fewer funds than before?

Yes, we consider it necessary to repay up to two billion dollars, that is, the amount used for the good of the nation. As for the funds pocketed by transnationals and domestic oppressors, they must be expropriated after a careful investigation. This would make it possible to pay the debt. But we must remember, the Congress stressed, that interest on the debt, which is frank usury and exploitation of the Panamanian people (as well as the Third World generally) is used by the United States for building up military strength, in particular for militarising of space, which is expected to cost trillions of dollars, according to the most conservative estimates. At the same time, millions of inhabitants of the planet are underfed. In short, let those pay who have had a share in plundering our country, that is, the imperialist monopolies and their myrmidons from the Panamanian big bourgeoisie.

The Congress unanimously supported the idea of holding a Latin American summit in Panama to work out a common continental position on the foreign debt.

The projected new transisthmian waterway was among the problems discussed at the Congress. It can be built provided the financing is done by international institutions but not by transnationals under any circumstances. Speakers said that control over the existing Canal, which is the nation's chief asset, should be the exclusive prerogative of Panama, such as would guarantee this important waterway real neutrality in the twenty-first century. Imperialism must not be allowed to torpedo the implementation of the programme for effective training and equipment of the armed forces of the republic as the only lawful defender of the country. The facts show that the United States, which argues that Panama "cannot" safeguard the security of the Canal, has no intention of withdrawing from our territory by the year 2000.

The special resolutions passed by the Congress are evidence of the Panamanian Communists' internationalism. They point out the need to promote solidarity with the peoples fighting for freedom and national independence. The PPP supports without qualification the heroic struggle of the patriots of El Salvador and Guatemala; it welcomes the efforts of the Contadora Group for a negotiated settlement of the Central American conflict and condemns "the criminal policy of the Reagan administration, which plans to invade Nicaragua, using the so-called communist threat to our hemisphere as a pretext".¹ The Congress denounced the plots of international imperialism and Zionism in the Middle East, reaffirmed its recognition of the Palestinians' inalienable right to establish an independent state under the direction of the PLO and demanded the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from South Lebanon and other occupied Arab lands.

The new phase of the democratic, national liberation revolution faces Panama's Communists with the highly exacting task of building a strong mass party. Our ideological work after the Eighth Congress will concentrate on defending the unity of the People's Party of Panama in line with the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and on persistently championing peace, democracy, social progress and the interests of all working people.

¹ So named after General Omar Torrijos, progressive statesman and politician (1929-1981). For details, on the Torrijist process, see Ruben Dario Souza Batista, "For Panama's Complete Independence", *WMR*, No. 2, 1978; *idem*, "The Dynamic of the Revolutionary Process", *WMR*, No. 5, 1983; Felix E. Dixon, "The Chief Battle of General Torrijos", *WMR*, No. 6, 1982; C.F. Changmarin, "Panama: The Torrijos Process and the Military", *WMR*, No. 9, 1985. — *Ed.*

² *VIII Congreso del Partido del Pueblo. Informe Central*, Panama, 1986, p. 28.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁴ Torrijos died in an unexplained air crash which well-informed sources attribute to the CIA. — *Ed.*

⁵ The treaties, signed in 1977, provide for the neutrality of the interoceanic waterway and for the gradual transfer of its management to the Panamanian state (by December 31, 1999). They amount to a legal liquidation of a colonial enclave on Panamanian soil. — *Ed.*

⁶ *VIII Congreso del Partido del Pueblo*, p. 19.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁹ *Unidad*, January 29 — February 4, 1986, p.3.

new experience

Our Interviews The Patriotic Union Scores a Success

Alvaro Vasquez — Executive Committee
and Secretariat member, Central Committee,
Colombian Communist Party (CCP)

Parliamentary and presidential elections were held in Colombia over the first half of the year, with the Communist Party taking a vigorous part. What is your assessment of the results?

At the parliamentary elections in March, the Patriotic Union¹ of which the Communist Party is a member scored a success in an unprecedented political situation secured in the course of resolute struggle for the democratisation of the social fabric. The presidential elections in May showed that the Left succeeded in consolidating its positions, enhancing its influence among the masses and winning their active support. But, before assessing in detail the significance of these developments, I would like to dwell on the distinctive conditions in which the Communists and other progressive forces of the country operated prior to the elections.

There is an essential difference between elections "Colombian style" and those conducted in developed bourgeois democracies. Our electoral system is adapted to the interests of the traditional oligarchic clans which can, on the one hand, manipulate public opinion and, on the other, rig elections to distort the will of the electorate. Hence the popular Colombian saying that "he who counts, elects".

In the final analysis, it is money that "makes the elections" in all capitalist countries. But in Colombia this feature has reached an extreme. For example, this spring one presidential candidate and several parliamentary candidates had to withdraw from the race because they could not afford to finance their election campaigns. Votes were bought as a matter of course. In a country as poor as ours there will always be people ready to vote for any candidate in exchange for financial assistance or promises of improved living conditions, of jobs and the like. In Bogata, four candidates were elected because they promised urban development in some of the city's districts; the residents were expected not only to vote accordingly themselves but also to solicit other

votes in support of their "benefactors".

Violence is a factor permeating the country's political and psychological climate, and this encouraged arbitrary action. Persecution and terror aimed against the progressive forces lasted throughout the election campaign. Significantly, the authorities extended the term of army service for those who were about to be discharged and called up the reservists during that period. The elections were thus treated as a period of martial law. On the eve of the elections, hundreds of Patriotic Union activists and supporters were killed or reported "missing".

Certain units of the armed forces were used to bring pressure to bear on the electorate. In Bogota and other cities, groups of soldiers and policemen distributed leaflets produced by the Ministry of National Defence printing office and aimed against the Patriotic Union and the Communist Party. In several rural areas, the military came to peasants' assemblies and visited homes, threatening to kill those who would vote the Union's ticket and calling this movement a "gang of robbers and murderers". Paramilitary groups led by army officers raided communities where support for the Patriotic Union was particularly strong. Veritable hostilities broke out in most areas where the Union won the elections to legislative bodies. In the municipal district of Cabrera, rural communities were even bombed, but the Electoral Guarantees Commission pretended not to notice these crimes. At the same time, the extreme rightists themselves accused the left coalition of applying pressure and intimidation to voters.

As the influence of the Patriotic Union grew, the local reactionary leaders began to openly clamour for repression of the popular masses. This reflected the desire of the top brass and of the influential sectors of the oligarchy to saddle the new President, to be sworn in on August 7, 1986, with extremely complex problems.

Certain armed extreme leftist groups also complicated our election campaign. They threatened reprisals against the truly left forces should they take part in the elections on the side of the Patriotic Union. In some agrarian areas, representatives of the Popular Army of Liberation and the National Liberation Army² tried to convince the local population that support of the Union would mean betrayal of the revolutionary cause.

It follows that the election results do not reflect adequately the actual alignment of social and political forces. Threats and intimidation kept half the electorate from voting, and the bourgeois parties thus won a majority. Still the activity of the masses, especially during the March election campaign, was sufficiently high. For the first time in the political history of Colombia, popular pressure secured a slot of a few minutes for the Patriotic Union and the Communist Party on television and in official radio broadcasts.

The elections have demonstrated the readiness of the Colombian people to use peaceful forms of political struggle to resolve their vital problems. The masses now have faith in their ability to win certain gains and end the sway of the rightists.

Elections in Colombia have always been contested by the two biggest parties expressing the interests of the oligarchy. Does the success of the Patriotic Union signify the emergence of a third viable force on the political scene?

True, until recently, the two parties of the oligarchy (the Conservatives and the Liberals) reigned supreme in the nation's politics. The revolutionary currents resorted mostly to extra-parliamentary forms of struggle: they staged strikes at individual factories and nation-wide, organised actions of students, government employees and women, conducted "hunger marches", "relocations" of thousands of peasants to urban areas, etc. Virtually all such mass actions are in conflict with the existing laws and are regarded by the authorities as "threatening public order".

Elections were as a rule, merely a reflection of the differences between the Liberals and the Conservatives who were vying for control of the government apparatus. The

bureaucratic nature of capitalist domination in Colombia gives rise to continuous friction between different sections of the oligarchy striving to win the privileges open to those in control.

However, a new and unusual development occurred in Colombian politics in March 1986. All observers and political scientists who analysed the results of the parliamentary elections acknowledged the success of the Patriotic Union as the most significant recent development. Within a few months of its establishment, this coalition succeeded, fighting against great odds, in more than doubling the number of those who voted to support the Left.

How did the Communists use the election campaign to increase their influence with the masses and promote the unity of the democratic forces? What prospects open before them in connection with the positions the coalition now holds in elected bodies?

In the course of the election campaign, the Communists and other left forces set up local Patriotic Councils which served as focal points of their political and canvassing work. This helped us to find supporters in those sections where we had had almost no influence previously, to broaden our social base. We made considerable gains in rural areas, in the zone of the guerilla movement and in the big cities, including the nation's capital.

The policy of alliances pursued by the coalition with regard to liberal activists and groups, the National Popular Alliance (Anapo)³ and various left currents on the basis of a programme of action for peace and democracy, the armistice between the government and the guerillas, as well as the urgent political and social reforms, precipitated clashes within the traditional parties and produced divisions in the oligarchy. Participation of guerilla organisations in the Union was another contributing factor. The election to parliament of two leaders of the guerilla movement is a development without precedent in Colombian politics. Some bourgeois party leaders regard the armistice and the guerilla representatives' participation in the elections as a positive shift, others are stubbornly opposed to it.

The results of the elections, particularly of the elections to parliament, are an expression of the popular masses' response to the policy of militarisation conducted by the ruling quarters. This course is precisely what impedes the far-reaching changes advocated not only by the Communists but also by broad sections of the public, including some members of the traditional parties. The success of the Patriotic Union is due above all to the persistent efforts conducted by the Communist Party in the interests of all who are searching for a solution to the crisis plaguing the country. The progressive part of the working class and of the democratic quarters rejects the policy of the Betancur government which has cut wages, increased unemployment, driven prices upward and demonstrated the utter inability of the ruling circles to cope with the nation's pressing problems by following the IMF-imposed path.

The elections have shown that progressive and democratic forces have come to play a bigger role in politics and consolidated their unity and influence, and that the popular masses have attained a greater degree of organisation. This opens up new and promising opportunities in the struggle for democracy and social progress.

We hold that the significance of the Colombian elections transcends national frontiers. The election platform of the Patriotic Union laid particular stress on the need for anti-imperialist solidarity with revolutionary Nicaragua. Viewed against the backdrop of the new campaign of slander against the Sandinist government, a campaign launched by the bourgeois mass media and playing into the hands of US imperialism, the position of the Union and its approval by the people are a major expression of support for the country of Sandino. We also hold that the shifts in Colombia's social fabric contribute to the improvement of the political situation in

Latin America and open a new chapter in the struggle of Latin American patriots for peace, democracy and social progress.

¹ A left coalition comprising the CCP, the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces, which is the biggest guerilla association and which has signed an armistice with the government, other guerrilla groups such as the Workers' Self-Defence, splinter groups formerly associated with the National Liberation Army, trade unions, other mass organisations and various democratic-oriented political figures. The parliamentary elections gave the Union 14 seats in the parliament (instead of the two the Left had before), 18 in provincial assemblies and some 320 in municipal councils.

² Guerilla organisations (see Gilberto Vieira, "On the Agenda: Democratisation" *WMR*, No. 5, 1986). — *Ed.*

³ A populist-type party composed mostly of the middle strata. — *Ed.*

In the Mirror of the Press

Nepszabadsag

WITHOUT DUPLICATING MANAGERIAL BODIES

This newspaper of the Hungarian Communists carried an article about the role played by party organisations in addressing economic tasks. At all stages of the development of the socialist society in Hungary, the article notes, the party has played a major role in determining the economic strategy of this development. The objective now is to upgrade the activities of party organisations in the economic sphere. It is a question not of a reform but of a long process that will require new attitudes.

The participation of party organisations in resolving economic issues is being modified: they no longer engage in resolving specific production problems, in other words, they do not duplicate the work of managerial bodies but see their role in creating the conditions for the effective fulfilment of plan assignments. The enhancement of the independence of production units and the introduction of the system of autonomous management prompt creative quests by party organisation especially in matters relating to their relations with factory councils, personnel policy, and so on.

The 13th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party mapped out a far-reaching programme for the country's economic development. However, not all the targets of the 1985 plan were attained, and the situation has not improved everywhere. Knowing the mood and potentialities of the working people, the article says, party organisations have to be more active in helping to work out effective executive decisions in production and supporting initiatives aimed at accelerating economic growth.

New Zealand Tribune

BRANCHES LAUNCH INTO ACTION

New Zealand Tribune, the newspaper of the Socialist Unity Party of New Zealand (SUP), has published an article on new aspects of the work performed by the primary branches of the party. Monopoly's drive to undermine workers' gains, destroy the national awards system and establish "labour market flexibility" is a salient feature of the current situation in New Zealand, *Tribune* notes. Success in combating this onslaught hinges on the organised strength of the labour movement and on the ability of the party to mobilise the masses for the struggle. Party branches are to play an important role in these efforts.

Working class activists have held meetings in Wellington and Auckland, the country's two biggest cities, to discuss the Labour government's "green paper" on industrial relations. The SUP holds that this question concerns everyone and calls on party members to examine the "green paper" closely and to ensure an appropriate response to it among the working class. It is essential for working people to seize the opportunities of broad participation in the discussion and tackling of national problems, to use the openings the current Labour government has offered for the extension of the democratic process.

Involvement in struggles for the rights of working people has been demonstrated by Auckland's branch. The city's Communists vigorously supported the tenants faced with the threat of losing their homes as a result of a scheme hatched by Chase, a huge property development company. In its pursuit of profit, this monopoly has begun to bulldoze through the old inner city to erect glass-and-concrete monstrosities where rent will be beyond the reach of low and even middle-income tenants.

The peace plan advanced in Mikhail Gorbachov's statement of January 15 spurred many branches into action. The public sees it as a tangible prospect for ridding the earth of nuclear weapons once and for all. The Communists of the town of Mt Albert are circulating a letter on the significance of the proposals, and the Christchurch party branch has taken the message to the Peace and People's Day in the local park.

The Christchurch and Dunedin party branches have launched a fund-raising drive for peace. Wellington Region has already sent in 2,000 dollars. In response to the party's appeal the Communists of the local branches are increasingly joining the discussions of the nuclear-free zone,¹ of topical questions concerning arms control and a revision of the defence policy as such, concludes *Tribune*.

¹ A bill currently under discussion in New Zealand provides for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone comprising the country's territorial waters and air space. The zone is seen as Wellington's contribution to the follow-up of the treaty on the designation of the South Pacific a nuclear-free zone, signed by Australia, New Zealand and eleven island nations of the region in August 1985. — *Ed.*

Documents

France

BEAT BACK THE RIGHT-WING OFFENSIVE

The very first steps taken by the Chirac government will aggravate the position of working people, the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party (FCP) says in a statement released in April 1986. The statement calls on people to act without delay in defence of their interests and to unite for a positive solution to the problems the country is facing.

In the course of the election campaign, the statement notes, the FCP said working people could count on the Communists and their elected representatives to fight against the reactionary right-wing policy. The Communist Party will continue to extend vigorous support to mass action and will use every opportunity to unite the forces seeking to overcome the crisis.

The Communist Party advocates steps to guarantee the purchasing power of the entire people, improve the position of low-paid workers, defend available jobs and create reliable new ones. The Communists are ready to move against the policy of austerity allegedly aimed at restoring competitiveness. They will strive to secure the use of financial resources for the promotion of production and solving the problems of employment, particularly among young people.

In their struggle against the onslaught on the public services and on their status, the Communists advocate improvement of these services and new forms of cooperation between the public and the private sectors. The Communist Party demands an end to privatisation, is ready to support tangible moves against the sway of the transnationals in the French economy and against the plunder of the developing countries, and will promote fruitful international cooperation on the basis of mutual benefit. The party will fight resolutely for peace and disarmament.

The Communists, the statement says, will expand their work at enterprises and in communities for joint nation-wide action by working people.

These ideas were developed in the documents adopted at the FCP Central Committee plenary meeting held in mid-May. As noted in the resolution of the meeting, now that the Socialist Party has fully accepted the policy of the right-wing government and is striving above all to win back the power it lost this March, only the Communists can lead the masses along a different path, the path of struggle against the crisis, in the interests of working people.

The plenary meeting has announced the plan to convene, in March 1987, the FCP National Council to consider the tasks of the Communists' ideological, theoretical and practical work at the current stage in the development of French society.

Side by Side with the Communists

HELPING WOMEN GAIN CONFIDENCE

The Communists hold that their activities in mass democratic organisations and the latter's vigorous involvement in the struggle for peace and social progress is a priority task. *WMR* has asked **Manouri Muttetuwegame**, member of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and General Secretary of the Women's Front of Sri Lanka, to share her experience in this effort.

The origins of the Women's Front of Sri Lanka goes back to 1948. It cooperates closely with the Communist Party but is by no means part of it. The Front is an autonomous civic organisation.

At the time the Front was established, our underlying concept was that the problems facing women in our country could not be fully solved without a thorough reshaping of society. And so the organisation was set the following task: encourage women to come out for their rights and interests and draw them into the common struggle for independence, democracy, progressive changes, and a better life. The Front has abided unflinching by this orientation.

Our purpose is to unite within the Front women of the most diverse occupations, belonging to all strata of working people. All women are eligible for membership irrespective of social origin, religious belief or standard of education. What we see as important is to offer women the best opportunities for meeting one another and to make the Front an exponent of their fundamental interests. To achieve this aim, we try to keep as close to the population as possible and to set up Front branches everywhere, even in small villages.

Another activity of the Front is to help women gain greater social consciousness and participate increasingly in public affairs. Their level in this respect is still low. But the main problem in Sri Lanka as distinct from some other Asian countries, especially Moslem ones, is not prejudices or antiquated notions about women's place in society. Most of our women are free of them and owe this largely to their high standard of literacy achieved thanks to the law on free and unlimited education for women, enacted in 1945. Women's social passivity is due rather to their overall inequality, which makes them underrate their significance and strength.

Young women have fewer opportunities than young men to continue their studies on finishing school, for most of them are married early, female labour earns much less than male labour, and so on. All this inevitably affects women's social consciousness. This is why, in fighting for their economic and social equality, we stress the role which they are in a position to play in society, and tell them what progressive women's organisations in other countries are doing and how. In the nearly 40 years since it came into being, the Front has succeeded in bringing about a deep change in the views of thousands of women.

Our current demands are prompted by the most acute problems of the working population, primarily women. They are among the main victims of the policy of "open economy" and of encouraging private capital, a policy which the United National Party government has been pursuing for about ten years now. The affects of this policy — the growing cost of living, unemployment and impoverishment — provide whatever is needed for the superexploitation of women. Among the job-seekers in the so-called free trade zone established by the government to attract foreign investment, preference is given mostly to young women in the 18-25 age group. They are paid niggardly wages but are compelled to accept any conditions if they want to help their families make ends meet, which is becoming more difficult from year to year.

The ruling quarters abet this superexploitation. At one time they even tried to exclude the "free trade zone" from the sphere of operation of labour legislation in order to enable the transnationals to do in these areas as they pleased. The regime has drastically cut subsidies for necessities and restricted state medical aid and free education. It tells the working people that "they should rely on themselves", which means that it is they who must secure a livelihood and improve their condition. As a result, many women who see no way out become prostitutes. And what does the government do about that? Nothing at all! While pretending to combat prostitution, it actually encourages it, hoping to attract more and more foreign tourists, primarily from the United States and Western Europe.

This is why the Front is now faced, more than ever before, with the task of defending women's social rights. We want women to get equal pay for work of equal value, and insist on restoring the ban on female labour in night shifts which the government has lifted. Our Front fought a real battle with the authorities over labour relations in the "free trade zone". When the government tried to exclude them from the sphere of operation of national legislation, we presented a petition to the Supreme Court on that matter and the Court upheld the petition. Shortly afterwards special laws were passed on the rights of working people employed in these areas.

A very important matter for us is to protect the interests of those women who go to the Middle East, primarily Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states, in search of a living. I wish to stress that they do not go there because they want to but because they are forced to do it by a government policy dooming more and more people to outright poverty. The plight of these women is truly appalling. Unable to speak the language of the country and lacking all rights, they are mercilessly exploited. At the early stage, they are generally dependent for everything on agents of private, occasionally semi-legal companies "specialising" in the export of female labour from Sri Lanka. These agents include out-and-out scoundrels. What is more, we have few embassies or consulates in the Arab countries I have mentioned, and so our women there cannot seek help when they need it. But the government shuts its eyes to all this. It does not care what price Sri Lankan women working in these countries pay for the money they remit to their families. It sees these remittances as a source of hard currency, that's all.

Our Front, like other progressive organisations, has no intention of being reconciled to this state of affairs. We have already demanded that the ruling party provide at least some legal protection for women who go to Arab countries to work, and that it negotiate the matter with the governments concerned.

As regards our general policy, I have said that the Front considers itself part of the

country's progressive movement and coordinates its activities with it. We mobilise women to oppose UNP policies, the suppression of democratic rights, unemployment, and uncontrolled price increases, doing it in collaboration with trade union, student and youth organisations. When, in 1982, the government held a referendum on prolonging the powers of the parliament elected in 1977 till 1989, our Front and another nine organisations of women released a joint document making it clear that the ruling party wanted to hoodwink the people through the referendum and to impose its rule for another seven years. Regrettably, we were unable to prevent this, but then we gained further experience of political struggle.

The question of cooperation with other women's organisations is a difficult problem with us. The opportunities for such cooperation are very limited so far. All the leading parties have women's organisations of their own. As there are great differences between our positions, we do not seek close relations with them at any price, even though we are not against contacts. Joint action is also hampered by the racist and chauvinist sentiments which are widespread both in the Sinhalese and in the Tamil communities and which have already led to clashes between them involving bloodshed. We are working among women in both communities. We tell them that their common difficulties should prompt them to seek unity instead of confrontation. However, right now it is very hard to convince them of this, in particular because the ruling quarters have a stake in fomenting racism. They use it as a means of dividing the working people and diverting their attention from acute social problems and the anti-popular nature of government policies.

In these circumstances, the policy of our Front is to carry out joint actions over specific issues with other women's organisations, including religious and feminist groups. We have succeeded, for instance, in laying the groundwork for a broad movement against female labour in the night shifts. The Front invariably takes an active part in the celebration of International Women's Day. Largely a result of our efforts, March 8 is now widely celebrated, for which women's organisations of the most diverse political trends cooperate in preparing.

The struggle for peace has been an increasingly important unifying factor in recent years. Women, like the population as a whole, are coming to realise its importance, if slowly for the time being. Membership in the Women's International Democratic Federation helps the Front greatly in organising its anti-war activities: we gear our efforts to those of the world's peace-loving opinion. We have already carried out several major anti-war actions, including protesting against the granting of base facilities at the port of Trincomalee to the United States. This year, which has been declared the International Year of Peace, we plan to extend our anti-war activity by bringing increasing numbers of Sri Lankan women into it.

In Brief

ARGENTINA

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Argentina has announced that the party's 16th Congress is to be held on November 4-7, 1986.

BANGLADESH

Having won five mandates at the parliamentary elections last May, the Communist Party of Bangladesh now has, for the first time in its history, representatives in the nation's supreme legislature. The largest number of seats was won by the pro-government National Party.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The last, 50th volume, of the *Collected Works* of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the Chinese language has been published. Work on the publication of this entire collection took 30 years. The translation was made on the basis of the second edition of the works of Marx and Engels prepared in the Russian language by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CPSU Central Committee from the original publications in German.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Representatives of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, and the Social Democratic Party of Germany conferred in Prague last May and adopted a statement on establishing in Europe a zone free of chemical weapons as an important step towards the total prohibition of such weapons.

JAPAN

Akahata, central organ of the Communist Party of Japan, held its annual festival in Chofu, a suburb of Tokyo, under slogans demanding the dismantling of nuclear weapons, calling for a peaceful, democratic Japan, and censuring Japan's conversion into a US nuclear-missile base.

MEXICO

At its festival in Mexico City the United Socialist Party of Mexico urged united action by the people in the efforts to consolidate Mexico's sovereignty. By tradition, the festival was attended by envoys from all the party's organisations in the country, delegations from fraternal parties and newspapers, and representatives of revolutionary democratic organisations in a number of Latin American states.

SYRIA

An international conference, sponsored by the journal *An-Nahj*, organ of the Centre for Socialist Studies of Arab Countries, took place in Damascus. It considered the dangerous consequences for the situation in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and the world as a whole emanating from the US aggression against Libya and the threats against Syria. Representatives of 54 communist, workers, and progressive parties of the Middle East and some other regions took part in this conference.

YUGOSLAVIA

At the beginning of 1986 the League of Communists of Yugoslavia had 2,168,000 members. There are more than 70,000 primary organisations of the party.

exchange of views, discussion

At a Crucial Time of World Development The Soviet Peace Programme and the Efforts of the Communists to Avert the Nuclear Threat and Ensure Disarmament

The *WMR* Editorial Council held a special meeting in Prague to consider the programme guidelines laid down by the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the strategy of other fraternal parties in the efforts to build up world security.

The meeting was opened by the *WMR* Managing Editor *Sergei Tsukasov* (Communist Party of the Soviet Union). Papers submitted for discussion were prepared by *Gancho Ganev* (Bulgarian Communist Party), *William Stewart* (Communist Party of Canada), *Alvaro Oviedo* (Colombian Communist Party), *Pavel Auersperg* (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), *Ib Nørlund* (Communist Party of Denmark), *Zenon Zorzovilis* (Communist Party of Greece), *Randolfo Banegas* (Communist Party of Honduras), and *Naim Ashhab* (Palestinian Communist Party). The participants in the discussion were: *Ali Malki* (Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria), *Orel Viciani* (Communist Party of Chile), *Francisco Gamboa* (People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica), *Antonio Diaz-Ruis* (Communist Party of Cuba), *Agamemnon Stavrou* (Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus), *Luis Emilio Veintimilia* (Communist Party of Ecuador), *Roland Bauer* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany), *Donald Ramotar* (People's Progressive Party of Guyana), *Sandor Szorcsik* (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), *Satiadjaya Sudiman* (Communist Party of Indonesia), *William Somerset* (Communist Party of Ireland), *Khalid Salam* (Jordanian Communist Party), *Rafic Samhoun* (Lebanese Communist Party), *Sam Moeti* (Communist Party of Lesotho), *Felix Dixon* (People's Party of Panama), *Cesar Augusto Jimenez* (Peruvian Communist Party), *Jerzy Waszczuck* (Polish United Workers' Party), *Jaime Barrios* (Communist Party of El Salvador), *Semou Pathe Gueye* (Senegal Party of Independence and Labour), *Khalid Hammami* (Syrian Communist Party), *Ali Ileri* (Communist Party of Turkey), *John Pittman* (Communist Party USA), and *Duong Ngoc Ky* (Communist Party of Vietnam).

Contributions in writing were submitted by: *Unni Krishnan* (Communist Party of India), *Elean Thomas* (Workers Party of Jamaica), *Georg Kwiatowski* (German Communist Party), and *Badamyn Lhamsuren* (Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party).

The following is a summation of the discussion of the problems involved in further vitalising the efforts to avert the nuclear threat and ensure disarmament.

The Communists of all countries have always given close attention to congresses of the party of Lenin, which has for almost seven decades headed the building of a new society in the world's largest socialist country. While making this point, speakers at the meeting stressed that the ideas, conclusions, and resolutions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU elicited particularly great interest in the fraternal parties.

The congress took place at a time of change for the Soviet people, international socialism, and the entire world. History has confronted the USSR and the socialist community as a whole with the need to make fuller use of the new social system's advantages to speed up scientific, technological, economic and social progress, enrich the socialist way of life with new forms and a new content, upon which socialism's force of attraction will depend on to a decisive degree, and reinforce socialism's position on the international scene. The nuclear threat created by imperialism has grown unprecedently acute, and it has become the world community's most vital need and the cardinal aim of existing socialism, of all the forces of peace, progress, and democracy, to avert this threat.

Responding innovatively to the challenges of the times, the Soviet Communists have charted the ways for resolving complex problems of domestic and foreign policy. The 27th Congress demonstrated that the CPSU is able, on the basis of an in-depth, critical analysis, to draw the maximum lessons from the past, gain a Leninist, broad understanding of the present period, and formulate a scientifically substantiated action programme. The CC Political Report delivered by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachov, the new edition of the Party Programme, and other documents of the congress reply to crucial issues of the day and formulate new tasks of immense political significance.

Participants in the Editorial Council meeting spoke highly of the guidelines given in the documents of the congress as indicating that the principal aim of Soviet foreign policy in the immediate future is to carry out the programme, advanced in the Soviet Statement of January 15, 1986, for destroying nuclear and other weapons of mass annihilation and creating a world-wide system of security. Fulfilment of this programme would inaugurate a fundamentally new period of development for humanity.

At the meeting representatives of many fraternal parties emphasised that the resolution passed by the 27th Congress reinforce the confidence that further headway will be made by the struggle for social progress, induce creative research into theory, and foster energetic mass actions in political practice. By linking the strategy of accelerating Soviet society's development with a wide-ranging programme for preventing a nuclear holocaust and saving world civilisation, the CPSU showed that it is a party of social progress and peace, that its policies are consistent with the vital interests of all nations, of all humankind.

The participants in the meeting declared their whole-hearted approval of the Soviet peace programme, noting that it had opened new opportunities for their struggle to remove the nuclear threat, for curbing the arms race and further vitalising and uniting all peace forces. It was noted that there was a need for a deeper understanding of the CPSU's role in international affairs at the present watershed stage of world development, for an exhaustive study of its approach to the present epoch's realities and of the distinctive features of the new political thinking clearly exemplified in the programme developments adopted by the 27th Congress.

In parallel, the discussion focused on pressing issues of the political struggle to turn peaceful coexistence into a norm of world politics and restore the detente process, to bridle the arms race and usher in nuclear disarmament, and to mobilise opposition to the US Star Wars programme and imperialism's policy of aggression. The point of departure for the discussion of these issues was the Marxist philosophy of peace with account of the actual conditions under which the communist and workers' parties function in the various countries.

Philosophy of Peace and Progress

The CPSU's creative, innovative approach to the dialectics of peace and social progress permitted the 27th Congress to make a more profound analysis of the epoch's realities and substantiate a political line consistent with these realities. The congress documents, speakers said, embody the solid unity between theory and practice, and the continuity and innovation in the development of Marxist-Leninist thought.

The world, it was said at the congress, has entered a new period of the historical process. Scientific and technological breakthroughs have resulted in a qualitative advance of the productive forces. Humanity's creative potentials have grown enormously as a result of the broad utilisation of new machinery and technologies in all areas of life. Further, the revolutionary changes in science and technology have led to qualitative and quantitative changes in the means of warfare, confronting civilisation with a real threat of self-destruction. On account of class egoism, for the sake of enriching the elite ruling the capitalist world, products of human intelligence and hands are turned against humankind by being used for the creation of weapons with enormous destructive forces. "The policy of the imperialist circles, which are prepared to sacrifice the future of whole nations" states the new edition of the CPSU Programme, "is increasing the danger that these weapons may actually be put to use."¹ Imperialism is responsible for the growing danger of a global military conflict in which there would be neither victors nor vanquished, but in which world civilisation would perish. This is what makes the situation fundamentally new.

The main trends of world development, it was pointed out at the meeting, are shown comprehensively in the new edition of the CPSU Programme. These are, above all, the steady consolidation of socialism's positions in the world and the growth of its prestige and influence; the growing role played by the peoples fighting for national liberation and social emancipation, for life's renewal in keeping with the principles of justice and humanitarianism; the unrelaxing and, at some critical moments, heightening counteraction by imperialism's reactionary, aggressive circles to positive changes in the world. In giving a more profound characteristic of the present epoch, the 27th Congress identifies an essentially new factor — the consolidation of the peace forces now uniting not only the socialist countries, the communist and working class movement, and the peoples of the new nation-states but also massive anti-war, democratic movements. The interaction of these forces is the factor that determines the general direction of world development in our epoch.

The world of today, speakers said, is full of conflicting economic, social, political, and ideological currents. The most deep-rooted of these manifest themselves in the competition between the two opposed social systems that differ substantially from each other in their readiness and ability to comprehend current problems, suggest the means for resolving them, and pursue the appropriate policy. Between imperialism and the developing nations there is now a wide and mobile spectrum of contradictions. On the one hand, there is the slow and laborious but irreversible process of fundamental social and economic changes in the life of these peoples, who comprise the majority of mankind, a process by which the role and prestige of the Asian, African, and Latin American nations are growing steadily. On the other hand, the ruthless exploitation and pillaging of the developing nations are, to a large extent, still the foundation on which the system of imperialism stands, for they are a major source for funding its militaristic preparations.

The crises constantly shaking various regions of the world, the social antagonisms in capitalist society, and the international conflicts compound the task of delivering humanity from the dangers hanging over it, from the nuclear threat in the first place. The question of where the threat emanates from and who generates it, speakers at the meeting pointed out, has been and remains of fundamental significance. The direction of the efforts to safeguard peace depends upon the answer to this question.

The facts that are piling up indicate that the danger of war is rooted in imperialism's,

particularly US imperialism's, aggressive policies. Developments are bringing the essence of these policies more and more distinctly into view: the itch to wreak social vengeance by achieving military superiority over socialism, the suppression of progressive, liberation movements, the maintenance of international tension at a level that would justify the creation and build-up of new types of weapons and the militarisation of outer space.

Imperialism bears the burden of responsibility for the fact that despite the recent gleams of hope the acuteness and the complexity of the problem of preserving peace, of preventing nuclear catastrophe are not diminishing, and that the avenues for the solution of this problem are being blocked. The following are some recent facts to which reference was made in the speeches.

In defiance of the Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests, militarist quarters in the USA are continuing to explode nuclear devices, thereby spurring the arms race and the appearance of new and more destructive types of armaments, and extending the potentialities for using them. Against the protests of the peoples, these quarters have started to put the Star Wars programme into effect. By their terrorist actions against Libya they have inflamed to bursting point the situation in the Mediterranean. Imperialism and reaction are responsible for the continuing undeclared wars against the peoples of Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, and Southern Africa.

As the Political Report to the 27th Congress of the CPSU noted, "the modern world has become much too small and fragile for wars and a policy of force. It cannot be saved and preserved if the thinking and actions built up over the centuries on the acceptability and permissibility of wars and armed conflicts are not shed once and for all, irrevocably."²

Many of the speakers emphasised the importance of the CPSU's conclusion that it is crucial to put an end to outdated political thinking and to develop and introduce into international practice a new type of consciousness consistent with the realities of the nuclear age. To think in categories of military strength in our day is to accept the possibility of humanity committing suicide. Today, when humanity is confronted with the question of "to be or not to be", there has to be a radically new approach to settling the cardinal issues of world politics. This approach is to be seen in Mikhail Gorbachov's Statement of January 15 and the Political Report to the 27th Congress of the CPSU. The innovative concept, advanced in these documents, of an interdependent world throws light on the dialectics of class and human interests and aims.

The Communists' inherent optimistic view of the world's future, it was declared at the meeting, cannot be based on a simplistic, superficial understanding of historical progress. The life of humanity with its many aspects and contradictions is seen by the Marxists as a coherent process unfolding on the basis of common regularities. The peoples are today drawn into a ramified system of diverse links and relations; this is the first time in world history that they are so closely bound by a common destiny.

"The prevailing dialectics of present-day development," states the Political Report to the 27th Congress of the CPSU, "consists in a combination of competition and confrontation between the two systems and in a growing tendency towards interdependence of the countries of the world community. This is precisely the way, through the struggle of opposites, through arduous effort, groping in the dark to some extent, as it were, that the controversial but *interdependent and in many ways integral world* is taking shape."³

In contrast to imperialism's militarist philosophy, which sets its aspirations above the interests of humanity, the Marxist philosophy of peace proceeds from human interests and values. Frederick Engels' words that "Communism stands, in principle, above the breach between bourgeoisie and proletariat, . . . because Communism is a question of humanity and not of the workers alone"⁴ were quoted in this context at the meeting. This attitude was enlarged upon and acquired the significance of a

programme guideline at the 27th CPSU Congress, at which it was stressed that in its practical work the party orients itself on Lenin's postulate that human life and the opportunities for its all-sided assertion constitute the greatest value, and that the interests of society's advancement stand above all else.

The communist world-view sees the human being with his interests and concerns as being at the centre of historical processes. This is precisely why the Communists hold that the appearance of thermonuclear weapons has raised the task of ensuring universal peace, of preventing a catastrophic conflict to the level of the paramount value in any hierarchy of international values, and that in order to achieve this aim it is necessary to "be above national egoism, tactical calculations, disputes and discords, which are worth nothing compared with the main value — peace, a dependable future".⁵

With the entire international situation undergoing a qualitative change, the Leninist concept of peaceful coexistence, which was further substantiated at the 27th Congress, remains the ideological foundation of the new Soviet initiatives. Peaceful coexistence is seen not merely as the absence of wars. It is a world order under which not military strength but goodneighbourly relations and cooperation would prevail, an order under which there would be a broad exchange of scientific and technological achievements and of cultural values for the benefit of all peoples. Deliverance from the expenditure of vast resources on military requirements would make it possible to use the products of labour exclusively for constructive purposes. Countries taking the road of independent development would be safeguarded against impingement from without, and it would be easier for them to proceed with the task of promoting national and social development. Moreover, it would be possible to resolve global problems with all states pooling their efforts. The CPSU, it was said at the Editorial Council meeting, has advanced the conclusion — of immense significance in terms of theory and practice — that on the international scene the objective conditions have taken shape in which the confrontation between capitalism and socialism can proceed only and exclusively in the form of peaceful competition, of peaceful contest.

In considering the propositions on peaceful coexistence, speakers noted that, essentially, they are principles synthesising the experience of the anti-war struggle of the Soviet Communists. In the discussion it was stated that realisation of the thesis, stemming from this experience, that it is possible to exclude wars from society's life would, in its significance for the destiny of the world, be commensurate with the Great October Revolution and the victory over Hitlerite fascism.

The political philosophy underlying the Soviet peace programme is a philosophy of social progress, speakers said. This philosophy proceeds from the premise that the future of peace is ultimately linked to all countries having a progressive, democratic system, to their peoples enjoying the right to free, independent development. It is beyond anybody's power to maintain a perpetual status quo in the world. Neither the class struggle of the working people, nor the national liberation movement, nor the ideological confrontation on the world scene can cease. In the nuclear age it is madness to attempt to put back the clock by force, export counter-revolution, and use ideological contradictions for undermining state-to-state relations. The Communists held that it is futile and impermissible to push revolution from without, let alone by military means.

In the light of these propositions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, it was noted at the discussion that the growth of the war threat significantly influences the struggle of the working people for social progress. That there is a definite regularity here was pointed out by Frederick Engels: "If conditions have changed in the case of war between nations, this is no less true in the case of the class struggle."⁶ What does this signify for the working class and its party in the present situation when the nuclear-missile factor has entered the sphere of social confrontation?

Speakers said that this means, in the first place, that it is essential to preclude

developments that could lead to a world nuclear catastrophe. What progress can one speak of if the preservation of the human race and normal conditions for its vital activity are not ensured? The historic mission of the working class is now getting a new dimension — that of using all its strength to prevent a nuclear conflagration, while the unalterable aim of the Communists to liberate humankind from all forms of exploitation and violence remains inseparable from the task of preserving life on earth.

In specifying these propositions, representatives of fraternal parties emphasised that the problems of war and peace have now acquired an unparalleled social significance. To say nothing of the missile-nuclear threat, the arms race nourishing it is very adversely affecting society. The gigantic growth of military spending places a heavy burden on the peoples, results in cuts in social programmes, increases unemployment, and perniciously influences civilian branches of the economy.

Editorial Council members from developing nations pointed out that while gigantic material and intellectual resources are being spent on the senseless arms race being spurred by the military-industrial complex, vast regions in Latin America, Asia, and Africa lack the means for satisfying the most elementary human requirements, and hundreds of millions of people are destitute, hungry, and exposed to disease. The following statistics were cited. Per capita income in the Third World countries is, on the average, one-eleventh of the comparable income in industrialised states; 570 million people in the developing world are undernourished; 800 million adults are illiterate; 250 million children have no access to education; medical facilities for 1,500,000,000 people are meagre, to say the least, or non-existent altogether. The situation is compounded by the involvement of developing nations themselves in the arms race. The annual growth rate of their military budgets averaged about 7 per cent in the 1960s, but went up in the 1980s to almost 15 per cent, a figure in excess of the growth rate of their GNP.

The war threat has coupled socio-economic problems to the task of fighting the arms race, militarism, and imperialism's aggressive policies. This link is so direct that no single major social issue can in fact be resolved without putting an end to militarism in politics, in international relations. This conclusion bears out also the following reference, made in one of the papers, to the Political Report to the 27th Congress of the CPSU: there is an irrefutable causal connection between the trillion-sized debt of the developing nations and the more than trillion-sized growth of the US military expenditures in the past ten years. The 200-odd billion dollars that are being annually pumped out of these countries by imperialism and the practically equal size of the US military budget in recent years are no coincidence.

Militarism, it was said at the Editorial Council meeting, has a direct interest in preserving and hardening the system of neocolonialist superexploitation. One can thus see why imperialism seeks to make the possibility of disarmament dependent on the developing countries renouncing their efforts to reinforce their sovereignty and on the socialist countries halting their support for these efforts. For the peoples of the developing world, who comprise two-thirds of the world's population, these terms signify that attempts are being made to confront them with the dilemma: either accept the perpetuation of servile dependence on the imperialist monopolies and remain without existing socialism's support or bear the responsibility for blocking agreements on disarmament and the ensuing threat of annihilation to humankind, of which they are a part. This is a fabricated dilemma. Between the struggle for peace and the struggle for national independence and social progress there is no conflict but rather a profound and productive interaction that has to be promoted in all countries and regions.

Socialism's Response to the Challenge of the Times

An analysis of the basic tendencies and contradictions of the world of today compellingly shows, it was said at the meeting, that the destinies of peace and social

progress are now closer linked than ever before to the dynamic economic and political development of the socialist community. Its countries are working to avert the war threat not only because peace is the only acceptable alternative to nuclear catastrophe but also because socialism's nature is oriented on peaceful constructive work. The fulfilment of its long-term plans and the safeguarding of peace are twin tasks. The accelerated promotion of socialism's creative potentials depends largely on the international climate just as the consolidation of peace depends on the rate of the new social system's further development.

Thus, speakers emphasised, it was indicative that at a turning-point for the world precisely socialism in the person of the Soviet Union advanced a series of foreign policy initiatives aimed at enabling humankind to meet the year 2000 under a peaceful sky and a peaceful outer space. At the core of the Soviet programme is the clear and concrete aim of abolishing all nuclear weapons. A successive, phased reduction of the arsenals of these weapons with a ban placed on the development, testing, and deployment of space strike armaments must be started by the USSR and the USA, and this process would then be joined by other nuclear powers, thereby making it possible to consummate nuclear disarmament everywhere by the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The material conditions and guarantees for the consolidation of peace, from which the Soviet programme proceeds, are of particularly great significance for world security, it was said at the discussion. "... The most superficial observer," one of the speakers said, quoting Marx, "must admit, that the prospects of peace being circumscribed within the limits of talk, the prospects of war, on the contrary, are based upon material facts."⁷ The situation on the international scene has changed radically since these words were spoken. Today socialism with its economic and defence capability and its influence on world politics has become a powerful material factor of peace. The recent congresses of fraternal parties of socialist community countries have reaffirmed socialism's ability and determination to change the course of events in favour of peace. Addressing the 11th Congress of the SUPG, Mikhail Gorbachov said: "The decisions of our party congresses are together providing socialism's response to the challenge of the times. Understandably enough, in its concrete manifestations this response will be multifarious, reflecting fraternal countries' specific features of development. But it will be one and the same in terms of principle because we have common goals and the same, communist, world outlook."⁸

Referring to the programme documents of their parties, representatives of fraternal parties of socialist countries on the Editorial Council noted that the Soviet peace programme fosters foreign policy cooperation and solidarity among the states of the new, socialist world. For instance, at the 17th Congress of the CPCz it was declared that the Communists and people of Czechoslovakia wholeheartedly support this grand programme and are using all the means and potentialities at their disposal to make the most effective contribution to its implementation. Warm support for the Soviet initiatives, which are consistent with the aspirations of all peoples, was expressed by the 13th Congress of the BCP. They, it was stated at the 11th Congress of the SUPG, are entirely in keeping with our ideal of a world without armaments and violence, a world in which every nation freely decides the question of the ways for its development. The Soviet peace programme is inseparable from the coordinated collective foreign policy of the Warsaw Treaty member-states, comprising its foundation, as it were, said the representative of the PUWP. Socialist solidarity with and unequivocal support for this programme has been expressed also by the Communists of Hungary, Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam.

In characterising the foreign policy line of the CPSU as an amalgam consisting of the philosophy of making the world safe and a platform of concrete actions, members of the Editorial Council said that it sets the orientation toward a campaign for detente, demanding, above all, action, political will, and determination to attain the set aims. It

was noted that in the face of the nuclear threat the crystallisation of new thinking must be accompanied by the development of appropriate *vigorous actions* to remove this threat.

Formulated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the Fundamental Principles for an All-Embracing System of International Security are a new road in world policies and encompass all the key areas of international politics. They help to define the concrete directions of such action, it was said at the discussion. These Principles, it was noted, demonstrate the Soviet Union's sense of responsibility for the destiny of humanity and its striving to put an end to the balancing on the brink of war, to the "balance of fear", and move to genuinely humane forms of relations between countries on the basis of peaceful coexistence. In the nuclear-space age the only intelligent option is collective security on the principle that the "security of each is the security of all". National security is a fiction if it does not fit into the pattern of universal security. The concept of an all-embracing system of security contains the prerequisites for the materialisation of the idea of a new political philosophy of peace.

This concept emanates from the premise that the character of present-day weaponry leaves no country with any hope of safeguarding itself solely with military and technical means. With the appearance of a huge capacity for mutual overkill it has become senseless to increase the size of the military arsenals of the USSR and the USA, of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO. The task of preserving civilisation, some of the speakers said, rises above bloc, national and other interests. In this context it was stressed that more vigorous efforts had to be made to expose the attempts being made by Washington to impose a concept of security backed by space-based nuclear weapons as the alternative to the approach that calls for settling the problems of security by non-military, political means. Implementation of this concept would turn outer space into a source of a lethal threat to humankind and open the flood-gates to an uncontrollable arms race.

If nuclear arsenals continue to be increased, even strategic parity will at best ensure *equal danger*, not *equal security*, it was said at the meeting. Continuation of the nuclear arms race will inevitably heighten this equal threat and may bring it to a point where even parity will cease to be a factor of military-political deterrence. Consequently, it is vital, in the first place, to dramatically reduce the level of military confrontation. For the Communists this means, above all, acting jointly with other participants in the peace movements in order to bring greater pressure to bear on the governments and parliaments of imperialist states. Mass actions are the only factor that can compel them to institute steps to remove the nuclear threat and achieve disarmament.

All this is made all the more important by the fact that the programme for a nuclear-free world advanced by the CPSU was given a hostile reception by the ruling circles of the imperialist powers. Although they talk about easing international tension and, at times, declare that they are prepared to abolish nuclear weapons, they either shun constructive action as soon as the question of practical steps is brought up or confine themselves to vague promises that mislead world opinion.

It was pointed out that in contrast to this posture the USSR and its allies are showing that in socialism's foreign policy words do not conflict with actions, that this policy is stable, consistent and immune to fleeting situation changes. A fundamental task of the peace forces, it was declared, is to explain to the people the fundamental distinction between the two lines in world politics.

Participants in the discussion, particularly representatives of communist parties of developing nations, focussed much of their attention on the idea of creating a system of international economic security. Such a system would, on the one hand, release the peoples from the unbearable burden of the arms race and, on the other, protect every nation against discrimination, sanctions, exorbitant debt commitments, and other attributes of imperialist policy. A world congress on economic security, at which it would be possible to consider the entire spectrum of issues straining world economic

relations, would help to further vitalise the struggle of the peoples of developing countries for national independence and social progress and link it up with the struggle against the war threat.

By advancing a constructive programme for nuclear disarmament and ensuring universal security, socialism has given a clear and explicit reply to a question of vital significance to all peoples, the question of the ways for ensuring peace. However, the struggle will be an uphill one, it was stressed at the meeting, and there should be no illusions on this score.

To make the tactics and strategy of the Communists' Struggle for peace effective there has to be a constant analysis of long-term and current, transient changes in the alignment of social and political forces on the world scene and in the capitalist countries. This requires taking into all-sided account the alignment of strength among the ruling circles of each of these countries, the distinctions between the bellicose and the more moderate, realistically-minded members of the various factions of the bourgeoisie, the inter-imperialist contradictions, and the correlation between centrifugal and centripetal tendencies in the interaction among imperialism's main centres. But the main thing is, speakers stressed, to strengthen the coalition of peace and intelligence uniting all who are opposed to the nuclear threat.

Diverse Conditions, Common Aspirations

The fraternal parties see the Soviet peace programme as an effective alternative to the imperialist policy of aggression and diktat. The front along which imperialist reaction is launching its assaults is widening, and the intensity of these assaults is mounting. This requires closer unity and a further vitalisation of the peace forces. Noting that the peace programme advanced by the 27th Congress of the CPSU is giving a powerful impulse to fighters for peace, freedom, and national dignity, many of the speakers dwelt on how individual communist parties, functioning in different countries and under different conditions, could more effectively counter imperialism's aggressive policies.

Unquestionably, the paramount task is to prevent the reactionary circles from starting a nuclear war. The forms and modes of action are dictated to the Communists by the actual situation, the character of the militarist pressure, and the correlation of the forces confronting each other. The solution of the global task of removing the threat of nuclear catastrophe is seen today in a gradual *paring down of imperialism's possibilities for using military strength to attain political aims*.

In fashioning the strategy and tactics of their work the fraternal parties are taking into account the fact that the solution of national or regional problems is inseparable from a fundamental improvement of the international situation as a whole. The arms race unleashed by the USA, its neoglobalist claims backed by a show of military strength, its gross interference in the affairs of other nations, and its undisguised piracy are today becoming a factor of the national life of many countries. At the meeting it was noted that this manifests many countries. At the meeting it was noted that this manifests itself most clearly in the planet's flashpoints, where the confrontation between the forces of peace and progress and the forces of war and reaction have reached a high pitch.

Representatives of communist parties spoke with anger and horror of the crimes being perpetrated by imperialism and Zionism in the Middle East and in a vast zone of the Mediterranean. Every act of aggression by them is another step in the escalation of armed violence and criminal operations against nations. The attacks against Lebanon, Tunisia, and Libya are milestones of the escalation of international terrorism in the region.

The policy of the present US administration features shameless propaganda campaigns in combination with military strikes at what are seen as "uncongenial" states, speakers said. The bandit attack on Grenada was one of the steps toward the

assertion in Washington of the dangerous imperial philosophy that it can do anything it likes. US imperialism has started an undeclared war against Nicaragua, whose people want to live in accordance with their own laws and reject foreign diktat in any form. If the aggressor is not stopped, there will undoubtedly be other victims.

The logic of the escalation of imperialist interference and piracy is well known to the peoples of Indochina from their own experience. Their struggle is still far from having ended. Having suffered defeat in its war against Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea, the USA has not abandoned its attempts to take revenge for that defeat. At present it elects to act through mercenaries. Given favourable conditions, the US military may, here as well, drop all camouflage and decide upon direct aggression.

Imperialism is employing analogous tactics in Africa. It uses dependent regimes, mercenaries, and the armed forces of South Africa's racists to fight countries that have elected to follow the socialist orientation. Bandit attacks are staged not only against Angola, Ethiopia, and Mozambique. Now the target is the whole of Africa, all the African peoples striving to cut short the imperialist pillage of their national wealth.

Conflicts called regional in Washington are much wider than their formal local character would suggest. In fact, the American attempts to bring pressure to bear by force, it was noted at the discussion, are actions in defiance of the world community of nations. It must be borne in mind that the "doctrine of neoglobalism", by which the ruling circles of the USA are now guided, is no more than an apologia for confrontation with existing socialism, with all whom the Washington administration finds objectionable, an apologia of establishing US hegemony in the world.

The Communists and the other peace forces are concerned about the situation in regions where the Second World War came to an end more than four decades ago. In Europe the US military are constantly enlarging the nuclear forces targeted on the socialist world. The continued deployment of first-strike Pershing IIs and cruise missiles, alongside the further build-up of the British and French nuclear capability, undermines the military balance on the continent and universal security. In the Far East and in the Pacific the USA has put together the second largest military group after the one in Western Europe in terms of numerical and military strength. This group poses a threat to the socialist states and independent nations in Asia. The Pentagon's militarist preparations are being joined more and more actively by the armed forces of Japan and South Korea. The US Pacific Fleet has long ago extended the sphere of its operations to the Indian Ocean — combat units of this fleet are on constant patrol off the shores of South and Southwest Asia.

An analysis of the situation in various parts of the world compellingly confirms the significance of new efforts being made to cut short the plans of the imperialists. The objectives inspiring these efforts are the abolition of conditions for imperialist armed interference, the cessation of the arms race, a ban on the deployment of weapons in outer space, a drastic cut in military spending, and the creation of a dependable system of common security.

Changes in Favour of Peace

At the Editorial Council meeting it has been noted that changes are taking place in the social consciousness, and these are evidence of a new, affirmative attitude of many people in the non-socialist world to the wide-ranging Soviet peace initiatives. Some are still only pondering the ways proposed by socialism for resolving the problems of the entire world community, others have come round to understanding the need for their personal participation in the defence of peace, and still others have long ago joined in the work of peace organisations. This is opening up new possibilities for enlisting various social groups and organisations into the peace movement. Conducive conditions are taking shape for dialogue and cooperation with people who do not in all cases oppose imperialism consciously, are often not in agreement with the ideological and political posture of the Communists, but are concerned for the destinies of peace

and, without abandoning their own views, prepared to help resolve the main issues of the times. Various socio-political forces are increasingly gravitating toward close peaceful interaction on the national and international levels. It was noted at the 27th Congress of the CPSU that the "trend towards strengthening the potential of peace, reason, and goodwill is enduring and in principle irreversible. At the back of it is the aspiration of people, of all nations to live in concord and to cooperate."⁹

At the meeting facts were given to illustrate the changes that have taken place in the social consciousness in the face of the mounting dangers to humanity. The following are only some of them. At the congress of scientists and workers in culture held in Warsaw within the International Year of Peace framework, eminent scientists, writers, workers in the arts, and men of conscience — people of different countries and with different world-views — adopted a joint appeal that is consistent in spirit and orientation with the Soviet peace programme. In Jordan a group of political personalities, members of parliament, and representatives of national progressive forces, women's workers', trade union, and other public organisations published a statement declaring their total support for the proposal for abolishing nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000. At the close of March, despite the stormy weather and cold rain, 380,000 people filled the streets and squares of cities in the FRG in the course of only four Easter days. The columns of demonstrators formed a kaleidoscopic picture of the peace movement in all its breadth: lilac for Christians, red for the Communists, the Social Democrats, the Union of Young German Workers, the Young Socialists, and the Marxist Union of Students and the most diverse coloured banners and streamers of trade unions, the Greens, women's organisations, various individual groups, and shopfloor and office workers of many industrial facilities.

Speakers drew special attention to the fact that socialism's peace offensive is powerfully influencing the course of the ideological struggle, restricting the opportunities of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, and giving the peace forces moral and political predominance. The Communists characterise the Soviet peace programme as their powerful weapon against imperialist aggressiveness: this weapon is shattering the social props of imperialism's militarist policies. As the representative of the Communist Party USA said, the Statement of January 15 "dealt a blow to US imperialist ideology and to Reagan himself. The next move is now up to him. What will his answer be?"

Public opinion is with increasing clarity seeing through the demagogic assertion that "both superpowers are responsible" for the arms race, the aggravation of international tension, the representative of the Communist Party of Greece declared. People representing diverse social forces are stating their views about the present world situation in the newspaper *Rizospastis*. Leading political personalities, retired generals, and the leadership of mass organisations are coming to the conclusion that anti-war demands should now be addressed to only one side, the USA, for the USSR suggests and even unilaterally implements the measures whose adoption is sought by the peace movement itself.

Analogous conclusions, the representative of the German Communist Party said, are being drawn by large sections of public opinion in the FRG. The view, advanced in the peace movement for years, that the threat to humankind comes in equal measure from the two "superpowers" got very little support at the Easter marches this year. The thesis about superpowers did not figure in the exhortations to these marches for the first time. There was good reason for this. More and more people in the FRG consider that the USA is flouting the interests of the overwhelming majority of the world's population.

In Ireland, said the representative of that country's Communist Party, many people are drawing attention to the fact that every new peace initiative by socialism is quickly and flatly rejected by the US administration and its allies. This hasty response validates the public suspicion that these initiatives are not even properly studied and that the

policy of rejecting proposals "from the East" is determined by a small group of people. This is making large numbers of Irish people doubt the Western stance on questions of war and peace and demolishes the contention of the right-wing leaders in the peace movement that both sides bear an "equal responsibility" for the deadlock in the disarmament negotiations.

Despite repressions by the authorities the peace fighters in Turkey, noted the representative of the Communist Party of Turkey, are growing more militant, rejecting the worn-out lie about the "threat from the North". Even right-wing politicians belonging to bourgeois opposition parties are stating bluntly that in its foreign policy the USSR is guided by the principles of goodneighbourly relations and peace, while the USA regards Turkey as a colony, as a springboard for aggression against socialism.

The Communists of Senegal note that the bourgeois press is having difficulties in its attempts to develop a suitable tone toward the Soviet Union and its peace initiatives because the "Soviet military threat" myths are no longer effective. New myths of this sort for anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaigns have yet to be fabricated. The peace forces should use this in their mass explanatory work in order to widen the struggle against US imperialist policy, which is the actual threat to all nations.

Participants in the discussion assessed as a positive phenomenon the fact that socialism's peace offensive is becoming a tangible factor of national life in non-socialist countries. Representatives of fraternal parties spoke in favour of a more effective utilisation of the new opportunities being opened by the foreign policy of the USSR and other Warsaw Treaty Organisation countries to enlarge the peace movement and upgrade the forms and methods of rebuffing imperialist propaganda.

In the view of the Danish Communists, in the present situation more is needed than general statements. The question stands concretely: How can the growing awareness of the people be turned, to use Marx's words, into a material force? In working out the strategy of the peace struggle it is expedient to take a closer look at the ways and means employed by the militarist forces in their actions. In order to mobilise public opinion in defence of peace it is mandatory to show what benefits are sought by the politicians who support the arms race and what can be done to halt that race.

Imperialism is conducting its preparations for war intensively and in many directions. This makes it all the more important for the peace forces to achieve mutual understanding on how to stop dangerous developments, notably the arms race.

The first step in the direction of genuine disarmament, speakers said, could consist of partial measures, for example, a moratorium on nuclear tests as is suggested in the Soviet peace programme. Such a moratorium could mark the beginning of the process of abolishing nuclear armaments. It is obvious that this is a realistic proposal: it does not clash with anybody's national interests and has been made by a power whose words carry weight. The efforts to put an end to nuclear tests are illustrative in the sense that the militarists can no longer misrepresent what is clearly apparent to the eye. The USSR has raised the question of a ban on nuclear tests in such concrete and clear terms that this had a tremendous impact on world public opinion, made it easier for people to understand the problem, and thereby boosted the efficacy of the mass struggle.

Militarist forces, it was said at the discussion, are using anti-communism and spreading lies, preconceptions, and prejudices in their attempts to create an atmosphere of war hysteria. Consequently, the task is to combat this anti-humane atmosphere and uphold the ideals of peace and friendship, realism and truth. These are highly significant ideals and they help to unite the peace forces.

The unleashing of a war is, as a rule, preceded by a destabilisation of the international situation that sows confusion among large sections of the population and allows catching them by surprise. In this light, participants in the meeting said, it is immensely important that state-to-state agreements are signed on a renunciation of the use of nuclear armaments and of force generally to settle international problems. When countries make the commitment, as the USSR and the People's Republic of

China have done, that they will not be the first to use these armaments they thereby acknowledge that nobody has the right to threaten to start a nuclear war. To get all the nuclear powers to make such a commitment means to help stabilise international relations and consolidate world security.

The fraternal parties hold that conducted in all these directions the struggle for peace can unite a huge majority of people in joint actions regardless of ideological differences. In the face of such overwhelming activity the warmongers would have to be careful not to find themselves isolated. Imperialism can and must be compelled to look into the eyes of truth, to reckon with present-day realities!

Growing Role of the Communists

The Communists are represented in all the main motive forces of social development, playing the unique role of the factor linking up the struggle against imperialism with the struggle for peace, democracy, and social progress. No other political force is able to perform this function. Hence the special responsibility of the Communists for the preservation of life on earth.

A cardinal task, speakers said, is to explain the peace initiatives of the USSR and the other socialist countries more actively in order to deprive militarist propaganda of the possibility of influencing public opinion. This will enable the peace movement to win to its side new forces, including realistically-minded members of the bourgeoisie — political personalities and businessmen who are not making a profit out of the arms race. Besides, this will help the people see the ways for resolving urgent problems linked to disarmament, putting an end to backwardness, and eradicating hunger and disease.

Wide publicity for the Soviet peace programme, the representative of the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour said, would make the work of the Communists more effective, facilitate their contacts with the masses and gradually tear down the veil that imperialism uses to distort the image of socialism and prevent people from understanding developments in socialist countries. Before reporting Soviet initiatives the mass media in Senegal used to wait for an interpretation of these initiatives by Washington. It was only through American propaganda spectacles that the Senegalese people looked at what the Soviet Union was doing. Today there is a demand for a different type of information, for unbiased information: the people want to know what is really taking place in countries of the socialist world, what their intentions and actual affairs are. More people have begun to believe the Communists, to heed their voice.

This is a noteworthy development. In capitalist countries the Communists are regarded by the people as the natural allies of socialism, and it is socialism that is offering humanity the true road toward deliverance from the threat of destruction. Of course, a considerable effort has still to be made to turn interest in the Soviet programme into readiness to contribute to the building of a nuclear-free and safe world. As the participants in the meeting pointed out, imperialism and reaction have no intention of taking up defensive positions. They have powerful information media whose potential for influencing public opinion is far superior to the possibilities at the disposal of the Communists and other progressive and peace forces in capitalist countries. The anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda campaign is by no means folding up. But with humankind's survival at stake, imperialism's line toward confrontation with socialism, the fanning of tension in the world, and the suppression of liberation struggles generate protests among the masses and a striving to join in repulsing the warmongers.

In Greece, said the representative of the Communist Party of Greece, the peace movement has a clearly pronounced anti-American slant and this gives it wide scope. Of course, not everybody is as yet convinced that the war threat is rooted in the nature of imperialism. Many people feel this rather by intuition than by anything else.

However, experience has shown the masses that in all the complex problems encountered by Greek society in the past 20 years (the dictatorship of the Black Colonels, the dismemberment of Cyprus, the dismantling of US military bases, and so on), the interests of the NATO militarist forces, of the US militarists in the first place, have come into conflict with those of the people.

Imperialist dictation and aggression evoke growing opposition in Central America, the Middle East, and Asia, actuating liberation processes and arousing strong counter-action from fighters for peace and social progress. Every Latin American, said the representative of the Communist Party of Chile, is now aware that the USA cannot be permitted to intervene in Central America. The movement for a political settlement of the region's problems and solidarity with the peoples of Nicaragua and El Salvador are steadily growing in strength. There is a broad consensus in democratic circles also in regard to the campaign to annul the external debt of the Latin American countries and establish a new international economic order. Noting these tendencies, the Communist Party of Cuba and other fraternal parties in the region are trying to raise the level of interaction and cooperation between various socio-political forces, of the Communists with the Social Democrats and Christians in the first place. Their positions are drawing closer in the main thing, namely in the efforts to create conditions for the free and peaceful development of nations and to do away with everything likely to trigger tension.

In the Middle East, it was said at the Editorial Council meeting, the Communists are working to unite the patriotic forces on the basis of a just settlement of the region's problems in keeping with the interests of all its peoples, including the right of the Palestinian people to a state of their own. In the prevailing situation they are acting to counter the imperialist-Israeli aggression, block the Camp David conspiracy and other conspiratory agreements, and extinguish the flashpoint of civil war in Lebanon. The fraternal parties of Arab countries see their efforts as a contribution to the common cause of defending peace.

The Communists of the developing states of Asia and Africa attach special significance to mobilising public opinion against the Pentagon's plans for harnessing these states to the USA's bloc policy and thereby creating new springboards of aggression against socialism and the national liberation movement.

Although they work under different conditions, speakers pointed out, the Communists take into account the line pursued by socialism and other forces of peace and progress in their own plans and actions. They harmonise their potentialities with the intentions and plans of their partners in the peace movement and endeavour to unite them in the face of imperialism's course toward aggression. The 27th Congress of the CPSU and the congresses of the fraternal parties of other socialist countries gave fresh impulses to this many-sided activity, which organically fits into the coherent programme for making the world safe. The Communists are now clearer about what they can do themselves and also about what their allies in the joint struggle are doing and trying to achieve.

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The epochal significance of the Soviet peace programme, it was stated at the Editorial Council meeting, is that it opens up the prospect for a fundamental improvement of the international situation. Humankind is getting the opportunity to build up, by common effort, a dependable system of security that will provide military, political, economic, and social guarantees for the peaceful development of every people. This opportunity will not be missed, the representatives of fraternal parties said, if the entire potential for peace, common sense, and goodwill is mobilised.

In the opinion of speakers at the meeting, the journal *World Marxist Review* has a most active role to play in helping to achieve this historical aim — this role lies in giving

people a thorough grasp of the peace initiatives of the USSR and other socialist community countries, exposing imperialism's political and ideological acts of subversion and, of course, giving wide coverage to the anti-war struggle of the Communists and all other democratic, peace forces in the new conditions.

The discussion showed that the Communists are at one in answering the question: Will the human race carry on or will it perish? Their reply is: Social progress, the life of civilisation must and will continue. This confidence, founded on the historical optimism inherent in the Communists, is sustained by profound knowledge of the objective laws of social development, brought to light and substantiated by Marxism-Leninism. It is backed up by the preparedness of the communist movement to promote constructive cooperation with all the forces concerned about the destinies of humanity, by the unflagging, persevering efforts of the fraternal parties on behalf of peace and progress.

¹ *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, A New Edition, Moscow, 1986, p.20 (in Russian).

² Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 74.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 581-582.

⁵ *Pravda*, January 16, 1986.

⁶ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 199.

⁷ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 261.

⁸ *Information Bulletin*, No. 12, 1986.

⁹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *op.cit.*, p. 83.

Capitalism in the 1980s Main Lines of Marxist Studies

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An international symposium, 'Imperialism in the 1980s', was held in Prague by the WMR Commission on General Theoretical Problems to mark the 70th anniversary of Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. Below is an abridged text of Heinz Jung's main paper at the symposium. A summary of the other papers presented at the symposium will be published in WMR shortly.

LENIN'S theory of imperialism, which he formulated within the framework of Marx's theory of capitalism, provides the only basis for any fruitful analysis of the trends within the imperialist system in the 1980s, and it is especially important today for studying the industrialised capitalist countries as systems of state-monopoly capitalism (SMC), that is, capitalism which has reached the high degree of socialisation at which the coalescence of the power of the monopolies and the state is its characteristic feature.

FRG Marxists regard their analytical work as a component part of the international Marxist-Leninist studies of imperialism,¹ whose results are reflected in the documents of the 27th Congress of the CPSU and of other communist and workers' parties.

According to Lenin's conception, the dominant relations of property and political power in the capitalist society in the twentieth century are pivoted on the monopolies

and finance capital, originating in the course of the law-governed process of capitalist socialisation, and under the influence of its contradictions. But Lenin also regarded imperialism as an international system with its inherent domination of the periphery by the metropolitan countries, rivalry of states, and competition between monopoly and financial groups, a system evolving in accordance with the law of uneven development.

What Lenin said about imperialism still holds true today and provides the basis for analysing the development of SMC in the 1980s. But the present stage has its essential distinctions, for with the emergence of socialism and the break-up of the colonial structure, imperialism has ceased to be the one and only world system. In terms of world history, the initiative has passed to socialism, and that determines the character of the present epoch.

Lenin's study of imperialism led him to the discovery of the specific social contradictions and class battles of his day and to the formulation of the proletariat's revolutionary strategy. His definition of the concrete forms of class relations and bourgeois domination, which are characteristic of each set of concrete historical conditions, is of key significance, and is a methodological approach that is highly important for the revolutionary working class movement in our own day as well.

Peace and disarmament are obviously the overriding issue today, and it sets the tone in studies of every aspect of present-day imperialism. In the light of the need to solve this main problem of safeguarding the human civilisation, Marxists now analyse the differentiation within the ruling forces of imperialism, alternative versions of its development within the existing SMC systems and types of international relations, and the patterns of political and social forces on the national and international scale. The interaction of the struggle for peace, democratic movements and class struggle, in the nuclear age has acquired new features, and the Communists must take these into account in their strategic propositions in the context of SMC and the development of peace movements.

SMC development in the 1980s can, on the whole, be characterised by its adaptation to the changed internal and external conditions, whose contradictory and disproportionate nature was made most manifest in the world economic crisis of capitalism in the 1970s. The SMC shaped by the monopoly bourgeoisie in the postwar period was designed to overcome and ease the economic and social contradictions generated by international and internal social factors of the class struggle. The system is in the grip of a crisis which not only continues today, but which is ever more acute in many respects.

The monopoly bourgeoisie has responded with a strategy of reorienting SMC development and switching to a class policy of social take-back. Such a policy was established at the centres of imperialism as the monopoly bourgeoisie's main orientation by the mid-1980s, and has led to the prevalence of conservative conceptions and forms of class domination on the political level.

It is a situation that is not characteristic of all the developed capitalist countries, but of the main centres of imperialism. Meanwhile, the internal and external limitations for conducting the conservative line have recently been made manifest. There is a regrouping of social and political forces, producing the possibility of a centrist reorientation or a shift to the left. Let us consider, in this context, some of the basic processes and changes.

Internationalism of Production and Contradictions

The inner evolution of SMC in present-day conditions cannot be understood without an analysis of the specific features of the international system of imperialism. Even in the 1960s, the internationalisation of the capitalist world economy led to its

monopolisation on a new scale, with the formation of international concerns known as the transnational corporations (TNCs). Their fixed capital is based mainly within national borders, while a steadily growing share of production and marketing involves operations abroad. Those are the specific features, for instance, of all the major monopolies in the FRG: they are not only the leading exporters of goods and services, but are also the main channels for the movement of capital—profits and direct investments—between nations. In recent years, the TNCs have been exporting more loan capital and taking an active part in international credit and monetary operations. The TNCs' orientation towards world markets has a great influence on SMC systems, and this is reflected in economic and political conceptions of 'modernisation for international competitiveness'. It is the TNCs that want a supply policy ensuring a growth of profits, while leaving the problem of satisfying internal demand in the background, so that there is a discrepancy between the monopolies' concern for profits and the development needs of the domestic market. Their strategic orientation towards higher profits ultimately tends to sharpen the *crisis of the mechanism by means of which economic processes are regulated*. That is also promoted by various other factors.

First, scientific and technical progress is now an ever more crucial prerequisite for the sharpening of international monopoly competition and induces a mobilisation of national resources. SMC policy in military-related science and technology (especially in the United States, and to a growing extent in the FRG) goes to strengthen the military-industrial complex and its influence.

Second, the development of international money markets controlled by finance capital, and beyond the reach of national regulation, is directly connected with the structural over-accumulation of capital. The relative independence of loan and fictitious capital on an international scale has been growing. The exaggerated interest rates, the vast influx of capital into the United States, the financing of armaments from balance-of-payments deficits, etc., have all gone to make monetary, credit and foreign-exchange relations as a whole the most sensitive nerves of international economic relations in the capitalist world. Even though imperialist countries can now influence them only within very narrow limits. Rivalry in this area has moved to the foreground of inter-imperialist rivalry, and here again there are growing contradictions between national SMC systems and monopoly and finance capital operating internationally.

Third, there is further internationalisation of SMC in connection not only with the development of such regional integration entities as the European Economic Community (EEC), but also of international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), among others. Alongside the states and monopolies, these are unquestionably new subjects of international capitalist relations exercising their economic and political functions for the benefit of monopoly capital. That is where a relatively new sphere of imperialist contradictions is emerging. These international institutions simultaneously operate as agencies of collective imperialist domination, with now and again a considerable role in countering the growth of crisis processes. These institutions tend to generate new structures of international economic and political relations, which could be seen as a trend towards the internationalisation of SMC.

Meanwhile, in the light of the competition between the imperialist countries, the current decade has provided a test for the Marxist conception of three centres of rivalry (North America, Japan and Western Europe), which was formulated back in the 1960s. There is now a prevalence in the capitalist world of centripetal trends, above all in consequence of the internationalisation of the economy. While that does not do away with the contradictions and the related centrifugal trends, many

economists believe that the cooperation between the three centres is not likely to be suspended as a result of some spasmodic surge of protectionism or the collapse of the system of capitalist monetary, credit and foreign-exchange relations, when the volcano of the international financial and debt crisis erupts. They expect imperialism to find ways of ensuring its basic interests through international regulation of the crisis processes.

That also applies to Western Europe. The development of economic integration does not do away with the rivalry and hegemonistic tendencies among the capitalists of the individual countries, notably West German imperialism. Guided by the interests of its monopolies, it has conducted a line of its own in many areas, irrespective of the ties with the EEC.

West European imperialism is obviously striving to set up along its periphery a ring of dependent states (Lome Agreement) as a zone of its direct influence, without carrying it to the point of a break with NATO and US imperialism. The West European monopolies have been trying to set up a system of 'collective' domination, and this cuts across the urge of US imperialism to assert its own hegemony. That provides the basis for a differentiation within the monopoly bourgeoisie, with the emergence of alternative strategies, as reflected in the activity of EEC institutions and agencies. That was made most manifest in their diverse attitudes to Reagan's SDI project, the Eureka project, and so on.

To complete the picture of the development of imperialism's international system account must be taken of its impact on the less developed countries (LDCs) and their burgeoning debt and mounting exploitation. The imperialist fight against the establishment of a new international economic order tends to worsen the international terms of trade and the economic conditions of the LDCs, and that, for its part, slows down economic growth within the zone of industrialised capitalism. SMC's need to solve many of the external economic-crisis problems intensifies its own internal contradictions.

Crisis of Economic Regulation

The central point of any Marxist analysis of the problem is to bring out the specific features of present-day capitalism, since that is the only basis for any realistic assessment of the strategy of the antagonistic classes in the capitalist society and its prospective movement.

The capitalist economy has continued to develop through a rhythm of cyclical crises, although their characteristics have changed substantially. In the FRG, for instance, the cyclical phase of recession ended in 1983, but the upward phase that followed, and that is still on, remains flabby. Mass unemployment has not shrunk, and there has been an increase in the 'old' and 'new' poverty. Even bourgeois experts do not expect any increase in economic growth rates or a decline in unemployment throughout the rest of the century down to the indicators of the earlier decades.

Let us recall the crisis of the early 1970s, with its characteristic feature of stagflation. It was largely caused by inflation, which originated in the United States under the Bretton Wood system, and sprang from the US financing of the Vietnam war.² The crisis was also a reflection of the monopolies' pricing policy and their strategy of resisting the devaluation of capital. That was the internal motor of inflation, but it was also the source of the basic weakness of the regulation mechanism geared to the interests of the monopolies. Following the 1974-1975 crisis, the TNCs' strategic aim was to reduce the level of inflation by regulating money supply and conducting a policy of austerity everywhere. However, this policy not only intensified the contradictions underlying the cyclical crises of reproduction but also sharpened the regional and sectoral structural crises and began to inflate government-budget

deficits.

The ecological crisis caused by the capitalist way of industrial development and consumption made itself known in the 1970s as yet another factor complicating the situation. In the densely populated and highly industrialised FRG, environmental protection became a formidable problem, and even its partial solution requires essential restructuring of the reproduction mechanism, something that is bound to affect monopoly profits. That is why the monopolies have blocked the solution of the ecological problem or have conducted a policy under which the costs of environmental protection are defrayed by the society alone.

There is, therefore, much more to it than the aggravation of the cyclical crisis, and Marxists classify these phenomena as a *crisis of the system of regulation and the basic economic structures of SMC*.

The substance of the current crisis of capitalism likewise exposes the changes in the accumulation of capital, and here it is important above all to bear in mind the conditions under which the economy is dominated by the TNCs.

In the FRG, for instance, intensive reproduction was established about twenty years ago, and it is now acquiring a number of new features at the 'electronic' phase of the scientific and technical revolution (STR), which is being spurred by the sharpening international competition. Investment activity in building and in the state sector began to decline in the late 1960s; modernising began to be restructured in the 1970s; the result is that labour-saving and capital-saving mechanisms of accumulation have been operating ever more actively in the basic spheres of production. This leads to a cost-saving expansion of capacities, i.e., to a redundancy of labour-power and capital. There is a sharpening of production and market contradictions, as investment demand from the capitalists and mass demand from consumers lag behind the requirements of reproduction, without the surplus capital being invested in the ecology, public transit, or a remodelling of the material base and social infrastructure, as this would depress the profit rate. The monopolies have also impeded any government-assisted improvement of the infrastructure, for this entails an important change in the redistribution mechanism which could hurt profits.

In the situation that has been taking shape, monopoly capital prefers external expansion, which, with the high level of internationalisation, intensifies the 'decoupling' of the monopolies from domestic markets; that explains the paradox of their stagnation while the concerns thrive on the profits reaped from external economic operations.

Overaccumulation is now manifested not only in the form of the existing unloaded capacities in the crisis-ridden areas, but also in the form of relatively surplus money capital in the dynamically developing areas, a result produced by introduction of new hardware and information systems to accelerate the turnover of capital, reduce inventories, and allow more flexible responses to market processes. All of this leads to a growth of loan capital, including fictitious capital. The positions of the major monopoly banks and the parasitism of finance capital, of which Lenin wrote, are immensely amplified.

The disproportions between the industries and the economic and social sectors have been compounded by the advent of the 'electronic' phase of the STR. In the FRG, the number of bankruptcies among small and middle enterprises rose to an unprecedented level in the cyclical phase of economic upswing. The 1980s are marked by a wave of new large-scale mergers, resulting in the emergence of high-technology concerns; these have powerful military-industrial components and act as vehicles of monopoly forms of R&D. Important restructuring processes are, therefore, under way within monopoly capital; these proceed partly under SMC direction, and in turn influence the lines of the state's economic activity.

Another essential change is that in the past capital used to migrate via the free-

competition mechanism until monopoly competition began to preponderate and the SMC mechanism for regulating it took shape. It is this mechanism that is now in a state of crisis, the main thrust of which is its incapacity to distribute the so-called factors of production in accordance with the development requirements of the productive forces and the needs of present-day reproductions. The crisis leads to a structural overaccumulation of capital as expressed in the phenomena and contradictions described above.

Strategy of Adaptation

How SMC now tries to adapt to the conditions of the mid-1980s should be a most important part of the analysis of present-day imperialism.

It is advisable to analyse in this context and in the light of the basis and reproduction spheres, the organisational mechanism by means of which the monopolies, the state machine and the society as a whole interact. That signifies a need to consider the role of *state-monopoly capital* within the end-of-century capitalist system, which means not only the present forms of state enterprise, the forms of 'mixed' capital, but also the interweaving of government funds and acts with private capital accumulation. The imperialist state evidently not only guarantees the political-class domination of the capitalist proprietors in the traditional way, but also provides the economic conditions for the realisation of capital as class property. This function is now fulfilled through a multilayered combination of organisational structures with monopoly-controlled associations of entrepreneurs having the central role to play.

The important thing is to bear in mind that the development of state-monopoly complexes, as organisational forms of state-monopoly capital, is not confined to the military-industrial sphere. It is a wider process in the course of which relatively new systems of monopoly-state interaction are established, as they are in the nuclear industry, energy, telecommunications, etc., so producing new forms of more or less stable monopoly influence on the state machine.

There are many debates with a clear class tenor over the market-state relationship in connection with this tendency. What are the preferable forms and lines for further socialisation? Bourgeois market-economy propaganda has not only defended the anachronistic requirements of capitalism, but has also expressed the interests of the monopolies, urging preference for private-monopoly forms of competition and socialisation in contrast to state forms. We find, therefore, that under SMC the character of the socialisation process bears especially on class relations.

This will be seen from the struggle over social policy and the restructuring of the state's social and political functions in the light of present conditions. Such a policy implies a considerable redistribution of the national income,³ and this is a reflection of working class pressure. Conservative attacks are now aimed at sharply cutting back social spending as a whole and reducing the role of the state in this sphere. There is, in particular, an effort to give private capital freedom of movement in the rapidly growing social security, education, public health and entertainment sectors, all of which are important areas of employment. The monopoly policy is, therefore, designed to institute control over the activity of the working class.

The conservatives seem to oppose state intervention in the economy but, while saying as much, they expect the state to ensure realisation of monopoly capital interests, which means that the state must be free of any obligations to create and preserve jobs, protect the environment, effect regional structural development, etc. They insist that the state must concentrate on the so-called general conditions of development, leaving all the rest to the play of market forces. In this way they want to prevent the working class from ensuring its own interests through the economic

activity of the state. It goes without saying that all the while the conservative circles have been speculating on the idea of modernising production and making it more competitive on the world market, the need to apply technical progress and create an 'information society'. In other words, private interests are set up as paramount, while there is recognition of the importance of the problems which cannot be tackled without state participation, and this, under the existing conditions, means a preference for the demands of monopoly and finance capital.

In conducting its economic strategy, therefore, the ruling class expects the crisis not only to 'take the working class in hand' economically, socially and psychologically, but also to enable capital to benefit from the absence of deep national, social and political upheavals, despite the growing mass unemployment. At the same time, the monopoly circles have been trying hard to consolidate the political role of the state by intensifying its functions of surveillance and suppression, with the use of the latest high-tech facilities. This is proceeding within the framework of the institutions of the bourgeois parliamentary representative system, but tends to curb and fold up its democratic elements, with the trend towards the establishment of an authoritarian surveillance state and the sway of security agencies increasingly gaining the upper hand.

There is evidence of a tendency not only to curtail the basic constitutional rights, but also to recast the whole of labour and social legislation, with an erosion of the rights which protect the interests of the work collective and which were won in long struggle by the working class movement. The idea is to reduce these rights to regulation of the relationships between private persons, so as to undermine the potential for collective resistance by the trade unions and other social movements. Such a policy is designed to intensify the repressive character of capital's class domination and to curtail the tactics of social compromise. Its conception of a 'lower-level social partnership' assigns to the unions the role of supplicants. The aim is to split the working class and erode its potential for collective resistance. Accordingly, capital has been switching to more 'flexible' working-time regimes, wage systems and working and employment conditions, which are now regulated by collective contracts.

From the standpoint of the monopolies, high technology holds out unprecedented opportunities for economising on variable capital and stepping up the working people's exploitation. Emergent forms of home-contract labour, opportunities to 'set up on one's own', part-time working, and temporary work contracts, in a sense all help to individualise labour relations and deprive the wage-worker of the protection of the collective. On this basis, the conservative forces in the FRG try to establish the minimum wages laid down by collective contracts, so as to spread low-wage areas, as it is being done in Japan and the United States. There is an effort to return the labour market to the period when trade unions were still banned.

By their criticism of social-etatism, the trade unions, and the working class parties, and by speculating on the sharpening contradictions between the individual and the SMC reality, the monopolies issue a serious challenge to all the organisations and trends of the working class movement, especially since changes in the composition of the working class in our country have been shrinking its industrial core, while the state of organisation within the new and rapidly growing groups of workers remains low, despite considerable progress.

Will the conservative forces be able to use the present period of crisis upheaval to restructure the SMC system along those lines, and to what extent will the working class and the unions be able to resist it?

Up to now, the working class movement in the FRG has managed to fend off the attempts to weaken the trade unions. Whereas there was earlier on a period in which the so-called new social movements often acted as the motor in the fight over exacerbated problems, and while they remain a considerable factor in social progress,

the focus of the social contest over these problems has recently shifted to the sphere of relations between the working class and the monopolies.

The sum and substance of what has been said is that the reformist-etatist type of SMC, which was preponderant earlier on, has given way to a conservative and monopoly type of SMC in the major countries of capitalist Europe, and that has led to a corresponding shift of accent in politics and organisational structures.

In terms of class relations and power systems, as Lenin described them, the alternative variants in which liberal and reformist methods used to predominate have given away to a policy of social revanche, social dismantling and a curtailment of the legal rights assuring the working people of collective defence of their interests.

In the economic sphere there has been a shift from Keynesian regulation of demand to supply-side economics and monetarism. Market-economy methods give advantages to high-technology concerns, finance capital and the TNCs. Within the state-monopoly interaction, the centre of gravity is shifting from etatist to private-monopoly forms of socialisation.

Finally, *in political and ideological terms*, the leading role of social-reformist circles is giving way to the sway of conservative elements or blocs of forces in which the conservatives have dominant positions and which also include the social-reformist governments that have swung to the right.

In actual practice, there is, of course, evidence of more or less mixed or transitional forms of class domination, depending on the balance of forces, traditions, depth of crisis, the country's external economic and foreign political positions, its place within the imperialist system, and its ties with the United States. Nevertheless, these types help to identify the essential aspects in the development of class relations and to determine the alternatives which are now possible within the SMC framework.

The conservative model of SMC has been running to the limits of its development, with its internal contradictions ever more pronounced, as foreign policy well illustrates. Outstanding problems and conflicts connected with the crisis of the economic regulation mechanism are likewise building up in domestic policy.

The growing differentiation in the conservative camp has been caused by the further aggravation of the contradictions of imperialism. The most aggressive circles of monopoly capital expect to resolve these by stepping up the arms race, the policy of confrontation and social revenge at home and in the international arena, as US imperialism is doing, and by bolstering the authoritarian state. Along this way there is evidence of the formation of a *state-monopoly military capitalism*.

Meanwhile, the social weight of centrist forces has been growing. They have displayed greater realism in foreign policy, and want to make wider use of the role of the capitalist state in economic socialisation at home, without abandoning social compromise.

However, social and political pressure from the masses continues to be a most important prerequisite for switching to the anti-conservative way of development. It depends on the strength of this pressure whether democratic reforms for the benefit of the working class make headway, and whether a start is made on the process which the FRG Communists present as a conception of turning to democratic and social progress. Consideration of the counter-forces and counter-tendencies operating against imperialism, which Lenin noted, helps to understand the actual development of SMC in the 1980s, as resulting from the class struggle in essentially different internal and external conditions, in the new situation which characterises mankind's condition in the nuclear age.

¹ See the Theses for the Eighth Congress of the GCP, which were widely discussed in GCP organisations (*Thesen des 8. Parteitages der DKP. Neue Fragen des Kampfes für Frieden und Arbeit—für eine demokratische Wende*). A large part of the analytical studies by FRG Marxists has been published since 1978 in *Marxistische Studien. Jahrbuch des IMSF* (Frankfurt on the Main), and other publications of the Institute of Marxist

Studies. Also, a conference was held in November 1985 by the Institute of International Politics and Economics (GDR) on 'SMC in the 1980s: New Trends and Contradictions'. Its results were published in *IPW—Forschungshefte*, Part 1, Berlin, 1986, and *WMR*, No. 5, 1985.

² Stagflation characterises the state of the economy under which depression (stagnation of production) and the consequent growth of unemployment go hand in hand with mounting inflation, i.e., soaring prices and a rising cost of living. The 1944 Bretton Woods Agreement of 44 capitalist countries effectively established the dominant, privileged position of the US dollar within the system of international monetary and credit relations. The IMF and the IBRD were set up under the Bretton Woods system, but even after it was scrapped in the 1970s and 'floating' exchange rates adopted, etc., they continued to operate for the benefit of the finance capital of the United States and other imperialist countries.—*Ed.*

³ Despite the great economic and social significance of this kind of redistribution, there is no realistic ground for the social-reformist view of social policy as the basis for the 'welfare state' under SMC.

Against Repression and Persecution Stop the Terror in Jordan

DISTURBING reports are coming from Jordan, where the ruling circles are engaged in a brutal campaign of terror to silence those who have ventured to declare their solidarity with the people of Libya in the face of US aggression. The authorities have arrested First Secretary of the Jordanian Communist Party CC, Faik Warrad, and other members of the party's leadership, as well as many prominent civic personalities known for their progressive persuasions.

The protests against the Washington administration's barbaric act of state terrorism reached a high point at Yarmuk University. It is reported that many students were killed or wounded in the clashes with the police, and hundreds were put behind bars.

Large sections of the people of Jordan have spoken up in defence of the democratic students. There have been mass protest demonstrations pledging unconditional solidarity with the students of Yarmuk University and demanding the punishment of the persons responsible for the death of unarmed people. The authorities used their entire repressive apparatus against the demonstrators. But finding themselves helpless to silence the people, they ordered the arrest of a large group of demonstrators and patriots, of Communists in the first place.

This further campaign of repression is striking evidence of the authorities' pro-imperialist leaning. To oblige their US patrons they are prepared to ignore the nation's interests and keep its finest sons in prison. There is a direct link between the efforts of international reaction to fuel tension in the Middle East and the Mediterranean and the savage repression in Jordan.

The reports of terror in Jordan have shocked progressive opinion throughout the world. People who cherish the ideals of freedom and democracy are demanding that the Jordanian government stop the persecution, release the persons thrown into prison, and give the masses the right to express openly their solidarity with fraternal Arab peoples.

Khalid Salam
Representative of the Jordanian
Communist Party on *WMR*.

viewpoints

The Trade Union Movement Cannot Be Destroyed

Mohammed Harmel – First Secretary,
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Communists in the non-socialist part of the world have to operate in difficult, occasionally very difficult conditions. The working class and trade union movement of Tunisia has lately been in grave danger, with the regime trying to fully control it. Last April, an 'extraordinary congress' of the General Tunisian Labour Union was held under the auspices of the ruling Destour Socialist Party (DSP), contrary to the position of the Union's leadership. The congress adopted decisions needed by the government. These developments are examined in the following article.

THE trade union movement has traditionally been playing an important role in the socio-political life of Tunisia as one of Africa's most representative labour movements. The General Tunisian Labour Union (GTLU) is a mass organisation exerting considerable influence on the development of the country.¹

Ever since the autumn of 1985, however, the movement has been up against much greater difficulties than before. The regime has been carrying on a large-scale operation against it endangering national democratic achievements. By coupling repression with economic pressure, dismissals and various manoeuvres, the authorities want to undermine the GTLU in order to eliminate it in the end. The government has siezed the Union's premises, substituted so-called provisional committees for GTLU branches and replaced Union leaders by its own proteges expressing the interests of the regime and the DSP and not those of labour. Many union leaders have been sacked and put under police surveillance, and some of them find themselves in prison. One of them is GTLU General Secretary, Habib Achour, leader of the trade union and national movement, a man well known in Tunisia. He was convicted on a trumped-up charge and has been behind bars ever since December 1985, despite his advanced age (73) and poor health.

This trend is most disturbing. The situation has deteriorated greatly since the early 1980s, when one had the impression that the ruling party had come to realise at long last the need for coexistence with the GTLU, which by then had grown, in effect, to the stature of an autonomous organisation.

It should be recalled that to all intents and purposes the Union was dependent on the DSP until the late 1970s. Nor is this surprising, since during the formative period of Tunisian independence the ruling party was a factor in uniting labour. Many members of the GTLU leadership, including Achour, belonged to the DSP at one time. For a number of years the Union supported the DSP concept of 'national unity', which assigned the trade unions the role of an appendage to the government. At that time they nearly lost their representative character, the workers' confidence and the ability to defend their interests.

Events of the period showed that a trade union movement linked with the DSP could be useful to labour only if it faithfully expressed its demands, that is, was reasonably autonomous in respect of the ruling party. The process of winning such autonomy began in the 1970s but met resistance from the DSP. The party leadership

could not conceive of trade union organisations developing without regard to its guidelines and policies. This was one of the reasons for a grave national crisis which began with a general strike on January 26, 1978. The strike was crushed, and nearly all GTLU leaders were arrested and sentenced to long terms in prison. That was also when the regime appointed a new General Secretary of the Union, a man whose name has since been forgotten by everybody.

It was not long before the spuriousness of this so-called solution came out. In the early 1980s, the DSP began to see clearly the new realities of the trade union movement. This prompted it to recognise trade union autonomy. The imprisoned GTLU leaders, including Achour, were set free. The Union and the regime agreed on coexistence within definite bounds.

Regrettably, anti-union, hegemonist trends reappeared afterwards within the DSP. They put their imprint on the party's attitude to the democratic gains of the people, such as the principle of political pluralism.² First the DSP tried to split the GTLU by forming a new trade union organisation. The attempt fell through, and then the government resorted to the virtual liquidation of the Union.

We believe that step was prompted by the following:

First, the economic crisis in Tunisia had gone deeper due to the government's commitment to capitalist development, so much so that the regime can no longer meet certain demands of labour, in particular the demand for higher wages.

Second, the DSP itself is in crisis. The crisis affects a party which has led the national movement for years but is losing its leading role. One indication of the crisis is that the party was unable to coexist with a strong trade union organisation wielding, moreover, political influence in society.

Lastly, increased hegemonist trends in the DSP, the notion that it could go on leading the country in the same way as earlier despite deep-going changes in society, made themselves felt.

The Communist Party was the first to expose the motivations and trend of the government's anti-union move and the manoeuvres undertaken by it. When the authorities, having seized the GTLU premises, presented the Union leadership with an ultimatum, demanding that either Achour be relieved of the post of General Secretary or the Union dissolved, we Communists promptly revealed the falsity of the dilemma. We said that the problem went beyond differences between Achour and the government. Besides, our party considered it impermissible for the authorities to dictate their will to the trade union movement or to replace its leadership as they saw fit. It was perfectly clear to us that should the Union leaders agree to replace the General Secretary, the government would demand further concessions. We proved right. Although the authorities had promised that they would return the GTLU premises as soon as the replacement was effected and that the Union would enjoy the same rights as before, actually the premises remained in the hands of the 'provisional committees'. Furthermore, the government demanded that their representatives, who had nothing to do with GTLU structures, be included in the Union leadership by administrative order on the pretext of 'preserving unity' and 'correcting mistakes'.

It must be said that the TCP had serious differences with Achour. He constantly attacked the Communist Party, and recently an open conflict broke out between us. But these differences have no bearing on the fundamental principles of defending the interests of the trade union and working class movement. Whatever our disagreements with this recognised leader, we never set ourselves apart from the working class. All that concerns it also bears a direct relation to us. We criticise Achour for many mistakes and miscalculations. Although he must not have wanted it, the methods used by him in the working class movement caused certain rifts in it that objectively played into the regime's hands. In short, our party criticises the Union's leader, but in doing so it is prompted by the interests of the working class and trade

union movement, which it wants to help draw lessons from its struggles.

The DSP is pursuing an entirely different line. Its aim is to exploit mistakes and negative circumstances in the Union leader's activity as a means of either disrupting the Union or bringing it under government control, turning it into a satellite of the regime and thus making it impossible for the GTLU to defend the interests of labour.

We are convinced that the Tunisian trade union movement is dynamic enough to overcome the miscalculations made by its leaders, change its working methods and formulate its objectives in more precise terms. This is why a task facing the TCP is to support the resistance which the unions offer to the government. Although they have no leadership, their resistance is very considerable and manifests itself on diverse levels.³ Strikes, including fairly big ones, are called in enterprises. It is typical of the movement today that the class consciousness of its members is growing faster than ever, which we regard as a real achievement of our party, a result of its policy.

There is a campaign going on in the country today, and we are participating in it along with other national trade union and political forces. Its purpose is to impose respect for the rights of workers dismissed from various enterprises and to secure the release of all arrested union leaders, the restoration of the lawful structures of the GTLU above all the reinstatement of the members of the Executive Bureau and the General Secretary.

Such are our immediate goals. They concern the whole nation, for the trade union movement in its present form is a result of historical development over a long period and a national democratic achievement. The existence and activity of the movement is an earnest that Tunisia will not get stuck in backward forms of public life, as is the case in a number of Arab and other developing countries.

At the same time, the TCP will continue working in the unions. It has always respected their Constitution and norms and repeatedly reaffirmed its intention to respect their autonomy and never to raise any obstacles to it. While Communists in the GTLU have criticised certain of its decisions, they have also recognised them. There is, for instance, a decision forbidding Union members to hold key positions in trade unions and political parties simultaneously. We respect it even though we consider it wrong. After all, one could work in both spheres; a union leader belonging to a party should not be denied the right to be elected to the party's leading bodies. This rule has compelled many of our activists to relinquish leading party or union posts. We have also encountered other difficulties. There was a time when Achour's followers simply expelled Communists from the trade unions. But the TCP members' integrity, firmness of principle, selflessness, sense of responsibility and devotion to the common cause have earned them appreciation among the working people, who see them as real union activists. Communists also owe their prestige to the fact that voluntarism and any tendency to take advantage of party or trade union work are alien to them.

As Communists are also active in the unions, they must understandably take a stand on reformism. This is a highly important matter. Reformism is a historical phenomenon and has deep roots in the trade union movement. To combat reformist trends correctly, we believe we must remember that they may play a positive role given definite conditions, may serve progressive aims where it is a question of, say, upholding the demands of labour and trade union autonomy. Politically, therefore, our task now is to defend this trend in the unions. At the same time, we consider it necessary to combat reformism ideologically, since it is an obstacle to fostering the class consciousness of the working class and to building up the revolutionary forces of the country.

We also take account of the fact that the DSP, which is a reformist type of party, has sacrificed trade union reformism being unable to support it any longer. This has created a situation in which reformist-type leaders objectively differing with the

regime over secondary issues are compelled to enter into a fundamental contradiction with it.

The reformist current in Tunisia has changed substantially under the impact of social and political conflicts. While its exponents do not question the capitalist system or its production mode, they champion trade union rights and defend the interests of labour in common with us. This is why the Marxist, revolutionary current in the movement and everyone else who ideologically takes an anti-reformist stand consider it possible to carry out joint actions with advocates of reformism.

The conditions in which Tunisia's working people are carrying on their struggles are very unfavourable. While the trade unions have not been banned, the GTLU has in effect been outlawed at the level of local and regional organisations. The regime maintains that workers join trade unions as legal organisations to openly defend their demands and not to prepare radical changes in the country. A combination of repression and manoeuvre has enabled the government to achieve some results. But its situation is not easy, either. The Tunisian trade union movement has deep roots in society, among large sections of the population. After 1978, it seemed for a time that the movement would be unable to recover from the blow dealt to it. But it revived and has become stronger than before. We Communists are convinced that it cannot be destroyed.

¹ By the late 1970s, the GTLU (founded in 1946) had over 350,000 members. Tunisia has a population of about seven million.—*Ed.*

² The principle was proclaimed by the Extraordinary 11th Congress of the DSP (1981), which passed a resolution admitting of the existence in Tunisia of political formations and public organisations other than the DSP. In July of that year, the regime lifted the years-old ban on the Tunisian Communist Party.—*Ed.*

³ Last January the GTLU Executive Bureau, elected at the Union's latest congress (1984), resolved to reinstate Achour (now in prison) as General Secretary, and after the 'extraordinary congress' it released a statement describing the congress as illegitimate and its convocation as a gross violation of the GTLU Constitution.—*Ed.*

Changes in the Argentine Working Class

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DUE to the structural crisis of capitalist production and under the impact of technological progress, notable changes have occurred lately among Argentina's wage workers. They are connected with qualitative and quantitative changes in the social and professional spheres and with the proletariat's increasing realisation of its place in society. However, scholars who agree with the working class draw dissimilar, occasionally contradictory conclusions regarding the significance of these changes, and so do bourgeois sociologists.

Rightists use the evidence about the disintegration of national production structures, the diminishing proportion of industrial workers, the high unemployment rate and partial employment as a pretext for cheerless comments on the fate of the working class and for sombre forecasts leaving no room for hope. They claim that no major changes can take place without big losers, that millions of workers want to go

Continuing our series on changes in the composition of the working class. See *WMR*, No. 7, 1984, and Nos. 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9, 1985.

back to the times when it was factory workers and not specialists in informatics who constituted the motive power of social progress, and that 'there are no more seats for workers in the "omnibus of history"'.¹

Hopeless forecasts concerning the outlook for the working class are also extended to the Communist Party. Would-be prophets allege that the Communist Party 'will witness the destruction of its traditional proletarian base', as in the case—or so they say—in other countries, and then find itself in a 'political and ideological impasse' from which it can only come out by renouncing 'political principles inspired entirely by the notorious class approach'.²

The purpose of this kind of anti-proletarian hue and cry is to mislead the workers, oppose certain sections of the middle strata to them and put the working class movement on the defensive in order to achieve 'class peace' by sacrificing the interests of labour. Another purpose is to implement a political plan making it possible to preserve existing social relations in the new situation while leaving bourgeois democracy intact, to 'update dependence' without going through political upheavals.

Thus we are in the presence of an ideological struggle. It calls for a correct answer to the working people's demands and for a proper assessment of structural changes among the working class. This is unquestionably very important in terms of theory, whose elaboration would contribute substantially to the practice of the working class movement and the activity of its vanguard.³

The road travelled by the Argentine proletariat is a hundred years long. To give a better idea of its present nature, we must detail certain stages of this road.

The Formation of the Contemporary Proletariat

Bourgeois production relations in Argentina overcame a series of obstacles as they took shape. These include primarily the latifundium system and other feudal survivals of the colonial period. At the turn of the century, foreign capital made no particular contribution to the capitalist development of the republic. Its interests were limited at the time to obtaining our raw materials (hides, meat, wool) and to selling industrial articles. In carrying on this trade, foreign capital made common cause with the landed oligarchy, which wanted the country to be almost exclusively agrarian, with opportunities for agricultural exports made conditional on industrial imports. Big latifundium owners furiously resisted industrialisation, considering it their enemy.

In this context the primary accumulation of capital proceeded slowly and strenuously and took brutal forms. Small agricultural producers and urban handicraftsmen were stripped of the means of production and joined those who were compelled to sell their labour in order to survive. But all obstacles notwithstanding, new economic relations gained ground. The home market required increasing quantities of manufactured goods.

The late nineteenth century, when small corporations and handicraft production predominated, saw the rise of industry in the form of enterprises producing food, clothing and glassware. That was also when the first refrigerator slaughterhouses were set up; coupled with a developing sugar industry and rail transport, they gradually made for a more precise differentiation of diverse classes and for the growth of the proletariat.

Immigrants from Europe played a decisive part in the formation of the working class.⁴ From the late nineteenth century to the early decades of this century, numerous Italians and Spaniards as well as smaller numbers of Frenchmen, Germans and members of other nationalities emigrated to Argentina, some in search of a better lot and others, of safety from counter-revolutionary persecution in their

countries. Their professional knowledge helped develop our budding industry. Immigrants also contributed to the working class and socialist movement of Argentina the progressive ideas brought by them from Europe; indeed, it was to these people that the movement largely owed its early rise.

After immigration had subsided, it was almost exclusively indigenous people, mostly rural inhabitants, that joined the proletariat. During World War II, the republic was deprived of imports. This led to the development of light industry, if a lop-sided one, and drew further thousands of people to urban communities. Nor was this immigration the only reason for the decrease in rural population. The effects of an agrarian crisis, too, forced peasants to migrate. In this way a modern proletariat emerged step by step; it became a powerful social force in Argentine society.

By the mid-1950s there were over one million workers in our country. An indication of economic development in those days was the decisive role in industry of a limited number of major enterprises engaged in the manufacture of motor vehicles, electronics, oil prospecting and production as well as in other industries requiring large investments. As a matter of fact, less than two per cent of the enterprises provided 50 per cent of the total output and employed half the workforce. Industrial concentration reached unprecedented dimensions involving hundreds of thousands of workers. Most of these workers lived in definite urban and suburban areas, which made for the rise of vast labour zones, a kind of mass proletarian dosshouses on the outskirts of the capital. Work under one and the same roof and common living had and still have a beneficial impact on the scope, content and forms of the working class movement.

The Situation Today

Whereas between 1935 and 1954 the proportion of industrial workers increased more than twofold due to the direct dependence of demand for labour on output, the 1960s witnessed a mere eight per cent increase in the numbers of the proletariat, even though production in the manufacturing industries grew by 64 per cent. This was due to the installation of up-to-date plant which did not necessitate a proportional increase in the number of workers.

Be that as it may, the proletariat grew numerically, if more slowly than earlier, until power was taken by a reactionary dictatorship (1976) and the trend was reversed.

Added to acute economic problems was the political problem of an authoritarian regime which used terror and aggravated the domestic situation to the utmost. This hit primarily the working class, especially in the factories. It became evident that one purpose of the 'economic model' chosen by the dictatorship was to considerably reduce the influence of the working class movement on the life of society, something which reaction had long sought.

In the late 1970s, the Argentine proletariat diminished by a tangible margin. Factory workers were affected most of all but their role among the economically active population remained appreciable. It is worthy of note that about 72 per cent of those engaged in material production and the service sector were wage-workers, roughly half of them being employed in factories, agricultural enterprises, construction, transport, communications, and storehouses. Office employees likewise made up nearly half of the wage workforce. Besides them there were only a few persons holding high positions in big private or public enterprises as directors and managers. The overwhelming majority of white-collar workers made common cause with the working class by virtue of their income level, living and working conditions, mentality and professional experience. Their organisation joined the General Confederation of Labour of Argentina.

The foregoing is indicative of the considerable share of the proletariat in the class composition of the population and of the numerical superiority of wage workers over

other social strata.

In percentage of wage-workers as part of the workforce, Argentina is behind Canada, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary and France but ahead of Japan, Spain, Venezuela and Brazil, according to data for the beginning of the current decade cited by the *ILO Year Book of Labour Statistics*.

In the 1970s, for the first time ever, the non-production sphere employed more workers than the production sphere. The very phenomenon of 'transferring' labour-power from material production to trade, finance and the service sector became a general trend. However, the reasons for this in industrial capitalist countries are not the same as in countries like Argentina.

As far back as the last century, the development of the productive forces in large-scale industry and the mounting degree of exploitation in other economic fields made it possible in countries of the former type to employ more and more workers outside the sphere of producing material values. Technological progress resulted logically in a further increase in the proportion of persons employed in trade and the service industry. It is evident that by now this natural development has become a process going on in monstrous forms, with such outgrowths as hypertrophied finance, parasitical forms of trade (primarily advertising), and state monopoly trends leading to a greatly bloated ideological, political, military and police apparatus of the state.

But what is the reason for the same phenomenon (allowing for distinctions in scale) in countries such as ours, which cannot be regarded as industrially developed?

There is no denying that the very growth of the productive forces contributed in a measure to the relatively fast expansion of non-production activity in Argentina (despite all obstacles). In this case, however, the main factor was the crisis of socio-economic structures, which caused a shift of those engaged in production to non-production fields. This growth also creates problems for the production sphere, which cannot absorb spare labour.

As distinct from industrial capitalist countries, growing trade and services in most of the developing countries are primarily a result of a shortage of jobs in the production sphere and are therefore no indication of progress in production. Here is a graphic example: in the second half of the 1970s, a substantial rundown of production in Argentina was accompanied by a tangible increase in the proportions of those working 'at their own cost' in trade and the service sector as well as by an increase in the numbers of those engaged in financial activity. These facts explain to a degree the grave problem of unemployment and partial employment. Some wage-workers who have lost their jobs in factories are searching for an opportunity to use their labour in the absence of demand or (to a lesser extent) due to wage cuts.

This 'new employment' in the so-called tertiary sector of the economy actually implies incomplete utilisation of personnel experienced in industrial production. In other words, we are witnessing a waste of highly skilled productive forces and habits of work typical of a factory environment, unlike handicraftsmen working 'at their own cost'. The 'tertiarisation' of the Argentine economy, that is, the priority development of the service sector, over the past years has been something of a shock absorber of the consequences of mass dismissals among producers of material benefits. However, the tertiary sector's ability to 'consume' labour-power was gradually exhausted.

Is the Working Class 'Disappearing'?

It will be seen that notable changes have come about in the class composition of Argentine society, in particular the working class, in recent decades. These changes require proper study, without a one-sided approach failing to cover the totality of phenomena and trends that have had an impact on these changes.

On the one hand, the crisis and the deindustrialisation policy pursued in the past by the military dictatorship (this sphere has undergone no major changes under the present government headed by Raul Alfonsin) had a generally negative effect on the condition of wage-workers and dealt a telling blow to most of them. On the other hand, there was an objective process of extension of the proletariat's social base, since exploitation came to affect new people employed in trade and the service sector—clerks, scientists, technicians, artists. Large trading centres, each of which employs hundreds of blue- and white-collar workers, hold an increasing place in trade, even though small-scale trade run by shop-owners and their families still exists. On the whole, the firms owning these centres employ many thousands. While private medical practice in Argentina has not disappeared, typical today are hospitals run by capitalist companies and sanitary institutions of the social security system using the services of a large body of medical personnel. There is now a larger number of repair and cleaning agencies servicing the premises of various employers' groups.⁵

Proletarianisation is spreading wider, encompassing more and more engineers and technicians directly engaged in production. Many of them hold ordinary workers' jobs in view of the high demand which production makes of skill.

Some bourgeois sociologists see in the changes under way and in their social manifestations signs of the rise of a 'new class' at the expense of a 'diminishing proletariat'. Yet it is a fact that the ranks of the exploited are swelled by people whom their social station and their living and working conditions make proletarians or who become more and more proletarianised in social, economic and psychological terms.

Mention should be made of changes in the composition of wage-labour in general and factory workers in particular. While in 1947 the proportion of workers in the chemical, rubber, oil and metal-working industries of Argentina slightly exceeded 25 per cent of the employed workforce, in the 1980s it is close to 40 per cent. This growth in the most dynamically developing industries made up for a relative, occasionally an absolute, decline in consumer goods production indices. These changes had their effect on the forms of proletarian organisation and on the working class movement as a whole, in which workers engaged in the more promising industries pay a growing role. It is they that give political substance to workers' demands and use more effective forms of struggle. The major proletarian struggles that have been going on since the late 1960s are evidence of qualitatively new actions by labour and reflect changes in the composition of the working class.

We have noted that after World War II the working class was reinforced mostly by rural inhabitants lacking both trade union and political experience. In the past twenty years, however, the proletariat has been growing largely through the influx of members of the second generation of one-time peasants, now a minority section of the working class. Today's worker is a person of proletarian origin.⁶

The new contingent is also gaining new social and political experience. Workers hailing from the countryside have gone through the period of growth of the national bourgeoisie and industrial development, with an improvement, if a limited one, in the social condition of labour as a result. In these circumstances their social consciousness was influenced to a considerable extent by bourgeois reformist concepts. As for the greater part of today's workers, they have in the past twenty years witnessed the failure of various reforms, which ended invariably in the imposition of dictatorships. Reaction carrying on an all-out attack on the vital rights of labour, did away with elementary civil and trade union freedoms and led the country to economic bankruptcy. The working people realised that the gains made by them under bourgeois reformist governments (usually in the early years of their rule), far from being consolidated, were promptly nullified, the result being that these governments fell and were succeeded by reactionary regimes.

Thus the succession of generations in Argentina went hand in hand with qualitative changes in the consciousness and mentality of the working people. While reformist trends predominate among them, the share of elements of a proletarian ideology has increased as a result of the experience mentioned above and of progressive changes taking place in the world.

But that is not all. Growing in step with the development of the more dynamic industries is a shortage of technologically competent workers fit both physically and psychologically to participate in production on the assembly line. These industries now employ mostly young people some of whom acquired initial skills in smaller enterprises while others had to give up their studies in specialised institutions for economic reasons or on account of age. At present anyone applying for a job in the production sphere or the service sector needs a complete elementary and in some cases a secondary education. In a country where over 30 per cent of the population lack all education, it is understandably easier to come across people fit mostly for manual labour requiring little skill. Even so, most workers are young today and the younger generation has a higher standard of knowledge than its predecessors. And while the former serves the working people as a prerequisite for a higher morale, the latter makes for a better understanding of the essence of social phenomena and the place, role and historical mission of the working class.

We might as well add that the way of life and habits of work of 'old' sections of the proletariat, especially its more enlightened group, have likewise gone through a certain evolution which has generated new forms of social consciousness and political culture. To use a figure of speech, it is a two-way street, with veteran workers sharing their experience with the younger generation and borrowing elements of a changing social consciousness from it.

New Tasks and Alternatives

Today's proletariat is more differentiated and multiform than the generations of its predecessors. The composition of the working class is more complex and so is the process of its unification in support of common goals. The dissimilarity of interests and requirements has increased with the influx of new groups and social strata whose members are virtually workers. But the proletariat, far from losing its potentialities, has multiplied them. For the role of the working class in Argentine society to grow, it is necessary to extend the social framework of the class, involve intermediate strata engaged in the non-material sphere, cross old social and cultural boundaries and gain vast experience of struggle.

This is confirmed by recent developments. Probably the greatest result of the struggle for freedom in the grim years of military dictatorship was the attainment of a high degree of democratic consciousness by the working people. The common will of the popular forces striving to defeat any attempt to destabilise constitutional order, and large-scale participation of the people in national and trade union elections, in actions upholding human rights and condemning repression, show that today people attach notable importance to the demand for democratic change.

This comes out all the more when we analyse the long succession of coups. Many of the conspirators' groups who seized power achieved their aims due to a certain indifference of fairly large sections of the proletariat to violations of constitutional order. Occasionally an anti-dictatorial action was neutralised by an atmosphere of illusory hopes artificially created among the people. Reaction has no such chances any longer. The new situation warrants the supposition that in the future the Right will be unable to come to power by carrying out a new coup, the reason for this being the increased consciousness of the proletariat and its readiness to defend democracy.

The fact that, qualitatively, new democratic convictions have taken root among the workers is the salient feature of the present stage. It is accompanied by a deepening of

the workers' anti-imperialist views. It would be hard to find an equally obvious and striking example showing that the plight of the majority of wage-workers depends on monopoly financial capital, and on transnationals and international organisations formed to defend capital's interests, as well as on their accomplices in the country. It is as a result of the realisation of this that the proletariat's class consciousness is growing and that it demonstrates in practice its superiority over other social forces in defending the sovereignty of the country and in preserving its patrimony and the national characteristics of its people. Last year mass rallies involving hundreds of thousands took place in the capital and other big cities. They were followed by national strikes last January and March and by many other actions against the government's economic and social policy, IMF policy and international usury and for a freeze on foreign debt payment. These moved the working class to a prominent place at the forefront of the fight for bread, jobs, peace and national dignity.

The proletariat's new stand on major national problems and the resultant changes in its relations with other classes and social groups are bound to impinge on the working class movement generally. A process of renewal is beginning in trade union structures. The fall of the dictatorship set off—in a different legislative context—a trend towards democratising trade union organisations. The so-called vertical structure (the principle of giving orders and ruling) is in crisis; the trade union bureaucracy preserved this principle for years against the working people's will in an effort to keep the reins of control. After the latest trade union elections the unions' militant section became stronger and many of its members now stand firm on class positions even though they belong to diverse political parties. True, a majority is still lacking but progress *has* been made. The future belongs to these forces.

The new factors in the working class movement also have a bearing on party policy. In the elections held in November 1985 with a view to partially renewing the composition of legislative bodies and municipal councils, the overwhelming majority of workers voted Peronist as usual. There was a new development, however: those Peronists who had discredited themselves by a reactionary position and gangster-like methods of trade union leadership suffered a serious reverse, for the electorate turned its back upon them. It is also revealing that Radical members of the government failed to win workers' votes in the main industrial centres despite aid from the state apparatus in the elections campaign. By contrast, the Left polled more votes than before. In the industrial area of Buenos Aires, the Popular Front, which is composed of Communists, revolutionary Peronists and Socialists, collected twice or even three times as many votes as the national average.

At the new stage in revolutionary class struggles, positive experience helps see clear in the importance of the tasks facing the working class movement. First among these is the devising of an alternative way out of the crisis dialectically combining the priority interests of labour and the national task of extending democracy and winning full independence for the country. Today objective reality suggests that ordinary people's serious everyday problems cannot be solved without resisting the economic and political power of big capital and latifundium owners, who are closely linked with imperialism, or without achieving real people's democracy. To draw up such a programme for the working class movement is all the more necessary because its delegates constantly participate in talks with employers and government officials in drafting various social agreements based on capitalist principles.

The powers that be expect labour to accept a further 'updating of dependence'; they would like to solve problems of the crisis and eliminate the effects of the foreign debt at the people's expense in order to establish 'social peace'. But the task is not only to reject the bourgeoisie's plans, as has often been done before, but to submit the working class alternative to the people for consideration. This would help the proletariat take the initiative and reduce considerably the time needed for the

organisation of a broad popular movement intended to contribute to the emergence of a new balance of forces favourable to major democratic and anti-imperialist changes, which the country needs so badly in order to advance to socialism.

The working class needs a programme of its own also because this programme must become a common alternative for the overwhelming majority of the people. This implies a far-reaching democratisation of the working class movement, its organic development and its expansion by bringing in new groups and social strata (the advanced section of youth and women, working people associated with the so-called underground economy, jobless people) that have made proletarian interests their own. What is needed in the final analysis is to heighten the ability of the proletariat to establish closer relations with non-proletarian groups objectively interested in the implementation of the programme of the working class, to understand and defend them.

The proletariat's achievements, past and present, and the tasks set by the future are raising the role of this class to a new plane in spite of fluctuations in the numerical strength of some contingents of workers. 'The strength of the proletariat,' Lenin wrote, 'is far greater than the proportion it represents of the total population. That is because the proletariat economically dominates the centre and nerve of the entire economic system of capitalism, and also because the proletariat expresses economically and politically the real interests of the overwhelming majority of the working people under capitalism.'⁷ These words are still valid.

¹ *La Semana*, September 5, 1985.

² *El Periodista*, November 8, 1985.

³ The need to study these problems induced the Victorio Codovilla Research Centre under the CC CPA to hold, in collaboration with WMR, a seminar in Buenos Aires on structural changes and development trends in the working class at this stage. Some records of the seminar were used in writing this article.

⁴ The 1914 census registered 2,391,000 inhabitants of Argentina, or 30.3 per cent of its population, as persons who came from other countries (*Anuario Estadístico de la República Argentina, 1981-1982*, Buenos Aires, 1984, p. 175).

⁵ *Problemas de Economía*, No. 88, 1985.

⁶ See M. Lebedinski, *Seminario sobre la clase obrera*, Buenos Aires, June 1985.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 274.

Pages of History Lessons of the Spanish Epic

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ON July 18, 1986, it will be fifty years since the military fascist rebellion and the beginning of the civil war in Spain (1936-1939). A direct result of the rebellion was the Franco tyranny, which lasted nearly forty years.

By fighting the dictatorship, the Spanish people paved the way for national reconciliation. The country now has a parliamentary democratic system under which the effects of the civil war tend to disappear. Nevertheless, the younger generation of Spaniards and millions of people the world over still show interest in the history of the war. Various Spanish authors have devoted to it more books and articles than to World War II. Many new publications and several films on the events of the 1936-1939 period will be produced this year in Spain and abroad. Conferences, colloquiums, symposiums and mass actions are to take place in socialist as well as

capitalist countries of Europe and Latin America and in the United States. The Spanish people, primarily their revolutionary and democratic forces, will again pay tribute to the veterans of the International Brigades, who plan to visit their second homeland in October.

Why does the Spanish civil war still evoke such interest? Because in the domestic and international situation in which it was waged, our people courageously defended a just cause, being admired by the whole of humanity, and delayed the spread of the flames of World War II for nearly two years.

The resistance to fascism in Spain went hand in hand with an unprecedented solidarity campaign of the proletarian and democratic forces of the world. All fair-minded people on earth perceived the defeat of the Spanish people and the fact that the Franco regime survived the collapse of Hitlerism in 1945 as a historical injustice. Lastly, the 1936-1939 war still arouses interest also because though it occurred long ago, it can still serve as a source of instructive experience for all who are fighting for peace, against aggression, for democracy and socialism.

Historically, the 1936 military fascist rebellion was intimately connected with the international situation of the time, with the offensive of fascism, militarism and imperialism in the Far East (Japan) and Western Europe (Germany and Italy). The Nazi takeover in 1933 had a direct impact on Spain. The aggressive designs of Hitler and Mussolini, who invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in May 1935, were also aimed at bringing our country into the fascist orbit. In 1934 and 1935, the rulers of Germany and Italy contacted members of the Spanish financial oligarchy and some rightist generals and politicians behind the scenes to offer them support in preparations for a rebellion against the democratic system.

The Right, which had reared its ugly head, won the 1933 elections by taking advantage of the setbacks of the newly established republic¹ and set out to plan the imposition of a clerical fascist dictatorship similar to the Dollfuss regime in Austria. The working class movement and other progressive forces of Spain thwarted that plan through various actions, above all through the miners' general strike and uprising in Asturias (October 1934).

The October actions, whose experience Georgi Dimitrov drew on in preparing his report to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, were a prelude to the victory of the Popular Front coalition in the February 1936 elections. The coalition formed a government, saving the republican system from degradation and paving the way for the peaceful development of political democracy, for reforms serving to consolidate it.

However, the Spanish oligarchy, which gambled on the effects of the world economic crisis, in particular unemployment and hunger, as well as on other national problems, contrived by propagating anti-republican views and exerting strong political pressure to involve in its anti-democratic schemes the bulk of the officer corps of the army, whose command identified defence of the interests of the ruling classes with the defence of Spanish interests. Besides, the oligarchy had the ideological and moral support of the Catholic church and the Vatican.

The ultras succeeded in intensifying and exploiting the religious sentiments of the population and its allegiance to the unity of the peoples of Spain, both of which are typical of our people along with deep-rooted anti-clericalism, parochialism and even local chauvinism. Thereby the rebels secured a definite measure of support among certain sections of the population. Franco's slogan 'Against communism and separatism' became the keynote of his coup. Without all this there would have been no rebellion or civil war.

The conspirators also used to the hilt the weaknesses and mistakes of republican cabinet ministers. After all, the republican-socialist governments failed in 1931-1933 to democratise the state apparatus, which became the rebel's stronghold militarily

and politically as well as ideologically. The social democratic concept alleging that the state is neutral and that one has only to form a government to give power the requisite orientation was proved basically wrong. Its Spanish variant played a role fatal to the republic.

When a military fascist rebellion broke out in Spain's Moroccan garrisons,² Santiago Casares Quiroga, head of the republican government, dismissed the event as unimportant. But on the night of July 18 Dolores Ibarruri, speaking on the radio on behalf of the Communist Party of Spain, called on the people to rise up in struggle and launched her famous slogan, 'No pasaran' ('They shall not pass'). The news of the rebellion deeply disturbed the workers and other inhabitants of Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and other big cities. Faced with the demand of the Communist Party and other political forces that the people be armed, Casares Quiroga and his ministers resigned (July 19). A few hours later, a new republican government was formed under Jose Giral. The principal achievement of the Giral cabinet was the decision to arm the people. By then, however, the rebellion had spread throughout the peninsula.

On July 19 and 20, the people took to the streets, being ready to defend the republic. Columns and battalions of a people's volunteer corps were formed in Madrid, Catalonia, Aragon, the Basque Country, Valencia and elsewhere. The longest and most sanguinary civil war in Spanish history was getting off to a start. It had two aspects—international and internal—from the outset and differed qualitatively from all the civil wars ever fought by our country.

The Fifth Regiment,³ which drew on the experience of the anti-fascist worker-peasant militia existing since 1933, served as a model for the formation of the people's volunteer corps. It was brought into being in Cuatro Caminos, a Madrid district, on the initiative of the Communist Party. The regiment served as a standard of organisation and political education, a school of military leaders and political commissars, and had a tangible impact on the formation of the regular People's Army.

The struggle of the masses, the political consciousness shown by the majority of the army rank and file, and loyalty to the republic on the part of a section of the officer corps linked with the CPS or the Anti-Fascist Military Republican Union, a democratic organisation, made it possible to defeat the conspirators in Madrid and other key cities, such as Barcelona, Bilbao or Valencia. The attempt at a surprise coup failed. But while the coup was suppressed in major cities, its organisers attained their goal in 17 agricultural provinces and in the African garrisons, and we must note that control over the Moroccan territories was vastly important to the rebels.

Madrid was still the counter-revolutionaries' chief objective, and General Mola soon marched his column (formed in Galicia, Castilla, Leon and Navarra) on the capital from the north. His operation was coupled with a swift offensive from the south by General Franco's troops transferred from Africa.

Early in September, a new republican government was formed under Largo Caballero, the Socialist leader. It included two Communists, and was a first step towards a badly needed radical change.

For all their bravery and growing efficiency, the people's volunteers could neither stem the offensive of Franco's troops against the capital (Franco was proclaimed 'generalissimo' by his supporters) nor counteract increasing intervention by fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. It was imperative to form a regular People's Army as proposed by the CC CPS in August. But the fulfilment of this task met strong resistance, primarily from the anarchists, who also took a stand against building a new, democratic state.

It was not until October that important decisions were made to form the first mixed brigades of the People's Army, set up a general staff under the High Command,

impart an official status to the General War Commissariat already there and specify the functions of political commissars. The government also decided to proceed to the formation of international volunteer units, purchase planes, tanks and other weapons from the Soviet Union and invite Soviet military advisers and technical personnel who could help organise the People's Army and war production.

On November 6 Madrid, which had already gone through air raids, was shelled by the rebels for the first time. The enemy was preparing to take the city by storm. Franco and his general staff claimed that the capital would be unable to stop the offensive. In our own ranks, too, certain military leaders and cabinet ministers believed that in the circumstances Madrid could not be defended. To be sure, it was hard but not impossible to defend the capital since the people's enthusiasm and courage made up to a degree from the lack of a real army. The fall of Madrid would have dealt a mortal blow to the Republicans' resistance. Military problems are inseparable from political, economic, moral and social ones, and it was highly important to realise this in deciding on how to defend the capital. The people led by the working class saw that it was a life and death struggle, and Madrid held out.

The government, enlarged by including members of the National Confederation of Labour and the Basque Nationalist Party, resolved to move to Valencia. Power in Madrid was exercised by the Plenipotentiary Defence Junta, which represented all the political forces and trade unions of the anti-fascist bloc. The Junta was headed by General Miaja, who had assumed command of the troops defending the capital. That was also when a headquarters was set up in Madrid to defend the city. Both leading bodies played a major role in resisting the fascists. But what made the fulfilment of the difficult tasks set to them possible was primarily the Madrilenians' morale and readiness for self-sacrifice. Madrid was saved because all its inhabitants, including children, women and old people, realised the community of their interests and joined in its defence. This enabled the defenders to win on November 6-8 a decisive battle whose outcome was of extraordinary importance for the 32-month anti-fascist resistance. Franco's attacking troops were pushed back as a result of heroic resistance by the people and their armed forces, whose close unity was a source of valour.

On the evening of November 8, 1936, when the offensive of the Franco troops was stopped, a mammoth rally took place at the Monumental Cinema on the occasion of the 19th anniversary of the socialist revolution in Russia, whose example gave inspiration to the Madrilenians. The rally was addressed by Dolores Ibarruri and other speakers. It ended in singing the *Internationale*. Such was the atmosphere of those unforgettable days.

Afterwards the defence of the capital benefited greatly from international solidarity. On the evening of November 9, the First International Brigade (incorporated in the People's Army as the 11th Brigade) arrived at the front in the area of Casa de Campo and Ciudad Universitaria. The day before, it had marched along the capital's Gran Via, with the people cheering.

This manifestation of proletarian and democratic international solidarity was preceded by the arrival of Soviet plant, food supplies and arms; Soviet advisers arrived too. Soviet tanks, guns and Maxim machine-guns were first used in our country late in October, in the battle of Sesena-Esquivias. They also helped defend the capital. In the sky over Madrid, the famous *chatos*⁴ battled with attacking Nazi aircraft.

International solidarity, shown throughout the war, made it clear to the Madrilenians, newly-formed units of the People's Army and the Spanish people as a whole that the cause which they were honourably defending was really a cause of progressive humanity, of all who were alarmed at the fascist offensive and the threat of a global conflagration.

Madrid remained the Republic's capital to the end of the civil war. The experience

of combat operations from November to January compelled the anarchists to recant their theory of non-recognition of any state or authority, enter into the government and agree to the transformation of their units into regular troops, the introduction of military ranks in them and their incorporation in the People's Army.

The defence of Madrid as well as the big battle of the Jarama in February 1937 during which the enemy attempt to encircle the capital from the south fell through steeled the People's Army. In March the Republicans defeated Mussolini's 60,000-strong army whose materiel included 120 guns, 75 armoured vehicles, and 90 fighters and bombers. This foiled the rebels' last attempt to blockade the city.

At a time when the rebels were plainly superior in materiel, the People's Army, then still in the making, withstood hard tests, such as the battle of Brunete, Belchite and Quinto, the capture of Teruel or the defence of Valencia. It also went with flying colours through the epic of the Ebro, where the 'generalissimo' got away by a hairs' breadth from losing the whole war.

Hitler's accession to power in Germany and the defeat of the workers' uprising against the Dollfuss regime in Austria amounted to a retreat of proletarian and democratic forces before fascism. What enabled the Spanish people in those difficult conditions to muster enough strength to resist the rebels and their patrons, Hitler and Mussolini?

Our people were defending a democratic system, the legitimate power of the Popular Front, which had won the elections on February 16, 1936. A decisive factor in the rising morale of the anti-fascist struggle was working class unity of action, born during the October 1934 uprising in Asturias. This unity made possible the establishment of the Popular Front, an alignment pivoted on cooperation among the Left, primarily the Communists and Socialists.

It served as the basis for lasting anti-fascist sentiments reflecting the workers' keen class awareness and indicating that part of the intellectual community and sizable sections of the peasantry and the middle strata, including the petty and middle bourgeoisie, rejected fascism. This atmosphere was a result of political work by the vanguard of the working class in three years of struggle against continuous encroachments of the oligarchy of the people's democratic achievements.

Having overcome revolutionary infantilism, the Communist Party called for a common and broad anti-fascist policy. It was the *chief subjective factor which helped organise resistance to the rebels, defend Madrid, form the People's Army and build a democratic state on new, distinctive foundations.*

In this state, whose main features took shape in September and October 1936 and were consolidated in the months following the crisis of the Largo Caballero government, the traditional forms of political democracy were supplemented under the government of another Socialist, Juan Negrin, by various forms of direct democracy, that is, participation of the masses in the performance of government functions on diverse levels. State power, brought into being during a powerful revolutionary democratic upsurge, effected deep-going changes in the people's interest. The land was transferred to the peasants and agricultural workers; the state assumed control of the big banks and industrial enterprises and the main spheres of the infrastructure; working people joined in their management. Catalonia and the Basque Country⁵ were given guarantees of traditional national autonomy. As the result of a cultural revolution, hundreds of thousands were taught to read and write; for the first time in Spanish history, working people's children gained access to higher education and culture.

Those who insist on ascertaining what came first, whether the revolution or the war, are caught in the meshes of a pseudo-theoretical problem. What happened was that the Spanish people accomplished *in the course of their struggle* a democratic revolution which is still unique in Western Europe, as the foregoing suggests. The

Popular Front, being an electoral alliance of a tactical nature from the day it was set up to July 1936, became during the war a strategic instrument of revolutionary transformation. "The Popular Front," said Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the CPS, "is neither a simple coalition of parties nor an alignment of several leaders. It is the broadest and deepest-reaching political organisation which the Spanish people have ever had, an organisation fighting against fascism, against the *traditional oppressors* and against the invaders."

As the Popular Front included members of different classes, numerous contradictions came out of it, so that the policy of successive Front governments was not free of mistakes, serious shortcomings and miscalculations. While admitting that we are responsible in part for some of these mistakes, we stress that the Communist Party fought against a recurrence of past mistakes.

Had the country been administered from February 16, 1936 on by a government including workers, the rebellion might have been staved off. Even a purely Republican cabinet but a stronger and more vigorous one than the Casares Quiroga government would likewise have been equal to averting that danger. In the first month of the war, the Giral government wasted much valuable time. The cabinet under his successor, Largo Caballero, was slow in making fundamental decisions. There was an excessive political debate on whether the volunteer corps sufficed or whether the country needed an army. The navy, most of whose contingents remained loyal to the Republic, was not used in adequate measure. The government betrayed extreme strategic shortsightedness even when it was clear that the war was assuming a protracted character. But the most difficult problem which it took the government long to solve was the lack of a united military political leadership.

Such were the peculiarities of the situation of that period of our struggle, compounded by religious and ethnic problems. Manifestations of anarchism and regionalism made it extremely difficult to bring about a single command; they intertwined, leading to negative phenomena, such as the self-isolation of the Regional Council in Aragon, where anarchist influence was dominant.

In spite of the mistakes, miscalculations and shortcomings of the Popular Front and its governments, the struggle which the people carried on under the Front's leadership played a historically progressive role at both national and international level. Nor were these mistakes the chief reason for the Republicans' defeat. Their defeat was a consequence of the coordinated efforts of world imperialism, which translated into direct armed intervention by the Axis powers, of the policy of 'non-intervention' adopted by Britain and France, and of the US monopolies' support for Franco.⁶ In terms of ideological propaganda, Catholic integristism, which dominated in the Vatican under Pope Pius XI, played its part.

It is perfectly evident that Hitler coordinated his preparations for World War II with hostilities in Spain. This is borne out by numerous facts. Thus, on March 12, 1938, after the Republican front in Aragon had collapsed the Nazis overran Austria. Preparations for Munich concided with the Franco troops' first offensive on the Ebro. The Munich meetings itself, which amounted to the surrender of the 'democratic' powers of the West, took place on September 29, when Franco captured a strategic point in the battle of the Ebro. In October, Hitler occupied part of Czechoslovak territory—the Sudeten region—in line with the Munich deal, which was a stab in the back of our resistance. On March 15, 1939, when the Republic lost Catalonia, Germany made a protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and on September 1, or five months after the end of the Spanish war, Germany invaded Poland. After seizing a number of European countries, the Nazis attacked the Soviet Union.

A review of the 1936-1939 events in Spain is inseparable from an analysis of important theoretical and political problems, such as the nature of revolutionary people's power, its connection with traditional democratic institutions or the

evolution of the CPS, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party and other member parties of the Popular Front during the war. Our historical analysis assigns a special place to an assessment of anarcho-syndicalism, whose theoretical constructions failed completely when faced with practice, with struggle. The question whether a 'proletarian revolution' could have been accomplished as an alternative to the policy of the Popular Front is still of considerable interest; the Trotskyists and certain 'leftists' say it could. The Front resisted Franco over a period of three years whereas their line would have resulted in immediate defeat.

Worthy of special analysis are various aspects of parochialism, regionalism and national narrow-mindedness as well as the role of central government bodies, in short, the problem of a single national leadership. The social, political and ideological essence of the defeatist current active in our camp from July 19, 1936 onwards is a further problem awaiting study. The point is that its efforts after it had gone through the whole civil war translated into Colonel Casado's rebellion against the Negrin government on March 5, 1939, a development which played into Franco's hands.

There is a need to bring out more fully the social roots of the intransigence with which the fascist camp systematically turned down the proposals of Republican governments to end the war. This intransigence was a visible confirmation of the fact that a financial oligarchy defending its class interests does not care whether thousands or millions lose their lives, nor is it interested in national sovereignty and independence.

The Spanish people's just struggle was a most important contribution to the liberation battles of World War II. The Spanish epic aroused the peoples' spirit of anti-fascist struggle. It helped unite the forces which strove to stop fascism and aggression. Our noble objectives inspired outstanding progressive thinkers and persons prominent in world culture. The Spanish war was a catalyst of militant internationalist consciousness and the solidarity of the proletariat and the more advanced social forces, which found its most vivid expression in the defence of Spanish democracy by more than 2,000 Soviet volunteers and 35,000 combatants of the International Brigades from 52 countries of all continents. Subsequently members of Brigades, commanders and political commissars, popular leaders who had survived the Spanish war, formed the vanguard of the Resistance to fascism. Our country became a school for these men.

Many contemporaries stressed the international significance and character of the Spanish War. 'If we are to preserve the legacy of our fathers,' wrote Claude G. Bowers, US Ambassador to Madrid, 'we must be prepared to fight as bravely as the Spanish republicans fought and died, stemming with their bodies . . . for two and a half years the wave of barbarity that swept Europe, until it succumbed amid the strange indifference of the democratic nations which they had defended so gallantly.'

Rodion Malinovsky, the renowned Soviet soldier, our companion-in-arms in the battle of the Jarama, who rose afterwards to the rank of marshal and served as Defence Minister of the Soviet Union, stressed that it was the first trial of military strength in battle with fascism, a trial described with every reason as an advance guard action and the prelude of World War II.

Palmiro Togliatti was perfectly right in saying that had that first bastion, Spain, fallen without striking a blow, the fate of the world would have changed.

¹ Proclaimed in 1931.

² Part of Moroccan territory was a Spanish protectorate at the time.

³ The term *regiment* should not be mistaken in this case for what it usually means. The Fifth Regiment was more like a recruiting and training centre. In the early months of the war, it sent several units to the main fronts and then dissolved itself, merging into the People's Army.

⁴ I-15 fighters (*chato* is Sp. for snub-nosed).—Ed.

⁵ Galicia was in the rebels' hands.

⁶ The Italian troops in Spain were 300,000 strong and the German troops the (Kondor Legion, etc.), over 100,000. According to incomplete data, Italy supplied the rebels with 1,000 planes, 950 tanks and armoured vehicles, 1,930 guns, 8,759 machine-guns, 1,426 mortars, 750,000 rifles, over 7.5 million shells, 324 million cartridges, 16,700 tons of aircraft bombs and 1,000 tons of explosives as well as other materiel worth 14 billion lire. In the first two years of the war, Germany supplied 650 aircraft, 200 tanks and 700 guns. During the battle of the Ebro, Franco got 50,000 rifles, 1,500 light and 500 medium machine-guns, new gun batteries and air force squadrons from Hitler. 'Without American oil, American trucks and American credits, we would never have won the war,' said Jose M. Doussinague, deputy Foreign Minister of the Franco government, in 1945. In 1938, President Roosevelt himself admitted that the United States had supplied Franco with large quantities of oil on credit. It has also shipped war supplies, including aircraft bombs, to the rebels.

The Philippines: Blind Alley of Neocolonialism

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OUR country is going through a period of ferment and often unpredictable developments. The early presidential elections last February were an indication of this. The National Assembly proclaimed Ferdinand Marcos as the winner but his opponents claimed the official vote count was rigged, while being themselves accused of ballot rigging. A dual-power situation arose.

The balance was ultimately tilted by the mass popular actions. These were triggered by the desertion from the government camp of some top military headed by the Minister of National Defence Juan Ponce Enrile and the Vice-Chief of the General Staff General Fidel Ramos. The latter two—the first, a millionaire lawyer who had US corporations as his clients and then held key posts in the government for many years, and the second, a US-educated professional soldier who made no secret of his pro-American leanings—were representative, as it were, of the propertied elite and the 'reformists' in the military. The latter were repelled by the corrosive influence on the armed forces of the clique of senior military officers headed by Marcos loyalist General Fabian C. Ver.

The anti-Marcos alliance consisted also of the moderate (as distinguished from the left-radical) wing of the Catholic Church, businessmen alienated by Marcos' discriminative cronyist practices, and disparate political parties and currents—ranging from the left-of-centre Social Democrats to the traditional right-wing politicians resentful of the regime's authoritarianism. The alliance had been clearly shaping up since the assassination of Benigno Aquino, one of the top leaders of the bourgeois opposition, in August 1983 and the subsequent rapid slide into political instability and the aggravation of the economic crisis that was already acute. The presidential candidacy of Corazon C. Aquino, widow of the prime symbol of martyrdom under the Marcos dictatorship, was launched precisely to unite the 'moderate' opposition. This made for a more effective electoral battle against the seemingly impregnable regime, thereby arresting a leftward swing of the country's socio-political life.

Activity by the opposition alliance peaked in the days following the elections. Refusing to recognise the National Assembly vote count, Corazon Aquino proclaimed a national campaign of 'civil disobedience'. The Church gave her its backing. The rebellion ignited by Enrile and Ramos could easily have been quelled by troops loyal to the regime had the clergy and supporters of the opposition candidate not appealed to the people to 'defend' the military rebels virtually with their own

bodies. Four days of mass actions, called 'people power' because of their magnitude, helped to facilitate the downfall of the Marcos regime. The reins of government passed to the hands of the political coalition led by Corazon Aquino.

The picture would be far from complete and accurate if no mention was made of yet another party involved in these developments—the USA, which played a major, if not pivotal role, in removing Marcos from power.

Why did the US imperialist magnates feel they had to get rid of a retainer who had in general faithfully served their interests? To get a better understanding of this it would be worth while briefly reviewing the relations between Washington and the ruling elite in the Philippines shaped out after the country obtained independence, especially after Marcos came to power.

US monopoly capital benefited greatly from the alternating rule of the bourgeois two-party system (Liberal Party and Nacionalista Party) from 1946 to 1969. It supported or denied support to this or that party or candidate depending on the latter's continued usefulness in promoting US strategic and economic interests. In the seven presidential elections prior to the imposition of martial law in 1972, victory went to five US-supported candidates, including Marcos in 1965. Candidates favoured by the USA lost only on two occasions—in 1957 and 1969. In the latter case Marcos was re-elected against the wishes of the USA.

The reason for this change of attitude to this former collaborator was that while on the whole he had pursued a policy consistent with the interests of monopoly capital he had displayed 'independence' in some issues. In particular, he had steered a course towards a diversification of external relations, towards establishing diplomatic, commercial, and other relations with socialist countries. In Washington they preferred Filipino Presidents who accommodated their domestic and foreign policies entirely to US strategic and economic interests. The immediate response of US monopoly capital and its political spokesmen to the election failure of 1969 was to instigate mass demonstrations demanding the resignation or even impeachment of the re-elected President on the ground of fraudulent elections. An armed insurgency organised in late 1968 by ultra-left elements began to spread: it was joined by radical Catholic elements.

Aware that the US was bent on destabilising his regime and that the popularity of his rule was declining as reflected in the senatorial election of 1971, and barred by a constitutional prohibition from running for a third term, Marcos imposed martial law in 1972, giving the 'imminence of communist revolution' as the pretext. Confronted by a determined political leader in control of the armed forces and backed by anti-Japanese guerrilla experience, US monopoly capital arrived at a *modus vivendi* with the martial law regime, which pledged to assure its economic and strategic interests.

The proclamation of martial law changed the political landscape in the Philippines. Rival oligarchs lost their powers and even their businesses, which were either curtailed, placed under the public sector, or taken over by Marcos' cronies. To get popular support, Marcos introduced some progressive moves—such as the proclamation of land reform (although limited in scale) and the strengthening of the public sector of the economy. Relations, as already noted, were established with socialist and developing countries. Statements were made in favour of non-alignment and plans formulated for setting up of basic industries.

However, with the USA applying increasing pressure, particularly through the foreign debt trap, which became deeper by the end of the 1970s, Marcos' earlier independent posturing came to naught. In obedience to demands by the World Bank (IBRD) and the IMF, the public sector began to be dismantled. The land reform was diluted and superseded by presidential decrees on the development of 'corporate farms' and other agrobusiness controlled by transnational corporations. 'Industrial

development' turned out to be the expansion of export-oriented but import-dependent neocolonial industries. Monopoly capital—US and Japanese in the first place—significantly consolidated its stranglehold over the Philippines precisely at the time martial law was in force and in the period after it was formally lifted (early 1981).

The regime's credibility was shaken by its failure to fulfil its promises to alleviate the people's harsh living condition and weed out bribery and corruption, and by the severe economic crisis with its invariable consequences—unemployment, rising cost of living, destitution, undernourishment, and hunger. Social tension was fostered also by the mounting political instability against the background of a continuing insurgency, the response to which included acts of lawlessness and brutality towards the civilian population. In this situation, while continuing to extend substantial economic and military aid to Marcos, the US ruling circles began establishing contact with his adversaries. Taught by the bitter experience of Iran and Nicaragua, Washington was clearly eager to set up 'moderate' alternative forces that could, if circumstances demanded, take over the helm of power.

This line became particularly pronounced in the latter half of 1983, when the US administration came to the conclusion that to avoid a further rise of social tensions and an intensification of the explosive situation in the Philippines the time had come to arrange a 'political transition'. At first, attempts were made by means of diplomatic, economic, and media pressures to compel Marcos to adopt a set of political, economic, and military reforms. These reforms, if fully carried out, would mean the dismantling of the regime because they would have eroded Marco's hold on the military, reduced the role of his business cronies, and liberalised the political process. This explains Marcos' stiff resistance to the reforms, which he started implementing in a piecemeal and flip-flopping manner, sometimes turning them upside down.

Meanwhile, the American pressures kept mounting. In November 1984 the US National Security Council called for influencing Marcos 'to set the stage for a peaceful and eventual transition to a successor government, whenever that takes place'. Last autumn Washington forced Marcos to call a snap presidential election a full year ahead of the end of his term. And when the election campaign got underway, the United States tried to monitor the whole process very closely, sending hundreds of media representatives and a number of official observers. The White House's special envoy Philip Habib arrived in the Philippines. But the United States was by no means an aloof observer. At the height of the election race the US cruiser *Blue Ridge* dropped anchor in the port of Manila, and a few days later it was replaced by the aircraft-carrier *Midway* with an escort of support vessels. This was clearly a demonstration of strength and of the USA's readiness to use it if the 'political transition' encountered snags. As if by a signal the American mass media began printing articles smearing Marcos. The calculation was that this would, on the one hand, clear the way for his removal and, on the other, focus popular disaffection on him so that the people would regard his departure as a 'victory' and a 'turn for the better'.

Nevertheless, to the very last, in Washington they did not believe that the opposition would be overwhelmingly successful. That explains the contingency option for recognising Marcos' re-election for a new term with a curb placed on his powers in favour of pro-American officers. When, as pointed out earlier, a dual-power situation took shape which anti-American left-wing forces could exploit, recourse was had to stronger means.

Enrile and Ramos, who were already poised for action, were prompted to act by a report alleging that their arrest had been ordered. When Marcos was about to use tanks against the military rebellion he was warned that he would be denied all assistance and would not be able to count on being helped by his American friends in the event he would flee the country. US Defence Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger

admitted that the USA provided the anti-Marcos forces with intelligence information on the positions of the loyalist troops and permitted defecting Philippine helicopters to refuel at the American Clark Field Air Base. Again, it was the USA that dealt Marcos the coup de grace. Reagan's emissary Senator Paul Laxalt told Marcos by telephone to 'cut, and cut cleanly', to which a dejected Marcos riposted: 'I am so very, very disappointed.' Virtually within minutes US helicopters evacuated Marcos and his family from the Malacanang Palace.

As these event came to a close US administration aides could not resist congratulating each other on a 'job well done'. They went so far as to depict this as the first success of the doctrine of 'neoglobalism' in Asia, as a model that could be used in other places with an analogous situation.

But has the crisis situation in the Philippines been really settled? The answer is no, for its causes lie much deeper.

The Philippines is at present experiencing the most severe economic, social, and moral crisis of the entire period since the Second World War. In many respects it is similar to the crisis that has hit other nations pursuing the path of capitalist development dependent upon imperialism. The Filipino economy can be called a national economy only in its geographical sense. It is a neocolonial economy serving not so much the interests of the Filipino people as those of the transnational corporations, backed by imperialist states and imperialist-controlled financial agencies like the IMF, the IBRD and the Asian Development Bank, and protected by the military might of the USA and by its bases and military forces stationed in the Philippines.

Neocolonial development, imposed upon our country, persisted no matter who was at the political helm—the Liberal Party, the Nacionalista Party, or the Movement for Free Society,¹ under bourgeois-democratic or authoritarian regimes, in periods when elections were held or when there were no elections. Formally, unequal trade relations are no longer imposed upon us, either US Congressional legislation or by Executive agreement. However, trade between an imperialist power and its colony or neocolony is free only for the former, while for the latter the terms are dictated. Trade and economic relations between the Philippines and the USA remain unequal, unfair, and unfree by virtue of the cumulative effects of the neocolonialist measures imposed earlier. These measures put an effective stranglehold on the Philippine economy, making it dependent upon foreign monopoly capital based mainly in the USA.

This is the root of the crisis, which can be seen plainly everywhere—in manufactures, agriculture, the services industry, and private and state-run financial institutions. One of the most damaging effects of this situation is the net mass outflow of capital. It has been variously estimated that for each dollar invested by them in the Philippines the transnational corporations and banks remit abroad from two to nine dollars.

The development of export-oriented industries dependent largely on imported materials and components generated a chronic trade deficit, in favour particularly of the USA and Japan. In 1983 it amounted to 2,500 million dollars (in the previous year it exceeded 3,700 million dollars). Huge sums in foreign currency flow out of the country to repay and service the external debt (more than half of the new loans were used for these purposes annually in 1972-1983).

The steadily growing trade-and-payment deficits led to a sharp diminution of foreign currency reserves. When it reached a dangerous level the government had to apply to the IMF for 'stabilisation' loans envisaged in the Bretton Woods arrangements. However, while such loans with their onerous provisions temporarily ease the foreign exchange situation, they inevitably destabilise the economy and even the government of the borrowing nation. These provisions require, among other

things, an open door for foreign investments and acceptance of restrictions on economic sovereignty involving tariffs, import and exchange controls, currency devaluation, and a limitation or diminution of the public sector of the economy in favour of private enterprise dominated by foreign capital. In addition, the borrowing country is required to open its books, thereby revealing to the imperialist-dominated IMF the economic vulnerabilities of the borrower and increasing the IMF's leverage with which to squeeze the borrower for still more concessions to foreign monopoly capital.

Moreover, the chronic shortages of foreign currency is compounded by the fact that the prices of Philippine agricultural and mineral exports as well as of the output of export-oriented industries and the prices of imported industrial machinery and equipment and consumer goods as well as of the raw materials and components required by export-oriented industries are dictated by the capitalist world market, which is dominated by the transnationals. Then there is the chronic budget deficit, which is generally covered by government borrowing from domestic savings. In order to have the funds to finance development projects, the government had to borrow from the IBRD and transnational banks. This led to the accumulation of a colossal foreign debt, 27-odd billion dollars, which the Philippines, like many other developing nations, is unable to repay.

Confronted by the constant acute need to reschedule current payments, the regime, having no domestic buttress, was unable to repulse the impositions of international finance capital backed by imperialism's political and military clout. The most reliable buttress is the people united under a close-knit political leadership determined to assert the nation's political and economic sovereignty and pursue a national-democratic path of development. But since this was lacking, the management of the Philippine economy passed, for all practical purposes, to the hands of the IMF and the IBRD with the help of Filipino technocrats.

The nation was inexorably integrated into the capitalist world economy, in which it was assigned the role of a market for the output of transnationals, of a building site for some industrial projects without large outlays, and of a source of cheap raw materials and cheap, undemanding, but quite skilled labour. As a weak element of the capitalist world system of private enterprise, the Philippines was and continues to be affected, with particularly destructive consequences, by the cyclical crises hitting that system. Suffice it to say that over the past two years there have been in the Philippines both a relative and an absolute decrease of the economic development rate, and unemployment has reached catastrophic dimensions, affecting 25 per cent of the able-bodied population of some regions. The inflation rate soared steeply, hitting the poorest sections of the population most painfully. According to some statistics, in the period from 1974 to 1984 the working people's real income plummeted 45 per cent.

Today over 70 per cent of the Filipino people live below the poverty line. This situation brought about by intensified imperialist neocolonial exploitation, creates the soil for mounting popular disaffection for the spread of the struggle for national liberation and social emancipation, against neocolonialism and its collaborators.

The Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas is in the forefront of this struggle. Imperialism and its agents, who have infiltrated the various political movements and organisations, are going to all lengths to inflame anti-communist and anti-Soviet feeling and branding our party as 'pro-Moscow'. They spearhead their attacks against the PKP, being fully aware that since its founding in 1930 it has consistently exposed the mechanisms, agencies, and means used by US imperialism to dominate and exploit the Philippines.

Our stand is clear-cut and principled: the main contradiction of our society is between the Filipino people and US imperialism. However, prevailing public opinion tends to blame all of Philippine society's ills on the faults and vices of the regime that

had clung to power for so long. This is partly due to the impact of imperialist propaganda, which, in order to cover the real role of the neocolonial socio-economic system in the Philippines, finds it more persuasive and politically convenient to place the blame on the Marcos regime rather than on the Communists.

The anti-Marcos campaign was joined by moderate bourgeois nationalists and radical left opposition forces. For tactical reasons they tended to downgrade the USA's responsibility for the catastrophic condition of the people and accentuate the role played by the Marcos regime. This is reflected in formulations such as 'US imperialism is the main enemy, but the Marcos dictatorship is the immediate enemy' and 'US imperialism is the main enemy, but is too strong, and it is necessary to confront first the weaker enemy, the Marcos dictatorship'. The purpose of formulations of this kind was to rationalise concentration on a full-blast attack on the Marcos regime combined with a half-hearted and inconsistent exposure of the real role of imperialism's mechanisms of exploitation and oppression.

As a result of this influence the common masses generally still accept the specious, simplistic explanation that the present system itself is good, the only problem being in corrupt rulers. It is a sad reality that the people still cling to illusions that the rulers of the USA will help solve the acute problems of Philippine society.

In this situation our party is intensifying its efforts to show the people that the present neocolonial system is the root cause of their suffering. The party organises the various strata of the people around sectoral interests or particular anti-imperialist issues, and mobilises them for political actions against all forms of neocolonial domination. The PKP does not entertain the ultra-leftist illusion that there is a revolutionary situation in the Philippines. Addressing the tasks of the national-democratic revolution it calls for greater efforts to educate, organise, and mobilise the people in political and economic struggles against imperialism, and not for inciting armed adventures.

The PKP remains truly based on the industrial and agricultural working classes. In its actions to expose and oppose imperialist machinations it counts primarily on the support of workers' and peasants' organisations. Its influence is visible in the youth, students', and women's movements, and in peace movement organisations. It is endeavouring to unite them in their joint struggle and create a broad common anti-imperialist front based primarily on the alliance of organised workers and peasants. In order to broaden the base of this front to the maximum, it is sparing no effort to reach out to different sectors regardless of their political affiliations, ideological orientation, and religious beliefs.

Although the emergent patriotic, national-democratic front is still weaker than some other forces on the Philippine political scene, it is steadily growing and acquiring strength because it reflects the realities of the national and international situation. It has the benefit of a long history of US imperialist exploitation and domination dating back to the US conquest and occupation of the Philippines in 1898 with recourse to duplicity and atrocities, which frustrated a victorious Philippine revolution against Spanish power. A factor reinforcing it is the patriotic role of the PKP-led anti-Japanese resistance in contrast to the behaviour of the bourgeois collaborators, who were helped to power by General Douglas MacArthur in 1946. Also in its favour is the experience since 1946 of all Philippine presidents (including Marcos), politicians, and businessmen, motivated by a mix of nationalism, pragmatism, and opportunism, who sought, in varying degrees, to assert the nation's political and economic independence but were ultimately compelled to submit to US diktat.

In a letter to the new head of state Corazon C. Aquino, our party's General Secretary Felicismo C. Macapagal wrote, in defining the Communists' attitude to the administration, that the party has always adhered to the principle that it would

'support any government that promotes the interests of the Filipino masses and loosens the foreign hold on the country. Conversely, the PKP will oppose and denounce any government that serves US imperialism and goes against the real interests of the Filipino people'.

We do not hide the fact that we conducted an active campaign to protest the electoral process. The Communists did not vote for Marcos because of his sordid record, of his administration's countless acts of wrongdoing, its unbridled corruption and degradation, and because of his subservience to the IMF and other external forces. But neither did we vote for the opposition candidate because of our perception that the Aquino programme of government appeared to be not only vague but also did not very much differ from the IMF-dictated programme, which had brought untold sufferings to millions of our countrymen.

The present administration obviously has the support of the USA. Headed by an intelligent leader with bourgeois-pacifist leanings, it is composed of representatives of diverse forces: anti-communist military, left-of-centre politicians giving priority to civil rights, and businessmen. But the new regime came to power on the crest of popular actions and won the backing of the masses. Compared with all its predecessors it has the most conducive possibilities for demonstrating a larger degree of independence from foreign diktat. This is not easy to do, because imperialist pressures are not being relaxed, of course. The imperialists will do and are already doing everything to limit the new President's options for development to scenarios favourable to them and prejudicial to the national sovereignty and interests of the Filipino people.

The bottom line of the early May visit to the Philippines by US Secretary of State George Shultz was that it was time to end playing at democracy and to get back to the status quo. During his talks with President Corazon Aquino and Vice-President and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Salvador Laurel, Shultz made no bones about Washington's great interest in continued stability in a country where it has considerable economic interests, strategic military bases, and a large troop contingent. For the sake of such stability the White House is urging the Philippine administration to pursue a tougher line with reliance on the armed forces and shows a willingness for a stronger political alliance with Manila—on its own terms.

However, the new regime's first steps (at the time of writing) hold out certain hopes. A provisional 'Freedom Constitution' has been proclaimed with the avowed purpose of restoring law and order, guaranteeing respect for civil rights, and helping to weed out the abuses of the previous administration. Political prisoners have been released. The state apparatus is being overhauled. There have been adjustments also in the armed forces. While welcoming the intention to normalise the situation in the armed forces by dismissing discredited generals and other officers, public opinion is making known that it would like to see an end to the use of the armed forces as an instrument for suppressing internal disaffection.

But this is far from enough. The democratisation process should logically have the ultimate aim of freeing the Philippine economy and society as a whole from the fetters of foreign domination and of dismantling the entire system of neocolonial dependence. If the present administration directs its efforts toward the assertion of the Filipino nation's sovereignty and safeguards it against imperialist intrusions it will have our party's unstinting support. The Communists are prepared to give all their energy and, if necessary, as they have demonstrated time and again, lay down their lives in the struggle for the country's true freedom and independence.

¹ Founded and headed by Marcos upon the imposition of martial law.

Gain and Violence Go Hand in Hand

James Aldridge – Author (Great Britain)

ABOUT the time that Olaf Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister, was shot in a Stockholm street, a young girl was walking away from a fast-food restaurant at the top of Lavender Hill, near where I live in London. It wasn't late at night, 8 o'clock, but by the time she had crossed a busy road and was walking down a side street she had been attacked by a youth, who dragged her into a car park and raped her. Unlike the tragic death of Olaf Palme, this casual incident of violence and rape in a London street wasn't reported in the national press. It has become almost too common to qualify. But in their own way these two acts of violence are a casual reflection on the problems of violence in all Western societies.

The way Olaf Palme was killed was almost a literal copy of the sort of thing we have seen hundreds and hundreds of times in American films and TV programmes. A faceless professional killer. A powerful Smith and Wesson hand-gun with hand-made bullets. A busy street. The hit man walks up calmly to his victim and shoots him in the back, and then disappears into a dark narrow street—all carefully planned and carried out. It was so close to the Hollywood style that when a Swedish girl, who witnessed the shooting, told a TV commentator that it all seemed so 'unreal', she was really saying that this time it was real when in fact it ought to be unreal, like TV.

As for the girl who was raped near our street in London, there was a clue to the rapist's identity. He had the word HATE tattooed on his fingers. It wasn't long ago that I saw an American film on TV in which something similar happened, and on the fingers of the man who did it was tattooed the same word HATE.

The closeness of real violence to the sort of unreal violence that we are saturated with on TV and in the media in general is now a normal part of all Western societies. Who are the killers? Who are the hooligans? Who are the rapists and thugs, and the gangsters and the drug dealers and the monsters who ravage women and children? Where does it all begin? Is it society itself that is wrong? Is it simply the daily saturation of violence that does it? Or is it a breakdown in the social structure that is slowly eating away at the stability of our Western society? Is the anarchic nature of capitalism, in its present form, creating an anarchic response in those who live by its morals, or who hate its morals, or defy its morals? Or is it a lack of any morality at all that is the problem? The questions are endless, the answers are also without end.

The truth is that the climate of violence obviously has its roots in what is happening to our society. Very few people would deny that. If the violence is a mixture of social violence, personal violence, and official violence, then it reflects the admixture of social conditions, personal conditions, and the role played by the powerful instruments of state authority. To trace all the connections would require a volume of social analysis, and another volume of psychological explanations that would tell us why it happens. But all one can do here is to take violence for what it is, and reflect on its influence as well as its effect.

Because it is now beginning to affect our children and our youth, it is probably best to begin there, with the kind of violence that has become a sort of trade-mark for the British—football violence. Why do they do it? And who are the violent youths who create such trouble?

Last year, at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels, many people died or were injured in a riot which was generally blamed on the British fans. John Smith, Chairman of the Liverpool club which was involved, blamed members of Britain's right-wing National Front¹ for starting the fighting in Brussels. He said he had evidence to support his accusation. He said that at the end of the match he was 'confronted by six so-called

supporters who appeared to be proud of what had happened. They identified themselves as National Front and Chelsea fans.' Also, at the match, there were National Front banners and gangs of skinheads generally close to the National Front. The Mayor of Brussels, said that he had seen extreme right-wing groups from England and Italy fraternising and drinking together in Brussels before the riot. A picture in *The Times* on June 10, soon after the Brussels riot, showed Parisian hooligans at a match in Mons giving the fascist salute. The caption under the picture said: 'They call themselves Kop, after Liverpool's fans, and have blossomed since the Heysel Stadium disaster in Brussels in which 38 died.'

So is this simply a phenomenon of neofascism? The fascist elements in Western societies certainly make use of the youth who are football fans. There is no doubt that by inspiring violence they are capturing some of the violent fans who inevitably join football clubs. But there is more to it than that because in the nature of football, where passions run high, there is also the possibility that our frustrated youth, sometimes our unemployed youth, sometimes our corrupted youth, sometimes our perfectly normal and safe youth, all express themselves in physical explosions that go much deeper than football rivalries. But why is it so violent now, in the eighties, when for so many years our football was more or less peaceful and our fans didn't beat each other up or wait outside the main gates of the stadiums to challenge rivals to bitter fighting?

The truth is that there is so much to frustrate our youth and so little to absorb their frustrations that this sort of violence is easily stirred and has become endemic in our cities. Almost every politician in Britain talks these days of inner city deprivation, or inner city unemployment, inner city poverty, and inner city crime rates. It is a popular theme with no answers. Those who face up to it declare, on the one hand, that unless work is created for our youth, unless unemployment is cut and the cities have better social facilities to absorb the energy of our youth, the violence will continue. At the moment there is little to indicate that these requirements can be satisfied. On the other hand, the official attitude is to recruit more police, apply more strictures, more laws, tougher prison sentences, harsher responses, etc. The cry of the wolf for law and order suggests, in fact, an acceptance of violence rather than a removal of its causes.

Gerald Kaufman, the Labour Party's Shadow Home Secretary, said on the BBC that crime has risen by 40 per cent since the present Tory government came to power. And, despite the 'law and order' solution of more police and tougher laws, 65 per cent of criminals are not caught. Of those who commit burglary, 72 per cent are not caught. Of those who commit criminal damage, 77 per cent are not caught.

Kaufman is talking about real criminality, but what is being done about young offenders who can hardly be called real criminals? More young offenders are locked away in Britain than anywhere else in Europe. More and more young people are being taken from schools and homes and put in prison for minor offences. While jobs are being cut, education cut, social amenities cut, in fact anything else that could help youth—while cuts in these social needs are often draconian, large sums of money are being spent on building 2,000 new prison cells specifically for young people. 'It is a terrible indictment of society,' an expert said on the BBC. And, taking it as a problem for law and order, one can ask if their punishments fit the crimes? Katherine Griffiths, a young and barely articulate girl who was homeless, stole a bottle of milk. She ended up serving 12 days in jail for it. Meanwhile, and only too obviously a contrast, we have city scandals involving the theft of millions of pounds by financial speculators that go unbothered and unpunished by the mechanisms of law and order.

The contrasts in our society are so obvious now that even within the Tory party there is a split between those who want to build a society on the aggressive principles of law and order and those Tories who see the old Britain being torn apart by a system of reckless greed in high places, and a vast deprivation of people at the bottom of

society.

Talking about the problem of deprivation, particularly in the inner cities, the former Tory Prime Minister, Edward Heath, said recently that it could lead to a social breakdown. 'Why obey the rules,' he asked, 'if obedience offers nothing? If our society cannot offer the hope of a job, decent housing, or a reasonable standard of living, how can we expect allegiance to society, loyalty to its institutions, and obedience to its rules?' In other words, obedience to law and order.

There spoke the voice of a frightened Tory recognising that violence in our cities is a response to conditions, not to the lack of law and order. Heath asked for a 'deliberate and purposeful strategy to recreate a modern British industry'. In other words, he wants a Britain that puts people to work, not sends them to prison.

Heath is one of the old Tories, the kind that ruled Britain with compromise and cunning and sometimes with brutality for several hundred years. The new Tories, those who rule us now, are the entrepreneurial uncompromising gamblers, who use money to make money. They are not much concerned with the makers of things. As free-for-all marketeers, they encourage the anarchic, self-interested, and ruthless money-making that demands absolute patriotism from the working class, but not very much from the gentlemen who make money or sell off the nation's birthright to the Americans.

It is their society and their morals that are being challenged, sometimes in an organised way by political methods, sometimes in a savage way by individual explosions that have no meaning or explanation, and sometimes in the strikes and protests that are becoming more and more violent as more and more police are used to solve the problem of law and order. But the conflict has reached the stage where, to quote Mr Heath again, 'why obey the rules (law and order) if obedience offers nothing?'

This kind of free-market society has its own free-market psychology. The battleground of big business is often so violent and ruthless now that it might as well be held up as a barbaric model. Who is to blame if the deprived of the inner cities conduct themselves in the same way as the gentlemen of the financial cities? And isn't it natural that in such an atmosphere we are educated every day on our TV screens, and in the cinema, with the same amoral violence that comes from the same battleground.

There is so much casual brutality, slaughter, assassination, and downright bestiality in our visual media these days that our youth, growing up in this sort of atmosphere, are confused by the gap between the reality of violence and the unreality of it. There is no social morality in it to help them. Like the girl in Sweden, confusion is our response to real violence and to the unreality of what is actually happening to us.

David Robinson, the film critic of *The Times*, recently wrote in his newspaper that in one American film called 'Indiana Jones' (a very popular film) there were 215 separate acts of violence, 39 attempted murders, and 14 summary executions. That, of course, is a modest total compared with the famous American film 'Rambo' which, at the moment, is number one in the ten top videos released in Britain. A programme on Britain's ITV about television programmes mentioned that in the United States a young American will have seen 15,000 murders on TV by the time he or she is 18 years old.

A report called 'Video Violence and Children' published in Britain last year recorded that a third of all 11-year-olds in Britain had watched the most brutal of video horror films. Half of all 15-year-olds had seen at least one of these videos, which would never be shown in a cinema or the TV because they are so horrible. An earlier report by a British parliamentary group quoted some of the children who had seen these videos. One boy, David, said: 'I like seeing people killed. I like it because its more aggro.' Another boy, Warren, said: 'I like all the blood coming out.' Steve

said: 'I like the bit in the film called "Driller Killer" where he puts a man up on sticks and then gets an electric drill and puts it through his stomach and he screams for ages. Then he dies.' A four-year-old girl said: 'I know all about sex. Its when a big man knocks you onto the floor and gets on top of you and you scream because it hurts.'

When faced with this sort of evidence, some of our psychiatrists say that video horror has no lasting effect on our children at all. But as *The Sunday Times* wrote last October: 'The balance of probability seems . . . to rest strongly with the notion that watching violence encourages the idea that it is a normal part of life.'

Violence as a normal part of everyday life is already saturating people's attitude to war, racism, terrorism, and political life generally. But internationally it takes on a more monumental shape. Much of the violence about war in American films like 'Rambo', or the sci-fic monsters of 'Star Wars' in space, is the violence of a Frankenstein monster that is out of control. The trouble is that the 'Star Wars' monster has a superpower behind it, and what makes it particularly frightening is that it begins as a Hollywood phantasy to satisfy America's dreams of the cosmos as a battlefield, and it ends as a reality in a plan to transform fiction into fact. Can it be done? As one critic has said: wasn't the President of the United States invented in Hollywood and didn't he come true?

Getting used to the dream and then transforming it into reality is becoming the ideology of American imperialism. Neil Postman, a professor at New York University, recently wrote in his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death* that every age has its own special form of imperialism, and he says that America's ideological implement is television. He points out that '60 million Americans, almost a third of our entire population, are illiterate'. This is the ideal condition for television to work on, and creating an ignorant audience 'conditioned to minimal mental activity' is not simply aimed at America alone, it will soon be dispersed to every country in the world. Satellite TV is about to become what Neil Postman has called the real weapon of America's imperialist invasion.

But in a world of ignorance, impressed by the American fiction of its own perfection and superiority, it is Star Wars that becomes the real weapon, not an unreal one. It is hard to say how the world imagines itself under an American diktat. What matters is that American policy persists in its worst inventions. If lasers are to be the weapon in space to neutralise and emasculate the Soviet Union, then American fiction has already prepared the way for it to be considered as a 'normal part of everyday life'.

The education to nuclear violence has often been imperceptible. It would be very difficult to trace the long and minute processes that have created a world of nuclear acceptability. For the most part it is the level of inspired passivity that has always been the danger. Resistance to the nuclear threat has to overcome the long years of subtle education in blurring the truth, hiding the reality. Initially the reality of Hiroshima was almost enough to shock us, but even that reality was obscured and confused for years and years. It took a long time for the various peace movements in the world to be heard. It took a long time to persuade some of our most intelligent men that nuclear weapons could totally destroy man and all his works.

Originally, when the United States alone possessed the atom bomb, the West was not afraid of it because it was the Soviet Union that was threatened by it, not the West. That kept too many people quiet who should not have been quiet. But the moment that the Soviet Union had the bomb and the danger was mutual, then our philosophers, writers, politicians, and men of conscience became concerned. CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) only came into existence after the Soviet Union had the bomb, not before, so it was never a matter of a Christian or an intellectual conscience doing its duty. It was simply a recognition of self-interest, of reality and survival. The danger now is that Star Wars can induce a similar reluctance

to act because it is a return to the old situation which threatens the Soviet Union but not the West. Star Wars is seen as the final, absolute, perfect weapon to which there is no defence. It supposedly gives America the final, absolute, and perfect means to apply its authority. The 'American Century', which the American publisher Henry Luce proclaimed after the war, will finally come to be, and once again the illusion confuses the reality.

The tragedy of the explosion that blew up the crew of the space shuttle Challenger was so deeply felt that a whole nation wept and mourned. Every family had been touched because one of the crew was a schoolteacher named Christa McAuliffe. Her pupils had watched the tragedy on TV, and a psychiatrist was called in to help the teachers of the school 'handle their grief and give help and support to the children'. The psychiatrist, Dr Michael Vanaskie, said: 'Films about space and star wars with fighting and explosions are unreal and can be accepted as phantasy, but Mrs McAuliffe was a real human being, part of their everyday lives.' And his solution was 'to tell them that it was a normal reaction to a tragic event to feel unhappy and cry, they should not keep it in'.

If Americans need a psychologist to make that distinction between star wars and the human being, it reflects a deep national disorientation that seems to have people living with a dangerous phantasy. And, as the years go by, we in Europe are also being disoriented so that at this rate life itself will soon seem to be as unreal as the disaster that threatens us. That may be an exaggeration now, but it may not be an exaggeration in the future.

You can't live in the Western world without being aware of the violent mess that our society is in. You can't live in the Western world without being aware of its failure to provide, and its increasing use of force to deal with any sign of protest or organised complaint. Violence is therefore a two-way street. Bernard Shaw once reminded us that life outside society is 'nasty, brutish and short'. But now we have its inversion. Life inside Western society is increasingly nasty, brutish and short for those who are unemployed, dispossessed, black, unable to cope, and in the case of youth face a lost future without hope and purpose. Can the ordinary needs of a human being be managed under these pressures? And what hope is there for a rich life of culture and peace in a world that continuously vulgarises every aspect of human existence, or corrupts it with the philosophies of conspicuous consumption and anarchic self-interest?

In his play *Pygmalion* Bernard Shaw tells us what happens when Professor Higgins takes Eliza Doolittle out of the gutter and, by giving her back the birthright of her own language, rescues her from ignorance and poverty. He had called her a squashed cabbage leaf, and promised to pass her off as a Duchess. What he really did was to open the door for Eliza to the beauties of science and literature, classical music, philosophy, and art.

If it is now the intention of America's TV imperialism to turn us back into squashed cabbage leaves, living the violent life of the violent streets, taking us back into darkness and ignorance, the problem is to rescue ourselves without recourse to Professor Higgins.

To restore the beauties of the mind has become the duty of every intelligent person. It is a fight to the finish. Americans themselves are engaged in it as deeply as the rest of us. They have their own struggle against violence and ignorance. But what can be said of a sophisticated nation that, in its own configuration, admits to 12 million users of cocaine. How must we accept a Presidential commission's report, which says that the business of drugs is marked by 'a degree of violence and corruption unsurpassed by any other criminal activity. The situation confronting us is a crisis both nationally and internationally, . . . it is a threat to our national security.' So what is the advantage of such a society's enormous and conspicuous consumption if it is losing the battle

against the depravity of the body and the corruption of the mind?

And, as we try to cope with the overflow of this violence and phantasy into Europe, we have to look closely at our own society to see where it needs defending against its own corruptions, its own violence, its own failures. 'To be or not to be' is not even a cliché any more. It has become our only means of self-defence. In defending culture, in trying to rescue society from its impoverishment and the nightmare of violence, we are deciding the future of mankind itself. If we are all Hamlets it is because all mankind is facing an ultimate choice, and therein lies the need to distinguish illusion from reality, violence from peace, life from death.

¹ A neofascist organisation acting under chauvinistic, racist slogans.—*Ed.*

In the Fighters' Front Ranks

Paul Angoyo – CC Political Bureau
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THE lot of Chad has long been hard. At the turn of the century, our country was seized by French colonisers. Throughout the decades of foreign domination, our people fought for liberation and national dignity. Chad won nominal independence in 1960 but the imperialists did their utmost to keep it in their sphere of influence. It was with their full backing that a regime under Francois Tombalbaye came to power. The regime was plainly unable and unwilling to resolve the acute social, economic and political contradictions of the new state. The end result was chronic instability fraught with a permanent threat of the rise of an explosive situation.

In 1975 power in Chad was taken by the military, who overthrew Tombalbaye. Four years later, talks between the military and certain leaders of the opposition National Liberation Front (FROLINAT) led to the formation of a national unity government. Shortly afterwards FROLINAT, led by Hissene Habre, came out against the military, a move which triggered a civil war. The Organisation of African Unity joined in the conflict. There ensued a series of conferences and meetings of the sides concerned; they ended in forming a Transitional National Unity Government (TNUG) that was to prepare for and hold the election of a new president.

A few months later, however, Habre took a stand against many TNUG members in a bid to usurp power and attempted a coup with support from the armed forces of the North under his control. The attempt failed and those involved in it fled ignominiously to the neighbouring Sudan (then under the Nimeiri dictatorship). But after that Habre's troops, backed directly by imperialist powers, invaded Chad and captured its capital, N'Djamena.

The French General Staff planned military operations to help imperialism's protégé. They involved thousands of French troops. Formations of Jaguar and Mirage F-1 fighters, as well as Breguet-Atlantic reconnaissance planes arrived in Chad, where an air defence system was being set up. France is also using the conflict in Chad as a pretext for extending its military presence in our country, where it plans to build a permanent base for its Air Force.

The civil war has caused untold hardships to the Chadian people. It has undermined the economy and forced down an already low standard of living. Chadians are hit by hunger and disease and lack elementary medical aid. Child mortality has reached 143 per thousand, a rate incredible in the late twentieth century.

What does Chad need to end the 'perpetual' crisis plaguing it? First of all, an end to imperialist interference in its affairs. Our people are equal to shaping their destiny by themselves, to choosing a development path in keeping with their national aspirations. It is very important to overcome differences within the TNUG and to unite the revolutionary patriotic forces and all else who sincerely want our bleeding wounds to heal as early as possible.

The National Democratic Union of Chad, a vanguard organisation of workers and peasants, takes a most active part in the effort of the TNUG. Its members have held in the past or still hold ministerial posts in the government. The chief purpose of the NDU is to build in collaboration with other revolutionary forces a just society in which exploitation will be ruled out and social equality and peace will prevail.

The NDU sprang up in 1974. The movements opposed to the Tombalbaye regime were disunited at the time due to regional, tribalist and confessional contradictions. This hampered their activity and distracted them from the real aims of the struggle. The NDU, formed by progressives, was intended to give a new incentive to actions for genuine independence and the construction of a society on just principles.

We met little support at first. The Union had to go through hard trials before it became an influential force. Between 1974 and 1979, it had to operate underground. Its first branch, formed in N'Djamena, only had a dozen members. But we gradually expanded our activity, setting up sections in the university, lycees and colleges and winning over progressive students as well as workers and other employees.

Now as in the past, we consider it very important to raise people's political and cultural standards and to arouse interest in knowledge, especially in the ideas of scientific socialism. In this respect the NDU's work centred on books so to speak. In 1977, we contrived to lull the vigilance of the authorities and to open a bookshop in the capital. It was obvious to anyone that the choice of books lining the shelves—the writings of Marx, Engels and Lenin—was not accidental. As for the prices, they were low enough for any buyer. The shop won great popularity. People from the most deverse walks of life dropped in to read, to leaf through a book, to have a chat or to discuss a topical problem. Very few customers knew that the shop was owned by one of our comrades and was carrying out a difficult mission as a centre disseminating progressive ideas. Today, many years on, it is clear that the shop was a good idea. Many of its customers joined the NDU later on while others became its active assistants.

In 1979, the NDU emerged from clandestinity. The next three years saw its membership and political maturity grow substantially. The NDU sent scores of members trained by it to various branches to enlighten and educate others. To use a figure of speech, their function in the NDU is like that of the lungs in the human body—supplying oxygen to the blood stream.

The NDU has adopted a number of political documents. The most important of them are its Rules and its first Programme, which may be described as a minimum programme. It still lacks an exhaustive analysis of the tasks facing us but then it is probably too early to go into details. The main thing is that both the Programme and the Rules are based on the principles of scientific socialism.

In view of the extension of its activity, the Union purchased a building in one of the capital's neighbourhoods inhabited by working people and established in it a centre for the training of cadre members. The centre promptly won popularity among the inhabitants. There the NDU General Secretary often talked with visitors in the evening. The auditorium soon turned out to be too small and so additional benches had to be brought every time. To give talks, we fitted out a hangar with seats for 200 people. Subsequently the talks formed the basis for a standing seminar.

The success registered in the capital inspired us. The NDU stepped up its efforts in the provinces, too, above all in rural communities. This was all the more important

since peasants make up 80 per cent of the economically active population. In this way the Union gradually won prestige in the countryside as well.

Regrettably, NDU activity in legal conditions was broken off after 1982 in the areas which found themselves under Habre's heel. Many of our comrades had to emigrate while others fell back on underground work. The conditions for struggle took a sharp turn for the worse. But 'a grain that has taken root will live', as the saying goes. And we must say that the roots of our organisation lie deep.

The NDU is striving to become a party of the whole nation. We are proud of the fact that today it represents all of Chad's nationalities. Its door is open to every patriot who shares our convictions, irrespective of sex, nationality or religion. The Union's motto is 'Unity, justice, dignity' and its chief slogan, 'Unite to build'.

The social base of the NDU is expanding. New branches spring up in enterprises, neighbourhoods and elsewhere. They are part of sections belonging to district organisations. We expect to set up a network of youth, peasant, cooperative and other organisations and are taking steps to this end. At a time when reaction is building up its pressure and delivers blow after blow to progressives, it is necessary to strengthen the military wing of the NDU.

There are those on whom we can lean for support in carrying on our struggle. At one time the population took a passive, wait-and-see stand. When the war broke out many Chadians left the country in search of a safe haven. Since then people have come to realise that the crisis can be ended only if they take its settlement into their own hands. Students, peasants and other working people come out with determination for their country's peaceful future, for the establishment of a progressive social system in Chad. Operating in the fighters' front ranks are members and supporters of the National Democratic Union.

Topical Notes

Reject as Unacceptable to Humanity

HISTORY and wishful thinking do not mix. The past cannot be reshaped. It is immutable. But, in order to advance faster than before, one must draw one's lessons from past events, whether fortunate or tragic.

The implications of the accident at the nuclear power plant near the town of Chernobyl in the Soviet Ukraine are a reminder of this truth. A tragedy occurred there: nuclear power suddenly went out of control in one of the reactors. Nothing like that had ever occurred in the Soviet Union before. And while we know that everything possible for curbing and containing this dangerous force was done at once, it took time and a great deal of effort to cope with the aftermath of the accident. To our anguish, there were casualties.

The Chernobyl accident alarmed many people all over the world. That is understandable. It was a strike of the alarm bell for all mankind, a grave warning of the danger posed by nuclear power out of control. People are realising that lessons must be drawn from what has happened—not only as regards the improvement of safety arrangements but also political lessons. This concerns both peaceful use of atomic energy and, especially, the attitude to nuclear weapons. After all, the world's stockpiles of these weapons are fraught with tens of thousands of disasters a million times more dangerous than the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant.

Naturally, people responded in different ways to the accident. We live in a heterogeneous world, composed of different social strata and classes, but even these

differences are giving way to the awareness that in the nuclear age, mankind has a common destiny. In many countries people responded with compassionate sympathy to the misfortune that befell the Soviet Union. Robert Gale and Paul Tarasaki, prominent experts in radiology, arrived in Moscow from the United States to offer practical assistance in the treatment of the power plant personnel and the firefighters affected by radiation. Soviet requests for deliveries of the necessary medical drugs and other supplies for the emergency treatment of those suffering from radiation sickness were met promptly. The Soviet Union is grateful for these fine examples of compassion.

Whenever a nuclear power plant accident threatens to raise the radiation level, public concern is understandable and natural, and Chernobyl was no exception. The USSR and neighbouring countries conducted constant dosimetric monitoring of the environment and of foodstuffs and took other preventive measures. The readings and results of tests were published in the press.

At the same time, one cannot ignore the fact that deliberate efforts were made to arouse widespread public hostility towards the Soviet Union. The forces manipulating the bourgeois mass media played a prominent part in this drive. They tried to capitalise on the misfortune that struck the USSR and launched a propaganda campaign which had nothing to do either with genuine concern for their own peoples or with elementary sympathy with the affected Soviet citizens. Everything was done to provoke panic and animosity towards the USSR.

Economic pressure was applied too. Several EEC member-countries unilaterally suspended imports not only of food but also of industrial goods from East European nations. This was a purely political, discriminatory decision: the 'protective' measures were applied only to imports from the *socialist countries*, although if radioactive contamination does occur, national frontiers are powerless to contain it.

The inescapable conclusion is that this unseemly response was obviously motivated by the desire of certain NATO quarters to use the Chernobyl accident for inflicting the greatest possible moral, economic and political damage on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. But they were not the only targets.

The motto of the propaganda campaign was, 'don't trust the Soviets—in other words, don't trust Soviet policy or anything the USSR says or does.'

To Communists and to all other honest people, there arises a matter of fundamental importance. One must decide what information to accept and how to act in the future, should a similar propaganda campaign recur. Enough time has passed to be able to determine which sources supplied truthful information and which spewed lies. Undeniably, *all* information provided by the Soviet Union was truthful and fully reflected the actual situation. It is equally undeniable that *all panic-mongering reports* of the Western press about the scale of the Chernobyl accident were lies disseminated to incense public opinion in Europe and the world.

One would be justified to conclude that, obviously, those who refuse to believe the USSR and see it as their mortal enemy will not change their spots. But when they control the mass media and try to foist their own ideas about and attitudes to the Soviet Union not only on their own countrymen but also on international public opinion as a whole, this poses a threat to peace.

And now about what appeals 'not to trust the Soviet' mean in this day and age. The impression is that the architects of the campaign did not fully realise what they were calling for. One can, of course, adopt a stance of sweeping mistrust, suspicion and hostility. But where will this lead to in our interdependent world? Can one really justify such an approach to a nation relations with which are an essential element of efforts to solve the problems of international security?

Any rational person will know how to answer these questions. Appeals along the 'don't trust the Soviets' line are made in the hope that, swayed by emotion, people

will cease to think. We have witnessed an attempt to brainwash those who welcomed the Soviet Union's unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions, its meticulously scheduled plan for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000, and the Soviet proposals on pooling the efforts of all nations to build a safe world. Essentially, the campaign was a scheme to divert the attention of world public opinion from the tackling of today's vital problems, to impede man's progress to the complete removal of the risk of a universal nuclear catastrophe.

That this risk is not connected with the operation of nuclear power plants is common knowledge. Some 370 power-generating reactors of different types are now working in different countries, and the number will grow because the world cannot do without nuclear power in the coming decades. This is a fact. No one can stop technological progress, although peaceful uses of nuclear energy do give rise to new concerns—about the safety of the population, about preventing radioactive waste from polluting the environment. Accidents at nuclear power plants call for more stringent controls over their operation. Of great importance in this respect are the proposals advanced by Mikhail Gorbachov in his speech on Soviet television. Mindful of the lessons of Chernobyl, the USSR addressed the international community with a proposal of joint efforts to establish a mechanism for exchanging prompt information on accidents and malfunctions at nuclear power plants, particularly when accompanied by releases of radioactivity. There is an urgent need for an international regime ensuring safe development of nuclear power engineering, a regime involving all countries that deal with nuclear power production. There is a need for these countries' closer cooperation within the framework of the IAEA, of the United Nations and of its specialised agencies—the World Health Organisation and the UN Environment Programme.

Nuclear arms are a different matter. Their stockpiling is getting increasingly dangerous and less controllable. The world's 50,000 nuclear warheads can destroy all life on Earth many times over. As Dr Gale said at a press conference in Moscow, medicine will be powerless if nuclear war breaks out. This is indirectly acknowledged by officials of the US Department of Energy: even the radioactive debris that might escape from a nuclear reactor accident does not create the deadly fallout resulting from a nuclear explosion.¹ So nuclear explosions are the real source of danger.

With due regard for all considerations of safety of its own people and of all mankind, the Soviet government has extended its unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests until August 6, 1986. It has again called on the United States to weigh the gravity of the danger facing mankind and to heed the voice of the world community. The proposal was reiterated that President Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachov meet without delay in the capital of any European country or in Hiroshima and negotiate a ban on nuclear testing.

The elimination of nuclear arsenals and deliverance from the threat of man's extinction are the foremost task the Soviet Union suggests all nations should tackle jointly. Obviously, only those who do not want to give up nuclear weapons and who thrive on increased tensions and universal suspicion oppose this solution. It does not even occur to them to 'hold the USSR to its word' when it proposes peace initiatives and to see, in the course of their joint follow-up, whether the Soviet Union can be trusted. The 'war party' is unable to counter this argument of millions of Western peace champions.

The propaganda campaign orchestrated over Chernobyl has shown how dangerous it is to manipulate public opinion. The accident was merely a pretext for fomenting anti-Soviet hysteria. Scare-mongering and dishonest playing on the normal human instinct of self-preservation were salient features of this campaign. They highlighted the degree of moral degradation of those who sponsored it. It was in fact a cynical and

cold-blooded exercise in psychological destabilisation of public opinion on an international scale. If one recalls that this was done on instructions and in the interests of those who cling to nuclear weapons, one will realise the danger of using anti-Sovietism to blind millions of people even for a short time. Should the militarist quarters in the West come to believe that they have secured military superiority over the USSR, their coveted goal, they may well plunge the world into disaster.

The nuclear age calls for a new political mentality and new policies. Chernobyl is another grim warning to the human race: the world has suffered an accident infinitely less dangerous than what a nuclear war may bring. It has dramatically highlighted the interconnection and interdependence of whatever man does—a distinctive feature of today's world. Life demands that we redouble and again redouble our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons and to secure reliable international cooperation in the uses of nuclear power. Whether the energy of the atom will serve a creative life in peace and universal progress or war, destruction and death is a choice only people can make.

No matter where we live, our most important common task is to ensure human survival. We cannot build a peaceful future without mutual trust, without joint efforts of countries even with different social systems. We can survive and coexist only together. But, no matter what pretext is cited to justify them, anti-Sovietism and anti-communism serve to alienate.

Chernobyl has shown that a contaminated political atmosphere is particularly dangerous now. The radiological consequences of a nuclear reactor accident can be overcome, especially if nations pool their efforts. Meanwhile, political contamination hampers the implementation of even these humanitarian tasks and, which is particularly important, makes a safe world a more remote prospect. But since there is no rational alternative to peace, mankind must reject as unacceptable everything tainted with imperialist psychological warfare.

Ed Hagg

¹ *International Herald Tribune*, April 30, 1986.

surveys, information and mail

Outcasts of the Twentieth Century Status of Ethnic Minorities in Industrial Capitalist Countries

THE past few years have witnessed a dramatic exacerbation of inter-racial and inter-ethnic relations in industrial capitalist countries that in many cases erupted into violent, angry clashes. The street fighting in the coloured ghettos of London,

Washington, Birmingham, New York, Liverpool, and Chicago have drawn public attention to the tragic condition of ethnic minorities. Whereas in the West not very long ago they spoke of an accidental outbreak of an 'epidemic of nationalism', today even bourgeois leaders concede that the roots of the unrest lie in racial discrimination that flourishes in all areas of life.

Slave Status

In developed capitalist countries there are no signboards with the words 'For Whites Only'. But society's division into two sections isolated from each other and not enjoying equal rights—coloured and white—is glaringly in evidence. Most of the coloured are on the lowest rung of the social ladder, and they are the ones who, as a rule, perform the most unattractive and low-paid work. In the USA half again as many Afro-Americans as whites, 80 per cent of the Chicanos (persons of Mexican origin), and over 70 per cent of the Puerto Ricans are employed on unskilled, mostly manual work. The corresponding indicator among immigrants, principally from Central African countries, is 81.6 per cent in France and between 84 and 94 per cent in Britain among immigrants from Caribbean and Asian countries. They are employed chiefly in poorly equipped sectors of the mining, textile, and food industries, construction, public utilities, transport, agriculture, and sanitation services. Most of the 'clean' professions are closed to them. Mainly whites are employed in the nuclear, electronics, and petro-chemical industries, banking, and other prestigious sectors of the US economy.

Discrimination against so-called guest workers is particularly harsh. Recruited in their homeland, they are for all practical purposes denied freedom of choosing jobs. This category of working people is subjected to eminently brutal exploitation as a result of the steady intensification of labour and the introduction of uncontrolled overtime. In Italy, for example, according to statistics of the Italian Confederation of Trade Unions, they work from 55 to 70 hours a week. The absence of labour protection is the cause of countless cases of injury and occupational diseases. In Switzerland the number of accidents among guest workers is, depending on the industry, from three to ten times larger than among Swiss. In France immigrant workers, who account of only eight per cent of the employed population, suffer 22 per cent of the production injuries. Denied social rights, they get no compensation for such injuries.

There is also wage discrimination against persons belonging to ethnic minorities. In the USA the wages received by Afro-American and other ethnic citizens is almost half of the remuneration paid to whites. In Canada Eskimos get half and Indian miners get one-third of what is paid to whites. Ship-building companies in Britain pay ethnic workers one-fifth of the wages of whites despite the fact that their work-day is four hours longer.

Non-white workers are usually at the top of the dismissal lists. In the USA, even according to official statistics, the unemployment rate among ethnic minorities has reached almost 50 per cent. The conditions of the indigenous inhabitants of North America, Australia, and New Zealand is appallingly tragic. The jobless rate is 80 per cent among the inhabitants of the Indian reservations of the USA, 80-90 per cent among the Eskimos of Alaska, and 75 per cent among able-bodied Canadian Indians. In Australia unemployment among aborigine industrial workers is six times above the average, reaching 100 per cent in some communities.

Foreign workers live under the constant threat of dismissal. Over the past 10-15 years the governments of capitalist countries, in alliance with the monopolies, have been pursuing a policy of regularly renewing the body of immigrants in order to obtain the largest possible returns from alien proletarians. Superexploitation leads to

the rapid physical exhaustion, and the need arises for replenishing manpower. New immigrants come to take the place of dismissed and deported immigrants, often on poorer terms. For example, 477,000 foreign workers were discharged and deported in the FRG in 1966-1967. They were replaced with newly arrived immigrants. This sort of 'rotation' persists to this day.

The scientific and technological revolution and the structural readjustments in the economies of capitalist countries have hit the employment rate of ethnic minorities particularly hard. Automation, new methods of management, and modernisation in the services industry have cut back the demand for unskilled labour, the bulk of which consists of non-whites. Their opportunities for learning skills are extremely slim on account of the discrimination in access to occupational training.

From Segregation in Education to Social Genocide

In order to operate high-tech machinery people must have a higher level of general education. However, in capitalist countries the majority of the coloured people do not get a proper education. In the USA, despite the legislative ban on segregation, more than 60 per cent of Afro-American children to this day attend schools where they predominate numerically and the quality of the teaching is far below the standard at schools in white neighbourhoods. The low knowledge level reduces the chances of these children finding jobs after they leave school. The situation is compounded by the fact that many of them quit studying early. In the USA, according to official statistics, the proportion of drop-outs among Afro-American schoolchildren exceeds 16 per cent, and among Spanish-speaking children it is over 30 per cent. Almost half of all the Indians in the USA have not finished five classes, although a system of twelve-year secondary education operates in the country.

Nor is the situation better in some other countries. In the FRG only half of the children of foreign workers study, and of these 60 per cent are compelled to drop out before finishing school. A matriculation certificate is won by only four per cent of the aborigine children of Australia, 20 per cent of the Canadian Indian children, and only six per cent of West Indian and 14 per cent of Asian children in Britain. This results in mass illiteracy among ethnic minorities. About half of the Indians in the USA and more than 90 per cent of the aborigenes in Australia are totally illiterate.

Of those who get a secondary education far from all can expect to learn a profession. In Britain approximately 35 per cent of West Indian and Asian school-leavers and in the FRG over two-thirds of the children of immigrant workers remain without occupational training.

Their chances of getting a higher education are even smaller. In the USA only 6-7 per cent of the senior year students¹ are from ethnic minorities. In Britain a diploma certifying higher education is received by only 0.5 per cent of ethnic West Indians and five per cent of young British citizens of Asian origin. Only one per cent of Canadian Indians and roughly 0.03 per cent of Australian aborigenes study at universities, which most of them do not finish.

The massive assault undertaken in the mid-1970s by monopoly capital and the ruling circles on the social gains and living standards of working people has most seriously affected the conditions of ethnic minorities, spelling out social genocide for them.

Social benefits programmes for the poor, most of whom are people belonging to ethnic minorities, have been slashed. In the USA 62 per cent of the chronically impoverished are non-whites. As many as 80 per cent of the Indians and Eskimos of Canada and nearly two-thirds of Australia's aborigenes and of New Zealand's Maoris eke out an existence below the poverty line. These groups of the population were the hardest hit also by the cutbacks of allocations for social security, housing, public health, and education. In the USA, for instance, cities in which ethnic minorities

comprise a particularly large part of the population are becoming the targets of the largest reductions in social allowances funds. The already small federal subsidies to the Indian reservations have been reduced by another 500 million dollars annually since 1980.

Abject poverty, shanty towns, and substandard medical care symbolise racial discrimination. In most of the capitalist countries coloured people are officially not barred from living in white neighbourhoods. But those who can afford this are helpless before the racist prejudices of the landlords. However, the majority of coloured citizens do not have the money to live outside the ghettos that have become part and parcel of the big cities. The most notorious Afro-American ghetto—New York's Harlem—is a neighbourhood of tumbledown houses that have not been repaired for a long time and many of which are in a hazardous condition. Even according to official statistics, more than ten per cent of them are uninhabitable. Harlem is short of schools and hospitals. The cinemas have given way to numerous bars and video-game halls, where narcotics are peddled. It is dangerous to walk in the streets of Harlem even in daylight: violence reigns there, and a large number of serious crimes is committed than in any other New York neighbourhood.

Harlem is no exception. The names of countries and cities differ, but the life of the ghetto inhabitants is everywhere the same. In capitalist countries most of the immigrant workers cannot afford even a ghetto dwelling. They live in barracks more often than not on the territory of factories, or in houses that should have been pulled down long ago. Several persons are assigned a tiny room devoid of elementary conveniences, but each is charged a rent as for a whole apartment.

That disease is widespread among ethnic minorities is due to the shocking living and working conditions. For example, the tuberculosis rate among Pakistani immigrants in Britain is 30 times higher than among the white population. In the Indian reservations in the USA the tuberculosis rate in proportion to the population is seven times higher than in white neighbourhoods. In ethnic communities many people are chronically ill, and the child death rate is very high. The average life expectancy is much shorter than among whites. For instance, in the USA Afro-Americans live six, Indians live 26, and Eskimos and Aleuts live almost 36 years less than whites.

Terror and Denial of Rights

As the twentieth century comes to a close millions of people belonging to ethnic minorities in the capitalist world are denied civil and political rights. The legislation that they have won from the ruling circles by a long and persevering struggle has not brought any fundamental change in this area. Take, for example, the situation in the USA. Laws on civil and suffrage rights were passed in that country in 1964-1965, and today Afro-Americans have representatives in the US Congress and in the legislatures of the various states, and also in the mayor's offices of 250 cities. However, while they make up 12 per cent of the population, Afro-Americans hold only one per cent of the elective offices. The picture is the same relative to other minorities. Americans of Mexican origin comprise between 12 and 15 per cent of California's population but have only two per cent of the delegates in the state's legislature and none in the California senate. By means of various manipulations a significant proportion of coloured people is prevented from taking part in elections. That explains why the Communist Party USA assesses the 1964-1965 laws as exclusively formal guarantees of equality that are either not implemented or have no real importance in day-to-day practice.

Similarly, the aborigines of Australia formally enjoy suffrage rights. But while numbering 150,000 they do not have a single representative in the nation's

parliament. In Canada the Indians have since 1960 had the right to vote in the elections to the Federal Parliament. But if an Indian invokes that right he, his wife, children, and grandchildren are deprived of their share of land in a reservation and have to leave the reservation for good.

A natural outcome of the absence of political representation is that the life of ethnic minorities is more often than not regulated by essentially racist laws. For example, Canadian legislation denies to Indians, persons of mixed blood, and Eskimos cultural and inheritance rights, the right to own land, and the right to social services, which are enjoyed exclusively by 'lily-white' Canadians. A new citizenship law passed in Britain divided all British subjects into three categories with unequal rights. Racism has thereby become state policy.

Immigrant workers are denied basic political rights. The immigration laws in capitalist countries are selective and are applied to persons of Asian, African, and Latin American origin. The main purpose of these laws is to provide labour for jobs spurned by the local population, and give immigrants no possibility for protesting arbitrary decisions of employers and moves to reduce the already small remuneration for their work.

Ethnic minorities encounter discrimination in courts of law as well. The harsh and, in many cases, unlawful attitude of the judiciary to the American Indians is noted even by the advisory council for ethnic minorities affairs of the US Department of Justice. One of its reports quotes statistics showing that American Indians are harassed more often by other citizens of the USA and that they are sentenced to longer prison terms than other citizens indicted on similar charges.

The judicial system of capitalist countries deals brutally with persons who speak up in defence of their people. Custodians of the law do not shun trumping up charges. This was how fighters for the rights of Afro-Americans Johnny Harris and Assata Shakour, the American-Indian leader Leonard Peltier, and many others were imprisoned.

Police terror against members of ethnic minorities has been stepped up in recent years. It has been estimated that one person a day dies at the hands of the police in the USA—more than half of the victims, up to 70 per cent in Philadelphia and Chicago, are Afro-Americans. Memories are still fresh of the tragic events of May 1985 in Philadelphia when a bomb was dropped from a police helicopter on a house inhabited by Afro-Americans. The explosion caused fires that gutted 60 nearby houses. There were 11 fatalities, including children, and hundreds of the ghetto inhabitants were left without a roof over their heads. Not a single person responsible for this brutality has been brought to justice or even punished administratively.

Police excesses provoked unrest in the coloured ghettos of Britain: in Bristol in 1980, in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Nottingham, Hull, Newcastle upon Tyne, and other cities in 1981, again in Liverpool in 1982, and in Birmingham in 1985. The unrest was suppressed with the most callous ruthlessness. Not a single policeman was brought to account.

The situation is compounded by the riot of racial hatred encouraged and fanned by the ruling circles of capitalist countries. Acts of violence and even murder are on the rise against coloured people. Back in 1981 the British Home Office found that the risk of attack on people of West Indian origin was 36 times higher, and on people of Asian origin 50 times higher than on whites. Last year ten persons died and many were injured at the hands of racists in Britain. The French press reports that one Algerian dies in this way every month in France. In Australia shooting aborigines has become a 'sport' for racist thugs.

As a rule, the police do nothing to stop violence, and criminals go unpunished. An example of this is that last year the court of appeal in the state of Alabama repealed the death sentence of a Ku Klux Klan member who, with an accomplice, wantonly

killed a 19-year-old Afro-American youth. More, according to numerous reports in the press, it has become almost habitual that after an act of violence by white hooligans, the victims and not the criminals are put behind bars.

Extremist violence suits the monopolies. By whipping up racial hatred they not only get the opportunity to insensify their uncontrolled exploitation of ethnic minorities, which brings them additional profits, but also to attain a similarly important objective: these actions divide working people, debilitate their resistance to the common enemy, and thereby reinforce monopoly domination in society. Understanding this danger, the communist parties of industrial capitalist countries have for many years been fighting consistently for the rights of ethnic minorities and enlisting large sections of the democratic public into this struggle.

Working Group, *WMR* Commission for
Scientific Information and Documentation

¹ This does not include young people of Asian origin.

Communist Youth Leagues

Brief Information*

Progressive Youth Organisation of Guyana (PYO)

ESTABLISHED in 1952 by decision of the Second Congress of the Progressive People's Party of Guyana (PPP) as the Party's youth section. The PYO immediately joined the popular struggle for political independence and upheld the interests of the young generation. Twelve months after its formation the PYO sponsored a national youth conference which attracted public attention to the problems of young people and demanded the establishment of a commission to study the working conditions of young workers and technicians. PYO activities incensed the British colonial rulers, and many PYO members were subjected to persecution and jailed. The organisation was forced to go underground. The clandestine period ended with the advent of a PPP government in 1957, when the first congress of the organisation was held.

From 1957 to 1964, when the People's Progressive Party was in office, the PYO played an important role in ensuring vigorous involvement of the younger generation in the development of the national economy.

Together with the PPP, progressive youth fought against the anti-popular policy of the People's National Congress—United Force coalition and suffered from persecution. Not all members of the organisation proved able to withstand these trials. The work of some primary organisations virtually came to a standstill. The situation was compounded by the fact that tactical differences led to a split in the PYO General Council. The party resolved to revitalise the work of the youth section. In 1969 the PYO held its Sixth Congress which set the task of mobilising the younger generation to the struggle for a socialist Guyana, for its economic independence.

The PYO currently totals some 8,000 members¹—students, young farmers, agricultural and factory workers, low-level salary earners, craftsmen and unemployed. The organisation enjoys considerable influence and prestige with Guyana's young people, leading them in their struggle for the right to work, education and recreation, against racial and political discrimination. Progressive

* Last instalment of the series. See also *WMR*, Nos. 4, 7, 8 and 10, 1984; Nos. 2 and 6, 1985; Nos. 3, 4, 6, 1986.

youth conducts demonstrations and protest rides and marches and circulates petitions in support of its demands.

The PYO attaches great importance to the attainment of unity among the Guyanese young people. With this end in view it is active in student councils, trade unions, farmers' associations, athletic societies and cultural organisations. The PYO cooperates with other youth associations and with the youth sections of religious organisations.

Progressive youth plays an important part in the propagation of Marxist-Leninist ideas among Guyana's younger generation and educates young men and women in the spirit of patriotism and proletarian internationalism. PYO members conduct seminars, discussions and debates in which young people unaffiliated with the organisation also take part. The PYO publishes the *Youth Advance* monthly and stages various cultural events for the masses.

As a member organisation of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Union of Students, the PYO is active in the movement of solidarity with the peoples fighting for national independence, against fascist regimes and dictatorships.

Democratic centralism is the organisational principle of the PYO. Primary organisations and groups are united in district and regional committees. The congress is the highest body (the latest, 12th Congress was held in 1983). A Central Committee, its Executive and Secretariat spearhead the work between congresses. PYO secretaries direct the activities of National Committees for Organisation, Education, Propaganda, Finance, Sports, Culture, Student Affairs, Young Women, Working Youth, Young Pioneers and International Affairs.

Communist Youth League of Denmark (CYLD)

The Communist Youth League of Denmark was founded in 1924 and has been operating under the guidance of the Communist Party of Denmark as its active assistant.

The League adheres to a consistent Marxist-Leninist position and has won prestige in the country. It sees its most important task at this stage in bringing young Danes into the struggle for peace and disarmament. Young Communists take the initiative of forming peace organisations among students and young trade unionists. The CYLD is affiliated to the Committee for Peace and Security. It seeks application of the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and takes part in rallies, marches and demonstrations against US nuclear missiles and the militarisation of space, for the creation of nuclear-free zones in Northern Europe. At present Young Communists are collecting signatures to the appeal 'For the Complete Abolition of Nuclear Weapons by the Year 2000'.

Defence of the rights of youth, primarily the right to work, is another important activity of the League. The job situation in Denmark has worsened very noticeably. Up to 20 per cent of young Danes are unemployed. League members organise campaigns to force monopolies and major companies to employ more young people. They sponsor marches against unemployment to attract public attention to the problem. The CYLD is campaigning against the adoption of discriminatory measures, in particular against the low rates for workers in the 18-21 age group. It supports the students' demand for higher grants and defends the right of youth to education.

Young Communists are working to make the League a mass organisation. They spell out its goals and tasks to young Danes, win new members and carry out campaigns aimed at securing more subscribers for *Fremad* (Forward), the League's periodical.

Special attention is devoted to working youth and to bringing them into political activity. The League has always enjoyed strong influence in the Organisation of Young Workers and Apprentices. Communist youth also cooperate with other youth organisations of Denmark, including associations of students and young Social Democrats. The CYLD is affiliated to the National Youth Council, which groups over 50 organisations.

The League takes an anti-imperialist stand on international issues. It plays an active role in the movement of solidarity with the peoples of Chile and Nicaragua, champions a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis on the basis of UN resolutions and supports the national liberation fight of the peoples of Southern Africa. The CYLD is an Executive Committee member of the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

It functions on the principle of democratic centralism. Its supreme authority is the congress, held every two years. The latest (36th) congress met in March 1986. The League's activity in between congresses is led by the Chief Board.

Federation of the Communist Youth of Paraguay (FCYP)

The FCYP, founded in 1936, groups the more enlightened part of working class youth, peasants, intellectuals and students.

The Federation is an assistant and reserve of the Communist Party of Paraguay (CPP). Prospective party members study Marxist-Leninist theory and practice in the ranks of this youth organisation. Many CCP leaders, such as Antonio Maidana, Alfredo Alcorta or Julio Rojas, began their political activity as Federation members.

The Communist youth of Paraguay see their chief task in implementing the party's programme and strategy and in drawing the younger generation into the struggle to overthrow the anti-popular dictatorship and to achieve real democracy, social progress, national independence and socialism.

The Federation has long had to operate in the harshest conditions of illegality. The Stroessner dictatorship relentlessly harasses and persecutes Young Communists. Thousands of them were jailed, tortured and killed by the police and the military or are missing. Many of FCYP leaders, including its General Secretary, Derliz Villagra, have been in prison for years.

All this notwithstanding, communist youth go on operating in factories, educational institutions, urban and rural communities as they prepare the younger generation for a democratic, agrarian, anti-imperialist revolution.

The organisation attaches great importance to the unification of all young men and women irrespective of political or religious convictions. It combats sectarianism and adventurism and strives for unity of action of youth in the interests of solving the country's difficult problems. The FCYP seeks cooperation with other youth organisations. To this end it works in underground Marxist groups, trade unions, peasant associations, educational institutions, the Political Youth in Exile organisation and the anti-dictatorial youth alliance.

The Federation sponsors numerous actions in support of common demands, such as respect for human rights, the repeal of fascist laws, the release of all political prisoners, a general amnesty and the repatriation of political exiles. It mobilises youth to fight against the dominance of foreign capital and the Paraguayan oligarchy, for new jobs, higher wages, an agrarian reform, more spending on education, and a democratic educational system.

The FCYP is a staunch fighter for peace. It brings young people into the anti-war movement and educates them in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. It has inherited the internationalist traditions of Paraguayan youth, whose finest representatives fought against fascism in Spain and organised movements of

solidarity with the peoples of Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic and Chile, with fighters for human rights in the United States. Young Communists of Paraguay continue supporting the peoples who are fighting against imperialism, for national liberation, against repressive regimes. The Federation is affiliated to the WFDY and takes part in every action sponsored by this international organisation.

The FCYP publishes a periodical called *Patria Neuva* (New Country).

¹ Guiana had a population of 900,000 in 1982. *—Ed.

Diary

DELEGATIONS of *World Marxist Review* took part in the work of the Eighth Congress of the German Communist Party and the 19th Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

the book scene

Through the Prism of History

On the completion of the eight-volume publication *The International Working Class Movement. History and Theory*, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1976-1985.*

THE rationale behind this fundamental work by a large group of Soviet scholars is clearly set forth in an introduction by Academician Boris Ponomarev. 'The idea was,' he notes, 'to create a sufficiently comprehensive picture of the socio-economic and ideological and political evolution of the working class and its maturing as the leading force in revolutionary social change . . . The authors undertook to coherently trace events and problems, against the backdrop of social development generally, directly pertaining to the evolution of the working class, and use concrete facts to show its mounting role as a factor conducive to mankind's social progress' (Vol. 1, p. 8).

A scrutiny of this multi-volume work, also published in English, German, Bulgarian, Czech, Vietnamese and Japanese, makes clear that the authors were equal to their task. They painted an impressive picture of the progress of the international working class movement from its inception to the present stage, a tremendous effort to research and interpret a theoretically precious experience.

A major merit of the publication is its combination of the concrete-historical and problem-and-theory approaches. The entire research takes careful account of the

* *WMR* carried a review of Vol. 1 in its issue No. 5, 1976; Vol. 2 was reviewed in No. 5, 1977; Vol. 3 in No. 12, 1978; Vol. 4 in No. 4, 1981, and Vols. 5 and 6 in No. 7, 1982.—Ed.

facts, with its solid concrete examination of the history of the international working class movement. Parallel to that, the authors set forth the logic of facts, focusing on the general features of the working class movement advance and its theoretical concepts relevant to the current stage of Marxist-Leninist social science.

The eight volumes under review have summarised critical breakthroughs in the historical and political sciences of the postwar years. The reference section draws on a vast store of both Soviet and foreign scientific publications. The encyclopaedic nature of the work makes it a recapitulation of the findings of a substantial stage in versatile joint research into the international working class movement, thus creating something on which to further build in this direction.

The historic experience generalised in the publication has close ties to the present day. The authors use the historical method to trace stages in the evolution of the working class movement as having occurred in a specific period and place. They have evaded the pitfalls of modernising simplification whereby history is tied in with political expediency; but it is obvious that they sought to use the prism of history to clarify the current problems of the working class movement and illuminate its prospects.

The publication meets the stringent criteria of the party spirit of Marxist social science. The authors are by no means clinically impartial to what they deal with. They examine historical events and theoretical problems from the standpoint of the working class and communist outlook to show a consistent scientific treatment of progressive social trends. The party spirit is also evident in the strong point they make against bourgeois, reformist and revisionist ideas distorting history and the very essence of the working class movement. In doing so they use valid scientific arguments to get at the class and methodological roots of bourgeois and reformist conceptions.

The language of most of the chapters makes them accessible not just to specialists but also the lay reader with an interest in the history and the current problems of the working class movement.

Each of the eight volumes is an independent effort; each accumulates the experience of any one important period in the history of the working class movement: the early stages of its political endeavour and 1848-1849 revolutionary battles (Vol. 1); the Paris Commune and transition to imperialism (Vol. 2); the 1905-1907 Russian revolution and the mass working class movement in the run-up to the socialist revolution (Vol. 3); the Great October Socialist Revolution and postrevolutionary years (Vol. 4); the building of socialism in the USSR and the liberation fight with fascism (Vol. 5); the working class movement after the Second World War (Vol. 6); the national liberation movement (Vol. 7); the emergence of the world socialist system and the communist movement (Vol. 8). It is also true that each volume is integral to the whole work, providing a comprehensive idea of the nature and laws of the development of the international working class movement and its revolutionary practices. This inner unity rests on the pivotal ideas binding together the eight volumes.

The chief focus of the entire research is the formation and evolution of the international working class as a liberating and creative class, with the volumes successively tracing the major stages of its development. First, the evolution of the working class itself: from the pre-proletariat of the early bourgeois revolutions, to the textile-mill proletariat, to the factory working class, to the present-day working class of the scientific and technological revolution period. Second, the formation of the working class as a socio-political entity passing through certain stages of professional and political organisation, the unleashing of its inner activity potential from spontaneous protest to the conscious political drive to radically change state power and transform society in a socialist way. Third, the ideological maturing of the

proletariat, its intellectual elevation from utopian ideas of a just society to scientific communism, which uncovered the objective laws of transition from capitalism to socialism.

The broad picture of the working class evolution is by no means an abstraction but a living history brimming with dramatic developments with an original national tinge. Much space is given to outstanding leaders of the working class movement; yet, by and large, this is a history of the working class masses in motion, their strike action, political battles, revolutionary and labour exploits and fortitude. 'Each successive gain,' the authors note, 'helped along the self-evolution of the working class and broadened its cultural and political views . . . The critical element was the very fact of workers' participation in the struggle . . . This process of struggle forged professional organisations of the working class and its political parties' (Vol. 2, p. 100).

The work provides a clear definition of the very concept 'the working class', generalising Marxist research and argument. 'The working class under capitalism is a class of hired labourers devoid of means of production and in a position of dependence in the social organisation of labour, exploited by capitalists who appropriate the surplus value produce by them' (Vol. 6, p. 150).

The authors use a wealth of facts to disprove claims by opponents of Marxism as well as revisionists that the working class is disappearing and its role declining. They cite convincing figures of the steady growth of the working class ranks throughout the world. While in the early twentieth century they numbered slightly more than 70,000,000, the mid-century figure was around 300,000,000 and reached 660,000,000 in the 1980s (Vol. 8, p. 660). More important, the working class produces material and spiritual values, carries on democratic traditions and furthers social progress.

Now that the scientific and technological revolution is making increasingly less use of live labour in production, the working class movement is facing acute political, economic and socio-psychological problems. The working class is being differentiated at various levels and joined by new groups of predominantly intellectual workers as brain work is making rapid headway in industry. Structural unemployment is producing a stable group of social 'outcasts'. The introduction of new technologies makes things particularly difficult for the traditional sections of the working class. That the publication raises these issues will surely prompt their further creative examination, in areas which the work pinpoints, too. The deep qualitative shifts now afoot in the composition of the working class, its views and political behaviour, as well as relationships with other socio-political forces expand rather than reduce its revolutionary potential in the drive for peace and social progress.

An idea central to the entire work is the role of the working class as promoter of general human progress. V. I. Lenin pointed out that 'from the standpoint of the basic ideas of Marxism, the interests of social development are higher than the interests of the proletariat'.¹ This idea emphasises the fact that the historical mission of the working class goes beyond its own interests. The working class represents entire progressive humanity and embodies forward-looking trends of general human history.

The humanistic mission of the working class is chiefly its fight for socialism, the most advanced system of social relations, free from social and national oppression and opening up a new historical path, one towards communist civilisation, which is the future of mankind. Appropriately, the publication gives a broad internationalist description of the role of the socialist revolution in Russia as a watershed in mankind's advance. This revolution was but a mighty explosion of the revolutionary energy of the masses, a breakthrough in world history, which for millennia had been the evolution and change of various forms of private ownership, into a future of freedom. This is why this evaluation of the October Revolution is relevant not just for the past but the present and future too. It has set off a sweeping international process

of formation of a communist socio-economic civilisation. 'It was precisely then, and with Lenin's participation,' the authors point out, 'that the decisive changes, which influenced a lot the direction and nature of subsequent development, began' (Vol. 4, p. 7).

The chief result of this development and the entire revolutionary effort of the working class is the existing socialism on this planet. This issue is specially dealt with in the eighth volume, which shows the role of the working class as a creator class paving the road for entire humanity. While by no means simplifying the difficulties and contradictions challenging the progress of world socialism, the authors show that the new social system is translating into reality the communist ideals substantiated by Marxist-Leninist theory.

The humanistic thrust of the historical mission of the working class is also seen in its peace efforts. The anti-war tradition was born with the working class movement. As early as 1870 the General Council of the International Brotherhood of Workers pointed out that the international principle of working class activities 'will be *Peace*, because its national ruler will be everywhere the same—Labour!'² The idea of peace was keynoted in the first decree of the Land of Soviets. The working class movement and its communist vanguard were the first to alert humankind to the threat of a new world war. The Seventh Comintern Congress asserted that it was possible to head off world wars. The fight of the working class, Communists against fascism during World War II gave an impetus to the anti-war traditions of the working class movement, which have assumed special urgency today. The working class is now chiefly responsible for the crucial goal of saving the planet from a nuclear war conflagration and preserving civilisation and its potential for social progress.

A standard-bearer of general human progress, the working class is also instrumental in people's drive for national liberation. The publication tellingly shows its part in the national liberation movement, both in the narrow sense of the word (direct participation in national liberation revolutions) and in the broad sense (the vast impact of the international working class movement and existing socialism on the course and outcome of people's liberation movement). All its volumes, especially the seventh, emphasise the idea that there are solid reasons for the unity of the international working class and national liberation movements.

Another important idea running through the entire publication is that to meet the challenges facing it the working class movement must be united. The opposition of the reformist and revolutionary trends is traced through all its stages, as in the ideological and political fight by Lenin and Communists against reformism. The authors conclude from past experience that only revolutionary actions holds promise for the working class movement. They all emphasise, too, the need for unity: '... Still unresolved is a problem crucial for the future of the working class movement and its role as the leading progressive social force—to end internal divisions and promote the movement's unity along independent class lines rid of bourgeois influence' (Vol. 6, p. 679). The research shares the view on the subject as set forth in the new edition of the CPSU Programme: 'However great the divergencies between various trends of the working class movement might be, they present no obstacle to a fruitful and systematic exchange of views, parallel or joint actions to remove the threat of war, improve the international situation, eliminate the vestiges of colonialism, and uphold the interests and rights of the working people.'³

Much space is given to examination of the international communist movement. The authors make a strong case for the fact that its emergence was facilitated by the entire history of an international working class movement faced with the need to achieve its revolutionary ends.

The publication deals at length with the role of Lenin and Bolsheviks in formulating political, organisational, and ideological foundations of a party of a new

type. At the outset of an epoch of revolutionary battles the Leninist party showed it was capable to assume historic responsibility to answer questions presented by the developments. This made it into the leading revolutionary force.

Vindicating the policy of the Bolshevik Party, the October Socialist Revolution raised the need for an international communist movement. The creation of Leninist parties and their unification in an international organisation was a 'valid and necessary process reflecting both continuity with respect to the revolutionary legacy of the past and qualitatively new features of the working class movement at a stage marked by the first breach in the imperialist chain and the start of transition to socialism' (Vol. 4, p. 252).

The authors have made a well-considered examination of the role of the Comintern, its many-sided work, a wide exchange of experience at congresses and in the commissions, and discussions of a broad range of political and theoretical issues. The Comintern accumulated and interpreted in the light of the Marxist-Leninist theory a wealth of international experience in the revolutionary fight in different countries, which offered concrete facts for large theoretical and political generalisations and conclusions.

A very useful feature is that the description of the formation and evolution of the international communist movement sheds light on its current problems. The authors emphasise not just the Communists' gains but their difficulties, temporary setbacks and losses. The reader thus sees for himself the hard way new problems arising from accumulating historical experience have to be solved. Communist parties have to contend with deep-going qualitative changes in their social base and the need to counter the 'social revenge' policy of the reactionary imperialist forces, present a democratic alternative advancing the interests of the working class and its allies, and find the right answers to major global problems. New forms for closing the communist ranks internationally are being evolved in the face of many difficulties. 'Solidarity and equality of communist parties presupposes equality, irrespective of the size of any one party and the role of the country where it works, in world politics, as well as mutual honesty and respect. Naturally enough, this is no reference to any 'disciplinary norms' in relations between the parties. The feeling of one's identity with the common cause helps find comradely forms to discuss differences and set the bounds and tone of argument on disputed issues" (Vol. 8, pp. 606-607).

The way the work considers these issues convinces us that the communist movement has entered a new stage in its development. This refers to a qualitative upgrading of all forms of the Communists' work and organisation, their international rallying together, which requires creative development of theory and leaving behind the inertia of things out of step with the times. Once these goals are achieved, the communist movement will graduate to a qualitatively higher stage consonant with present realities.

The conclusion contains the most principal lessons of history to be drawn from the work's message:

- the evolution of the international working class movement is a natural historical process, truthfully reflecting international needs of the progress of human society and its transition to the communist socio-economic formation;

- the party, the militant vanguard of the working class equipped with a forward-looking social development theory, is essential for the working class to fulfil its revolutionary mission;

- the entire experience of the international working class movement bears out the cardinal truth that socialism can be won only through the class struggle and revolution, not reform;

- history is evidence that the working class is internationalist by nature and can accomplish the tasks of revolutionary transformation of the world only as long as it is

loyal to proletarian internationalism and uses the dialectics of the international and the national in its class struggle:

finally, what is needed to educate and mobilise the working class as a subject and creator of history is a scientific theory of social development, its creative use and unceasing enrichment with novel experience.

The publication gives extensive coverage to theoretical questions. It tersely and substantively describes critical stages in the progress of Marxism in close interaction with practical activities of the working class movement. In most cases the authors present ingenious ideas to show the way the views of Marx and Engels evolved. But the emphasis is naturally on questions of Marxism in our day and age. There is a broad analysis of Lenin's merits in creatively developing the Marxist teaching.

To use the Hegelian description of philosophy as an epoch captured in thought, one would be justified to call Leninism a philosophy of the current epoch. But there is more to it than just philosophy. Relying on a revolutionary working class party, Lenin was successful in translating social progress needs formulated by theory into a language of political action. Accordingly, the ideological potential of Marxism became a material force of the revolutionary drive of the masses who are changing the world. "Leninism today," stresses CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov, "is not just a system of scientific truths and revolutionary views. This is a changed world of the twentieth century: socialism, which is now a reality for a third of the global population; this is but human advance towards social and national liberation. Social progress is inexorable and is made so by laws opened by Marxism-Leninism."⁴

By showing the creative dynamism of Marxist theoretical thought, this multi-volume publication prompts an innovative approach to theory. The novelty and fluidity of the current historical situation, the scale of creative endeavour in the socialist world, new phenomena and processes in capitalist and liberated countries and global problems—all these urgently require creative advancement of Marxist-Leninist theory, emphasis on often unconventional facts of our day, and gearing political thinking to our rapidly changing reality.

The work obviously looks to the future. By recapitulating historical experience to meet high scientific standards, it urges solution of new problems. This is in step with Lenin's behest that Marxism raises issues 'not only in the sense of explaining the past but also in the sense of a bold forecast of the future and of bold practical action for its achievement'.⁵

The publication looks into history to creatively interpret current problems of the international communist and working class movement and world development.

Professor Yuri Krasin,
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¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 236.

² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, p. 194.

³ *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, A New Edition, Moscow, 1986, p. 73 (in Russian).

⁴ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Leninism—a Living Creative Teaching, a Cogent Guide to Action*, Moscow, 1983, pp. 4-5 (in Russian).

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 72.

An Author's View 'An America I Believe In'

French communist writer Henry Alleg is well known for his books *La Question*, *Prisonniers de Guerre*, *Victorieuse Cuba*, *Etoile rouge et Croissant vert*. He also led as editor a collective venture, the three-volume *La Guerre d'Algérie*. What makes them special is a profound examination of various problems, a combination of documentary detail and their poignant exposure, and a lively imaginative narrative. All this is present in his latest work, *S.O.S. America!*, put out by the Paris-based Messidor Publishers.*

While recently visiting Prague he talked to *WMR* members about his work on the book.

What made you take up this subject?

During the last US presidential campaign West Europe, specifically France, was snowed under by eulogies of Ronald Reagan, as bourgeois mass media joined in extolling 'new methods' of the Washington administration, which allegedly helped take the nation out of the crisis, create more jobs and even provide abundance for its citizens.

The aim of this propaganda campaign is clear. In France, the traditional industry of entire areas and regions is now being scrapped, ostensibly to revamp industrial production. Unless we go in for modernisation, automation and robotisation, we are told by the employers, we will fall behind other countries. But it is a fact that capitalist modernisation entails lower living standards and spiralling unemployment. You have to be patient, the owners exhort their workers, in six months or a year there will be jobs for all. You'll be free to walk about in white smocks, pressing buttons and piling up money. Just look at the US.

Naturally enough, the French are not as naive as to believe that there are now only multimillionaires living under the canopy of the Statue of Liberty; and yet many of my compatriots have been influenced by the myth that America is already well into the twenty-first century, mankind's tomorrow, and only the Reagan 'development model' could serve as an example to follow. So I decided to take a look there at a 'France of tomorrow', as our prophets would like us to believe.

Could you tell us something about your writing secrets? What were your plans for the trip and to what extent were your expectations vindicated?

I have no secrets. For nearly a year I had studied American newspapers, magazines, official documents, read lots of books and gathered an extensive file. Rather than observing the country from a hotel window I travelled the length and breadth of it, I spent several months among workers, teachers, newsmen and the jobless. It was those common people—whites, Blacks, Chicanos and Indians—who helped me learn of 'another America'.

Frankly speaking, the reality turned out far more bleak than I had expected. Presumably, one of the biggest shocks I had was technical degradation in some industries. For many the US is a synonym for advanced technology. True, America manufactures the latest weapons, it has scientists who developed an artificial heart, and Nobel Prize winners. America's business acumen, enterprise and industry are no myth, too, but in everyday life you come across most incredible things.

* Henry Alleg. *S.O.S. America!*, Messidor, Paris, 1985, 250 pp.

My book starts off with a description of the New York subway. It is a sore sight for anyone's eyes, and not only because it is derelict and abominably dirty. Taking a trip on it is always taking some risk—you hear every day of endless crimes there, including cases of rape and murder. Between January and November 1984 alone there were 4,000 fires there, 700 of them serious. They were mainly caused by garbage catching fire and faulty electrical equipment. A special Senate commission which investigated the condition of the subway rolling stock reported that most cars were technically unsafe for the passengers.

I remember admiring a very beautiful bridge in New York from a distance but when I came closer I saw that it had run to seed and was eaten by rust. Characteristically, US Communist Party General Secretary Gus Hall once told me that when he steps on an American bridge he tries to hold his breath to become lighter. There is much truth to this joke. Nearly half the 500,000 American bridges need an overhaul.

According to John Ingersoll, vice-president of the Homestead Union, thousands of kilometres of railway track and water and sewage piping in the US should have been scrapped long ago. A *Newsweek* article claimed it would require over 47 billion and around a hundred billion dollars to repair and maintain water-supply and sewage systems respectively. Such are contrasts in this 'technically most advanced' world nation.

Washington officials claim unemployment in the USA is on the decline. What would you say to that?

Contrary to claims by 'Reaganomics' advocates seeking to brighten up a sombre reality, unemployment is still the most acute problem in the USA. An economic upturn in 1983 and the first months of 1984 was short-lived. You should also bear in mind that official statistics often juggle with figures. To illustrate, a person who has been going jobless for a year is struck off the 'unemployed' list to become registered as a 'discouraged worker'. There are as many as around five million such desperate people 'forgotten' by the statistics. US economist Victor Pero estimates that 16,000,000 to 17,000,000 Americans failed to find a job in 1984-1985.

Unemployment has been spreading like a cancer growth. I closely watched the situation in Michigan and Ohio, an area the Americans once proudly called the 'steel heart of the world'. Once it was home to the top-paid workers in the USA. They had nice houses and sometimes a family owned two cars . . .

All this has changed there now. Steel mills have closed down. In Pittsburgh I saw entire blocks gradually turning into ruins, empty streets and boarded-up shop windows. The former owners of comfortable cottages are now happy with any kind of accommodation they can get. This is in stark contrast with what I saw in the Soviet Union where things are steadily getting better now, along with the housing.

US Attorney General Edwin Meese once remarked that in the US everyone eats his fill. Surely, millions of Americans would take it as a bad joke. Let us consider the facts. A report by the Chicago mayor published in December 1984 stressed that of the city population of 3 million nearly 900,000 suffered from chronic hunger (while 25,000 had no roof over their heads). Just to think that roughly one in three people goes underfed there! Things are no better in Philadelphia, Detroit or New York. Nation-wide, around a million children suffer from various psychic disorders caused by undernourishment. For many Americans, soup kitchens run by charities are the only thing to keep them going.

Can words describe the humiliation of people who spend hours waiting for a handout? I once saw a man in a queue for charity cheese brandishing a poster, reading, 'Reagan, give me a job and I will buy my cheese'.

What are your impressions of 'American democracy'?

Several years ago George Gilder, US presidential adviser of sorts on philosophy and culture published a book translated into French under the title *Richesse et Pauvreté*. What is the main idea of this work, which, Reagan tells us, he always keeps at his bedside? As the author sees it, all people are divided into 'winners' and 'losers'. To help the weaker survive is against natural laws. The thing is to support the strong, the 'winners', and then the 'surpluses' of their riches will rain gold on the have-nots. But if you have lost, Gilder contends, do not blame others and covet their riches. In the world of competition and business enterprise the winner is one who is stronger, one acting in the spirit of the 'wild West'. Such is a thumbnail summation of the unsophisticated 'philosophy' which the President has taken so much liking to.

Nowhere else is the cult of 'social Darwinism' preached by the White House so glaringly evident as in the US. It goes without saying that the well-heeled are spared the seamier aspects of American life. Florida alone boasts nearly 200 private airfields with sizeable service personnel. There are people there who can indulge any of their whims, like buying a swimming pool worth several hundred thousand dollars and filling it with Perrier mineral water brought over from France; erecting a copy of the renowned Rome Trevi fountain in their garden; or buying a pistol of gold encrusted with diamonds. Contrasted with the ostentatious luxury of the multimillionaires, the poverty there is even more conspicuous than in African countries beleaguered by drought and the legacy of colonial exploitation and neo-colonialism.

One finds it hard to understand why there are 45,000,000 needy people in a most affluent state which has never been invaded by enemies and has grown fat on world wars. Is *that* democracy?

Now a word about rights and freedoms there, even in the sense they are seen by the bourgeoisie. Few of our countrymen know, for instance, that the US is building concentration camps for 'subversive elements' in case of emergencies, and that there are laws allowing the authorities to keep people in detention indefinitely, depending on their conduct.

My book tells of one black man named George Jackson. On trumped-up charges of stealing food worth 70 dollars he was jailed, spent there nearly ten years and finally died, according to the guards, in a brawl. But this is a lie. Jackson, who earlier had been unconcerned with politics, read a lot and pondered things while in jail and finally wrote a book, *The Soledad Brothers*, decrying American social vices, racism and jail atrocities. It is not dangerous when a black man writes, 'the whites are merde, they oppress us'; this would only strengthen the racists' hand. But it is dangerous when he censures the system itself and urges whites and blacks to jointly fight it. They repeatedly beat Jackson and kept him in solitary confinement, and, failing to break him, they killed him.

Regrettably, the limited space did not allow me to include a chapter on the life of America's natives and the planned genocide against them practised by the authorities. There was one thing an Indian I know told me. Many years back his younger sister and other girls from this reservation had been called up to a first aid post where the doctor told them their appendix needed to be removed and insisted on an operation. Some time passed, the sister and the other girls grew up and got married. And then tragedy struck: it turned out that in their childhood they had been forcibly sterilised.

This is not the only such case—thousands of Indian women have been deprived of the joys of motherhood. But who cares? The bourgeois press, radio and television, always eager for a sensation, are keeping mum about this disgraceful practice. So much for the human rights there.

Talking of the mass media, while in San Francisco I met a friend of mine, a

compulsive peace advocate who had refused in his time to fight in Vietnam. The conversation turned to just how well Americans are informed. I must admit earlier I believed that Americans keep abreast of things, if only domestically, what with their numerous newspapers, magazines and radio and TV stations. Not so, said my friend. Americans are very badly informed, citing one example. In 1983 over 500,000 marched for peace and democracy and against racism to mark the 20th anniversary of a march on Washington sponsored by Martin Luther King in defence of civil rights. My friend, a teacher, took a short leave to join the march. When he came back colleagues wondered where he had been—it turned out they never heard of this peace march, as the local media 'overlooked' it.

The odds are that the present realities are forcing Americans to be more critical of their government's policy and listen more attentively to the voice of reason. What would you say?

While in the States I talked with various people, among them diehard anti-communists, and this is what the latter told me: It is true we do not like the Soviets, we do not like the Reds but they still exist and can destroy us, while we can destroy them. There is nothing you can do in such a situation but to sit down at the negotiating table—we on one side, the Russians on the other—and try to reach agreement. Asked whether they think the Soviet Union is the source of the world's evil, 70 to 80 per cent of Americans will say no, things are far more complicated than that, this is an exaggeration . . .

People are waking up to the danger of nuclear confrontation invited by Washington's militaristic gambles, like the recent unprovoked gangster raid on Libya. In an extensive public opinion survey held shortly before the 1984 presidential elections and which I mentioned in my book, 83 per cent claimed that any limited nuclear conflict would spill over into a global one; 89 per cent said there would be no winners or losers in such a war, and 92 per cent were against attempts at military superiority over the USSR as, they argued, the Soviets would bridge the gap anyway.

It is also true, though, that there is still no such thing as a united peace movement in the US capable of effectively influencing the authorities. There are thousands of small groups voicing their resolve to work for peace but with a rather vague idea of the responsibility of their own government, which has the interests of American imperialism at heart, for the arms race and mounting world tensions.

Your book quotes US Communist Party veteran Henry Winston as saying that anti-communism is losing ground in the US. Does not this sound paradoxical in a way?

It sounds paradoxical indeed, and yet I agree with my American comrades. Certainly this is not to say there have been changes in the official government policy, which furthers frenzied anti-communist and anti-Sovietism. Still, despite the obscurantist climate in which Americans have been raised for decades, the spirit of McCarthyism has lost much of its hold.

In earlier times, for example, Communists had no access to radio stations, while in the last presidential campaign they were invited to go on the air, though not often. Communist party leaders got the opportunity to read lectures in some universities. The audience never heckled them but listened with much attention and asked serious questions on the nature of communism and features of the socialist system. But, admittedly, the most striking fact was that Angela Davis was invited to talk to teachers and students at Dallas University—in Texas, which still has a law under which a person belonging to the Communist Party can be sentenced to death.

Many changes are now at work in the US and many more will surely come. In this 'nation of multimillionaires', millions of Americans progressively swamped by

poverty and despair are voicing ever greater alarm over their condition. People of various political views are asking themselves why their country has found itself in such dire straits and how to save it.

I remember a talk I had with Jack McCloskey, an active peace fighter and co-founder of the Swords to Ploughshares anti-war organisation. When we heard that I wanted to write a book about his country, he asked me to explain that not all Americans were monsters, that millions of them, just like he himself, were dreaming of friendship and peace. I did as I was asked.

Indeed, there is another America, a nation of peace-loving and good-natured people concerned for and hopeful of the future and opposed to the insane idea that the greatness of a nation is measured by the number and power of the nuclear bombs it has. This is an America I believe in.

'Let Our Deaths Bring Us Closer to Victory'

Why Imperialism and Reaction Fear the People's Party of Iran, 1985, 91 pp. (in Persian)

ALMOST 50 years ago Taghi Erani, a prominent figure of the Iranian communist movement, turned to the judges trying him and his comrades and exclaimed: 'Why are you so afraid of working people?' This phrase of an ardent revolutionary who was murdered in the Shah's prison is topical to this day. It is no mere coincidence that Erani's words are echoed in the title of this underground publication of the People's Party of Iran (PPI).

The book is essentially a collection of excerpts from speeches delivered at trials and last messages sent to their comrades, mothers, wives and children by Communists who died at the hands of the Shah's butchers and of sadistic torturers in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Collected for the first time, this priceless documentary record is a chronicle of the courage, heroism and unbreakable fortitude displayed by PPI members. It is also an outline of the party's history, a history linked indelibly with the destiny of the Iranian people.

The book shows that ever since its inception, the party has been fighting selflessly for the interests of working people, for independence, democracy and social progress, exposing the forays of domestic and foreign reactionaries. The persecution of the PPI, the editors of the collection note, can only be explained by the fear and hatred with which the enemies regard the party, seeing it as the main obstacle to their criminal designs. Facts are cited to confirm this assessment. In 1980 Ronald Reagan warned openly that a Left government in Iran would pose a great danger to the United States and its friends (see p. 47).

The book recalls that the first wave of mass reprisals was unleashed against the PPI in 1946, five years after its formation. In various areas of the country party organisations were raided, thousands of Communists were jailed and many of them died in prison, including Colonel Giolamreza Djavidan who proudly told his executioners: 'Today you can silence me. But the voice of the people who are fighting to be free will resound all across the nation' (p. 7). Or take the case of Fereydon Ebrahimi, a Communist the jailers tortured for six months to make him repent publicly and renounce the PPI. But, about to be executed, he said: 'I have chosen the path of struggle for the happiness of the people and I am proud of it' (ibid.).

Despite the savage reprisals, the party enjoyed mass support and succeeded, within an extraordinary short time, in restoring its ranks and structure and addressing its tasks with renewed vigour. But a new blow was dealt it in 1949. An attempt on the life of the Shah gave the authorities a pretext for outlawing the PPI. Arrests of PPI

leaders and rank-and-file members began. Khosrou Ruzbeh, a member of the party's Central Committee, set a shining example of courage. 'Our party,' he said at his trial, 'is an implacable enemy of colonialism, a staunch champion of the country's independence and territorial integrity. Our goals are rooted in our humanism, in our respect for the people. We want exploitation of man by man, this grave social ill, to end forever' (ibid.). Several years later Ruzbeh was brutally murdered.

The book stresses that this time the reactionaries again failed to attain their objective of destroying the PPI. The party preserved its organisations and influence among the people. This enabled it to play, in the early 1950s, a prominent role in the powerful anti-imperialist movement which forced the Shah to flee the country and consolidate the positions of the national government led by Mohammed Mossadegh. But the respite proved to be brief. In August 1953 Western intelligence services, first and foremost the CIA, assisted by the monarchist quarters and Iran's top brass, staged a coup which was followed by a campaign of mass terror. The book deals with this grim period in detail. Specifically, it notes that to justify the reprisals, the reactionaries fraudulently accused the PPI of subversion and of gathering classified information for the USSR. Under this false pretext, thousands of Communists were arrested and tortured to death.

Iran's current ruling clique readily took up the myth of PPI spying and subversive activities: the invention is used to foment anti-Soviet hysteria and to persecute the Communists and other patriots. There are chilling accounts of the way the prisoners are tortured and of the refined techniques used to intimidate them and force them to "confess". But all this failed to break the spirit of Colonel Huchang Attarian, a PPI member imprisoned despite his great personal contribution to the defence of the 1979 revolution from imperialist conspiracies. Speaking for the last time before the tribunal which sentenced him to death, he said: 'I deny all charges of spying or involvement in activities that threaten national security ... On the contrary, from March 1980 until the moment of my arrest I fought ... to defend the republic' (pp. 34-35).

Although many gruesome facts are cited in the book, it does not lead the reader into dejection or despair. 'Let our deaths bring us closer to victory which will raise still higher the banner of world-wide emancipation of the working class.' 'Shed no tears. I am dying so that my people would live.' 'Long live the PPI! Death to imperialism! Long live the revolution of Iran's dispossessed people!' 'My darling, tell our son who his father was and what he died for. Our son must follow in our footsteps along the path of the People's Party of Iran' (pp. 8-10). These lines from the many letters collected in the book are full of optimism; they are behests left by fighters. They were written by people of different age groups, different educational backgrounds and social status, but united in their dedication to the cause of the party and in their unswerving faith in a happy future for the people.

Our long-suffering country is going through a very difficult period. The Iranian obscurantists are moving ever closer to US imperialism, motivated by a common hatred and fear of the forces that represent peace, democracy and social progress. *Mardom*, the principal newspaper of the PPI Central Committee, has reported that between October 1985 and March 1986 alone, dozens of party activists have been executed in Iran, including two Central Committee members. Driven underground, the Communists are fighting heroically against great odds. Their feelings are aptly expressed in the closing lines of the book: 'A burst of machine-gun fire can mow down freedom fighters, a ruthless executor can maim a person for life. But nothing can stop the offensive against the diabolical stronghold of those bought by big capital, landowners and imperialism. The seeds sown by our party are sure to sprout.'

Mehran Bina,
Iranian journalist

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