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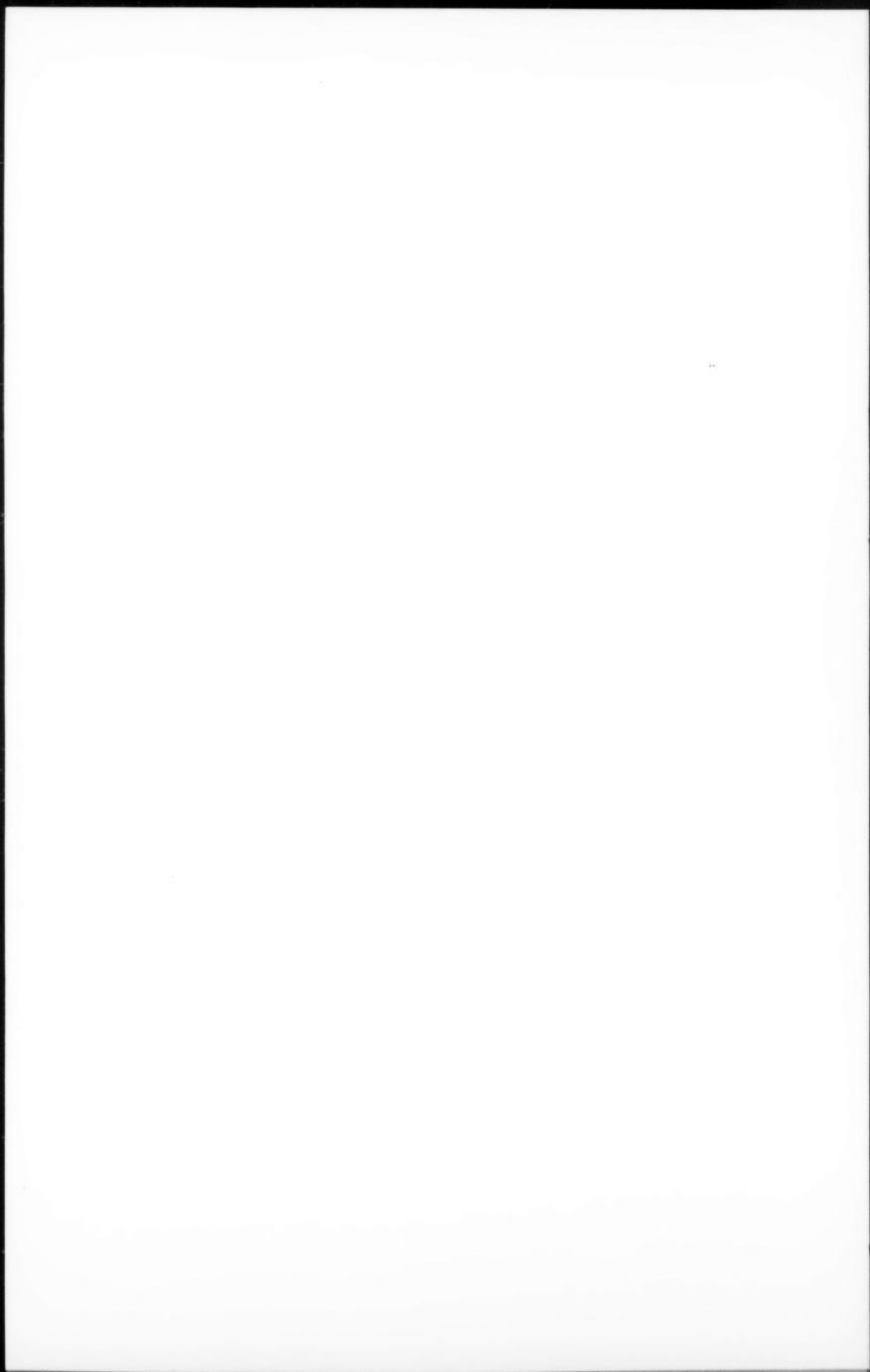
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socialism: policy of peace and progress

The Era Of The October Revolution: Great But Realistic Goals

Gustav Husak — General Secretary,
CPCz Central Committee, President of
Czechoslovakia

THERE have been many turning points in the twentieth century which is now drawing to a close. The October Revolution, which gave rise to far-reaching and irreversible change across the world, was the most significant. The seventy years that have elapsed since that breakthrough have put the universally history-making essence of the October Revolution into increasingly bold relief. Far from waning, its impact on the destinies of the human race is gaining strength.

The first victorious socialist revolution resolved class, economic and political contradictions that capitalism had aggravated to an unprecedented degree. Russia, the weakest link in the imperialist system, was where the best organised and best grounded in theory vanguard of the proletariat arose. It was a Marxist-Leninist party, created and led by Lenin, brilliant thinker, political expert and revolutionary. To quote Lenin, the conditions that emerged and a combination of objective and subjective factors made Russian workers, who were at the head of the popular masses, "the pioneers of the world struggle against imperialism."¹

To the masses of the people, the October Revolution was a grippingly convincing demonstration of the truth of Marxism-Leninism. Internationally, its greatest result was the emergence of a world communist movement — an international force which undertook the historic task of conducting a principled struggle to eliminate capitalist exploitation, for the freedom of nations and for the rights of the oppressed masses.

—1—

Soviet government by the people, the first state of workers and peasants was an example of a *radically new approach to social problems*. The very first decrees of the government which Lenin chaired — those on land and on the nationalisation of industry, railroads and banks — destroyed the economic basis of capitalist exploitation. The revolution made the age-old dream of the Russian peasant come true by giving him land. By proclaiming equality of peoples and the right of nations to self-determination, the October Revolution broke the chains of ethnic subjugation. The domination of the oppressor classes was eliminated and social privileges abolished. The way was opened to socially equitable relations based on labour, the collective spirit and mutual respect among individuals.

In its message to the Soviet people in connection with the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, the CPSU Central Committee notes with good reason that this “most important event of the century, ushered in a new era in human history. Time has convincingly confirmed its intransient importance and showed that socialism opened up unprecedented opportunities for social development.”²

For the first time in history, the victory of a socialist revolution and the establishment of the newborn Soviet state launched the extremely difficult and complex but highly honourable undertaking — the building of a new society, the transformation of a country that was, at that time, economically and culturally backward, into a modern socialist power. The Soviet people were the first to tackle a very responsible task — that of creating and testing ‘on the go’ the most progressive social system and organising socio-economic, political and intellectual activities.

As a starting point of transformations in Russia, the October Revolution gave a powerful impetus to the creative development and enrichment of Marxism-Leninism, a process based above all on the initial experience in socialist construction. The period when Lenin was in control was of particularly great and fundamental theoretical and practical importance. That was when the foundations of the strategy dedicated to a mighty creative effort were laid. They are the source which the CPSU is tapping to this day for inspiring ideas of accelerating socio-economic progress. There is a deep and universal significance to Lenin’s precepts on the role of the working masses, on the character of government by the people and of social justice, on conditions essential to the party’s and society’s healthy growth, on public property, planning, cost-effective economic management, the use of value-related and financial incentives, on the need to keep ideology pure, on criticism and self-criticism.

Implementing and developing the revolutionary behests of the October Revolution for 70 years now, the Soviet Union has turned into a socialist power of global standing, with a great economic, scientific and technological potential based on public property in the means of production, with remarkable accomplishments achieved in science and culture, and with a firm system of democratic government. The Soviet Union meets the social requirements of all strata of the population, enables its peoples and ethnic groups, which enjoy equal rights, to flourish, and ensures a high level of education. For the first time in history, a society has been built offering a *tangible, humanitarian and democratic alternative* to capitalism. A system has been devised under which the working people create all values and enjoy them.

The path the Soviet people have traversed towards these universally historic accomplishments has demanded strenuous efforts as well as sacrifices from the working masses. Many courageous defenders of the revolution shed their blood and gave their lives in the struggle against foreign invaders and in the Civil War. In bringing about industrialisation, collectivisation and a cultural revolution, millions upon millions of people laboured enthusiastically.

The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the Nazi invaders holds a place of exceptional significance in the history of our century. Fighting heroically against Hitler's aggression and then against the Japanese militarists in the course of this dire trial, the Soviet people won a glorious victory and upheld the heritage of the October Revolution. The most reactionary forces of imperialism failed to break the forces of socialism in their rise.

The Soviet Union bore the brunt of World War II, *contributed decisively to mankind's deliverance from the plague of fascism, and helped to liberate many nations from tyranny*. The defeat of the Axis powers changed the global alignment of class forces rapidly and radically. The revolutionary process, joined by the national liberation movement, brought victory to the working people in many countries of Central and South-eastern Europe. A world socialist system gradually formed. It was the greatest achievement in the history-making advancement of socialism since the October Revolution. The world's renewal was continued as popular government was established in several more countries — on Vietnamese and Korean soil, in China — and, later, as the Cuban Revolution triumphed. The colonial system of imperialism disintegrated. Having attained independence, many nations chose a socialist-oriented path.

The Soviet people had to go through trying times in the tackling of their creative tasks too. "A dear price was paid for the deviations from Lenin's principles and methods of building new society, for violations of Socialist legality and democratic norms of life in the party and society, for the voluntarist errors, for dogmatism in thinking and inertia in practical actions," the CPSU Central Committee said in its message to the Soviet people in connection with the 70th anniversary of the revolution. However, the people had the courage to call these things by their right names and to launch a principled struggle to overcome them. A critical approach to past mistakes does not detract from the importance of historic

victories. It reflects the maturity of the Soviet system, its ability and commitment to create conditions for the fullest possible assertion of the essence of socialism.

As we are marking the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, the CPSU and all Soviet society have adopted and begun to implement a strategy of socio-economic acceleration, a programme for a revolutionary restructuring in all spheres. This is the road of translating the principles of the October Revolution and Lenin's behests into reality, of discharging the historic mission of socialism on the eve of the twenty-first century. The CPSU aims not only to overcome manifestations of passivity, stagnation, conservative attitudes and dogmatic thinking, but also to raise society to a fundamentally higher level and to ensure a steady and dynamic growth of this best-ever system which is based on science, on the lofty ideals of Marxism-Leninism and on unimpeachable moral principles.

A creative effort to master the heritage of the October Revolution and Lenin's theoretical and practical behests makes it possible to better tap the sources of the socialist system's everlasting strength and the theoretical wealth of scientific communism in the tackling of essential political, socio-economic and other tasks, both current and long-term.

By advancing this course at the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of its Central Committee, and by elaborating on it at its 27th Congress in 1986 and its January and June 1987 plenary meetings, the *CPSU has confirmed its dedication to Lenin's ideas, its maturity, and its ability to lead in revolutionary development and to respond effectively to new demands.*

The Soviet Communists are steering their country along a realistic course of accelerating socio-economic progress. In this, the key role is played by a radical restructuring of the economic mechanism and by a far-reaching effort to promote democracy. That is the only basis on which the working masses can develop their transformative efforts and effective participation in the management of the social fabric, on which man of socialism can evolve and fully assert himself. *The dominant value underlying the concept of perestroika in the USSR is purposeful work of the people, the source of state power, to shape their destiny and history.*

The perestroika programme is a creative embodiment of Leninism at the present stage in the development of the Soviet Union, of the socialist community and of the world in general. It continues and upholds the cause begun by the October Revolution. It is a new step in revolutionary theory and practice. The ideas of perestroika inspire the Soviet people to launch bold reforms. This is why the Soviet Union and its people are commemorating this major anniversary by marching resolutely ahead, by displaying a high degree of activity and demonstrating the unity of the party and the people.

—2—

Mankind is now facing a responsible task, that of responding adequately to the challenge of today's world. This task stems above all from the scientific and technological revolution and its impact on the world's economic trends and international political developments; it is also what

determines the forms and objectives of the global competition between socialism and capitalism. This is the background against which perestroika, a practical programme combining the advantages of socialism with the advances of science, acquires a universal importance in enhancing the prestige and the appeal of our advanced system.

The CPSU policy of perestroika is generating a widespread response throughout the world. International public opinion is increasingly grasping the immense influence the revolutionary changes in the Soviet Union exert on international ties, relations and events. The Communists, the progressive democratic forces *hail these achievements as proof of the Soviet leaders' responsibility for the future of their country, of socialism and of the world.* They realise that the greater the accomplishments and the higher the dynamics of the socio-economic, political and intellectual upsurge the USSR attains, the more tangibly socialism and the communist worldview will influence the destinies of the world's nations.

Even bourgeois propaganda cannot keep silent about the impact of CPSU policy on all humanity. Our adversaries are trying at least to distort this policy, to present it as an alleged deviation from socialism and an acceptance of capitalist recipes. They seek to contrast socialism with democracy and human rights. But these attempts cannot do anything to change the facts: we are witnessing a Leninist policy which is rooted in the essence of socialism and which imparts modern parameters and prospects to it.

The revolutionary change in all spheres of Soviet society and the assertion of a creative, Leninist concept of socialist development are of particular importance to the socialist world. The sister countries, too, are facing the extremely important task of responding to the challenge of the times. This means coupling the advantages of socialism with scientific and technological progress, accelerating society's advancement, enhancing the efficiency of the economy and raising the living standard — that is, using the potential of the new social system more fully.

A lively quest and struggle for more rational attitudes to management, planning, enhancement of socialist democracy and the people's involvement in matters concerning the entire social fabric is typical of life in the socialist countries today. The functioning and perfection of socialist democracy is determined by a basic law, that of steadily implementing the fundamental principle of *the people being the source and the instrument of power.* We must strictly observe social justice which is based on unswerving compliance with the essential precept of socialism — 'from each according to his abilities, to each according to his work'. All this will enable us to make better use of the opportunities our system presents for dynamic growth of the economy, the social sphere and culture. It is time to abandon obsolete views and notions concerning the building of socialism and the forms this process takes.

Naturally, every fraternal party, every country of the socialist world is doing this in accordance with its experience, conditions and needs. The practical record bears out Lenin's prediction that the revolutionary process, the building of socialism will take a vast diversity of forms and methods. This diversity adds to the significance of *the sister countries'*

experience, of its exchange, and of summing up and applying all that which is valuable and which is born in the course of the common efforts of the peoples jointly advancing along the socialist road. This acts as a powerful stimulus in the continuous development of our social system and expands its opportunities.

It is important to give a new dimension to the ties that exist among the socialist countries. At the working meeting of the CMEA fraternal parties in Moscow in November 1986, conclusions of principle were made about the need to improve our cooperation and its mechanics. The steps that have been envisaged are aimed at transforming this cooperation into an effective factor of accelerating the socio-economic growth and the scientific and technological progress of the socialist community countries at the current stage.

—3—

The heritage of the October Revolution is of cardinal importance for the recent history and the future of the Czechoslovak people. The establishment of the Czechoslovak state in October 1918 is linked inextricably with the upsurge of the revolutionary wave the Russian Revolution caused. The strength of Lenin's ideas and the example of the Soviet Union were factors in the emergence of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in May 1921 and in the militant action of the masses against bourgeois oppression and exploitation. The mission of liberation the Soviet Union discharged during World War II contributed decisively to the renewal of the national freedom and sovereignty of the Czechs and the Slovaks. Cooperation with the USSR became essential for the building of socialism in our country.

Over the years of socialist development the people of Czechoslovakia have attained results they can be justly proud of. The revolutionary truths of the October Revolution were borne out by the events that occurred in our country too. In Czechoslovakia, *a restructuring affecting all spheres of the social fabric is also essential* to enable our society to continue advancing, to impart a new quality to it, to promote the initiative and the consciousness of the people — in other words, to use the potential of socialism more fully. The Communists, the working people of our country hail and support the course adopted by the CPSU. They regard the policy pursued by Lenin's party as an *example that inspires them and gives them the strength to tackle their own tasks.*

The 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (1986) put forward a programme for accelerating the country's socio-economic development and effecting far-reaching changes in economic management and in the social, intellectual and cultural spheres. We are drawing up an integrated economic reform which will be based on the Leninist principles of planning and management. A broad public discussion has been launched concerning draft legislation on state enterprises and on agricultural, producer, consumer and housing cooperatives.

Politically, the steps charted by the CPCz are designed to perfect the entire social system. They are to strengthen the role of the Communist

Party in the implementation of the changes that have been planned, and to improve the style and the methods of its work on the basis of collective leadership, democratic centralism and democracy within the party. Special attention is accorded to the further enhancement of socialist democracy, self-government by the people and greater public openness.

To us, the essence of our comprehensive effort to develop socialist democracy is above all in ensuring tangible participation by the people in decision-making and monitoring, in better using the existing and creating new opportunities for it. We strive to diversify our democratic forms and methods of managing affairs of state and society, and we place priority emphasis on the need to provide greater scope for an open, objective, critical and self-critical examination of all problems, for a better contribution by the working people to their solutions. We also aim at creating a favourable social climate and adopting organisational political measures to increase the interest of the masses in the implementation of our policy goals and to involve the people in the tackling of day-to-day tasks at the national level, in urban and rural areas, in civic organisations and in the workplace everywhere. For example, this is why the draft law on state enterprises envisages a much greater role to be played by the work collectives and the bodies they will democratically elect in decision-making on fundamental issues of economic management and in the selection of executives. Similarly, the draft laws on the cooperative movement also proceed from the need to consolidate the basis of self-management. We regard this as the *only right way to promote political activity among members of socialist society*.

The social restructuring sponsored and directed by the CPCz as part of the effort to perfect the socialist system involves a struggle against any and all manifestations of stagnation, inertia and irresponsibility. This struggle is now among the party's foremost tasks.

Socialism is created for the people and by the people.

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The policy goals of accelerating social progress in the USSR and its sister countries and the new tasks formulated by the world's socialist and other progressive forces are linked indelibly with the *struggle to remove the war threat, ease international tensions and preserve and strengthen peace*.

'Peace to the Nations' was one of the first demands the Soviet government presented before international public opinion immediately after the victory of the October Revolution. The call for a democratic peace which Lenin's 'Decree on Peace' raised was the source of the general course adopted in Soviet foreign policy. This policy is based on peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems.

Now that our nuclear and space age has developed weapons of unbelievable destructive capacity, prevention of war means survival of civilisation and of humanity. Against this background, the peace programme put forward by the CPSU and the initiatives launched by the Soviet Union show a practicable way towards delivering mankind from the burden of nuclear weapons and creating an integrated system of

international security. This we regard as essential for the free development of all peoples, for constructive international cooperation.

The dedication of the Soviet Union to the search for a universally acceptable solution to the present dangerous situation was again reflected in Mikhail Gorbachov's article 'Reality and Guarantees of a Secure World', addressed to the 42nd session of the UN General Assembly and to international public opinion in general. It goes without saying that Czechoslovakia also fully backs the unflagging and responsible Soviet efforts to raise the issue of a comprehensive system of international security.

Supported by the anti-war forces and realistic figures in many countries, the consistent peace-oriented policy of the socialist community countries is designed to strengthen détente, end the arms race and prevent its extension to outer space. Disarmament is a socialist objective. Throughout the world, people welcomed the statement made at the 27th Congress of the CPSU: "Our ideal is a world without weapons and violence, a world in which each people freely chooses its path of development, its way of life."⁴

The militancy of the foreign policy conducted by the Soviet Union and all countries of the socialist community is strengthening the forces which work for political settlement of contradictions and for cooperation unhampered by ideological or other differences. The understanding is growing that in order to untangle acute international problems, it is imperative to overcome earlier, confrontation-oriented attitudes invariably displayed by certain imperialist quarters and to establish *a new way of political thinking*. Despite all the difficulties, contradictions and risks, conditions are emerging for the development of a healthy trend in international relations.

The seven decades that have elapsed since the October Revolution have yielded enormous results and benefited all mankind. The might and the international prestige of socialism is exerting a positive influence on social progress in different countries and continents, on the scope of the struggle the world's peoples are waging against imperialism, on the tackling of fundamental questions and on efforts to translate mankind's cherished aspirations into reality.

Our turbulent century began as social contradictions matured and the revolutionary situation developed, later to culminate in the October Revolution. Now that the twentieth century is drawing to a close, socialism as a world system is pointing the way to prospects that are consonant with the interests of the future. The new social system is offering a tangible and humanistic answer to the most pressing problems facing our civilisation on the eve of the twenty-first century.

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 151.

² *Information Bulletin*, No. 10, 1987, p. 3.

³ *Ibid.* p. 6

⁴ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Moscow, 1986, p. 71.

What We Expect From Radical Reforms

Emil Khristov — Secretary, BCP Central Committee

THE People's Republic of Bulgaria developed at a fast rate for more than four decades. We now have a material and technical basis that is quite substantial for a country of Bulgaria's size. The poorest in post-war Europe, backward, agrarian Bulgaria has turned, over the years of socialist construction, into a major exporter of mechanical engineering, electronic, chemical, biotechnological and many other products which testify to its scientific and technological progress.

Recently, however, extensive development factors and the excessively centralised economic management have exhausted their potential. Growth rates began to decline, and the qualitative aspects of growth failed to satisfy us too. The domestic market and the services lagged behind the overall level of the economy.

Taking all this into account, the BCP adopted a policy of *radically restructuring economic and cultural management, and reorganising the economic, administrative and social mechanisms*. The 13th Party Congress (1986) set the strategic task of ensuring a radically new quality of growth in all spheres of the social fabric. Substantive changes are to affect the productive forces, the relations of production, as well as government, legal, ideological and political bodies. Some of these processes are only just getting off the ground, while others have already gained sufficient momentum because the quest for ways to improve our economy has been going on for more than two decades now.

Underlying the transformations are guidelines for 'A New System of Economic Management', drawn up by Todor Zhikov, General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee, back in 1963. The July 1968 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee built up on the precept of the need for reforming the management of social processes as a whole. In 1972, an integrated programme for raising the living standards was adopted. This shows that the past decades witnessed a vigorous search for and experimental verification of new methods which added to the party's practical and ideological experience.

The BCP has been particularly active in this field in the 1980s. The theoretical foundation and the direction of the country's development were set forth in the decisions of the 12th Party Congress (1981), in Todor Zhikov's subsequent studies concerning the material and technical basis of

Emil Khristov (b. 1924) was imprisoned in 1941 for revolutionary activities. In 1949 he graduated from the Department of Law of Sofia State University and holds a Candidate of Economics degree. A member of the BCP since 1946, he has served as chairman of the Social Relations Management Council under Bulgaria's State Council since 1974 and as a member of the State Council and chairman of the Commission for Social Policy since 1976.

Emil Khristov joined the BCP Central Committee in 1976 and was appointed its secretary in January 1984.

mature socialism and the scientific and technological revolution, in the precepts describing the state as the owner and the work collective as the master and manager of socialist property, and in documents dealing with socialist democracy and other matters.

A critical appraisal of the practices of management also revealed their shortcomings. Administration by fiat still persisted; a number of industries were infected with departmentalism and territorial authorities with parochialism. Steps taken to enhance production efficiency, improve product quality, expand the range of goods and promote labour initiative and discipline on the shop floor proved inadequate.

The restructuring effort the BCP is launching takes into account both our own experience and that of the fraternal socialist countries and communist parties. Change is necessary because the opportunities of extensive economic growth, used quite vigorously in the past, have been exhausted. Besides, new global realities have appeared which we simply cannot ignore. I will mention only some of them — the rapid advancement of the scientific and technological revolution, the crisis-related developments in the world capitalist markets, and the consolidation of integration within the socialist community. Here it is important to note that we do have the necessary prerequisites for the change we are planning — a material and technical infrastructure, the essential personnel, and the firm position of the party and the state.

New approaches are based on a better knowledge of the objective laws of socialist construction, on the study and use of scientific and technological advances, and on further democratisation of the entire social fabric. We are paying due attention to the operation of the law of value, of the commodity-money relations connected with it and of the general law under which the interests of classes, social strata, collectives and individuals underlie social development. And, as we are progressing in our efforts to build a new society, the role of the popular masses and of work collectives is growing, and socialist democracy is expanding and gaining depth.

These transformations are effected through a creative application of Marxist-Leninist theory, based on a dialectical materialist analysis of the processes under way in Bulgaria.

The changes we refer to are substantive and comprehensive. *Within a short period, we are to make Bulgaria an advanced country. The task is to increase economic growth rates and make the fullest possible use of the factors that intensify economic production.*

As far as the development of the productive forces is concerned, our course is aimed at creating and applying fully automated technologies, as well as computerised control systems (integrated automation, introduction of robots, and extensive use of computers). The structure of the national economy is to change perceptibly. Priority emphasis is to be accorded to the promotion of electronics, microelectronics, robotics, lasers, biotechnology, and new types of raw and other materials. We are shifting from material-intensive to science-intensive and resource-saving types of high-tech economic production, from the manufacture of individual types of equipment to entire machine systems.

Important steps are to be taken to improve the relations of production. As I noted earlier, the changes are based on the fact that society owns the means of production, while the work collective should be their direct master and manager. In April 1987 the National Assembly approved a declaration placing socialist property under the management of work collectives. This legal instrument is of constitutional importance. It made self-governing organisations — structural units of the national economy — masters and managers of property. Conclusion of agreements between the state and the work collectives establishing the latter as managers of factories, hospitals, schools, research establishments and farms is drawing to a close.

There is a factor one should take into consideration in perfecting management and promoting democracy. Integral and indivisible public property is not turning into group property in our country: society remains its owner. The state retains the functions of taking strategic decisions and of regulating the activities of self-governing entities. We are switching from administrative means of influence and management to predominantly economic ones. The role of centralised planning is being enhanced: planning agencies are to analyse current developments and to draw up and implement long-term integrated programmes of scientific, technological, economic and social advancement, as well as basic output ratios.

The state plan is drawn up on the basis of a dialogue with self-governing organisations and is approved by the National Assembly for a period of five years. The targets of the plan reach the manufacturers in the form of information on social needs. Economic standards, conditions and regulating factors elaborated in advance are an integral part of the plan.

As the people's political vanguard, the party will continue to chart the general course and the strategy of society's progress, pursue its personnel policy, act purposefully to educate the working people in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, and ensure a moral and political atmosphere essential for the attainment of our objectives.

However, self-governing systems at all levels will have ample opportunities for development; that is why they are responsible for efficient operation. In the final analysis, all this will make it possible to overcome the indifference which, to a certain degree, has developed in recent decades among the collectives and the working people with regard to public property.

The changes we are envisioning will also diversify the forms of socialist property which is the basis of our social system. Property controlled by cooperatives, communities and self-governing territorial units will be developed and promoted. We have provided for the issue of shares to collectives and individual workers and for individual labour activities. Forms of mixed or joint property belonging to Bulgarian enterprises and foreign juristic or natural persons will become widespread.

As I have noted, self-governing organisations — enterprises, amalgamations, combines, agro-industrial complexes, associations and cooperatives — are structural units our economy is made up of.

The *enterprise* is a technologically, economically, organisationally and socially distinct self-governing economic entity. Enterprises freely

purchase and sell fixed and circulating production assets, select avenues of development, shape their organisational and managerial structure, plan marketing, scientific, technological, investment and production activities, independently market their products at home and abroad, cooperate with other entities and bear full responsibility for the results of their work. The enterprise is self-governed by the general meeting of workers (or their representatives at large factories), and economic council, and the leader of the collective. The general meeting has the broadest powers: it elects the council and the director who are accountable to it and approves prospective development decisions, the plan, basic internal regulations, rules, and provisions for internal cost-effectiveness and for remuneration.

The income of work collectives is made up of earnings from the sales of the foods and services produced, while the wage fund depends on the results of the work. Regulating measures are based at this level on the need for social labour productivity to increase faster than the average wage. Personal earnings have no upper limit and are determined by the scope of personal contribution. This applies to all categories of personnel.

We now provide for bankruptcies and liquidations should an enterprise prove to be economically inviable. The state, as the owner of the property, asserts its rights and takes corrective measures. If these fail, the state cancels its contract with the enterprise and dissolves its work collective. An organisation can also be declared bankrupt by the bank which provides it with credits. In such cases the production assets are transferred or sold to other collectives.

The team, shop or production line personnel is the primary work collective operating on the basis of self-management within the framework of its rights, duties and responsibilities. They are formed at the enterprise, receive the necessary means of production under a contract and, also under a contract, manage their affairs along the lines of internal cost-effectiveness. The team itself determines its composition, elects a council and a leader, establishes (in accordance with relevant technical documentation) internal quotas for the input of labour, raw and other materials, an power, receives the income and distributes the wage fund.

Enterprises linked by technological or production relations are grouped into *economic amalgamations (combines)*. The resources and the potential of the individual units are thus used to coordinate technological, marketing, industrial and social policies aimed at greater efficiency on the basis of common interests. However, enterprises retain their economic and legal autonomy and maintain direct ties with the budget, the banks and the market (suppliers and consumers). They have the authority to withdraw from the amalgamation.

Management at this level is exercised by the economic council which comprises the directors of the constituent enterprises and their elected leader. By decision of the council the amalgamation forms its funds, centralising no more than 50 per cent of the relevant resources of its enterprises.

The *association* has emerged as the biggest economic entity in Bulgaria. It is a group of self-governing economic and other organisations pursuing a concerned policy in large intersectoral production complexes. Operating

within its terms of reference which are defined by its members, an association adopts an integrated approach to technology, specialisation, coproduction, investment, marketing and social matters. It coordinates the activities of its constituent organisations in the tackling of common tasks, stimulates competition among them, organises the training of personnel, takes care of the necessary research, provides essential information, and sets up integrated commercial outlets and service agencies. An association is administered by a governing board (the highest body), and executive bureau, a chairman, and a supervisory council. All rights, duties and responsibilities of an association are contractually determined by the constituent self-governing organisations.

The Electronika Association is one example of a powerful intersectoral economic group. Organising the manufacture of electronic technological systems, developing the software industry, and devising and introducing fully automated technologies and computerised control systems are its chief purposes. It is responsible for fusing electronics with industrial technologies throughout the national economy. Consequently, this association comprises major amalgamations manufacturing electronic devices, software, metal-cutting machine tools and robots.

In keeping with the plans of restructuring, we are perfecting the relations of distribution which tangibly promote collective and personal interest in the development of social production and influence the living standard and the way of life. Guaranteed wages and salaries are being replaced by incomes according to the work performed — incomes that depend on actual results. This will make it possible to do away with wage and salary levelling and with the still persisting cases of unfair distribution of various benefits. Workteam, family and individual contracts will become common, and the incomes of economic managers will be tied to the profitability of their organisations.

Changes occurring in the superstructure affect all spheres of the political, economic, social and cultural fabric. The declaration of the National Assembly of July 1987 on the transformation of communities into self-governing population entities has entered into force. A well-established traditional institution, the community is emerging as the basic territorial and administrative unit. It will take part in deciding on the structure of the economic facilities to be established on its territory, organise small and medium enterprises, promote self-sufficiency in agricultural produce and services, ensure full employment, and encourage individual and collective efforts to produce additional goods. The community is now also responsible for housing construction, the infrastructure, health care, education, cultural activities, recreation, sports, and the maintenance of law and order within its area.

A recent decree of the PRB State Council has reconstituted the country's 28 districts as nine regions. This will make it possible to remove the existing obstacles to the prompt discharge of current duties by many government and economic agencies and to eliminate administration by fiat.

The highest government bodies are restructuring with due regard for the new tasks. Representatives of communal entities will take part in the work of the National Assembly which is becoming the supreme collective organ

of self-government. Departmentalism and industrial parochialism proved to impede our economy's intensive growth. Some ministries and departments have therefore been dissolved and four new ministries have been established instead — the Economic and Planning Ministry, the Ministry of External Economic Ties, the Farming and Forestry Ministry, and the Ministry of Culture, Science and Education.

The party is playing a growing role in comprehensive efforts to analyse social processes and phenomena, in the shaping of the social development strategy, and in the training of personnel at all levels of management. At the same time, the BCP will work to eliminate duplication of functions discharged by the state and to end the practice of keeping economic and social bodies under petty tutelage.

Substantial changes will occur in civic organisations, until recently overcentralised and bureaucratised. Such organisations will be established, as they become necessary, in the self-governing communal entities.

We are to redraft the nation's legislation and Constitution after a new Party Programme is adopted.

The changes envisaged in the ideological sphere are aimed at eliminating man's alienation from public property, removing social imbalances, stepping up the struggle against negative phenomena, and fully restoring the genuine moral values of socialism as formulated by the classics of Marxism-Leninism. Thousands of people perished in the struggle against capitalism and fascism, and generations of BCP members and non-members have been working selflessly since the popular revolution of 1944 to ensure the triumph of these ideals.

The problems discussed in this article have been set forth definitively, integrally and systematically in the documents of the July 1987 Plenary Meeting of the BCP Central Committee, specifically in the report by Todor Zhikov. One of the meeting's documents, 'Fundamentals of the Concept of Further Socialist Construction in the PRB', is essentially an attempt at drawing up an integrated model for the development of our socialist society in the decades to come.

The concept was approved by the National Assembly in August. A national party conference to discuss this issue of great importance will be convened in December 1987.

A brief explanatory remark is in order here. The word 'model' refers to an effort to forecast Bulgaria's future as it is now seen by our party, not to any ideal of socialist development to be emulated. Our national model has been elaborated on the basis of increasing comprehensive integration with the USSR and other socialist countries, and of the dialectics of the common, the distinctive and the unique in the development of socialism in our country.

Some of the planned changes are directly connected with the processes of socialist economic integration — the transition to international prices as the basis for national prices, the steps enabling enterprises to engage in domestic and foreign trade, the lifting of restrictions on their activities, including the setting up of joint enterprises with foreign participation, and the organisation of duty-free zones in our country. We believe that all this will encourage closer and more comprehensive cooperation within the

CMEA framework.

What do we expect from the radical changes under way in Bulgaria? First and foremost, *an upsurge in the social energy of our people to ensure successful socialist development*. It will be a long process which will involve difficulties, both objective and subjective, the latter particularly challenging. But our party is united and unanimous in its support of the course charted by the July Plenary Meeting of the BCP Central Committee, and fully committed to consistent and radical change.

A Personal Impression

Perestroika: The Beginning Of The Road

"We need deeds, not words"
(V. I. Lenin, August 20, 1921)

THE flower-decked monument before the body building plant of the Moscow Motor Works recalls the visit of V. I. Lenin to the small workshop of those days immediately after the October Revolution.

June 1918 was a dangerous time, but also a time of great projects. Lenin envisaged the day when the Russian *muzhik* would be astride a 'steel horse'. In five or six years, he said, the workers here will be turning out thousands of Soviet cars. And so it was! When our exploring team arrived we found a factory producing 200,000 lorries a year.

It had not been an easy achievement, this industrial colossus. The one-time Red sailor, Ivan Likhachov, for whom the works was named in 1956, after 30 years of directorship, recorded his experience once with Henry Ford, who patronisingly urged on him 'the capitalist way'. Thanking him for the technology, Likhachov said, "As for the economy, we'll build it not in your, capitalist, but in our, socialist, way."

To consult the people is a Leninist tradition, so in April 1985, just a week before the crucial plenum, the newly elected General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov visited the plant. On the shop floor a vivid face-to-face consultation took place, pointed, and about the working man as master of the work-place, of his country and of society as a whole.

The April 1985 plenum and the 27th Congress in 1986 posed a novel and revolutionary concept of deep economic and social transformations on the basis of technological and scientific advance and democratisation. These concepts were at the core of our conversations with our hosts, the workers and engineers at the main assembly line. They told us with pride of the diesel trucks they have produced. These, they said, take us to the top of the world league in truck technology.

The Likhachov works has 100,000 of the 118,000 people working in the Association. It is in its fifth reconstruction. Its latest reconstruction and the building of two new shops is to switch its production to diesel fuelling and

this project is the subject of present acceleration. The first batch of production will be delivered this year.

The works is more than just a factory. It has a training institute for its own workers: one year of study alone and the others of alternate weeks of study and workshop experience. The institute's output is thereby of workers who are both theoreticians and practised.

The works has also an impressive and extensive cultural and social fabric with such facilities as a House of Culture, a stadium, swimming pool, sauna and exercise apparatus. It has a hospital and kindergartens, with rest homes and sanatoria.

To us it was clear that serious effort had already been made to identify the realities of its affairs, to pin-point the hitches persisting and to establish the devices to meet the problems of acceleration and re-adjustment. Cost-accounting and self-financing have been introduced and independent quality control inspectors to upgrade the output have been put to work.

Two Sides of Change

However, there are two sides to perestroika, remarked Deputy Secretary A. Sushev of the Party Works Committee. At Likhachov (and also at Electrosila which we visited in Leningrad) it was found that while workers were all in favour of improvements, new housing, bonuses and leisure, he felt some were less enamoured with the problems of *earning* the means of paying for these in improved performance. That reality had to be brought home, and it was a problem that a section of the work-force, and even of the people at large, thought the whole problem was a management one and required only some organisational adjustment, as distinct from harder and more efficient work. Even so, he was optimistic, given the improvements of output-related pay and bonuses of the newly motivated teams, emulated by others, of course, that there would be an immediate quality and quantity improvement. The result would be the speedier accumulation of the social and incentive funds, and enthusiasm and participation in the new working and its harvest.

Fruit of this harvest was tasted when 2,000 extra flats were put into service in Leningrad, against a background of massive housing shortage. This was a result of the Electrosila workers joining with others in the acceptance of 2- and 3-shift working. By this there was a better use of the factory hardware, savings on the investments and a big jump in productivity. There were rewards, of course, part of which was the 2,000 new flats. We visited Yevgeni Makarov in his new flat, where, with his wife Marina, a computer operator, we heard experiences of their life in the new district.

If we take as given the historic record and the legacy sketched in for us by Electrosila Director Boris Fomin we get to the questions of today which the factory is addressing. As things developed at Electrosila they were close to cost-accounting already, but they *did* need to intensify. Changes do not proceed smoothly, some people do not change at all! However, important gains like that in labour productivity (8 to 10 per cent) brought their own rewards. 8 to 10 per cent represented a saving of 2,000 workers! Labour discipline was an important issue too. The correlation between the

consumption of resources and the output of individual workers reflects the degree to which the application of labour to materials is efficient. Now some 60 to 70 per cent of production is team-based with elected leaders and the election of directors, superintendents and foremen also.

Asked what changes had come with perestroika, the Director said that they had stepped up education and the involvement of managers with the shopfloors, and with 'Political Days', when a report was made but was now accompanied with a question session resulting in a more useful discussion. Fewer meetings were now held and there was no longer the priming of speakers at them. On reflection we can say that we found overall a resolve to institute the measures which would, in the words of the General Director of Electrosila, renew the factory collective and restore the working man as master of his work-place. His colleague at the Likhachov Works, the Deputy Director, stressed: "Democratisation of production and the election of leaders are the characteristic features of the healthy process now under way in the economy. Cost accounting and democratisation are the only right line for perestroika in the economic mechanism".

A radical reform of economic management of which we heard in Gosplan and at the enterprises is the major element of restructuring. It is framed in the proposed Law of the USSR on the State Enterprise, giving independence and self-government to the work collectives. On this basis a whole package of specific measures in national planning, pricing system, financing, etc., is to be in place by the end of this year, so as to bring centralised management into accord with this Law.

The apple of its eye today, and an aspect of its participation in the sci-tech revolution, is Electrosila's project for a cryogenic turbo-generator using super-conductivity, already close to completion. Its economy in comparison is far ahead of other turbo-generators.

In regard to the sci-tech revolution we went to the new port that Tallinn was building and met a surprisingly young Chief, Anatoly Kaniev. He detailed the project of which he is in charge and described the progress, so far, in a high-tech venture with two more stages yet to be implemented. For him perestroika was mostly about pressing ahead, but by means of an ever-growing participation of his personnel in the decisions and discussions of implementation. Our group was most impressed by the inspection of the highly automated facility.

We had visited the Moscow Institute of Bioorganic Chemistry of the USSR Academy of Sciences. There we heard of and saw how the imperative of marrying up theory and practice was being implemented in another sphere. Deputy Director and outstanding scientist Vladimir Bystrov, outlined the programme to translate into reality the output of science. He sketched the formation a year ago of an inter-sectoral and technological complex called Biogen, bringing under one heading not only basic science but production plants, research centres and design.

The Role the Party Plays

At Smolny, the historic base of the October Revolution, which is being continued in the new tasks before today's Communists, we also met the

Regional Party Committee Secretary, Alexandr Degtyarev, who outlined for us the scale and scope of Leningrad's affairs. There was still difficulty in overcoming the practice of trying to improve by extensive instead of intensive means. The great problem, Comrade Degtyarev explained, was labour shortage, and it has to be remembered that Leningrad is not only without the citizens who were lost in the heroic defence during the Great Patriotic War, but also without two generations of their children. It means the economically active population is less than the number of pensioners! This demands a policy of attracting people to the region, 50,000 per annum, and this, in turn, means further pressure on social resources to the tune of 15,000 roubles per each new person! Intensification would end this pressure and it is the chosen direction of perestroika. In housing, the requirement is 600,000 flats by the year 2,000 in Leningrad. The CPSU Leningrad Regional Committee estimates that some 100 million roubles will be switched from industry in the next five years to improve living conditions there. He referred to the strengthening of links between science and industry.

At the behest of the party new practices of election are abounding in the Party, State and public organisations. Local Soviet elections were in hand and collectives everywhere were preparing nominations, including multiple nominations. More than one-half of those elected are non-Party persons.

Testing the mood of the public, the Communists found that while 99 per cent were in favour of perestroika, only 60 to 70 per cent believed that there is anything they can do personally, and only 30 to 40 per cent agreed that they noted change. We must strive to raise significantly the number of those ready to make their personal contribution, many officials stressed. Asked for further details as to improving party work, Comrade Baranova, head of agitation and propaganda, felt that internal communication had been much improved. Every third Thursday all party and Soviet functionaries visit primary organisations and labour collectives, discuss their problems and the specifics of *their* working. Advance notice of the topics allowed all participants to prepare. Political Days found favour and agitator cadres reported the feelings and responses at grassroots. Countless letters come in to both the Committee and the primary organisations and to the press. A valuable change was the breaking down of the formalism which had gripped meetings.

In Moscow, at its February plenum the City Committee was faced by its First Secretary Boris Yeltsin on the progress to date. Self-critically he urged it to recognise how little had been done, how little had really changed. In earnest response, the Committee set about renewed efforts to achieve a better quality in its work. Communists in leadership have to report and be able to face the sternest criticism of their personal efforts to uphold their responsibilities and to restructure them. High-flown speeches and superficial analyses are being resolutely fought. Independent initiatives and the just criticism of the errors of superiors must oust the old supine compliance. The aim is to bring every view out into the open to ensure accountability to the people below. Such assessments at the end of May saw Bureau members of the Moscow City Committee Ilya Pisarev and Vladimir Scherbakov answer, respectively, for party work in housing and

social conditions at the enterprises. Two pages of *Moskovskaya Pravda* reported the examination of their work. In the end these comrades were urged to accept the severe criticisms made in a comradely spirit and to get down to the necessary corrections and implementations. Further, the same meeting endorsed the value of such appraisals of people at whatever level.

It was readily admitted by the Secretary of the Moscow City Committee, Yuri Karabasov, that the hardest task was to get the basic organisations which are in the thick of the ferment amongst the people to act in the spirit of responding to the demands of the people.

For the City Committee the matter was tackled in a forthright manner by the 'top' going directly to the primary organisations, dispersing amongst them, making clear the new approach, offering all information, encouraging and accepting their responses. Caution and hesitation ruled at first, and there was some confusion, obscuring the degree of rank-and-file response.

Initial movement does show, however, in the spate of secretarial resignations and replacements — about 40 per cent — as the membership began to try to implement some of its ideas. In the 33 Moscow District Party Committees themselves a new appraisal had changed 19 first secretaries and about 30 per cent of staff making for more responsive organs.

The perestroika projected by the leadership of the CPSU requires the active involvement of all the people in every aspect of the running of society. This is why the primary organisations must be mobilised and why bureaucratism must be removed by a deepened and broadened socialist democracy. Change is happening unevenly and slowly; it has many setbacks and misunderstandings and runaway enthusiasms that have to be sensitively corrected.

Information is the key to democracy and its possession by the masses can prevent the upper echelons from continuing in the old way. For example, concerning building developments and intentions in Moscow the scene was set for the public debate by having, first, a media discourse by the architects. And, in the same spirit, a continuing exchange goes on at the Moscow City Committee level with the journalists and radio chiefs to establish open treatment of questions and ensure that all public issues are treated in a responsible way, without superficiality or 'head-hunting'.

Impatient new cadres are coming forward, are thrust into activity, are right or wrong, make mistakes or succeed. Comrade Karabasov thought that one of the reasons why movement at the grassroots was still rather slow might be that officials in countless primary organisations were lacking experience and training in their new posts. It is vital that more time be given to study and cadre education. It is being provided.

Elections were pointed to as a unique way of voicing rank-and-file views. It is probably correct to say that there would be initial shortcomings where good leaders might be dismissed in pique, say, for some past but remembered 'offence', or worse, that benign choices might be made to cause as little upset as possible. However, this would certainly be followed by a wiser choice when its effects on pay and performance were felt. Disastrous choices now would be infinitely easier to deal with than before

when 'recall' was not an option.

At our meeting with Regional Secretary Comrade Veino we had a graphic description of the Party in Estonia and its problems. He spoke in detail about the plunge of the Party into the resolution of these and the building of better machinery to help. He saw that the main task was to get to the people and to be at the head of the new demands. The young people were the easiest to motivate. The older were more difficult. Tallinn also used 'Political Days'.

Experiments in the economic field take place searching for better ways. A major change was the installation of the GOSSTROJ of Estonia to replace a host of ministries and functionaries who were simply in the way of achievement!

Already are established individual and family contracting units in services. There was a double benefit: services were improved and money incomes were increased but, as well, some labour was released. The problem arises because there is a low birth rate in Estonia. 96-97 per cent of people work or are at study. Today's woman doesn't want to be a housewife.

At the May 9 Kolkhoz we got an insight into the agro-business complex and its considerations. Lots of efforts are going into perestroika and it was evident that they were materialising in increasing yields of milk, fodder, vegetables and fruit. The tremendous potential of the human factor when it was consulted and not just directed was noted by First Secretary Yan Martin of the Paide District Committee. Now the expenditure of the local Soviet was without direction from above so that it had initiative in consulting with the people to make options and to allocate finance. The effect was that targets in the social sphere met 100 per cent.

At the historic town hall of Tallinn we inspected its ancient relics and heard its history. There we met Comrade Sillari who recalled some of the more recent revolutionary highlights of the city. He told us that there was a strong Party force of 1,070 primary organisations and 7,000 members. From the primary bodies they learnt at first hand the real state of things and the extensive social shortcomings that had to be addressed. Openness and democratisation were the means of getting things done. One snag they found early was that people were so used to being directed that it was a great wrench for them to take up initiatives of their own without endorsement first.

Comrade Sillari catalogued for us the many city services that had improved with the aid of individual and family contracting, from private taxis to cafés and beauticians. He instanced also the goods that were in short supply and the hopes of easing that by means of 150-plus new cooperatives.

The Party is everywhere encouraging the people to take initiatives in their own surroundings.

The Komsomol and the Trade Unions

Housing is a big problem in general and its lack is a factor in the staff turnover which plagues all enterprises, and at the Likhachov Works no less, since there, too, many live first in dormitories, then marry and have

children. There were more complaints about housing than about pay or bonuses. The Komsomol representative, Alexandr Malakhov, said that they physically build houses themselves, cooperatively, renovated existing housing and constantly sought to improve the dormitory environment, adding, for instance, child education facilities. An abiding feature of this life-style must also be the opportunity of and provision for involvements like hobby clubs, literary and radio clubs, the Works Komsomol newspaper and radio station, and, of course, the facilities at the stadium. Perestroika means the intensification of these efforts with a new evaluation of the needs and priorities and with new resources allocated.

The Works Komsomol was aware that the young would one day replace their seniors and so an aspect of their work is to bring this home to the members, involving them as fully-fledged citizens in all the problems and in their solution. He referred to some cases of 'social injustice' in terms of housing, pay and vocational training. In the new situation the Komsomol would strive to sharpen its representations: young Malakhov held to the view that there *were* interests to defend, and Komsomol interests are specifically catered for in the factory's Plan.

The role of the Trade Unions was outlined by Yevgeni Osinkin. The TU Committee at Likhachov covers all 118,000 persons employed, of whom 97 per cent were members. It had 79 members, 20 of them at other places. Their major activities were bargaining, improving Socialist competition amongst the production teams, industrial safety, and disposing the social and holiday facilities within their purview. This included the use of 56 day-care centres and four Pioneer camps. The Union annually distributed some 26,000 subsidised holiday vouchers for rest and rehabilitation. They were aiming to boost that to one-third of the membership. They also replaced 50 per cent of the chairmen of Union committees throughout the Works in a shake-up. In response to the question of the impact of perestroika he said it presented problems in three categories. One was Quality on which there was a new emphasis, and to which they had already responded. The second was the Diesel project, where they were striving to get the planned launch. The third category was that concerned with setting quotas, working conditions, benefits, recreation facilities and miscellaneous matters that perestroika highlighted to augment the social aspects.

Though we heard an impressive catalogue of Union activity and busy administration of the social service and benefits at all the enterprises we visited, most striking was the absence of reference to wage formation. The Likhachov Works has, however, a new system of wages and bonuses in prospect.

It was conceded at the 18th Congress of the Trade Unions that, to too large a degree, the Unions had been a lever for increasing production graphically described by Comrade Gorbachov as dancing 'cheek-to-cheek' with management. Indeed, many responsibilities appear to have been neglected. At the Likhachov Works, and again at Electrosila, we were to note an absence of head-gear, eye-shields, gloves and foot protection. Noise levels were excessive, it seemed to us. We were assured that provision was made where it was appropriate, but also that the workers "didn't like these protective items"! Vigilance and patience will be needed

to ameliorate the effects of 2- and 3-shift working (economically desirable, but viewed with hostility by workers). Yes, they do enlarge the labour-time input and more efficiently utilise the technology and the equipment, but they do also aggress against the leisure, recreational and self-improvement time.

Cost-accounting and the new independence of management to act will undoubtedly be valuable allies on the work floor. All elements will come under scrutiny and the ability of unions and management jointly and effectively to take prompt action will be crucial in stemming the haemorrhages of working hours lost or wasted.

Work-teams which can elect and recall their leaders and the concept of wages on the basis of achievement, with additional powers to affect the factory and floor management where it is seen as impeding team performance are serious changes and will impact on these features. Grassroot members of the party and the unions must set about improving their immediate surroundings for work and compel the consequent changes at higher levels.

New Ideas in Art and Culture . . . and in the Media

The most striking feature of perestroika is 'glasnost' . . . 'openness'. Yuri Karabasov of the Moscow City Party Committee put it thus: "Now you can disagree with anyone, formulate your own opinions . . ." And this was generally so, even at meetings such as ours, where different points of view were often heard at the same time. Of course, old habits die hard. There were still instances where a senior official tended to dominate the exchanges even though, at his side, were the responsible comrades from whom we wanted to hear. There were also those who felt they should say only what they thought a senior wanted them to say.

Yuri Sklyarov, Director of the Propaganda Section of the CPSU Central Committee, described the essence of perestroika, and the role of the mass media. The most important objective is to intensify the human factor, to encourage the activity of the people so that they can really feel responsible for the state of affairs in the party, the state and in society as a whole. For people to participate in everything they should know everything — glasnost must become the norm.

We had been able, independently, to assess the extent of the progress in this matter.

Several new features are noteworthy. First, the mass media is better used by the people. In articles and commentaries there is a lively debate with differing and opposing views equally expressed. Literally tens of thousands of letters are pouring in each week. More of them are published. Editorial policy is formed at the media house instead of somewhere remote from it and on high. Several new ideas have surfaced in the media to enlarge public access to it. Those who have written in on topical subjects participate with appropriate experts and officials in media programmes. Questionnaires are published in advance and responses are sought for special programmes. In Leningrad ten special phone-in numbers were allotted and there are outside broadcasts from the street or Metro.

Unfortunately, said the journalists, there are some dissonant voices who still want to know where is perestroika for them, when they just don't use the possibilities of their situation! And some officials, they say, still seek public opinion only after decisions have already been taken. There is sometimes misuse of glasnost when officials are attacked unfairly. One journalist joked: "What is in common between a Minister and a fly? Both can be annihilated by a newspaper!"

And what did the journalists think of themselves in the new situation? Previously they conformed entirely. They avoided dealing with acute social or economic issues. Today such individuals are anachronisms, though they still exist. There is much psychological inertia, of course, but there now is a much higher competence in journalists, a deeper content to their work, more knowledge of theory, more commitment to the Party, a wider and higher level of consciousness. At times they come under great pressure to lay off some exposures, even being arraigned in Court as was recently the case in the Voroshilovgrad region. Happily, the Party supports them against such unprincipled attacks. Concerning their union in Leningrad, one of those whom we met said, "Perestroika is very slow in the Union . . . too much quality discussion . . . not enough organisational efforts".

A non-journalist also had a view. He thought not all journalists were prepared for perestroika. Some never criticised and now are unable to give an in-depth analysis. There are those who criticise for criticism's sake, and do not criticise themselves. Newspapers seldom apologise or withdraw incorrect reports, even when exposed as such. There are even some who withhold reports.

There was a 4.7 per cent increase in circulation of newspapers and magazines since last year. The demand is now outstripping both production and the old distribution method. 90 per cent of newspapers are on subscription, but, as well as an increase in these, the news-stands are sold out within minutes of the papers' arrival. There are steps to increase the newstands and to drastically improve the quality and quantity of printing equipment. Video is another area in which much has to be done properly to exploit the genre.

Alongside the mass media there is everywhere a 'revival'. Creative productions previously suppressed are now being brought to public view, like the Georgian film *Repentance*, which we perceived as an exposure of the sufferings of the Stalin period.

Artists who, with their material, were barely tolerated are being brought into the mainstream of cultural life. An example is the young Rock musicians and their creative output. New productions in theatre openly satirise, and comment upon, as they please, political and social phenomena today. We saw the excellent play *The Quotation*, sold out and rapturously received by the audience who delightedly recognised those "who lived from one quotation to the next", and the negative consequences of that attitude.

We met the famous playwright, Mikhail Shatrov. The present situation of glasnost in the creative arts is "a blow against the absolute centralisation and control established in the 1930s and against the Stalinist concept of man as just a small screw in a big machine. This concept was contrary to

every principle of the October Revolution". According to Shatrov, the essence of the new position lies in "a radically different concept of man as his own master". "The organisational changes which have taken place in the theatre, combined with the new approach, has given the creative people a revival of their own spirits . . .", he said.

At the same time deep conservatism battles with modernity in this field. Some people do not want Rock and other forms in concert halls and on radio. They say that it will corrupt the youth. The established unions of writers, artists and musicians do not want to accept the young on the grounds that they aren't 'professional'.

The attitude towards 'youth culture' in the creative arts is seen also in relation to youth itself — a main social force in society. Everywhere we went we could observe youth's participation, important and practical, in perestroika. Yet there is still an attitude which doesn't recognise them as capable and independent beings, like the older generations.

Another social force central to perestroika is the women. Women's Councils have been set up. In Leningrad we were told that the major concerns were with family matters.

Most women felt very happy with the anti-alcohol drive. It leant towards family stability, they said. Some think the gravity of the problem justified the sternest measures. Others felt a gradual approach might have been better. Yet others felt there would be no end till more alternative forms of social relaxation were in place.

Naturally the Soviet Communists cannot overlook the activities of the class enemy. Ruthless psychological warfare is being waged by imperialism against socialism. Its increasing intensity was noted in the conversation at the CPSU Central Committee. Capitalism would like to impose its own values and standards on Soviet society and subvert its moral values, it was said. Since the capitalist media voice cannot be drowned out it has to be countered with the truth about socialism, with openness and bold propaganda initiatives. The handling of these questions in the past left much to be desired. There is still need to ensure the support of some Party committees for more openness.

Summarising our exploration of perestroika in action, we feel that we have witnessed very much that is changed. We set off with a healthy suspicion and then felt it melt in the face of the facts that were uncovered and the enthusiasm and excitement of most whom we met. Occasionally, indeed, we found the old high-handed approach. We found not a little artful dodging on some issues, but we met frankness too and a readiness to confirm what had been wrong in an unedifying past, and to demonstrate the changes made and the new safeguards in place to uphold them.

Many of our interlocutors realised that perestroika is not only the device to overcome threatening stagnation, but also the breaking out of a 'chrysalis' of old management forms and techniques — techniques of commandism from on high and remote from the issue. This 'chrysalis' was seriously constricting socialism's advance. The purpose of perestroika is to raise the whole society and its economic, social and spiritual activity into a qualitatively new regime seeking better to use the possibilities of socialism. Alongside an explosion of information and an extended democratic

participation at every level, its purpose will be to move further along the road of actual and effective involvement of the Soviet people in decisions on this advance. Perestroika is to give full play to the contending real-life experiences of the citizen in the role of worker and manager.

Our conclusion is that the whole development in the Soviet Union and the will of the Soviet people is for *more* democracy and *more* socialism. Clearly, a radical transformation is under way. It isn't a return to capitalism, as some wishful thinkers in the West would have it. Neither is it a cosmetic exercise. It is a further development of socialism, a deep and thorough going process led by the party with the people and for the people.

William Somerset

Communist Party of Ireland

Jerzy Waszczuk

Polish United Workers' Party

Elean Thomas

Workers' Party of Jamaica

The Crucial Factor of Acceleration

Scientific and Technical Progress in Mongolia

Tserengyin Gurbadam — Dr. Sc.
(Econ.), CC member, Mongolian
People's Revolutionary Party

THE Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia was a crucial turning point in the destinies of mankind. It has also been of abiding significance to Mongolia: our own people's revolution took place in 1921 under its direct influence and opened for us the way to national and social progress. Mongolia's historical advance from feudalism to socialism, bypassing capitalism, is the main outcome of its development over more than half a century.

Mongolia's non-capitalist way of development is not some kind of one-off experiment or a breach of the law governing the successive change of economic and social formations. It is the shortest and most humane revolutionary leap from pre-capitalist relations to socialist relations. It was forecast by Lenin and effected in practice by the Mongolian working people.

When Lenin said that capitalism did not necessarily have to be a stage of development for some backward countries, he did not at all deny the need to boost their productive forces to a high level. The 'preparatory work' for transition to socialism, which usually proceeds haphazardly under capitalism, is carried out in conscious and purposeful effort by the liberated

peoples, who can rely on all-round assistance from the triumphant proletariat of the advanced countries.

Within the lifetime of a single generation, the Mongolian working people have transformed their country by taking the way indicated by Lenin and with the fraternal support of the USSR.

Mongolia, but recently a backward country, has been confidently building socialism, gradually catching up with the industrialised countries. Along with other socialist states, it is engaged in solving diverse economic and social problems, among them, as the 19th Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (1986) said, the problem of developing social production with greater efficiency, and further raising the people's wellbeing on that basis. The party believes that these objectives can be attained above all through scientific and technical progress.

Jambyn Bathmuh, MPRP CC General Secretary and Chairman of the Presidium of the Grand People's Khural, says: "We are building socialism in the epoch of the scientific and technical revolution . . . No production or social problems can be solved without the use of scientific and technical achievements."

Scientific and technical progress in our country does, of course, proceed in conditions which are different from those in the European countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and in the light of our national, geographical, climatic and historical specifics. The main one is that the STR is being carried on in a country which has advanced from feudalism to socialism by simultaneously effecting several revolutionary transformations, such as socialist industrialisation, the build-up and development of a scientific potential without any tradition behind it, and the technical re-equipment of the old industries. The on-going changes in Mongolia signify *an historical advance from the old type of social production based on manual labour to factory-and-machine production, a new type for our country*. That, we believe, is tantamount to an industrial revolution.

Socialist industrialisation is the radical means for overcoming economic, cultural, scientific and technical backwardness, and is the material foundation of the industrial revolution. Its first phase in our country was completed in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Once a backward and entirely livestock breeding country, Mongolia was transformed into an agrarian-industrial country with a multi-sectoral socialist economy, thereby creating the conditions for completing the build-up of the material and technical basis for socialism and going on to the second phase of industrialisation. A new stage of development has been started.

Our industry now accounts for 46 per cent of the aggregate social product. There are important shifts in the territorial location of the productive forces. Along with the development of Ulan Bator, the traditional centre, new ones have arisen: Darkhan, Erdenet, Choibalsan, Sukhe Bator, Baganur, Khutul and Bor Undur. More than one-half of the once nomadic population now lives in cities and townships.

Ever wider use is being made of new technologies in the national economy and the quality of producer goods has been improving. From 1925 to 1986, basic production assets multiplied 61-fold. The number of

automated and semi-automated lines, machines, plant and computers has been going up. We in our country have executed a leap from the 'age of muscle energy' into the 'age of electricity', bypassing the 'age of steam'. Mongolia is now among the five countries in Asia (without the Middle East) which have the highest energy-per-head figures. The accelerated equipment of agriculture has helped completely to mechanise cropping, and the trend is similar in the growing of potatoes and vegetables, and in hay-making. *Technical facilities in the national economy as a whole perform operations equivalent to the manual labour of 50 million persons.*

A sizeable scientific potential has been created: we now have a ramified network of research, design and development institutes, laboratories and experimental stations. The working people's technical standards have been going up and a technical and scientific intelligentsia has been taking shape. Almost 60 per cent of workers in Mongolia now have 8 or 10 years schooling, and roughly 20 per cent of those working in the national economy have a higher or secondary specialised education.

There is, however, an urgent need to accelerate scientific and technical progress, without which it is impossible to switch the economy to the way of intensification, ensure quality growth and improve the consumer properties of goods. For the time being, we are at the stage of partial intensifications, with the extensive type of reproduction still prevalent.

The potential that has been built up and the level of maturity in the productive forces still fall short of satisfying social requirements. Our potentialities are still being outrun by the demands on the material, cultural and everyday living and working conditions among the populations, young people in the first place. Large-scale measures have to be taken to induce young men and women to stay in the countryside and to reduce their migration into the towns, and also to effect the technological restructuring of livestock-breeding, the traditional sector of the national economy.

For the time being, Mongolia markedly lags behind most of the other CMEA countries in the maturity of its material and technical facilities, efficiency of production, labour productivity, energy per worker, national income per head, and some other key economic and social indicators.

We need to shape new and more progressive productive forces, to change their structure, and to switch from the evolutionary to the revolutionary type of scientific and technical progress. With that end in view, the MPRP CC and the Mongolian government have been putting through large-scale measures designed *further to deepen and complete our socialist industrialisation on the basis of modern science and technology.*

The basic industries are being given priority development to expand reproduction and speed up scientific and technical progress. We intend to shape new centres and territorial-production complexes while creating the social and everyday infrastructure, with emphasis on well-equipped lines of production in engineering, metallurgy, chemicals and, especially, in biotechnology.

The fact that *virtually the whole of our national economy is under the revolutionising influence of modern science and technology* is being taken into account by the party's policy. There is a drastic change in many

proportions: those between the old and the new industries, the small-scale and large-scale enterprises, and between producers and consumers, so making it possible to turn out altogether new products and sharply improve the quality of traditional products, and to reduce energy and material-intensiveness and the assets-to-product ratio.

Faster economic and social progress, growing efficiency in production and high product quality largely depend on the effort to build up science and turn it into a force directly affecting the economy.

We have *a coherent state scientific and technical policy* and strive to set the right scale and lines in developing the basic sciences in the light of the limited potentialities of our economy, our traditions, and our education system, and on the basis of close integration with the socialist-community countries. We have to make a substantial change in the input structure, giving priority to applied research and technical projects and the wide use of what has been achieved in world science.

Electrification of our agriculture is a specific and challenging problem, which is made more intractable by the fact that our mobile energy-users are widely scattered over a vast territory. There is also the need to introduce modern and mobile radio communication facilities and new types of low-cost transportation and low-capacity and highly mobile facilities for turning out small batches of a wide range of products.

How successfully innovations are used largely depends on the forms and methods of administration and economic management, and those we now have do not quite meet our requirements. The June 1987 Plenary Meeting of the MPRP CC mapped out ways to improve national-economic planning and the economic mechanism, and to raise product quality. These will do much to accelerate scientific and technical progress.

All the elements of the innovation process must be tied in with each other so as to shape a coherent science-technology-production system, including its institute-design office-production sub-system. The factory sector of science is the weakest link in these chains. Here and there we have either embryonic experimental and testing centres and reserve capacities or none at all. Our academic institutes are mainly oriented towards research, instead of the application of the results in the economy; they work on their own and do little to coordinate their activities with the sectoral research institutes.

The possible ways of solving this problem are suggested by the experience of other socialist countries. A great effect comes from such forms of integration as technical and technological centres within the framework of producer associations (combines), science-and-production associations, scientific and technical complexes at higher schools, centres for introducing new hardware, technologies and advanced experience into production, joint scientific expeditions, and ad hoc research teams with those from other CMEA countries.

We believe that if scientific and technical progress is to be sustained, socialist economic integration must be made more intensive, direct ties developed, and bilateral and multi-lateral science-and-production associations set up.

Mixed enterprises, among them the Mongolian-Soviet ore concentration

combine Erdenet, Mongolbulgarmetall, Mongolczechoslovakmetall, and the Mongolsovtsvetmet economic association are highly important for us. An international geological expedition of the CMEA countries has been doing good work on our territory. We intend to set up more such enterprises, including some in the light and food industries and in agriculture. Long-term bilateral programmes for developing economic, scientific and technical cooperation until the year 2000 open up good prospects for Mongolia.

Our participation in implementing the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress of CMEA Member Countries up to the Year 2000 provides a powerful impetus to the further development of Mongolia's potential. We have already joined in 36 of the 93 main projects along all the priority lines of the programme development.

The strengthening of ties with scientific institutions in the USSR, especially with those close at hand — in Siberia, Kazakhstan and Kirghizia — and the establishment of mixed associations and firms with the participation of the most authoritative Soviet specialists, or under their guidance, will also be beneficial in tackling major scientific, technical, economic and production problems. Cooperation in fields like genetic and cell engineering, the production of biologically active substances and medicinal drugs, the search for and development of rare-earth elements, the complex use of scientific and technical achievements in the life of our livestock-breeders, and so on, could also be fruitful.

It is now twenty-five years since Mongolia joined the CMEA, and the new type of cooperation within its framework has been of great benefit to our country. Experience shows that it is only by deepening socialist economic integration that our party can attain its long-term objectives: complete the building of socialism, raise the level of Mongolia's productive forces and align it with that of the community's European countries, and steadily enhance the working people's well-being.

The CMEA Economic Summit in June 1984 said that the fraternal countries "regard it as their internationalist duty to go on giving assistance, on the present just basis, to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Cuba, and the Mongolian People's Republic in accelerating their development and making their economies more efficient with an eye to their tasks of socialist industrialisation, and in promoting their wide participation in the international socialist division of labour."²

The Mongolian people's achievements would have been inconceivable without the vivifying influence of the ideas of the Great October Revolution and the selfless assistance of the Soviet Union and the other fraternal countries. It is quite natural, therefore, that the 19th Congress of the MPRP saw our all-round integration with these countries as the highroad for our party and our state.

We believe that strengthening our ties with the world's first socialist country, the USSR, is of utmost importance. Mongolian-Soviet relations in every sphere of social life have been raised to a qualitatively new level, directly involving the working people themselves in a much more fruitful and intensive effort. The fraternal countries' friendship, all-round cooperation and socialist economic integration are the crucial external

factors and the pledge that the MPRP will attain its strategic goal of building a new and happy society on Mongolia's ancient soil.

¹ *CC Report to the 19th Congress of the MPRP*, Ulan Bator, 1986, p. 36 (in Mongolian).

² *The CMEA Economic Summit*, Moscow, 1984, p. 24 (in Russian).

The Party Programme: An Obligation To The People

Antonio Diaz-Ruiz — representative
on WMR, Communist Party of Cuba
(CPC)

THIS year we began implementing our Party Programme which was adopted at the historic Third Congress of the CPC in late 1986. It *maps out the ways of achieving a strategic objective — that of completing the construction of socialism in Cuba*. It is an integral and scientifically substantiated document which is profoundly democratic because, having been submitted to a nationwide discussion, it reflects the opinions and aspirations of the working masses.

Speaking on the long-term tasks before us, Fidel Castro, First Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, said: "We now have to tackle new problems that arise in the course of our development, as a result of our accomplishments; they are problems that stem from the great historic obligation we have undertaken to continue developing the country, building socialism, and advancing revolutionary theory and practice. We must prove that socialism is superior to capitalism not only in education, health care, sports and similar fields. The capitalists themselves acknowledge these advances. We must prove to the capitalists that the Communists, the socialists, can solve questions of national development two, three and even ten times better. That is a matter of our conscience, honour, awareness and principles."¹

The Programme pays special attention to the economic and social progress of our republic. It takes into account both our country's achievements and past shortcomings and mistakes, and it highlights the avenues of socialist construction.

The historic victory of the Cuban Revolution of January 1, 1959 and the herculean efforts of our revolutionary fighters and all working people have made the country fully independent, eliminated exploitation of man by man, and secured and developed genuine democracy. Industry, land, banking, communications, transport, domestic and foreign trade have been nationalised and put at the service of the working class and the masses in general. Public property in the means of production has become well-established in major branches of the economy. Gradual collectivisation is

under way in agriculture, where small land-owners still retain part of their property. This drive is being conducted on a strictly voluntary basis. In other words, the socio-economic infrastructure we have inherited from capitalism has been transformed radically.

Let me cite some figures to illustrate the dynamics of our development. As the country's population increased from 6.8 million to 10 million within 27 years, the gross social product grew 250 per cent. All branches of the national economy have gained strength. Production of electric power increased 4.7 times and of steel, 16 times. The volume of construction is 12 times the previous figure, and similar ratios are 1 to 150 in the capacity of water reservoirs, 1 to 19 in merchant marine deadweight, and 1 to 11 in the annual fish catch. The list could go on and on, featuring items such as nickel, cement, fertilizer, petroleum products, citrus fruit, eggs and many others.

Previously, Cuba had no mechanical, electrical or electronic engineering to speak of; now we manufacture buses, sugar cane harvesters, engines, television and radio sets, refrigerators, minicomputers and medical equipment. Mechanisation across the board has increased output volume and labour productivity and made working conditions easier, particularly in sugar cane harvesting.

The material and cultural living standard has risen. Nutrition has improved, and 85 per cent of the households now have electricity. There are 91 television sets, 50 refrigerators, 59 washing machines, 152 radio sets and 60 fans per 100 families.

All Cubans enjoy free medical care. The health service has reached the remotest villages. On average, one doctor takes care of 443 people. Infant mortality has dropped, and average life expectancy has reached 74.2 years. We are ahead of all other Latin American countries in combating malaria, polio, diphtheria, tuberculosis and leprosy.

Tremendous progress has been made in education. The revolution had to deal with a legacy of some one million totally illiterate people, and many more were semiliterate. Only 13 per cent of the population went to school. Today, all children, most young men and women and hundreds of thousands of adults receive free education at general and technical schools and at universities and attend various training courses.

Culture also serves to raise the intellectual level of the working people. No longer élitist, it is open to all. Our achievements in sports are a matter of common knowledge; athletic pursuits have ceased to be a moneymaking business and are now a field of mass involvement.

Our system of government guarantees social protection to the people. Unemployment has been eradicated in Cuba. Everyone is entitled to a job in accordance with one's aptitude, interests and experience. Remuneration depends on the quantity and quality of the work performed and is based on the principle which states that every family must have a minimum essential for meeting its basic requirements. People's incomes are rising steadily.

The socialist state ensures labour safety, proper working conditions, paid leave, and free medical treatment in case of illness or injury. There are maternity, disability, loss of breadwinner and old age types of assistance.

We have banished the ills which are typical of capitalist society and which reflect its exploitative nature and moral degradation — racial discrimination, prostitution, mendicancy, drug abuse and gambling.

The establishment and consolidation of popular government bodies has made it possible to take a tangible step forward in promoting self-government by the people, and in enhancing and perfecting socialist democracy.

Marxism-Leninism, the culmination of man's economic, political, social and philosophical thought, has emerged not only as the basis of policy and the guide to action of the Communist Party of Cuba but also as the ideology of the vast majority of the people.

The indisputable accomplishments we have attained over the years of the revolutionary process do not mean that we have been free of mistakes. As it was noted self-critically at the Third Congress of the CPC, material and manpower resources were not used fully enough, and economic and social advances could have been greater. A nationwide movement has been launched to eliminate shortcomings and negative trends and to perfect socialism.

The Programme notes that the completion of the *material and technological basis of socialism* are the foremost goal of the party's economic policy. This calls for continued economic development, for the consolidation of the socialist relations of production until they become fully dominant, and for improvements in the economic management system.

We are to expand our export and import capacity. Both new and traditional exports will be developed to make foreign trade as effective as possible. We will begin manufacturing goods that we now import, particularly from capitalist countries. We will expand tourism and economic services to other nations in order to increase our foreign exchange earnings.

The Programme reiterates our policy of enhancing economic integration with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries — among other things, within the CMEA framework. This will enable us to raise our volume of trade at equitable prices for Cuban goods and to ensure a steady supply of raw materials and fuels.

We intend to keep strengthening our ties with Latin American and Caribbean countries, to maintain our relations with developed capitalist powers on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, and to be active in international economic organisations.

In focusing on accelerating industrialisation and scientific and technological progress, the party believes it necessary to accord priority to the branches that manufacture means of production, to use natural resources rationally and to expand the extraction and thorough processing of raw materials.

We are to raise production efficiency, improve the use of labour resources and the geographical distribution of the productive forces, and to gradually bring living conditions in different regions to a common level. This will provide the basis for tackling the key task of *ensuring the well-being and the comprehensive development of all our citizens*.

The emphasis is on a higher quality and a broader range of goods and services. The rationing system that has been with us all these years made it possible to distribute basic necessities equitably despite the difficulties caused by the imperialist economic blockade. As economic production grows, rationing is being gradually phased out, but low-income families will still be guaranteed access to the basic essentials.

The Party Programme extensively covers steps needed to perfect the system of economic management because the ties among the various components of the national economy are growing ever more complex and diversified. At the same time we hold that socialist construction is a political, revolutionary task, and that the economic mechanism cannot replace political or ideological tools.

The Third Congress of the CPC exposed mistakes in the concept and practical use of economic management — mistakes that put the future of the revolution in grave peril. Specifically the notion alleging that for the sake of furthering the nation's socio-economic development, material incentives could be applied without regard for the socialist principle of remuneration for the quantity and quality of the work performed, gained widespread currency. The party will direct and supervise these processes, ensure broader involvement of the working people in the development, implementation and monitoring of economic plans, and foster an economic way of thinking among political, trade union and administrative executives and among workers generally.

Planning is a central principle of socialist economic management, and it is very important for the former to objectively reflect the state of the latter and exert an active influence on it. Hence the need to combine centralism with operational economic autonomy and make wide use of commodity-money relations. Ensuring the preponderance of social interests, we will strengthen economic efficiency and cost-effectiveness and extend them to every job. We hold that in these efforts it is important to avoid both oversimplification and schemes of questionable feasibility.

The party attaches great importance to socialist emulation and to a correct combination of moral and material incentives. The aim is to attain the best results in economic production and services, enable people to assert their creative abilities, and foster civic responsibility and a socialist attitude to one's work. The administrative and legal measures to combat unearned incomes, abuse of pay funds, and illegal acquisition of benefits will be strengthened.

The CPC's social policy is designed to perfect social relations, transform living conditions inherited from the past, and create a socialist standard of living.

We believe that the following trends are typical of our new way of life: the transformation of labour into a conscious, socially useful and creative activity; a heightened sense of responsibility, collectivism and comradeship; increasing convergence of personal and social interests; and the gradual elimination of the differences between intellectual and physical labour and between urban and rural areas.

Classes and social groups are changing in the course of socialist construction. The party promotes their development and, as a classless

society is being created, gradually furthers their convergence into a single whole.

Cuba has scored impressive results in the emancipation of women. They enjoy full equality, take part in civic activities and are promoted to leading posts. In future, too, we must not confine our efforts merely to educational work aimed at eliminating mental holdovers of the past. We are to act more vigorously so as to tackle the material problems that hamper progress along our chosen course.

Care for the younger generation is equally important. Young people make up more than half the population of Cuba, and very soon the responsibility for the country's future will rest with them. The party will help to meet the interests of young men and women in all spheres.

Work collectives will grow stronger and play a bigger role in the tackling of economic, political and social questions. Labour legislation will enhance the guarantees of our citizens' rights and social benefits.

We will continue to perfect our medical service. Priority will be accorded to preventive care, hygiene, rational nutrition, and to health as a way of life. We estimate that by the year 2000 the practice of house calls by medical personnel will spread throughout the country, and there will be health care centres at every enterprise.

Education will change radically too. The training of teachers and managers will improve, and the latest advances of science and technology will be used as teaching aids. New studies will be conducted in the sphere of the social sciences which are historically linked with the rich humanitarian traditions, the ideal of independence, the anti-imperialist struggle and the progressive culture of the Cuban nation. We pay considerable attention to in-depth studies of Spanish and of foreign languages.

Fruitful leisure is an important element of man's comprehensive development. Recreation, culture, sports and leisure in general make life richer, alleviate natural tensions and restore one's physical and intellectual strength. Opportunities for cultural growth will broaden, while physical education and sports will become even more widespread, particularly among children and youth.

The overwhelming majority of the Cuban people has welcomed with enthusiasm the tasks set forth in the Party Programme and is working to accomplish them. We are restructuring our economic mechanism, strengthening our political and ideological work, enhancing the labour activity of the masses, and acting resolutely to eliminate mistakes and negative trends. Confident in their future, the Cubans regard the CPC Programme as their own.

¹ Fidel Castro Ruz, 'Statement at the Closing Session of the Third Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba', *Socialist Cuba*, January-February 1987, pp. 40-41 (in Spanish).

Recollecting the October Revolution

THE FIRST DAY, THE FIRST ACT

Seventy years ago, on October 25-27 (November 7-9 in the Gregorian calendar introduced in Russia after the October Revolution) the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies took place in Petrograd (now Leningrad). The event marked the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the foundation of a socialist state in Russia — the Republic of Soviets. The Congress formed the first Soviet government — the Council of People's Commissars headed by Lenin, which adopted the first legal acts of the Soviet state, the Decree on Peace and the Decree on Land.

Those historic events were witnessed by progressive American writer and journalist John Reed, who was in Petrograd at that time as a war correspondent. He warmly welcomed the October Revolution and keenly followed its development. His *Ten Days That Shook The World*, a remarkable piece of journalistic writing which was to gain world renown, was published in the US in March 1919. Lenin spoke highly of the book and wrote a foreword to its American edition.

Below comes an excerpt from the book describing the adoption of the Decree on Peace by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

...NOW Lenin, gripping the edge of the reading stand, letting his little winking eyes travel over the crowd as he stood there waiting, apparently oblivious to the long-rolling ovation, which lasted several minutes. When it finished, he said simply: "We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order!" Again that overwhelming human roar.

"The first thing is the adoption of practical measures to realise peace. ...We shall offer peace to the peoples of all the belligerent countries upon the basis of the Soviet terms — no annexations, no indemnities, and the right of self-determination of peoples. At the same time, according to our promise we shall publish and repudiate the secret treaties. ...The question of War and Peace is so clear that I think that I may, without preamble, read the project of a Proclamation to the Peoples of All the Belligerent Countries..."

His great mouth, seeming to smile, opened wide as he spoke; his voice was hoarse — not unpleasantly so, but as if it had hardened that way after years and years of speaking — and went on monotonously, with the effect of being able to go on forever... For emphasis he bent forward slightly. No gestures. And before him, a thousand simple faces looking up in intent adoration.

Proclamation to the Peoples and Governments of All the Belligerent Nations

The Workers' and Peasants' Government, created by the revolution of November 6th and 7th and based on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, proposes to all the belligerent peoples and to their Governments to begin immediately negotiations for a just and democratic peace.

The Government means by a just and democratic peace, which is desired by the immense majority of the workers and the labouring classes, exhausted and depleted by the war — that peace which the Russian workers and peasants, after having struck down the Tsarist monarchy, have not ceased to demand categorically — immediate peace without annexations (that is to say, without conquest of foreign territory, without forcible annexation of other nationalities), and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposed to all the belligerent peoples immediately to conclude such a peace...

"The revolution of November 6th and 7th," he ended, "has opened the era of the Social Revolution. ...The labour movement, in the name of peace and Socialism, shall win, and fulfil its destiny..."

There was something quiet and powerful in all this, which stirred the souls of men. It was understandable why people believed when Lenin spoke.

By crowd vote it was quickly decided that only representatives of political factions should be allowed to speak on the motion and that speakers should be limited to fifteen minutes.

First Karelin for the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. "Our faction had no opportunity to propose amendments to the text of the proclamation; it is a private document of the Bolsheviki. But we will vote for it because we agree with its spirit..."

For the Social Democratic Internationalists Kramarov, long, stoop-shouldered and near-sighted — destined to achieve some notoriety as the Clown of the Opposition. Only a Government composed of all the Socialist parties, he said, could possess the authority to take such important action. If a Socialist coalition were formed, his faction would support the entire programme; if not, only part of it. As for the proclamation, the Internationalists were in thorough accord with its main points...

Then one after another, amid rising enthusiasm; Ukrainian Social Democracy, support; Lithuanian Social Democracy, support; Populist Socialists, support; Polish Social Democracy, support; Polish Socialists, support — but would prefer a Socialist coalition; Lettish Social Democracy, support. ...Something was kindled in these men. One spoke of the "coming World-Revolution, of which we are the advance-guard"; another of "the new age of brotherhood, when all the peoples will become one great family..." An individual member claimed the floor. "There is contradiction here," he said. "First you offer peace without annexations and indemnities, and then you say you will consider all peace offers. To consider means to accept..."

Lenin was on his feet. "We want a just peace, but we are not afraid of a revolutionary war. ...Probably the imperialist governments will not answer our appeal — but we shall not issue an ultimatum to which it will be easy to say no. ...If the German proletariat realises that we are ready to consider all offers of peace, that will perhaps be the last drop which overflows the bowl — revolution will break out in Germany...

"We consent to examine all conditions of peace, but that doesn't mean that we shall accept them. ...For some of our terms we shall fight to the end — but possibly for others will find it impossible to continue the war. ...Above all, we want to finish the war..."

It was exactly 10.35 when Kameniev asked all in favour of the proclamation to hold up their cards. One delegate dared to raise his hand against, but the sudden sharp outburst around him brought it swiftly down. ...Unanimous.

Suddenly, by common impulse, we found ourselves on our feet, mumbling together into the smooth lifting unison of the *Internationale*. A grizzled old soldier was sobbing like a child. Alexandra Killontai rapidly winked the tears back. The immense sound rolled through the hall, burst windows and doors and seared into the quiet sky. "The war is ended! The war is ended!" said a young workman near me, his face shining.

The Years Of Decisive Choice

Iosip Broz Tito

Excerpts from the reminiscences written by Iosip Broz Tito on request from the Belgrade Institute of Modern History for a collection of memoirs by Yugoslav participants in the October Revolution and the Civil War in Russia in 1917-1921 published in Belgrade.

I HAVE already stated more than once that my participation in the October Revolution and the Civil War in Russia was quite modest. By force of circumstance I was briefly in the ranks of the Red Guards and the internationalist units of the Red Army, which accounts for the modest scale and significance of my contribution. This is not to say, however, that I stayed aloof from the first victorious socialist revolution, the grandiose

Iosip Broz Tito (1892-1980), a leader of the Yugoslav and international Communist movement, joined the Social Democratic Party of Croatia and Slovenia in 1910. He found himself a POW in Russia in 1915. A member of the CC and the CC Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia since 1934, he worked in the Communist International in Moscow in 1935 and 1936 and became head of the CPY in December 1937. During the people's liberation war in Yugoslavia (1941-1945) he was Supreme Commander of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia. From 1940 to 1952 he was the General Secretary of the CPY CC, from 1952 to 1966 the General Secretary of the Union of Communists of Yugoslavia, from 1966 to May 1980 the UCY Chairman and from 1953 to May 1980 President of Yugoslavia.

undertaking of Russia's workers and peasants who opened a new era in human history.

The October socialist revolution in Russia profoundly influenced all of its participants and contemporaries. It was only natural that I should have immediately espoused the revolutionary ideas. I was a Socialist then and took part in the socialist workers' movement. At that time, it was the socialist movement, not the communist one; in other words, before the First World War the workers' movement was called socialist and I was active in it. Obviously, when I faced the events, such as the great Russian revolution, it swept me completely. I readily absorbed the ideas of changing social life and the social system, all the more so since I had seen with my own eyes what the absolutist tsarist regime of oppression was like and my thoughts and actions fully accorded with the thoughts and actions of Soviet Russia's working class, even though I was nothing but a captive Austro-Hungarian soldier.

Besides, the October revolution and the revolutionary situation, which shook the entire world at the end of the First World War and after it, were responsible for the dramatic break-up that the then rotten European empires had to experience. At that time the world was going through unheard-of tribulations and senseless bloodshed, which engulfed first and foremost European nations and led to the crisis of the capitalist social system and to searches for a way out of chaos.

Started as an uprising of the working class and all the working people of Russia against ordeals and suffering, to which the tsarist regime had doomed them in that unjust war, and as a striving to put an end to the senseless settling of mutual military accounts, the taking of human lives and the destruction of material and spiritual values created over centuries, the socialist revolution in Russia could not but shake millions of people throughout the world and win immediately their sympathies precisely because it gave hope of building, in contrast to imperialism, a new, better and more just world of brotherhood and peace.

Though it was admired, approved and supported by millions of people, by all the working people, who had been deprived of their rights and thrown into the trenches of the European carnage, and by the oppressed nations trampled underfoot by the invaders, the October Revolution, on the other hand, enraged the ruling classes because it brought about a new order. The oppressed, deprived of all rights and, consequently, submissive Raja¹ took their destiny into their own hands and all of a sudden became the masters of the situation. In this way the October revolution woke up people's minds and from this point of view immediately became our cause and part of our own aspirations and hopes: it showed all of us a way of doing away with the suffering and troubles of the time . . .

I think that the events of the period, even though they are quite remote from us, now seem even more important. Their direct impact on my political and ideological make-up and the development of my consciousness in general was extensive and profound. During the revolution I definitively took the side of communism and revolution. I have already mentioned that earlier I had been a socialist-minded worker, a homeless proletarian. But prospects were rather dim in the European

atmosphere of the period and it proved even more difficult for everyone of us in particular to take a stand when war became a grim reality.

Sober voices did sound at socialist congresses and some international conferences; they pointed to the need to counter the mounting military hysteria and demanded that socialist proletarians should not fight for the interests of their exploiters and the ruling classes. But those voices got drowned in the ocean of war-mongering propaganda, nationalistic pronouncements and the pseudopatriotic assertions to the effect that homeland and national interests were in danger, all of which the powers that be used to protect their dominant positions and privileges and to mask with high talk of patriotism and homeland their aggressive claims to other peoples and nations and their desire to re-divide the world.

. . . A young worker at the time, I found it difficult to take my bearings in the sea of those conflicting interests, deliberate lies and dishonest play. I was only 22 and for almost a year I had been wearing the uniform of an Austro-Hungarian soldier and lived in the confinement of military barracks. For this reason the revolutionary activities of Russian workers and peasants and their successful revolution became the main lever that firmly put me in the forefront of the revolutionary movement, in which I invariably stayed ever since.

The author further describes his service in the Austro-Hungarian army, the circumstances of his Russian captivity in April 1915 and his internment in POW camps in the Simbirsk Gubernia (now Ulyanovsk Region) and outside the town of Yekaterinburg (now Sverdlovsk). There Tito, who was repairing railroads together with other POWs, made friends with revolutionary-minded Russian workers, among them Bolsheviks.

He heard about the victorious socialist revolution in Petrograd when he was outside the Siberian city of Omsk. He recalls how he joined an internationalist unit of the Red Guards and applied for Soviet citizenship, how he became a member of the Bolshevik party and took part in battles against the mutinous Czech Corps, which joined the counter-revolutionaries.

As soon as I learned that the Red Army had freed Omsk (which, I believe, happened in November 1919), I decided to go there.

As a matter of fact, I visited Omsk more frequently at that time and was more active in the revolutionary work. I came into contact with the Yugoslav communist organisation, which had its own section at the Regional Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) housed at the time in a bank, the biggest building in Omsk. I was enrolled in the party by Yugoslav comrades represented then by Dimitrije Georgievič. He had been sent to Omsk by the Bureau of the Yugoslav Communist Group under the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to strengthen and expand party organisations among Yugoslavs in Siberian towns and to organise ideological, political and military work among them. Later I met Georgievič in Moscow when I was already the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and he returned from Spain in the autumn

of 1939. We resumed our Omsk acquaintance.

I did not stay long in Omsk because I wanted to go back to my homeland as soon as possible. In the spring of 1920 we had already a chance to follow the events in Yugoslavia. From the Russian papers available in Omsk I knew that the country was in a ferment. Previously reports came of the 'green cadres',² a peasant uprising which, to my mind, evinced the influence of the October revolution. I also heard in late 1918 and early 1919 about the uprising of the Domobranski regiment in Elačic Square,³ against which machine-gun fire was opened from the roofs of houses. Many of those rebels had returned from Soviet Russia. But there was no party at that time to organise them and to bring the matter to conclusion, to more significant events throughout the country. All that enhanced my desire to return to my homeland as soon as possible.

One day when the Civil War was still on I opened an Omsk paper and read a headline: 'Peasants Revolt in Croatia'.

I went to Yugoslavia in a freight train going from Omsk via Moscow and Petrograd.

From Petrograd I proceeded through Estonia to Narva where a cordon was set up for all the repatriated POWs in an old fortress on the border with Soviet Russia. I spent about three weeks in Narva. From there, together with other POWs, on the mediation of the German mission I went to the port of Stettin by boat. On departure I was put in charge of the transport. In Stettin we were grouped by nationality and citizenship. Together with a group of Yugoslavs I returned to my native land through Germany and Austria. In Vienna I reported to the Yugoslav consulate and we were sent to Maribor⁴ where we were held several days in a cordon. I was listed as a 'suspicious character', as I came from Soviet Russia; the bourgeoisie had already begun to fear the 'Bolshevist menace' — the revolution.

In November 1920 I came to Zagreb and already on November 3 registered at the city commandant's office. I was immediately ordered to report to the authorities of my native land that I myself longed to return to as soon as possible. After all I had heard nothing from my parents nor other relations for more than six years now.

It all took me about two or three days and already on November 5 I got a job at a Zagreb mechanic shop in Petrinjskaja Street. Once again I was a homeless proletarian. There I joined the Zagreb branch of the Union of Metal Workers and then the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

A stage of my life came to a close but it was full of such changes and so many of them . . .

Then followed election activity (parliamentary elections were held on November 28, 1920), enrolment at the Club of Repatriates from Russia, strenuous work among the Zagreb proletariat, talks about the land of the Great October Revolution and the ever dear meetings with many of those who fought for the ideas of the October Revolution, for Lenin's ideas and with those who continued to struggle at home for the same ideals, for a socialist revolution to triumph in our homeland.

¹ The Raja was an oppressed Orthodox population deprived of all rights under the Ottoman yoke. — *Ed.*

² The 'green cadres' was the name of a movement of deserters from the Austro-Hungarian army who hid in forests. Initially it aimed against the continuation of the imperialist war and gradually turned into a movement against the rule of the land-owners and the bourgeoisie. — *Ed.*

³ A square in Zagreb, the main city in Croatia. — *Ed.*

⁴ A city in Slovenia. — *Ed.*

I Saw It With My Own Eyes

Hermod Lannung

— honorary member of the governing body, Danish Radical Left Party, Patron of the Liberal International

Hermod Lannung, a witness of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power in Russia, did a good deal to help that country in her time of trial. Below are recollections of the long-time friend of the world's first socialist state and the veteran peace campaigner.

I WILL be 92 on November 9 when the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution is celebrated and I am happy to have witnessed two revolutions in Russia, one in 1917 and the other in 1985-1987. The current revolution, I think, is the direct extension of the first one, of the ideas formulated by Lenin. I have every reason to say so not just because I was in Russia during the revolutionary upheavals of 1917-1920. My acquaintance with that great country grew into a strong friendship with her and as a result I have been partial to her destinies for 70 years now and following closely the processes there. Every coming day brings proof that my conclusion is correct.

I, a 21-year-old student, first came to Russia in May 1917, retracing Lenin's journey, as it were, across Sweden and Finland to Petrograd. I had been offered a job at the Danish diplomatic mission: they had more work than they could handle because Denmark had agreed to look after the interests of Austria-Hungary in Russia.

Immediately upon arrival I found myself in the thick of turbulent events, all the more so since our mission was in the heart of the city, at 10 Sergievskaya Street just off Liteiny Prospect. That was a fascinating and dramatic, though sometimes risky, time for me, a young and green foreigner from a quiet well-to-do country.

I was an outsider, of course, but nevertheless a keen observer of events that were changing the course of world history before my very eyes. Formidable developments were fast-flowing and tension kept building up. Hunger was rearing its head; ruin, chaos and the disruption of the entire socio-political and economic life of the country were growing worse; and the situation on the war fronts became more and more alarming. The

people grew restive as a result and the trust in Alexander Kerensky and his Provisional Government was melting.

The hour of reckoning came on October 25, and I myself heard the signal shot fired by the guns of the cruiser *Aurora*. The Bolsheviks led by Lenin chose the right time to take power.

To be perfectly frank, the most important thing for many Danes, including myself, at the time was the overthrow of tsarism. Unlike the Russians, we did not have a clear idea of every detail of the situation at the time and hailed with equal interest both the February and the October Revolution of 1917. Both were, as everyone knows, virtually bloodless, and that was proof positive for everyone that Russia was ripe for revolutionary change.

It soon transpired, however, that those 'details' were vitally important. The point was that the two revolutions were quite different in their nature, and the attitude of my compatriots to the events of October 1917 changed dramatically. Some of them took a downright counter-revolutionary and anti-Bolshevik attitude (there were among them the head of the Danish diplomatic mission and a number of its staff members), while others were openly doubtful of the Bolsheviks' ability to cope with the situation and pull the country out of the crisis. Some of the Danes, naturally, were indifferent to the fate of the new republic and only a few showed sympathy and understanding for it. I was among the latter. My radical views must have played a role here but, frankly, even those of us who sympathised with the October Revolution and the Russians were rather sceptic of the prospects of the Bolsheviks' policy.

There was good reason for such an attitude: the position of the emergent power was desperate. The country had ground to a standstill, the economy had been plunged into chaos, hunger, epidemics and terror were rampant, the savage war was going on, the army was disintegrating, and so on, and so forth. Could anyone have presumed at the time that the Soviets would defy all odds, moreover, without cadres, experience or funds in such a vast and backward state.

When I took over a post in Moscow on July 1, 1918, I saw even clearer how desperate the situation in the country was. Though very young, I was asked to fill in as a deputy chief of a large branch of the Danish Red Cross in the new Soviet capital (the government had moved to Moscow in March of that year).

That was a very difficult time indeed for the Soviet power, which controlled just a few *gubernias* (provinces). The anti-Bolshevik Czechs were advancing on Moscow from the east, the German army stood in the west, the White Guards advanced from the south and from Siberia; moreover, mutinies flared up every now and then and various gangs were busy working havoc in the countryside. The British, French and Americans landed in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, also in Odessa and other cities on the Black Sea, the Japanese in Vladivostok, and the Turks in the Caucasus. The Socialist Revolutionaries were active in the capital, hoping to overthrow Lenin's government with German help. On July 6 they shot dead the German ambassador, Count V. Mirbach and on August 30 a Socialist Revolutionary woman terrorist seriously wounded Lenin.

Moscow was almost gripped by panic.

Our position was dramatic as well. Two members of our mission, both young engineers, who mediated the return of Austro-Hungarian POW's on the Eastern part of the country, were shot dead by the White Czechs. I was arrested: at the time Count Mirbach was shot, I had the bad luck of going along the street not far from the German Embassy. I was shortly released, of course, but the experience was not quite pleasant.

I stayed in Moscow till March 1919 and then returned home to finish my legal education at the University of Copenhagen. In the summer of 1922 I passed my graduation exams. I had not had time to get down to work in earnest, however, when I got an invitation to go back to the hunger-stricken Russia as a delegate for the European Student Relief and Fridtjof Nansen's¹ Relief Work for Intellectuals. My second stint in that country lasted till May 1924, when the famine was overcome.

Even in my first months in Russia as an officer of those charities, I travelled from Kharkov to the Crimea and Novochoerkassk. The south of the country was in the grip of hunger and we had more than enough to do. We tried to help students and university professors with food, clothing and books, supplied hospitals with equipment and medicines, etc. It was hard but challenging work . . .

I travelled a lot, saw a lot, learned much and came to love Russia and her people even more. I had a good relationship with the Soviet authorities. In May 1923 I was recalled from Kharkov to Moscow and put in charge of the European Student Relief and Fridtjof Nansen's Relief Work for Intellectuals in the whole of Russia. In that capacity I travelled on humanitarian missions to the universities of Kazan, Samara, Saratov and Kiev.

What were my impressions of that second visit to Russia and of what the Soviet power had achieved since my first visit? They were far stronger and more lasting. By then I had gained some experience and education, developed my analytical abilities and acquired standards for comparison. I also had some time to think out everything and draw my conclusions: waiting for departure, I lived for three weeks in the flat of Leo Tolstoi's daughter, Alexandra Tolstoi (the great writer's grandson was my secretary at the time). I visited the Soviet Union again in 1926, 1928 and 1930.

The most important thing was that my scepticism of the Bolshevik's ability to remain in power had virtually evaporated. They had indeed coped with enormous difficulties! I was amazed and fascinated by the tremendous progress made by the new power in most fields in an unbelievably short period of a decade. One of the achievements was the eradication of hunger, which had in the past claimed tens of thousands of lives. I am proud to have contributed to that effort.

The pace of far-reaching transformations in the country kept speeding up. I realised from my personal experiences that the Soviet power was there to stay. What was behind that amazing success of the Bolsheviks, which was a total surprise to many people? The first factor, I think, was the strong will of Lenin above all to carry through ideas of the October Revolution, which had caught up with millions of people and led them onwards, and also the strength of the Soviet people themselves. Their

colossal enthusiasm, dedication and rock-hard resolve to carry through the Bolshevik plans and to bring their cause to the successful end amazed and thrilled me.

The second factor was the remarkably wise, flexible and consistent domestic and foreign policy of Lenin's government. I would single out here his brilliant solutions to the economic, nationalities and cultural problems, which was exceptionally important for the famine-stricken multinational and largely illiterate country. The Bolsheviks took some special approach, of which they alone were capable, to the critical tangles of Russia's development and effectively untied them. It is my profound conviction that, thinking in old ways, they would have never accomplished that task. And I see here immediate parallels with the present-day new political thinking in the Soviet Union.

. . . Having returned home in 1924, I was pleased to see that interest in the Soviet Union had grown considerably and that there was less mistrust and hostility towards it. The Bolsheviks' achievements had made a great impression. In the same year Denmark at long last recognised the USSR and established diplomatic relations with her (commercial relations had been initiated the year before).

Since that time I have been doing what I can to promote Danish-Soviet relations in various fields, including social, economic and cultural. I have long established a good relationship with some Danish Communists and cooperated with them for the World Congress although the Radical Left Party has no official contacts with the Communist Party. This cooperation has been especially active in the Danish National Association for Cooperation between Denmark and the Soviet Union, of which I have been President since 1974.

We worked together fruitfully above all in preparing and holding in Copenhagen the World Congress of the International Year of Peace, which I chaired. In the general view, the Congress was a success. We will carry on our plans. Every now and then I get a dressing-down for my work for peace but I am none the worse for it and have no intention of revising my endeavours.

¹ At the time Nansen, who had been appointed high commissioner for POW affairs by the League of Nations, directed an effort to bring relief to famine-stricken Russia. — *Ed.*

exchange of views, discussion

The October Revolution And Prospects For Social Change

International Symposium in Prague to Mark the 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution

Below is the second part of the *WMR* review of the symposium 'The October Revolution and the Main Problems of Our Age' (for the first part, 'The Communists' View of the World Today', see *WMR* No. 10, 1987).

The present instalment summarises the participants' views of the more important problems of the theory of revolution which are posed by contemporary practice to Marxist scholars. These are the transition of socialist society into a qualitatively new state; changes in the position of the working class and in conditions for its struggles in the capitalist world; and the eradication of relations of dependence among nations following the disintegration of the colonial system of imperialism.

THE October Revolution has generated social development tendencies which remain fundamental to the principal avenues of human progress. In stressing their viability and irreversible character, the participants in the symposium noted that the October Revolution had by no means made social progress automatic: it still is full of controversies.

The world socialist system, the greatest achievement of the October Revolution, has irreversibly asserted itself on Earth and socialism has become a model of the most just organisation of society in existence. The past 70 years have proved that the working class is the central figure of this age of ours and the principal motive force of social progress, although in the past few decades it has come against considerable difficulties in exercising the latter role in the capitalist world due to a range of objective and subjective factors. The process of the national emancipation of the peoples, born of the October Revolution, keeps gaining momentum, and motives for strengthening internationalist solidarity and broadening cooperation among the revolutionary, democratic and peace-loving forces remain as strong as ever.

A Process Revolutionary by Nature

The Marxist notion of socialism is being enriched substantially. What is needed is not just a realistic assessment of what socialism is like today and what it should be like tomorrow but, most important, a search for ways of resolving the problems which have arisen before socialist society at the close of the 20th century. The diverse processes in the world socialist system, first and foremost perestroika in the Soviet Union, have produced strong motivation for such theoretical quests. Analysing the international impact of these changes, **Janusz Kolczynski** (Poland) said that the CPSU's course of accelerating socio-economic progress and democratising society is introducing in the practice of the Communist movement and in the theory of Marxism-Leninism *a qualitatively new perception of the prospects of socialism and of ways of carrying on the revolutionary transformations initiated by the October Revolution.*

There arises in socialist society a need to improve and refine various aspects of the economic and socio-political structures. Yet the notion of socialist development as a predominately evolutionary process hampers an understanding of the fact that some systems of political and economic organisation under socialism, which have been effective in specific historical circumstances, may exhaust their potentialities. In that case they cannot be adapted through improvements, modifications and partial reorganisation to new social requirements. It is necessary to discard and replace them, in short, to carry out a *radical perestroika*. The simplistic identification of the principles of socialism with specific forms of socialist organisation resulted in the erroneous conclusion that any deviation from the habitual, time-tested models of development and administration that were widely used in international socialist practice was tantamount nearly to the abandonment of socialism and its ideological foundations.

That is why it is so important today to study the dialectics of revolution and evolution under socialism and to understand the dynamism of socialist construction as a process which is *revolutionary* in both form and nature. The participants in the symposium discussed some aspects of that theoretical problem.

Under socialism with its public ownership of the means of production and collective labour, revolution is also an instrument of change and transformation. As socialist society develops, the range of its tasks and goals does not remain unchanged. The social values of the working class, those which express the very nature of socialism, also keep being enriched as a result of new requirements. The practice of socialism therefore makes it imperative to produce a more comprehensive and profound evaluation of even those basic values.

The gravest menace to socialism, according to speakers, was posed by breaches of *its links with progress* in the social sphere, science, technology, the economy, political democracy or any other field. Phenomena of stagnation are bred, specifically, by adherence to ossified dogmas, old solutions no longer fitting the changed realities, and also by misunderstanding of or disregard for new problems. Socialist development, meanwhile, always presupposes orientation to everything

that is new and advanced, prompt corrective measures and a readiness and ability to overhaul the mechanisms and patterns of the basis and superstructure in accordance with the rightly understood social requirements. In the absence of all that, an accumulation of contradictions can hold back development and bring about a political conflict. Poland, for instance, had an especially painful experience of this sort in the 1980-1981 crisis.

Socialism is not something accomplished but a comprehensive process, **Konstantin Florea** (Romania) observed. Transformations which renew society go on and reach deeper and deeper at every stage of socialist construction, embracing the productive forces, relations of production and other social relations, administration and management and the way of life. Accordingly, *the concept of socialist revolution in the contemporary world needs to be enriched and updated*. It draws general conclusions from the experience of not only 'clashes on the barricades' but also, which is most important, of creating, developing and transforming the socio-economic, institutional (relating to forms of social organisation) and spiritual life.

It is essential to take a realistic view of shortcomings and translate critical attitudes into practical action in order to guarantee the continuity of the revolutionary process under socialism. Setbacks, difficulties and mistakes by no means negate the major achievements of socialist societies or belittle the superiority and immense potential of the new system. More, those pitfalls were caused not by 'too much' socialism but by violations of its principles and by disregard for the general law-governed regularities of concrete realities in specific countries. An underestimation of the role of agriculture in Romania's socialist economy, for instance, resulted in the backwardness of the agrarian sector, the speaker said. That drawback was eventually rectified and the Party launched a new agrarian revolution.

An assessment of the past and the attitude to it constitute a sensitive practical problem, **Georgy Shakhnazarov** (USSR), said. Democratisation, glasnost and strong criticism of shortcomings in Soviet society do not at all mean any denial of what has been achieved by socialism in the 70 years since the October Revolution. The hopes of the enemies of the new system that the Soviet Union will veer away from it in any way are illusory and unrealistic. The objective the USSR has now set out to reach is fully to realise the potentialities of precisely the socialist mode of production. That is why we talk of *the direct continuation of the cause of the October Revolution*.

That great revolution, participants in the symposium noted, became the most far-reaching ever upheaval in the entire system of social relations. The new socio-political foundation of society — the power of the working people and the public ownership of the means of production — has always been the unshakable basis of the development of socialism. Yet the cardinal task of renewing forms of social relations continues to be tackled now in basically new conditions and at a new level.

Perestroika in the USSR is directed at resolutely overcoming phenomena of stagnation, at scrapping the braking mechanisms and at building up an efficient and dependable system of acceleration. It is directed at revitalising the mass of the population. The revolutionary

character of that change reflects first and foremost the dialectics of the assertion of everything new and truly socialist and the removal of everything outdated that is in the way of social progress.

It is the *democratisation* of society and the state and the development of the socialist self-governance of the people that under socialism are a real factor and tool of revolutionary change. The economic structures of socialism and democracy are inseparable because at every stage of socialism the revolutionary process presupposes *the conscientious and responsible participation of the people in history-making*. It is a distinctive characteristic of the political system of socialism that the broadening of democracy and the extension of worker participation in management are linked to a rise in the leading role of the Communist Party.

The class content of the socialist state can manifest itself in full only in such a political form as democracy. Unless society grows more and more democratic, socialism becomes emaciated and the functioning of the state deformed. The Polish scholar singled out in the restructuring of Soviet society a few points which he considers to be *important to all the socialist countries*. These are a broader participation of the masses in decision-making and in running the affairs of the state and society; the provision of conditions for the comprehensive development of creative thought in science and culture; the assertion of social justice; and the broadening of opportunities for human self-expression.

An historical imperative and the principal need of the socialist countries at the current stage of world development, speakers noted, is to accelerate socio-economic development, through intensifying scientific and technological progress and to tap the extensive potentialities latent in the socialist system.

The comprehensive intensification of production as a base for the acceleration of socio-economic progress can be viewed as a general law-governed regularity of the development of socialist countries at the present stage, **Gombyn Miegombo** (Mongolia) observed. Although Mongolia still has opportunities for extensive growth, the question of development by intensive means is also on the agenda. The acceleration of the development of this type is necessitated, too, by the task of evening out the economic development levels of the national economies of the socialist community.

A new quality has now been imparted to the revolutionary process in Cuba, **Antonio Diaz Ruiz** (Cuba) said, by the need to tackle more efficiently the tasks of building socialism. Other factors contributing to this new quality are the rectification of mistakes and negative trends, such as emphasis on the economic mechanism to the exclusion of everything else, the cult of spontaneity, underestimation of political and ideological work.

People often ask what are the similarities and dissimilarities between the rectification process in Cuba and perestroika in the Soviet Union. The goals of the two processes are essentially the same: to accelerate and perfect the building of a new society and to find the shortest ways leading to it. The tasks, forms and methods of work at the same time differ due to different circumstances. Socialist Cuba is an economically underdeveloped country, which belongs to the Third World. So it serves as an example for

the peoples not only by an advanced social system but also by its ability to achieve a higher labour productivity and economic progress.

The difficulties of the political guidance of socialist processes are explained by the need to appreciate the specific practical tasks which arise in every transition to a new state of society, **Duong Ngoc Ky** (Vietnam) said. The Vietnamese revolution has been going on for almost 60 years now. Relying on 'the strength of the nation and the power of the epoch', it has won victories in battles with imperialist powers and led the country onto the road of independence and socialist development. At present Vietnam is in the first phase of the period of transition to socialism. The party is concentrating the people's efforts on stabilising the socio-economic situation and creating preconditions for socialist industrialisation. This goal involves measures to upgrade organisational work and evolve a new mechanism of management.

The socialist theory and practice of our century, **Konstantin Florea** said in his contribution to the discussion of the dialectics of the general and the specific, demand consideration for the diversity of concrete circumstances and differences between the stages, methods and forms of building a new society. Hence the rich gamut of specific views, reflecting the wealth and originality of the experience of world socialism, despite unanimity on the basic choice and a range of assessments and conclusions. That experience should be thoroughly studied, the lessons of all the positive and negative phenomena learned, and anything fitting the realities of the given country borrowed.

In **Georgy Shakhnazarov's** view, it is an important aspect of the new approach to relations within the world socialist system to show a far greater consistency than ever in respecting the demands of internationalism and to develop relations of absolute equality on the basis of the total independence of each country and the mutual responsibility of all for the common cause. Each of the fraternal parties is free to choose and sovereignly to decide on the way to follow. The Soviet Communists by no means impose on anyone the mode of actions they themselves use.

The importance of exchange of experience and of drawing general conclusions from it has grown at the present stage. The socialist countries can together, helping one another, reach new frontiers through developing integration, applying advanced forms of cooperation, using a system of measures to improve the CMEA activity and implementing their joint comprehensive programme for scientific and technological progress.

Reliance on the Working Class

The October Revolution and the subsequent social revolutions of the twentieth century, **Gerry Van Houten** (Canada) among others pointed out, have confirmed that the Communists are right in relying on the working class as the main force of transforming capitalist into socialist society. This orientation in their actions offers *the only possible prospect* for their efforts in the class battles of today as well.

The participants in the discussion at the same time drew attention to the need to explore the latest tendencies in the evolution of the working class and to find practical ways for asserting its leading role in the struggle for

peace and social progress. The working class is at a crossroads today. Far-reaching shifts are taking place in society under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution, the internationalisation of production and the escalation of crisis phenomena in state-monopoly capitalism. The social and legal status of the working people is dramatically worsening. Moreover, changes in the midst of the working class as a result of monopolistic policies are escalating into *a mass plight*, which, like an avalanche, is engulfing tens of millions of the working people.

One contradiction that strikes the eye, **Santiago Alvarez** (Spain) pointed out, is that although capitalist development leads to the numerical growth of the working class, it first and foremost escalates unemployment, and it is the chief one of the new tendencies reflecting the deepening antagonism between labour and capital. Altogether three million people, or 23 per cent of the employable population, are out of work in Spain today. The total unemployment in the OECD countries stands at 31 million.

The monopolies' strategy leads to the formation of the fearsome model of 'a society of two-thirds', in which capital dooms one-third of the employable population to being outcasts and living on charity. The stratification of the working class is growing due to the widening gap in skills, educational levels and incomes.

Discrimination in production and society as a whole has an especially strong effect on women, immigrant workers and youth. Another circumstance is likely to play a substantial part in the longer term: shifts in material production hit out at *the core of the working class* and the share of workers employed in the conventional industries, associated with factory smokestacks, is shrinking. The causes of the decline of the old industrial centres lie not only in the introduction of new technologies, materials and energy sources but also in the export of materials- and labour-intensive lines of production from the industrialised countries to the regions with cheaper labour markets.

Yet even in the present situation the core of the working class, consisting of the workforce of the largest plants, remains strong, **Richard Kumpf** (FRG) noted. Altogether 40 per cent of the industrial workforce of West Germany are employed in plants with more than 1,000 workers each. It is that part of the working class that is displaying an increased level of class awareness and a high sense of discipline in the struggle for their rights. The question of the prospects of the working class movement is especially acute in class conflicts today. Either the working class together with the movements which are in solidarity with it will counter the policy pursued by the corporations and thus create preconditions for successful struggle for its ideals, or it will suffer a bad economic defeat that will cripple the working class movement.

The Communists tell the working people that the capitalist system is unable to guarantee social progress along with advances in science and technology. *The way out is offered by struggle for a socio-economic policy which in the long term leads to a socialist perspective.* Here the Communists' slogans should not be abstract and divorced from the real political situation and the tasks of the current strategic period, and the October Revolution taught us an important lesson in this respect.

A discussion is under way in the German Communist Party on the character of the party and its role in society, the speaker continued. Even more important tasks have arisen before us in the past decades. More and more people are becoming involved in political movements under the impact of the negative factors inherent in the social system of the FRG. Peace actions have reached an unprecedented scope. The vigorous participation of the working class and its parties and trade unions is decisive to their success. The German Communist Party stands for a democratic alternative in the development of the country and opposes the drift to the right in politics. It is working for the consolidation of all the forces to the left of CDU/CSU. Such an alliance is far broader than a 'left bloc' because it unites all the forces opposed to the rightist tendency.

Jan Debrouwere (Belgium) drew attention to the changing conditions of class struggle in the countries of Western Europe as a result of its falling to an ever growing extent under the military-economic sway of the USA. The militarisation of a large part of the economy, education and mass media in Western Europe involves the degradation of culture, including political culture, the gradual abandonment of liberal parliamentary democracy and an increasing orientation towards authoritarian centralism.

The non-conventional Greens and anti-nuke movements are relatively new phenomena in West European politics. They are representative of the emergent mass actions of those strata which have been born of structural changes in capitalist production and whose cultural and social ambitions have been neglected. Left and working class ideologists have not yet adequately studied and understood those movements. The Communists have taken serious efforts to overcome alienation. However, the non-conventional movements still are mistrustful of the left and the participants in them sometimes succumb to anti-socialist manipulation.

The non-conventional movements have much influence, but they seem to be past their heyday and it cannot be ruled out that they will eventually grow depoliticised, lose their broad base, wane and recede into the background. Hence the need for the Communists to find arguments, language and alternatives that would be understandable and acceptable to those who are now pinning their hopes on the non-conventional movements.

Henrik Bang (Denmark) dwelt on the growing democratic character of the peace efforts. Public opinion in the capitalist countries is shifting towards nuclear disarmament and the substitution of the policy of dialogue and mutual security for that of strength. The doctrine of nuclear deterrence and the balance of terror is being called into question. More and more people urge reductions in military spending and suggest that the money released by cuts in military budgets be used to resolve problems of unemployment and education and to meet social and ecological needs.

Militarist thinking is coming under ever stronger criticism. However, the coalition of broad public forces that would be capable of bringing home the demand for peaceful development is still in the process of formation. Helping in the establishment of such a coalition, the Communists explain that the peaceful development of the country calls for the solution of democratic problems related to the restriction and subversion of the

influence of the militarist circles. This circumstance is reflected in the Communists' proposals for 'new thinking in Danish security policy', aimed at democratising national foreign policy and achieving more openness in defence matters. The main thing is to rely on the nascent turnaround in the public mood to make people act.

Speakers noted that the influence of the ideas of the October Revolution on the working class and popular movements today is inseparable from changes in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and from their consistent peace initiatives.

Tendency Towards Cohesion

The October Revolution drew the Communists' attention to their duty to give assistance to the national liberation movement in colonies and dependencies. It taught the peoples to put an end to the division of nations into the oppressors and the oppressed. The crushing of the colonial empires was an historic achievement of the peoples on the road towards resolving that problem. Yet the world economic order assembled by imperialism has survived, enabling a handful of developed capitalist countries to exploit and oppress the developing nations.¹ The conflict of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America with imperialism has been dragging on in new forms since the elimination of the colonial system. Dozens of sovereign states are participating in the non-aligned movement. They have become an effective factor of world politics, opposing neocolonialism and imperialist aggression and working for peace and a just international order.

Since the peoples gained political independence, **Vasudevan Nair** (India) said, they have had broader opportunities for *cooperation with socialist society*. Relations between India and the Soviet Union can be considered a model of peaceful coexistence. They are also a concrete manifestation of the alliance of socialism and the forces of national liberation, the latter including the patriotic strata of the local bourgeoisie and government. These relations show that there is a sound basis for cooperation between socialist countries and emergent states following the capitalist road of development. That basis consists of their shared interest in peace and international security, the contradiction between the nations' striving for independent development and the policy of imperialist expansion, and an understanding of the fact that relations with socialist countries help promote political and economic independence.

The national liberation processes in the world today are very diverse, **Orlando Millas** (Chile) noted. A number of former colonies and dependencies have chosen the socialist road. Socialism has taken a hold in Latin America, too, where the prestige and influence of the glorious Cuban revolution keep growing. New popular revolutions, like the Sandinist revolution in Nicaragua, are making progress. There are 'revolutionary democracy' and 'national democracy' among controversial social and liberatory phenomena, and all of them should be explored in detail.

There is an extremely diverse and volatile gamut of situations differing from one another by the intensity of the dependent countries' conflict with

imperialism. But all their differences notwithstanding, they cooperate at international forums and in regional organisations because they have common problems in the struggle against neocolonialism and US neoglobalist policy. Coordinated action is a progressive tendency and the Communists support it.

Jamie Barrios (El Salvador) asked: How are the joint international actions and initiatives of Third World countries related to the revolutionary process of liberation? Though a factor of countering US imperialist policy, is not the Contadora Group performing the part of 'firefighters' too? There is opinion among the liberation forces that capitalist leaders, seeing their neighbour with his beard singed, scurry to moisten their own.

The steps taken by the Contadora Group naturally bear an imprint of the desire to defuse the explosive situation, **Francisco Gamboa** (Costa Rica) said. But equally important *is the trend to protect the interests of nations as such that underlies the Third World countries' collective efforts to counter imperialism.* The growth of that tendency is creating entirely new conditions for the continuation of the revolutionary process of liberation and for relations of solidarity.

The forms and concrete manifestations of solidarity are, of course, different from what they were at the time of the struggle against colonialism and for political independence. The working class movement for its part supports the peace initiatives of the non-aligned movement, a new world economic order and development for disarmament and opposes the encroachments of imperialism on the sovereign rights of the peoples.

Discussing the prospects of the national liberation struggle, **Rafic Samhoun** (Lebanon) noted that the participation of the working class in it broadened its social content. Allied with the farmers, the small and middle bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intelligentsia, the working class can establish a democratic form of government, one capable of achieving genuine economic independence and overcoming economic backwardness.

Upon winning independence, **Donald Ramotar** (Guyana) noted, the Communists come face to face with the tasks of organising class struggle for steering society onto the road of socialist orientation as well as with those of countering neocolonialism. This choice of the road of development still is on the agenda in a number of countries where capitalism is taking root. Preconditions for it can be created through the democratisation of the political life. Hence the great responsibility of the Communists for the destinies of the social development of their peoples.

Non-Marxist ideas of socialism also have a role to play in the choice of the road of social development, **Magdi Kamal** (Egypt) said. In his view, a number of stages can be identified in the evolution of those ideas. In Egypt there first arose the question of attaining national independence through a sociopolitical revolution. Then emphasis shifted onto the possibilities of progress and of ways of achieving social justice. The subsequent abandonment of the progressive course entailed the prevalence of reactionary ideas in non-Marxist socialism: socialist demagoguery was used as a disguise for the dominance of parasitic strata and Big Business in society and for collaboration with imperialism. The ideologists of the

present regime now reduce what they call 'Egypt's experience of socialism' only to shortcomings in a bid to discredit socialism. The Communists explain in this situation why social justice has not been achieved, and simultaneously try to cooperate in politics with groups embracing non-Marxist socialist ideas.

The political trends representative of such ideas, **Ali Malki** (Algeria) pointed out, are characterised by mistrust of the working class and the Communists. At the same time they stand in opposition to the bourgeois and pro-bourgeois forces which are openly hostile to any socialist ideology, including scientific socialism. One aspect or the other of that contradiction gains prominence at various stages of the liberation movement and should be recognised in specific circumstances.

The speakers stressed the immense viability of the internationalist traditions of the October Revolution. International solidarity has now become richer and more complex and diversified. It is developing at a time when the antagonism between the aggressive policy of imperialism and the interests of the whole of humanity keeps aggravating. The question of interaction as an essential factor of peace and social progress has arisen for the progressive forces to its full height, which was noted by, among others, **Jan Nemoudry** (World Federation of Trade Unions), **May Fisher** (Women's International Democratic Federation), **Luis Valenta** (World Federation of Democratic Youth), **Chitta Biswas** (Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation) and **Bedřich Švestka** (World Peace Council). They noted the broad responses evoked from the democratic public by the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution and the role it played in promoting solidarity in the struggle for the rights of the working people, women, youth, for the rights of nations, and for the paramount right of man to live in a safe world.

The ideas of the October Revolution, creatively applied and developed by the fraternal parties in today's conditions, **Jerzy Waszczuk** (Poland) said in conclusion, have universal and everlasting significance. Their immediate extension is the philosophy of Soviet perestroika, which has given a fresh impetus to the theoretical explorations and innovative actions in the international communist movement and to the realisation of its ideological and political potentialities. Theory is turning to face the realities of the age, the needs of the practice of building socialism and the requirements of the class and national liberation struggles. The Communists consider it their paramount and most urgent task to save humanity from the danger of nuclear annihilation. The fraternal parties tend to pay more and more attention to other global problems as well. The study of those problems helps substantiate the communists' general mission in human history, reveals the profoundly humanitarian character of Marxism-Leninism and assists in drawing up concrete programmes for cooperation among the Communist and working class parties and for the broad interaction of various political forces and social movements. To be a match for the present-day needs, *WMR* should more often pose and explore pointed issues, involving in discussion not only Marxists but also representatives of the non-Communist left and democratic forces, and not shun disputes, polemics and clashes of views.

¹ See the first part of the review (WMR No. 10, 1987) for the participants' views of the aggravation of the contradictions between the 'poor' and the 'rich' countries. — *Ed.*

for universal security

War Is Alien To The Working Class

Herbert Mies — Chairman, German
Communist Party (GCP)

THE message of the CPSU Central Committee to the Soviet people on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution was not addressed to one people only. It is a message to all workers, all nations, all Communists. "The 70th anniversary of the October Revolution," it says, "comes at a time when the very human race is faced with the problem of survival. The future of the world — a world shared and interdependent, as well as conflicting — is being determined now. The planet can and must be saved from the threat of nuclear war. Life in security, independence and progress can and must be ensured for all nations. Not everything here depends on us — on the USSR, on socialism. But what does depend, we shall accomplish and do so in full."

The CPSU and the Soviet government pursue a consistently peace-loving policy in international affairs. Their new way of political thinking prompts them to approach world problems realistically and flexibly. They are working steadily to ensure that, entering the third millenium, the world's nations lay down their nuclear arms, bar weapons from outer space and eventually eliminate them on Earth. These efforts really evoke the spirit of Red October, of the days that shook the world.

The October Revolution developed and triumphed in the struggle against an imperialist war. In the summer of 1915 Lenin wrote that "an end to wars, peace among the nations, the cessation of pillaging and violence —

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such is our ideal."¹ Two years later he added: "The war has created such an immense crisis, has so strained the material and moral forces of the people, has dealt such blows at the entire modern social organisation that humanity must now choose between perishing or entrusting its fate to the most revolutionary class for the swiftest and most radical transition to a superior mode of production . . . Perish or forge full steam ahead. That is the alternative put by history."²

The devastating capacity of today's weapons of mass destruction has put the world's peoples at the centre of a dramatic confrontation over issues of war and peace. A nuclear war will give mankind no chance of surviving, whether under socialism or capitalism. Today, the choice is between surviving or perishing together. That is why the Communists of the Federal Republic keep returning to these quotations from Lenin, applying their trust and logic to our time. Our conclusion is that nothing is more *important to us than peace, than the task of preventing German soil from ever again becoming a breeding ground of war but will instead be sending forth impulses of peace.*

Born of the October Revolution, the socialist system immediately elevated the struggle for peace to the rank of an extremely important foreign policy principle. A popular striving for peace and a struggle for its establishment were a motive force behind the emergence of the first socialist state and, later, of the world socialist system. The entire development of this new society, initially in a single country and subsequently within a community of states, has proven that socialism and peace are indivisible.

The newborn Soviet government came onto the international scene with a Decree on Peace. The birth of socialist society thus revolutionised the essence of international relations too. Socialism inspired and promoted relations of a new type, based on the principles of peaceful coexistence. From Lenin's historic Decree on Peace to the programme for the building of a nuclear-free world by the year 2000, to the most recent disarmament proposals of the USSR and all countries of the socialist community, not only continuity but also a constant search for new and practicable avenues have been typical of the policy pursued by socialism.

Today, this policy is marked by a new way of political thinking and action aimed at safeguarding peace. Such is the essence of the initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries of the Warsaw Treaty alliance, initiatives that are so clear and close to the world's nations. Such are the reasons for the respect Mikhail Gorbachov enjoys on the international scene. Such is the rationale of the dialogue of reason and realism representatives of the GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other socialist nations are conducting with political and civic activists in our country.

The policy of new thinking and action, of searching for new and realistic ways towards disarmament has acquired an additional measure of credibility with the Soviet Union and the United States reaching *agreement in principle on an accord to eliminate medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles.* This same policy of reason, and realism in the GDR's and other socialist countries' relations with the FRG — highlighted by the visit of

Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SUPG Central Committee, to our country — strengthened our faith in the peace-loving ideals of socialism and made it easier to translate them into reality. The unity of goals, statements and practical action explains the appeal inherent in the foreign policy of the socialist countries, of the communist parties since the October Revolution.

The Responsibility of the West German Communists

Nothing has been more forcefully reminding us West German Communists of our responsibility for contributing to the cause of peace than the incontrovertible historical fact that the two biggest wars in human history were launched from German soil. The unprecedented atrocities of the Nazi aggressors, genocide and concentration camps were a feature of World War II which threatened to extinguish human reason.

This grim lesson of history and the imperative demand that now, on the eve of the third millenium, mankind, including the working class and the people of our country, heed the voice of reason encourage us — and, to be more precise, make it incumbent on us — to act with a special sense of responsibility.

For all their devastating consequences that affected many nations, the wars of the past never raised the issue of civilisation's survival. (This is not meant to exonerate those who launched wars.) However, today there exist nuclear weapons, their delivery means that can cover any distance, as well as other weapons of mass destruction, and the Federal Republic is now a major armoury in which they are stockpiled. This means that a war launched from German soil would inevitably destroy all life on Earth. This dimension of our special responsibility for the solution of the most important global problem, that of ensuring peace, and of other issues of our new age in which an interdependent and largely integral world is taking shape, has prompted us to undertake a *reappraisal of many views and attitudes*. That became particularly imperative in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the deployment of the Pershing II missiles, first-strike weapons capable of reaching Moscow within minutes, turned West German territory into a launching pad of a totally destructive nuclear war.

Our working class party started this reappraisal to step up the struggle for human survival, a task transcending the boundaries of classes or political parties. Aware of the popular concern over and fear of destruction in a nuclear inferno, we were striving to *expand the ranks of the peace forces as much as possible*, to go beyond the confines of the traditional peace movement, to promote relations of new partnership among all these quarters, and to overcome the division into the leaders and the led. At the same time, we upheld the special responsibility of the working class for the maintenance of peace, and took into account the constructive contribution all strata and classes, up to and including the bourgeoisie, could make to the cause.

That was one of the factors behind the emergence of a broad peace movement in the Federal Republic, a movement that is now a *powerful force in our body politic*. It is increasingly coming to embody the unity in

diversity of the working class movement and of the peace current in which the working class and its political organisation and trade unions have adopted a new approach to their responsibility for the preservation of peace.

Anniversaries of the October Revolution have always encouraged us German Communists to reflect on the role the working class and the labour movement of our country should play in tackling the vitally important problems of our age. This is connected with the need to have a clearer picture of our country's policy in international affairs.

The Role of the Federal Republic of Germany

It is now perfectly obvious that, given its considerable economic, political, military and ideological weight, the Federal Republic plays an important role in European and world affairs. While not a power of global rank, it is clearly a power of European standing, and it exerts substantial influence on the way the world's economic, political and strategic issues are dealt with. This is borne out by the role the Federal Republic has played in the attainment of the Soviet-US accord on medium-range missiles; by its involvement in the drafting of NATO's response to the far-reaching proposals of the Warsaw Treaty countries, and by the evolution of the West German attitude to the settlement of the conflict in the Persian Gulf and to the situation in Chile, Central America and Southern Africa. The new dimensions the role of our country has acquired are also confirmed by the position it holds in the world economy and trade, by its impact on international-economic competition and on the acceleration of the scientific and technological revolution, and by its contribution to the development of concepts regulating the social consequences of this revolution.

Situated geographically along the line dividing the two world systems, the Federal Republic cannot afford to ignore the changes that have occurred in the alignment of forces. More than other imperialist countries, it must adapt itself to these changes. At the same time, it is a major ally of the United States, although it admits that some of its distinctive security, economic and political interests differ from those of the US.

All these new features lead us to conclude that the impact of the Federal Republic on a widening range of international issues is growing. Consequently, so is the responsibility of the peace-loving and democratic forces, primarily us Communists, for what is happening in our country. We must be aware of this and shape our activities accordingly.

As far as the foremost issue is concerned — whether to have disarmament or an escalation of confrontation — the political forces in the Federal Republic are grouped in the following arrangement. There is the 'steel helmet faction', the CDU/CSU and the military-industrial complex behind them. They are building up their influence on foreign and domestic policies and spurring on an unprecedented conventional arms race despite the fact that, again and again, they encounter resistance both in parliament and during elections. Even in the government, they are a distinct minority: there is a relatively large group of politicians there who are aware of the need to adapt to the changes in the alignment of forces both on the

international scene and at home (although they refuse to abandon the old 'positions of strength' policy — for example, they cling to the allegedly 'open German question'). Confronting these forces is the overwhelming majority of the people: they pin their hopes for the future on peaceful co-existence and disarmament. This majority comprises a broad spectrum of forces — from the working class movement, the peace movement and the Greens to part of the Free Democratic Party membership and even some groups of the bourgeoisie.³

Hence the conclusion that *our political activities should be aimed at ousting the 'steel helmet faction' with its reactionary foreign and domestic policies*. All this shows that we were right in choosing the slogan of our Eighth Congress — 'For a New Policy, a Nuclear-Free World, and Jobs for All' — and in drawing up a concept of a new policy we believe the Federal Republic should pursue. This policy should be aimed at preventing war and achieving disarmament. It should be based on our country's involvement in a vigorous process of peaceful coexistence, renunciation of old military doctrines, and a new partnership in matters of security. It should be an anti-militarist policy backed by widespread popular participation in decision-making on the cardinal issues of our age.

Although the alignment of forces is now more favourable to the conduct of such a policy (and to a vigorous policy designed to ensure employment and the observance of democratic and personal rights and freedoms), the convergence of different currents into a single mainstream is yet to meet the demands of the day. However, *fresh opportunities* are opening up for unity between the peace champions and the working class movement, and new conditions are emerging for enhancing the role of the GCP as an indispensable unifying factor in the political realignment of forces. In the course of these developments, the party can and must grow stronger.

The Day of Anti-War Action which has come to be traditionally marked on September 1 can be cited as an example of the way the working class of the Federal Republic takes part in the struggle over issues of war and peace. This year the Day of Action demonstrated that the entire working class movement — social democratic, communist and most of the Christian-oriented workers — was unanimous on the most important problem, that is, on the need to be active in the struggle for disarmament, for peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, and for stronger anti-militarist and anti-fascist trends. The slogan 'Disarm Now, Work for Security, Prevent War from Ever Breaking Out' was linked with the demand for the Federal Republic to give up Pershing IA missiles unconditionally. Besides, the Day of Anti-War Action has confirmed that the German Trade Union Association (GTUA) have, together with other peace champions, become much more active in defending peace.

This, as well as the recent steps jointly taken by the social democratic labour movement and the Communists from the socialist countries — steps rooted in a common commitment to peace — prove that *all sections of the West German working class movement are becoming increasingly aware of their special responsibility and are acting accordingly*. This was mirrored in 'Ideological Debate and Mutual Security', a remarkable document adopted by the SDP and SUPG,⁴ and in the joint proposals on

disarmament put forward by the West German Social Democrats together with the CPSU, the PUWP and other ruling parties of socialist countries.

These steps, particularly the impressive degree of unanimity achieved for the first time between the Social Democrats of the Federal Republic and the Communists of the socialist countries (and of course, the West German Communists) on issues of the struggle for peace and partnership in security, as well as the fact of their cooperation despite the contradictory nature of relations between them are a novel accomplishment, a result of joint action. The GCP, which is active in the peace movement, has also contributed to this.

The Working Class Movement as an Integral Part of the Peace Movement

We note that a genuine understanding of the consequences of the world wars launched by German imperialism is awakening and the rich traditions of the struggle for peace are reviving in some sections of our country's working class movement. This is helping to noticeably *politicise the working class movement* and to heighten its attention to issues of war and peace.

As a vehicle of social progress, the working class has an objective and unequivocal stake in the preservation of peace; this is why the threat of mankind's self-destruction is a particular challenge to it. Besides, the working class is the best-organised force for peace; moreover, at military factories it comes into contact with those who profit from the arms race.

Social practice indicates that the objective tasks and the special responsibility of the working class in the struggle for peace are realised in a quite contradictory way. Recalling the history of the peace movement in the Federal Republic, one cannot say that the working class participated in it from the outset as an organised and organising force. Some sections of the working class movement such as the GCP provided the necessary initiative and rallying momentum in the mass protests against the missiles. But the trade unions held back at first. This was connected with the fact that under Chancellor Schmidt, the SDPG supported the NATO decisions on the deployment of the missiles in our country and kept pushing these plans through. The anti-missile opposition which existed among the Social Democrats and in the trade unions began to gain strength as the peace movement grew, as thousands of action groups for peace sprang up in urban and rural areas. This movement helped a new approach to take hold gradually in the SDPG and in the trade unions. As recently as 1981 the presence of a metalworkers' union leader at a big peace rally provoked a heated debate. Today, participation of GTUA officials and leading Social Democrats, including SDPG Chairman Hans-Joachim Vogel, in such events is a usual thing.

The ruling quarters try to prevent the issue of peace from being raised on the shop floor. They use various demagogic tricks to try and convince the working class that disarmament will threaten jobs. The unemployed actually number 3.5 million in the Federal Republic (and hired labour totals some 22.6 million people), so the impact of this argument should not be underrated. A few years ago the tycoons of the military industry

succeeded in winning factory industrial councils over to their side, demanding that the Federal government award more military contracts and lift a number of restrictions on arms exports. On the whole, this situation has now changed. Awareness has grown in the metalworkers' union and in the GTUA that arms production cannot be justified by references to the need to protect jobs. The broad scope of the anti-missile struggle gradually brought about a major change in the thinking of the active part of the working class. Following the establishment of local *peace action groups*, similar associations were set up at more than 200 industrial enterprises in our country during the early 1980s. On the one hand, this was a reflection of the growing consciousness of wage and salary earners in matters of the struggle for peace and, on the other, it was a way of criticising the trade unions for holding back. As a rule, factory action groups act as informal associations alongside the unions, without competing with the latter. These groups have already held several nationwide conferences, also attended by high-ranking union officials.

Workers' study circles dealing with matters of conversion and sponsored by the metal workers' union are another form of the struggle for peace and disarmament at factories. Workers holding jobs in the military industry are jointly studying the possibilities of converting their factories to civilian production. Capitalist pursuit of profit has so far prevented the implementation of the available projects: consistent exercise of the right of workers to take part in decision-making has not been assured. Nevertheless, these efforts show what opportunities would open if industrial and office workers could themselves determine the character of their industry.

Factory peace action groups and union-organised workers' conversion study circles have played a positive role in mobilising the working class for the peace struggle and in raising the level of its political consciousness. They and certain other forces can claim credit for the fact that the unions no longer keep aloof from the peace movement but are active in it. They had a role in the 1983 decision of the GTUA to call for a five-minute nationwide work stoppage to highlight the peoples' commitment to peace and to protest against the missile deployment. Naturally, much more could have been expected than a single such expression of the unions' opposition to the arms build-up policy. One should note, however, that the GTUA call for this action, first, had no precedent in the history of the Federal Republic and, second, focused the attention of millions of wage and salary earners on issues of war and peace. Protest against the deployment of the missiles was also expressed when a vote was taken at bigger factories, particularly by young vocational trainees who, in a symbolic gesture, declared their workshops nuclear-free zones.

I think I have every reason to say that *the organised part of the working class, the labour movement in the Federal Republic is coping increasingly with the tasks of our time*. And a new way of thinking and action are the order of the day.

Still, we should be sober in our assessment of the progress achieved. It is too early to say that the main demands for disarmament and conversion come from the shop floor. But opportunities for this have improved, borne

out by the position taken by the 13th Federal Congress of the GTUA in May 1986 which called for a constructive response to Mikhail Gorbachov's proposals on eliminating nuclear weapons by the year 2000. The congress also condemned the US plans to militarise outer space. A statement adopted at the congress noted that "creation or preservation of jobs cannot be accepted as an argument for increased military production of greater arms exports. The jobs of the relevant category of workers can be assured in a different way. In this connection the Federal Congress again demands that preparations be made for industrial conversion. The Congress hails and supports the workers' study circles comprising the industrial council members and the deputies who aim to reduce their factories' dependence on military contracts by taking up new lines of products."

Certain elements of a new way of thinking have indeed taken root in the trade unions, leading them to adopt a new attitude to military production. Our party is working to promote such change. At first, it was primarily the Communists and the Social Democrats favouring joint action who waged the struggle to have the working class movement send forth more powerful impulses for developing the peace struggle and changing the alignment of the social forces. Today, more people advocate this idea.

Can the Federal Republic Become a Factor for Peace?

The changes occurring in the world situation prompt the GCP to consider the question of *how the Communists should change their political contribution to the struggle for peace and make it more effective*. Proceeding from the proposal on the elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of the century, this is how we see our task: the new dimension the issues of war and peace have acquired demands that we examine the opportunities for the creation of non-aggressive and unmilitarised economic and social structures in the Federal Republic even before the transition to socialism which is a long-term historical prospect. In other words, if, given the present international situation, we are to fight for making our country a reliable partner in the maintenance of peace while the capitalist system is retained, we must identify the economic, political and ideological basis essential for imparting to a leading West European NATO ally of the United States a quality which can be described as 'peace capacity', that is, a capacity to realise its peace potential.

We see the theoretical starting point in Lenin's idea about *radically different interests existing within the imperialist camp*. Lenin distinguished between the 'war party' of the imperialist bourgeoisie and its 'pacifist faction', tracing the origins of these groups above all to the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. His ideas formed the basis of the Rapallo Treaty which embodied the policy of peaceful coexistence. Proceeding from Lenin's concept we conclude that we must ascertain which interests of the big bourgeoisie are connected with military production, which are at the opposite end, and how they can be influenced.

With this end in view one should begin by considering the situation in West German industry and the place of military production in it.

Our industry is highly export-oriented. That was a major reason why the Federal Republic was unhappy about the US-advocated restrictions on

trade with the socialist countries. This is an important difference between West European and US interests.

The government's neoconservative policy has increased the relative weight of the military-industrial complex. The share of the workers whose jobs involve only weapons production relative to the total number of wage and salary earners employed in arms manufacture (about 300,000) is decreasing because the contemporary military industry in the Federal Republic is integrated into the country's economic structure to a much greater degree than in the past and much more firmly than in the United States, France or Great Britain. This industry is dominated by the MBB and Daimler-Benz concerns which receive about one-third of all military contracts. While MBB is oriented mostly on arms production (some 60 per cent), this figure is less than ten per cent at Daimler-Benz.

Both concerns are connected with the German Bank which controls and directs most of West German arms manufacture. This industry is not concentrated in the hands of a single monopolist group but is a *part* of big capital. We believe that this makes for both positive and negative aspects. One of the latter is that many concerns have a direct stake in payments from the military budget. This spurs on the arms race and acts against those who advocate disarmament. On the other hand, the positive aspect is that most of the corporate arms manufacturers do not depend exclusively or predominantly on military products. It follows that economic interest in arms manufacture is only *one of many motives* for their activities.

This assessment of the situation makes it possible to identify *both economic and political 'fulcrums' for long-term conversion*. Both are linked directly with efforts to consolidate the relations existing between the two world systems. This will add strength to the striving for disarmament and simultaneously draw the attention of monopoly groups to the opportunities for a dynamic development of economic ties with the socialist countries. *In economic terms therefore, the Federal Republic has a good chance of becoming a non-aggressive country even if it retains a firm political position within NATO, of realising its peace capacity.*

One should also note the growth of West German military spending, although its growth rates are not as high as they were planned. Besides, defence expenditures are only one of the aspects of budgetary policy. Different ministries constantly vie for the few remaining resources, thus offering a chance for bringing political pressure to bear on the shaping of budgetary policy, and that includes military outlays.

Another group of related contradictory interests of the bourgeoisie is connected with the extremely adverse overall effects of military spending on the state of the economy. The United States offers a graphic example. The close dependence of research and development resources on military contracts does nothing to make the US economy more competitive on world markets.

Using the contradictions between different interests within the state-monopoly system in order to pave the way for a policy of disarmament and détente is a foremost task of the working class movement. For this effort to succeed, pressure on the ruling quarters should be built up. Special

interests of the working class lead it to increasingly press the government and the monopolies for disarmament and conversion.

Impetus to the Struggle for Peace

We are facing the question of human survival. In this connection, *all class barriers are disappearing in the struggle for peace*. At the same time, the working class and the salary earning middle strata, first and foremost professionals specialising in science and technology, are feeling the effects of the arms race more acutely than others.

One should begin by singling out the *social* aspect of the problem, something the working class is becoming increasingly aware of, as it is clear from its slogans — 'Jobs, Not Missiles' and 'Education, Not Bombs'. These have also been taken up by the peace activists. We also note another new point in the arguments advanced by the trade unions. 'Disarmament for Development' is their slogan which came from the country of the October Revolution and became firmly established in the West German peace movement — not because it originated in the Soviet Union but simply because it is consonant with popular experience and with demands for the soonest possible solution of mounting global problems.

A sizable part of the working class and of the intellectuals employed in science and technology believe that other issues related to military production are also coming to the fore. For example, what is the consumer value of such products? Discussions of questions of this kind gave rise to the workers' conversion study circles. In some cases, shipbuilding workers refused to lay down naval vessels, and printers turned down literature that extolled war. Ever more wage and salary earners want to have a say in determining what kind of goods they are to manufacture, raising the issue of their products' social usefulness and environmental safety. Some intellectuals employed in science and technology refuse to take part in military research and development, and they use their expertise to assist the working class and the struggle for peace.

This kind of action *increases the spectrum of the interests underlying a genuinely working class policy in the struggle for peace and disarmament*; such action should be promoted. At the same time, it enhances politicisation of the working people and encourages an in-depth examination of the government's security policy and of the disarmament concepts that are advanced.

From the outset, the working class has fully proven its pioneering role in the defence of peace. Naturally, not everything has been smooth here because the imperialist bourgeoisie sometimes succeeds in winning sections of the working class over to its side with the help of 'defend your country' demagoguery. Still, a struggle against war has been constantly present throughout the history of the working class movement. That was and is the case in many countries, particularly where working class policy has become state policy. The impulses generated by the working class of the socialist countries have for many years been making the imperialist forces and governments adopt a more peaceful stand. *The 'new way of thinking' and the 'coalition of reason' are notions that embody the essence of the*

concept which calls for the involvement of all potential allies in the struggle for durable peace, including the broadest possible sections of the big bourgeoisie.

Working to strengthen peace and achieve disarmament, the West German labour movement responds to and acts in accordance with new and substantive demands.

First, we must keep stressing that peace is possible only in conditions of peaceful coexistence and cooperation with the socialist countries. This implies closer economic ties and a chance for our working people and labour activists to meet with workers from the socialist countries, so that they could know and understand each other better. The working class of the Federal Republic has developed rich traditions of solidarity and friendship with the Soviet Union. From its birth, Soviet Russia embodied the hopes of the working class throughout the world for a life without fear, poverty or wars, for social progress. When the imperialist powers invaded the first socialist state, our proletariat launched large-scale solidarity actions under the slogan 'Hands Off Soviet Russia'. Today we regard East-West cooperation, understanding and friendship as the main condition essential to durable peace.

Second, we should promote the understanding that peace can be reliably guaranteed only if anti-imperialist solidarity continues to develop. When people realise that hotbeds of tensions in Central America, Southern Africa, the Middle East and other regions are a potential source of rapidly spreading conflicts, that an end must be put to the forays of irresponsible gamblers and fascist dictators everywhere, then anti-imperialist solidarity will become an imperative of the times. The interests of durable peace demand that development in all parts of the world take a civilised course, and this is a factor behind the breakthrough in popular thinking. For example, the presence of delegates from Nicaragua or El Salvador at peace rallies in our country works to prove the point that the struggle for peace is linked with the struggle for social progress.

Finally, the *third* factor essential to a successful struggle for peace concerns *resistance to revanchism, anti-communism or any attempts to revive neo-Nazism and fascism.* The working class and its movement in the Federal Republic should not only pay attention to this organic element of the struggle for peace but also support it by tangible action. This is all the more important because many alarming new developments and phenomena remind us of the ever topical behests of the antifascist resistance movement — 'Never Again To War', 'Never Again To Fascism'.

In the 70th year since the October Revolution the peace efforts of the working class movement in our country and in the world are receiving numerous and powerful impulses and invigorating ideas from the Soviet Union which add to our strength. This influx of new energy should be channelled into the peace struggle in the Federal Republic so that we could discharge our international responsibility.

¹ V. I. Lenin; *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 293.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 25, pp. 363-364.

³ Such is the alignment of forces over the issue of peace and disarmament. The picture is totally different if one considers problems of domestic policy, first and foremost social questions.

⁴ For detail, see article 'Ideological Debate and Mutual Security' by Roland Bauer in this issue.

New Dimensions of Responsibility

The Arms Race Is Incompatible With Development

Ajoy Roy — Central Committee
Secretary, Communist Party of
Bangladesh (CPB)

THE threat of nuclear war is as real in Asia as it is in any other part of the world — but to many people here this is not clear. It is not sufficiently clear even to those whom I regard as politically conscious.

The reason is that most of such people in our region confine their efforts to the struggle against military regimes and oppressive laws, for employment, higher wages and for meeting other day-to-day needs. As for the issues of war and peace, of disarmament, one often hears that these are the concern of the two 'superpowers', not of the developing countries. At best, the problem is recognised as an exclusively European one.

How do we link the struggle for a decent standard of living with the struggle for the preservation of the human race itself? Both these tasks brook no delay. We the Communists of Bangladesh regard them as interdependent and indivisible. The first consultative meeting of the communist and revolutionary democratic parties of Asia and the Pacific¹ was right to point out that in our age, the struggle for peace is an organic and essential part of the struggle for democracy and social progress; that prevention of nuclear war is indispensable for the advancement of any society along the path of democratisation and social transformations.

In our efforts to convince people that this is so, we try to select arguments which are clear and close to our countrymen — for example, the tangible fact that there is a US naval base on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, in close proximity to Bangladesh. The US troops stationed there may invade our country within a very short time 'in case of emergency'. Or take another graphic example. Pakistan has reached the homestretch on its way to the nuclear bomb, and it is naive to believe that this is of no concern to us and should worry only the 'nuclear club' powers.

This is how the struggle for food, shelter and jobs is essentially connected with the drive for peace. We do not want to be a voice in the wilderness, and so we relate the two things — the concerns common to our people and the realities of today's world. We relate these concerns not only to what may happen but also to what is already in existence *de facto*. People should be well aware of this interconnection.

Furthermore, in most countries such as ours the military dictatorships are kept in power by imperialist support. The dictatorship in my country has been in power for ten years, backed by the imperialists and dependent on their aid for its very survival. Significantly, military spending keeps growing, and the aim is not only to preserve the dictatorship. Militarisation is also designed to satisfy the growing but insatiable appetite of the arms dealers. In contrast to our poverty, the living standard of army officers is little lower than in the West — although education, health care and other social programmes which are being curtailed to build up the military budget are in a sorry state, and this dangerous trend is gaining ground.

Meanwhile, the imperialists are becoming increasingly active. I would even say that in our subregion, they are operating 'in a race against time'. They are interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign nations and sowing discord and hostility among them. They are doing their utmost to expand the network of their military bases on the soil of foreign countries. Suffice it to mention Chittagong in Bangladesh and Trincomalee in Sri Lanka where the Pentagon would dearly love to establish a foothold.

Therefore, if we want to overcome underdevelopment and poverty, if we want to defeat illiteracy, disease and hunger, if we want to solve the extremely acute problem of unemployment, we must combat militarism because *the arms race is incompatible with development*. This is the context in which we Communists and all other progressive parties should raise these issues. To my mind, they are yet to be related to each other. Regrettably, international organisations such as the World Peace Council, have not been paying sufficient attention to this problem. True, the World Federation of Trade Unions has been recently trying to organise several seminars on these questions, but the national unions have failed to take up the initiative.

We the Communists of Bangladesh are working to convince people that the 'accursed problems' that haunt them daily should be tackled through disarmament, and we are citing striking figures to prove our point. Bangladesh spends 20 per cent of its national budget on military projects. Isn't it too much for a country as poor as ours?

Democracy is another acute problem in our country. No one is indifferent to it. My countrymen have a profound aspiration to democracy. They have been fighting for it for ages. But democracy or a democratic policy could never stabilise in our country. Even having gained independence, Bangladesh could not get rid of military rule.

To the CPB, the need to integrate the two dimensions of the struggle is obvious to the Communists. Our latest party congress, the fourth, decided that we should work precisely in this direction. The documents adopted at the congress state that together with the struggle for a better quality of life and for emancipation from exploitation, the peace movement should also become a factor of the nation's life.

I believe that anti-war sentiments are not sufficiently strong in the CPB itself. Frankly, so far the outward aspect has been prevalent: we gather people together, organise marches and publish reports on peace demonstrations in the newspapers. People do take part, but they are yet to fully grasp the need to uphold the higher values of peace and life, to

become as conscious of this imperative as they are of their daily worries such as food and shelter.

Making 'two tributaries converge and form a single river' — that is, linking the mass struggle against the imperialist-backed reactionary government, for land, food, jobs and a better life with the drive for peace which should be forged into a truly mass, militant and united movement — is an extremely complex task we the Communists of Bangladesh are facing.

¹ Held in Ulan Bator in July 1987. — *Ed.*

Brief Commentary

Ideological Debate And Mutual Security

Roland Bauer — SED CC member,
SED representative on WMR

A DOCUMENT of exceptional significance was made public jointly at simultaneous press conferences in Berlin and Bonn at the end of August by the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) and the Programme Commission of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany (SPD).

It was the first joint fundamental statement by the two parties on key ideological and political issues of our day since the split in the German working class movement seven decades ago. It notes both the common and the differing standpoints and positions of the Communists and the Social Democrats, and that alone is unique for both parties.

That statement not only raises the cardinal issue of international politics today — the need to avert a nuclear war that could annihilate all life — but also sets forth a concept of the substance, forms and methods of the contest of differing ideological and political forces that is inevitable at the end of this twentieth century.

The document is also a vivid expression of the new political thinking and approach to international political issues, the outcome of profound efforts by both parties to comprehend the basic problems of our day, and the result of long-standing ties between the SED and the SPD in the fight for peace. Among the milestones on this way of broad contacts and constructive dialogue were the International Conference 'Karl Marx and Our Day', which was held in Berlin in 1983, and the meetings between SED CC General Secretary Erich Honecker and SPD leaders Willy Brandt, Hans-Joachim Vogel, Oskar Lafontaine, and Johannes Rau. The proposals by the two parties for setting up a zone free from chemical weapons and a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe have also been important.

The fundamental conclusion drawn by the SED and the SPD that *in the present world historical situation mankind can either survive together, or perish together* was the starting point for the joint document *Ideological Debate and Mutual Security*. It follows, therefore, that peace and security can be won only through understandings on the principles of cooperation, instead of a build-up of the military arsenals against each other: "It is the quality of policy, and not the quality of weapons that is decisive in the issue of stability and security in the world."¹ Along with the task of eliminating the nuclear threat, the document also points to such problems facing mankind as preservation of the biosphere, resolution of the ecological crisis, the drive against hunger, and elimination of the less developed countries' debt and economic backwardness, all of which can now be solved only through joint efforts.

It is the conviction of both parties that the purpose of the new political thinking and responsible action is to establish stable and lasting peace, ruling out war as an instrument of policy. Such a world order impedes the use of armed force, while the instruments of war are still there. It helps to settle conflicts between states by peaceful means through agreed procedures, and expresses recognition and respect for each people's right to self-determination.

The necessity of *forms of rivalry meeting these noble goals* logically follows from the coexistence and inevitable rivalry between the two economic, social and political systems, which are qualitatively distinct and essentially opposite. Among these forms are peaceful competition, a comparison of views in the light of principle without the use of force over any political and ideological contradictions, and cooperation for mutual benefit and advantages. For the first time, the SED and the SPD have formulated in a joint document the principles, content and political norms in accordance with which this cooperation and ideological debate must be carried on by peaceful means.

The joint statement takes cognizance of the fact that there are opposite economic, social, political and ideological tenets between the two systems, and clearly says that they will exist in the future as well, and that one cannot expect them to converge. It does not obscure the fundamental differences in the positions of the Communists and the Social Democrats, but clearly sets them forth. It says just as clearly and definitely that the contest over the advantages of a social system can be carried on only "when peace and the continuation of history have been ensured . . . Each of the two systems can demonstrate the advantages to which it lays claim only through the power of example which carries conviction for people in a given country and beyond its borders".² This implies, above all, the contribution either social system can make to ensuring peace, to eliminating the threat to the environment, and to the development of the third world countries. It is the common view of the SED and the SPD that other touchstones are:

- a capacity to cope with the social consequences of scientific and technical progress;
- development of genuine democracy, practice and further extension of human rights taking account of the fact that social, political and individual

rights are interdependent;

— establishment of relations between economics and the ecology, between man and Nature, with a sense of responsibility to future generations.

The two parties emphasise that this kind of competition between the two systems, if it goes along with a reduction of armaments, can stimulate and accelerate social progress in both systems.

The larger part of the joint SED/SPD document is an analysis of the circumstances and conditions, and also of the way in which *the common efforts in the struggle for peace should be fortified*. But it also holds that the controversy over the different attitudes to the problem of power, democracy, means of production, etc., can and should proceed. It sets forth both the identical positions and the issues on which the two parties do not see eye to eye. Then follows this conclusion: the controversy over these basic issues is still on, and it cannot be ended either by compromise formulae or calls for goodwill and peace. No one would benefit from a glossing over of contradictions. The two parties are in agreement that the ideological debates, first, must not hamper common approaches to the struggle for peace and disarmament, and second, must be conducted in civilised forms implying the right of the other side to existence.

The SED and the SPD both want *to develop the culture of political debate, a dialogue from opposite positions*, with an agreement on definite basic rules. They include clear-cut expression of social and political differences and efforts to overcome stereotype images of the other side and also stipulate that dialogue and cooperation should not exclude open criticism. The document says: "Debate over basic positions can become part of the productive competition between the systems if it is carried on in such a way that Communists and Social Democrats take account of each other's principled views, refrain from creating an enemy image, impugning the motives of the other side, deliberately distorting its convictions, or smearing its representatives. Both must anticipate that they will be judged on the strength of their successes, achievements, mistakes and reverses."³

The two parties start from the assumption that for a long time to come the two social systems will "coexist and have to find common ground with each other. Neither side should question the other's right to existence. No hopes should be pinned on one system eliminating the other".

We, Marxist-Leninists are, of course, convinced that socialism will ultimately triumph on a world scale. However, this will not take place through the export of revolution from the socialist countries, but only as a result of the development of the internal contradictions and class struggle in the capitalist countries. This struggle is connected with many circumstances and conditions and can never be generated or 'accelerated' from outside, just as it must not be suppressed through external intervention.

In the light of present-day realities and the priority of the task of preserving peace, the SED and the SPD believe that *the ideological debate should not be carried over into relations between states*; mutually acceptable and accessible rules for mutual intercourse need to be formulated to enable both sides equally to realise their basic values.

The joint document formulates the basic norms and rules of the "culture of political debate ensuring peace and even serving peace". It is the unanimous view of both parties that these rules should be put into practice through the actions of the most diverse political forces. Among these rules are:

— Social systems are not static. They tend to change and develop in each country on its own, proper basis. They are continuously faced with new problems which they cannot solve without making changes and ensuring further development and reforms.

— No one can claim the right to explicit criticism and polemical statements, without equally recognising the right of the criticised party to do the same.

— Criticism of the social state of things in the other system should be based on verifiable facts.

— A realistic and differentiated analysis and image of the other side, instead of wild propaganda of an enemy image and a build-up of fear of the other side, are of crucial importance for the new culture of political debate.

— The ideological contest must be carried on without interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

— Open discussion of the competition between the systems, their successes and failures, their advantages and disadvantages must be made possible within each system. Genuine competition even implies promotion of such a discussion with practical results.

— Provision of wide information for citizens in the East and the West tends to acquire a growing significance in ensuring peace and competition between the systems.

— Dialogue between all the public organisations, institutions, forces and individuals on both sides has a growing role. This includes visits and return trips, and participation in scientific, cultural and political measures outside the system.

The SED and the SPD say in conclusion: mutual security cannot be attained if ideological contradictions are manifested in forms jeopardising and poisoning inter-state relations, to say nothing of conflicts being presented as an irreconcilable and inevitable struggle between good and evil. Mutual security implies peaceful competition between the systems within the framework of jointly formulated rules, including the culture of political debate and dialogue from opposite standpoints.

Let us hope that these conclusions and the new thinking in action will spread fairly widely and rapidly in the right spirit.

¹ *Neues Deutschland*, August 28, 1987.

² *Neues Deutschland*, August 28, 1987.

³ *Neues Deutschland*, August 28, 1987.

The Objective? A Thinking Movement

Johannes Pakaslahti — Secretary
General, World Peace Council

THE peace movement is beginning to irk some politicians. Their usual complaint is that it is increasingly invading 'big politics'. But how can it be otherwise today? It is not that the movement is developing because someone is goading the world's peoples to monitor and control the powers that be. The realities of the nuclear age have forged a link between the lives of people who used to keep aloof from politics and the decisions taken by the leaders of governments or military and political alliances. Inevitably therefore, the attitude of governments to international security, to nuclear and general disarmament, as well as their practical actions in this field are of concern to everyone.

Men and women in different countries increasingly want politics to reflect their vital interest as fully as possible: they have a stake in a world without threats, in a world living in freedom and progress. There is a growing desire for change in international relations. Ever more people reject the old approach in the search for a more secure world, for global and regional security models which would reduce the war threat.

Peace-loving civic forces do not distance themselves from politics: they influence it, *expressing a vote of moral confidence or non-confidence in governments*, depending on whether the moves made by the latter further universal interests and strengthen international security. This is neither a denial of national interest nor disparagement of national security. On the contrary, today these factors are strengthened by the common struggle to eliminate nuclear weapons and hotbeds of tensions, to defuse military confrontation between certain countries and groups of countries. The point is to reasonably combine the particular with the general, the partial with the comprehensive, and to rule out any contrasting of national priorities to universal ones. Guided by this dialectic, the peace movement can act as an effective political and social force and make a perceptible impact on world developments because public support is essential to any policy.

Awareness of the present-day threat and resolute opposition to nuclear weapons have become a worldwide phenomenon involving, in different parts of the globe, much broader strata than ever before in the history of the peace movement.¹ In the West, the peace movement has spread to cover various organisations and political structures on which it had no influence to speak of in the past, and has even gone beyond their confines. In many parties, central issues had to be newly assessed. In this way, the peace movement not only irked some politicians but also gave rise to changes in some parties.

The significance of the peace movement as a socio-political force resides above all in its *capacity to move onwards and attain new goals*. It is therefore essential to check continuously the development of the movement and of its components against the day-to-day realities.

In this sense, the situation now is different from what it was in the early

1980s, when the peace movement developed and grew mainly in opposition to a specific type of weapon system in several countries. The starting point was a correct one. It laid the basis for the subsequent broadening of the movement and for more effective action by peace champions.

The action of different peace groups and organisations and the questions they raised led to a deeper understanding of the need to renounce those political and strategic military concepts that, in the final analysis, hampered real disarmament. Millions of people realised that nuclear war was under no circumstances acceptable or possible.

While an end to the arms race and the adoption of tangible disarmament measures are the central political task of the peace movement, it is also developing ever more clearly into a force which *champions basic human values*. From a movement of protest against some objectives, it is evolving into one of support for others. Public opinion is responding positively to this transformation.

Today, the peace movement should *work out a truly global approach to issues, assess the situation from different points of view, and discuss different questions* of universal importance.

For example, the idea that peace activists and environmentalists should act independently and separately has prevailed for too long in some countries. Both these movements uphold the survival of humanity. Both acknowledge that the resources released by disarmament can be used to protect the environment, to combat disease, hunger, etc.

The peace forces can help: to consolidate relations between different nations through cooperation, not confrontation; to promote recognition and respect of diversity, but not approval of injustice. We render comprehensive support to all those who are acting for the elimination of injustice. The peace movement therefore cannot refrain from expressing solidarity with the vast majority of the South African population in its campaign against the apartheid regime.

Abandoning the so-called enemy image — the stereotypes of both internal and external enemies — is one of the first steps the peace movement itself can take. Given the threat which is looming over all humanity, it is morally wrong to divide different currents and organisations into, say, 'dependent' and 'independent' movements, thus creating artificial obstacles to joint action. Much too often people rightly argue that 'we cannot have confidence in your movement since you cannot even live in peace among yourselves'. Instead of divisions, we need broader cooperation and dialogue.

Progress along this path can be promoted by the growing interest in a new, defensive type of military doctrine, in international relations built on confidence and trust, in an understanding of each other's point of view. This interest is also connected with an increasing demand for change — something which is inherent in human nature and which is receiving new impulses from the current policy of reform in the Soviet Union.

Joint action does not imply either any attempt on the independence of different forces or a renunciation of one's own basic stand. After all, *none of the components of the peace movement has the right answers to all questions. On the contrary, broader cooperation encourages one to assess*

one's views more critically than happens at gatherings of the likeminded.

If the different currents of the peace movement fail to achieve a higher level of cooperation, the security models they advocate and their proposals for the settlement of conflicts will never win majority support. Consequently, the movement will be unable to make governments really reckon with it. By furthering cooperation between these currents, we are developing the movement into a socially and politically influential force and raising its prestige and that of each of its individual members.

The situation being what it is, many peace champions have adopted an independent and distinctive approach to the two great powers and to all other countries, whether big or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, affiliated in military blocs or neutral and non-aligned. However, an independent approach does not mean that we must 'distance ourselves' from politics. On the contrary, people are ready to support political decisions that are in keeping with the interests of both national and universal security.

The record shows that it is not enough merely to approve someone else's valuable ideas and initiatives. We are convinced that the peace movement must be a *thinking movement*, capable of performing an independent analysis of the international situation and of advancing its own concrete proposals — on curbing the arms race, reducing military arsenals, creating new nuclear-free zones, removing medium-range missiles, and equitably settling regional disputes. Profound discussions of these acute and topical issues are now under way.

Upholding universal human values, the peace movement cannot be either pro-Soviet or pro-American. It should adopt and apply equal criteria vis-a-vis both these powers. At the same time, we hold that it is our duty to indicate clearly which of the two approaches to disarmament is more in line with the interests of peace.

One cannot fail to see that when the Soviet Union introduces a unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions and proposes that mankind get rid of nuclear weapons by the year 2000, it echoes the wishes and the demands of different peace forces. If we see some positive shifts in the position of the US administration, they are a direct result of the influence exerted by the anti-war, anti-nuclear movement both in the United States and across the globe.

In both cases we see specific goals to be fought for. Apparently, the universal cessation of nuclear testing and reaffirmation of our resounding 'no' to the 'star wars' plans, to the arms race on Earth and in space should be our immediate objective. It is no accident that this platform won widespread support among the peace forces throughout the world.

Such global, universal goals are a lodestar for all participants in the movement. In different countries, success in the attainment of these goals is linked directly with the understanding of what can be done nationally and regionally to strengthen universal peace. By way of explanation let me cite the example of the Nordic countries. The peace movement in our nations has long advocated a nuclear weapon-free zone for the North of Europe. The people have welcomed this idea, and different socio-political forces — from the Communists to the churches and even to some conservative quarters — are ready to fight for this specific objective. It is a

clear-cut goal that mobilises us all. It shows that smaller countries can play an important and vigorous role in international politics, in ensuring their own and universal security, in the drive towards disarmament.

Discussions of various practical questions have been organised around this slogan — why we need a nuclear-free zone, who opposes the idea and why, what danger the deployment of nuclear weapons in Scandinavia poses and what must be done to remove the obstacles. Inevitably, the main problems of world politics are raised in this debate.

I would like to repeat that the movement advocating a nuclear-free zone for the North of Europe is quite broad and diverse and includes even those who are firmly committed to NATO. Some think that the alliance with the United States is useful to their countries and want to strengthen it. That is no obstacle to joint action. We invite the cooperation of all who are concerned over the region's security. The foremost aim of such cooperation is not to argue over attitudes to the United States or NATO but to remove the war threat.

The development of the movement for a nuclear-free Northern Europe has demonstrated its strength — the fact *that it is independent of a bloc-oriented policy, that the movement's objectives are concrete and clear, that regional and universal factors are intertwined in its struggle.* It is a mass movement which cannot be manipulated to adopt a one-sided orientation. It is exerting an ever more vigorous influence on political structures in an effort to attain the objectives that have been set.

The World Peace Council maintains close ties with such movements and helps to establish cooperation among them. The position and role of the WPC in the anti-war struggle depends on its capacity for acting as a forum of cooperation between different forces, as an effective factor of their unity. My personal opinion I have put forward here with regard to the tasks of the peace movement, its independent position, its capacity for analysis, its attitude to different states also applies to the World Peace Council.

The need for contacts and cooperation has increased. This means that we all must think about how we can pool our peace-making efforts, how this can influence political developments, and how it can help rally the masses in the struggle for peace and human survival. We must think and act to prevail over nuclear death.

¹ Specifically, in Europe this was connected with the NATO 'two-track' decision of 1979 and with the changes in the US nuclear war doctrine which stipulated that such a war was acceptable and winnable.

Is Europe To Be Divided by Enmity?

Rudi Arndt — President, Socialist Group of the European Parliament; member of the Socialist International Bureau

WITH is the weight of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament? To what extent is it capable of influencing its decision-making?

WITH its 164 deputies out of the total of 518, the Socialist Group is the leading group in the Parliament. Alongside us, the left wing of the European Parliament includes the communist faction¹ of 48 members (26 of them representing the Italian Communist Party) and also a group uniting deputies of different progressive political forces. The right wing is made up of the Christian Democrats, the Conservatives, the Liberals and the Gaullists.

As a leading group, we have a strong influence on decision-making at the Europarlament. One of its peculiarities is that all of its political groups are, as a rule, a little more progressive than their national parties, and are quite independent. The European Parliament has neither ruling nor opposition groups and for this reason its deputies are not as bound by considerations of government or party solidarity or any other factor of domestic policy as their counterparts in national parliaments. This is also true of the Socialists, the Christian Democrats and the Conservatives.

This state of affairs enables us to form an absolute majority on a number of important problems, as was the case with the resolution in support of Mikhail Gorbachov's proposals on nuclear missiles in Europe. The Europarlament has no chance nor sets itself the task of bringing pressure on the governments of the EEC member-states. Its resolutions are a demonstration of a certain attitude but through them and also through participation in TV debates and discussion and publications in the press we can influence public opinion and the political quarters.

What international problems are now in the focus of the Socialist Group's attention?

We pay priority attention to numerous problems of the European Economic Community proper. The establishment of relations with the Third World has been figuring prominently among our priorities. We also pay much attention to the defence of human rights not only in European

Rudi Arndt (b. 1927) joined the Social Democratic Party of Germany in 1945 and was one of the leaders of the Socialist Youth. In 1952 he was elected deputy to the Frankfurt city council and in 1956 became a parliamentarian in the Land of Hessen. He was a long-standing member of the Hessen Government and from 1973 a member of the leadership of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. From 1972 to 1977 he was Mayor of Frankfurt, from 1979 a member of the SDP faction in the Europarlament, from 1979 to 1984 first Vice-President of the Socialist Group in the Europarlament and has been the Group President since 1984.

countries, for that matter, but also elsewhere, be it in South Africa, El Salvador or Afghanistan. The problem is considered practically at all the sessions of the European Parliament, which meets in Strasbourg for five days a month. The overwhelming majority of deputies denounce the violations of democratic rights and freedoms. Under the impact of our resolutions the Turkish authorities have, for example, revised a number of court decisions. Let me emphasise that the Europarlament always makes progressive decisions as far as human rights are concerned. It is, perhaps, even more influential in this sphere than in any other field of international life.

Now for the disarmament problem. In 1986, the Socialist Group worked out a common stand that incorporates several elements.

First, we believe that the countries of Western and Eastern Europe should play a far greater role in the matter of security. Our interests differ from those of the United States and from Soviet interests, too. Though the USSR is a European country, its greater part is in Asia and, besides, it is a superpower. It is necessary that the voice of Europe be heard better in international affairs today. Regrettably, we did not sit at the table either in Reykjavik or in Geneva. The European states should work more actively to end the arms race, which can be achieved only by strengthening cooperation among them rather than by creating a new European military superpower.²

Second, the Reykjavik meeting showed that there are real possibilities for radical disarmament. It is our belief that the two superpowers should work to implement the understanding that was within their reach in Reykjavik and then to have a drastic reduction of other strategic arms systems.

Third, the Socialist Group is for the immediate elimination of the US and Soviet medium and shorter-range nuclear systems deployed in Europe. We welcome the readiness shown by the Reagan administration and the Soviet leaders to conclude a separate agreement on them on the principles of the 'double-zero' option.

It should be pointed out that until recently there were many differences in the Group on this issue. Most of its members — the British Labour, the Dutch, Greek and Belgian Socialists and the West German Social Democrats — were against nuclear weapons in Europe, while the Italians, the French and the Spaniards thought differently. Now only the French Socialists have reservations and constantly stress that France 'should remain a nuclear superpower'. Nonetheless, they have lifted their objections to the Group's concerted approach to the problem of nuclear weapons on the European continent. Differences only remain on the issue of nuclear weapon tests. When the majority voted in favour of ending them the French Socialists insisted on a footnote to the text of the resolution to state that their party was of a different opinion.

Fourth, we are convinced that the 'double-zero' option should not be the final goal: the next step should be negotiations on battlefield nuclear weapons. The generals often say that battlefield nuclear weapons differ little from conventional weapons. That is wrong. Some of the battlefield nuclear weapons are as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb. The logical

conclusion of the entire process should be an agreement on limiting conventional weapons.

The Group supported, by a majority vote, the proposal of the Socialist Democratic Party of Germany that the role of the army should be only that of defence so as to cut down any possibility for one state to attack another. But the 15th Congress of the Union of Socialist and Social Democratic Parties of the EEC Member-States (which adopts resolutions by consensus) held in Portugal last spring postponed the decision about this concept.

Fifth, one of the aims of the disarmament process is greater mutual confidence and military stability in Europe at lower levels of armaments. If some concrete results are produced at the Vienna talks on the reduction of conventional arms and armed forces in Central Europe, a tangible impulse will be given to the process of establishing viable arms control. We are aware that this is a complicated and long process. It is therefore all the more important that the results of the Stockholm Conference be taken into consideration during talks on disarmament and limiting military activities of states. It is necessary always to bear in mind that the problem of security has not only a military but also a political aspect, which in turn presupposes greater democracy and freedom and the fuller observance of human rights by both sides, and also better relations with the USSR and other countries of the Warsaw Pact.

What does the Socialist Group do to improve the political climate in Europe and to expand cooperation between East and West?

We have long been acting in this direction. On our initiative the European Parliament passed several important resolutions calling to develop relations between the EEC and the Soviet Union. The Socialist Group repeatedly proposed to the Soviet leaders to have negotiations with the European Community and the Europarlament. The Socialist International Bureau, of which I as the Group President am a member, is very attentive to our opinion.

Two years ago, during his visit to France, Mikhail Gorbachov for the first time pointed out that it would be useful to have business relations between the CMEA and the European Community. Soon negotiations started and the first official delegation of the European Parliament formed by the Socialist Group went to the USSR in December 1985. We had talks at the CMEA headquarters and meetings at the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Supreme Soviet. We paved the way to Moscow, as it were. A year later it was visited by a delegation of the Christian Democrats.

We played the leading role in establishing contacts between the EEC and the CMEA. The Socialist Group has a special influence in the Europarlament on the issue. In 1987 its delegation visited all the capitals of the Warsaw Pact states. We can now say that an agreement has been reached on establishing relations between the CMEA and the EEC. Work on the text of a joint declaration is practically over. The visits resulted in an agreement upon cooperation between every national parliament of the Warsaw Pact member-states and the European Parliament.

You are one of the leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. How does its faction in the Europarlament affect the working out of the Party line in world affairs?

In 1981 the SDP decided that the stand adopted by its faction on international and security problems should be the position of the party. Ever since we have been playing a decisive role in working out the party's foreign policy concerning Europe. Its every deputy to the European Parliament is a member of the Social Democratic faction in the Bundestag. Our influence in the party has grown immeasurably, compared to the period when it was in power.

What can you say about the interaction between your Group and the Communist Group in the Europarlament? Do you think it can promote inter-party cooperation in West European countries?

Our contacts with the Communist Group in the Europarlament encompass a very broad range of problems. I have good relations with its leader Gianni Cervetti. We sit together and often discuss problems of strategy and tactics in the Europarlament. However, our approach to different aspects of the development of the EEC is not always the same. For instance, as distinct from the majority of the Socialist Group deputies, the Communists are in favour of building nuclear power plants and always vote on the issue together with the Christian Democrats and the French Socialists.

The Italians in the Communist Group are very active. They were much faster than us to decide on many questions, say, human rights, Polish events and the situation in Afghanistan. The Italian Communists have good connections with the leading groups in the Europarlament. Not only we but also the Christian Democrats and the Liberals consider them a serious group.

As for cooperation between the Social Democrats and the Communists on the national level, I would say, it is an historical question, which depends on the political situation in every particular country. Say, in Italy the Communist Party gets up to 33 per cent of votes, whereas in West Germany the Communists have 0.5 per cent of votes. I think it is also a question of tradition. During elections most of the Communist supporters vote for Social Democrats because they think it is better to have them than a candidate from the right.

Relations between the Social Democratic Party of Germany and the Communist Party are, of course, also affected by the existence of two German states. I would like to point out that when I was one of the leaders of the Socialist Youth we were forbidden to maintain any contact with the Communists. The situation has changed since that time. Already in the late 1960s we held joint demonstrations against the US aggression in Vietnam and now peace marches involve Social Democrats together with Communists.

Incidentally, for me it is in part a personal issue. I come from a family with long-standing Social Democratic traditions. My great grandfather

founded in 1863 a Social Democratic organisation in the region of Frankfurt and was one of the delegates to the first party congress. My father was also active in the party and perished in a Nazi concentration camp. And now my own family is divided, as far as political affiliation is concerned: 50 per cent are Social Democrats and 50 per cent are Communists.

How can you explain the tendency towards improvement of the international climate in Europe that appeared of late?

I would explain this by several factors. To begin with, the USSR and the USA have changed their attitude to Euromissiles. For example, when the Socialist International held a disarmament conference in Vienna in October 1985 and invited a Soviet and a US delegation to it, the position of the two sides was different from what it is now. Special mention should be made of the importance of the Soviet initiatives laying the foundation for the 'double-zero' option. We believe that the present-day Soviet position is similar in content to the proposals formulated by the Socialist International in Vienna in October 1985. I am glad that the Soviet Union and the USA have come to an understanding on concluding an agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles in Europe.

Furthermore, until quite recently no ruling party or parliament of any CMEA country expressed willingness to have relations with the Socialist Group, even though it has always occupied left positions in the European Parliament. Whereas now they recognise the need for having negotiations with us and the European Community as a whole.

As a realist, I am convinced that the present-day Soviet position is dictated by the interests of the Soviet Union itself and the other countries, which are members of the CMEA and the Warsaw Pact. What Mikhail Gorbachov is doing now puts the conservative forces in Western Europe, including in the European Parliament, in a difficult situation. They can no longer claim, as before, that it is impossible to have anything to do with the Soviet Union. On the contrary, the new aspects of Soviet policy are very important for our group because already in the early 1980s we passed a resolution insisting that it was necessary to have negotiations and voicing belief that they would work.

Let me add one more thing. To judge by the mood prevalent in the European Parliament, the changes in Soviet society have raised trust in Soviet policy and foreign policy initiatives. And this in turn cannot but affect the political climate in Europe, in the other Warsaw Pact countries and the rest of the world.

¹ See an interview with Gianni Cervetti, chairman of the Communist faction in the European Parliament, in *WMR*. No. 10, 1987. — *Ed.*

² Reference is made here to West European military integration plans worked out by influential political forces of some countries, members of the EEC and NATO. — *Ed.*

Dual Task

Kenneth Douglas — National
Chairman, Socialist Unity Party of New
Zealand

TO begin with, one fact that is clear to us New Zealanders: the country's peace movement has been growing since the 1970s thanks to full awareness that disarmament and better living conditions are inseparably related. A campaign for attaining what can be characterised as a limited goal, a nuclear-free New Zealand, jolted the peace-loving public into activity.

In the past, even while Europe was shaken by mass anti-war action, the deployment of missiles there was still too abstract to have much impact. The actions by the peace-loving forces remote from us can hardly be said to have seriously influenced anti-war efforts in New Zealand, although the nuclear winter theory has helped considerably in showing the effect that a nuclear conflict in Europe would have on the rest of the world. But nuclear missiles in the Pacific, especially on submarines and warships, and nuclear tests were a much more tangible danger.

We now have a number of national branches of international associations, among them Physicians for Peace, Architects for Peace, Scientists for Peace, etc. The members of those organisations, working for détente and disarmament, are not 'Reds' or 'Moscow's agents', as the reactionaries label them. The nuclear threat has now become obvious not just to a few of the more perspicacious people but to the mass of the population. Hardly any politician will today risk openly engaging in war propaganda. All this is forceful proof of the retreat of anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism.

But the most significant development, I think, is change in the young people. Young men and women today are keener than ever before on reality with all its problems and quite aware of the paramount idea that human survival makes it imperative to rid the world of the burden of nuclear weapons. That is why few New Zealanders are surprised to see many young people among peace campaigners. They sometimes do work which may seem unimportant, like collecting signatures for presentation to Parliament, selling peace material, like badges and T-shirts with peace slogans on them, and so on. But then, the campaign for a nuclear-free New Zealand also started small, with nuclear-free homes and workplaces growing into nuclear-free towns and cities. It set up peace squadrons of hundreds of small boats which tried to stop the entry of nuclear warships. It involved industrial action with port and maritime workers refusing to work in ports where US nuclear warships berthed.

The emergence of the A-bomb and nuclear-weapons tests have had appalling effects on the Pacific: the tragedies of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Bikini and Mururoa are common knowledge. It was only natural for the Pacific peoples to join in the peace actions from the start. The immense scope of the movement for the establishment of nuclear-free zones is understandable in this context. Palau has a nuclear-free constitution¹ and Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands had banned visits by nuclear ships even

before New Zealand did. The passing of legislation which bans nuclear weapons from New Zealand territory was the result of the work of hundreds of peace activists, workers and trade unions.

The goal of establishing a nuclear-free zone in that area was a central element in bringing into being the Pacific Trade Union Forum, now called the Pacific Trade Union Community. This organisation is a voluntary association of unions and union centres which support and work for three major objectives: a nuclear-weapon free zone; independence and liberation from colonial domination for all the territories and peoples of the South Pacific; and the expansion of trade union movements in each country and raising its effectiveness.

Economic goals are no less important to the New Zealand working people. The situation is indeed peculiar. On the one hand, aspirations for a contribution by the New Zealand people towards a nuclear-free world have been the centre point of the government's defence and foreign policies. On the other, the government has enthusiastically been implementing a programme of economic deregulation and restructuring that has been loudly extolled by the International Monetary Fund and the OECD² advisory missions. This economic policy is dramatically altering New Zealand and has resulted in a huge shift to speculative investment with an associated withdrawal of productive investment, interest rates in excess of 21 per cent, rapidly rising unemployment and falling living standards. This reactionary economic policy not only conflicts with Labour's progressive peace policy but eventually tends to undermine it.

The New Zealand working class therefore faces the dual task of making the government revise its economic policy so that it should respect the working people's interests and helping preserve what the peace movement has already achieved.

¹ In August 1987 the provision on the state's nuclear-free status was withdrawn from it under US pressure. — *Ed.*

² Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. — *Ed.*

the communist movement. In the fraternal parties

The Dialectics Of Fraternal Interaction

Pieter Keuneman — Chairman,
Central Committee, Communist Party of
Sri Lanka (CPSL)

WE are witnessing the diversity of the communist movement. The scope of the issues the fraternal parties are tackling at home and on the international scene is widening. The changes that have occurred in mankind's social fabric since the October Revolution in Russia are posing a tough challenge before us — the challenge of a continuous creative quest for and elaboration of new forms of the Communists' concerted international action. These should be effective forms, consonant with the spirit of the times, with the needs of our struggle, with the objectives of expanding and enhancing the influence of our movement and of the revolutionary and liberation forces in general.

Naturally, in working to meet a challenge of such great scope and responsibility, we can no longer rely on habitual patterns of thought, on oversimplified stereotypes. We need new lines of approach to the central issues of our movement, and this calls for an objective and balanced appraisal of its past and for Communists to pay due attention in their struggle to today's global, regional and national realities.

From the inception of the revolutionary working class movement, its founders and teachers have always stressed the vital importance of internationalism. This insistence arose out of their realisation that the historical mission of the proletariat to replace capitalism with socialism on a global scale cannot be accomplished without internationalism. The internationalism of the proletariat was also essential to the ideological and organisational consolidation of the proletariat itself.

Pieter Keuneman was born in 1917. While a student at Cambridge University in the 1930s, he was organisationally and politically active in the student movement. He was also a vigorous participant in the anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and liberation movements during the pre-war years. One of the founders of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka (established 1943), he served as its General Secretary for 30 years and has been its Chairman since 1974. Pieter Keuneman was a Member of Parliament from 1947 to 1977 and a cabinet minister in the United Front Government from 1970 to 1976. He is the author of several books, pamphlets and articles on issues of the world revolutionary process and the international communist and national liberation movement.

The triumph of the October Revolution and the establishment of working class power in one-sixth of the world gave a new dimension to the concept of solidarity. The victorious working class saw the trail it blazed into the future as a contribution to the worldwide struggle for humanity's liberation from exploitation. In return, it enjoyed the profound solidarity of its class brothers, manifested in actions held in all continents to defend Soviet Russia.

The events of that period posed the question of how the international cooperation of the Communists would develop. Revolutionary Marxist organisations existed in several countries, but they differed considerably in levels of organisational strength and political maturity. Apart from the Bolshevik party in Russia, none of the other parties had yet acquired the capacity to lead the masses in successful battles for the capture of power. The interests of the revolutionary movement demanded the elaboration of an effective form of international cooperation among the champions of social progress.

The establishment in 1919 of the Communist International marked the advent of a type of international cooperation that was new both in content and in form. The parties of the Communist International firmly rejected the opportunist trend in the working class movement and adopted a truly revolutionary stance. They saw themselves as national detachments of a centralised international organisation and subject to a common discipline. They considered that this form of interaction would most effectively enable them to mount an offensive against capital and to wage class and liberation battles.

Although sectarian mistakes and subjective accretions did appear from time to time in the work of the Comintern after Lenin's death, its immense service to the international communist movement and to the unfolding of the revolutionary process cannot be challenged. It was a really worldwide organisation which made close cooperation of the fraternal parties possible. Uniting the revolutionary forces under the banner of Marxism-Leninism, it helped the formation and spread of communist parties, and assisted them in establishing deep and firm roots among the masses, in waging class and liberation battles, and in fighting against the threat of fascism and war. It would be no exaggeration to say that *the Communist International became a powerful accelerator of historical progress.*

However, a time came when the fraternal parties which were the national sections of the Comintern came to realise increasingly that forms of leadership from a single world centre were becoming an obstacle to manoeuvrability and to the prompt dealing with concrete problems of mass mobilisation and strengthening of communist parties in individual countries. This awareness was reinforced in the course of the struggle against German fascism and Japanese militarism, when the widest coalition of different forces was created for victory over the aggressors. The decision of the Comintern in June 1943 to dissolve itself, therefore, arose from objective reasons.

Victory over fascism created a new international situation which enhanced the opportunities for the transition of many peoples from

capitalism to socialism and for the emergence of socialism as a world system. These changes raised once again the need for new lines of approach to the unity of the communist and working class movement, for new forms of interaction among the fraternal parties in the new conditions.

The practical record shows that the forms of such interaction are transitory, that they may change — and change repeatedly — under the impact of various circumstances. But *the essence of this cooperation is embodied in proletarian internationalism*. Meanwhile, each new era adds to the content and expands and deepens the very concept of internationalism.

Let us now turn to the experience of the post-war years. Throughout this period, it is possible to discern two tendencies at work within the international communist movement. The first is the increasing internationalisation of the movement. The second is that the specific and concrete activities of each party have acquired greater differentiation and significance. Although these two tendencies may appear contradictory, they are in fact interrelated organically.

An important post-war attempt to resume organised interaction was the setting up of an Information Bureau in Warsaw in 1947. The Cominform was created at a juncture when the revolutionary and liberation movement was on the rise in connection with the great victory over German fascism and Japanese militarism. This was clear from the advent of people's power in several European and Asian countries, from the fact that the colonial system began to disintegrate, and from the stronger positions progressive and democratic forces secured in a number of West European nations. At the same time, although the Cominform helped to supply information on new phenomena such as people's democracy, it suffered from many shortcomings and defects.

To start with, its membership was restricted to Europe and confined to the ruling parties in its eastern part and to the communist parties of France and Italy, which participated in post-war coalition governments. Secondly, as the attitude of the Cominform to Yugoslavia's stand showed, the Information Bureau was not free of the arbitrariness associated with the Stalin personality cult. But, above all, the main tendency of the Cominform was in the direction of recreating a new leading centre at the time when history had proved that such a centre was no longer appropriate. It was therefore not surprising that the Cominform did not last long.

The search for effective forms of international interaction among the Communists was complicated further by the rapid expansion of the movement itself. As new communist parties came into existence, this increased once again the unevenness in the levels of development and of political experience within the movement. The smaller and newer parties tended to welcome the recreation of some sort of central authority which would help to work out a guiding general line and assist them in their theoretical understanding and practical work. On the other hand, some larger and older parties were apprehensive lest such a development would limit their independence or foster hegemonism.

Following the corrections made by the 20th CPSU Congress of the distortions that had arisen during the period of Stalin's personality cult, a

new form and level of the fraternal parties' cooperation emerged. This was confirmed by the international meetings of communist and workers' parties held in 1957 and 1960. The Communist Party of Sri Lanka is one of the many parties which were formed during World War II and after the Comintern was dissolved. We were fortunate and honoured to take part in these meetings, and we benefited immensely from this experience. We have always remained convinced that the periodic holding of such meetings is an appropriate and valuable form through which interaction between fraternal parties can find expression in present times.

The first meeting, held in Moscow 12 years after the end of World War II, is especially memorable. It is a happy coincidence that both the 70th anniversary of Great October and the 30th anniversary of this first world communist meeting should be celebrated this year. Representatives of the 64 fraternal parties that attended the 1957 meeting drew, for the first time in the history of our movement, a conclusion whose fundamental significance has become clearer ever since. It is that *war is not inevitable, war can be prevented, peace can be defended and consolidated*. This conclusion was all the more important because it was formulated at a time when the development of nuclear weapons had changed the nature and the consequences of any world war, and it subsequently paved the way to the growing realisation within the international communist and workers' movement of an objective truth — that there is *a dialectical unity between the class interests of the proletariat and humanity's global interests*. This conclusion has enabled the Communists to emerge in the forefront of the struggle for both.

The world meetings of the Communists, including the 1969 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, did not intend or attempt to create a new leading centre. But the character of the documents they adopted indicates that they provided an orientation, a direction for the work of the international communist movement, based on pooled experience. Defining the main content of our epoch, they analysed the historical conditions of the revolutionary struggle. The parties worked out the strategy of the fight for peace as a decisive component of the fight for social progress, underlined the mutual interaction of the three main streams of the world revolutionary process, demonstrated the intimate connection between democratic struggles and our socialist aims, and emphasised the need to enhance the cohesion and authority of the international communist movement and to overcome the historical division in the labour movement. All this was very important, although recent decades have witnessed a certain lag between theory and practice, and schematic approaches have gained currency. We Communists did not always promptly assess new phenomena and trends of social development.

Looking back at the events of the late 1950s and 1960s, it is necessary to note self-critically that some of the assessments made and conclusions reached were somewhat coloured by idealistic and simplistic assumptions. Communist unity was presented as *static, automatic and almost self-contained, devoid of contradictions, sharpness and drama*. Although the 1969 meeting was attended by 75 parties, it was becoming more and more clear that there were both identical and differing approaches to the

various problems of the movement, and that a correct balance between national and international interests was yet to be achieved. Some parties, including ruling ones, distanced themselves from international communist meetings. Even among those that attended all such forums, some delegations supported only sections of the final documents or expressed reservations about their contents.

At this stage, the search for new forms of fraternal interaction suffered a severe blow as a result of the activities pursued by those who advocated the then policy of China: they not merely repudiated many fundamental conclusions that the international communist movement had arrived at during its world meetings, but also departed from the previously internationalist line of the Communist Party of China. An attempt was made arbitrarily to impose a special line on other parties, even to the point of interfering in their internal affairs. The CPSL was one of the first fraternal parties of the Asia-Pacific region to be subjected to this splitting offensive. Fortunately, our party had sufficient vitality and political maturity to emerge from this trial successfully. When a delegation of our party's Central Committee visited China in December 1986 to discuss with our Chinese counterparts normalisation and resumption of bilateral relations after a lapse of nearly a quarter of a century, we were happy to be officially informed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China that it now considered such action in relation to our party to have been incorrect.

During the period in question, other challenges to communist unity and solidarity surfaced, based on nationalist or revisionist influences. Specific national features in certain countries, regions and continents were sometimes exaggerated and given an absolute value, while insufficient attention was paid to broader, general laws, such as those involving the transition from capitalism to socialism in the present age and the application of Marxist-Leninist theory to the specific practice of revolutionary and liberation struggles. Efforts were made to promote various forms of 'regional' communism. There was debate on the future of the doctrine of 'Eurocommunism'.

This complex period in the interaction of the fraternal parties, whose effects are still not fully overcome, once again confirms that, although the dominant tendency within the communist movement is towards unity, international cooperation and greater proletarian solidarity, *it does not move in a straight line or take effect mechanically.*

On the other hand, the experience gained over the past few decades has demonstrated the capacity of our movement to face various challenges, overcome them step by step and, most importantly, search for new ways and effective opportunities of international interaction based on the equality and class solidarity of the Communists. This cooperation calls for *the fraternal parties' independence and has nothing in common with hierarchical relations, dull uniformity, or a show of unanimity.* The need for interaction stems organically from the fact that none of the fraternal parties can have an exclusive claim to the final truth. Let us briefly review several forms of such interaction that have gained ground in recent years.

Bilateral contacts have been developing steadily. The presence of guests

at communist congresses and participation in the celebrations of important international anniversaries offer an opportunity to exchange views on cardinal issues of world development. International scientific seminars and conferences provide yet another such forum. In this connection, meetings of this kind sponsored by *World Marxist Review* have played a very important part. We should not forget that the journal itself is a product of the first world meeting of communist parties in 1957.

The spread of regional cooperation and interaction in the practice of communist parties is also a notable recent feature. Over the past 15 years, there have been more than 130 regional meetings and conferences among the Communists of Europe, the Arab countries, the Mediterranean region, Africa, Latin America and, quite recently, of the communist and revolutionary democratic parties in the Asia-Pacific regions. Simultaneously, communist participation in the forums of broad social forces is increasing.

We hold that it would be short-sighted to see these regional communist meetings, now so widespread, merely as a second-best substitute in the absence of another world meeting. The regional form of interaction arose out of necessity and proceeds under its own momentum. At the back of it is not merely a geographical concept but a sum of socio-economic and political regional problems of one and the same type, or a sharp crisis situation generated by local causes or by foreign imperialist intervention — hence the need to develop specific and in-depth approaches, above all in order to rebuff the regional intrigues and actions of imperialism and its local supporters.

Moreover, fraternal parties in different regions encounter new phenomena and developments that are both specific and similar. In other words, some of these problems occur in more than one region and this should be taken into account too. *Collective efforts to assess and find solutions to such problems help Communists to conduct their struggles more effectively.* Regional meetings also provide lessons of considerable interest and significance to the entire communist movement.

The success of these regional meetings, which have raised the interaction between fraternal parties to a new level, has understandably made more insistent the demand that interaction should be taken to a still higher and global level. A large number of fraternal parties, including our own, the CPSL, have already come out in favour of holding another international meeting.

The problems we are now facing are unusual in terms of their content. The necessity has matured jointly to discuss the key issues of revolutionary and liberation struggles in an age that has confronted humanity with a challenge to the survival of civilisation. We believe that ensuring this survival is the *foremost duty of the Communists, a new and priority task*, as the recent 13th Congress of the CPSL described it. At the same time, guided by their class approach, the Communists realise that it is futile to fight for the freedom of one's own country or region without helping to defend and advance the cause of freedom and progress everywhere. Similarly, it is self-defeating to fight for socialism for one's own people while ignoring or seeking to distance oneself from the real socialism that

exists in our world, with all its achievements and complexities.

There have already appeared encouraging signs of changes in the positions within the communist movement. For example, certain parties which had earlier contested the conclusion of the 1957 world meeting that world war is not fatalistically inevitable have now changed their views. The determined efforts of the CPSU, after its 27th Congress, to put into effect the policies of perestroika and a vast expansion of socialist democracy are also helping to dispel the doubts certain quarters have expressed about the prospects for effective interaction of the fraternal parties on the international scene.

Although positive trends have emerged recently in the movement towards more comprehensive multilateral interaction of the Communists, there are still certain problems *that will have to be resolved before a new interactional meeting can become a reality. This process is likely to require both time and patience.*

One such problem is the insistence by certain parties on the acceptance by others of pre-conditions before they can agree to international interaction with them. This is a matter to which our party referred in its recent discussions with the Communist Party of China.

While not objecting in principle to a new world communist meeting, certain quarters have argued that it should be radically different from earlier ones, that its agenda should be more political than ideological, and that the meeting should concentrate on concrete problems and avoid any attempt to produce programmatic documents which can be regarded as a general line for the movement, binding on all parties. In their opinion, such a meeting should be a forum where experiences and views can be exchanged without a summing-up or agreed conclusions. Each party should be free to take from the discussion anything it considers suitable for its national needs.

Another view goes further and holds that a meeting confined to communist and workers' parties based on Marxism-Leninism will be sectarian and contrary to the spirit of the times. They advocate that future meetings should include not merely the communists, but other sections of the left and socialist movement as well. We believe that conferences of communist and workers' parties based on Marxism-Leninism and conferences of broader left forces can be seen as complementary. We also advocate the broadest possible left unity, comprising both the Communists and the non-Communists.

The impression is that a fundamental guiding principle — namely, *proletarian internationalism* — is invariably at the centre of the discussions under way in our movement. The growth of the movement, the diversity of its tasks, and the multiplicity of class alliances have, we believe, enlarged this concept and made it more flexible than it was in the early years of our movement.

However, there are certain basic elements to proletarian internationalism that cannot be overlooked or denied without danger to the very concept itself. Proletarian internationalism is a principle reflecting the philosophy of special relations among fraternal parties because, in terms of solidarity and support, these relations also apply to other

detachments of the working class movement. As the revolutionary core of working class unity, proletarian internationalism is also the means through which the communist movement can fulfil its historical duty of uniting and leading the working class and other forces of social progress in the struggle for peace and for national liberation and class emancipation. A party that upholds this principle does not repudiate its own independence. To it, proletarian internationalism is a desire and readiness to do everything possible to enhance the cohesion of the Communists. Where temporary differences arise because of distinctive approaches, we maintain that the efforts to resolve them should be conducted through fraternal dialogue, not confrontation.

The unfortunate splits that have occurred in some fraternal parties of industrialised capitalist and developing countries are another complication along the road to a new international meeting. Some of these splits have been attributed to subjective factors and others, to ideological considerations or external interference. Frequently, while differing sharply over domestic policies, alliances or tactics, the rival groups which used to comprise a single organisation continue to identify themselves with Marxism-Leninism and scientific socialism, support the internationalist positions of the communist movement, and seek to retain bilateral relations with the fraternal parties in other countries. The existence of more than one communist party in a single country sometimes creates problems for other fraternal parties in deciding which of them to deal with in bilateral relations, in invitations to attend congresses and international gatherings, etc.

However, where the differences do not appear to be irreconcilable or to involve repudiation of principled positions, the wisest policy for the rest of the movement is to *assist the contending groups in finding negotiated solutions*, without infringing on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other parties. Testimony to the effectiveness of such an approach is the way in which temporary divisions that arose in the Communist Party of Sri Lanka in the mid-1970s were resolved.

To sum up, one can note that there is still a distance to go in re-establishing and promoting interaction of the fraternal parties. The CPSL is convinced that the problems that exist can be resolved. To this end, it is necessary to build on all the positive features that have manifested themselves in recent times.

Communist Parties' Congresses

The Country In A Hostile Environment

Jeremia Mosotho — Communist
Party of Lesotho

THE Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Lesotho, which was held in utmost secrecy in early 1987, analysed the complex and involved political situation in the country. The military regime brought to power by the January 1986 coup d'état has not yet put forward any coherent programme for overcoming the crisis gripping Lesotho. The government's political line is not clear either.

But one thing is certain: foreign policy has shifted to the right. The authorities, having opted for broader cooperation with the South African apartheid regime, do not condemn its inhuman practices but keep telling the people that it is the lawful government of a neighbouring country and that friendly relations should be maintained with it. South African military advisers have arrived in Lesotho and a number of agreements on military cooperation have been concluded with Pretoria. A hydroengineering complex will be built jointly in the mountains under a special agreement to supply water and power to South African industries. The Lesotho economy is in the fetters of neocolonialist dependence: the finances are controlled by the British banks and industry and trade by South African private capital.

The Congress concluded that the country is ruled today by the more reactionary strata of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, by the established feudal and semi-feudal chiefs, and also by a section of the bourgeois class with close links to foreign monopolies. The government's course serves their interests and for this reason it enjoys the backing of the imperialist powers, primarily of the United States and South Africa.

The racists clearly had a hand in the events that led the military to power. However, the weaknesses of the former regime, such as its undemocratic nature and inability to meet the people's needs, also had a role to play. The country clearly headed towards chaos at the time the coup was staged. The ruling Basotho National Party was being torn apart by internal squabbles and there was strife in the army as well. The Jonathan government had lost control of the situation. The South African leaders, all those who found Lesotho's national unity an impediment, were perfectly happy with those events.

The Jonathan regime collapsed under the combined onslaught of domestic troubles and intervention from without, and power went to those of the military who had been openly opposed to the government, had close links with the King and were politically to the right of the Basotho National Party. But strife in the ruling circles did not end with the coup. Today one grouping stands for even broader cooperation with the South African

racists, for a hostile course towards socialist countries and for tougher repression at home, while another, counting on the King's political authority, is seeking the establishment of absolute monarchy. The King himself keeps his distance from the Pretoria authorities and leans towards non-alignment. Hence the controversial political course of the military regime.

The military government has so far avoided violence in repressing the democratic forces. The political parties have been banned but not the trade unions. There are no witch-hunts for the Communists and other revolutionaries. But at the same time the authorities look the other way as the racists' secret services abduct or murder in Lesotho territory alleged activists of the African National Congress. Several of our comrades have been killed in such operations.

The situation in the country is more and more alarming. The power struggles and contention between the groupings for unchallenged hegemony can any moment trigger another political explosion. The South African racists, meanwhile, are busy supporting the arch-rightist army officers in a bid to install them in power. The apartheid regime poses a grave threat to the sovereignty and independence of Lesotho by continued intervention in its internal affairs.

This acute and tense situation has made the tasks of organisation paramount for the Communists. This aspect of the party was not given enough attention in the past and the party was organisationally loose, which made for dissention and eventually led to a split in the mid-1980s. Those who broke away refused to involve themselves in the party work and did not want the party to grow stronger, ostensibly out of the fear of the government's repression. Yet it was nothing but a pretext: they did not like to find themselves involved in party building because they preferred to pose as individuals with no direct links to the party and the mass movement.

Our differences with the proponents of those views go back to the early period of the Communist Party of Lesotho. When it was established in 1962, the Communists decided that since they were numerically weak and did not have a broad social base, they should work through other political parties. Their first choice was the Basotho Congress Party. But then it espoused anti-communism and expelled our comrades. In 1968 the Fourth CPL Congress ruled that *the Communists should henceforth act as an independent political force while cooperation and alliances with other parties should be based only on a specific minimum programme.*

In 1970, we for the first time contested parliamentary elections as a party in its own right. Faced with defeat, the government invalidated the election returns and introduced a state of emergency. We had to go underground. The party lost many members in acts of repression that followed and nearly disintegrated. In the mid-1970s, however, the situation somewhat normalised. The ruling Basotho National Party shifted to the left in its foreign policy and our relations with the other political forces again became a topical issue.

The Fifth CPL Congress in 1976 reaffirmed the conclusion of the previous party forum on the need for the Communists to remain

organisationally independent. Our attitude towards the Basotho National Party was one of critical support: while endorsing the positive aspects of the government's actions on the international scene, we criticised its reactionary and undemocratic domestic policy. However, some party members, contrary to the decisions taken by the CPL, objected to that attitude towards the BNP and insisted that work should be conducted through it. The differences grew worse and finally brought about a split.

It may seem even paradoxical that the splitters, while urging work through the Basotho National Party, were in fact intriguing with that Party's right wing to remove Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan. After the coup some of them took the side of the military junta. There is no unity among the splitters, however, and they can be considered finished as a political force.

Having learned the bitter lesson of those years, our Party has set out to improve its organisational work. The first thing to do is to organise party cells of three to five members each all over the country. Unlike in the past, they should exist in the rural areas as well as in the capital of Maseru and other cities.

We attach much importance to building up our ties with mass organisations and work in them is considered a duty for every party member. Priority is attached here to revitalising the Communists' activities in the trade unions. The Lesotho working class is too small to afford disunity. The latest CPL Congress stressed that the party should do what it could to promote unity among the workers. Here our comrades are to make every effort to neutralise anti-Communist and anti-Soviet sentiments found in some segments of the working class movement.

It is extremely important for us to develop and strengthen our ties with the South African working class and its trade unions, such as the National Union of Mineworkers, in which some 200,000 immigrants from Lesotho play a notable part. These workers are the natural social base of our Party, although they work outside Lesotho. We have been virtually out of touch with them and are just beginning to establish contacts.

The racist authorities are trying hard to split up the miners' ranks and threaten the recalcitrant, especially immigrants from Mozambique and Lesotho, with deportation. There are continuous attempts to provoke ethnic strife and conflicts. The working class and trade union movement of South Africa, however, is steadily gaining strength. This situation of a revolutionary upswing increases our Party's responsibility for promoting the ideological and political awareness of immigrant workers from Lesotho so that they should be more active in the struggle mounting under the leadership of the ANC against our common enemy, the apartheid regime.

The delegates to the Seventh CPL Congress also discussed the international situation, the party's agrarian programme and other issues, and elected the ruling bodies. The Congress has been a very important event in the history of our party, which marked its 25th anniversary in May 1987. The decisions of the Congress help us to plot our course in the difficult situation and more efficiently to tackle our main political task of repulsing the intrigues of the Pretoria regime and mounting struggle for a return to democracy in the country.

Consistent Policy

Hans Kleven — Central Board and
CB Executive Committee member,
Communist Party of Norway

DEFENCE of peace has always been a part of the historical mission of the working class. Today, it is the most important part, because its class interests and the interests of mankind as a whole are best served by peace. It is quite natural, therefore, that the issues of war and peace, and disarmament, were central to our party's 19th Congress in April 1987.

A new political thinking has taken shape in the course of growing resistance to the danger of mankind's self-annihilation in a nuclear war, and one of its basic elements is recognition that there must never be a nuclear conflict. That is why our Congress drew this fundamental conclusion: "Averting a nuclear catastrophe must be the main task of political thinking and action. That puts on us the duty to spread among the people, politicians and statesmen, an understanding that such a war cannot be an acceptable instrument of policy".

Our Marxist-Leninist view of the problem of war and peace is being further elaborated in accordance with the new thinking. The new military-technical and international factors merely go to emphasise the need for the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. It was said at the Congress that "to be or not to be in the nuclear age depends on this historically concrete form of peace between the chief opposed forces of our age". What is more, there is the question of *a qualitative change in peaceful coexistence*. Up to now it was an armed peace, and if it is not to collapse, there is a need to switch to an unarmed peace. The complete elimination of the nuclear arsenals is the crucial step towards a peaceful coexistence without weapons or with a minimum quantity of weapons, and here the Soviet Union's programme for a nuclear-free world by the year 2000 is the concrete initiative.

The Congress called on all the participants in the peace movement, the government and the Storting, and on all the progressive and democratic forces of the Norwegian people to think about how Norway could promote international détente and disarmament. For their part, the Norwegian Communists have formulated three primary objectives: *make the United States agree to an end to the testing of nuclear weapons; prevent the realisation of the 'star wars' project; and create a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe*.

The central task of the peace movement in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark is to induce the authorities of these four Nordic countries to sign and seal a treaty setting up a nuclear-free zone, and the relevant negotiations are now up to the Norwegian authorities alone. Given the

Hans Kleven (b. 1926) is a lawyer by profession. He has been a member of the CP Norway since 1945. From 1961 to 1968, he was a member of the Central Board and Secretariat; in 1968 he left these bodies over disagreements with the opportunistic policy of the former chairman of the CPN. In 1971, he became a member of the Board of the CPN's Oslo organisation. Since 1975, he has been a member of the National Board, the Central Board, the CB Executive Committee, and deputy chairman of the CPN. From 1982 to 1987, he was Chairman of the CPN.

present composition of the Storting and the Norwegian Labour Party government, whose programme favours a nuclear-free North, one would expect Oslo to take a positive attitude, but the present cabinet does not appear to be eager to take any concrete steps. A Norwegian 'yes' to a nuclear-free zone is being made contingent on US and NATO approval, or on a 'European settlement', as it is also called. The implication is that the Atlantic foreign policy will be carried on and Norway's dependence on Washington will not be relaxed in any way. Up to now, neither bourgeois nor Social-Democratic governments have displayed any desire to act alone or with other Nordic countries for a nuclear-free Europe, although the most realistic way to limiting and eliminating nuclear weapons runs precisely through phased regional measures on disarmament.

The Congress posed a vital question for the future of the country and the people: "Has not the time come for the Norwegian government and the Norwegian Storting to display boldness and to begin to think and act independently? It is our people's interests, and not the Pentagon's desire, to turn the country into a forward base of nuclear strategy, that should determine Norway's policy on defence and security". That was a call on the people and the authorities of the country to take a firmer national and independent stand and to act up to it. Here pressure from mass democratic organisations on the Storting and the government becomes of tremendous importance.

A broad popular movement for peace began in Norway in the first half of the 1980s; 570,000 signatures were collected in support of the main slogans of the 'No to Nuclear Weapons!' organisation, including the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the North. It is not easy to maintain such activity, but the situation today requires that this should be done even more vigorously than it was a few years ago.

If the peace movement is to be strong and if it is to rise to the level of the present-day demands, it must, we believe, become even broader politically, ideologically and socially, and involve new groups and strata of the society. Its activities objectively involve not only the working class, but also the middle strata and bourgeoisie, including a section of the big bourgeoisie. There are peace forces in all the classes and in all the parties, and political and religious circles.

The trade union movement has a primary role in activating the peace struggle. Positive changes have taken place within the movement, and the Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions, for instance, has taken a number of decisions on fighting against nuclear weapons and in support of disarmament, a stand backed up by a five-minute general strike in October 1986. The 'star wars' project has been condemned by 19 sectoral unions. We believe, at the same time, that the unions will have to give much more attention to these key issues, because it has been proved that jobs and living standards largely depend on a fold-up of the arms race.

The church and the believers are an important potential in the struggle for peace. There is a logical link between their humanistic activities as Christian organisations on a national and international scale, and their anti-war action. Here, atheists and believers have a common priority: to cooperate for peace on the Earth. It is gratifying that the Norwegian

bishops have taken a clear stand against the nuclear arms race, and that many clergymen have spoken in defence of peace in their sermons from the pulpit.

The growth in the ranks of the peace movement adds urgency for us Communists to the task of explaining to its participants: 'who, what political forces and whose economic interests tend to whip up the arms race and push the globe to the brink of annihilation? Many lack such knowledge, and have no clear idea where the threat of war comes from. The new CPN Programme of Principle, which was discussed at the Congress, underscores the importance of the greatest number of people becoming aware of the role the US military-industrial complex has to play in building up the arsenals of war and posing the threat to world peace. The clearer the causal connection between the capitalist social system, on the one hand, and the danger of war and the arms race, on the other, the more resolute and firm will the peace movement be in supporting peace initiatives, including the Soviet proposal to conclude a general nuclear test ban treaty.

Right-wing circles and big capital in Norway, as those in a number of other industrialised capitalist countries, have mounted an offensive against the working people in the basic spheres of life: social, economic, political and ideological. On the one hand, the ruling class has been accumulating vast amounts of capital and wealth, and its members have made fortunes on hectic stock-market speculations; the steady rise in interest rates has given the banks additional vast profits. On the other hand, the working people's real wages have been going down, budget appropriations for social needs and public health care have been cut back, and there are growing queues for housing. Norway spends only 0.4 per cent of its Gross National Product on housing construction — half as much as it did in 1980. The political resolution of the Congress says that the Social Democrats' policy of class cooperation is illusory: "We have witnessed the Norwegian Labour Party government being forced to conduct, under pressure from powerful groups of capital, a bourgeois-type economic policy, to create a regime favouring the shipowners, while leading the drive to depress the working people's living standards".

The working class movement has not yet succeeded in beating off the attacks of the monopolies. Our party said that one of its main tasks is *to go over to the offensive against the right-wing forces and big capital*. To do so, the working class movement needs to be united on a new alternative economic and social policy, one which has always been centred on the issue of democratic management of the economy for the benefit of the society, in accordance with formulated plans, and in cooperation with the trade unions. The CPN believes that such management should cover capital investments, the starting of new industries, the introduction of new technologies, the use of natural resources, the extension of loans and credits, the fixing of interest rates, the funding of research projects, the regulation of foreign trade, and more stringent controls over the export of capital.

Regulation of credit policy deserves special attention. The CPN wants the existing state banks to have enough funds to finance all the projects in

the areas of their activities. That relates to housing construction, community amenities, and credits for fishermen and farmers on favourable terms. We believe that a ceiling should be put on interest rates in order to counter the harmful effects of inflation on rank-and-file recipients of credit, and to put a stop to them being robbed by private banks through high interest rates. It is time to introduce higher taxes on stock-market and real-estate speculators. That would help to transfer funds from the private sector of the economy to the public sector for solving the society's most important problems, and also to curb the power of monopoly capital.

The ultimate purpose of all the measures of control and management of the economy is *to guarantee the country's independence and to satisfy the people's material and cultural wants*. That is the basic and only reliable way of ensuring stability, greater social certitude and well-being for the individual and for the society as a whole.

The Norwegian Communists sincerely welcome perestroika, faster economic development, broader democracy and renovation of every aspect of life in the USSR and other socialist countries. In the long term, this process is bound to have an influence on the working class movement in the capitalist world, make the new social system more attractive for the labouring masses, and stimulate among them a greater interest in Marxism. If existing socialism is able to demonstrate all its social advantages, it will give a mighty impetus to the struggle for the liberation of the working people from capitalist oppression, and for peace. The important thing is to see clearly that, despite the hopes of the bourgeois politicians, the process of all-round renewal of the society in the socialist countries does not mean any departure from Marxism-Leninism. On the contrary, it is entirely in the spirit of this viable and creative doctrine. The further development of the Marxist-Leninist theory and its application in practice show the continuity of and loyalty to the fundamental values of the working class and international communist movement.

Some people in our party have hinted at the need to 'renovate' Marxism, and the Congress gave this clear and unequivocal response: Any 'renovation' can proceed only on the basis of our principles and theory; Marxism itself had no need either for renovation or modernisation; it is modern, but it needs to be continually developed and enriched with fresh analysis of the experience of daily activities and new conclusions. The Congress reaffirmed this class stand by *unanimously adopting a new Programme of Principle of the Communist Party of Norway*.

This programme is designed to replace the 1973 Programme. It is not a 'new' one in the sense that it abandons principles or adds new ones to the old. Our Programme clearly shows the continuity in preserving the theoretical Marxist-Leninist basis, the characterisation of our epoch and its basic contradictions, the assessment of capitalism and socialism as social formations, the exposition of anti-monopoly strategy, etc. As in the past, the Programme declares that the Communist Party of Norway is guided by the principles of proletarian internationalism.

At the same time, it is a new Programme in form and partly in content and structure, a reflection of the important changes that have taken place

in the country and the world since the early 1970s. It takes account of the rapid development of the scientific and technical revolution, its social consequences, the structural changes in the make-up of the working class, the alterations in the mechanism of capitalist exploitation, the monopolisation of industries, the growing concentration of capital, and its expansion abroad, and other phenomena.

The main thing, we believe, is that *the Programme now gives a central place to the issue of war and peace*. It says that in our day, the struggle for peace has become of concern to the entire human race, for it is over and above class distinctions and ideological differences. Priority significance is attached to the preservation of peace, because peace has become the main prerequisite for solving all other social problems and conflicts. At the same time, the struggle for peace is a form of class struggle, and its necessary condition. It does not abolish the laws of social development or 'postpone' their operation, and this concerns class battles, and the contest between capitalism and socialism. But it does lay an imprint on the forms of struggle for socialism, and also on relations between states belonging to the two systems. That is the starting point for understanding the idea of setting up a worldwide coalition of reason and realism for the preservation of peace.

The Drafting Committee is to go on working on the new Programme and is to lay the final text before the party leadership for approval. The new Programme is to be purposefully used in party studies, for the Marxist education of the Communists; it will help to raise the theoretical and political analysis of the realities and will promote the party's unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

Positions Of Principle

Meeting of CC Secretaries of Fraternal Parties of CMEA Member Countries

THE secretaries for economic affairs of the central committees of the communist and workers' parties of the CMEA member countries held a meeting in Sofia on September 1-2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Cuba, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Polish United Workers' Party, the Romanian Communist Party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of Vietnam, who discussed in principle the proposals considered by CMEA bodies for restructuring the mechanism of cooperation, of socialist economic integration and of the work of the Council itself.

The participants noted that, implementing the resolutions of the congresses of the fraternal parties and the CMEA Economic Summit and multilateral and bilateral agreements, the CMEA member countries had

made progress in their economic development. However, they stressed, that cooperation and improvements in its machinery should make a more tangible contribution towards the fulfilment of the strategic goals formulated by the communist and workers' parties.

Measures are being taken with assistance from the European CMEA countries in Cuba, Mongolia and Vietnam to boost their economies with the broad involvement of their domestic resources. Meanwhile, there are opportunities for upgrading cooperation and improving the efficiency of the three countries' participation in socialist economic integration. That cooperation is to accelerate the gradual bringing of their economic development levels to those of the European CMEA countries.

The measures planned to improve cooperation are designed to make it contribute as much as possible to the acceleration and intensification of the socio-economic development of the fraternal countries, to the growing well-being of their peoples, to the efficient use of the advantages of the international socialist division of labour and to the consolidation of their positions in the world economy. Special importance is attached to the broad involvement of economic organisations in every field of cooperation, inter alia, through direct relations between them, which necessitates proper conditions. All this is to extend planned cooperation among the CMEA economies and to make them more complementary.

Views were exchanged on drafting a collective concept of the international socialist division of labour for 1991-2000 in order to identify agreed areas for further improvements in cooperation. Emphasis was laid on the need substantially to increase CMEA's role in organising that cooperation, to streamline the CMEA structure and to concentrate the Council's work on strategic targets.

The participants exchanged the experience accumulated by their parties in guiding the improvement of economic management and foreign economic operations in the CMEA countries.

They stressed the immense importance of the Great October Socialist Revolution and noted the significance attached by the fraternal parties and countries to the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of that signal event.

The CMEA countries, which are unflinchingly following their course of safeguarding and strengthening peace and removing sources of tension in the world, reiterated their firm resolve to work for constraints on the arms race and for disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, so that the huge resources thus released could be used to promote development.

The participants reaffirmed the determination of their countries to broaden diverse economic, scientific and technological cooperation with all the socialist states, and also to advance equal and mutually beneficial cooperation with all the other states of the world regardless of their socio-economic systems. Stress was laid on the need for global solutions to the problems of underdevelopment, foreign indebtedness and the establishment of a new international economic order, and the invariable policy line of establishing official relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community, was reiterated.

Promoting Trust In The Party

Heinz Geggel— SUPG CC member
and head of the CC Agitation Department

THE programme of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SUPG) enjoins its members to do everything for the people's well-being and for peace, and that is what they strive to do in their day-to-day work throughout the country and in the international arena. That is the basis on which the SUPG has exercised its leading role in mobilising broad masses of people to implement its policy. There is much in which our society can take pride. That, Erich Honecker told the 11th Congress of the SUPG in 1986, is the result of the solid trust between the party and the people, and of the dedicated labour effort, discipline, skill and tireless energy of the working people of town and country.

This trust is based on the unity of the party's economic and social policy. Our assumption is that economics is a means, and not an end in itself, and that boosting production and making it more efficient must go hand in hand with an improvement of our citizens' working and living conditions. The successes of this policy are there for all to see: our working people have social certitude, full employment, growing family incomes, longer holidays, larger aids for children and privileges for working mothers, a modern system of education and public health care, moderate rents, stable consumer prices, and growing satisfaction of our people's spiritual and cultural wants.

Sometimes we have had to overcome great difficulties in blending our economic and social policy. The Communists have been working together in the light of the 1976 SUPG Programme, which has completely justified itself in practice, and which has enabled the party to identify in due time all the problems in the country's development and to discuss them with the people.

The citizens of the GDR are now aware that the Communists are as good as their word, but the record shows that there is nothing automatic about the people coming to believe that the chosen policy is the right one, or about their readiness to work most efficiently and to display creative initiative. That is why *we regard ideological and political work as the core of the whole of our party work*. The SUPG Programme puts the duty on every Communist to be 'an active fighter on the ideological front', and to work every day to implement the party's policy wherever he or she may work and live.

The qualitatively new period of development since the 11th Congress of the SUPG calls for a higher level and greater effectiveness in mass political work, and that for two main reasons. First, the existing external conditions, the gravity of the international situation, and the unusually acute struggle to ensure peace, curb the arms race and effect disarmament. Second, the scale of the tasks in mastering the scientific and technical revolution in our socialist society and in implementing the party's economic strategy.

Erich Honecker told a meeting of the first secretaries of party district committees at the SUPG CC last February that if the decisions of the 11th Congress are to be fulfilled, there must be clarity of thinking, solid socialist consciousness and unflinching class attitudes. Hence, the priority task in mass political work: no issue must be circumvented if it agitates the minds of the people, and the basic aspects of the party's domestic and foreign policy must be painstakingly explained in detail.

All of our citizens are deeply concerned with the preservation of peace. Accordingly, the SUPG has worked actively to convince our people that peace and socialism are indivisible. We do not confine ourselves to demonstrating the peace initiatives of the socialist states. After all, *the success of the GDR's policy of dialogue and cooperation crucially depends on its international standing, and that is determined by political stability and steady economic growth.* The main line of our work in political education is to drive home to the masses the connection between the two. Millions of our people now work under the slogan: 'My workplace is my sector in the struggle for peace'. Making a personal contribution to the strengthening of peace is the main motivation of their constructive and producer activity.

The decisions of the SUPG's 11th Congress require that ideological workers should explain the party's economic strategy in detail, and show the need for wide-ranging intensification, especially of development and application of key technologies. Here, two essential points are being emphasised. First, *combining the advantages of socialism and the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution (STR) is the prerequisite for steadily raising the efficiency of production, and so also of living standards.* The intricate technical, economic and social problems in large-scale industry can now be coped with by the 460 or so combines operating in the GDR, at which centralised management goes hand in hand with the working people's initiatives. Second, *the outcome of the struggle between socialism and imperialism on a world scale is ultimately determined by the sphere of the economy, by higher labour productivity and the development of science and technology.*

The working people are informed of daily plan fulfilment, of the course of socialist emulation and of the tasks before the enterprise and its units by Communists, trade unions, and executives at every level, from the director down to the team leader. We make a point of having everyone know of the extent to which the efficiency of every economic unit depends on the quantity and quality of the individual's work and economies in materials and energy, and that means everyone's awareness of how economic and social policy as a whole is being realised.

Producer collective conferences show that their members take a great interest in fulfilling the tasks set by the party's 11th Congress, and that these require hard work and good labour organisation. An effort is being made to develop everywhere creative initiative, a careful attitude to social property, and a socialist way of thinking and behaviour, so turning mass political work into a factor of high attainment with measurable results.

Comparison of the producer results and exchange of experience in the work of combines, enterprises and their units in various industries including construction, and also of agricultural cooperatives, have become

an important method of political guidance, for the examples of the best show how the work of the rest can be improved.

Wide-ranging intensification of the economy is a prominent element of the SUPG's ideological and political work. Party organisations strive to create a social climate throughout the country for mastering STR achievements. The mass media — newspapers, radio and television, most importantly — describe the key technologies, the benefits they hold for the society and for its individual members, and the work that has to be done at various levels to make use of these.

Party organisations give special attention to scientists, technologists, designers and workers on whom the solution of the problems in science and technology and the application of STR achievements to production largely depend. The best results cannot be achieved without leaving the beaten track, giving up habitual and often 'convenient' techniques, and advancing creative quests for new solutions. For that purpose, we strive to use and develop such traditional qualities of our working class and intelligentsia as their fine work ethic, commitment, inventiveness, flair for creativity, and sense of discipline. In 1986, for instance, 6,000 working people at the Carl Zeiss Jena combine were trained in microelectronics, industrial robotics and new technologies. By the end of this year, another 12,000 workers at the combine are to receive training and retraining.

Let me repeat that combining high economic indicators with a steady improvement of working and living conditions is the crucial factor of the SUPG policy. That is also an important sector of trade union activities in the GDR. The 11th Congress of the Association of Free German Trade Unions in April 1987 held a frank discussion of how the trade unions have been making use of those of their democratic rights which involve participation in management and planning at the enterprises, and how they have responded to the working people's concerns, wants, proposals and critical remarks.

The citizens of the GDR have seen for themselves that the principle of blending economic and social policies, the basis of the party's strategy, is the right one. They are also aware that the country has scored all its successes in sustained struggle against imperialism, which has increasingly revealed its incapacity to solve any problems for the benefit of man. The facts of everyday life make our people proud of the accomplishments of socialism and strengthen their confidence that the people of the GDR, led by the SUPG, will be able to fulfil their tasks in the future as well. The pledge there is the solid and militant unity of the SUPG and the CPSU, of the GDR and the USSR, and of the fraternal parties and peoples of all the socialist countries. We have been developing exchanges of experience with them in every field of social life.

The system of socialist democracy in the GDR serves to strengthen the trust between the party and the people. It is not confined to elections alone. Millions of men and women are daily involved in state and social affairs under this slogan: 'Take part in labour, planning and management!' Almost one in three citizens are variously engaged in concrete social work: as trade union activists, and as members of parents' committees at schools, grievance and arbitration commissions, labour safety commissions at

enterprises, housing commissions in the neighbourhoods, and so on.

Along with the SUPG, there are four allied political parties: the Democratic Farmers' Party of Germany, the Christian Democratic Union of Germany, the Liberal Democratic Party of Germany, and the National Democratic Party of Germany, together with numerous mass organisations, ranging from the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions to the Society for the Protection of Nature and the Environment. These forces have been doing great work among the masses to ensure observance of the citizens' diverse interests. Consequently, *along with the working class and its party, our allies have been making a unique contribution to the country's social life.*

The SUPG wants all persons in office — deputies, burgomasters, and officials of the state apparatus — to keep in constant touch with the masses. Their duty is to find out what the people want, to answer their questions, and to correct any mistakes and shortcomings without red tape. Concern for the needs of citizens helps to create a healthy social climate in the workplace, and in the neighbourhoods in town and countryside. Political, social, cultural and democratic rights are being realised in goodwill cooperation between all the classes, strata and social groups. Under socialism, there are no 'second-rate' citizens or 'social outcasts'.

The ideological situation in the GDR is specific in that two German states — one socialist and the other capitalist — coexist side by side, and that West Berlin lies in the centre of our country. That helps us to spread widely information about the GDR's policy, about the achievements of the new social system, and about the peace proposals of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community. But five TV channels and almost 20 radio stations on the other side broadcast their programmes in German round the clock in an effort to meddle in our internal affairs.

This constant confrontation goes to determine the conditions in which the SUPG has to carry on its work, including ideological and political work. The results are there for all to see. Today, almost four decades since the founding of the German Democratic Republic, the truth about our socialist reality, about our people's confidence in the future and their sense of being well safeguarded, and about our peace policy is becoming ever more obvious. No one anywhere, including the FRG, can ignore the achievements of socialism which exist on German soil.

The SUPG's experience shows that once a clear-cut political goal has been set, use must be made of diverse methods of agitation work in concrete and interesting forms. While the mass media are most important in our day, they cannot be a substitute for person-to-person contacts between party members and non-party people. Thousands of party, state and economic functionaries use telling arguments in a well-organised and concerted political dialogue in the work collectives and in the neighbourhoods on the main political issues and current events.

The eighteen months since the 11th Congress of the SUPG have shown that its decisions are on the whole being successfully fulfilled. We are now able to state that the positions of socialism and peace have been further consolidated thanks to the GDR working people's creative initiatives and their urge to achieve high results. These achievements in domestic and

foreign policies are the outcome of the SUPG's cohesion and testify to its higher militancy and solid relations of trust with the whole people.

The Figures Tell the Story

EVERYTHING FOR THE BENEFIT OF MAN

— From 1970 to 1986, the GDR's national income and industrial output went up by over 100 per cent, and crop yields, by 32.8 per cent.

— In mid-1987, the GDR had 73,000 industrial robots and 31,000 computer-aided design (CAD) systems. By 1990, the number of CAD systems is to go up to 85,000-90,000.

— Real incomes in the GDR in 1986 were twice as high as those in 1971, while cash incomes per head went up by 91 per cent.

— By 1990, the number of new and modernised flats in the GDR will come to roughly 3.5 million; 10.5 million of the GDR's 17 million citizens will have their housing conditions improved.

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

— The discussion of the draft five-year plan for 1986-1990 and of the 1987 plan involved 6.1 million working people in the GDR, who made over 777,000 proposals, of which account has been taken in the plan.

— The SUPG has 2.3 million members, its allied parties have 450,000 members, while 9.5 million working people are members of the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions, of whom 2.5 million are union activists.

— Some 268,000 citizens of the GDR are deputies and candidate deputies of the councils of people's representatives; 450,000 are members of commissions and groups of activists: 368,000 take part in the work of National Front committees, and more than 1 million in house committees.

— Over 60,000 members of the parties allied with the SUPG work on the councils of people's representatives, 1,180 are burgomasters, 10,000 work in the state apparatus, and 10,200 are people's assessors, judges and members of comrades' courts.

Grassroots Experience

Communists In Work Collectives

Nicolae Gheorghiu — deputy editor-in-chief, *Munca de Partid*, journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Romania

ONE of the salient features of Romania's modern history is the evolution of the revolutionary party of the working class into the leading political force of society. The party scientifically plans ways for the comprehensive

We continue our coverage of the work of primary organisations of the fraternal parties (see *WMR*, No. 6, 1987). This is a summary of an article received by the *WMR* delegation at the meeting of editors of party journals from socialist countries in Zakopane, Poland.

development of the country and mobilises the people through more than 70,000 primary organisations for the practical implementation of its main policy line.

Primary party organisations are the backbone of all the work collectives, ensuring everywhere the exercise by the party of its leading role, the unity of will and action among the Communists and all other working people and ever stronger links with the mass of the population. CPR General Secretary Nicolae Ceausescu has stressed on more than one occasion the need to attach priority attention to those party cells which should be the motive force of every work collective in the economy and in social and cultural affairs.

The party constantly takes care to promote the growth and activity of the primary organisations and to extend their powers. The best people are chosen to work in the party bureaux and usually more candidates are nominated for election to them than there are vacancies. Before standing for election at party conferences and congresses, candidacies are discussed by the Communists and other comrades at the workplace.

Before general meetings of the working people are called at the beginning of every year, the primary organisations assess the performance of officials and executives. Depending on these assessments, decision is taken whether they should continue in their posts. Exercising their right of recall, the participants in the general meetings in 1987 withdrew 270 senior officials and executives, among them directors, their deputies, chief engineers and accountants, and party secretaries, who concurrently chaired working people's councils. They were replaced with new comrades.

Practice shows that the growth of the role of primary organisations depends in large measure on support for and control over grassroot activities. Our party has taken a number of measures in this respect, which have resulted in an organisational innovation. Teams of volunteer instructors have now been set up at all the municipal and town party committees, with every instructor assigned to one or two primary organisations. Being knowledgeable and experienced, instructors help plan party work and organise and hold meetings, and also attend bureau sittings.

In addition, members of the district, municipal, town and communal party committees and their staff are obliged to attend a fixed number of general meetings in primary organisations, which involves help in drafting and implementing the decisions taken by those meetings. Those party workers now delve deep into the life of work collectives and give them concrete help as they discharge their duties of mentorship, support and control.

Measures are taken to strengthen primary organisations numerically and to improve their work, and also to perfect acceptance procedures. Party bureaux assign experienced and respected cadres to take charge of younger comrades wishing to join the CPR. As candidates prepare for enrolment, they study not just the Party Programme and Rules but also the practical aspects of party work in their collectives.

In this way a close relationship with veteran communists helps future

party members gain knowledge and develop skills essential to the political and organisational work in the party, learn the rules and requirements of the inner party life and develop the fighting spirit which helps them upon joining the party immediately to become active in the life of their organisation.

The CPR appeal is seen from its continuous numerical growth. While in 1965 the party numbered 1,450,000, the figure today is almost 3.7 million. More than 55 per cent of the membership are workers, 15.6 per cent farmers, and 20.5 per cent intellectuals and office employees. Altogether 34 per cent of the membership are women.

The party is therefore represented in every sphere of the economic, social and political life. Yet this is a prerequisite rather than guarantee for its success. To make it work, the Communist should act energetically, the party organisations and their bureaux should thoroughly realise their tasks and the party activists should constantly improve their qualifications.

Many of the present-day secretaries of party committees at large enterprises are graduates of party schools. The bureau members of the primary organisations every year take a graded refresher course under a programme which includes lectures, methodological seminars and exchanges of experience. In the 1987 election campaign, all the leading party bodies, including at the grassroot level, were renovated in accordance with the CPR Rules by at least one-third. Education was organised for the newly-elected comrades with emphasis on practical work: they have to know how to fulfil tasks as well as to understand them.

The journal *Munca de Partid* (Party Work) contributes to this effort. It features advice to the grassroot elective activists on ways of organising the bureau's work between party meetings, on the duties of the party organisation secretary and his or her deputies, on planning, and on directing the activities of mass public organisations and fostering worker self-management at enterprises under conditions of cost-accounting.

The primary party organisations seek to have their members be exemplary workers and fulfil all the party and state decisions and resolutions. Regular party assignments, the implementation of which is monitored, are one way of achieving this goal. Success comes to those who, in giving assignments, take account of the requirements of political and organisational work and the need to raise and resolve the more outstanding questions and reckon with the qualifications, inclinations and wishes of every party member.

Today's assignments are geared first and foremost to the fulfilment of the resolutions of the 13th CPR Congress (November 1984) and national programmes on the modernisation of production, improvements in the technological standards and quality of output, the accelerated growth of labour productivity (which is to double by 1990), and savings of raw and other materials and energy. The Communists study these programmes individually or collectively and do what they can to contribute towards their implementation.

The application of a new provision written into the Party Rules by the 13th CPR Congress has produced good results. Under it, all the party members are periodically to report to their comrades on the fulfilment of

their assignments. Another time-tested method, one-to-one talks of bureau members with every Communist, is used also with good effect.

All this multifaceted work is reflected in *Munca de Partid*, which helps Communists recognise achievements, identify shortcomings and add to the experience of the primary party organisations.

INFORMATION

In Brief

ARGENTINA

The first issue of *Ideología y política*, the theoretical journal of the Communist Party of Argentina, has come off the press. The main aims of the periodical are to help the party cadre and all Communists raise their ideological and political level and to publicise Marxist-Leninist theory. The issue opens with an article by CPA General Secretary Athos Fava who analyses the situation in Argentina and the tasks of the party.

ECUADOR

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ecuador has decided to convene the regular 11th Congress of the CPE in April 1988, after the presidential and parliamentary elections slated for January. The United Left Front of Ecuador which includes the CPE has nominated Jaime Hurtado, leader of the Popular Democratic Movement party, for President and the Communist Efraim Alvarez for Vice-President. Rene Mauge Mosquera, General Secretary of the CPE Central Committee, heads the bloc's ticket in the elections to the unicameral parliament.

FRG

A recent plenary session of the German Communist Party Board has called on all democratic forces of the country to step up their struggle against the forays of Nazis old and new.

INDIA

A decision to launch a nationwide campaign on urgent issues of the country's socio-economic and political development has been taken at a summit conference of four left parties — the Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist Party. Among other things, the left parties demand the resignation of the present government and more resolute measures against rising prices and against corruption in the higher echelons of the civil service.

Newspaper Festivals

Volkstimme, the newspaper published by the Communist Party of Austria, has celebrated its annual festival in Prater, Vienna's biggest park, under the slogans of fighting for peace, disarmament and détente, against the policy of the authorities which increases unemployment. Tens of thousands of Austrians who attended the festival expressed their support for the Communist newspaper, many of them taking part in discussions and seminars.



A national festival of *l'Unita*, the newspaper of the Italian Communists, was held in Bologna from August 29 to September 20 to pay homage to Antonio Gramsci on the 50th anniversary of his death. More than five million people attended. Taking part in the festival were delegations from different countries and many Italian political, trade union and civic activists. A large-scale exchange of views on left initiatives, as well as seminars and round tables on international issues, were organised.



The ninth traditional festival of *Voz*, the newspaper of the Colombian Communists, was this year devoted to its 30th anniversary, to the 57th anniversary of the Colombian Communist Party, and to the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. An exhibition was mounted to highlight the history of the CCP and various stages in its struggle for social transformations, democracy and peace.



The Palace of Sports in the steelworkers' town of Schiffflange hosted a festival of the Luxembourg communist daily *Zeitung vum Letzeburger Vollek*. Exhibitions were mounted in the brightly decorated hall, highlighting the party's struggle for the vital interests of the working people, for peace, democracy and socialism. There were also displays of exhibits sent by sister newspapers.



The recent festival of *l'Humanite*, the French communist newspaper, was devoted to the 26th Congress of the FCP scheduled for December 1987 and to the forthcoming presidential elections of 1988. An international camp of tents and stalls sprang up in La Courneuve, a suburban park near Paris, and for two days in September more than 1.5 million people came there to attend dozens of discussions and rallies. The festival offered an extensive cultural programme. A political address was delivered by Andre Lajoinie, member of the FCP Political Bureau and the party's presidential candidate.



The traditional festival of *Rude pravo* was this year held to commemorate the first issue of the Czechoslovak communist newspaper which appeared on September 21, 1920. Within two days, some 140,000 people visited Julius Fučík Park in Prague to view exhibits mounted by newspapers and periodicals from socialist countries and to attend performances of musical and folk art ensembles from Czechoslovakia, the USSR and Latin American and African countries.



Duisburg, a major industrial centre in the Ruhr, hosted a festival of *Unsere Zeit*, the German Communist Party newspaper. More than 450,000 people attended the event. Political discussions dealt with issues of nuclear disarmament and the struggle for peace in Europe, of unemployment, the social position of women, and the need for greater solidarity with the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

After The Electoral Defeat

A Survey of the Italian Communists' Discussion

Adalberto Minucci—member of the
ICP Leadership

In last June's snap parliamentary elections in Italy, the Communist vote was 3.3 per cent down from 1983. The causes of the defeat and the ways of righting the situation came under a broad discussion in the ICP as soon as the elections were over. *WMR* asked Adalberto Minucci to comment on the election returns, to tell of the conclusions reached by the Italian Communists in the course of the discussion, and to describe the problems facing the ICP.

THE Communist Party suffered some heavy losses in the June elections: its candidates were backed by 782,000 fewer voters as compared with four years ago. It is all the more ominous since it followed upon the ICP's reverses in the 1979 and 1983 elections. The unfavourable trend which got under way at the end of the 1970s is in sharp contrast to that of the 1963-1976 period, when there was virtually a steep upward spiral of the communist vote in Italy.¹

It is true that in the elections to the European Parliament in 1984 we had a fairly high score: the ICP was supported by 33.3 per cent of the electorate, and this raised it to the top among the West European left-wing forces in the number of votes won. The referendum on the sliding-scale wage in 1985 also provided evidence of the broad support enjoyed by the

Communists. Although we failed to put through our proposals, 46.0 per cent of Italians voted for them. But these two highly specific examples apart, one has to admit that the Communists' standing in the electoral campaigns since 1979 is clearly at odds with our earlier successes.

The session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the ICP in June started a wide discussion throughout the party from the grassroots organisations to the governing bodies, with tens of thousands of Communists taking part. For all the political and theoretical significance of the discussion, its outcome cannot be regarded as final. This is merely the starting point for further in-depth analysis in the run-up to a National Conference of the party on programmatic issues to be held in the spring of 1988.

The results of the latest elections are regarded by the party as a symptom of a highly important phenomenon that is characteristic not only of our own country. The ICP's defeat is of a piece with the overall picture of the declining influence of the left-wing forces in Western Europe. We reached that conclusion not because we wanted to find a pretext for solace by selecting vindictory facts which is not our aim. The fact is that when studying the political trends in Italy, the Communists are confronted with the same problems as the working class movements and left-wing parties throughout the capitalist West.

In the latter half of the 1970s, the right-wing and moderate conservative circles mounted a powerful class counter-offensive. They had discovered that the pillars of their hegemony had been shattered and their economic domination jeopardised by the changes in the world correlation of forces and the more vigorous anti-imperialist struggle. The left had advanced in the countries of mature capitalism, notably in Italy, France and the FRG, and that was reflected in the election returns. The working class had made considerable trade union and political gains. That was the state of things until the middle and end of the 1970s.

The wide conservative offensive is still under way. It has proceeded in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres on the basis of some new ideologies or old but refurbished ones. One need merely recall the concept of neoliberalism, the myths of 'personal success' and 'boundless opportunities', the newly discovered 'values' of individualism, and so on.

This offensive has yielded results virtually in all the Western countries. Its initiators made use for ideological purposes of the contradictions and weaknesses in the socialist countries and in the Third World. The conservative forces found their leaders in personalities like Reagan, Thatcher, Chirac, Kohl and Nakasone. The left suffered a string of defeats in Japan, Great Britain, West Germany, Spain, Portugal, France and Italy. Nor are things any better in Nordic Europe.

The most developed industrial societies are being literally rocked by the effects of the crisis of the past decade and the processes of economic, social and political transformations.

Some groups of the left now cast doubt on the existence of a class that could be an embodiment of their common interests and prospects for a new society. Indeed, the ongoing changes are such that they make one give serious thought to the mission of the working class, at any rate in the sense

in which we have seen it until now. There is also a change in the forms of labour typical of past decades: here important changes have taken place under the impact of the scientific and technical revolution and the new technologies.

From the outset the ICP has demonstrated a capacity to analyse and comprehend the nature of the changes in the working class and in the capitalist society generally and steadily to develop and renew its own policy. Here is an example to illustrate what I mean. In the post-World War II period, when individual labour in Italy began to give way to assembly-line production in industry, the ICP was able to respond correctly to this development by helping to fortify the positions of the working class and by enlarging its unions. By contrast, the same process in a number of other countries led to a weakening of the unions and communist parties. That was when the Italian Communists also established themselves as a major political force in the electorate.

We are now faced with a new trial that is as challenging as the earlier one. Communists and the left in Italy, like those in Western Europe generally, do not yet have a correct answer to the processes transforming the society. For the time being, the conservative forces have gained the upper hand, they have dealt heavy blows at the trade unions and the working people, and have put all the left-wing parties and movements in a quandary.

It was said in the discussion that the party had made some mistakes and even blunders over the past few years: we were unable, for instance, to make our democratic alternative policy entirely consistent. It failed to direct into a single channel the efforts of the Communists and those of the other left-wing and democratic forces, which together with the ICP presented a potential alternative to the political system headed by the Christian Democrats. One was often left with the impression that the task was being reduced to establishing a political front, an alliance of parties. That is why it was enough for one or more parties — potential allies of the ICP — to refuse to constitute such an alliance or to disagree with it on some issues for the alternative policy to be undermined. What is more, we failed to tie in this slogan with the mass movement, to mobilise the working people, the members of the traditional and modern working class, in its support.

The problems of the young were widely discussed. There was a sizeable loss for the Communist Party of young voters in the elections.² That is also characteristic of all the left-wing forces in the West. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a major shift of young people to the left, and at the time most young men and women either joined the party or supported it. The process was then reversed: a section of the young turned their backs on politics, and another section opted for the ideology of personal success.

It is not so easy to give a straightforward answer to the question of what young people are today in our society and what they want. They find it hard to accept the values and culture of earlier generations, and there is every indication that it is a phenomenon that is in evidence not only in the capitalist world. When I was in Moscow recently, I saw a film, *Is It Easy to be Young?* and it left a deep impression on me. It seemed to me that it

dealt with problems that were similar or very much like those facing young people in the West.

There is a great difference between the present generation and that which we used to call the 'Vietnam' generation (meaning the millions of young men and women throughout the world who voiced solidarity with the Vietnamese people's struggle). Most of those who belong to the present generation have no clear view of any objectives, however simple and elementary, for the sake of which one should be politically and morally active.

I think that we have here before us a wide front of work. Everything will depend on whether we are able once again to help young people to rediscover the great ideals of our movement, such as peace, solidarity, freedom and morality. The moral aspect is highly important, because the mistrust young people in Italy, the United States and other countries have for politics largely originates from their condemnation of the corruption pervading the ruling classes and government. It is important to present these great values to young people in concrete terms and to put them into the context of the present.

Efforts to offer young people a new way are now being made in Italy by the Catholic Church and its sponsored organisations, which urge a return to 'absolute truths' that are, at all events, metaphysical and not concretely historical. These organisations can attract some young people, but they are incapable of truly helping many young men and women who are worried over their condition and know nothing about their prospects and future.

At one time, we Communists had convictions which subsequently turned out to be based on illusion, and that is why I am not at all inclined to claim that our party is alone capable of giving the new generations the right answers to their burning questions. But the decade of the conservative wave has made it clear that while the ideology of Reaganism and neoliberalism and their recipes have had some success among a section of the young, they are still doomed to failure, ephemeral and unrealistic since they offer nothing for the solution of their problems. What is more, there is a growing understanding among young people that behind the neoliberal myth of personal success lurks the reality of unemployment, the discrepancy between schooling and the requirements of the scientific and technological revolution, and so on. That being so, we believe that it is the task of the Communists and all other left-wing forces to offer the young generations a concrete alternative policy.

The participants in the discussion said that while the ICP suffered a defeat, the elections were a success in one sense: we got into parliament the largest number of women ever. The Communists scored this success through a very vigorous and purposeful campaign under this slogan: 'Vote for Women!'. I do not think that it could have stemmed the downward trend in the number of votes cast for the ICP, but we regard the outcome of the campaign as a major political gain and as the result of the party's long struggle for the freedom of all the members of the society, and for social and civic progress.

Several points should be brought out when considering the conclusions of the discussion.

The party reaffirmed its democratic alternative course, but made some important corrections. First, the alternative concept should be based not only on relations between the various parties, but should also be programmatic, with reliance on mass unitary movements. Second, we need to address proposals and initiatives to the Socialists and other left-wing forces that would be open for everyone prepared for cooperation between political and public movements. Here the Communists must not bind themselves with rigid formulae. The Socialists now tell us: "You will be unable to start a dialogue with anyone except us — either with the Christian Democrats or the Catholics." We, for our part, are convinced that the alternative can be built if all the forces concerned with renewing the Italian society are involved in the dialogue.

From the standpoint of our prospects, special significance will attach to our capacity to extend contacts with members of left-wing parties and movements, which in Italy are now fragmented. There were dozens of electoral rolls in many constituencies, and some of them got only a handful of votes (that does not apply to the Greens, who on the contrary won representation in parliament for the first time). This kind of fragmentation naturally tends to disperse the potentialities of the left-wing forces. Things were complicated by the fact that at one point the Italian Socialist Party in fact joined the moderate conservative offensive. We oppose this tendency and have for our part been doing everything we can to create the conditions in which the views of the left could coincide. Much here will depend on the climate that will be established in the relations between all the working class parties of Western Europe — Communists, Socialists and Social Democrats — and, which is of no small importance, with the left-wing Catholics, who have a great weight in Italy and some other countries.

To what extent have the changes in the make-up of the party's governing bodies and its cadre policy been influenced by the outcome of the elections?

There is no denying that the electoral defeat confronted the ICP with the necessity of renewal. We could not pretend that nothing has happened. But the main thing is that a new, quite numerous and highly skilled generation of cadres has been taking shape in the recent period, so the question of its access to party leadership has arisen. For some years now, especially at the latest congress, such cadres (most of them just over thirty and some even younger) have been introduced into the central bodies. From this standpoint, there has been a marked rejuvenation of the party (which, regrettably, does not apply to its membership as a whole).

The July session of the CC and the CCC considered the question of renewal on the level of the ICP's highest bodies as well. The Secretariat, which has seven members, now has only one member of the older generation: the party's General Secretary; two belong to the middle-age group, and four are under forty. Let me stress that we regard these changes as a natural result of the constant course set on renovating the party and its governing bodies.

Let me note in conclusion the importance of the international factor for the success of the Communists. We have watched with interest the

reforming efforts in the Soviet Union initiated by Mikhail Gorbachov, and wish them every success. We have simultaneously sought to strengthen our independence and make it adequate to the conditions of the Italian society today. The ICP hopes that the evolution of international relations will enable us to live in peace, freely to discuss our common problems with other democratic forces and all together to join actively in the struggle for a better future for mankind.

¹ In 1976, the ICP won 34.4 per cent of the poll (the highest ever), in 1979 — 30.4 per cent, in 1983 — 29.9 per cent, and in 1987 — 26.6 per cent. — *Ed.*

² According to *l'Unita*, 17 per cent of voters under the age of 25 supported the ICP. — *Ed.*

History and Our Day

Veterans of the Revolution

I Envy The Young People

Konstantin Sinozersky — member of the CPSU since 1917 and participant in the storming of the Winter Palace

HARDLY anyone would be surprised to hear such a confession from a person who was born at the beginning of this century. Indeed, I sincerely envy the young generation of today and believe that the cause of my life, the cause of the Great October Revolution, is in safe and strong hands — promoting this cause, this generation is to accomplish and see a lot.

This is not blind faith. I often have meetings with young people and try to be abreast of their cares. I feel they have interest in my generation and in our youth, which we spent fighting in the front ranks wherever the party sent us.

I joined the party a few days before the storming of the Winter Palace when I was already with a Red Guards unit of Petrograd's Vyborg district. We had never held a rifle in our hands nor known how to fall in. But we wanted to be real soldiers of the revolution with all our hearts and every night we enthusiastically studied the art of warfare. My four friends and I had the recommendations from Mikhail Kalinin¹, who knew us by our joint work at the Aivaz plant.

After the victory of the October Revolution a group of soldiers from our unit was sent to form a combined force to guard the Smolny Palace, which housed the Council of People's Commissars. It was there that I saw Lenin. Let me describe my first meeting with him.

One day my friend Plyakov and me were going back to the guards' quarters after our term of duty. In the corridor we came across Bonch-Bruyevich². He asked us how we were getting along and if we had our tea regularly. (We had been at loggerheads with the chief of the guards who

had little concern for the Red Guards.) We answered that everything was all right. Bonch-Bruyevich was not alone. His companion also began to ask us questions: he wanted to know how old we were, where we came from, where we had our schooling, who our parents were, what we had done before joining the Red Guards and how we happened to be with the Smolny guards. He heard us out and said that we were right to press the point. In our condition, he pointed out, tea became a problem which affected work. "Always expose every, even the most insignificant shortcoming and if you cannot correct them yourselves put your superiors in the know." Then, pointing at us, he told Bonch-Bruyevich: "We should increase the ranks of our party by enrolling people like them." "But the two of them are party members, Vladimir Ilyich," Bonch-Bruyevich replied.

It then dawned upon us that we had been talking to Lenin.

I have lived a long and far from easy life since then. I fought against the counter-revolutionary basmatch gangs in the Pamirs, built a new railway line in the Far East, fought against fascism at the fronts of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 and worked at the General Headquarters and the Army Law Academy . . . I am not recalling my life story to stress that my generation made all the accomplishments through struggle and at the cost of great sacrifices, courageous efforts and self-abnegation. I want to warn the young against looking for an easy life and seeing themselves as merely the happy heirs with all the difficulties surmounted. One cannot accomplish without struggle or strain the lofty tasks of making life better, edifying oneself, augmenting the spiritual and material wealth of one's homeland and mankind, preserving peace on Earth and handing it all over to the coming generations.

This path has in store much which is unknown and new and which does not always come easily. And perestroika carried out in our country is indisputably a new initiative, even though it is a direct extension of the October Revolution, a concrete embodiment of its ideas and creates the conditions for a more effective use of the tremendous potential of socialism.

But as people justly say it is easier said than done. At this turning point of today everyone of us faces the problem of one's own responsibility for perestroika. "That 'beautiful tomorrow'," Mikhail Gorbachov pointed out, "may not materialise if everyone does not work today by the sweat of his brow, changing his way of thinking, overcoming inertia, and mastering new approaches."³ This is the order of the day and this is what the experience of the October Revolution teaches us.

¹ Mikhail Kalinin (1875-1946), a CPSU member from 1898 and member of the CPSU CC from 1919, took part in the 1905-1907 Revolution and the February and October Revolutions of 1917. He was chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee from 1919, chairman of the Central Executive Committee from 1922 and chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet from 1938.

² Vladimir Bonch-Bruyevich (1873-1955), a Soviet party leader and statesman, party member from 1895, participated in three revolutions. In the period from 1917 to 1920 he was the executive secretary of the Council of People's Commissars.

³ Report by the CPSU CC General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov to the June 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, *Moscow News*, Supplement to No. 27, 1987, p. 3.

There Is No Open Sesame To Freedom

Emil Habibi — CC Political Bureau member, Communist Party of Israel

WHEN did I first become aware of the ideas of the October Revolution? The more I think of it the more convinced I become that 'first' cannot be pinpointed: realisation of the significance of that event grew along with the process of my own ideological maturing. That process was influenced by the first Palestinian Communists, who, though numerically weak and viciously persecuted, made a profound impact on our generation.

I was the seventh child in my family. My elder brothers worked in the railway depot, built a breakwater in Haifa Port, and then took up jobs at an oil refinery. My parents were believers and my father, a village school teacher, was chosen the elder of our religious community. Fate was not kind to him: when the British army took over a tract of land after World War I, his family's plot turned out to be right in the middle of that area. That misfortune brought my parents to the city.

One of my elder brothers took over from our aging father as the breadwinner. Some of his fellow-workers were members of the banned Communist Party of Palestine and our house, which was 'above suspicion', was used for meetings of the party cell. My father paid no heed to the secret gatherings, pretending that he did not suspect anything. But I was very keen on what they talked about. Sometimes I walked in on those meetings or, driven by a child's curiosity, eavesdropped on them at the door. I sensed only 'revolution' in the word 'Bolshevik', which was then taboo.

After such meetings some of the comrades used to leave behind books; I remember, in particular, Leo Tolstoi's *A Confession*. I grew fascinated with Russian classics translated into Arabic. During the six-month Great Strike in Palestine in 1936, a schoolmate took me, then a 15-year-old boy, to a bookshop from which one could borrow books for a fee of one piastre a month. I learned far more from books than from school classes, where history was taught from textbooks published by the British colonialists: according to them, 'history' ended with the end of World War I and the Armistice of November 11, 1918. On that anniversary every year the wives of British officers handed out to schoolchildren flowers of wild red plums (*berkuk*), while their husbands executed Palestinian patriots in Akka's jail as on any other day.

In the late 1930s, when I was about to graduate from school, I heard about the feats of the Palestinian fighter who led an armed resistance command in the Al-Khalil Mountains. My schoolmates and I kept discussing in secret a plan to form a group and join the rebels. I wrote a short story about that hero and the feats of a handful of workers and farmers who won victories over the British imperial army. Years later I realised that it was my urge to do something that made me write.

Frankly, when I learned that the word 'Bolshevik' derived from

bolshinstvo, majority, I was slightly disappointed: in my mind it had been associated with the magic words like 'open sesame' from the *Arabian Nights* tales. I heard the truth about the Bolsheviks from a Communist worker.

One of my brothers wanted me to become an oil engineer and thus fulfil his own dream, which was out of his reach. I enrolled in the correspondence department of London University and took up a job as a locomotive engineer's mate. And the engineer was that same Communist I had just mentioned. It was not at once that I learned about his political affiliation. Once, over a snack, I told him in a heart-to-heart talk about my literary ambitions. He listened sympathetically to my simple secrets but nevertheless made criticisms, some of them rather stinging. He for his part shared with me his visions of the future and spoke about the Soviet Union, where oppression and exploitation of man by man had been uprooted. At that time I was looking for a meaning in life, for a goal to devote myself to entirely. So my older friend led me to that goal, explaining to me that it depended in large measure on my generation, including myself, if the homeland would achieve what the Soviet Union has achieved. There is no open sesame to the treasure-house of knowledge and freedom, he said. The doors to them should be broken open by force, just as the workers hew out blocks of rock in the Itleet quarries.

His words became ingrained in my memory. The 1948 tragedy in Palestine separated us and I have not heard of him since.

. . . Long ago our ancestors struggled against oppression and tyranny, defying all the reversals and setbacks; there were rebellions of Roman slaves, revolutionary movements of Black slaves and the Karmatians' movement in the Arab East. Those setbacks became past history 70 years ago, when socialism first materialised on Earth. As for the spirit of the October Revolution, which is as viable and relevant as ever, it is well exemplified by boldness and audacity, like those of the Paris Communards who stormed the heavens, as Marx graphically put it.

The Soviet Communists, I think, are bold, audacious and daring in their present-day striving to renew and rejuvenate the Communist ideas. They are bearing a great share of the responsibility for the destinies of humanity. In the whole of preceding history, such a heavy burden has not fallen to the lot of either the Communards or any other political movement, nation or country. A strong impetus to the renewal of socialism has been given by realisation of the need to do everything possible for human survival.

We remember Lenin's famous reply to his opponents, who claimed there was no party in the country that could assume full power and responsibility. The leader of the Russian revolution stated, "Yes, there is!" Processes in the Soviet Union today are giving us confidence that there is such a party and that it is living on, acting and winning victories.

In our youth, we often argued about what the world would be like after the triumph of communism. Now, wise with years and experience, we in the main know the answer. But is it enough just to know? The main thing is to act. We Communists will have for a long time yet to break a new trail, which can be followed only by bold and audacious people, willing to pay a price for advance towards the unknown.

The Event Which Charted The Future

Ha Hui Giap — Director of the Ho Chi Minh Museum, veteran of the Communist Party of Vietnam

THE thunder of the October Revolution in Russia resounded all over the globe, as Comrade Ho Chi Minh, the founder of our party and of socialist Vietnam, so graphically put it. The long dark night over Vietnam was dispelled by the light of Marxist-Leninist ideas and the experience of that revolution, and opened up a realistic perspective for our people. It gave us confidence in our national-liberation struggle and our own revolution, which triumphed in August 1945.

The Vietnamese people defeated the French colonialists and the US aggressors, and united its homeland, and since then it has carried on and developed its fine revolutionary traditions, and built up and defended its united socialist state under the leadership of its Leninist party and with the assistance of the USSR and the international communist, working class and liberation movement.

We in Vietnam have always been convinced that the October Revolution ushered in a new era for the whole of mankind, and that the Soviet Union, which the revolution brought into being, has been and continues to be the bastion of all the progressive forces. That is why we have always celebrated every anniversary of that significant event as our own great holiday. The more trying were the conditions, the more resolutely we acted having in mind the epic of the October Revolution.

CPV CC General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh (who was known in the underground as Kouk) was a 16-year-old secondary-school pupil in Hai Hung region in 1930, when he was given the assignment of circulating leaflets in the regional centre to mark the anniversary of the October Revolution. He was caught and subjected to agonising interrogation, but gave away nothing. The young revolutionary was then sentenced to a six-month term of imprisonment. Terrified by the sweep of the revolutionary movement in the country, the authorities later forced the court to review his case, and Nguyen Van Linh was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was transferred from Hanoi to the prison on Condor Island, where comrades Nguyen Van Cu, Le Duan, Pham Van Dong and Hoang Quoc Viet were also incarcerated. While in prison, Comrade Nguyen Van Linh fought against the inhuman conditions of imprisonment and the barbarous treatment of the prisoners, but also managed to carry on political and theoretical studies, learned French, and read Marxist-Leninist writings in that language.

Le Van Kiet, another prisoner at Condor Island serving a life sentence,

Ha Hui Giap (b. 1902) has been in the revolutionary struggle since 1926; he joined the CP Indochina (now the CP Vietnam) in 1930; in 1931, he was arrested by the French colonialists and incarcerated on Condor Island until 1936, and then again from 1940 to 1945. After that he was engaged in party work in the southern part of Vietnam. For many years he was then alternate member of the Central Committee and a deputy head of the CPV Propaganda Department. Since 1977 he has been director of the Ho Chi Minh Museum in Hanoi.

hoisted the communist party flag on top of the aerial of the radio station at Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) to mark an anniversary of the October Revolution. At that time, thousands of people saw party flags fluttering over the fairway of Song Tien River: they had been attached to telephone cables slung across the river so skilfully that the authorities were unable to remove them for a long time. That was in 1930.

Meanwhile, the hoisting of flags in the prisons led the authorities to outlaw the possession of red fabrics or any objects of that colour. In that period, we met in secret to read books about the Soviet Union obtained from our comrades. These books inspired the prisoners and strengthened their spirit. The colonialists became aware of the importance of these books to such an extent that they compared Ho Chi Minh's pamphlet on the USSR to a combat weapon.

Times were hard in 1941. Our jailers made use of the Nazis' swift advance into the interior of Russia to provoke the prisoners: "Well, why don't you go on shouting: 'Long Live the USSR!'" Your USSR is about to be destroyed". We replied: "Napoleon conquered the whole of Europe and even entered Moscow, but still came to a bad end. That's what will happen to Hitler too. The USSR is sure to liberate itself, France and the whole of mankind from fascism".

The Red Army's impressive victories made it clear that the defeat of the fascist bloc was inevitable. The Communist Party taught the political prisoners to engage in active studies and to prepare for a break-out from prison. The Communists once again marked the anniversaries of the October Revolution by flying flags and singing the Internationale.

On the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, the working people of Vietnam are even more active in their creative effort: they have supported the measures to overcome the difficulties which arose in the process of revolutionary transformations, and have intensified their struggle against the nuclear threat, and for world peace. As we celebrate the fine anniversary of the October Revolution, we thank the Soviet Union once again for its contribution to the cause of mankind's liberation, and reaffirm our dedication to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, the precepts of Ho Chi Minh, and the militant traditions of the Vietnamese people.

The Unforgettable Years

Enrique Lister — veteran of the Communist Party of Spain

AT the time of the Great October Socialist Revolution I, a boy of ten, lived in a Galician village. I did not go to school, could not read or write and, naturally, could not even imagine what a great impact it would have on my life when I heard about it from people in our village. A year later I left for Cuba and there, at 20 years of age, joined the Communist Party. My political choice was no chance: working as a stone-cutter, I had learned

at first hand the universal value of those ideals which were inscribed on the banners of the victorious Russian revolution.

I returned home in 1928, joined the Communist Party of Spain and was shortly chosen to head a general workers' trade union. But just in four years, facing a 30-year prison term for political activities, I had to flee my homeland. The bitterness of having to part with my comrades was sweetened by the joy of having my cherished dream come true: I was going to the Soviet Union, the land of the October Revolution.

I well remember Gogol Boulevard, Vorovsky Street, Arbat and other places associated with my stay in Moscow. My life took a new turn: I married and our daughter was born. More important, I enrolled in the Lenin School and for the first time got a real chance to study. The three years I spent in the USSR were decisive in my evolution as a Communist and a proletarian fighter.

A campaign was launched in the Soviet Union in the early 1930s to mobilise young people for the building of the Moscow Metro (subway). I volunteered to share my expertise in tunnelling, was drafted into the Metro workforce and took part in building its first line. I worked there for a year and was even awarded the title of a 'good shock worker'. At 24, I was the oldest in our team of students and my team-mates jokingly called me 'Grandpa'. I will never forget the Soviet workers' warmth towards their Spanish brother. It was then that I, with my Party's consent, joined the CPSU.

Meanwhile, the stage was set in Spain for major class battles. Working class actions were gathering momentum in Asturia and other areas. The Political Bureau of the CPS CC decided that I should return home. Before that, I took a course of training at the military school of the Frunze Military Academy. I also had the good chance of attending a few meetings of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935 but, before it closed, I had secretly returned to Spain in September.

I was put in charge of the Party's anti-militarist work. To start it, we launched a newspaper, *El Soldado Rojo* (Red Soldier), to fight militarism and the reactionary military. A civil war soon broke out in Spain and I became directly involved in fighting.

The reader will recall that Spain was proclaimed a Republic in 1931. The new government, however, failed to fulfil many of the tasks which faced the democratic state. Big landowners retained their property, the Church controlled major economic levers and the military, as before, meddled in state affairs.

The victory of the Popular Front in the elections to the Cortes on February 16, 1936, ushered in a new period in the development of Spain and a people's democratic republic of a new type began to assert itself in the country. This development, naturally, was not to the liking of the big bourgeoisie, landowners and reactionary military. A fascist coup was staged in July 1936.

The Republic badly needed armed forces of its own. First, we formed the Fifth Regiment from militia units and then set out to build a people's army. I was to put together the first of the six regular brigades. On October 29, 1936, the brigade, supported by a company of Soviet T-26 tanks, had its

baptism-of-fire in the battle of Sesena. Even today I recall with a smile the bewilderment of career army officers, who helped us at the time, at the sight of a mere stone-cutter, who had not even served in the Spanish regular army, planning combat operations on the map, directing troops and grasping the finer points of the art of warfare. No one in our forces knew that I, among several Communists, had had military training in the USSR.

The Soviet Union's assistance to the Republican forces is common knowledge, yet I cannot help commending here anew what the Soviet internationalists did for us. There were Soviet military advisers in many divisions, brigades and even battalions, assisting in the build-up of the Republic's armed forces and in their mastering the difficult art of warfare. Our air force and artillery were backed in their successful operations by Soviet pilots and gunmen, who not merely trained Republican fighters but fought side by side with them.

And the role of Soviet films such as 'Battleship Potemkin', 'Lenin in October', 'We are from Kronshtadt', and 'Chapayev', in the political education of our fighters and the people as a whole can never be forgotten. All this was extremely important to our political and military effort.

I next came to the Soviet Union after the Hitler Wehrmacht had attacked it on June 22, 1941. On arrival in Moscow, I along with other comrades asked to be sent to the fighting army. The question was raised with the Soviet leadership. Rodion Malinovsky¹ wanted very much to have me serve under his command but, as he said, Stalin said that the country had enough military men as it was. We were offered posts at the six-month training course for junior commanders. Comrades Modesto, Cordona and I were eventually promoted to Major-General. When the Polish Army began to be formed, we were assigned to provide training for the Polish troops.

On November 6, 1944, we were flown from Bucharest to Yugoslavia to help at the General Headquarters of Tito's army. In February 1945, my comrades and I arrived in Paris to take up party work and train Spanish guerrillas for struggle against the Franco dictatorship. . .

As you see, all my life is associated with what the October Revolution stands for. In 1937, I was elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain and in 1946 to its Political Bureau. I was a Political Bureau member till 1970, when I broke up with Carrillo and Co. because I disagreed with their course. We established the Communist Workers' Party of Spain. A little more than a year ago, we decided to disband that party and return into the Communist Party of Spain: it is no longer led by Carrillo and, although we do not share its policy in every respect, we think that the mistakes made by it can be rectified only from within.

There are not a few people in Spain who would like to besmirch Marxism-Leninism and the practice of building socialism in the USSR. I am one of those who have stood up for them throughout their lives. Recently I took part in a long discussion on our television on these issues, defending everything positive that had been done in the USSR even under Stalin. Errors and bad mistakes did occur in the past; the present is not

without drawbacks and difficulties either; but all this by no means negated the tremendous work of the Soviet people and the CPSU in building a new society.

The Soviet Union has always been our lodestar and the subject of our admiration, not only because it has given us help but because it has been setting an inspiring example.

¹ Rodion Ya. Malinovskiy (1898-1967), a member of the CPSU since 1926, was Marshal and two times Hero of the Soviet Union. He was in Spain in 1937-1938, giving internationalist help to the Republican armed forces, served as a front commander in the Second World War, and was Minister of Defence of the USSR from 1956 to 1967. — *Ed.*

Traditions of Solidarity

Adam Egede-Nissen — veteran Communist, member of the Party Control Commission, Communist Party of Norway

MY road to the communist movement was natural. My father could not be said to influence his children direct in this sense but the atmosphere in the family undoubtedly moulded all of us. Long before the October 1917 Revolution, father, an active Socialist, kept in touch with the Russian Bolsheviks, and after the Revolution he travelled to Moscow and met Lenin. Of course, he told us all about that.

I was eight when my elder brother brought me to a children's Socialist organisation. When the Communist Party of Norway was established in 1923, I joined its youth organisation and then, not yet 17, the party itself. In the 1920s we followed with keen interest events in the Soviet Union. People in the streets and cafés, students at school and, naturally, we in our youth communist organisation used to discuss the building of socialism. I wanted very much to see the new society with my own eyes. From childhood I dreamt of becoming a physician and, when I was offered an opportunity to go to the Soviet Union to study medicine, both my cherished wishes happily came true.

When I came to the Soviet Union in 1932, the situation there was still difficult and tense. Unemployment, however, was already a thing of the past and giant industrial projects were under construction all over the country. In my six years in the USSR I witnessed unprecedented economic growth. Both that progress and immense changes in the mentality of the people engaged in building socialist society were very impressive. The prevalent sense of collectivism in the country infected us students as well.

Adam Egede-Nissen (b. 1911) is a son of a Norwegian working class leader, the Chairman of the Communist Party of Norway from 1936 to 1946. He became involved in politics at an early age, first working in a Communist youth organisation and since 1927 in the Communist Party of Norway. He was for many years a member of the Party's National Board (Central Committee). A physician by training, he was elected to the board of the National Physicians' Society, and also to the Oslo municipal council.

Among us there was none of that rivalry which is prompted in capitalist countries by individualism and the wish to 'make it to the top'. We all worked side by side, helping one another to master knowledge, and although everyone strove for academic progress, there was no envy for the best or contempt for those who did not do so well. I was 'taken in tow', as we used to say, in Russian and anatomy, and was happy to help others with German.

The years I spent in the USSR not only made me a physician but also became for me a school of political education under socialism. When I returned home in 1938, I had a deep awareness of the correctness of our communist ideals, which shaped my subsequent political activities.

A sense of international solidarity with the Soviet Union, the land of the Great October Revolution, is quite natural for me as a Norwegian Communist and for my party comrades. The epoch of the revolutionary transformation of society, ushered in in November 1917, gave rise to a worldwide movement of solidarity of the working masses with victorious socialism. That movement has continued ever since, extending far beyond the communist parties.

In the early 1920s, for instance, Fridtjof Nansen, our famed Arctic explorer and public figure, organised and led an international campaign of relief for the hunger-stricken Volga area, which enjoyed much support in Norway as well. The purpose of the action was not merely humanitarian aid but also help to the Soviet power. I well remember the enthusiasm stirred among the Norwegians by a fund-raising campaign under the keynote 'A tractor for the Soviet Union'; it attracted many people, even those who did not at all share the communist views.

Our sense of solidarity with the Soviet Union was so all-consuming that we were blind to the negative aspects of life in that country in the 1930s. Like many other Communists, I had no doubt that the events of 1937-1938, the trials of that period were justified. We thought them a part of the struggle against the enemies of socialism, for such were the times.

Sympathies for the Soviet Union grew immensely during the Second World War, when it was the last bastion in the way of the 'brownshirt plague' of Nazism and the last hope for deliverance from it. The victory over Nazi Germany, won through the colossal efforts of primarily the Soviet people, became a great triumph for socialism.

The Soviet Union has now entered a new period of revolutionary renewal in the entire life of society. I have the impression that Soviet people have long been growing more and more aware of the need for radical change and for casting aside everything outdated that hampers progress.

I have no doubts that traditions of the workers' international solidarity with the peoples building socialism will be given a fresh impetus by the processes going on in the Soviet Union. We Norwegian Communists wholeheartedly support the broadening of socialist democracy in every area of social life and the assertion of glasnost. Practice shows that it is extremely important to discuss openly difficulties and errors in order promptly to find ways of overcoming and rectifying them. The usefulness and efficacy of glasnost is evident even from the fact that most of the

present criticism in the USSR is directed at removing obstacles to the development of socialism. Simultaneously, the honest discussion of the urgent problems of Soviet society in large measure denies capitalist propaganda opportunities for fabrication, speculation and misrepresentation of what is taking place in socialist countries. The supporters of socialism, meanwhile, are given new arguments in its favour because as perestroika gathers momentum, the mass of people become even more active as the motive force of change. All this increases the appeal of the new system.

It sometimes seems to me, however, that some of the enthusiasts of glasnost go too far in denouncing certain past brakes on the progress of Soviet society. Only a blind man would fail to notice the advance over the years and the improvement in the living standards. Immense progress has been made in housing construction, community improvement and social security. Perhaps, that emphasis on difficulties and shortcomings is meant to wake up the people, so to speak, but it should not be overlooked that the enemies of socialism use whatever opportunity comes their way to smear it. The Soviet people have every reason to take pride in the history of building and defending socialist society since the October Revolution, and its 70th anniversary is a great holiday for all those who share the ideals of socialism and communism.

The indivisible link between peace and socialism and the decisive role the latter plays in preserving our civilisation are especially clear today. It was no chance that peace came first of the three watchwords of the October Revolution, 'peace, land, bread'. It so was not merely because the emergent Soviet state desperately needed it; a commitment to peace was intrinsic to the socialist nature of the new society because after the overthrow of the exploiting classes, there remained not a single social stratum or group with an interest in war or preparations for it. Ever since the Great October Revolution efforts to safeguard and strengthen peace have been at the core of Soviet foreign policy.

The USSR has now posed to the world community of nations the need for a new approach to problems of war and peace and for a new mode of thinking. Now that people have developed the capacity to annihilate the planet itself in a nuclear war, no one can hope to win it. Even the arch-reactionaries in the USA are not so thick as to be blind to the threat of self-annihilation. That the key issue of our time is the safeguarding of peace should be clear, I think, to everyone in all countries and under all social systems.

So the bold far-reaching initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are evidence that the inheritors of the October Revolution care for the paramount right of all people, the right to live. As a Communist and as a medical man, I wholly share this care. I took part in the work of the latest, Seventh Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War held in Moscow in the summer of 1987. The Norwegian delegation consisted of 53 people of very different political persuasions and attitudes to the USSR. However, both in the delegation and at the Congress all of us were unanimous on the chief point: nuclear war must not be allowed to break out because medicine has no means to

cope with its awesome consequences. That many of our recommendations coincide with what the Soviet Union and other socialist countries suggest by way of lessening and eliminating the nuclear threat just shows to what extent the latter reflect the needs and interests of humanity.

Efforts for peace are central to the activities of the Norwegian Communists. Our country had a first-hand experience of war and Nazi occupation; small wonder, therefore, that the desire for peace has gained much ground among the Norwegians in the 1980s. There have emerged new action movements and groups alongside established pacifist organisations, mobilising broad sections of the population and staging a series of impressive actions like peace marches to Paris, Copenhagen and Moscow. The movement for a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe has built up a considerable prestige and even influenced the Norwegian government's position.

We Communists unconditionally support the initiatives of the various peace organisations and groups and help organise mass actions for peace without claiming a role of leadership. What we want is not contention in the peace movement but cooperation in extending its influence on the social life, political parties and governing institutions. The peace struggle is for us not a tactic but our own cause arising from the vital interests of the people. We consider our efforts for peace to be a contribution to the realisation of the ideals of the October Revolution.

national liberation: time for unity

The Uphill Road Of Independence

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

SEVEN decades are a short time span on the scale of human history. Yet the world has changed beyond recognition since October 1917. As that date recedes into history the essence and the great social transforming role of the breakthrough achieved by the Great October Socialist Revolution is being more and more revealed.

When the Socialist Revolution triumphed in the old Russian empire, it was not a revolution confined to one country alone. *It started the transition from capitalism to socialism on a worldwide scale.* "The abolition of capitalism and its vestiges, and the establishment of the fundamentals of the communist order comprise the content of the new era in world history that has set in",¹ Lenin noted in his day.

Of course, it was no spontaneous affair. Nor was it a smooth process. The revolution and the state born of it had to defend themselves in bitterest struggle against internal and world counter-revolution in the civil war, and later against the extreme reactionary sections of monopoly capital embodied in German fascism. The Soviet state held out primarily by the strength inherent in a liberated people ably and courageously led by the Soviet Communists and also because of the worldwide sympathy and support of working people and progressive forces. Socialism broke out of the confines of one country and became a world system.

I am confining myself here to the impact of the October Revolution and of the building of socialism in the USSR on the colonial and national liberation movements. It was impossible, or at any rate difficult, for backward colonial countries to win independence when imperialism held undivided sway in the world. The imperialist powers had immense economic and military superiority. Science and technology also were their monopoly. With the victory of the socialist revolution, industrialisation and the victorious conclusion of socialist construction and the Soviet

Rajeswara Rao (b. 1914) comes from a peasant family and was educated at the Benares Hindu University and Vizagapatam Medical College. He joined the Communist Party of India in 1931 and from 1943 to 1952 was secretary of the CPI committee of the Andhra province. He was active in the peasant armed uprising at Telengan. In 1950-1951 he was General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India; in June-December 1964, secretary of the National Council of the Communist Party of India and since December 1964 has been General Secretary of the CPI National Council. Rajeswara Rao has published many works on India's politics and economy and on the international communist movement, and is a regular contributor to *WMR*.

victory in the Great Patriotic War, all these changed. The world balance of forces shifted in favour of working people and the national liberation revolutions.

In the new conditions, formerly oppressed peoples, *objects of imperialist plunder and spoliation, hundreds of millions of them moved into the world arena as subjects, makers of history.* In the very wake of the October Revolution and the outbreak of the general crisis of capitalism, a qualitatively new high tide of anti-imperialist movements swept throughout Asia. The revolution putting the working people in power, ending national oppression and ensuring equality of all nations inhabiting the USSR engendered a massive revolutionary wave in these countries. These culminated in the collapse of the colonial system through the tremendous weakening of the imperialist positions after the Second World War. The liberation struggle entered a new stage with over 100 independent nations entering the struggle to seek the path forward, and some of them already opting for socialist orientation.

In future, also, the Soviet Union and the socialist system are going to play a significant role in the choice these countries are going to make. In this context the decisions of the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union assume significance. Their impact on the anti-war struggle worldwide is already evident. The series of peace initiatives of the Soviet Union have begun yielding results in the sense of convincing hundreds of millions of its sincerity and of the need to join actively in the peace offensive to compel the imperialist circles to come to agreement.

The strategy and tactics of thorough-going reconstruction of the Soviet national economy on a new, higher technological foundation, the acceleration of economic and social development as a whole and profound democratisation of social, political and economic life, when realised, *will make socialism superior in every respect to capitalism.* We believe this is the essence of the process of reform going on in the Soviet Union at present. This has tremendous implications for the further advance of the world revolutionary process. Hence the Communists and progressive opinion the world over will be following these processes of socialist renovation in the Soviet Union hopefully and anxiously.

I propose now to discuss briefly the October Revolution as it influenced the national liberation movement in India.

Two major features of the state born of the triumphant revolution — both arising essentially from its class, social character — attracted India's outstanding national leaders. First, its consistent and uncompromising anti-imperialism. Second, Lenin's position on the right of the nations to self-determination and the unconditional recognition of it by the world's first socialist state. The significance of these features for the further advance of India's national liberation was gradually grasped by a wide spectrum of the movement's leaders, irrespective of their specific attitude to the social and state system of the Soviet Union.

Of course, the revolution facilitated the spread of the ideas of scientific socialism among broad sections of freedom-fighters leading even to the formation and growth of a stable left wing in the Indian National Congress,

the country's first anti-imperialist organisation. Jawaharlal Nehru was its foremost spokesman. In his presidential address to the Lucknow Congress (1936), while asserting his conviction in scientific socialism and affirming that some glimpses of it could be discerned already on the territories of the Soviet Union, he was to state: "If the future is full of hope, it is largely because of Soviet Russia and what it has done." Nehru carried forward this assessment when he stated at the time of the anti-fascist war of liberation: "I have no doubt that the Soviet Revolution had advanced society by a great leap and had lit a bright flame that could not be smothered, and that it has laid the foundation for that new civilisation towards which the world could advance."²

World-renowned Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, after a visit to the Soviet Union in 1930, grasped in depth the social transformation that had begun there and warmly commended its lessons for India in his letters from Russia. Even Mahatma Gandhi in his own way appreciated the spirit of sacrifice behind the Bolshevik ideal.

These appreciations of the Soviet Socialist Revolution and its meaning for India and the world came somewhat later when the implications of what had been taking place in the Soviet Union began to be widely understood. But even with the very first news of the conquest of November 1917, its importance began to dawn on India. Already in December 1917, Liberal Annie Besant, in her presidential address to the Indian National Congress, said that "the Russian Revolution and the probable rise of a Russian Republic in Europe and Asia have entirely changed the conditions [of struggle — *R.R.*] in India".³ In fact, in the wake of the revolution a new, higher stage of anti-imperialist mass awakening and upsurge began in India. The Jalianwalabag massacre was the turning point.⁴ This culminated in the first mass non-cooperation movement against the British authorities led by Mahatma Gandhi. The country witnessed an unprecedentedly high wave of working class mass strike actions. The All-India Trade Union Congress was founded in 1920. In the 1921 session of the AITUC the delegates stated that the Swaraj (self-rule) they would have was not to be Swaraj of the capitalists but Swaraj of the workers. The emergence of the working class movement was giving a qualitatively new impetus to the national movement.

Several groups of national revolutionaries were abroad in Europe and America. They and those who went abroad immediately following the First World War were attracted by the October Revolution. Some of them went to Soviet Russia braving tremendous difficulties. The first Indian Communists were born from among them.

Disillusioned by the withdrawal of the non-cooperation movement by Gandhi in 1922, many of the young participants turned to the experience of the Russian Revolution and to socialism in a search for more effective ways of struggle against British imperialism. This led to the emergence of Communist groups in the country leading to the foundation of the CPI at Kanpur in 1925. And due to the tireless work of the Communists, revolutionary militant mass trade unions emerged in Bombay, Calcutta, in some of the railways and in some other centres towards the end of the 1920s. These years witnessed some of the mass strike struggles, including

the six-month strike of Bombay textile workers.

The Communists also began to work actively in the Indian National Congress and formed part of its left wing. They strove to bring the working class and the peasantry as organised movements in the national movement. They projected *the demand of complete independence as the aim of national struggle* over several years, which was accepted by the Congress finally in 1929. They continuously impressed upon the national leadership to adopt a radical programme of socio-economic transformation. The influence of the socialist transformations in the Soviet Union and the Communists' activities in the national movement played a significant role in the adoption of the fundamental rights and economic programme resolution at the Karachi session of the Congress in 1931. Again the concept of socialist economic planning and the Soviet Union's great success in the drive for industrialisation produced a tremendous impact on India's national leadership. Already by 1938, the Congress on the initiative of Nehru formed the National Planning Committee to plan out the economic development of the country.

Internationally, the Indian National Congress swam along with the world's anti-imperialist forces in this atmosphere because of the consistent work of Jawaharlal Nehru. This is evidenced by its affiliation to the League Against Imperialism in 1927, and its openly expressed sympathy with Republican Spain and the despatch of a medical mission in aid of the Chinese people in the struggle against Japanese imperialism.

Following the Soviet-led allied victory in the anti-fascist war of liberation, India witnessed an unprecedentedly broad and powerful upsurge of national liberation struggle as part of the worldwide anti-imperialist upsurge. It spread to the British Indian armed forces as well, shaking that very basis of imperialist power in the country. British imperialism could not contain the upsurge and India won independence on August 15, 1947. True, due to the inaptitude and unwillingness of the bourgeois national leadership to lead the anti-imperialist wave, the imperialists could fan the Hindu-Muslim communal division and impose partition on the country. Yet the achievement of Indian independence was an historic event not only in the destiny of our country — it also gave fillip to the development of the national liberation movement of other countries.

The bourgeois leadership of the Congress consolidated the state power at a rapid rate. On the attainment of political independence, the capitalist class was hoping that as part of the capitalist world, India would obtain capital and technology from the West. They proclaimed their willingness to welcome foreign capital. But this hope was shattered in the very early post-independence years. The imperialist states of Britain and America refused to provide modern machinery and technical know-how. But then by the mid-1950s imperialism no longer possessed a monopoly of science and technology. India could and did turn to the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries for economic and technological aid and cooperation for its industrialisation.

Till then the impact of the October Revolution and the socialist construction in the USSR was of an ideological and political nature. In the four decades since the attainment of independence, it has assumed the

form of closer cooperation in economic, cultural, scientific and other fields with the Soviet Union. It has enabled India to resist the neo-colonial diktat of imperialism and successfully embark upon an independent, self-reliant course of economic development despite being part of the capitalist world economy.

Today, thanks to socialist aid and cooperation, India is a medium-developed agrarian-industrial country, though still with vast areas of underdevelopment. And it has developed a strategically strong public sector as the core of its industrial structure. This is a strong base for pursuing further the course of independent development.

It is to be underlined that this was achieved rebuffing imperialist opposition to the course. On every occasion of economic difficulty that the country faced — due to the contradictions of capitalist development with semi-feudal remnants — the Western capitalist states directly and through the World Bank and the IMF exerted tremendous pressures to change course. The Indian government resisted these pressures all through, though not always steadfastly. India has invariably obtained the Soviet Union's support in its resistance to these neocolonialist intrigues and pressures. The treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation between the USSR and India signed in 1971 is a watershed in this respect. It has served as a shield against military pressure and blackmail by imperialism directly or through surrogates.

Indo-Soviet relations received a new and comprehensive uplift with the visit in November 1986 of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, to India and through the documents he signed in Delhi with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The latest agreement on long-term scientific and technical cooperation signed during Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Moscow during the India festival carries this cooperation forward.

What is the basis of this close friendship between these two countries and states belonging to two different socio-political systems? First, this is based on complete equality and mutual advantage. Second, there is common interest for both countries in combatting imperialism and putting an end to neocolonialism, colonialism and racism. Third, both are interested in safeguarding peace, strengthening international security and ending the arms race. Fourth, this cooperation has been helping India to stand up to imperialist diktat and to eliminate the heavy colonial vestiges and underdevelopment and embark upon a course of independent economic development.

Hence Indo-Soviet cooperation is based on objective requirements of both states. It answers fundamental national interests. Over the years, a near national consensus has developed in India on the need for friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community. It may be noted that in the brief interregnum of the Janata government in Delhi in 1977-1980, the foreign policy and the relations with the Soviet Union, in the main, continued as before, despite the subjective desire of some of the Janata leaders to change the progressive foreign policy course.

It needs to be stressed that *the Communist Party of India made a significant contribution to the country's progress*. It vigorously supported

the development strategy based on the public sector as its core. At the same time, it fought for the interests of the working people and for basic agrarian reforms and against distortions and deviations in the development strategy which often happened following World Bank-IMF pressure. Unfortunately, agrarian reforms could not be implemented due to their sabotage by the Congress state governments, except in Kerala and subsequently in West Bengal when Communists came to power. The party has been in the forefront of the struggle for democratic demands, such as the formation of linguistic provinces. It played a vital role in the evolution of India's progressive foreign policy as well. We have consistently campaigned on issues of peace. We have fought against pro-imperialist internal reaction and the imperialist conspiracies against our country. Communists were the first to campaign in our country for friendship with the Soviet Union and explain how it is in India's own interests and why, focussing on the nature of the social system in the USSR.

As a result of its role in these struggles and movements, the party gained in prestige. It was voted into the state government in Kerala in 1957 for the first time. By then the CPI had become the main opposition in Parliament. The party was becoming a galvanising factor in the development of left and democratic forces. This process of growth of Communist influence over the masses and democratic consolidation was disrupted following the unfortunate split in the party. In these years, despite all the difficulties, we have steadfastly defended the positions of the international communist movement.

At this point of time our country is facing a grim and complex situation. The threat to India's security has aggravated considerably of late. The intensifying US naval build-up and militarisation of the Indian Ocean has heightened the dangers to our shores. The massive US supply of arms, including such advanced planes as AWACS, to Pakistan has created added problems to the security of the country. And the USA is planning to thrust another dose of 4.3 billion dollars worth of arms aid to that country. On top of this is the danger of Pakistan going nuclear.

Imperialism is stepping up pressures on India to dilute its anti-imperialist non-aligned foreign policy course.

US imperialism is aiming at the very destabilisation of the Indian state. Imperialist encouragement to fissiparous, communal forces and Khalistani terrorists in Punjab is too obvious. The communal situation, with its attendant Hindu-Moslem riots, has become a serious menace and a challenge to the very secular democratic set-up and unity and integrity of our country.

The government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has upheld the anti-imperialist foreign policy of the country. The Prime Minister has taken some bold initiatives together with the New Delhi Six and the non-aligned movement for nuclear disarmament, in support of Soviet peace initiatives and for helping anti-apartheid struggle. His signing the Delhi Declaration with Mikhail Gorbachov was an important step. But his retrograde economic policies of downgrading the public sector, giving primacy to the private sector monopolists, opening the door to multinationals and lending the ear to the World Bank's harmful recipes, all in the name of taking the

country into the twenty-first century, have already begun to adversely affect the Indian economy. Objectively this aids the imperialist destabilisation drive. The silver lining in the situation is our country's close economic cooperation with the Soviet Union.

In this context our Party considers that today the two struggles, viz., against the neocolonialist offensive of imperialism and against the retrograde economic policies pursued by the government . . . "are inextricably linked together", as the Political Resolution of CPI's 13th Congress states.

Today our country is facing an unprecedented *political crisis*. The capitalist path of development pursued by the Congress these 40 years since independence has reached a dead end, resulting in increasing unemployment, growing poverty, rising prices, rampant corruption and abject misery of the people. All types of chauvinist, secessionist and religious fundamentalist forces have raised their ugly heads. All this has resulted in the serious erosion of the credibility of Rajiv Gandhi's government and its mass support is dwindling.

In order to defeat the game of internal reaction and the imperialists it is necessary to forge a *left-democratic alternative* to the Congress (I), "for effecting basic 'socio-economic changes' breaking away from the present capitalist path of development. That is why our party wants the replacement of the bourgeois government of the Congress (I) by a left and democratic government and does not want another bourgeois government which is bound to pursue the same disastrous path."⁶ The bourgeois opposition parties are trying to put forward an alternative to the Congress (I) without an alternative programme based on principles of secularism, democracy and anti-imperialism. They are only harping on the issue of corruption. The Andhra Pradesh chief minister has come out with a scheme of confederation of opposition parties to replace Congress (I) at the centre.

It is beyond our imagination how a confederation of opposition parties with diverse political views on key problems facing the country today can be a national alternative. It can be seen from the programme that is presented in that connection that what is meant is a rightist alternative.

There is not a word in the programme about the threat of imperialism to our country's security, stability and unity; about the danger of penetration of the imperialist multinational companies; about putting an end to the loot of Indian monopolies; and the need for radical land reforms for giving land to the tiller.

This type of bourgeois alternative will not help the solution of any of the serious problems facing the country. On the contrary, they will be intensified, making our country a victim of imperialist conspiracies. This only helps the rightist forces to shift the country's policies to the right. We oppose and combat such attempts.

It is clear that Rajiv Gandhi has lost the confidence of the people as was displayed in the 1984 elections. The Communist Party of India, after serious consideration, demands that the only democratic solution of the present political crisis is for the Prime Minister to seek a fresh mandate from the people who are the ultimate arbiter in a democracy.

The developments in this period have clearly demonstrated the growing weight of the united left and the important role which they can play in shaping events, as was clearly seen in the initiatives taken on the issue of the right of the President to dismiss the Prime Minister and to set up former president Zail Singh again as a candidate in the Presidential election. In both issues the left foiled the game of reaction. The need of the hour is for the CPI, the CPI (M) and other left parties to initiate a mass campaign together with all democratic and secular parties and forces, against the anti-people internal policies of the Rajiv Gandhi government and compel it to accede to the popular demand for a fresh poll. During the mass campaign we would project a minimum programme based on anti-imperialism, secularism, and democracy, and satisfying the urgent minimum demands of the people.

Only such a broad-based campaign and struggles on mass and political issues can lead to the emergence of a left democratic alternative to the Congress (I) rule. It would be the constant endeavour of the Communist and left parties to isolate the religious, fundamentalist and extreme right forces in the process.

This year is significant not only because it is the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which opened the new era of socialism in the history of mankind, but also because of the 40th anniversary of India's independence. Hence this year the CPI will celebrate in a fitting way the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution as well as the 40th anniversary of India's independence.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 392.

² J. Nehru, *Discovery of India*, Meridian Books, London, p. 15.

³ *Congress Presidential Addresses*, Vol. II, Madras, 1935, p. 311.

⁴ In spring 1919, troops sent by the colonial authorities opened fire at a mass protest rally on Jalianwalabag Square in Amritsar. — *Ed.*

⁵ The separatists seeking the secession of Punjab from India want the establishment of a 'State of Khalistan'. — *Ed.*

⁶ *Documents of the XIII Congress of the CPI*, 1986, p. 65

A Revolution That Is Transforming The World

Khaled Mohieddin — Secretary General, National Progressive Unionist Party (Egypt)

THE October Revolution gave rise to a social system that differed from all previous ones and was based on public property in the means of production and on government by the Soviets, that is, workers and peasants. Having emancipated the peoples of Russia from the yoke of tsarism and capitalist exploitation, the revolution imparted a powerful impetus to, and effected radical changes in, the national liberation movement in the colonial

countries. Led by the great Lenin, the Russian Revolution supported the liberation struggle of the Arab peoples, including the Egyptian Revolution of 1919.

The victory of the Soviet Union and its allies over Nazism changed fundamentally the alignment of forces on the international scene. The world socialist system backed our peoples mightily in their struggle against imperialism, Zionism and reaction. Egypt owed its ability to resist these forces to the fraternal assistance of the Soviet Union in industrialisation, expansion of the arable land area, and development of the armed forces.

Soviet-Egyptian relations offer convincing proof of the benefits inherent in cooperation between a socialist power of global standing and Third World countries. These relations provide a good example of the way the principles of peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs are applied in practical terms. Consolidation of Egypt's political and economic independence and her protection from external aggression were among the essential aspects of this cooperation. Without the assistance our people received from the USSR in all spheres, we would have been unable to resist the US-Israeli attack of June 1967, and the Egyptian troops would have been unable to cross the Suez Canal in October 1973. At that time Soviet aid enabled the Egyptian army to use the latest military hardware against the enemy.

Relying on friendly relations with the country of the October Revolution, Egypt strengthened her independence, created her own industry, and extended the arable land area by more than one million feddans.¹ The Soviet Union helped us to build the Aswan High Dam, a steel complex, an aluminium-producing mill, a dry dock in Alexandria and dozens of other projects. Egyptian experts estimate that 96 per cent of the Soviet credits were used in industry and power production. The USSR provided these credits on easy terms (annual interest rate of 2.5 per cent), and the loans were paid back in products of enterprises built with Soviet assistance or with traditional Egyptian exports. No political strings were ever attached to the USSR's aid to Egypt.

The training of thousands of Egyptian workers, technicians and managers by Soviet experts was an equally important undertaking. The same is true of the specialists trained for the Egyptian armed forces. The country's scientific and technological potential became her truly national wealth, enabling her to keep up with the accomplishments of our age.

The relations that came into existence between Egypt and the Soviet Union after the revolution of July 1952 offer a model for all developing countries striving to break the monopoly of imperialism on economic ties with the Third World.

By now the decline that developed in these relations through no fault of the Soviet Union has been overcome, and cooperation between the world's first socialist power and Egypt is again gaining momentum.

The policy of the new Soviet leadership under Mikhail Gorbachov which is aimed at a radical reorganisation of the economic, political and cultural fabric is making the Soviet Union profoundly and universally respected. The course of this change confirms the inexhaustible potential of the socialist system for development, application of new advances in science,

technology and management, expansion of democracy and respect for man.

By following the process of perestroika, all friends of the USSR can see that it is advancing along the path of cardinal transformations enabling socialism to secure a leading role in the world's science, economy and politics — a role that will make it possible to change the global alignment of forces in favour of peace and progress.

¹ A feddan equals 1.038 acres. — Ed.

Nigerians Are Friends Of The USSR

Dapo Fatogun — Editor-in-Chief,
New Horizon, Nigeria's Marxist monthly

THE October 1917 Revolution in Russia generated a very strong current of new liberation ideas throughout the world and it continues to inspire anti-colonial, anti-imperialist and anti-apartheid struggles, especially in Africa.

The reality that a ruling class of feudal landowners and capitalists was overthrown by a popular revolution of workers and peasants in Russia gave a very strong impetus to all the struggles of the popular masses in Africa against all forms of foreign and domestic oppression and domination. The 1917 Revolution also gave Africans a new perception of freedom, democracy, social justice, and national identity. It opened the people's eyes to the *possibility* of building a more egalitarian socio-economic system, that is socialism.

The new social system not only helps constantly to improve the well-being of the masses but also performs the internationalist mission of supporting and assisting the creative efforts of the peoples of the emergent countries to overcome backwardness, underdevelopment and neocolonialist dependence. We know from the practice of Soviet-Nigerian cooperation, for instance, that Soviet economic assistance is helping *the Nigerian economy to stand on its own feet*.

Our task in Africa today, as we see it, is to help strengthen socialist forces in the world, and also the peace movement which have a deep interest in the noble goals of socio-economic progress being accomplished. That movement is growing more and more aware of the fact that as long as the Soviet Union is developing its own strength, economic, political and military, it will continue to be a very useful deterrent against all other forces of neocolonialism, imperialism and apartheid. From this point of view, Africa is gaining a great deal.

Africa has been gaining and will continue to gain from the 1917 Revolution of workers in Russia. I think generally that most African countries have very good relations with the Soviet Union. I say so not

talking about the leadership in some cases. What is more important, the enlightened part of the African population are fully aware that of the two world powers it is only the Soviet Union that genuinely defends the interests of the poorer popular masses in Africa. We do have occasions when some leaders have some kind of infatuation with what is happening in the West, but generally speaking, when we take the peoples and specific countries, such as Nigeria, the largest and most populous country in Africa, I can say confidently that most Africans very deeply appreciate both the 1917 Revolution and the Soviet Union.

We in Nigeria have many reasons to view the Soviet Union as a friend. First and foremost, there is what the Soviet Union has done since the incidents of the Biafran war to keep Nigeria together. Another reason is the Soviet Union's contribution to the Africans' national-independence struggles and especially its support for the peoples of Southern Africa in the battle against the apartheid regime. The USSR is regarded as a genuine comrade 'sharing the same fighting trench', as our people often say.

Most of the independent African countries, after their liberation from colonialism, faced the immediate option as to the road of development. Marx, Lenin and scientific socialism did provide a clear alternative road of development for the people of Africa, and this from the point of view of knowledge and scientific studies is a kind of legacy which everybody, every enlightened person in Nigeria appreciates. The military in Nigeria wants to hand power back to the civilians in 1992 and called an open debate for the people to decide which option, what system they would adopt. The people of the whole country chose socialism. This means that in the country a majority of people are aware of *the wide gap between socialism and capitalism*.

The Great October Revolution again comes to mind in this context. The Leninist Revolution, the 70th anniversary of which is celebrated in Africa by all friends of the Soviet Union, has brought to our continent advanced philosophy and optimistic prospects.

The Socialist Orientation: Theory and Practice

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THE terms 'non-capitalist development' and 'socialist orientation', linked to Lenin's idea that backward countries could move towards socialism without passing through the stage of capitalist development, appeared in Marxist writings in the 1960s. The idea was mooted by Lenin in a speech to the Second Congress of the Comintern on July 26, 1920.

The article is based on the author's report at a WMR International Seminar in Prague on 'The Prospects of the Socialist Orientation'.

Strictly speaking, he did not offer a theory of non-capitalist development (in the sense of a system of inter-related categories), nor did he use the term itself. But the idea that it is possible to bypass the capitalist stage was of immense significance. It did not stem in any way from the model of worldwide historical development substantiated in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, and was put forward contrary to the formation sequence set out in Marx's introduction to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. However, Lenin's idea was not an entirely new one: towards the end of his life, Marx insisted that his outline of the development of capitalism in Western Europe should not be regarded as a universal master-key to world history, and he cited the example of Russia to weigh the hypothetical prospect of moving towards socialism without first building a developed capitalist system.¹

At the Second Congress of the Comintern Lenin clearly stipulated the two conditions under which the capitalist stage of economic development is not inevitable for backward nations: (1) "if the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them", and (2) if "the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal".² These are, so to speak, conditions of a practical order. But in theory Lenin considered the likelihood of a fundamentally new pattern of formation development, in which the 'conventional' bourgeois-democratic mould, national movements became a part of the socialist revolution as an epoch.³ He advanced some important propositions on the ways and means that could bring about the transition to the new system while avoiding the 'delights of capitalism'. Moreover, he stressed that it was impossible to foresee how the complex process of such a transition would run. That, he wrote, "will be prompted by practical experience."⁴

The world's first-ever form of non-capitalist development, in the periphery of what used to be tsarist Russia, was highly specific. It proceeded less from theory than from practice and was the outcome of the victorious socialist revolution in the developed centre, fusing with the revolutionary processes in the outlying regions. The advancement towards socialism in circumvention of capitalism was made by peoples in the backward regions under Communist leadership within a single state. That is why the stage of socialist construction there began after a very short period of general democratic changes and was completed in the outlying regions not very much later than in the centre.

The Great October Revolution, which turned socialism into a reality on one-sixth of the globe, imparted the most powerful impetus to all the revolutionary streams of our day. Indeed, history has not yet known such sweeping revolutionary struggle, which has spread virtually across the world, including the regions once regarded as 'peripheral'. There is everywhere a more active search for radical ways and means for breaking with the past for the sake of a better future, the trail to which was blazed by the workers and peasants of Russia.

The Mongolian People's Republic was the birthplace of the second form (variant) of non-capitalist development, which proceeded in an independent country whose productive forces and social relations were at a very low development level. The general democratic phase of the reforms

(despite the broad and close links to the world's first socialist country) lasted almost 20 years. Similarly, it took more time to lay the foundations of socialism in Mongolia than it did in Soviet Central Asia or Kazakhstan.

By and large, the transition to the new system in circumvention of capitalism in the once backward regions of the USSR and in Mongolia had some unique features. Any mechanical identification of this process with what is now taking place in socialism-oriented countries merely tends to obscure the essence of the problem and may be the cause of theoretical confusion and of grave errors in practical affairs.

But it would be equally wrong to go to the other extreme and regard the present-day socialist orientation as an absolutely new phenomenon that has nothing in common with the well-tried forms of advancing to socialism along a 'shortcut' way. Indeed, it has some elements of general significance. With regard to the experience of non-capitalist development in some Soviet Republics and Mongolia the elements of unfading significance are: first, the leading role of the party adhering to the platform of scientific socialism; second, the multiphased transition to socialism and the inevitability of a relatively long general democratic phase; and third, the close alliance with existing socialism.

In many of his works, Lenin stressed that, *as distinct from the industrialised countries, there had to be infinite caution, undeviating consistence, no haste or impetuosity, and a creative, innovative approach to the solution of many problems in the peasant countries*, which are virtually all the countries now opting for the socialist orientation. Revolutionaries must have the ability to find an approach to the peasant masses, most of whom are illiterate and completely hostage to traditionalist ideology, particularly to religion and nationalism. Among them the ideas of scientific socialism can be successfully spread only in a form understandable to the people, but without oversimplification or vulgarisation. This has proved to be one of the hardest problems.

Mention must be made of another highly important point: there has to be a respectful attitude to the traditional values and a balanced and gradual reshaping of the traditional structures. Traditions, after all, often contain elements of the socio-culture the peoples have produced over the centuries and even millenia. The very idea, generally speaking, of a so-called rapid transformation of the post-colonial societies can hardly be regarded as correct. In many cases the urge to produce a forcible 'demonstration effect' in the shortest possible time has negative consequences. One of the things now being much discussed is what could be called a revival of traditionalism, but that is, to some extent, also a reaction to the hasty attempts to do away with traditional institutions.

Historical practice shows that in advancing along this tortuous way of transition to socialism, bypassing capitalism, no one is immune to miscalculations, extremes, and sometimes even serious errors. Haste in effecting radical economic, social, political, cultural, and other reforms and confusion of the general democratic and property socialist phases of development are a frequent malady among many patriots sincerely seeking to deliver their peoples from age-old backwardness. Another reason why it is dangerous to pre-empt events is that it leads to setbacks, discredits the

socialist orientation, and so plays into the hands of its adversaries. It is haste in adopting ill-considered decisions that often proves to be the impetus for slidebacks from the earlier progressive option.

The present-day socialist orientation is a new form of non-capitalist development *consistent with the new phase of the liberation movement that has taken shape under the direct influence of the alignment of global forces that changed in favour of socialism after World War II.*

The choice by newly free states of the socialist orientation is the result of the deepening and development of the social content of the national liberation revolutions. After such a revolution triumphs the social struggle rises to a higher level with a growing demarcation and keener appreciation of class and political interests. There is a regrouping of the corresponding coalitions, and the formation of a new alignment of social forces that sustains the dialectical interconnection of national liberation and social emancipation.

Whereas the social base of the national liberation movement consists of almost all the classes and social strata of an oppressed colonial society, with the exception of the feudal lords and compradores, *the mass base of the socialist orientation consists of all the non-exploiter classes capable of taking an anti-capitalist or, at least, a non-capitalist stand.*

However, the orientation towards socialism does not mean the actual building of socialism. One must bear in mind that there are many variants of the socialist orientation open to people's democratic regimes guided by the doctrine of scientific socialism, and to non-proletarian revolutionary-democratic regimes whose ideology is non-Marxist. In the latter case, the principal criterion of the socialist orientation is provided by the regime's economic, social and political practices and by radical anti-bourgeois reforms of the social structure. Such reforms are entirely consistent with the revolutionary democrats' principle that there is an indivisible link between national liberation and social emancipation.

Departures from this principle usually signify changes in the social base of the regime, as a rule, its embourgeoisification as a result of the growing influence of the lower and middle strata of the local bourgeoisie. A saddening lesson that the socialist orientation is reversible came in the 1960s and 1970s from Ghana, Egypt, Somalia, and some other countries. Indeed, tendencies and processes that may cast doubt on their progressive social evolution have been gathering momentum in several other countries.

There have also been some abrupt departures from the socialist orientation, like the one carried out in Egypt by the bourgeoisified élite of the government bureaucracy, together with the groups of the parasitic and speculative bourgeoisie which had instantly sprung up after 1970 (and which had partly emerged from the underground). But we feel that special attention should be given to the gradual departure from the socialist orientation, which is frequently camouflaged by the contradictory attitudes on the part of various groups of the bourgeoisie to this or that aspect of the socialist orientation. That is often due to the fact that the bourgeois strata (the nouveaux riches, in particular) are highly heterogeneous, belonging to different sectors, developing unevenly, with contradictions and often at each other's expense. But all of them cannot, as a rule, exist without the

support of the state and its active intervention in the economy, and have an objective stake in using the state apparatus and the public sector to defend them against foreign competition and also as an aide, money-lender, supplier and buyer of their goods. Hence, the very natural fear that, as socialist orientation gains in depth the state will gradually narrow down the sphere of their activities and put a ceiling on their earnings. That is why, with every new step in progressive development, there is growing resistance to it on the part of the bourgeois circles.

The present day form of the socialist orientation has been developing in more favourable conditions. Considerable experience of progressive and socialist reforms has been gained in some countries in which precapitalist relations were formerly predominant. Revolutionary democratic regimes now have an example of 'how it's done' to quote Frederick Engels.⁵ The non-capitalist way of development is now open to many countries owing to the existence of the socialist world, on which countries opting for social progress can rely for assistance and support. (That does not, of course, conflict with the self-evident truth that the new society has to be built primarily by the peoples that have embarked upon that way.)

The collapse of the system of colonialism and the liberation of dozens of countries from foreign domination have highlighted the role of the external factor and the significance of the changes in favour of progress and socialism in the overall balance of forces on the globe as a result of the October Revolution, the rout of Hitler's fascism and Japanese militarism, and the continued development of the entire world revolutionary process. Indeed, the success of the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, and especially of anti-capitalist transformations in the newly liberated countries is closely bound up with the shift in the global balance of forces.

The external factor is likewise of great significance when the newly independent states choose their way of development. It does not, of course, invalidate the importance of the internal factor consisting of economic and social backwardness and the presence of precapitalist structures. Hence, the incompleteness of some national liberation revolutions and even the reversal of processes, some of them in countries that initially opted for socialism.

The multiformity of the socialist orientation is due to many factors, not the least of which is that in some of the countries that have opted for it national capitalism was practically non-existent (most of the countries of Tropical Africa) and states with relatively developed capitalist relations. These groups of countries differ significantly in terms of their strategy of economic and social progress and of changes in their basis and superstructure.

Within the framework of the present-day socialist orientation, some countries are also designated as those of the 'first generation', i.e., those that started out on social progress in the 1960s and, in most cases, stopped at the stage of general democratic reforms, showing no perceptible tendency to move towards scientific socialism, and those of the 'second generation', which opted for socialism in the 1970s and have advanced significantly, chiefly in building up their superstructure along socialist lines. There is a clear dependence on the starting level from which the

social and economic development began. At any rate, no vanguard party of the working people or a party guided by scientific socialism has been formed in any of the countries which earlier had relatively developed capitalist relations. This phenomenon should be closely analysed: *the question of the prerequisites for a socialist orientation has to be studied thoroughly.*

An analysis of the difficulties of moving along the socialism-oriented way leads to this conclusion: for all the incontestable importance of the superstructural elements, it is the economy, economic development, that calls for the closest attention. It is in the economic sphere that most states opting for the socialist way have been confronted with grave complications.

There, the conditions for industrialisation that could bring about a short and sharp economic leap have, as a rule, not yet matured. Agriculture continues to be the leading and definitive sector. That is why what happens to the economy and, indeed, the success or failure of the whole socialist-orientation policy vastly depends on the state of affairs in the agrarian sector.

The distinctive features of the socio-economic process poses the ruling revolutionary democratic forces simultaneously with two problems: the first is to take the productive forces of agriculture to a higher level and the second is to integrate the ruinously pauperised lower strata of the rural population (the section that is a pillar of the most consistent revolutionary democracy) into the sphere of economic growth and social progress. The solution of these problems requires, first and foremost, agrarian reforms that would be an ally of democratic, anti-feudal, and anti-bourgeois reforms spearheaded against the big rentier landowners and the merchant and money-lending bourgeoisie.

Such reforms have many points in common with the agrarian reforms in Eastern countries that have remained capitalist. These were put into effect by the ruling bourgeoisie with the object of suppressing conservative capitalist evolution trends (under which precapitalist forms of exploitation remain for a long time) in order to accelerate the overall development of capitalism. At this stage the difference is usually the larger scale and greater depth of democratic steps (stricter limitation of the size of landownership, an end to the peasant redemption of land, and so forth) and anti-bourgeois steps (the creation of a public sector on nationalised lands, constraints on the freedom to alienate land and on trade, an orientation on the labouring peasants in the cooperative movement, and so on). However, the main distinction of socialism-oriented countries is *the state's determination to build up a social sector in the key branches of the economy* (industry, the economic infrastructure, foreign and large-scale wholesale domestic trade, banking) *so as to concentrate in the hands of the state the instruments for influencing economic and social processes in the countryside.*

At the stage of deepening agrarian reforms, the basic criterion of consistent revolutionary-democratic policy in the countryside is the attitude to the rural commodity-producers (petty-bourgeoisie), on the one hand, and the needy and pauperised strata of the rural population, on the other. The sharpness of this issue is determined by how widespread

pauperism is among the rural working people, and by the backwardness and oppression of the rural lower strata integrated into the pre-capitalist structure. The difficulty here is a significant improvement in the economic condition of the lowest groups of the peasantry, an improvement contributing to their emancipation from the traditional structures controlled by the rural élite and their conversion into an independent pillar of the revolutionary forces cannot be achieved solely by means of anti-feudal reforms. The reforms have to go deep into the economic and social relations within the peasantry itself so as to bring about a redistribution of property in favour of the lower strata. It means, in fact, a fundamental social restructuring requiring an unswerving revolutionary-democratic policy and all-round — political, economic, and ideological — preparation.

Revolutionary democracy is confronted with great difficulties along this way. First, there is an aggravation of the class contradictions with groups of the rural population whose interests are affected by the policy of redistributing economic resources in favour of the lower strata. Second, the substantial shortage of economic resources not only in the countryside but in the whole of the society makes it difficult to choose an optimal development strategy that would simultaneously help to conduct a consistent class policy, to develop the productive forces in agriculture, and to accumulate funds for a modern industrial sector.

There is usually a sharp struggle over the ways and means of resolving these contradictions. A typical variant of the strategy under consideration is the attempt to ensure certain socio-economic synthesis by creating an agrarian structure combining private and public economic interests and mechanisms with artificial constraints on the socio-economic stratification of the peasantry. But that, certainly, does not remove the problem of a class choice at the next phases in the development of the social process.

The extent to which the socialism-oriented countries have advanced along their chosen way is now crucially determined by changes in the superstructure, of which the ruling *revolutionary-democratic party* is the key element. In the 'second generation' states it is the vanguard party, or the party of the working people and of scientific socialism, as it is also known.

Vanguard parties are not a product of anyone's will or a reflection of the imperatives of revolutionary theory. They have been produced by the course of social development. The experience of the past decades shows that without such a party there can be no successful advance for a country taking the socialist way.

The formation of vanguard parties is a long and multi-faceted process. Some of them are formed in hard political struggle within the framework of national-patriotic fronts, from which revolutionary-democratic forces emerge and are subsequently consolidated. Others emerge through gradual (and often exceptionally complicated and contradictory) approximation of the left-wing of revolutionary democracy and the Communists. Yet a third way is the unification of Marxist groups and circles with left-radical, anti-imperialist and anti-bourgeois groups.

This process is directly bound up with the development of the socialist

orientation itself, with profound changes in social structures and the mass consciousness. These changes evolve very slowly, being resisted by a whole complex of conservative economic, social and political structures. There are first the patriarchal tribal relations, the traditional ruling clans and chieftains, who regard the formation of a vigorous and mobile party as a natural threat to their domination. The ethnic and denominational prejudices of those who regard the vanguard party as being above all an instrument for the attainment of self-seeking objectives by some ethnic group are a substantial factor hampering the emergence and strengthening of the vanguard party. For various objective reasons, the vanguard party cannot but have some covert advocates of conservation of retarded social structures under pseudo-socialist slogans, and also those who try to impose the bourgeois way of development by means of radical, 'modern' catchwords.

A similar danger lurks in any attempt at prematurely declaring a vanguard party to be a working class party with Marxism-Leninism as its ideology. This putting the cart before the horse is not in keeping with the party's character: it has to have solid support from the masses, and its ideology must mobilise the people to tackle such acute problems as putting an end to the age-old backwardness, the eradication of hunger, the building of a viable economy, and so on. In some African countries, it is a matter simply of sheer economic and political survival. Can the masses properly appreciate in these conditions Marxist-Leninist ideas and understand their proletarian and internationalist character? Need one say how dangerous it is, for instance, to make hasty and ill-considered proclamations of atheistic slogans. On the other hand, one may ask whether the local proletariat, which has not yet turned from a class in itself (wherever it does play a notable socio-political role) into a class for itself, will not be deluded about its actual role in the society. After all, in the less developed countries the proletariat is still not strong enough to come forward as the main force furthering social progress.

The experience of the vanguard parties in socialism-oriented countries shows that *the most difficult problems still are: to give all cadres — from the leadership down to the rank and file — a profound understanding of the ideas and principles of scientific socialism; to surmount the internal contradictions (clan, ethnic, religious), and to increase the proportion of class conscious workers in the social make-up.* There is also a need to reinforce the party's links to the masses, to improve the mechanism of the party's relations with state agencies and public organisations. The vanguard parties will be able to transform themselves into Marxist-Leninist parties only by solving these problems gradually and with much consideration, and here actual economic, social, political and cultural changes are of especial significance.

It is quite obvious that the present stage in the development of the countries of the East is characterised by the tendency of the advanced contingent of the revolutionary democrats consciously to turn to the ideas of scientific socialism. They are objectively impelled to do so by the search for optimal potentialities for progressive social restructuring. The ideas of scientific socialism are now accessible not only to a relatively small

leadership stratum, but also to rank-and-file members of vanguard parties, to all those who take part in or simply sympathise with the struggle to build a society without exploitation.

Those who favour acceptance of Marxism-Leninism emphasise its practical significance for realising the principle of social justice, pointing out that it is ultimately the clearest formulation of the ways and means for overcoming backwardness, eliminating antagonistic contradictions and getting rid of oppression of some classes by others as soon as possible.

In this context, the influence of Marxism-Leninism on the programmatic documents of ruling vanguard parties is indicative. In these documents, the revolutionary-democratic forces state their adherence to its fundamental principles and seek to formulate the right approach to the strategic problems of development. In some countries, Marxism-Leninism has been proclaimed as the official ideology, so that the advanced ideas are being disseminated on a state level.

The growing influence of Marxism-Leninism does not, of course, mean that the internal ideological contradictions of revolutionary democrats are already behind them. Going over to advanced positions in ideology involves a resolute break-up of traditional, primarily nationalistic, notions and psychological inertia being hampered by subjective unwillingness or incapacity on the part of many, including sincere patriots, to accept the basic propositions of the Marxist theory. But this switch is promoted by the rising political consciousness of the working masses, and the accumulation by them of experience in political struggle and transformations on the way to socialism.

¹ See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1970, p. 153.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 244.

³ See *Ibid.*, Vol. 30, pp. 159-160.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 244.

⁵ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969, p. 403.

James Baldwin – Henri Alleg: People Must Not Lose Each Other

Two of the books and papers on racism, published in the past few years, merit special attention: *The Evidence of Things Not Seen* by **James Baldwin**, a prominent present-day American author, published simultaneously in Paris and New York, and *S.O.S. America* (reviewed in *WMR* No. 7, 1986) by **Henri Alleg**, a French writer and journalist, put out at about the same time. This circumstance prompted the idea to bring the two authors together so that they should discuss the threat posed by racism to peace and understanding among people and nations.

Henri Alleg. You say in *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*: Those who define people by colour are condemned to blindness. There is not a single racist in the world who would not be a liar and a coward. Because being a racist is imagining that reality can be subjugated to one's anguish. What did you mean by such voluntary self-deception?

James Baldwin. It indeed seems to me that racism is a form of human cowardice. There is always a reason to despise the other, and it makes no difference who or what that other is. The Western world, the so-called Christian world, has lived through generations in a kind of room lined with mirrors, white people only in the white imagination. History is something like a hymn written by white people, of white people; therefore the enduring illusion about the 'benign' French — the French were exactly like the white Americans in deep South.

But they would become 'white' only when they had nearby 'niggers' or, say, 'redskins'. We were not 'blacks' in our far-away homeland, Africa; that name was given to us by those who came to make my ancestors a commodity.

If 'honest work and the magic of the market', as our magician-president Ronald Reagan claims, really were the road to plenty, the American Blacks would long have become the wealthiest people in the world. But

James Baldwin (b. 1924) is the author of popular novels, such as *Go to Tell It on the Mountain* (1953), *Another Country* (1962), *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (1968), *Just Above My Head* (1979) and *If Beale Street Could Talk* (1974). He has written many stories, plays, and collections of verses and essays. Since the late 1950s he has been living and working chiefly in France, and finally settled down in Paris after the assassination of the US black civil rights leader Dr Martin Luther King in 1968.

Henri Alleg (b. 1921) a veteran of Algeria's National-Democratic Revolution. Between 1950 and 1955 he was director of the newspaper *l'Alger Republicain*, was arrested by the French military authorities in 1957 and in 1961 escaped from jail. Many of his books are about the Algerian war, such as *La Question* (1958) and *Prisonniers de Guerre* (1961). He edited the three-volume corporate *La Guerre d'Algerie*. His other works include *Victorieuse Cuba* (1963) and *Etoile rouge et croissant vert* (1983). He is a member of the French Communist Party and a special correspondent of *l'Humanite*.

this phrase is an appallingly accurate summary of the history of my people: brought to America against our will, we indeed were put *on the market*: our life in that land began with a slaveowner's signature under the title deed to our flesh, a mere merchandise. And people with a lighter skin who were almost as miserable as we were when they reached the New World — paupers, the dregs of society and wanted convicts — did not take long to realise what was in store for them if they did not behave as 'whites' . . .

You know it is not a colour question. All this is happening over and over again for generations, for centuries. And it does not matter what term you use to describe such outcasts — Black, heathen, pagan, Jew or Gypsy . . . People are never so easily described, so easily controlled. Civilisations come and go because of this reason. It is the key to what is happening in the entire West — in the USA and Holland, in Britain and France — wherever the slave trade was and racial prejudice has survived. Do you agree?

Henri Alleg. Yes, James, in principle. I have never deluded myself with the idea, quite common and very flattering to the French, that racism has no roots in France. Just as in any other large country, two traditions coexist in France. One is the tradition of the French Revolution, although we remember that there were supporters of slavery among its leaders because, when all is said and done, it was a bourgeois revolution. And in the United States George Washington, who came up with a Declaration of Human Rights, himself owned slaves. We should therefore always put phenomena in their proper historical context. During the Paris Commune, many Communards struggled against racism and for genuine equality, although theirs was a paternalistic attitude: they wanted 'to raise to their own level' those whom they colonised — as if people from other cultures and civilisations were necessarily 'lower'. It was the essence of French colonialism . . .

James Baldwin. And of European colonialism in general.

Henri Alleg. Yes, of course. But France has always had a truly anti-racist trend which, perhaps, has not manifested itself so forcefully in other European countries. However, today, I see unprecedented outbursts of racist sentiments, as if it were the time of the Algerian war . . . And I hoped so much that after all the trials, the humiliation of Nazi occupation and all the senseless and vicious colonial wars, France had developed at least some immunity to the plague of racism . . . But although, fortunately, most of the French are not infested with that virus, the danger is quite real.

James Baldwin. You have mentioned the war in Algeria. At about the same time I went to the country where I had been born, to the USA. The southern states were in the grip of what they called race riots. The white people in Alabama were hurt, they could not believe that their former slaves could possibly turn on them. They asked, "Did we treat you badly? Did we hurt your feelings?" It was exactly what the white people in Alabama and the white people in France thought. "We loved each other," the French told me, "how could this happen to us?" Of course it happened. They did love the Algerians — from the distance of their superiority, in the very same way that the white Americans created out of the 'savage' which I was in Africa the 'happy darkie' of the plantation fables, the 'happy darkie'

of *Gone With the Wind*, an American fable for white people, manufactured to obliterate a crime. If in fact I am a man like you and you have made me your thing, you have made me your slave and less than a thing, then you committed a crime against a human being — but I am not a human being and there is no crime.

White Americans are living in the trap of their imagination. A white person either beats your brains out or tries to become your friend. In the minds of most white people the black person is someone that they have invented. For most of them, when you are young you are a black cat, a phallic symbol, and when you are old you are a saint, Uncle Tom. You are called 'Nigger Boy!' and 'Hey!' and there is no one who is seeing you . . .

And we will be losing each other that way because the 'white supremacy' legend is a trap for those who have made it up. Take South Africa. If some white people only look, they are, too, prisoners in South Africa, captives to their own prejudice.

Henri Alleg. I will tell you a story from my journalistic days which illustrates your conclusions. It happened in Harare (which was called Salisbury then) at the time of the proclamation of the independent Republic of Zimbabwe. Just imagine a charming clean city, a paradise for a few tens of thousands of whites, and all around it hundreds of thousands of Blacks living in bidonvilles in abysmal conditions, without electricity, gas or tap water. The poverty was unbelievable, there were many disease-stricken people, cripples and children with eyes sore with trachoma . . .

It was the time of the transfer of power — a very unusual situation because Blacks had already been appointed to ministerial posts while their staff remained the same, whites steeped in racism.

I wanted to interview a minister and was sitting in his reception room, lined with old engravings from the age of British colonial rule. They showed invaders in cork hats, standing like feudal lords amidst joyful natives who welcomed them with offerings of fruit and other gifts . . . No one had thought of removing those engravings, which were an insult to Blacks, especially at the time independence was about to be proclaimed.

In the reception room, a young white secretary, exquisitely dressed and very pleased with herself, asked me what country I was from. Having heard I was from France, she exclaimed: "Oh, I passed through Paris as my husband and I went to Italy: his ancestors come from Italy. What a beautiful land: there are museums, churches and the like. But honestly, I could not have lived in Italy." I asked why, and do you know what she told me? "There are too many poor people there and we here are not used to such a thing." That meant that the Blacks around her were not people; she was just not seeing them, as you have put it.

But let us leave our reminiscences for the time being. You recently went to the United States to see friends . . . Although your book answers in many ways the question I am going to ask, will you, please, say what you think of the roots of the Black problem in the USA and what is your attitude to what has come to be known in today's political lingo as Reaganism?

James Baldwin. First of all, let me talk about Reaganism. I am not disturbed by a particular man who has given his name to the phenomenon itself. I have lived through many American presidents and I intend to outlive this one, too. Reaganism is first and foremost a symptom of the panic, not only in America, not only in England and not only in France — the panic on the part of the Western world.

If we speak of the Black problem, the Negro problem, from my point of view — and I talk about America because I was born there and that is my frame of reference — it is not a Black problem, it is a white problem. If one could change the optics, the real problem of the country is not the poverty among Black people, not the crime rate among Black people, not the victimisation of Black people, not the prisons, but what the white Americans do to their children.

It is a crime to raise a child, I think, on the assumption that he is safe because he is white, that he is a free white at 21. Safety is a dream, no one is safe, and the sooner your son learns it the better. A black child is born to danger, and knows that by the time he or she is at the outside ten years old. The danger of any 24 hours, the danger of being called a Nigger, the danger of being spanked, hungry, out of work, the danger of simply getting through your life . . . You see it in your father's eyes and it is a terrifying thing to go through . . .

In a sense, it is a paradox: if you know, and from the very beginning, that you were born to die, if you are not destroyed, you may be able to live. If you think you were born to a world that is going to answer your call because you are white you are in a much, much, much greater danger. The world is not 'white' no matter what Ronald Reagan thinks, no matter what George Washington thought. You have to deal with the world as it is. Human being is the same everywhere and what we are talking about, racism, is how one looks at the world.

We may lie to each other but you've got to tell the truth to the child, the children are our responsibility and you cannot tell the child to hate a Jew, or an Algerian, or an Arab, or a Negro, or a white person, because it is a crime.

Society is plunged into chaos in the absence of ethical values. Confusion is one frequent result of disparity between declarations and reality, between words and deeds. People conceal something from their fellows, some even have their brothers for enemies. And many have no courage to recognise the natural human right to love and respect one another.

Henri Alleg. You say on the last page of your book *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*: the political and social system we have today can no longer serve human needs. Awareness of this fact is growing in the people's midst as they see their children killed or forced to go hungry and live in fear all over the world, on all the continents and shores of our brilliant planet. In these lines, which sum up the philosophical idea of the book, you go beyond its basic but nevertheless specific problem of the Blacks' destinies and turn to common human problems. You seem to expound the well-known idea of Martin Luther King, who said: "There is more to the Black revolution than the Blacks' struggle for their rights: it makes America face its whole tangle of ills, such as racism, poverty, militarism and spiritual

impoverishment. It goes below the surface to expose innate flaws and shows that the real problem is the radical restructuring of society itself."

I saw how right Dr King was when a few years ago I was writing a book about change in Soviet Central Asia since the socialist revolution. There live in that region, over which wave after wave of invaders rolled, peoples of very different origins, histories and cultures, and relations between them were sometimes marred by hostility and violence. Now, what has changed in Central Asia under Soviet government? I do not want to paint a picture of paradise for you and claim that, after age-long wars and strife, there are no longer any mutual prejudices, nor can be any. But it is a reality that the land which a mere 70 years ago had an illiteracy rate of 98 per cent today has more educated men and women (who enjoy equal rights) than Sweden, Denmark or France. More, one thing in common for those people of different nationalities is a sense of fraternity and mutual tolerance which once seemed impossible.

All this prompts the conclusion which sends me back to what you said in your book and what I found in Dr King's words: racism and mutual hatred, injustice and barbarity, when all is said and done, are rooted in a political regime imposed on people, and in that exploitation which is practised in the capitalist countries, including those we are talking about, like the United States and France.

James Baldwin. I liked your example although I myself do not know much about the Soviet Union. But even on a brief trip to that country in October last year, when I went to the Issyk-kul forum of men of culture, I realise that it was nothing like an 'evil empire'. I do not know why but many people become stricken with a sort of myopia as soon as they turn to look at other countries. It would be a good thing to compile a new political vocabulary so that the peoples could communicate and better understand one another.

At certain points in history people are faced with hard choices. In Nazi Germany, for instance, it was morally too expensive to have a Jewish friend. It is a very difficult matter to have an Arab or a Black friend. The choice is imposed from the top, from the society against which all of us struggled in order for me to be your friend in Louisiana or in Berlin, or in Paris, or in London. The only way to rearrange that is to change the society and that is very, very difficult.

Martin Luther King's widow made me a gift of a watch, the only one I have not lost or smashed. It has on it Martin's portrait and an inscription, his words 'I have a dream'. Perhaps, common human morality will remain just a dream, but I believe in it like Martin did.

Henri Alleg. The Issyk-kul forum, which you attended, discussed many problems bearing on the destinies of Earth, civilisation and culture. What do you think of the problem of major importance to humanity: will peace be preserved, and will we continue to spend enormous funds on nuclear arms, although this squandered money could have fed and cured millions of those who are starved or ill? Do you believe in the possibility of any agreement or are you pessimistically anticipating catastrophe?

James Baldwin. The Issyk-kul forum was very interesting and gave me a good deal. It is only with time that we will fully appreciate the significance

of such meetings but it is important that they should continue.

It is possible for people to reach agreement because this is prompted by the need to avoid self-destruction. Western civilisation, meanwhile, has already proved that it will rather wipe people off the face of Earth than listen to them and sack whole continents rather than share their resources as brothers should. In principle, it is quite capable of destroying life on Earth. But I do not think it will come to that, although what is taking place around us is terrible and the threat is very real.

The classic ploy of choosing a scapegoat for all the evils of society is still current today. It is enough to label some group of people 'leftists', 'rebels' or 'terrorists' to deny them the right to be considered human beings and then to wipe them out like dangerous pests. Some authorities believe — and try to make others believe — that starving men, women and children are a 'Communist menace', and go out of their way to finish off all those who have not been bought or are not exploited by them.

As a result, we have really been through the third world war. There has been a series of little wars, little limited wars, from Lebanon to El Salvador, with the same intention — to keep the power in the hands of people who think they have the power.

But for how long can we keep killing each other? If we do not learn, and very fast, to live with each other, this small world of ours is doomed.

We must liberate ourselves from this vocabulary of hatred or perish in it. Something that is hard to put into words ripening in human mentality, inexorably changing all of us. Future is being made today and we are contributing to it with our every breath and every step. The past does not disappear without a trace and everything we have ever done comes back to haunt us. Wherever we live, in the East or in the West, we are forever bound together and need each other. It is a bad delusion to think that there are two worlds: we have just one world, one for all the people . . .

From 1917 to This Day

'She Is Russian, But Her Language Is Clear To All Peoples'

Reflections During a Visit to the USSR Central Museum of the Revolution

WE discussed history with Galina Vedernikova, deputy director of the USSR Museum of the Revolution. We said that it was by no means the image of today's world projected into the past. History has its own objective laws, its own truth, its own realism. It can be neither improved nor made worse. We also recalled the not too distant past when it appeared that researchers were better advised to turn a blind eye to some things than to display a keenness of vision. And, of course, we recalled the famous

phrase of the Russian scholar Nikolai Karamzin: while anyone and possibly even all of us may forget or hide something, "history must have a long memory".

"Some buildings have a truly fascinating history," Galina Vedernikova said. "Here you have this burgundy-coloured palace with a white portico and white wings, and with the figures of lions slumbering on the gate pillars. It has been gracing the main street of Moscow for over 2000 years. It survived Napoleon's invasion and the fire of 1812. Many celebrities called at this house, including Pushkin and Griboyedov, as well as some of the Decembrists — people of unimpeachable honour. Later the palace became the English Club, the 'temple of indolence' of the Moscow nobility, where the pillars of society, the loyal cohorts of 'Our Father the Tsar' and supporters of monarchy congregated, lost and won fortunes at cards and generally had a good time in the splendour of its halls and rooms. The October Revolution swept away this crowd, smashed the juggernaut of tsarism and left it in the ditch of history as so much junk. But it was not only a break with the past. The October Revolution was above all a creative effort. It was, perhaps, no accident that this palace hosted an exhibition called 'Red Moscow' and then became the USSR Museum of the Revolution. Three years ago the museum marked its 60th anniversary.

"It was actually the people themselves who created the museum of their revolution by preserving the cultural heritage of the past and collecting priceless memorabilia of their heroic present. They turned these items over to the museum as gifts — documents, leaflets, photographs, banners, as well as personal belongings, weapons, medals and other decorations of freedom fighters."

We were standing on the cobblestones of the shrub-lined courtyard of the museum where renovation work had just been completed. Nearby was a six-inch artillery piece the revolutionary troops fired in October 1917 to oust the counter-revolutionaries from the Kremlin. As we stood there, buses kept discharging a steady stream of tourists. In the babel of different languages, I hastened to keep the conversation going.

"But many people accused — and are still accusing — the Bolsheviks of looting the nation's treasures, of destroying monuments and having a short memory," I said to Galina Vedernikova.

"Facts are indeed a stubborn thing. And the facts are that Lenin's Decree on Land, adopted simultaneously with the Decree on Peace in the early hours of October 26, 1917, included a provision on the inviolability of former landowners' estates and property — collections, archives and libraries. A year later a decree was promulgated prohibiting the export and instituting the registration of works of art and historic relics. One also hears that the intelligentsia, the artistic community allegedly rejected the revolution and there was no one to enforce these decrees. But that's not true. By early 1919 the professional associations which supported Soviet government had a membership of 800,000 intellectuals, including an artistic community of more than 27,000."

"But history — which has a 'long memory' — tells us that good intentions motivated numerous laws and decrees, but that they often remained on paper, or, say, on clay tablets or papyrus."

"Let me cite one example. The year 1922 was a tough year for our people and for the newborn republic. The armed foreign intervention alone cost us more than 39 billion gold rubles — a quarter of Russia's total pre-war wealth. There was famine along the Volga and in the Ukraine. But even facing these enormous challenges, the country decided it could spend 15,000 gold rubles not to infringe the conditions laid down by the Paris-based collector Onegin-Otto for the sale of his famous Pushkin memorabilia."

We entered the vestibule and climbed the marble staircase leading to the halls full of revolutionary relics. The museum stocks nearly one million exhibits, and new items keep arriving. The more valuable and remarkable ones are on display.

There is a special quality to the museum's silence. You can readily imagine hearing the whitting of the mimeograph the Bolsheviks used to print clandestine literature, or the pistol shots and explosions of home-made bombs the Moscow workers' militia was armed with during the first Russian revolution of 1905, or the monotonous sound of leg irons, or the revolting crackle of the leather straightjacket the tsarist jailers used to torture political prisoners, or the rattle of the ingeniously shaped wrought-iron key which, in 1917, unlocked the cell doors of Petrograd's Peter and Paul Fortress to release the imprisoned fighters against autocracy. Or the ear-splitting roar of the gun the legendary cruiser *Aurora* fired as a signal to begin the storming of the Winter Palace, or the tapping of the Morse Key, or the stuttering of the machine guns mounted on the horse-drawn carts of the First Cavalry Army during the Civil War.

There are many things the October Revolution accomplished for the first time in human history, and the museum highlights these achievements. Like a 'spall of an era', the exhibits help one to feel the pulse of those heroic years, to grasp the greatness and the universal significance of the October Revolution.

There is the first message of the Military Revolutionary Committee drafted by Lenin — "To the Citizens of Russia":

"The cause for which the people have fought, namely, the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet power — this cause has been secured."¹

There are the first, historic decrees of the Soviet government — the Decree on Peace which laid the basis of our country's peaceful foreign policy and the Decree on Land which turned 150 million hectares of land over to the peasants without any charge. There is the famous Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia. Adopted within days of the storming of the Winter Palace, it proclaimed: (1) the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia; (2) the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, up to and including secession and the formation of independent states; (3) the abolition of social privileges and restrictions; and (4) free development of national minorities and ethnic groups.

There is the first Soviet primer for adults, published in Moscow in 1920. It opens with the now familiar lines — "We are not slaves. slaves we are not." In pre-revolutionary Russia, three people out of four could neither

read nor write. The revolution sent millions of children, teenagers and adults to school. A mere two decades later the literacy rate passed the 87 per cent mark — as was shown in the 1939 census. Under Soviet government, about 50 literary languages were born, some of them acquired by small ethnic groups — the Nanai, the Khanty, the Chukchi, the Nentsi, the Evenki, the Mensi and the Nivhi.

The first Soviet tractor was produced at the Stalingrad Tractor Works in 1930 — when Sir Henri Deterding of Royal Dutch Shell said that “the Bolsheviks are people totally unfit for anything creative; they feel they were born to destroy.” But our country kept building and creating, and the ‘Russian miracle’ evoked sincere admiration as we amassed a huge material and intellectual potential at an unheard-of rate. At the tractor works, the American plan called for 163 days to build the mechanical assembly shop — but Soviet workers completed it in 28 days. The construction of the foundry took 72 days, not 193, and the excavation, 50 days instead of 160. The whole of the giant plant, built to manufacture 40,000 tractors a year, was finished in 11 months.

That was only one of the countless building blocks that went into the foundation of socialist industry. The pace at which the country was living and building was forced on us by circumstances beyond our control. Only heavy industry could ensure the economic independence and defence capacity of a young republic surrounded by hostile states.

The first semi-automated machine tool ‘DIP-200’ (‘DIP’ being the acronym for ‘catch up with and overtake’), the first steel of Magnitka and Kuznetsk, the first atomic power plant, the first man-made satellite. The exhibits are landmarks on the path our country has travelled swiftly from the primitive wooden plough, from endemic illiteracy, poverty and exploitation of man by man to modern industry, to the heights of knowledge, genuine democracy and universal social security — although during the short historical period in which all this has been accomplished we went through two devastating wars and each time had to rehabilitate the economy.

“I have recently read an article,” Galina Vedernikova said, “in which the author recalled saying much the same things to an audience in the West and hearing something like, ‘You are wrong. All countries built their industries and promoted science and technology. Education is developing everywhere. Housing construction has been going on everywhere too. You think you were trail-blazers? You simply followed in the footsteps of those who had traversed this path before you.’ You know what he said in reply? He said that the similarity was superficial and then he said — and I quote — ‘We built plants and factories, but we built them on our own, without exploiting colonial peoples. We did not plunder other nations to strengthen our country. We created our industry so as to free it from what was essentially forced labour, so as to make the workers of a factory feel they were really in control. We introduced technological advances, but we did not take jobs away from the people whose labour these innovations were supposed to make easier. We built houses for working people, and we built schools to make education available to all.’

"I agree that the article you are talking about has gone to the crux of the matter. I think that this is the principal issue in the debate which has been going on since the very first days of the October Revolution. What kind of society are we dealing with? What has it given to the people, to every nation and ethnic group, to all humanity — and at what price? Is it committed to peace since no one in it profits from war? Is it capable of rising above the differences that divide the world, now that the human race is facing the question of survival? Answers to these questions alone can lead one to an understanding of Soviet society. This is what the October Revolution was all about, this is the reason for the existence of socialism. And fighting for socialism were not only our people but also thousands of internationalists, including Poles, Hungarians, Romanians, Czechs, Slovaks, Yugoslavs, Bulgarians, Germans and others."

"Please take a look at this exhibit. It is a plain silver ring which belonged to Georg Schuller, a German mineworker and a Communist. In 1917, when German and Russian servicemen fraternised during World War I, he presented a Russian soldier with a German silver mark. The regimental smith made the coin into a ring and engraved the initials of the German and the Russian internationalists.

"Georg Schuller kept this ring as a symbol of solidarity and friendship with the Soviet Union. Shortly before his death he gave the ring to his daughter Gertrude Wendler, a member of the Communist Party of Germany since 1945, and told her to cherish the friendship of our two peoples. She presented the ring to our museum."

Fraternal solidarity and internationalism. For almost three decades our country was alone in its confrontation with world capitalism. There were times — the economic dislocation, the famine, the Civil War, the foreign armed intervention, the counter-revolution and the sabotage by the bourgeoisie — when it seemed that the march of history was about to be reversed. But the Soviet people received effective support from the international proletariat, from people of progressive convictions worldwide. Exhibits documenting this fraternal solidarity abound in the museum's halls. The 'Hands Off Soviet Russia' campaign, the numerous resolutions adopted at workers' meetings and rallies in different countries, solidarity banners, and a poster from France inscribed 'The Paris Commune of 1871 was defeated, but the Moscow Commune of 1917 has triumphed'. And, of course, the 'Golden Books' — whole volumes of greetings from groups and individuals, photographs, drawings and pages and pages of signatures. These books were sent or brought to Moscow by workers' delegations from Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United States to mark the 20th anniversary of October Revolution.

I saw personal belongings of some of the foreign internationalists who came to help the world's first Soviet republic to defend its freedom and independence. The Hungarian Mate Zalka was one of these people, and the museum displays his sabre, compass, bullets extracted from his wounds, and combat awards he received. Mate Zalka later became a popular author. Under the alias of General Lukas he fought in Spain on

the republican side and died a heroic death there.

The museum has mounted a special exhibition to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution — 'Fighters for the Revolutionary Cause'. The exhibition features documents, photos and biographical notes on 105 revolutionaries, including I. Armand, L. Krasin, A. Kollontai, M. Litvinov, F. Sergeyev-Artem, and Y. Yaroslavsky.

"But why is the list so short? Or, putting it in broader terms, why has our history become 'depopulated'? History books and manuals — and the exhibits of the museum, too — say very little about those who led our party after Lenin. One is hard put even to find the names of all heads of government — the Council of People's Commissars and the USSR Council of Ministers. Frankly, many names and destinies, as well as extremely important but complicated periods in the history of the party have been consigned to oblivion and become taboo. How long can we keep silent about the contradictions, shortcomings and mistakes of the past and make believe that they never occurred?"

"A time has come when imitation of the truth, subjective likes and dislikes, as well as taboos are becoming — have not yet become, in my view — impossible", Galina Vedernikova replied. "A tool has emerged with which society effectively controls the state of affairs in all spheres of our life, including the science of history. I am referring to glasnost. Too many negative phenomena have accumulated in our historiography. It is not all that easy to destroy the still operating braking mechanism at one stroke, to abolish the long-accepted bureaucratic monopoly on the truth, to end the obsequious practice of inflating the role of some people and forgetting others, and to overcome the dogmas that struck roots years ago — specifically, the view that the party developed smoothly and without conflict. Besides, we've got to break and reshape our own habits and thought patterns.

"Today, all of us in the Soviet Union are learning to appraise the past honestly, and that includes recent years too. And we are not hiding the fact that we are learning. There is nothing furtive about it. On the contrary, we are doing it openly, publicly. The press, radio and television are debating these complex issues, with a sense of commitment and without glossing things over. These problems were frankly discussed at the 27th Congress of the party and at plenary meetings of its Central Committee. But I think it is more important to mention what is now being done 'not to hoodwink' ourselves, as Lenin said, 'but to have the courage openly to admit the existence of what exists.'" Again, I will cite only one fact, but it reflects not only the character but also the depth of our perestroika.

"Here is a brief press report. 'On July 16, 1987, having considered the objection lodged by the USSR Prosecutor General with regard to the case of 15 citizens convicted in the early 1930s, the USSR Supreme Court ruled to repeal the 1931, 1932 and 1933 decisions concerning these persons and to dismiss the case for want of a corpus delicti. None of the rehabilitated are alive.

"Let us recall these 15 names, all the more so because readers are likely to come across some of them frequently in the future: they were the cream

of our academic world. The roll call: A. Chayanov, N. Kondratyev, A. Chelintsev, N. Makarov, L. Yurovsky, A. Doyarenko, A. Rybnikov, L. Litoshenko, S. Chayanov, L. Kafengauz, A. Teitel, I. Leontiev, A. Fabrikant, O. Hauke and N. Ghendzekhadze."

The size of this article prevents me from supplying details about the real achievements of these people or about their 'crimes'. In brief, they were tried for the 'establishment of and a leading role in a Peasants' Labour Party' — although there is no mention of such a party in the country's government and other major archives — and for their connection with the 'interventionist Industrial Party group'. Let us wait a little for details to appear. Let us refrain from hasty conclusions or assessments. After all, we are not rewriting history yet again, to suppress some things and emphasize others. We are in search of historical truth. The most important thing is that we are rising to a new level in soberly reviewing the experience of the Communist Party and of our state, in assessing the great store of human thought.

A meeting has been recently held at the CPSU Central Committee with the leading executives of the mass media and professional associations. A clear-cut position was worked out and outlined there. Mikhail Gorbachov summed it up as follows: "We cannot and we must not ever forgive or justify what happened in 1937-1938. Not ever. The responsibility lies with those who were then at the helm. But, comrades, this does not belittle all that we have today, what the party and the people have achieved after going through these trials. The losses were grave and great; we know what the years 1937-1938 brought, what blow was dealt to the cadre of the party, of the intelligentsia and of the army. Nonetheless, we must be aware of the enormous strength of socialism, of our system, which has withstood all that, joined the battle against Nazism and triumphed . . .

"We are telling the truth and nothing but the truth. We take pride in every single day we have lived. We cherish every single day — even though some were very grim — because this has been our historical school, these have been our historical lessons."

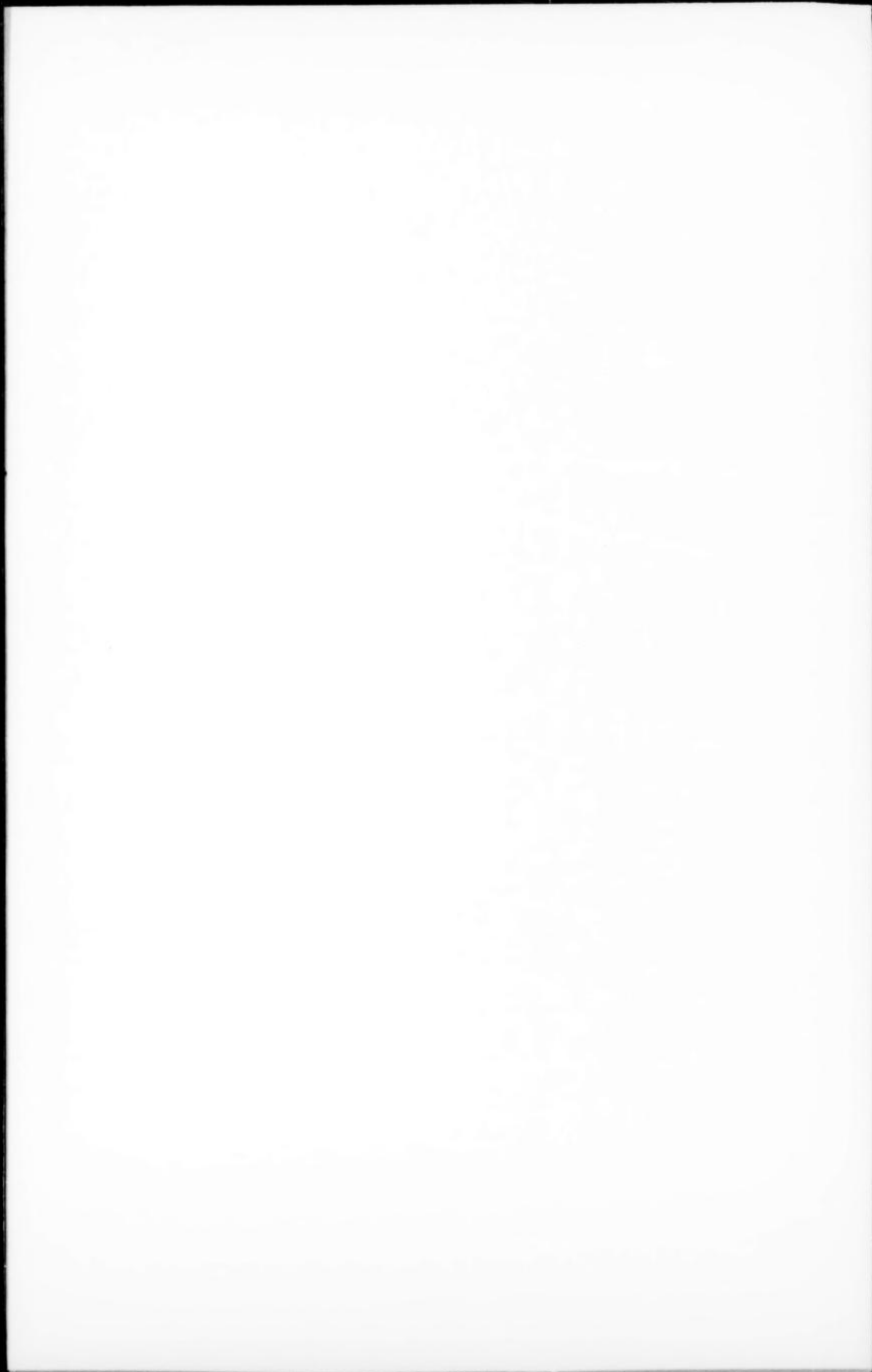
In the evening the bustle of the tourists subsides, and the halls of the museum grow quiet again. I now recall my parting look at the relics on display and my parting reflections.

I recall an exhibit from Switzerland — a glass case with a small but expressive drawing by the well-known artist France Masereel. The drawing, devoted to the October Revolution, is inscribed 'She is Russian, but her language is clear to all peoples.' No matter how our revolution is described — as a miracle, the opening of a new era, an enigma, or a utopia — her language is indeed clear to all who believe that man deserves happiness, that he can and must fight for this happiness — for himself, his family, his people and all humanity, even though the struggle is hard.

Anatoly Danilevich, Moscow.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 236.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 391.



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