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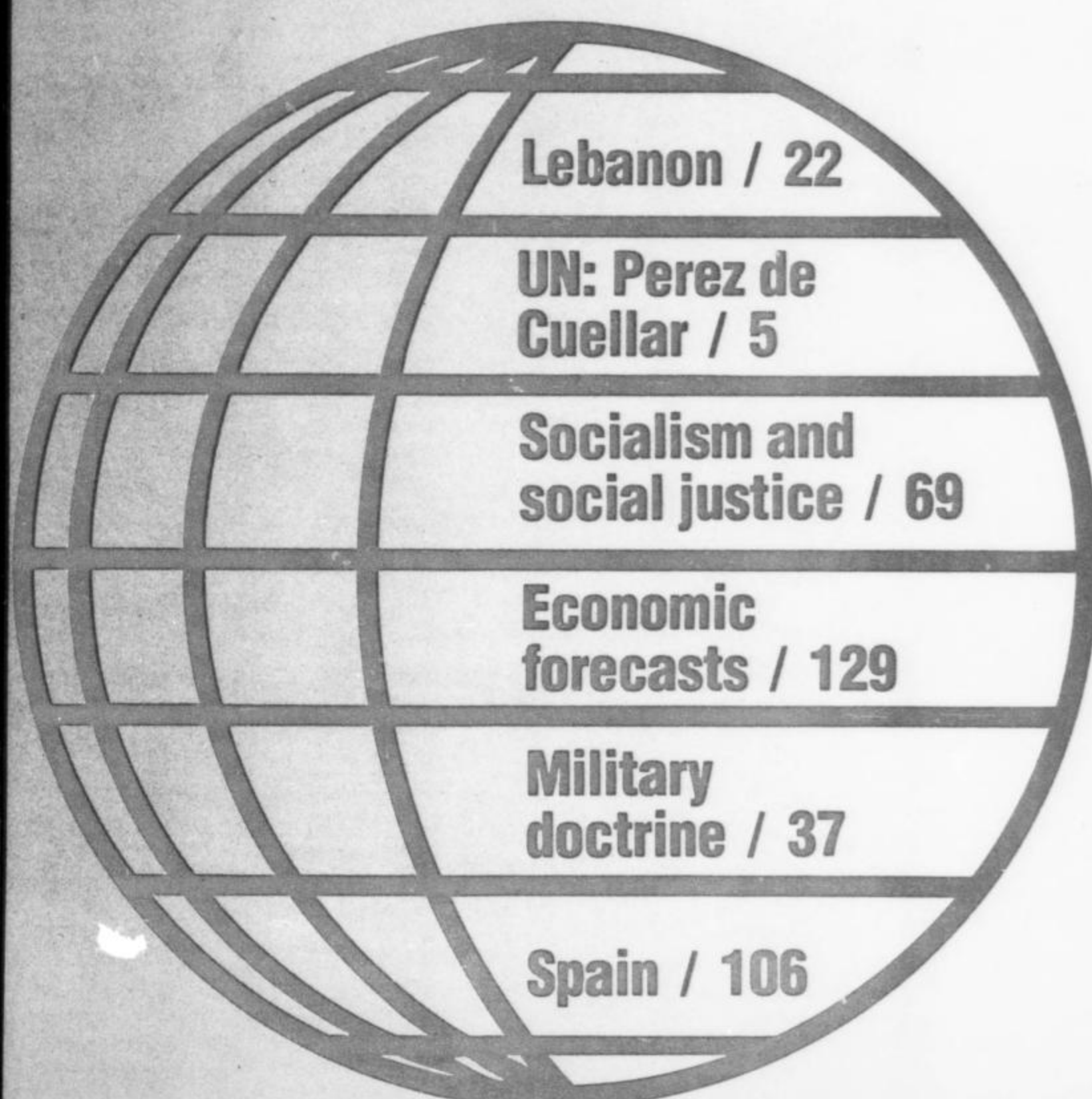
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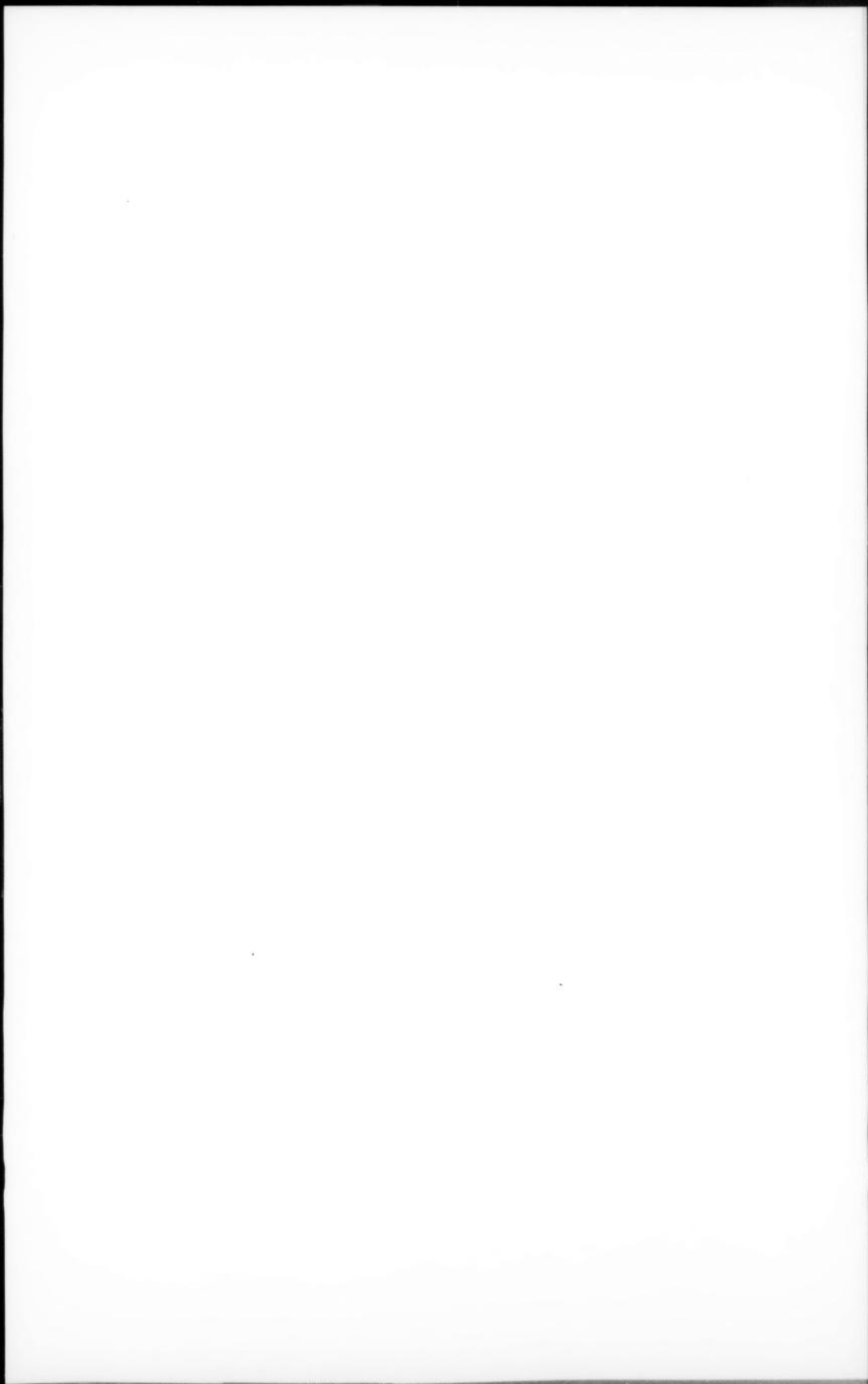
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For A Fuller Use Of UN Potential

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar — UN
Secretary-General

We hope you agree that the world is tired of constantly facing the threat of annihilation and that it needs to find a solid foundation for ending this extremely dangerous situation and to arrive at a proper balance of interests. How would you describe the principles essential to the solution of this highly important problem, what can bring about a turn for the better in world affairs, and how can the UN contribute to it?

I HAVE used every occasion I could to stress that the threat of nuclear catastrophe is not to be regarded as one among many other issues but that preventing such a horror is the precondition of all our endeavours. The principles essential to the solution of this over-arching problem have been stated with clarity in the pronouncements of the General Assembly and the United Nations Conference on Disarmament. The goal of curbing the arms race and moving towards substantial disarmament agreements leading to the final elimination of nuclear weapons needs to be vigorously pursued. Pending the realisation of that goal, all practicable measures need to be taken to bring about an immediate decrease in the risks arising from the existence of today's enormous arsenals. It is essential, as General Secretary Gorbachov has observed in his recent article, to ensure security at each stage during the process of disarmament and to agree on mechanisms for maintaining peace at drastically reduced levels of non-nuclear armaments.

The agreement, soon to be finalised, between the USSR and the USA on medium and shorter-range missiles is not only a significant first step but also assumes an historic character in being an agreement to eliminate two categories of existing weapons. A breakthrough on eliminating strategic offensive arms would be a unique and major achievement towards genuine disarmament.

Replies to questions posed by *World Marxist Review*. — Ed.

As regards the contribution of the United Nations, I should like to mention that the Conference on Disarmament established by the United Nations is a unique negotiating forum where all viewpoints are represented. Its value would be greatly enhanced if it were given more high-level political attention by all its members. Furthermore, verification has been a difficult element on which to find agreement in most of the disarmament negotiations now under way. This is an area in which the United Nations is qualified to make a significant contribution.

It is especially noteworthy that, in his article, General Secretary Gorbachov has referred to the possible role of the United Nations in verifying compliance with agreements to lessen international tensions and limit armaments. His specific suggestions invite thoughtful consideration by all governments. I would wish thorough preparation by governments for the forthcoming Third Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament which could provide the opportunity to devise means for the realisation of the organisation's potential in this vitally important field.

How would you assess the United Nations' activities in view of what you have said? What is hampering it in its work, particularly in its efforts to promote international security and disarmament?

I agree with the view that hopeful prospects are now opening for the resolution of major problems and, therefore, for a better utilisation of the machinery of the United Nations. However, in all kinds of political climate, the efforts of the United Nations will be shaped and determined by the degree of cooperation it receives from member states. Without such cooperation, the United Nations can do nothing. With such cooperation, there is no limit to what it can attain in strengthening international security and promoting disarmament.

A central responsibility lies on the permanent members of the Security Council: agreement among them is essential to every step towards resolving conflicts and lessening tensions. But they, in turn, have to be responsive to the declared wishes of the majority of nations. Only then can the United Nations play a radically new part in the spirit of its Charter.

You come from Peru, a Latin American developing country. As the Secretary General of the United Nations, how do you evaluate the prospects for the solution of the numerous and acute problems of the Third World, above all the socio-economic issues, and, in this connection, of the world at large? How do you see the link between development and disarmament?

My origin in a Latin American developing country has no doubt given me a keen understanding of the facts of social suffering caused by under-development but I do not allow it to impair my impartiality as far as differences of viewpoints between the North and the South are concerned. As the Secretary General of the United Nations, I have welcomed the final act of the recent session of UNCTAD. This constitutes a comprehensive statement on the issues facing the world economy and on the policies and

measures needed to revitalise development, economic growth and international trade. The fact that this statement was adopted by consensus seems to be a promising sign for pragmatic, multilateral cooperation in the economic field. There is a better recognition now of the common interest in employing a growth-oriented strategy for the resolution of the problem of the external debt of developing countries and establishing an environment which would support growth in them.

The link between development and disarmament is implied in the Charter of the United Nations itself when it speaks of "the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources". No one can question that an ever spiralling arms race has been consuming a proportion of global resources, both in the industrialised and the developing countries, which is intolerable. Nor is the proposition debatable that disarmament could release additional resources for development.

You have recently visited the Soviet Union. What do you think about the changes under way in Soviet domestic and foreign policy and about Moscow's recent peace initiatives? How does the new way of political thinking fit the broad, international interests of all mankind and how does it relate to the present activities of the United Nations?

When in Moscow, I had a detailed exchange of views with General Secretary Gorbachov and I was greatly impressed. I welcomed the opportunity to express to him my warmest wishes for the success of the Soviet Union in working out the various processes of domestic reform which have been initiated recently. Considering the position of the Soviet Union in world affairs and as a permanent member of the Security Council, its thinking on the strengthening of peace cannot but command worldwide interest and attention. It is a matter of very great significance that, in the statement General Secretary Gorbachov made in New Delhi last year as well as in the article published on the eve of the current session of the General Assembly, he envisions a central role for the United Nations in a comprehensive approach to peace. To the degree that the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union elicit a positive response and become links in a chain of reciprocal actions towards peace, they can strengthen the capability of the United Nations to address major problems which are hitherto unresolved.

International Communist Movement

More Meetings, More Comradely Discussions

Anthony Vassallo — General
Secretary, Communist Party of Malta

OUR age is marked by swift change throughout the social fabric — in politics, in the economy and in ideology. Each day brings something new and often unexpected, as if testing the viability of the programmes and theoretical concepts advanced by various political forces, of the ways in which they act and of the organisational structures they adopt.

The communist movement is an integral part of our diverse and rapidly changing world, reflecting its problems and contradictions, searching for answers to the questions mankind encounters and fighting to resolve them in the interests of the working people, of the masses. Operating in countries with different socio-economic, political and ethnic conditions, communist parties are dissimilar in their influence and experience, in the tasks they face and in the ways they tackle many specific issues. But they share historical and ideological roots and ultimate goals that are obviously common; there is, therefore, a force of fraternal class solidarity which has emerged successfully from many trials.

Like their comrades in other countries, the Communists of Malta are aware of their involvement in a great international movement and agree that it is *about to enter a new stage in its development*, when it will have to respond to the challenge of our age and gain renewed vitality.

We believe that this assessment acknowledges both the accomplishments of the movement and the negative factors some parties encountered in the 1980s — the relative slowdown in the development of many socialist countries, the drop in the Communists' influence on the electorate and the offensive of the right-wing conservative forces in the capitalist world, the reductions in the numerical strength of certain trade unions, and the like. As a global phenomenon, the scientific and technological revolution has affected all countries — industrialised capitalist, developing and socialist. Internationalisation of economic production and trade has risen to a higher level. Environmental problems have become more acute than ever before, while the nuclear arms race has made the destruction of all humanity a distinct possibility.

Anthony Vassallo (b.1924), metalworker and engineer, joined the General Workers' Union in 1943 and was elected to leading GWU posts. He was a member of local parliament in 1944-1945 and a major functionary of the Malta Labour Party and a member of its Executive Committee. Anthony Vassallo worked as a technical director and taught at a technical institute. In 1969 he was among the founders of the Communist Party of Malta, served as its Chairman for seven years, and has been its General Secretary since 1976.

This article continues the series about the international communist movement (see *WMR*, Nos. 9, 10, 11, 1987).

Working to Scrap the Stereotypes of the Past

In order to keep pace with the march of history, it is important to perform a critical reappraisal of our ideological and practical heritage and to determine what should be accorded priority, what is to be reassessed in the light of new realities, and what had better be abandoned as obsolete or inadequate. This reappraisal will be impossible unless we *overcome the stereotypes* which took shape in the past, when the working class movement was tackling issues largely unlike what we are facing today. This is sure to be a difficult, at times agonising, reappraisal and it will obviously take some time: often, attitudes grow obsolete and ineffective even before new and more adequate ones emerge. Attempts to devise some general and universal patterns or formulae applicable under any circumstances and at all times cannot be a substitute for a profound theoretical analysis of specific, diverse and changing realities.

True, sometimes the very logic of political struggle makes it necessary to give priority to some issues at the expense of others. But the risk is that whole areas of the social fabric will be left without proper attention or study. For example, priority attention to the struggle for peace, against the aggressive and anti-Soviet policy of imperialism is natural to the Communists under the actual circumstances which the rivalry of the two systems has produced. At the same time, however, less attention has been paid to economic problems — although this is where many processes of today's world are rooted. The living standard, the attitudes of the masses, election results — all that inevitably affects our work and our influence — depends on the state of the economy.

The way we consult the classics of Marxism is at times mechanical: we fail to take the historical context into account and which is worse, we make poor use of the very methodology inherent in a Marxist approach to reality. Let us recall Lenin's method of work. He began by examining actual changes in the economy, in the relations of production, in the social structure; he analysed huge amounts of statistical data and critically 'digested' studies of bourgeois economists and social scientists. His fundamental works *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* and *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* could not have been born in any other way. Let us leaf through these books and see which we come across more frequently — quotations from Marx or relevant facts, figures and concrete calculations.

Citing Marx is not enough to make one a Marxist. Grasping events from the viewpoint of historical materialism, a science Marx founded, is what it takes to be a Marxist. "The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas," Marx and Engels wrote in the first chapter of *The German Ideology*, "but real premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions of their life, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity."¹

If we were always guided by this approach in our practical work, it would be easier for us to identify in time those *substantive changes* which the scientific and technological revolution introduces into the productive

forces, the relations of production, the organisation of labour, the structure and the worldview of the working class. We could better explain the problems involved in the development of the socialist countries and the communist movement if we faced reality instead of frequently trying to present it 'the way it should be' in accordance with speculative and oversimplified constructions. We all know that some comrades tended to picture the strengthening of socialism and the development of communist parties as an inexorable and linear advancement 'from victory to victory'. And, since the record also includes setbacks, zigzags in development and cases of decline and even stagnation, the clash between realities and 'triumphal' models inevitably resulted in frustration and disillusionment. Previously correct formulae turned into meaningless stereotypes. The current political realities of a number of capitalist countries have put many acute questions before Communists. The onslaught of the ultra-conservatives has, in several cases, virtually cancelled out the efforts undertaken by the advanced detachments of the working class movement for a leftward shift. Growing public concern over the environmental and other global problems has given rise to mass democratic movements but failed to increase the influence of communist programmes and alternatives. The aggravation of capitalist contradictions, crisis phenomena and the deteriorating position of the working people have generated defeatist attitudes in some trade unions and left parties.

The Communists have always been implacable enemies of capital. We have kept exposing exploitation and oppression and catching the bourgeoisie 'red-handed' in the act of appropriating the surplus value created by the workers. Unfortunately, bourgeois propaganda has succeeded in countering our efforts to expose capital and surplus value with some anti-socialist concoctions and the impact has been felt tangibly. The view that 'working for the state but not for a private employer means to work worse' began to surface in mass consciousness. The right-wing forces present the socialist prospect as something inefficient, in a bid to malign socialism as a system by claiming that it is a 'society of idlers' with inevitable shortages, queues, waiting lists and imbalances.

That is why we believe it very important to explain that the flaw lies not in the surplus product itself but in its private appropriation, that the Communists want this product to benefit the workers, the entire people. A highly productive and advanced society of conscious and competent workers is our goal. This is why we should not only be at home in the classics of Marxism-Leninism but also and above all display an ability to deal professionally and profoundly with economic matters and with issues of technology, sociology and informatics: no matter where these questions arise, they can only be resolved through an *in-depth socio-economic analysis and specific and practicable measures*, not with the help of political incantations or speculative recommendations. For several years, our cadres have underestimated the significance of these demands.

During the nascent stage of the communist movement Lenin warned against the dangers of 'communist arrogance', of politically overbearing attitudes and of the belief that the historical mission facing the vanguard of the working class was something fore-ordained and not requiring to be

constantly reaffirmed in the course of political and ideological battles. It was once said that 'the Communists are people of a special mould, made of special stuff'. These words were uttered in homage to the high moral qualities of heroic revolutionaries who fought selflessly for the emancipation of the working people. One must admit, however, that this well-known phrase has also been interpreted to assert a kind of exclusiveness connected with a 'monopoly on the truth'. Naturally, neither any single party nor the communist movement as a whole can lay claim to such a monopoly. By no means all those, who, in different spheres of culture, in philosophy and in other fields, hold far from communist views are necessarily our enemies or agents of our enemies.

A century ago Engels took issue with those of his comrades who preferred to 'stew in their own juice' out of fear of staining or losing their ideological purity. "Where would we be today," he asked, "if we had always insisted on cooperation only with those who openly accepted our platform?"²

If we reject a narrow, sterile view of loyalty to Marxism, we should above all remember that Marxism developed and expanded *in close contact, conflict and debate with other currents*, not in an hermetically sealed test tube. Marx and Engels often drew on studies and conclusions of thinkers who had nothing in common with scientific socialism. Suffice it to recall the way Engels used the works of Lewis H. Morgan, a bourgeois ethnographer, to substantiate fundamental precepts of historical materialism and of his doctrine concerning the emergence of the family, private property and the state. The sharp polemic the founders of scientific communism waged against Ferdinand Lassalle did not prevent them from largely accepting his concept of the social essence of the constitution. Finally, Lenin provided us with an example of creatively adding to the theoretical principles of scientific communism in his critique of the doctrinaire schemes put forward by the leaders of the Second Communist International.

It follows that *what we need are discussions and exchanges of views* not only involving us, the like-minded, but also conducted within the framework of broader forums in which all advocates of progress, peace, international cooperation and disarmament would take part.

The New Way of Thinking and the Class-Based Approach

The need for the new way of thinking which was discussed at the 27th Congress of the CPSU and at the congresses of several other sister parties is linked with the development of human consciousness in a critical period, when mankind is facing the alternative of self-destruction or self-preservation. How does this new way of thinking relate to the Marxist tradition of a class-based approach to political problems in general and to issues of war and peace in particular? Does the new approach signify a change in the traditional communist interpretation of the interrelationship between universal and class-based values?

These questions are being vigorously debated among the Marxists. The fact is that the class-based approach to issues of war and peace has never been something immutable, devised once and for all. Suffice it to compare

the documents approved at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International with those adopted at the 1957, 1960 and 1969 Meetings of Communist Parties to see that assessments changed, and changed substantially, while remaining essentially communist, Marxist. For example, the 1928 Congress of the Communist International said in a resolution that "war is inseparable from capitalism. From this it follows that the 'abolition' of war is possible only through the abolition of capitalism, i.e. through the overthrow of the bourgeois class of exploiters, through the proletarian dictatorship, the building of socialism, and the elimination of classes. All other theories and proposals, however 'realistic' they may claim to be, are nothing but a deception calculated to perpetuate exploitation and war."³ In the 1950s and 1960s the Communists saw that it was really possible to 'force' peace on capitalism and ceased to regard wars as fatally inevitable.

Finally, awareness of the unprecedented destructive power of the weapons stockpiled around the world has led to the conclusion that in a nuclear age, a world war is totally unacceptable. Aside from the impossibility of turning it "into a civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie", as the Communist International once urged, this war would destroy all social systems, all classes, the whole of humanity.

That is why the *concept of a nuclear-free and non-violent world* which the Communists are now advancing and which was so clearly articulated by the CPSU *in no way contradicts the class-based approach*. This approach cannot be at odds with a desire to safeguard universal values, to protect the life and the well-being of the world's peoples.

True, the class struggle and acute social contradictions remain with us. But it is a salient feature of the current historical stage that before these contradictions are removed, victory in the struggle for human survival must be secured. In other words, the new way of political thinking does not mean that the Communists are dismantling their traditional approach to the correlation between the universal and the class-based, but that they are adopting a more profound and unsimplified interpretation of the *historical mission and essence of the working class* as a force which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating all of mankind — both freeing it from social injustice and delivering it from the threat of destruction.

The class-based approach and class awareness today call for this relationship to be taken into consideration; they are incompatible with narrow and 'restrictive' interpretations of working class interests. Lenin held that the political vanguard of the working class ceased to perform its proper role if it concentrated the "attention, observation and consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone".⁴ Many years have passed, and much has changed in our world, but these words remain instructive as far as the Communists are concerned.

To this day, however, some things written about these issues leave the impression that the flow of time has stopped for their authors. To this day, we do not always acknowledge that since the composition, structure and image of the working class have changed, *the class-based approach, the tactics and the strategy of our struggle cannot be adequately reflected in formulae one hundred years old*.

For the bourgeoisie has not stopped developing either: it keeps inventing new means of exploitation, of combating the labour movement, of splitting the working people. We in Malta feel this too and have to draw relevant practical conclusions in our activities. The strike is a weapon that should be used judiciously, not haphazardly. This means that we need new methods of struggle, based both on modern theoretical precepts and on past experience. It is important to learn to change one's attitudes swiftly, sometimes even overnight, if this is essential for the success of the workers' cause, for defending the interests of the working masses.

Questions of *relations with other political forces* advocating disarmament and cooperation of countries with different social systems — say, with Labour or Social Democrats — are acquiring special importance. In this context we believe that the struggle against untenable, erroneous views should be waged as a struggle for the unity of the working class movement. One cannot allow criticism of social democratic viewpoints to degenerate into a kind of 'sport' justified by narrow and often quite arbitrary considerations of ideological purity. Genuine Communists have always set greater store by the general advancement of the cause of peace and progress than by the short-term advantages of their own organisation.

The Communist Party of Malta, for example, has regarded and continues to regard consolidation of the policy of neutrality and of the ties with the socialist countries as an important task because this exerts a positive influence on the situation both in our country and in the Mediterranean as a region. Our efforts have not always been appreciated by the electorate or reflected in our party's influence, but they have not been in vain. While in the 1960s, the two main parties in Malta — the Labour and the Nationalist — opposed diplomatic relations with the USSR, today neither questions the validity of ties with the socialist countries any more. It has also proven possible to secure a *nationwide consensus* on permitting no military bases on our soil: even the right-wing government which came to power in 1987 no longer dares oppose the constitutional ban on foreign military presence in Malta. This is a consensus our party has always been fighting for.

Without Ulterior Motives, With Sincere Wishes of Success

The new way of political thinking embodied in Mikhail Gorbachov's bold peace initiatives and the CPSU policy of renewal throughout the Soviet social fabric are welcomed in different countries. In Malta, too, public opinion hails and supports this approach. Many people who were previously suspicious of the USSR are beginning to see that the changes occurring in its domestic and foreign policy are also exerting a favourable influence on the international situation.

It is clear that we, the Communists, are not idle bystanders: everything that happens in the socialist countries is immediately reflected in the attitudes current in the communist movement, as well as in the ideological struggle we have to wage against imperialism. The appeal of socialism as an open society is growing, although in this sphere, too, the right-wing forces

are trying to further their struggle against Communism by changing their propaganda methods.

"We pointed out those shortcomings of socialism which the CPSU now acknowledges," our opponents say. "Therefore we, not you, were right." This claim is untenable if only because such critics have always reduced any discussion of socialism to its flaws and kept stubbornly silent about its accomplishments. Still, this anticommunist propaganda trick has to be taken into account both in covering, within a capitalist society, the problems of perestroika in the Soviet Union and in defining the standards and the ethics of our attitude to the socialist countries.

The far-reaching changes under way in the USSR, the perestroika drive and the innovative practices of the CPSU are generating a disparate response even among the Communists. At the same time, as Mikhail Gorbachov has stressed repeatedly, it is very important for the Soviet comrades to know how their friends view them, for only friends can tell the whole truth without ulterior motives and with sincere wishes of success. We think that this idea is particularly valuable: even within the communist movement there have been attempts to take an unfriendly view of Soviet realities and to apply criticism as an end in itself, displaying not so much one's desire to see the mistakes corrected successfully as an effort to keep one's distance from the CPSU. But this keeping at a distance from socialism means that one dissociates oneself not only from its problems, difficulties and mistakes but also from its achievements, both past and future. Besides, the masses regard this stand as a party's actual renunciation of its own socialist goal, as a loss of its distinctive identity — with all its inevitable consequences.

There are many obligations inherent in proletarian internationalism, including the duty not to keep silent about mistakes which harm our common cause. In such cases one should not gleefully criticise but request an explanation, raise this or that issue and submit recommendations. We must not for a moment forget about *the CPSU's enormous burden of responsibility*. And so it is our internationalist duty to support the changes that have been launched, for they are sure to benefit not only the Soviet people but also all peoples throughout the world.

A Joint Search for the Right Answers

A renunciation of stereotypes will be useful not in itself, but only if we are effective and timely in the elaboration of new approaches and guidelines consonant with our communist world view. It may be true that as Horace said, each passing year takes something away, but there is no doubt that each year also brings new experience and adds to the store of our theoretical knowledge. Today, one can arrive at the truth only by drawing on the international practice of the Communists, on the results of collective intellectual efforts, by comparing different and at times sharply contrasting views.

Hence the significance of *international contacts, of sister parties' meetings*, of mutual studies of views and experience. We hold that such meetings should not be confined to an exchange of speeches prepared in

advance: they should be forums of broad discussion and debate. We need more dialogues and fewer monologues, more arguments and less rhetoric. If a dialogue is not oppressive or one-sided, if you can be asked any questions, if you answer them and in turn put questions to other comrades — this eventually helps to identify common ground and benefits everyone.

A legitimate question arises: how do we prevent a lively and frank exchange of views from escalating into such forms of a polemic which could undermine sentiments of solidarity and have a destructive effect on inter-party cooperation? Obviously, discussions of this kind, even if they do become acute, should remain *comradely* and not lead to labelling, 'excommunicating' from Marxism or the like. We should develop the true debating values through promoting the conduct of meetings at which the contribution of each participant to the analysis of international and national conditions of struggle is respected and valued. For all the diversity of these conditions, for all the inevitable dissimilarity of some attitudes and assessments (this is now recognised as normal for the communist movement), there will surely be *class unity* on the principal, key issues. The art of debate will develop if there are more meetings and discussions not necessarily culminating in the adoption of a lengthy and detailed final document. We believe that *World Marxist Review* could also play a role in this process.

As an integral part of the world communist movement, the Communists of Malta are trying to do all they can to further the cause of peace and international solidarity. Time is urging us to be more circumspect and flexible and to take a broader view of various issues. The difficulties we have encountered can be overcome because victory is the reward of those who take reality into account.

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol 5, p. 31.

² Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 36, p. 598.

³ 'The Struggle Against Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communists'. Resolution of the VI World Congress of the Communist International, Workers' Library Publishers, New York, 1932, p. 9.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 412.

For a Socialist Perspective

New Signposts On Our Road

Ole Sohn — Chairman, Communist
Party of Denmark

THE Danish people have an ingrained desire for peace, democracy and independence. It is inherent first and foremost in the working class, which has taken upon itself a leading and uniting role whenever the destiny and future of the nation has been in the balance, which has happened on many an occasion in the age of imperialism. Denmark's sensitive geographic location astride the Baltic straits has made concern about a lasting peace a vital precondition for the very existence of our nation. Hence the traditional and well-justified foreign policy of neutrality pursued by our country. It was dropped officially only in 1949, when Denmark was forced to join NATO. However, the desire to stand aloof of the militarist aggressive policy of the imperialist powers is still alive in the Danish people and constitutes an important factor of politics.

Now that the question of war and peace has been given a new dimension by the nuclear threat, the Danes' striving for peace prompts a new approach to related problems in our country. More and more people have come to realise that involvement in confrontational politics may plunge the nation into catastrophe. The freedom and independence of the peoples and the very survival of humanity are impossible unless a lasting peace, the relaxation of tensions and universal security are achieved. The peace forces are aware of these realities and keep stepping up their efforts in ever new areas.

The crisis phenomena which hit the capitalist world in the 1970s did not spare Denmark: unemployment reached an unprecedented level, real wages dropped and a huge balance-of-payments deficit was piled up. The increasing aggressiveness of US imperialism put a brake on the process of détente. Denmark became even more tied to the monopolistic Common Market. That has resulted in new difficulties in the country and the successive Social Democratic, bourgeois and coalition cabinets proved unable to resolve them. Instead of introducing democratic measures to control the crisis, the Social Democratic government joined forces with the right parties in pursuit of an 'incomes policy'.

Although the alignment of forces in Parliament did not warrant it, in 1982 the Social Democrats, even without seeking a mandate from the electorate, surrendered power to the so-called 'quadrifoliate' coalition of right-of-centre bourgeois parties headed by the conservative leader Poul

Ole Sohn (b. 1954), a builder by training, began his political career in the Communist Youth League and in 1970 became a member of its board. In 1972 he joined the Communist Party of Denmark. He was active in the trade unions and in 1977 was elected chairman of the General Workers' Union in Horsens and has been a member of that union's board since 1980. He was elected a member of the CPD CC in 1980, a member of the CC Executive Committee in 1983 and Chairman of the Communist Party of Denmark in 1987.

Schlüter. In formulating its overall policy, the coalition draws inspiration from the rightist policies advocated especially frankly by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, policies on which Denmark's monopoly capital firmly insisted. The country's membership of the Common Market and the militarist North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was used to impose such a course on it. A strident propaganda campaign was launched to camouflage the real issue and assure the Danes that 'things could not be better'.

The bourgeois government has put its neoconservative stamp on the 'incomes policy', which meant further onslaught on the social sphere. Real wages, unemployment benefits and social spending have dropped so dramatically as a result of the redistribution of resources in favour of capital that the Prime Minister himself has had to admit the reality of poverty in Denmark of the 1980s. The picture is further aggravated by an unemployment of 250,000 with no reduction in sight, a foreign debt of 280 billion kroner, and an annual balance-of-payments deficit of 25 billion kroner. The right cabinet has sunk the country deeper in the red than any other government. The moneybags consume more and more luxuries while the living standards of the ordinary Danes continue to deteriorate. What has really been thriving under the rays of Schlüter's 'incomes policy' is speculative profit-chasing. But it does not create jobs.

Between 1980 and 1985, industry boosted its profits by 247 per cent, but only a small part of that huge revenue was ploughed back as long-term investment. As proprietors choose to pocket more and more funds, industrial output is not modernised fast enough while research and high technology — the future of industry — are farmed out to transnationals. The production base of the Danish economy is dwindling and the country's share of the markets is shrinking as a result. The process first affected industrial goods and has now spread to farm produce as well.

The only way to solve the problems, the right politicians believe, is to increase pressure on the working people, and they are doing so quite cleverly. But there is nothing to be achieved in this way: even the government itself predicts that production will keep shrinking and unemployment growing. In fact, *another capitalist crisis is round the corner*, and no incantations, like those of the labour minister who says that "there is no crisis", will fend it off.

The working people have shown their dismay in more than one strike and demonstration under the keynote 'Down with Schlüter' and in defence of democratic trade union rights. Admittedly, the forces opposed to rightist policies have not yet united to such an extent as to be able to put an end to them. The Folketing opposition, as well, is too timid to rely on the wrath growing in the people's midst. The public sentiment cannot be considered futile, however, because it has forcefully manifested itself in the struggle for peace, for better living standards of the working class and against environmental pollution and membership of the Common Market. The popular movements have influenced the positions of the Social Democrats and the centrist parties and a series of commendable decisions have been taken by a parliamentary majority contrary to the government's wishes. It has become clear that *success is possible* if various forces unite on a democratic basis in vigorous and combative action.

In these circumstances the 28th Congress of the Communist Party of Denmark, held in April 1987, became a notable event in the political life of the country. Its conclusions threw new light on the tasks facing the working class and all the other progressive forces of the country in the present-day complex situation. Socialist awareness firmed up in the working class movement and the need for vigorous action in the interests of the working people was more profoundly understood. The current demands on us Communists were pinpointed and better realised.

The Political Manifesto of the Congress, 'What the Communists Stand For', probed today's problems and gave a characteristic of the society we live in. It stresses that *in its actions the Communist Party must rely on a coherent ideology which makes it possible to see the perspective of the struggle and analyse the problems that arise*. That ideology itself is being continuously renovated in the process of its application.

Many new big questions arise before us in day-to-day work. We understand that they can be resolved only jointly with other forces, which offer different approaches. We Communists relate these questions to the struggle for socialism but do not demand that others do the same. They for their part, however, have no right to demand that we renounce our convictions and our commitment to the socialist perspective. In the interests of joint action we must explain better and more coherently that precisely the socialist world outlook prompts us consistently to advocate the common goals of the working people and enables us to expose the root causes of the problems facing the working class movement.

The ideas of socialism have been developing and growing richer both in theory and in practice. They have been carried on by different generations. And we cannot ignore the fact that every generation has to absorb those ideas anew, relying on its own experience and with due consideration for changing circumstances.

Circumstances now show that *the development of existing socialism has entered a new phase*, as our Congress noted. "Socialism is not satisfied with what it has achieved. Another breakthrough is on the agenda, and it has already taken off. Socialism today is in a position to make full use of its advantages as a system to carry through revolutionary reforms," the Political Manifesto noted.

"More socialism, more democracy", that was how Mikhail Gorbachov formulated the essence of the new course. Our Congress noted its importance not only for the USSR but also for others. "The acceleration of social development in socialist countries means radical renovation of relations of production and other social relations under socialism," the Manifesto reads. "This can be achieved only through public openness and the broadening of socialist *democracy*. But democracy means not only respect for certain rules. It works only when the people energetically and consciously exercise their democratic rights to protect their own interests . . . This development also has great international significance for the people's democratic aspirations. It shows how democracy can embrace those areas of production and other social activities which are off-limits to bourgeois democracy. It makes it easier to repulse attacks launched by the

anti-communists". Clearly, *processes under way in socialist countries encourage people all over the world to practice new thinking and to reconsider political realities.*

We stated at our Congress that "there is no revolutionary situation as yet" in Denmark but that "a transition to socialism can be achieved through the evolution of the people's struggle for democratic goals into their struggle for socialism". Relying on this evaluation, the party formulated its strategy of action. Advance along the road of combative democracy will naturally take considerable effort to overcome the resistance of the other parties in the working class movement and outside it. The forces favouring change are to spring from vigorous popular movements.

The demand for peace and human survival is the universal democratic demand that unites all people. It has been formulated by the people and has grown so imperative that all politicians have to reckon with it. This reality seems to be dawning, though slowly, even on the US President, especially since according to public opinion polls, Americans rate Gorbachov and his peace policy higher than Reagan. The USSR and the US have reached accord on cutting their missile arsenals. The continuous pressure exerted by the peace movements has undoubtedly helped here. This prospect is more than welcome but we know that at the same time struggle is about to enter a new phase because the NATO politicians are determined to carry on an arms race in space, conventional and other weapons. The war corporations in the United States and Western Europe go on peddling the 'threat from the East' myth in order to keep profiting by arms production.

Most of the Danes and a majority of the Folketing deputies approve proposals for stronger peace and international security that have been put forward by different countries. This is where the Social Democratic Party has moved towards a sensible stand in the past few years and the peace movement, among others, deserves credit for this development. Influential forces in that party, however, would like to come to terms with the right government on a security policy, whereas the situation undoubtedly calls for the very opposite, namely, *a fresh impetus* to the process of détente. Denmark for its part could contribute to it. The struggle for democracy and for a new thinking, urged by socialism upon the whole world, can and must be helped in this way. It is our duty to work for the missile reduction agreement to become the first step towards the abolition of all nuclear weapons and the conversion of the resources spent on armaments to the solution of the global problems of our time.

A report of the International Commission for the Environment and Development, chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, that was released last summer stresses most forcefully the imperative of stopping the mad arms race and coming to grips with the problems of the atmospheric ozone layer, acid rains over forests, deforestation, the pollution of the seas, and also growing poverty in many countries. The report says unambiguously that action is needed now, before harmful global changes have become irreversible.

Most of the Danish population, as is indicated by recent representative

public opinion polls, support the demands for a vigorous policy for peace, disarmament and environmental protection. Clearly, these demands are a component of the alternative which could become the rallying point for the forces opposed to the right government's anti-people policy and its effects.

Taking a broad view of the situation, the Congress pointed out in the Political Manifesto: "Democratic struggle should be waged nowadays as anti-monopoly struggle for peace, national independence, better living conditions and environmental protection . . . When the aspirations of the working class come together with the general democratic demands formulated by the popular movements and organisations, they can become a force capable of remaking society." We have reaffirmed our attitude to these movements and drew up detailed proposals for joint actions for peace, for the right to work, for social justice and for a healthy environment. That is our contribution to the alternative which should be forwarded in opposition to the right government's policy.

The inevitability of new parliamentary elections being called before the end of the year 1987 was evident for a long time. The task of using them to oust the right government took on a special edge in view of the government's numerous encroachments on the working people's interests and its failure to live up to its promises. The slogan '*For a Worker Majority and a Policy for the Worker's Benefit*' grew more and more popular with the working class movement.

The Communists advocated for a long time the idea of a majority of the working class parties in the Folketing. We at the same time pointed out that one precondition of success, without which a good chance of ending right rule could be missed, was *the rallying of those parties around concrete steps towards a new policy*.

However, it proved difficult to bring home the truth that unity was the key to victory. The leaders of the Social Democratic and the Socialist People's (to the left of Social Democrats) parties, although acquiescing in the 'worker majority' slogan, on the one hand, understood it as a vote-winning call but, on the other, refused practically to commit themselves to 'a policy for the worker's benefit'. The Communists warned that if the struggle against the right government was not waged from clear-cut alternative positions, it would merely give that government a chance to remain in office.

Developments indicated that that was precisely what was going to happen. The formulation of a communist alternative therefore was an important task of the Congress. Its basic principles were discussed in the trade unions and other working class organisations to clarify what was to be expected from a 'worker majority'. Discussions, however, could not do the job of joint action which would make the right parties respect the will of the working people. The Social Democratic Party and the Socialist People's Party never woke up to the reality that the strength of the popular movements and the working class was the decisive factor of a genuine democratic turn in politics.

Our party discussed at its Congress the chances of the working class parties to secure parliamentary majority. The Manifesto notes that it "cannot be achieved without struggle against capital and those in power.

The working class movement will not be able to resolve its problems if it retreats. And the people *are ready* to fight on major issues, such as the tariff agreements, peace efforts and relations with the EEC. Only through reliance on the demands of the trade unions and other popular movements is it possible to formulate a real alternative that would embrace major problems, draw up a comprehensive programme for their solution and meet the needs of the people to such an extent that a powerful popular movement will become the motive force of change".

Proceeding from these postulates, our party put forward proposals on the contents of a policy meeting the worker's interests. We realise that these proposals will not be immediately acceptable to the other parties and are ready to support any steps going in the same direction. The economic policy that we propose must encourage production rather than speculative deals; it therefore envisions major investments to create new jobs, including the expansion of public production in new technologies, electronics, environmental protection, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. It is important to control the cross-border movement of capital to enable a worker majority to pursue an independent economic policy. Our demands include also the nationalisation of banks, insurance companies and oil and gas fields. A worker majority will be able to secure resources for the necessary improvements in the social conditions of the working people through putting an end to current large-scale speculation. Taxes on the profits of capital and property owners should be raised.

The conservative Prime Minister, as we had anticipated, launched a surprise political manoeuvre and called preterm elections to the Folketing on September 8 with just a few weeks left for campaigning. The scheme was to hold the elections before the expected rise in unemployment and other manifestations of the crisis materialised. Another consideration was to make use of the differences within the Socialist Democratic Party.

Though it ultimately failed, that plan created a very complex and involved political situation. The ruling coalition parties sustained a telling defeat at the polls and lost seven seats in the Folketing. Their parliamentary fortunes now hinge on the votes of the extremist populist Progress Party. Because of this alliance of the reactionary forces, however, the working class cannot be satisfied with the electoral results either. The Social Democrats suffered further losses and their leadership was reshuffled as a result. The Socialist People's Party was a success but the Left Socialist Party failed to clear the two per cent barrier. That there are several more or less 'socialist' parties creates the impression of some confusion and division on the left of the political spectrum.

The Communist Party achieved electoral gains in various parts of the country but not enough to make it to the Folketing. It is nevertheless remarkable that the Communists were supported by the voters and gained in prestige.

The overall political situation in the country following the elections is unstable. Schlüter continues as head of a coalition bourgeois government but many people believe that new elections in the not so distant future are a distinct possibility, all the more so since new contradictions are arising in society in the face of an economic crisis.

These developments, we believe, confirm *the correctness of the political line* laid down by the Congress. The Communist Party plans fresh initiatives to strengthen the unity of the working people and to intensify their actions so as to make further rule by the right government impossible, compel it to resign and thwart the attempts of the bourgeois centrist parties to tie the Social Democrats' hands with a 'civil peace with capital' or with a 'social contract'. Our experience shows that these goals can be achieved only if the people are mobilised.

What we have already accomplished inspires our party with confidence and gives us fresh strength in the struggle for social justice, a healthy environment, national independence, peace and a socialist perspective.

¹ Between 1982 and 1985, real wages dropped by 7 to 8 per cent and unemployment benefits by 13.5 per cent. — *Ed.*

The Lebanese Knot: Seeking A National Democratic Solution

Georges Hawi — CC General
Secretary, Lebanese Communist Party

THE Lebanese resistance marked on September 16, 1987 the fifth anniversary of its struggle against the Israeli occupation. Five years ago, in September 1982, when the invaders fell upon Beirut, the Communist Party issued its historic statement on the establishment of the Lebanese Patriotic Resistance Front, and called on all the national patriotic forces to rally to its ranks. Two days later, our comrades staged the first combat operation against the occupation troops in the centre of Beirut, and it was followed by others, so that within ten days the aggressors, who had invaded the Lebanese capital, were forced to withdraw.

Over the five years since the emergence of the Front, the liberation of the country from the interventionists has been the main task of the Communists and all the other progressive forces. *The Lebanese resistance continued to play the role of the main, if not the only, vehicle for attaining this goal.*

The task of correcting its line continues to be a most pressing one. When the fascist-minded denominational circles, who had established close ties with the invaders, began, with Israel's support, to put forward their own scenarios for a settlement in Lebanon, they also met with the opposition from some communal and religious forces. In the period of the rising

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liberation struggle, the activities of these forces, in fact, became an element of the national battle against the invaders and the Israeli agents. But their influence subsequently began to have a negative effect on the movement against the occupation.

The Gist of the Contradictions

What then are the positions of the Israeli aggressors and the Patriotic Resistance Front opposing them in the context of the situation now taking shape in our country? This was the main issue discussed at the Fifth Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party in February 1987.

The Israeli invasion, mounted with Washington's support, signified a new stage in developments on the Lebanese scene. It showed that the United States, Israel, and Arab reaction had mounted a major offensive against our people. A qualitative turn in the policy of our country's ruling bourgeoisie was simultaneously effected. In order to restore the shattered class domination, it did not stop short of national betrayal. Phalangist Party seized the post of president of the republic with the sponsorship of the Israeli invaders. The key positions in the power apparatus went to the most extremist wing of the bourgeoisie, which denies that Lebanon is a part of the Arab world; it wants the country to be hitched to the hegemonistic plans of the United States in the Middle East region, and the conclusion with Israel of a separate peace deal on Camp David lines so as to form a bloc with the Zionist leadership for fighting against the Arab national liberation movement.

The extremist wing has complete control of the main political decisions and the commanding heights in the national economy. Members of the Christian community are prevalent among these leaders. While they do not actually represent it, they still seek to act on behalf of all Christians and to consolidate the class domination of this part of the bourgeoisie. They have pursued a harmful political line: whenever the privileges of the bourgeois stratum turn out to be jeopardised, inter-communal strife is stoked up in order to defend these with the support of the mass of Christians and to put a religious-communal gloss on the contest under way in the society. The fact is that the response of the other denominational forces to the hegemonistic line of the right-wing Christian circles likewise tends to benefit them.

The calls for setting up an Islamic Republic in the country, on the one hand, sound like a response to such slogans as 'Lebanon Is a Christian National Homeland' or 'Lebanon Is a Christian Republic'; but on the other hand, these calls clearly betray their source, namely, the experience of the Islamic Republic in Iran, with its overt intention of exporting this kind of state system to Arab and other Moslem countries. For their part, these ideas add grist to the mill of extreme reaction, which would actually like, under the banner of the Christian religion, to form *de facto* its own denomination-community mini-state, something that would signify a *dismemberment* of Lebanon, and its conversion into Israel's appendage.

Both slogans — that of the Islamic and of the Christian republic — ultimately serve the scheme of the US-Israeli alliance, not only because they now help to fuel strife and discord, but also because these slogans

impel the establishment on our soil of several state entities on the denominational principle, and provoke divisions in other Arab countries, thereby providing justification for the establishment of the state of Israel on a religious basis and its urge to 'secure borders', meaning not just some geographical boundaries, but, indeed, *a change in the character* of its neighbouring states. Tel Aviv would like to see these weak, fragmented and fighting against each other, for that would enable the Zionist rulers to dominate them directly or indirectly through the strategic alliance with Washington.

We find, therefore, that the confrontation in Lebanon has proceeded along two lines: on the one hand, there is *the resistance to the Israeli invasion*, and on the other, the efforts to overcome the anarchy and the turmoil produced by the ruling regime, and the attempts to *perpetuate the denominational structure*, something that had, in fact, enabled the invaders to intrude into Lebanon. For the ruling political circles, collaboration with them has become a necessary condition for their own existence. The battle for liberation now merges with the struggle for re-establishing the country's unity and reasserting its membership of the Arab world, for a democratic reform of the political system so as to eliminate any manifestations of religious or communal strife, and to establish complete equality of rights and duties for all citizens.

The Fruits of the 'Free Economy'

The civil war which broke out in the mid-1970s in Lebanon had a definite *economic and social basis*. The pronounced class distinctions within the population were a product of the 'free economy' that was distorted and entirely dependent on imperialism. It is based, to the detriment of the productive sectors, on the service sector, the traditional commercial activity and transit middle-man operations. The civil war compounded the weaknesses of dependent capitalist development. As a result of the Israeli intervention and the fresh outburst of internal strife, the basis of the national economy turned out to be almost entirely destroyed. The internal economic situation became even more dramatic when the Lebanese authorities allocated from their foreign-exchange reserves about \$4 billion for the purchase of weapons and munitions from Western powers, the United States in the first place, as they continued their course of stoking up the civil war, to say nothing of the downright plunder of the popular wealth and dollar speculations, which have been unprecedented in the recent period and which have been encouraged from on top.

The LCP CC analysed, at its recent plenary meeting, the nature of the current crisis of the 'free economy' system. There is evidence of a new phase, that of a *general structural crisis*, in which diverse negative phenomena affecting every aspect of life, including institutions of the existing system, are intertwined. The economic basis of the service sphere has gone to pieces, and the material elements of production are being destroyed. The flight of capital and the transfer of many economic establishments abroad has gone hand in hand with a large-scale emigration of the able-bodied population. State outlays have been going up. As of the end of June 1987, the internal debt totalled 185 billion Lebanese pounds.¹

Inflation has become headlong and uncontrollable. The state has been losing its function as the sole centre of the power of the bourgeoisie, and has demonstrated its incapacity for effective political solutions. The economic and social crisis has become the primary cause of the general political crisis.

The party believes that there is no way out of the situation, unless these two conditions are met. First, the country must have the prospect for a democratic settlement of the crisis; second, the 'free economy', the symbol of dependence on imperialism, and its monopoly plunder system must be abolished.

Intricate Pattern of Forces

The Fifth Congress of the LCP examined the origins of the crisis and stressed that it could be overcome only through a *national democratic solution*. That part of the bourgeoisie which has perpetrated a national betrayal is no longer capable of restoring its domination of the country and uniting it. The political and economic system existing in Lebanon has suffered a fiasco and has demonstrated its incapacity to settle national problems and to ensure democracy and management of the economic sphere. The regime's attempts to move out of the crisis without going beyond the bounds of the US-Israeli decisions are futile and merely go to worsen the situation.

That is only one side of the problem. Another is that the quest for the desired national democratic way out of the crisis period is being slowed down and complicated by the existence within the patriotic opposition of contending denomination-community trends which had dominated it from 1984 until the beginning of 1987. That posed an additional threat to Lebanon's unity and shut off the way for a reform of its political system, because the hegemony of one religious community cannot be replaced by that of another on the plea of its being numerically stronger in the presence of a plurality of religious communities.

The situation was further hotbed up by 'a war of the camps', which flared up under the impact of two factors that are interconnected but that are diametrically opposite in origin.

First, the pressure from Israel, and Lebanese and Arab reaction on the circles in our country, notably those within the Amal movement, who take a hostile attitude to the Palestinian people's national liberation struggle. These circles initially opposed the return of the contingents of the Palestinian revolution to some of the positions in Lebanon which they had occupied after the historic victories scored by the national-patriotic forces in the country over the invaders, and the invasion by the United States and some other NATO countries. The resistance to the presence of the Palestinians subsequently developed into an attempt to rout their armed formations. The agents of Israel and the Lebanese authorities and also the rich real estate traders were involved in the anti-Palestinian conspiracy. The latter were most tempted by the obtrusive idea of cutting off the Lebanese crisis from the Middle East crisis, so as to induce Tel Aviv to move out of the country by hitting out at the Palestinian presence. They entertained the illusory hopes that the subsequent stabilisation of the

situation would make it possible to involve the assets of local owners of sizable capitals and to find new ways for doing so, in view of the fact that the opportunities for entrepreneurial activities in the Arab world and neighbouring Africa have been markedly narrowed down over the past few years. Such is the outcome of the general crisis phenomena in the capitalist economy, the Iran-Iraq war, and the changes in the investment policy of some progressive African states.

Another factor had a direct or indirect effect on the set of elements considered above: it is the right-wing policy then pursued by the leadership of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, its attempts to turn Lebanon, the Palestinian camps on our territory and the patriotic-minded masses of Palestinians into an arena and object of struggle. The purpose of these attempts was to obtain a place at the table of some imaginary negotiations on a Middle East settlement on the basis of the Amman Agreement between King Hussein of Jordan and the PLO leadership, which was subsequently abrogated.³

One should also add that the Amman Agreement itself would never have originated but for the rumbles of the 'war of the camps', which had a psychological and other effects on Palestinian organisations; the popular masses, and the situation on the Arab and international scene.

A number of other circumstances variously aggravated the situation. First, the national patriotic forces failed to fill the political vacuum by imposing their own terms on the participants of the anti-Lebanese conspiracy and so exerting due influence on the course of developments. Second, the left-wing circles of the Palestinians did not have a sufficiently active role to play. They were unable fully to distance themselves from the PLO leadership's line in its efforts to use Lebanon for smuggling in the schemes of the rightists. Nor did the left-wing circles take any measures to join the Lebanese national patriotic circles to put an end to the tragic fratricidal conflicts which are intolerable. We resolutely condemn such conflicts and believe that *the way to overcome them is to increase, instead of decreasing, the role of the left-wing Palestinian movement.*

The third circumstance springs from Syria's stand that failed to draw a distinction between its genuine support for the Amal movement, which came out against the Israeli invaders, the US imperialists and the reactionary Lebanese regime, on the one hand, and on the other, the movement's use of such support for attacking Palestinians, their revolutionary forces, and even the Lebanese national patriotic circles, including the Lebanese CP, the Progressive Socialist Party and other organisations. The Amal movement used the sharp contradictions between Syria and the PLO leadership so as to start, on the pretext of opposing Yasser Arafat, a fight against the Palestinian people, its armed forces and the cause for which it had been fighting. As a result, a heavy blow was dealt at the whole Arab national-liberation movement.

The Communists and the Alliance Policy

Our party's Fifth Congress examined the question of relations between the Lebanese national patriotic forces and the Palestinian revolution, and emphasised: their relations should not be under the influence of some of

the negative extraneous practices of the revolution, but should be determined by principles helping to remove these extraneous elements and prevent them from being revived.

There are a number of basic propositions. The Palestinian problem, as a national problem of all Arab peoples, is also the cause of the Lebanese patriots. The Palestinian people, wherever they may be — under the yoke of occupation or in the diaspora — have a legitimate right to stand up for their interests, including action arms in hand. Lebanon is one of the front line states, where a considerable number of Palestinians are concentrated, and they are entitled to use its territory for carrying on their national struggle. The terms of their political and military presence in the country have, of course, to be observed. The important thing is that it should be tied in with the task of national democratic transformations, and should not contradict them, with an eye to the requirements of the struggle and the correlation of forces on the Lebanese scene, since the prospects of the Palestinian movement here directly depend on whether Lebanon's national patriotic forces are able to ensure the possibilities for its activities.

At our Fifth Congress, we analysed the question of our attitude to Syria and said that, because of its stand, Syria has been and continues to be *the main element of the front of resistance to the offensive by imperialism, Zionism and reaction*. In the Middle East, Damascus continues to have the key role in activating the Lebanese patriotic resistance to the Israeli occupation and to the interventionist acts by the United States and other NATO powers, and in supporting the Lebanese struggle to rid their country of the Phalangist hegemony, which relies on the invaders. Regardless of our neighbour's attitude to the political, economic and social realities in Lebanon, one has to admit that the 'Syrian factor' retains its basic significance in resisting Israel, liberating the homeland from the invaders, and beating back direct attempts by imperialism to undermine Lebanon's unity. Our positive assessment does not signify a repudiation of efforts in reducing the effect of negative elements arising from the attempts to ignore the Lebanese national patriotic factor. We stand for an alliance with Syria and want it to be further consolidated on the basis that Syrian support does not imply any substitution for the role of the country's national patriotic forces, contradictions with them or impediments to their activities.

Sharpening Contest

The Fifth Congress of the Lebanese Communist Party issued a resolute challenge to the denominational and communal set-up: *an internal settlement on a national-democratic basis* is the only way out of the crisis that has gripped Lebanon. This call met with an immediate response from other progressive patriotic parties, the democratic people's movement in the various parts of the country, and representatives of all its communities.

The response of reaction was a different one. Within a year, four members of our party's Central Committee fell victim to political assassinations. One should note that the terroristic acts were aimed not only against the party, for the assassins tried to demoralise the people and the democratic circles. Nor was it an accident that within a week of the

congress, fierce armed clashes broke out in Beirut. But the schemes of the organisers of these acts failed. The Communist Party, acting jointly with the Progressive Socialist Party, demonstrated its steadfastness. The denominational forces were given a rebuff, Syrian forces entered the Lebanese capital, and this helped to normalise the situation and to strengthen security after a period of wild terrorism by armed detachments belonging to various communities and groupings. The LCP soon took fresh and far-reaching steps by starting a popular mass movement for improving living conditions and ensuring civic liberties. The General Confederation of Working People staged several strikes in the course of which workers displayed their growing cohesion and organisation.

The other side was quick to respond: there were more frequent Israeli raids in the south, Prime Minister Rashid Karami was assassinated, and a slogan was spread about for setting up a 'government of independence', meaning a 'government of division'. There were also signs of a repetition of the situation which had existed before the 1982 Israeli invasion. The right-wingers became most active in their efforts to insinuate into the post of Lebanese president someone who would loyally serve the US-Israeli plans.

In the run-up to the election of a new president⁴, the in-fighting will, apparently, reach a high point. We have some major developments before us. There is the prospect not only of a resumption of the civil war, as the fascist-minded forces switch from the tactics of political pressure to armed action, but also the threat of another Israeli aggression in view of the generally more active US intervention in the affairs of the Afro-Asian region. This intervention has assumed diverse forms: escalation of the naval presence of the United States and other NATO powers in the Persian Gulf; mounting pressure on Syria; steps to keep the PLO out of the Middle East settlement process; provocative acts against Libya taken directly or with the use of Chad's mercenary forces. There are also the plots designed to put at the head of the Lebanese Republic someone who is prepared to resume efforts to realise the plan for separate deals, like the Camp David deal, something that tends to undermine the plans for a complex settlement of the Middle East crisis.

The Soviet proposals for *an international conference* with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, provide the basis for such a settlement. Such a conference should be the forum for seeking a comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem, instead of serving as a cover-up for bilateral capitulationist deals.

Which Way Out?

In view of the mounting contest on the Lebanese scene and the effect of the situation in the Middle East region on the course of developments in our country, the Communists will have to fight for the fulfilment of a number of major and interconnected tasks, as formulated by the Fifth Congress of the LCP.

The first task is to consolidate the party by building up its military potential, increasing its capacity to resist the invaders and the plots of

internal reaction, to enhance the authority of the Communists among the masses, and especially in the working class, and also among the participants in the movement for solving the country's democratic, economic, social and political problems. We believe that it is necessary to enhance the LCP's influence in the sphere of ideology, and in the mass media, especially since Lebanon has now become an arena of a fierce battle against imperialism, Zionism, isolationist separatism and religious fundamentalism, i.e. the forces which are hostile to progress, democracy and communism.

The second task is to ensure the unity of the progressive patriotic forces on a sound basis. The recent establishment of the Reunification and Liberation Front is a step in this direction. The important thing is to translate intentions into reality, and this will require long and hard struggle to normalise relations between the Lebanese national patriotic forces, and to settle the crisis on a peaceful, democratic basis, something that will meet with a response throughout the Arab world.

The third task is to strengthen the combat comradeship with the Arab national liberation movement, and this implies a greater role for the communist parties of the Arab countries, their inner cohesion and unity in relations with each other. Such a process will make it possible, on the one hand, to take a joint stand against the imperialist offensive, and on the other, to sharply intensify the struggle for revolutionary transformations, which will give the Arab liberation movement the prospects of moving out of its present state of crisis.

The fourth task is to strengthen the brotherhood with the international working class movement and its parties, and with the socialist community, headed by the Soviet Union. Allied ties with the Soviet Union are the pledge of success for the Lebanese people and its progressive patriotic forces. The most vital requirements just now are frustration of the neoglobalist offensive by imperialism, preservation and consolidation of international peace, removal of the threat of a devastating nuclear war, disarmament, and elimination of the hotbeds of tension. These dictate, more than ever before, the need for an understanding by everyone of the new and diverse realities, and for the cohesion and cooperation of the Communists of various countries.

That is what we think and that is how we have acted. We have no illusions about any long-term effects of compromise solutions in the atmosphere of the crisis that has gripped Lebanon, but we do not reject them, because they can give the people a breathing space and the possibility of winning time.

From the rostrum of the Fifth Congress, the Communists issued a call for the convocation of a national conference of all the Lebanese patriots in order to put an end to the civil war. This will not require the full realisation of the working class programme (a national democratic revolution), or even a full-scale democratic reform. The conditions for ending the war are: liberating the country, averting the danger of its dismemberment, clearing the way for transformations, though not quite inconsistent, and democratic

guarantees of continued political struggle for reforms in various areas. Finally, it means implementing the realistic programme for a Lebanese settlement that would create the basis for a national dialogue.

¹ In the autumn of 1987, the exchange of the Lebanese pound fluctuated between 250 and 400 per US dollar. — *Ed.*

² Armed clashes around the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, which were especially fierce in the autumn of 1986. — *Ed.*

³ On the adverse effects of this agreement for Lebanon and the situation in the region, see Georges Hawi, 'To Find a Way Out of the Crisis', *WMR* No. 11, 1985. — *Ed.*

⁴ To be held in August 1988. — *Ed.*

The Image Of Socialism: The Way It Is Built

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THE way progressive public opinion in capitalist countries pictures socialism has long been based not so much on theory or propaganda as, increasingly, on the actual practice of implementing socialist ideals.

Today's socialism is the result of the transformations launched by the victory of the October Revolution in Russia 70 years ago. The influence of that great revolution continues to this day. However, socialist reality has an impact on consciousness above all through direct contact with facts. People perceive it in the light of their own interests. Interaction between *subject and object* changes both the man, who seeks for knowledge, and the object of his quest, the new social system.

The image of socialism takes shape in a definite historical and social situation. The acute political and ideological struggle waged over it influences the formation and adjustment of this image. Naturally, an individual's concept of socialism and attitude to it affect his assessment of the society around him and his stand in social conflicts. Conversely, social and political activity largely determines the ability of people to grasp truthful information about the new social system.

In the interaction between subject and object, the two elements move to the foreground alternately. Since the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the object has been the dynamic factor: the development and transformations of socialism in the USSR are an obvious fact. It is no accident that the various mass media in foreign countries pay so much attention to internal developments in the Soviet Union. But the peace-loving disarmament-oriented policy of the USSR and of the entire socialist community has probably been exerting an even greater impact on people's minds. This is also clear from the increasingly favourable public

attitude to Mikhail Gorbachov, who represents the new way of thinking and action. Personalisation of politics is now a typical feature of mass consciousness.

The situation that has emerged is making great demands on the forces of socialism and communism. Whether they want it or not, their goals are constantly checked against reality, against the specific policies of the socialist countries. Coping with these demands means opening up new opportunities for growth in the influence of advanced ideas. This article presents conclusions made from the experience of political and ideological struggle in the Federal Republic of Germany.

One of the aspects of the current situation is that the self-appraisal, 'self-portrait' of socialism is becoming more critical of the past and the present, that is, self-critical. A critical public opinion calling for openness is rapidly taking shape. Recent ideas about socialism are being re-examined and some of them, even well-established ones, turn out to be untenable. Supporters and friends of socialism will have to exert considerable intellectual efforts to build an image reflecting the present realities, diversity and dynamics of this new social system. We hold that only a *Marxist image of socialism* would be adequate, for only a Marxist approach can combine a realistic assessment of facts with an understanding of history's trend and make it possible to anticipate the future paths of progress. This concept also incorporates the socialist ideals articulated by Marx, Engels and Lenin.

The victory of the socialist revolution in Russia created fundamental conditions for translating theory into reality. Lenin, the man who inspired and organised the October Revolution, decisively influenced the shaping of the image of socialism which appealed to millions of working people throughout the world. That is why people in the Soviet Union and in other countries still turn to Lenin's legacy, seeing it not as a dogma but as a source of ideas for their own theoretical work and practical efforts to build socialist society.

Why do we in the Federal Republic need a Marxist image of socialism? 'We' in this case denotes, on the one hand, the forces which want to see the bourgeois, capitalist system, an anachronism in terms of historical progress, dispensed with. I am not referring only to the organised Communists and other adherents of the Marxist world view, but also, in principle, to all those who strive for democratic, anti-monopolist and socialist change. *Openness with regard to socialist ideas* is essential for progressive models of the future. This is why a relevant image of socialism is indispensable.

On the other hand, 'we' also includes all those who are aware that the human race can survive only in conditions of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems. The bourgeois quarters who share this view are prompted to adopt a more realistic attitude to their partner in survival and, simultaneously, rival in the socio-political and ideological spheres. The scientific image of socialism we advocate can promote this approach too. Naturally, one should not entertain illusions about part of the bourgeoisie (the part oriented on peaceful coexistence) accepting the basic ideas of socialism and drawing appropriate conclusions. This would

mean a renunciation by the bourgeoisie of its class-based positions — an obvious impossibility.

The anti-communist precepts of our country's official policy have left an imprint on the entire post-war period. Special emphasis was laid on promoting hostile attitudes to the USSR and the GDR. Therefore, the image of socialism in West German mass consciousness is largely determined by the view people in the Federal Republic take of these two countries.

Images of socialism can exert a restraining or, conversely, a stimulating influence on members of most democratic and social movements. The understanding that socialism — primarily the Soviet Union — is committed to peace, disarmament and détente has been recently on the rise in the Federal Republic. That is an important and promising change in public awareness. And, while 'peace' and 'socialism' are not yet perceived as indivisible concepts, conditions for grasping this interdependence have improved. Much of the credit goes to the peace movement whose activities have highlighted the dependence of West German security on universal security. The impact of the socialist countries' peace initiatives on the minds of our people is equally important. Both these factors have helped to promote a *more receptive attitude to the peace-loving policy of socialism*.

A favourable view of existing socialism is also current within a broad spectrum of anti-imperialist solidarity movements that fight against racism, neocolonialism and the exploitation and oppression of Third World nations. The leading role of the socialist countries is evident to members of these movements; this helps in the development of an unbiased attitude to socialism.

The availability of a socio-political alternative plays an important role in the struggle of the working class movement in the Federal Republic against the capitalist crisis and its social consequences. Despite the obvious defects innate in capitalism, its advocates keep asserting that a market economy is more efficient than one based on planning and public property in the means of production; the former is allegedly superior to the latter. Much is being made of both non-existent, fictitious and actual shortcomings and faults of socialist economy. These campaigns are aimed at stabilising the capitalist system, 'inoculating' people against socialism, as well as frustrating the adoption of democratic reforms and socialisation measures that could enable people to uphold their social interests and democratic rights more effectively.

In the Federal Republic, criticism of socialist principles invariably degenerates into attacks on all those favouring such reforms within the framework of state-monopoly capitalism. Bowing to this propaganda, the social reformist quarters have cut the ground from under their position. That is why another objective of an image of socialism based on our doctrine is *to support the policy of social and democratic transformations*.

During the historical period of transition launched by the October Revolution socialism has not yet triumphed in the industrialised capitalist countries. The socialist nations are still facing the task of catching up with these countries as far as the development level of the productive forces is concerned. That is now the focal point in the competition of the two

systems. Implementation of socialist principles in the world of developed capitalism calls for forms and specific conditions that differ from earlier ones. At any rate, previous forms and conditions will hardly obtain in the course of any conceivable transition to socialism. Nonetheless, West German advocates of the Marxist world view believe that socialism offers a *glimpse of our own future* with exploitation and capitalist ownership eliminated, with a planned socialist economy, and guaranteed and effective equal opportunities for all citizens.

An objective image of socialism by no means implies that all its practical aspects should be seen as a model to be emulated by industrially developed capitalist countries. Rather, the aim is to adopt an historical approach to the actually existing socialist system and on that basis to contribute to the theoretical development of a socialist future for countries such as the Federal Republic. It should be perfectly clear that overcoming the certain economic lag rooted in historical reasons is, to socialism, a prime task; in fulfilling it, the advantages inherent in this advanced social system will come to the fore. It follows that in creating a scientific image of socialism, one should necessarily accord due consideration to *the position from which it originally started, the different forms it took, the distinctive aspects of its various development stages, and their uneven nature.*

As for the main features this image of socialism should display, it should be, I repeat, *historical*, and that in a dual sense: socialism in this or that country should be viewed with due regard for its starting point and in the context of the path it has traversed; besides, it should be presented as a new and progressive society. Lags, shortcomings, mistakes, as well as accomplishments should be regarded in this dual way.

At the same time, this image of socialism should always be *materialistic*. One must not project one's wishes onto actual reality. We should strive to understand and explain the development, potential and limitations of this social system, taking its distinctive socio-economic foundations and motive forces into account.

It is extremely important to adopt a *dialectical* approach which, instead of disregarding the existing contradictions, would interpret them as a motive force of social advancement under socialism too. Socialism will thus be presented as a vibrant and diverse system shaped by human effort. This approach makes it possible to avoid both unwarranted superlatives and derogation. Obviously, however, concepts organic to an antagonistic class system cannot be projected onto socialism. Its innate contradictions should be considered in terms of categories adequate to it. The conclusion is that in order to understand socialist society, one needs much more detailed information than one can pick up, say, from the works of Marx, Engels or Lenin. Today, we should combine a theoretical and an empirical approach in analysing the realities of the socialist countries.

More than ever before, an image of socialism should now be *realistic* not only because this is what its realities demand but also because critically oriented social consciousness is increasingly emerging as a motive force of socialist development.

To the people of the Federal Republic, socialism is not something you can only find on an island called Utopia (which means 'non-existent place')

in Greek). The socialist world begins on the banks of the Elbe and the Werra; people who live there have long been speaking German too; and that world's salient features are open to mass consciousness in a country such as ours. The hopes and aspirations that cannot be realised under capitalism are an integral part of the image of socialism shaped according to our doctrine. However, they should not be confined solely to a theoretical, let alone utopian concept of a society: they should be embodied in socialist realities. At the same time, the Marxist view of realism implies not only an effort to simply register facts but also to *grasp their meaning* within the context of the entire socio-historical process.

While the principal laws and features of the communist stage of social development can so far be formulated in a relatively abstract way, the picture of the new social system should not be presented as something speculative or imponderable. Our analysis should cover specific phenomena and direct relations among people. An image of socialism should therefore be *concrete*. This will give us a basis for explaining all kinds of facts — for example, the general availability of education and training on the one hand and, on the other, the relatively limited current opportunities for providing the population with an adequate choice of goods, for tackling environmental problems, etc.

Summing up, one can say that in our view, *a Marxist image of socialism is a scientifically substantiated picture of this new social system, a picture enabling one to gain a clear understanding of reality, including the nature of contradictions under socialism, and helping one in the struggle against anti-socialist and anti-communist ideas and against the clichés of capitalist society.* This is the only image of socialism making it possible to identify the principal issues, present them adequately in journalism and political education, break the grip of bourgeois stereotypes, and support progressive social forces.

Let us now look at the conditions which are essential to intellectual receptivity and which should be taken into account in devising and publicising this image of socialism. It is clear that as far as our country is concerned, one should deal above all with specific groups, strata and classes.

For all its unchanging basic techniques, bourgeois science is constantly shifting the emphasis about in dealing with socialist reality. In the late 1960s and early 1970s — during the so-called period of détente and reform — the foremost type of criticism adopted in our country with regard to existing socialism was based on the convergence theory. Now that conservative ideology has gained the upper hand, the prevalent concept is that of keeping at a distance from the 'adversary'. While criticism based on the convergence theory did leave some room for certain positive assessments which were close to reality, conservative ideology is dominated by a blatantly class-based viewpoint of the bourgeoisie.

Its advocates are evidently trying to gloss over the crises of their own system and to leave them out of any comparison between capitalism and socialism. For example, they seek to ignore the fact that, developing on its own, planned basis, socialism can function without mass unemployment or a sense of insecurity among the working people.

True, these crude techniques have a limited impact. They are in obvious conflict with the realities of the socialist countries as seen by tourists, TV viewers and the like. During periods of acute social conflicts, this tactic may turn against the bourgeoisie itself because after reappraising their own position in society, people may adopt a new and favourable view of socialism. When a watershed juncture is reached, the trend towards socio-political reorientation gathers momentum in certain social groups, particularly among members of various social and civic movements — trade unionists, peace champions, environmentalists, activists of the progressive women's movement, etc.

A receptive attitude to an objective image of socialism now more than ever calls for an understanding of that system's new and fundamentally different nature. For example, one of its greatest accomplishments is that under socialism labour is no longer a commodity. We know however that the necessary labour discipline and labour ethics cannot get established automatically, by themselves. The same is true of the intensity of labour at a technological level comparable to capitalism. It follows that along with historic accomplishments, *problems of a new and distinctive nature* arise under socialism. Or, taking up another example, the creation of a planned economy may be regarded as equal in significance to man's taming of the fire in prehistoric times. But knowledge, a clear understanding of the problems involved and a vigorous commitment to the implementation of plans are particularly essential to a consciously directed process of development. In such cases mistakes and oversights lead to consequences that differ from those which may occur in the course of a spontaneous process. In a number of such spheres, socialism had to pay a high price for the experience it acquired — the price often exacted by history from pioneers but not from those who follow them and use the available experience correctly.

Socialisation of the economy and its transformation into the basis of socialist democracy are major gains of socialism. It is difficult for people living in a bourgeois society to grasp this fact because everyday consciousness constantly isolates the social from the personal, and politics from economics. It is true however that democratic movements in different countries, including the Federal Republic, are now quite resolute in raising issues of direct democracy and people's participation in the management of the social fabric. The trade unions are claiming the right to monitor and take part in economic management at the factory level. The bourgeois system of representative government is being criticised. All this is paving the way to a better understanding of socialist democracy. However, attempts to gauge it by the yardsticks of bourgeois representative democracy fail to work. This means that the emphasis should be placed not on such comparisons but on *qualitative differences*.

We can see that under socialism, people also encounter problems. But they are completely different from those plaguing the working people in the capitalist world. Even seemingly related problems have an entirely different content. That is not easy to understand, even for people with a positive attitude to socialism. Expectations are often ahead of the capabilities, particularly if criteria of the communist stage are applied to

today's realities with regard to issues such as social equality.

Today's image of socialism in capitalist countries is powerfully influenced by internal and external factors. Their interaction is compounded by the growing internationalisation of human activities as a whole and of the means of human communication in particular. Class contradictions are rising to the level of the opposing systems; nations, states and alliances are emerging as the subjects of these contradictions. In this way class confrontation is unfolding in spheres where it is less easily discernible.

The historical experience accumulated over the 70 years since the October Revolution confirms that the "example of existing socialism is of special importance for further social progress . . . The changes now under way in the Soviet Union, the GDR and other socialist countries are increasing the appeal of existing socialism against the background of the competition between the two opposite systems."¹ That was a quotation from Willi Gerns, Presidium member of the GCP Board, who holds that the advantages of socialism should be particularly evident in the following five spheres: the struggle for peace and disarmament; economic and social development and application of scientific and technological advances; expansion of democracy; assurance of social and individual human rights; and activation of the creative potential in culture and art.

Processes under way in these spheres are clearly very important for efforts to perfect the Marxist image of socialism and enhance the desire to emulate its example. *Scientific substantiation of this image* is not only an ideological task. Given the role of the contemporary mass media and the exacerbation of the class struggle nationally and internationally, this is a key issue which history has posed before militant Marxism and the revolutionary working class movement and which determines their future. Naturally, tangible accomplishments in socialist development will have the decisive say here. But the way they are to be presented to the members of social and democratic movements, to the public at large is also very important.

¹ Willi Gerns, 'Die Umgestaltung in der Sowjetunion und die DKP', *Standpunkt*, No. 1, 1987, p. 5.

The Doctrine Of Averting War And Defending Peace And Socialism

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USSR Armed Forces and First Deputy
Minister of Defence of the USSR

THE document, *Concerning the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty States*, which was adopted by the Berlin Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee,¹ has met with a wide response among the international public. That is understandable, one and all now face the nuclear threat, and survival in the nuclear-space age has become the chief task of mankind as a whole. That is why it is important to make a resolute switch to the new political thinking in the military field, as well as in politics. There is a need to shed the obsolete views of national and international security problems, to overcome the theory and practice of 'nuclear deterrence', on which the policy of the United States and the NATO bloc is still based, to do away with the mutual suspicion and mistrust accumulated over the decades, and to obtain a better understanding of each other's concerns and intentions.

That is precisely the aspect the allied socialist countries had in mind when they took the decision to make public their military doctrine, on which the Warsaw Treaty's defence activities are based, and which is an expression of their common defensive military-political objectives.

The present situation springs from profound changes in international relations. "Our complex and diverse world is being made ever more interrelated and interdependent by objective processes", says CPSU CC General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov.² In these conditions, the establishment of a *comprehensive international security system* and a joint quest for striking a balance between the often contradictory interests of the various states and nations become a most acute problem. This also has a direct bearing on the military doctrines and military activity of these states, and especially of the military-political alliances confronting each other.

It is common knowledge that military doctrines are the clearest reflection of the actual attitude to the basic issues of war and peace. Every state has its own national military doctrine. Alongside of this, there is also a shaping of coalition military doctrines reflecting the common military-political objectives and tasks of the states within the military-

Sergey Akhromeyev was born in 1923 and has been a member of the CPSU since 1943. He joined the Soviet Army in 1940. He graduated from the Military Academy of Armoured Troops in 1952, and the Military Academy of the General Staff in 1967. He took an active part in the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) and then served in the army. From 1974 to 1979 he was head of a Central Directorate and Deputy Chief of the General Staff. From 1979 he was First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, and since 1984 has been its Chief and First Deputy Minister of Defence of the USSR. From 1981 he was alternate member of the CPSU CC, and since 1986 has been a member of the CPSU CC. — *Ed.*

political alliances. Such are the doctrines of the Warsaw Treaty states and of the NATO bloc.

The military doctrines (whether of individual states, or of military coalitions) result from the intricate development by the states of their ideas on tackling military tasks, a process that does not run arbitrarily, but under the objective influence of concrete political, economic, social, ideological and military-technical factors. A strong influence on military doctrines is also exerted by the pattern of military-political forces, the economic potentialities of the states, the peculiarities of their military and geographical situation, the level of production of weapons and military hardware, and the state and relation of the military might of their armed forces. But it is *the character of the states' social system and their policies* that mainly and above all characterise the orientation and content of military doctrines: whatever the social nature of states and military alliances, whatever their policies and ideology, such is also their military doctrine. Indeed, it is politics that determine the substance of their military tasks and the modes of their fulfilment, and that lays down the objectives, direction and scale for development and use of the armed forces.

The materials of the 27th Congress of the CPSU contain an in-depth analysis of the development trends in the international situation today, and give a profound insight into the causes and sources of the danger of war.

The new edition of the CPSU Programme emphasises that "imperialism was responsible for two world wars that claimed tens of millions of lives. It is creating the threat of a third world war".³

Imperialism has always striven for social claw-back and has tried to change the balance of forces, to roll back socialism, and eventually to eliminate it as a social system, as President Ronald Reagan declared not long ago. In recent years, the United States, in alliance with other NATO countries, has mounted an offensive against socialism along every line. One of the main lines is the material preparation of war, a step-up of the arms race, and an urge to attain military superiority over the socialist countries, a line that can also be discerned through an analysis of the military doctrines of the United States and the NATO bloc. Western politicians and strategists have certainly said a great deal about their desire for peace and international stability and have tried hard to present their military doctrines as defensive ones.

They have, in fact, conducted a policy from positions of strength. The military aspects of their arsenal continue to be the main ones in their confrontation with the socialist countries. While the military-political leadership of the United States and the NATO bloc are aware that a nuclear war cannot be won, they still regard the threat of starting one as an instrument for attaining their military-political objectives.

They have not given up any of their long-term large-scale military programmes, and have not shown a desire to do so. On the contrary, they have carried on intensive preparations for deploying qualitatively new strategic-weapons systems. New MX ICBMs are being placed on combat alert. Tests have been started on the latest sea-borne Trident II ballistic missile. New B-1B bombers armed with long-range Cruise missiles are being included in the combat complement of their strategic air force. A

new generation of strategic nuclear weapons vehicles — the Midgetman ICBM and the Stealth advanced technology bomber — is being developed.

Hardly had the prospect appeared for an understanding between the USSR and the United States on eliminating medium and shorter range missiles, when the NATO bloc leadership got down to stepping up their replacement with new types of weapons. The armed forces of the United States and NATO *are being invested with an ever more offensive and strike character* with every passing year.

The militarisation of space is a special element in the aggressive war plans of the United States. The idea is to develop space armaments with the use of weapons working on new physical principles so as, on the one hand, to provide a 'space-shield' — a multi-echelon anti-missile defence — for its own territory, and on the other, to deploy space-based strike forces that would, together with the existing offensive strategic weapons, enable the United States to deliver, with impunity, a 'crippling' nuclear strike at the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Treaty states, or, at any rate, to keep posing the threat of delivering such a strike.

The aggressive tenor of the present-day military doctrines of the United States and NATO is clearly discerned in all the basic directive documents on the build-up of armed forces and the strategic conceptions of 'direct confrontation' and 'flexible response'. They ignore the realities and continue to orient their armed forces towards conducting above all a global nuclear war against the USSR and the other socialist countries, and towards conducting different versions of a limited nuclear war.

They have, at the same time, given ever more attention to preparing for operations in a drawn-out conventional war with the use of new weapons systems, with the crucial role assigned to preparations for surprise attack and subsequent large-scale military operations with their simultaneous spread to the entire depth of the territory of the USSR and its allies. That is precisely the objective of the latest US and NATO operational-strategic conceptions of 'air-land operation', 'air-sea battle' and 'fight against second echelons'.

The day-to-day activity of NATO armed forces is ever more dangerous. The exercises and manoeuvres annually staged in Europe, the Atlantic and other strategically important areas acquire ever greater scale and scope, so that it is hard to draw a distinctive line between them and the actual deployment of forces for the conduct of war. This tends to increase the danger of surprise attack. One especial danger is that the aggressive military plans of the United States and NATO are still being based on the illusory hope of attaining decisive advantages as a result of preemptive strikes, including strikes with the use of nuclear weapons.

There are continued attempts to prove that nuclear weapons have been and must remain the most effective means of deterrence, and that peace has been preserved only by the 'nuclear deterrence' strategy, which the West has conducted for many years. In actual fact, however, it is this strategy that has repeatedly brought the world to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe, creating unpredictable situations and generating fear and mistrust of the politics and practices of international relations.

The policy of the socialist states has an altogether different orientation. In

accordance with the decisions of the congresses of their communist and workers' parties, the main objective of the policy of the Warsaw Treaty countries is to perfect socialism in a balanced and all-round manner, and this can be done only in peace and reliable security.

The allied socialist states, in virtue of the nature of their social system, have never connected their future with a military solution of international problems. Socialism rejects — without any reservations — wars as a means for resolving interstate contradictions, whether these are political, economic or ideological. No forces with a stake in aggressive policy and war exist — or can exist — in the socialist society. It has no need of armies from the standpoint of its internal conditions.

Struggle to eliminate wars from the life of mankind, to end the arms race, to exclude the use of armed force, to strengthen peace and international security, and to effect general and complete disarmament has always been the main line of its foreign-policy activity. It wants to see all controversial international issues settled by peaceful means, by political means alone.

Those are the origins of the basic content and orientation of the socialist countries' military doctrine: to prevent both a nuclear and a conventional war, to secure and defend their countries against the encroachments of imperialism and to enable the people to work in peace.

The military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty, and of each of its members, is determined by the peaceable policy of the communist and workers' parties and governments of the socialist countries, by the international agreements concluded between them, and by their jointly formulated and agreed propositions on defence. In scientific terms, it is based on the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, on military science, and on the entire system of knowledge about war and the army.

The military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty countries determines the general principles of defence of the socialist-community countries. It began to take shape with the formation of our defensive military-political alliance, that is, over thirty years ago, when its socialist and class character and defensive tenor were also determined. These main features of the Warsaw Treaty's military doctrine have remained immutable to this day, which does not mean, however, that it has on the whole remained unchanged in the past period. In view of the shifts in the military-political situation, some of its propositions have been elaborated and seriously corrected.

The present military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty countries starts from the realities of the nuclear-space age. It is permeated with the spirit of the new political thinking, and is a reflection of the new approaches to defence and security in the nuclear age. All of its propositions are designed for the solution of two cardinal problems: first of all *to prevent and avert* both a nuclear and a conventional war; and second, to provide socialism with reliable defence. There is, therefore, a fundamental distinction between the military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty countries, and the military doctrine of the NATO bloc.

The new propositions of the Warsaw Treaty countries' military doctrine are reflected in its modern definition. It is now regarded as *a system of*

fundamental views officially accepted in the Warsaw Treaty Organisation on the prevention of war, on military construction, on the preparation of their countries and armed forces to ward off aggression, and on the modes of conducting armed struggle in defence of socialism.

It follows from this definition that the military doctrine of the fraternal socialist countries is aimed against war, and for consolidating the foundations of international security, instead of preparation for war. It starts from the assumption that war is intolerable, and determines the set of effective political and defence measures aimed to avert war and not to allow the aggressor to start one with an eye to this or that advantage in the illusory hope of winning the war and emerging as victor from it.

One has to emphasise that this is *the first time* that the proposition of averting war has been included in such a straightforward and sharp formulation within the definition of our common military doctrine. The military activity of the Warsaw Treaty countries did, of course, envisage a struggle against war even in the past, but now this task has been brought to the fore in our military doctrine as the main and definitive one. Why has that happened?

The reason is that the outbreak of a world war would have disastrous consequences for both sides. Nowadays, no political objectives can be attained in a nuclear war. "It has now become perfectly clear to everyone that the old notions of war as a means of attaining political objectives have outlived themselves. In the nuclear age, these obsolete dogmas fuel a policy which could spark off a universal conflagration," says Mikhail Gorbachov.

The most important feature of the Warsaw Treaty countries' military doctrine today is that it is purely defensive (and that also makes it basically different from the military doctrine of the NATO bloc). The feature has been further developed and now determines the entire content of its political and military-technical aspects.

Where is the evidence of this? It lies in the defensive substance of the military-political tasks the allied states set themselves, and in all our practical acts — both internal and foreign policy acts, in the character and content of our military planning and military construction, training of the armed forces and in the demands made on the development of our military art: strategy, operational art and tactics.

The orientation of the allied socialist countries' military doctrine stands out in boldest relief in these key propositions:

First. The Warsaw Treaty states threaten no one, have no intention of attacking anyone, and will never take the way of aggression. They have no territorial claims on any state, whether in Europe or elsewhere. They do not regard any state or people as their enemy. On the contrary, they are prepared to build relations on the basis of mutual consideration of interests, security and peaceful coexistence with all states without exception.

Second. The Warsaw Treaty countries will never — under no circumstances whatsoever — be the first to start military operations against any state or alliance of states, unless they are themselves the object of aggression, of armed attack. The allied socialist states will never be the first

to use nuclear weapons.

Third. The Warsaw Treaty countries will continue to strengthen their defence and carry on their military construction in strict accordance with the principles of the military equilibrium, and to seek to maintain the military-strategic equilibrium at the lowest possible level required for defence. They do not seek military superiority but will not allow military superiority over themselves either.

These are the pivotal propositions on which our military doctrine is based. They are embodied in our military practice and in the concrete programmes for the development and training of the United Armed Forces.

It is common knowledge that, like any other military doctrine, that of the Warsaw Treaty countries has two aspects: the political and the military-technical aspects.

The *political aspect* is the main one. It determines the attitude to the problems of war and to preventing it in the nuclear age, and to the orientation of the military-political tasks in strengthening the defence and ensuring the security of the socialist states, in the light of Lenin's dictum that "no revolution is worth anything unless it can defend itself".⁴

The Warsaw Treaty countries' assumption is that there is no fatal inevitability of a world war, and that it can be averted, however great the threat to peace now being posed by the policy of the aggressive circles of imperialism.

Security cannot be ensured by military-technical means alone in this age of nuclear weapons. Political means and action by many states tend to acquire ever greater significance in tackling this problem.

It is possible to ensure a comprehensive international security system only by means of a whole complex of measures in the political, economic, military and humanitarian spheres.

The main tenor of the political aspect of our military doctrine is to conduct a policy of peaceful coexistence, solve international problems by political means, and strengthen the defence of the socialist countries and international security in the light of the principle of maintaining the military equilibrium between the USSR and the United States, between the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO. Their security must be mutual, and in international terms, the security of all the states must be universal.

The *military-technical aspect* of our military doctrine is subordinate to the political aspect. Starting from principled military-political propositions, this aspect determines the corresponding military, organisational, technical, strategic and military-economic measures for averting war and beating back a possible aggression. It shows the probable nature of a war the aggressor would try to start against the USSR and the other socialist countries, and identifies the armed forces that are required in peace time and in the course of such a war, and how to prepare the country, the army and the navy and how to use them in warding off aggression. All these are complex and fundamental questions, and the correct answer to them is of great theoretical and practical significance.

It is important to stress that the defensive character of the Warsaw

Treaty's military doctrine equally applies not only to its political, but also to its military-technical aspect. What is more, it is in the military-technical aspect of the doctrine — the concrete strategic solutions and actions, the plans for the development of the United Armed Forces, their organisational build-up and technical equipment, and the practical operational and combat training — that the defence orientation is realised in practice.

The main requirement is that all the socialist community countries start from the principle of *retaliatory action, equilibrium and defence adequacy* in solving their defence problems. This also applies to the technical equipment of the armed forces. It was not we who initiated the build-up of the vast arsenal of destructive means of armed struggle now accumulated in the world. On the contrary, the USSR and all the other Warsaw Treaty countries have always striven to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons and the spread of the arms to new areas.

The assumption of our doctrine is that the make-up of the armed forces, and the quantity and quality of their weapons, must be strictly commensurate with the level of the war threat, and must be determined by the actual requirements for reliable defence and ensuring our countries' security. *We seek to have just as many forces as the attainment of this goal requires. Not a thing more. That is the meaning of the principle of defence adequacy.*

But with the constant military threat posed by the active military preparations of imperialism, defence adequacy cannot be viewed one-sidedly, irrespective of the balance of armed forces taking shape. It would, furthermore, be a mistake to regard it as one-sided disarmament, and a unilateral reduction of our defence efforts.

The content of defence adequacy has been clearly defined in the Berlin document in these words: "The armed forces of the socialist states are maintained in combat readiness adequate to not allowing ourselves to be caught unawares, and to giving a crushing rebuff to the aggressor in the event that an attack is, after all, carried out against them."⁵

The requirements of our military doctrine exclude the delivery of preventive, pre-emptive strikes, and bind our armed forces to look to retaliatory defence operations with the start of aggression. That does not at all mean, however, that the United Armed Forces of the WTO intend to ward off an adversary's strikes no more than passively. If an aggression is committed, they will inflict crushing retaliatory blows at the enemy and will act with utmost resolve and vigour. Whatever the war an aggressor may launch — nuclear or conventional — he cannot hope to escape retribution.

The limits of defence adequacy are not set by us, but by the actual activities of the United States and the NATO bloc, and by their attempts to have a military potential assuring them of military superiority over us. In that kind of situation, the Warsaw Treaty states, while coming out for disarmament measures, are forced to maintain their armed forces in a make-up and state enabling them reliably to ward off aggression. The entire system of the Warsaw Treaty's defence readiness is such as to keep their armed might constantly maintained and supported in a state under which the balance of combat potentialities would not allow the aggressor to

attain his military-political objectives, whatever the conditions in which he starts and carries on the war.

Of special importance here is the maintenance of the *military-strategic equilibrium in strategic nuclear weapons*, which are of crucial significance for conducting armed struggle. That does not, of course, signify any complete identity of the armaments of the sides. Over the past period, the nuclear forces of the USSR and the United States have largely developed along different lines. Essential distinctions in their organisational structure, make-up and arms components have taken shape objectively. That is why the point is a rough equilibrium under which one side's advantages in various indicators of military might are offset by the other side's definite advantages in other indicators.

The military-strategic parity which now exists — the roughly equal balance of military forces between the USSR and the United States, and between the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO bloc — is characterised by just such a state, and it is the key factor in averting war and deterring the aggressor, because it ensures the possibility of guaranteed infliction on the aggressor of unacceptable damage in retaliatory actions, and makes meaningless any attempt on his part to unleash a war.

The military-strategic parity does not, of course, in itself guarantee complete security for any state and does not exclude the potential danger of war. The Warsaw Treaty countries' assumption is that the present balance of military forces is intolerably high, and that it is fraught with a vast danger to peace. Any further continuation of the arms race will evidently further intensify the danger of war and could carry it to the point at which even the military-strategic parity will cease to be a factor of deterrence.

That is why the Warsaw Treaty countries have made such great efforts *to lower the level of the military forces' equilibrium* in the belief that true equal security in our age is guaranteed not by a high, but by the lowest possible strategic balance level totally rid of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

States truly desirous of peace in the present situation have no alternative but the reaching of agreements on a radical lowering of the military confrontation level, and a reduction of the military potentials to the limits of adequacy necessary for defence, so that neither side would, in ensuring its defence, have any forces and means for surprise attack and large-scale offensive operations.

The Soviet Union has done all that is necessary to create a real possibility of agreements being concluded to eliminate medium- and shorter-range missiles. It has accepted several compromises: it has agreed to leave out the nuclear potentials of Britain and France, to defer the solution of the question of medium-range airborne means, and has expressed a readiness to eliminate all its medium- and shorter-range missiles not only in Europe, but also in the Asian part of the country. The other side has also made some concessions. The result was that what was but recently considered to be unfeasible has become possible: *an understanding has been reached in principle on the total elimination of two classes of nuclear weapons.*

The destruction of several thousand nuclear warheads on medium- and shorter-range missiles of the USSR and the United States is, certainly, only an insignificant part of the vast nuclear arsenals, but the important thing is that the idea of nuclear disarmament has been put on a real and practical basis for the first time. An agreement on this issue opens the prospect for other major treaties. This is no more than a first step, only the beginning that could lead to the abandonment not of a part, but of the whole nuclear arsenal, of every type of weapon of mass destruction. But it will, of course, be far from an easy thing to do.

Our constructive proposals for a radical (50 per cent) cut in strategic offensive weapons of the USSR and the United States, with a simultaneous preservation and scrupulous observance of the ABM treaty, and on a complete termination of nuclear tests under stringent international control, including on-site inspection, is now on the negotiating table at Geneva.

Our line in all these matters is based on the principle of equilibrium and equality. The United States and its allies have, regrettably, taken a different stand. The unwillingness of the United States to shelve its programmes and to reckon with the interconnection between offensive and defensive strategic weapons continues to be the main obstacle to an understanding on strategic offensive weapons.

The Soviet Union wants to prevent an arms race in space, and with that end in view it has invited the United States to fortify the ABM Treaty regime through the non-use by the sides of the right to depart from the treaty for a period of ten years, with scrupulous observance of all its provisions. In order to facilitate an understanding, we have proposed that space-based ABM projects should be confined to the laboratories on the Earth and that there should be an agreement on the list of devices that would be allowed to be put into space or banned from it. However, the United States is opposed to any limitations on the building of a large-scale space-based ABM system.

Real prerequisites for completing the elaboration of an international convention banning chemical weapons have been created in the course of negotiations on these weapons thanks to the USSR's purposeful and constructive stand. The positions of the states have substantially converged on these issues, and also on questions of control. At the same time, the US decision to produce binary chemical ammunition continues to be a serious stumbling-block.

Europe, where the mightiest groupings of the armed forces of the NATO bloc and the Warsaw Treaty countries are in immediate confrontation with each other, naturally has a special place in the Warsaw Treaty countries' proposals and practical actions. The allied socialist countries have been working for a reduction in this region of armed forces and conventional armaments down to a level under which neither side would, while ensuring its defence, have the means for mounting offensive operations, to say nothing of launching a surprise attack. To that end, they have proposed cuts in the armed forces, the tactical nuclear and conventional weapons of all the European states from the Atlantic to the Urals, and also in the corresponding forces and weapons of the United States and Canada deployed in Europe.

They have proposed, as the initial step, mutual reductions in ground forces and tactical air forces of the two alliances by 100,000 to 150,000 men on each side, and a 25 per cent cut (over 500,000 men on each side) in the troops of both alliances in Europe in the early 1990s. But here again we have come up against the attempts by the other side to bargain out unilateral advantages for itself. The United States and other NATO countries want to have tactical nuclear means, including tactical aircraft, to be excluded from the negotiations, seeking to prove that the 'disbalance' needs to be eliminated only in the ground forces, and taking a peculiar approach to defining the reduction zone. Meanwhile, it is clear that tactical nuclear weapons are the key component of a surprise strike potential and large-scale offensive operations.

It is also obvious that it is impossible, in practice, to separate tactical nuclear means from the ground troops and air forces since these means are a part of their structure, have a 'dual purpose' and can be used in either nuclear or conventional mode. It is, generally, impossible to work for the elimination of the offensive potential of the sides without cuts in the tactical strike air force.

The Warsaw Treaty states have also offered the NATO countries a number of other measures aimed to relax tensions in Europe and limit the potentialities of the sides for surprise attack. Such proposals have been made by Poland, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and other countries, including proposals for reducing the concentration of weapons in the zone, in which the sides are in direct contact, down to a minimum agreed level; on the creation in various regions of zones free from nuclear and chemical weapons, and zones with a lowered concentration of armaments; on the creation of a nuclear-free corridor along the line of contact between the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO with a width of 300 kilometres (150 kilometres on each side); and on the dismantling of military bases and withdrawal of troops from foreign territories. This series also includes Mikhail Gorbachov's recent proposals which he made on his visit to Murmansk for a radical lowering of the level of military confrontation in Northern Europe, on the creation of a nuclear-free zone in this region, and on the reduction of military activity and limitation of the scale of air force and naval activity in the areas of the Baltic, Northern, Norwegian and Greenland seas, and also the spread of confidence measures to these areas. It is to be regretted that on all these questions NATO has given no answers for the time being.

The socialist states believe that no confidence will be created in each other by means of some magic wand. *Arms cuts and a display of restraint by the sides in the military field* are the most effective means of building confidence. In this context, they have offered the NATO countries a mutual repudiation of the use of armed force with a commitment to maintain peaceful relations with each other. And as a radical measure, they have reaffirmed their proposal for a simultaneous dissolution of the North Atlantic Alliance and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, and the dismantling of their military organisations, as a first step.

It is not a sign of weakness that the Soviet Union and all the other Warsaw Treaty countries have carried on a persevering struggle for peace

and disarmament: the allied socialist states have enough potentialities and resolve to prevent anyone from talking to them in the language of force.

The defensive character of our military doctrine, under which retaliatory actions are the basic mode of operation by the Warsaw Treaty armed forces, does not reduce but, on the contrary, makes even higher demands on the vigilance and combat readiness of the United Armed Forces, on their capability to discover in due time an attack being prepared by the aggressor, and to deal the aggressor a crushing rebuff in any situation.

The communist and workers' parties of the fraternal socialist countries and their governments have been doing everything for the security of our states and peoples and of the whole socialist community, and for the preservation of lasting peace on the Earth.

¹ It took place in May 1987.

² *Pravda*, September 17, 1987.

³ *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. A New Edition*, Moscow, 1986, p. 22.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 124.

⁵ *Pravda*, May 30, 1987.

the party

We Are Ready To Respond To New Ideas

From the Ninth Congress of the Tunisian Communist Party

Ahmed Brahim — Political Bureau member, Central Committee, Tunisian Communist Party (TCP)

THE Ninth Congress of the Tunisian Communist Party (June 1987), the first communist forum convened legally over the past quarter of a century, became a major event which aroused great public interest and was welcomed by all democratic and progressive forces of the nation. The delegates took stock of the period since the Eighth Congress (1981) and set forth communist proposals on ways to overcome the acute crisis affecting the entire Tunisian social fabric. Specific methods of struggle for implementing these proposals were outlined.

The political aspect of the crisis is linked with the fact that the partial democratisation which had started early in the current decade under the impact of political and trade union battles began to wane. The authorities

again took up one-party rule concepts and methods¹ and stepped up their attacks on democratic gains. A blow was dealt to the Tunisian General Union of Labour (TGUL). Its representative bodies have been dissolved, and the lawfully elected leaders subjected to brutal reprisals. Obstacles are being raised to the normal functioning of opposition parties, and their leaders and activists are treated in a high-handed, arbitrary manner. Freedom of the press and democratic civil rights are being curtailed.

All that is an integral part of a hard-line policy which the authorities have adopted and which is fraught with dangerous consequences for the country and its future. The aim is to debar those forces that, aware of their responsibility, could combat the crisis and defend national and democratic gains from the decision-making process and to make it a monopoly of the repressive apparatus. But Tunisia's development is impossible without conscious participation of the people and without observance of freedoms. As was stated unequivocally at the congress, the Communists are firmly *opposed to reprisals, even when these are applied to quarters with whom we have fundamental differences.*

Among other things, this refers to the campaign launched against the membership and leaders of the Islamic Tendency Movement (ITM) whom, as we were holding our congress, the authorities intended to bring to trial in the State Security Court.²

We were not closing our eyes to the dangers of religion interfering in politics, of believers' sentiments being used in a struggle that is not religious but political and social. There must be no slide into religious hegemonism. The Tunisian people must not be split into pseudo-champions and pseudo-opponents of Islam. We must prevent the triumph of backward, reactionary views of social development and avert the prospect of a theocratic regime which would abolish freedom of thought and religious freedom. Nonetheless, the Ninth Congress reiterated the Communists' firm opposition to reprisals and persecution of beliefs and to attempts at resolving the existing differences by force.

Ideas compete with one another in a natural way only if democratic freedoms are observed. That is the only way to protect the country against dangers stemming from both religious and non-religious fanaticism. Meanwhile, reprisals aggravate the crisis, make its consequences unpredictable and open the way for reckless gambles. Repression can only thicken the fog of uncertainty surrounding the 'issue of succession'³ and hamper its solution in a democratic manner, that is, via legally sanctioned national institutions.

The Tunisian economy is in a chronic structural crisis. The congress evaluated the current government programme of reform. Emergency measures taken under this programme have succeeded, to a degree, in arresting the deterioration of some sectors of the economy. The long-term effect, however, is bound to be negative. The very logic underlying these measures is aimed at promoting a liberal capitalist model of development — there is the lifting of price controls and of restrictions on import-export transactions, the curtailment of the public sector, and the vicious circle of applying for new loans to service old ones.

Giving free rein to market forces and curtailing the state sector in an

underdeveloped country means to hitch it to the juggernaut of parasitic capitalism and international capital. It spells submission to the demands of the IMF and aggravation of dependence with all that this entails — growing unemployment, increased social contrasts and imbalances in the development of different regions, lower spendable incomes for the people, and an overall deterioration in the living conditions of the working people and the masses as a whole.

In the realm of theory, the Ninth Congress enhanced our understanding of fundamental issues relating to the current stage in the development of our country, to the content and forms of the state, to the relationship between religion and politics and to the progressive aspects of the Arab-Muslim heritage. It gave an impetus to our scientific quest and to a critical analysis and reappraisal of concepts such as that of the character of the national democratic revolution.

The alternative the Tunisian Communists are offering is based on the premise that *at the current stage, a national democratic revolution is impossible without a firm rejection of the capitalist way of development, and of a policy designed to curtail democracy.*

Our goal is to develop a popular movement capable of changing the alignment of forces in favour of a 'new historical alliance' centred around working class and progressive socio-political forces. Such an alliance could open a socialist prospect before our country.

The Communists are now working to create a broad national democratic alliance in order to stop the deterioration of the situation and ensure the implementation of the more urgent demands. These include:

- respect for personal freedoms and civil liberties, release of prisoners of conscience, and a general amnesty;

- restoration of trade union rights and repeal of unjust measures that have dealt a blow to the autonomy of the TGUL and its lawfully elected governing bodies;

- removal of unconstitutional obstacles to the activities of opposition movements and democratic associations;

- settlement of the issue of succession via legitimate national institutions;

- urgent economic and social steps to alleviate the disastrous effects of the sway of parasitic and dependent capital, to curb growing unemployment and hold back the decline in the people's purchasing power;

- defence of the Personal Status Law as an important gain;⁴ a policy of genuine cultural renewal which is oriented on the progressive values of our Arab-Muslim heritage and which rejects irrationalistic and obscurantist trends;

- our country's right to take independent decisions and pursue a foreign policy which is truly based on the principles of non-alignment, vigorously resists imperialist aggression and the nuclear war threat, and displays solidarity with the national liberation movements.

All those who hold national interests dear can join this platform. Among other things, it could help to overcome organisational weaknesses, to abandon self-serving and one-sided attitudes, and to step up joint action

and invigorate the policy of alliances among the left, within the democratic and progressive movement as a whole. This platform reminds all constituent forces of this movement — both trade unions and political organisations — of the need to learn relevant lessons from the experience we have accumulated, particularly in recent years. We must realise that wrong assessments and erroneous methods of work prevented the democratic forces from blocking the government's return to authoritarian positions and from effectively resisting the suppression of the trade unions.

The Ninth Congress of the TCP extensively discussed issues concerning the party itself and self-critically examined shortcomings in our work. This served to reinforce the unity of party ranks and to work out ways of consolidating what had already been achieved in the development of the party and in its organisational, ideological and political strengthening.

Despite the noticeable increase of its influence in various regions of our country and in different strata and groups, the party's numerical strength is still small. It is going through a complicated stage of consolidating its unity and improving its leadership. This effort is far from completed and, naturally, it highlights flaws which are compounded by the difficulties of 'controlled legality'. They have produced a degree of inner tension which threatens to weaken the unity and the role of the party.

Joint efforts to grasp the problems that arise and a democratic and responsible discussion enabled the Communists to reach the stage of their Ninth Congress as a *dynamic and united force ready to take part in a dialogue and receptive to fresh ideas*. The forum itself was a decisive step in the emergence of a strong *revolutionary party* with deep roots in Tunisian society.

The delegates of the congress unanimously adopted several important decisions aimed at enhancing democracy within the party, promoting the Communists' initiative, perfecting collective methods at all levels of party leadership, strengthening unity and discipline through a creative concept of democratic centralism, correcting organisational shortcomings, invigorating theoretical work and cadre training, and improving the contents and the appearance of the party newspaper.

All these tasks are part of the overall policy of substantially increasing the party's influence with the working class and the peasants, consolidating its positions among the younger generation, and improving its cooperation with the progressive quarters, specifically with trade unionists and intellectuals.

As a national force active in the struggle for the interests of the working class and of the Tunisian people, the TCP regards itself as an *integral element of the international communist movement, the national liberation movement and the champions of universal peace and progress*. Support for the Palestinian people and the struggle for peace against the aggressive course of US imperialism, are a cause the Tunisians see as their own.

Could Israel have launched its air raid against our country in October 1985 without clearing it with the United States and securing its support? Has the blood of the Tunisians killed during the bombing not mingled with the blood of the martyrs of the Palestinian revolution? And what about the NATO nuclear bases and other military installations in Sicily, so close to

our shores?

The extensive public participation in the demonstrations that were held in Tunisia against the Israeli raid on Hammam-Plage and after the US aggression against the fraternal Libyan people is evidence of the strong roots anti-imperialist consciousness has struck among the masses and of the opportunities for its development in the coming years.

It was natural for our congress to pay particular attention to issues of the national liberation movement in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and to the need to be involved in the struggle against the nuclear war threat and for strengthening friendly relations with the socialist countries, primarily with the USSR, a true and reliable ally of the Arab peoples.

The congress welcomed the peace initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union and supported its proposals that the great powers withdraw their naval forces from the Mediterranean. We called on all the nation's forces, on all Tunisians to join resolutely in the global struggle for peace, to restore the organisational basis which would help mobilise the country's public opinion around these issues.

Our party held its forum in the year marking the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution in Russia and, obviously, our congress laid special emphasis on the vitality and topical significance of that revolution's ideas, borne out by the decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress and by the revolutionary perestroika under way in the Soviet Union.

"We reiterate our full solidarity with the socialist countries," Mohammed Harmel said at the congress, presenting the Central Committee report, "not only as Communists who fight for socialism and hail the victories of workers' and peoples' revolutions, but also as a component of the liberation movement which has always had the socialist countries as true and reliable allies."⁵

The successes scored by the Soviet Union in its domestic and foreign policies, the creative effort it has undertaken to correct shortcomings and eliminate bureaucratic attitudes are giving us a fresh impetus, helping us in our struggle to promote anti-imperialist sentiments and publicise socialist ideas among our people.

Very real opportunities exist for the expansion of the democratic, progressive movement in Tunisia, and the important thing is to use them. The conclusions and decisions of the Ninth Congress of the TCP are urging the Communists to spare no effort in creating a broad popular movement. The congress has stimulated theoretical thought and militant unity within the party which preserves and builds on its revolutionary traditions, closely linking its duty to its own people with its internationalist tasks.

¹ The Destourian Socialist Party has remained in power since independence (1956). — *Ed.*

² In late September 1987 Tunisia's State Security Court sentenced Rashid Ghannouchi, the leader of this banned religious and political organisation, to hard labour for life, and many other ITM activists, to prison terms. They were charged with attempts to overthrow the government, slandering the head of state, engaging in illegal association and with other crimes. During the trial Rashid Ghannouchi declared that his organisation did not seek to seize power, that it had always opposed terrorist and violent methods of action, and that dialogue and official recognition were its aims. — *Ed.*

³ Habib Bourguiba (b. 1903), head of state of the Tunisian Republic since its establishment, was in 1954 proclaimed President for life. As this article went to the printer's, the news came from Tunisia that President Habib Bourguiba had been replaced for reasons of health. Former Prime Minister Zine al Abidine Ben Ali became President. — *Ed.*

⁴ The law forbids Tunisians to have more than one wife (while Islamic law allows four wives to a man) and grants women the right to divorce their husbands. — *Ed.*

⁵ *At-Tarik al-Jadid*, July 4, 1987 (in Arabic).

Together With The Whole People

From The Fourth Congress of the PPS of Morocco

Omar Al Fassi — CC Political Bureau member, CC Secretary, Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco

THE Fourth Congress of the Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco was held in July 1987 under the slogan: 'Together with the People for the Triumph of the National Cause, for Democratic Change and Social Progress'. It was preceded by 22 regional party conferences, whose preparation included party section conferences, and a wide-ranging discussion of the draft CC Theses by primary organisations in town and countryside, at enterprises and in the neighbourhoods, and also on the pages of the daily *Al-Bayane*, our central organ.

Each of the 1,339 delegates elected to the congress represented 40 party members. The opening of the congress, which was held in the Palace of the International Casablanca Fair, was attended, together with the delegates and foreign guests, by representatives of all political parties in the country, delegations from the Moroccan Labour Union, syndicates, various cultural and occupational associations, and organisations of the anti-colonial resistance fighters, and also deputies of local organs of power. Among the guests of the congress were delegations from 32 fraternal and friendly parties, including a CPSU delegation and representatives of other fraternal parties from the European socialist countries, the People's Republic of China, Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kampuchea and the communist and workers' parties of Arab countries, Western Europe, Africa and Asia.

Geographically, there were representatives of party organisations from all parts of the country, including the re-incorporated Saharan provinces and the towns of Seuta and Melilla in the North, which are still under the control of the Spanish colonial authorities. Here are some data on the composition of those who took part in the congress: workers and other persons working for a wage (industrial sector) — 30.4 per cent; peasants and farm labourers — 15.6 per cent; teachers — 17.4 per cent; persons of the liberal professions — 2.8 per cent; senior administrative functionaries — 3.3 per cent; petty traders — 7.1 per cent; students — 17 per cent; non-working persons (dismissed workers, housewives, etc.) — 6.3 per cent.

The report of the Credentials Commission said that 35.2 per cent of the delegates were between the ages of 21 and 30 years; 35.3 per cent between 31 and 40 years, and 10.2 per cent were women (2 per cent up on the previous congress).

There was a wide discussion of the report delivered by General Secretary Ali Yata and of the draft CC Theses. More than 40 representatives of various party organisations spoke in the debates, and they made a contribution to the elaboration of the PCC documents with their own experience and critical remarks. The political commission was authorised to take into account and sum up the amendments and addenda proposed in the pre-congress discussion and by delegates who spoke at the congress.

The congress analysed the country's internal problems and international issues, and examined in detail various aspects of the country's territorial integrity and defence of its territorial unity, the economic, social and political problems facing the Moroccan people, the international situation and the new realities of the modern world, and organisational matters relating to the party's consolidation.

Our congress paid much attention to the internal economic situation and discussed economic and social problems in a wide international context.

The world capitalist economy is going through an acute crisis, which has inflicted the greatest suffering on the less developed countries. The rate of economic growth in many Third World countries is lower than that of population growth, but the vast external debt — now over \$1 trillion — is the most painful problem. Countries taking the socialist orientation have been heavily hit by the effects of the crisis, apparently because of their underestimation of the complexities of the national-democratic revolution, and their failure to reckon with all its lessons in due time.

The documents of the congress contain an analysis of the economic situation in Morocco, with its policy of austerity pursued under the agreements with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. While this policy has helped to restore relative financial equilibrium (especially over the past year), the report said, this has happened only because of the favourable economic conjuncture: the prices of energy raw materials were falling on the world markets, there was a bumper crop, more remittances were coming in from Moroccan citizens abroad, and tourist revenues were rising. But this policy has compounded the structural crisis, slowed down the country's economic development, and weakened the role of the public sector (state capital investments came to 10.6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product in 1982, and to only 4.9 per cent in 1985).

The economic growth rate has, on the whole, remained low, and from 1980 to 1985, GDP growth averaged only 2.8 per cent a year. Our economy's dependence on the external world increased, and that despite the many efforts to stimulate the output of export goods, and the marked devaluation of the national currency. Moroccan exports include a short range of goods (phosphates and their derivatives, and farm produce). Marketing outlets remain limited: over one-half of our trade is with the European Community countries.

Confronted with the crisis, the country's leadership intends to privatise the public sector, instead of consolidating it, although it has had the crucial

role to play in economic development since independence. Some such measures have already been taken, including the handover of the tinned-food exports and many farmlands to private entrepreneurs, who now also handle the hotel business. The growing tendency to liberalise the economy to some extent accords with the recommendations of international financial institutions, while meeting the interests of the Moroccan bourgeoisie, which continues to control publicly owned assets and to expand its sphere of business activity. In other words we have witnessed the emergence of new forms of ties between local and international capital.

Agriculture is in the doldrums, with output growing at hardly over 1 per cent a year. The unjust land-holding and land-tenure system has led to the impoverishment of the rural population. What is more, funds are made available primarily to the export oriented sectors, and this yields fat profits for the owners of large estates. Meanwhile, there is a shortage of foodstuffs, and the steady increase in farm imports tends to make the country more dependent on the external world.

The complicated economic situation is having a visible effect on every aspect of social life. Unemployment has become a constant calamity. The official figure of 650,000 jobless is a far cry from the actual figure: according to some estimates, it is as high as 2.5 million, and this must have an adverse effect on the workers' struggle for their rights. Per head incomes dropped from \$670 in 1984 to \$630 in 1986. In that period, prices went up by more than 36 per cent, and wages by only 5 per cent, with a consequent drop in purchasing power. Appropriations for public health care and education are being whittled down.

The working people have to bear the brunt of the crisis under capitalist exploitation. Women are subjected to a dual exploitation: they remain unequal with men both in wages and in rights. Out of the 250,000 school-leavers who come on the labour market every year only 10 per cent are able to find jobs. More than two-thirds of the 10 million young people have to live off their families, or to do casual petty jobs. Nothing is being done for the recreation of the young, who are not protected against the social ills. Young people find it hard to learn a trade. The education policy keeps half a million seven-year-olds out of the schoolrooms every year.

The acute economic and social crisis shows that the satisfaction of the narrow class interests of the right-wing reactionaries, who have been adapting themselves to the new strategy of imperialism, tends to jeopardise the Moroccan people's gains. The right-wingers have executed a qualitative ideological turnabout, abandoning the various nuances of the old traditionalist positions in favour of a project for a 'consummate political society' based on capitalist doctrine and ties with the West.

In this situation, Morocco's national-progressive circles have been beating back the onslaught of imperialism and foreign capital, and carrying on a fight against the offensive by the reactionary right-wing forces and the parasitic strata, against our people's economic, social and political gains, a fight which has included actions against election fraud, and the wave of arrests of hundreds of citizens, including members of our party. Some of them are still in prison. Last year, our newspaper, *Al-Bayane*, remained

closed for 70 days under a censorship order. The working people's civil rights are being violated.

Many congress delegates told in detail of the mass struggle for democracy, and those who took part in the discussion were agreed that this struggle has not proceeded in anything like a straightforward manner, being a complicated process, with achievements and successes, but also with occasional retreats under the negative impact of the structural economic, financial and social crisis on the political superstructure.

The national-progressive circles are working to make a democratic contribution so as to find the way out of the crisis, but this activity has yet to assume truly wide scope because of the divisions and lack of unity within their ranks. The documents adopted by the congress stress the importance of the policy of class alliances, which springs from the need to rally broad strata of the working people, the working class in the first place, and the political and trade union forces standing on guard of their interests. We are working for democratic change and trying to involve in joint action other political and social circles which suffer from the devastating effects of the imperialist exploitation.

The party has been strengthening its own ranks for the earliest formation of such a bloc. New PPS sections have been set up in towns and villages, a sizable contingent from among the workers and other strata of the population has joined the party, and some of the organisational problems which arose in some district organisations with their growth have been solved.

But we are only setting out on this hard road, and that is why we cannot entertain any illusions. The creation of a mass party is a challenging problem with many aspects that need to be further studied. We must educate cadres capable of rallying the working people, enlarging the scope of their work in the mass organisations and elective bodies, and making more effective use of *Al-Bayane* as a vehicle of information and organisation, it was emphasised at the congress.

The attention of delegates was focussed on our strategy. Ali Yata dealt with some theoretical propositions, and made some corrections in the concept of the national-democratic revolution, a concept the party put forward after independence in the belief that it is the only way to carry the country from its state of backwardness and to open up the prospects for development towards socialism. The report said: "The national-democratic revolution has been both a radar and a beacon of our advance. Thanks to the theoretical approach which is based on scientific socialism, and which follows from the concrete analysis of the Moroccan realities, we have established that imperialism is the one and common enemy of all class and social forces operating in Morocco, with the exception of some marginal groups. Imperialism seeks to stifle our urge for national independence, to hamper the exercise of our right to territorial reunification, to perpetuate the domination of foreign monopolies, to entrench their financial and commercial interests, and to implant its own culture to the detriment of the development of our own."

The congress examined the present-day international situation and considered both the general tendencies and the individual crisis situations

in many parts of the world (Palestine, the Persian Gulf war, South Africa, Latin America, and others). Delegates stressed our party's dedication to the ideals of the unity of the Maghreb and of all the Arab peoples. The Theses adopted by the congress unequivocally reaffirmed the Palestinians' right to self-determination and national independence, and voiced support for the PLO, that people's sole legitimate representative, and for the idea of convening an international conference with the participation of the PLO, the states of the Middle East region, and the permanent members of the UN Security Council for a definitive settlement of the problem of Palestine and of all Arab territories occupied by the Zionist aggressors.

The PPS supports the constructive proposals of the Soviet Union and other socialist states for strengthening peace and developing détente and disarmament. We wholeheartedly welcome the decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, and the policy of perestroika, which the Soviet Communists are now carrying out in the economic, social and political spheres. The PPS CC Theses reaffirm the party's principled stand with respect to the forces of socialism throughout the world, and internationalist solidarity with the peoples' struggle against imperialism and oppression, and for peace and international security, with mutual respect for each party's independence and their equality.

The Fourth Congress of the PPS unanimously approved the amended Theses, the report and the political resolution setting out the tasks of the present stage. It demanded the release of political prisoners. A special resolution of the congress called on the party and its friends widely to mark the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The congress elected a new Central Committee (71 members), the Political Control Commission and the Financial Control Commission. A plenary meeting of the Central Committee which met during the work of the congress re-elected Ali Yata as General Secretary of the party. It also formed a 13-strong Political Bureau and a five-member strong CC Secretariat. A woman, Amina Lemrini, President of the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women, was the first woman to be elected to the Political Bureau.

The congress of the Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco was certainly a major political event in the life of the country, and a striking manifestation of internationalism in action.

Grassroots Experience

New Forms Of Work At A Time Of Change

Sandor Lakos — editor-in-chief,
journal *Pártélet* of the CC of the
Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

THERE is far-reaching change afoot in the economy and the entire social life of Hungary. Following the introduction of new forms of management, enterprises have become far more autonomous. The institutional system of socialist democracy is being improved and it has grown richer in content. Public and mass organisations are revising their activities. Differing interests in virtually every field are identified, brought into conflict and harmonised as a regular feature of our theoretical and practical activities.

The party was and remains the inspiration behind the transformation of social relations. It vigorously promotes in every way the unfolding of the process of renewal. At the same time the day-to-day practice shows that in many cases the party is unable to adapt its own style and methods to the new circumstances that take shape on its own initiative.

The establishment of *more correct relations* with state, economic, public and mass organisations and with various mushrooming associations and unions of citizens is viewed by us as one of the more important tasks of the Communists in the period to come. All of them have their distinctive characteristics and the party has to work in a new way in changed circumstances. What is needed is a critical revision and improvement of the system of political institutions, methods of party guidance and the party's internal life. This work is now being conducted on the initiative of the HSWP Central Committee, and its success depends to a large extent on the primary organisations, which play an irreplaceable role in the implementation of party policy.

The primary organisations tackle at the grassroot level important political tasks, translate the party line into practice, rally the Communists for united action, and help ensure that the masses understand, accept and give practical support to our policy. They make better use of their broadened rights than before, display an ever greater initiative, respond more sensitively to problems of concern to the people, frankly discuss them and mobilise work collectives for the fulfilment of the tasks set for them. It is a heartening development of the recent period that non-party people are being involved on an ever larger scale in working out solutions to important problems and in other activities.

At the same time, even more primary organisations have suffered a drop in prestige and lost some of their political influence on work collectives. One of the reasons for this situation is their inability to make progress in

The present article continues a series of contributions on the activities of the primary organisations of fraternal parties. (See *WMR* Nos. 6, 11, 1987.)

the solution of problems which have faced people for a long time, such as poor organisation, squandering and an irregular supply of goods to the population. There are objective reasons for those shortcomings, of course, but primary organisations, too, often are inconsistent and slow-moving and slacken their control over the fulfilment of the tasks set for them.

The loss of prestige often is a result of the gap between the spirit of the resolutions taken by the supreme party bodies and publicised in the press and political work at the grassroot level. Sometimes primary organisations merely echo the conclusions made 'on high' without revising their actions accordingly, i.e. fail to match words with deeds. True, the directives handed down are sometimes so numerous that it is hard adequately to follow them. Many organisations do not match words with deeds also because they try at all costs to avoid conflicts. They often wait for word from above even when they have both the authority and resources to resolve problems on their own.

One more reason for concern: party unity on many practical matters has weakened under the impact of economic and other social changes. Party members are not always sure that individual resolutions are interpreted correctly. Moreover, economic changes sometimes provoke debates on basic political issues. But it is not in the work of the primary organisations that the main causes of this situation are rooted.

The point is that the country's economic growth has slowed down, that economic restructuring is proceeding sluggishly and that the living standards have even declined. The discussion has centred on the effects of these adverse developments on society. At the same time, virtually every measure aimed at promoting progress also stirs up debates. We consider them natural and try to give answers to all questions and to clarify the purpose of the steps that have to be taken.

The decision on the *exchange of party cards*, taken by the June 1987 Plenary Meeting of the HSWP Central Committee, will in our view help mobilise the Communists for the fulfilment of the socio-economic development programmes and for cementing the party ranks. That exchange, the seventh since the liberation of the country from fascism, will be finished by the end of 1988, when the Hungarian Communists will mark the 70th anniversary of their party. Every party member will be heard on his or her readiness to follow in practice the policy of reform and renewal and to live up to the party requirements.

The HSWP policy of principle is *to involve the primary organisations on the broadest possible scale in the formulation of the basic party directives and political guidelines for the development of the country*. Rank-and-file Communists are active in discussions in the run-up to the congress while the leading bodies take care that grassroot reactions should not be ignored. Proposals coming in are incorporated into current and long-term plans. It is the best way to ensure the feedback, i.e. the reflection of views in everyday practice. This is done, naturally, not just once every five years, during preparations for congresses: the feedback is effected through a ramified information system, meetings of party leaders with the rank-and-file and annual progress report meetings.

The party organisation should be a lookout, timely exposing

shortcoming and mistakes. That was the case, for instance, in the Veszprem province, when last year a loss of livestock was caused by certain financial measures. The Communists there strongly stated their concern about those hapless 'incentives' to livestock-breeding. The province party committee and central bodies promptly reacted to the signal and the situation began to improve.

Generally speaking, however, a better job could be done of generalising and putting to use proposals made by Communists. Sometimes people are not even told what is the fate of an initiative, and they get the impression that they are expected merely to carry out decisions rather than to contribute to decision-making bearing on society as a whole. The latter, meanwhile, is precisely what the Communists rightly want and fresh steps are to be taken towards that goal.

We are likewise seeking to extend the practice whereby territorial and production party bodies canvass party members for their opinions before taking an important decision. The Communists then regard such a decision as their own, find forceful arguments to convince the people of its correctness and take a creative approach to its implementation. But sometimes there are glaring contradictions: the leaders of primary organisations justly stand up for their right to have a say in various measures taken by higher-up party bodies but themselves fail to ask members of their organisations their views of the state of affairs at the local level.

The party's economic policy has a direct bearing on the life and work of the primary organisations. There is a *qualitative change* afoot in the economy today. The measures taken to mitigate our problems have not yet yielded radical results. Some of the decisions that have to be taken give rise to conflicts in individual production collectives. The old system of values has to be reconsidered in view of cuts in state subsidies, closures of unprofitable enterprises, redeployment of labour, personnel cuts and other rational and much-needed but difficult steps.

The current goal of demarcating functions in the economy more clearly is creating quite a few problems in the primary organisations. It is sometimes hard to decide at the grassroot level where political influence of principle ends and inadmissible interference begins. We think that the primary organisations should take *the initiative in raising issues rather than replace executives in decision-making*. The Communists' task is to demand measures which can yield results, evaluate the political implications of plans that are being made, support correct initiatives with agitation and personal example and monitor ongoing processes.

Such a political approach is practised, for instance, by the Communists of the 21st (Csepel) district of Budapest, whose industrial enterprises have assumed a resolute course of economic restructuring and of organising highly efficient production. The district party organisations continuously keep in sight the activities of inventors and the introduction of robots and other technological innovations. The Communists have pressed the local authorities into changing the reception hours at the district administrative agencies and the working hours of the services so that people should not have to take leaves-of-absence to look after their private affairs. These and

other steps have quickly brought results: profits at Csepel industrial enterprises have soared and the quality of output improved.

The primary party organisations are to become the *vehicle of new, modern approaches to economic policy*. We consider it to be their duty to support leaders with initiative and enterprise who are willing to take reasonable risks, to refine the system of material incentive and differentiated pay according to work inputs, to contribute to the organisation of production that would meet the market demands and to create every condition for quality work. Grassroot efforts are not enough to achieve progress in these immense tasks. Clearly, it is necessary to have an ideological 'ground-clearing' at a countrywide level and make room for improving the efficiency of production in line with the resolutions of the 13th HSWP Congress (1985) and the July 1987 Plenary Meeting of the HSWP Central Committee.

Relations of principle between the party organisation and the management within the work collective have a special role to play. Economic executives now regularly report to the Communists. In some cases, however, such meetings differ but little from production conferences: reports abound in figures, deadlines, lists of production items and economic terms. Such information has a positive mobilising effect, of course, but exerts only an indirect influence on political work, while many issues which really interest people are ignored.

Not everywhere do party organisations take a resolute stand and demand concrete action from economic executives. The situation is better in those organisations which set up work groups of Communists to explore and analyse *politically* problems in the life of their work collectives. Following a report by the economic executive, they present their findings and conclusions to the meeting and discussion flows from those two presentations.

The practice of the successful grassroot organisations shows that they can play the decisive role at the workplace only if they not just address themselves to concrete day-to-day problems but look into *long-term economic prospects and priorities*. It is very important, too, to create in the work collective a good moral climate, to ensure effective workplace democracy and to have the public organisations efficiently perform their functions. The Communists' innovative, responsible and consistent position has an invaluable role to play here.

The HSWP primary organisations have an ever greater role to play in *cadre policy* as well. They enjoy what we call the right of endorsement: if they take exception to a candidacy for an executive post, the appointment cannot be made before a higher-up party body has its say in the matter. Demands on economic managers and their professional qualities are changing in the new situation. The executives' performance is more and more often judged on the basis of results, although the political and moral factors have lost none of their importance either.

There are facts indicating that the moral aspect should not be overlooked. Last year, for instance, worker councils at 40 industrial plants, including rather inefficient ones, raised considerably salaries to newly-elected managers contrary to any common sense. At other plants

managers who had been doing very well were not re-elected because of the personal grievances of some council members and narrow factional interests. Speakers at a round-table meeting called by our journal on these problems explained this situation primarily by shortcomings in the work of party organisations.

Many senior executive posts are elective in Hungary today. Vacancies are announced in newspapers and can be contended by people who do not work at the enterprise in question and are unfamiliar to its work collective. In such cases party committee secretaries personally interview candidates and request information about them.

There still are cases of subjectivism, however: work collectives in most cases prefer their own people even when 'outsiders' have obviously better qualifications. Another contradiction that made itself felt at first was that the party organisations had doubts about the planning of cadre policy. The mood has now changed as the special need for a systematic education and training of cadres and their planned advancement has been generally recognised.

What are the urgent tasks in the leadership of primary organisations? Work in them will make progress, the central party bodies believe, if the party gives clear-cut political and ideological answers to questions of concern to the Communists, such as directions of economic development, the character of money-commodity relations and their link with the planned economy, new aspects of social policy, boundaries for property differences, etc.

There is ever wider understanding that the leading party bodies should take account of *the differences in the situation of grassroot party organisations*. The independence of state and economic management bodies and motley local interests face primary organisations with diverse problems. Hence assistance to them from above can be efficient only when it is rendered by differentiated methods.

An essential condition of success today, we think, is more promptly and more thoroughly to inform the Communists and to prepare them for major decisions and events. It is important to relieve primary organisations of all the obligations which are unrelated to political work and to this end to revise all the procedures which are outdated and result in formalism.

We are seeking to ensure that administration by decree is supplanted to an ever greater extent with *direct assistance to the grassroot organisations*. It is the success of the primary organisations in the fulfilment of their tasks that is the measure of efficiency of the higher party bodies. The primary organisations need support that would enable them to make full use of their independence and really be the leading socio-political force in their localities.

The journal *Pártélet* is doing what it can to promote the restructuring of party work, including work at the grassroot level. A discussion on overcoming formalism launched by the journal, for instance, has evoked much interest. The Communists, clearly, are concerned about that problem: in letters and other responses they share their experience of uprooting that evil, which saps the energy and viability of party organisations.

The primary organisations are the foundation of the HSWP and its plenipotentiary representatives in enterprises, offices and residential areas. It is there that people come into direct contact with the Communists and judge by them the party as a whole. The more good words are said about the work of the primary party organisations and its members, the more reason we have to conclude that the party has a truly guiding role, is in touch with the mass of people and enjoys their trust.

Marxist Research Centres

Publicity Through Research

Brazil is going through a complex period of democratic change, of overcoming the legacy left by the long years of the dictatorship. A revival is under way in the political, social and economic spheres, and this means that the Communists should look for and find their own answers to the new questions the country and the party are facing, and readjust their work to gear it to the new realities. Contributing to this search is the Astrogildo Pereira Institute, the Brazilian Communist Party's recently established research centre. *WMR* has asked Professor Selso Frederico, director of the institute, to explain how the centre operates.

It is clear why our institute has been named after Astrogildo Pereira, one of the founders of the BCP, a well-known civic activist and a brilliant intellectual who fought on the side of the working class. His works display a flexible, innovative approach to the analysis of problems, a democratic spirit and a breadth of views. We strive to uphold these traditions and to use the experience available to us to tackle contemporary issues.

The door of the centre is open to all left intellectuals — both to well-known older scholars and, primarily, to the younger generation. We organise training courses, symposiums and public lectures. Events held to commemorate important revolutionary landmarks help us to establish contacts with the democratic quarters. For example, we have sponsored commemorative weeks to honour Karl Marx on the centenary of his death and to pay homage to Astrogildo Pereira. Taking part were prominent academic, political and civic figures representing different parties and organisations.

The idea of a research centre was advanced in the late 1970s. The dictatorship had not been crushed then, but the democratic movement was rising rapidly. The working class asserted its role by stepping up strikes, and trade unions were staging a comeback. After the promulgation of the amnesty bill, democratic leaders, including Communists, began to return home from exile. The BCP emerged from the underground, although it was still formerly outlawed. The situation called for the setting up of

legitimate agencies, for using all available channels enabling us to contact the masses and exert an influence on different social strata. That was how the Astrogildo Pereira Institute was born in 1982.

Our foremost current task is to draw up and supply the party with recommendations based on a scientific analysis of Brazilian realities. We are perfectly aware of the responsibilities inherent in such a mission: objective and subjective conditions are changing rapidly, and party policy should be adjusted just as promptly. Since 1985, when the ban on the BCP was lifted, our centre has been linked with the party not only ideologically but also organisationally. The BCP Central Committee is coordinating our work.

We are helping the party restore its contacts with the masses (these ties were weakened during the years of the dictatorship) by studying and examining problems that directly affect the people. We are working on ways of increasing the number of jobs, curbing unemployment, promoting and expanding the struggle of the trade unions, and leading the Brazilian economy out of the crisis.

Sorting out these issues is as difficult as defining one's approach to the rapidly changing national realities. We are gratified that many journalists, scholars and leaders of mass organisations are already looking to the documents and papers of our institute for answers. Everyone uses the information he gets from us as he sees fit, but this fact alone signifies recognition of our work and is proof that we are indeed involved in the shaping of public opinion.

We strive to be in the thick of events, to respond to the most topical problems and to be active in discussions. For example, the institute drew up an alternative draft Constitution of Brazil. This was used as the basis of an official BCP document which was distributed among members of parliament and welcomed by the public. We are also studying pressing issues of economic development, national culture and religion.

The headquarters of the institute, based in Rio de Janeiro, has launched an interesting project — recording the history of the party as it exists in the 'oral tradition'. Many documentary sources were lost under the dictatorship, and this imparts special significance to the reminiscences of veteran party members who survived many years of persecution and reprisals. For various personal reasons, not all of these people can write down what they remember. They simply talk about themselves, their comrades and events they witnessed or took part in. Staff members of the institute record these recollections on tape. Then they check and ascertain the facts and select those that are well-corroborated and generally important. Historical research includes another major project — a bibliography dealing with the record of the working class and democratic movements in Brazil.

Close cooperation with *Voz da Unidade*, the party newspaper, helps us to publicise the results of our work. The paper often carries articles prepared by our institute on economic, political and social issues, on drama, cinema, literature and aesthetics. Since 1986 we have been publishing *Novos Rumbos*, a 200-page theoretical quarterly with a circulation of 5,000. Many people in Brazil, and not only Communists,

regard it as one of the most interesting academic periodicals.

The work of the institute is a 'two-way street'. Aside from acquainting the democratic quarters with the views of the Brazilian Communists, we try to study and take into account everything that is new in the country's social sciences. We have set up branch offices in different states, although publicity and political education have so far remained their dominant forms of work: they sponsor workshops, meetings and discussions. We are also organising Marxist study groups on specific issues in collaboration with many different scholars. Recently, a group of this kind has been formed at the San Paulo Academy of Law, quite a conservative educational establishment. That was a major event both for the academy and for us.

Brazil's democratic structures and organisations are still in the making. So far we have not yet established permanent contacts with other progressive research centres. That is an objective for the future. Our international ties are also limited — we maintain relations with similar institutes in Cuba, Argentina and Mexico and want to exchange more articles and papers with other Latin American scholars. Meanwhile, the institute is tackling its foremost current task — that of helping the BCP elaborate and publicise its views on the most pressing problems of our society.

INFORMATION

The Communist Movement Today

Call For Unity

THE concentration of naval force by the US and some other NATO states in the Persian Gulf area threatens it with an armed conflict and interferes with efforts for universal peace and international security, says a joint statement by the representatives of the Egyptian, Jordanian, Iraqi, Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian communist parties, the National Liberation Front of Bahrain and the Communist Party of Saudi Arabia. Pursuing an aggressive policy, the US ignores all calls for easing tensions in the region and settling the dispute between Iraq and Iran in a peaceful way. Washington intends to exercise pressure on progressive Arab regimes, first and foremost on Syria, Libya and Democratic Yemen, to make them abandon their anti-imperialist course, to bring to nought the efforts of the Palestinian people and to perpetuate the Israeli occupation of the Arab lands.

The statement calls on all the peoples of the region and their patriotic forces to strengthen their unity, to cast aside differences of secondary importance and to promote solidarity in combating the US-Israeli onslaught.

USSR and Bulgaria Have Similar Aims

During their Moscow meeting Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and Todor Zhikov, General Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party Central Committee and Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, discussed problems of restructuring undertaken in the Soviet Union and Bulgaria and of furthering Soviet-Bulgarian cooperation.

Both sides noted the essential similarity of aims and tasks of the restructuring process in the USSR and Bulgaria, though in each country it had its own specific scale, rates of changes, and ways and means of achieving them. It was stressed unanimously that comradely, sincere relations between the CPSU and the BCP, the Soviet Union and Bulgaria are especially important at the present-day crucial stage. Both parties attach prime importance to that factor.

High Degree of Cooperation

Cooperation and close interaction between the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Polish United Workers' Party on the basis of socialist internationalism were reiterated during Erich Honecker's visit to Bulgaria and Wojciech Jaruzelski's visit to the German Democratic Republic.

The fraternal parties attach great importance to exchanges of experience in building socialism. Todor Zhikov and Erich Honecker spoke of intensified political, economic and cultural relations between Bulgaria and the GDR, contacts between their parliaments and governments, the Democratic Farmers' Party of Germany and the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union, and between state and public organisations.

At the Berlin meeting the two sides spoke in favour of expanding diverse working contacts at different levels, especially direct contacts between party organisations at enterprises. They gave a positive assessment of the degree of cooperation between the people's representatives and the friendly parties. Emphasis was laid during the talks on the importance of furthering exchanges in social sciences.

On the Basis of Principles

What happened in the past can be regarded as a negative experience but it would be better to have done without it altogether, Deng Xiaoping, Chairman of the CPC Central Advisory Commission, said greeting Hungarian leader Janos Kadar who visited Beijing after a 30-year long interval. During the talks held before the 13th CPC Congress started its work in October 1987 Chinese leader Zhao Ziyang stressed that the two nations had much in common, sought to carry out deep-going reforms, each proceeding from their specific conditions, and were ready to exchange experiences to speed up their progress.

Expressing high opinion of the Chinese Communists' persistence and political courage in coping with the problems facing their country, Janos Kadar confirmed the existence of accord between the two parties on the main issues determining the destinies of the world. Hungarian-Chinese

relations have again become what they should be in all the fields and this was done on the basis of principles, Janos Kadar stressed. They are developing in the spirit of equality and the atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, which enables the sides to state existing agreement of views and to discuss frankly problems on which their views differ.

On Independence and Responsibility

During their meeting in Belgrade Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Czechoslovak President, and Bruno Krunic, Chairman of the CC Presidium of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, exchanged opinion on the international workers' and progressive movements. The two sides stressed that inter-party ties and cooperation should develop on the principles of independence and non-interference in each other's affairs and the right of every party to pursue an independent and sovereign policy and to translate into life revolutionary strategy and tactics, proceeding from their socio-economic, political and national peculiarities and their responsibility to the working class and the people of their countries.

For the Peaceful Balkans

Nicolae Ceausescu, General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party, had a meeting in Bucharest with Harilaos Florakis, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece on a visit to Romania. The sides voiced their desire to develop and strengthen relations between the two parties. They emphasised that the key problems of our day was to stop the arms race and to go over to disarmament, first and foremost nuclear disarmament, and said it was also important to turn the Balkans into a zone of goodneighbourliness, peace and cooperation, free from foreign troops and military bases.

Unification Is Realistic

The General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party and the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain had talks in Madrid, focusing on the position of the left forces in Europe and the possible ways of stimulating them. During the meeting Alessandro Natta described the present situation of the European left forces, stressing the need for initiative that would promote conditions for their drawing closer together, while retaining the singularity of every one of its units. Gerardo Iglesias specified the position of the Communist Party of Spain on the eve of its congress, which is scheduled for February 1988 and is to discuss proposals for the unification of the Spanish communist movement. He said that the most difficult tasks had been accomplished and the unification of all the Spanish communist forces seemed a realistic affair.

WMR Introduces

Humberto Ramirez Cardenas,
First Secretary, Central Committee, Communist Party Of Bolivia

IN connection with Simon Reyes Rivera's election as Executive Secretary of the Bolivian Workers' Centre at the Seventh Congress of this leading trade union association, the extraordinary plenary meeting of the CPB Central Committee (July 1987) temporarily relieved him of his duties as First Secretary of the CPB Central Committee. Humberto Ramirez Cardenas was unanimously elected to that post.

Humberto Ramirez was born into a miner's family in 1925 and began his work as a miner too. He has been a trade union leader and Secretary for Organisation of the Trade Union Federation of Bolivian Miners. He has also been elected deputy Senator from Potosí Department.

Humberto Ramirez joined the CPB in 1952 and has served on the Political Commission and the Secretariat of the CPB Central Committee. He was appointed manager of the party newspaper *Unidad* in 1965 and imprisoned under military dictatorships (in 1967 and 1971).

Humberto Ramirez is well-known among the Bolivian working people and in the international communist movement. He represented the CPB at the Eighth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Second Conference of South American Communist Parties (Lima, 1986), the International Conference for the Peaceful Unification of Korea (Havana, 1986), and the 12th Congress of the Communist Party of Greece (1987).

In Brief

ECUADOR

The Left Broad Front of Ecuador (LBF), a coalition of the Communist, Popular Socialist and National Unity parties, has held its Third Congress under the motto 'For the Unity of the People and the Left Forces in the Struggle Against Oligarchy and Imperialism, for National and Social Liberation'. The forum was attended by more than 1,200 delegates from the LBF committees active in all the 20 provinces of the country. The congress reiterated the policy of alliance with the Popular Democratic Movement and other left organisations and also the decision to nominate joint candidates during the January 1988 elections. The congress appointed Comrade Efraim Alvares to the post of LBF chairman.

LUXEMBURG

Ecologists scored considerable success (10.4 per cent of votes) in the municipal elections held in the country's capital on October 11. The

Socialists, who lost 2 per cent of votes compared with the previous elections, remained in the lead with their 36.1 per cent of votes. They are followed by the Christian Democrats (34.6 per cent). The candidates of the Communist Party of Luxemburg received 3.3 per cent of votes, which is 0.3 per cent less than the corresponding figure at the previous elections.

PARAGUAY

The Central Committee of the Paraguayan Communist Party has had a plenary meeting in profoundly clandestine conditions. It mapped out the guidelines of communist strategy and tactics, reiterated the need for further strengthening contacts with the broad mass of the people and approved the short-term programme of struggle for the democratisation of the country. The PCP CC called on all the party members to start preparations for the Fourth Party Congress.

TURKEY

The Communist Party of Turkey and the Workers' Party of Turkey, two political organisations banned in the country and barred by the authorities from taking part in the elections, have had talks on their merger, a joint communique distributed by them in Brussels in October 1987 states. The talks led to the decision to set up a united political organisation named the United Communist Party of Turkey.

Newspaper Festivals

THE Belgian communist paper *Le Drapeau Rouge* has held its festival in the La Louviere, a steel workers' industrial centre. The pavilions and stands of the local federation of the Communist Party of Belgium and progressive Belgian organisations told of Communist actions in defence of the working people's rights, to struggle for peace and for removing the US nuclear missiles from the country. The participants discussed politics and other matters of common interest. The festival was attended by representatives of several fraternal Communist parties and papers and also the *World Marxist Review* journal.



The traditional annual festival of the Swiss Party of Labour and its press took place in Geneva. It culminated in a mass meeting addressed by the party General Secretary, Jan Spielmann. Speaking of problems of world politics and the nuclear danger looming over mankind, he voiced full support for the steps taken by the Soviet Union and other socialist

countries in the field of disarmament. The party, the speaker stressed, would resolutely back demands for better living conditions for the working people and for enhanced attention to environmental protection problems.



Hundreds of thousands of people attended the traditional festival of *Akahata*, the central paper published by the Japanese Communist Party. They took part in political discussions and attended lectures and concerts. There was a successful canvassing for signing the appeal to ban nuclear weapons put forward by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki public last year. The participants in the festival held in Tefa outside Tokyo were greeted by Konji Miyamoto, JCP CC Chairman.

exchange of views, discussion

Social Justice: Paramount Principle Of The New Society

An international symposium on 'Social Justice Under Socialism: Realities, Problems, Prospects' was held jointly by the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and *WMR* in Sobieszew, Poland. It was attended by Prof. **Tasho Pachev**, head of the sociology chair of the Karl Marx Higher School of Economics (Bulgarian Communist Party); **Antonio Diaz Ruiz**, representative on *WMR* (Communist Party of Cuba); Prof. **Miroslava Šolcova**, deputy director of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, CC CPCz (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia); Prof. **Harry Nick**, researcher of the Political Economy Institute, Academy of Social Sciences, CC SUPG (Socialist Unity Party of Germany); Prof. **Bela Feszi**, researcher of the Higher Party School of the CC HSWP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party); **Salem Said**, representative on *WMR* (Communist Party of Jordan); **Kim Zon Khen**, representative on *WMR* (Workers' Party of Korea); **Kinayatyn Zardychan**, researcher of the Institute of Social Sciences, CC MPRP (Mongolian People's Revolutionary

Party); **Jerzy Waszczuk**, representative on *WMR*; Prof. **Stanislaw Widderszpil**, head of the sociology chair of the PUWP Academy of Social Sciences; Prof. **Wladyslaw Zastawny**, researcher of the Institute of Political Economy of the PUWP Academy of Social Sciences; **Antoni Malinowski**, researcher of the Institute of Scientific Socialism and Party Theory of the PUWP Academy of Social Sciences; **Edward Pierwola**, researcher of the social policy chair of the PUWP Academy of Social Sciences; **Boleslaw Przywara**, head of the social policy chair of the PUWP Academy of Social Sciences; **Janusz Seczys**, staff member of the international department of the CC PUWP (Polish United Workers' Party); Prof. **Constantin Moisuc**, chair head of the Academy of Social Sciences, CC RCP (Romanian Communist Party); Prof. **Vadim Rogovin**, leading researcher of the Institute of Sociological Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences (Communist Party of the Soviet Union); **Ali Ileri**, representative on *WMR* (Communist Party of Turkey); **Duong Ngoc Ky**, representative on *WMR* (Communist Party of Vietnam).

Staff members of the embassy of the People's Republic of China in Poland, **Du Jiagi** and **Zhu Sufzian**, attended the symposium in the observer status.

The brief summary of the discussion below was prepared by *WMR* staff member Alexander Andronov.

THE founders of Marxism-Leninism scientifically proved that social justice is materialistic in nature and is rooted in class and historical circumstances. Every socio-economic formation fills the notion of social justice with its own economic, social, moral and political contents, determined by the development level of the productive forces and relations of production. "The justice of the Greeks and Romans held slavery to be just; the justice of the bourgeois of 1789 demanded the abolition of feudalism on the ground that it was unjust. For the Prussian Junker even the miserable District Ordinance is a violation of eternal justice," Engels wrote.¹

Every new epoch was objectively more progressive and broadened considerably the interpretation of social justice, made it more democratic and humanistic and brought it into greater harmony with common human values. However, justice will always be an ideological reflection of the fundamental interests of the dominant class. Taking issue with Russia's bourgeois liberals, Lenin noted that their conception of justice was the equality and freedom of commodity owners.²

The socialist system removes the major obstacles to the establishment of social justice by abolishing private ownership of the basic means of production, which become the property of the people, and by putting an end to exploitation, social oppression, the rule of the privileged minority, poverty and illiteracy of the mass of the population. Socialism creates preconditions for asserting equal rights to work and to remuneration depending on the work input, and people are provided with such benefits as free health care and education and a minimum housing rent, which makes all citizens feel socially secure and confident of their future. People are given practical opportunities to participate in the administration of

production, social and state affairs.

Socialism, however, has not yet attained justice in every respect if measured against the communist ideal. There are differentials between social groups, strata and individuals, inter alia, in the property status — quite noticeable though incomparably smaller than those under capitalism — and also in cultural and educational standards. Speakers at the symposium therefore characterised justice under socialism as the *maximum possible* degree of equality attainable today in the status of different social, class, occupational, territorial-communal and demographic groups of people. The degree of equality, moreover, is objectively preconditioned in each country by the level of the material, cultural and intellectual maturity of society.

Discussions covered a broad range of issues because every field of life is transformed under socialism to meet the requirements of social justice. This review deals with just one important aspect of the problem, justice in distributions.

To Each According to His Work

Distribution by labour is an objective law of the socialist economy and the chief principle of the distribution of income under socialism. However, speakers noted, it does not work automatically.

Pachev. It is far from easy to apply in practice the principle 'to each according to his work'. While in production the yardstick is cost, there is no such criterion in the non-production sphere. Pay by the hour is poorly related to the end results of work. Salaries are not always pegged to the competence levels of officials. Some of the manifestations of inequality are intrinsic to distribution by labour, and are fair. But others spring from secondary factors, and frequently are unfair.

Several speakers noted that in this context it was important closer to relate earnings to work inputs and to enhance the incentive value of pay in order to accelerate the socio-economic development of society while averting any substantial deviations from the principle of social justice.

Nick. It would be an illusion to believe that the two tasks can be implemented quickly and in full or in equal measure. Contradictions and tensions are bound to arise. What we have is, on the one hand, justice and, on the other, the need for high labour productivity; on the one hand, encouragement to the best producers and, on the other, mutual assistance.

A great deal here depends on the material resources available to one country or another. In the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, participants in the discussion noted, especially in countries with a medium or low economic development level, scarcity sometimes leads to levelling in distribution.

Duong Ngoc Ky. Vietnam has a contradiction between the low volume of the national product, on the one hand, and the need to encourage innovators and high-skilled workers and at the same time to provide all working people and their families with the minimum essential goods, on the other. In practice this necessitated levelling in distribution, which has persisted for a long time, both during the war and after it. We have now

narrowed it but we cannot yet give it up altogether. In our view, this practice is justified at a certain stage of the country's development.

Diaz Ruiz. In Cuba some of the basic foodstuffs, such as meat, fats and coffee, are rationed, and the practice has to be preserved for the time being because otherwise many people would be unable to afford them. We are working to abandon levelling but this will take time. People in the higher income bracket can buy food from what we call the parallel market. The public believes this practice to be justified at the present stage of our development.

Objective conditions for *a closer and more direct relationship of remuneration for labour and the end results of work* evolve along with the accumulation of national wealth (and in some countries with sizeable economic potentials such conditions exist already upon the establishment of the socialist system). But sometimes levelling is viewed by public opinion and practical economists as a truly socialist principle, while differentiation of incomes is derided as a deviation from that principle. Speakers noted that some countries had been trying for a long time to make wages perform social functions that they could not perform, which resulted in 'pay padding' to bring wages up to a socially acceptable level regardless of the workers' contribution. As a result of deficiencies in economic mechanisms, economic managers did not care about pay rates for various types of labour or about the size of the workforce with which to meet plan targets. Those practices were qualified by speakers as economically flawed and socially unfair.

Privileges in distribution were extended to basic industries in some countries to promote speedier economic growth and to strengthen economic independence. Wages in them were set higher than in other economic sectors to attract skilled specialists and workers. Should such privileges be retained?

Rogovin. Labour of the same kind is remunerated differently in different sectors of the Soviet economy. This practice dates back to the pre-war period; wages were high in heavy industry, not so high in light industry and low in agriculture, retailing and the services. These imbalances have to some extent survived till our time.

Widerszpil. The situation in Poland is similar. Why do various sectors pay different wages to workers of the same skills, educational standards and other qualifications? Why do young specialists earn less than low-skilled workers? Sometimes unjustified privileges result from arbitrary decisions. We think that they should be cancelled.

Speakers observed that along with the consolidation of the economic basis, the negative effects of differences between sectors in pay rates increasingly made themselves felt. They result in labour turnover and discourage workers from raising their skills, prompting them instead to seek employment in a 'rich' sector. People do not have their needs met as a result of the low prestige of work in retailing and the services. Hence the conclusion that unjustified wage differentials should be cancelled.

New problems are now posed by economic reforms introduced to intensify production, to promote receptiveness to achievements of scientific and technological progress, to broaden the economic

independence of enterprises and wider to involve the working people in management. The economic mechanisms began to be restructured in some countries, such as Hungary and the GDR, some 15 to 20 years ago whereas in others, among them the USSR, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam and Mongolia, these processes are just getting under way. Experience differs from one country to another but the main targets are to enhance the role of economic and material incentives to attain more efficient production and to make better use of the different forms of property under socialism.

Pachev. Every Bulgarian worker has the right to administer property and be a co-owner of property, but it has proved far from easy to have this right exercised in practice. At first, emphasis was laid on the role of the state in economic management. There were indubitable positive results but also some negative aspects, such as over-administration in the economy, the conversion of cooperatives into a kind of state property and constraints on democracy. Property became anonymous to some extent.

Now we have evolved and are translating into practice a concept of the state as the owner and the work collective as the master and manager of socialist property. Workers have become more active in the administration of production and their personal interest in the affairs of society has increased.

Nick. The practice in the GDR is somewhat different. There has been no tendency for the conversion of cooperatives into state ownership and we continue to strengthen them. The turning of cooperators into workers, I think, is coercive and harmful. Private property continues to play its part, especially in the crafts and retailing. Large state enterprises and integrated works enjoy considerable economic autonomy and their employees exercise their rights as equal citizens. We therefore do not think it necessary to emphasise group-owned property.

Pachev. In Bulgaria property also remains state rather than group-owned.

Moisuc. Romania's practice is much similar to that of Bulgaria. Enterprises have been turned over to work collectives, which are to manage rather than own them (they are not entitled to shut them down and dismantle them), and which also share with the management the right to use part of the profits. This is to say that the property of the entire people does not disappear or dissolve into group-owned property. As for alienation, the reason for it seems to be wrong mechanisms of economic management. This problem can be resolved through self-management. It also helps that in our country any worker can buy stock in his enterprise (to the value of up to 100,000 lei)³ and receive interest depending on the enterprise's performance.

Speakers noted that there seemed to be a series of stages between the property of the entire people and group-owned property at which the subjective factor grows in importance while the essence of the former is preserved. The exercise of the working people's rights can be guaranteed both through self-management and through improvements in centralised planning, which integrates the interests of the individual worker, the work collective and the state.

At the same time, it is quite correct under socialism further to develop and strengthen the cooperative and individual forms of property which, in addition to state-owned property, guarantee to the working people fair access to the means of production.

The extension of cost-accounting and the granting of broad rights to enterprises and work collectives emphasise factors shaping the incomes of the working people, specifically, the extent to which they can and must be related to the performance of enterprises.

Moisuc. Neither the minimum nor the maximum wage level is guaranteed in Romania any longer: earnings depend entirely on the enterprise's profits. One month the workers may earn four times their monthly average and another just one-third.

Question. Aren't these ups and downs the result of factors other than the workers' personal inputs, such as irregular supplies and mismanagement?

Moisuc. It is hapless managers who usually blame extraneous 'objective' causes. Yet with enterprises enjoying broad autonomy, it is the fault of the manager if his plant has no marketing outlets or raw materials stock, so he has to take the blame.

Question. The workers, too, take the consequences, don't they?

Moisuc. Four general meetings of workers are called every year; they have the authority to re-elect the general manager and the entire managerial personnel. If people like to have small pay, let them keep poor managers: if not — they will choose new ones.

Pachev. The extension of cost-accounting in Bulgaria has led to the introduction of the concept of the so-called graduated social and economic insecurity. Under it, socialism should manifest its humane nature first and foremost towards those who discharge their duty of worker conscientiously. And those who would like to live off others must be denied the sense of absolute security.

Question. Does this mean that they face even unemployment?

Pachev. No, it doesn't. The whole point is to do away with wage levelling. The state has no obligation to meet equally the needs of all people regardless of their work inputs.

Noting the economic efficiency of new managerial methods, some speakers, however, showed a degree of wariness towards them from the point of view of social justice. Won't broader autonomy for enterprises lead to unequal pay for equal work? Won't the gap between the material possibilities of work collectives grow, with some having, say, luxury holiday centres and others no recreational facilities at all? Won't social tensions arise between workers and managers? Won't this situation cause the spontaneous interplay of economic forces and the anarchic migration of labour? The discussion produced the conclusion that these problems

should be foreseen and studied already today and that a clear-cut answer should be given to each question. The need for new approaches was substantiated as well.

Said. To pay laggards as much as the best producers is unfair with regard not only to the latter but to the whole of society, because such levelling has an adverse effect on social development and results in stagnation. This holds true for sectoral priorities as well. If, say, agriculture is crucially important to society today, adequate funds should be appropriated for it and higher pay rates fixed. This seems unfair — but is entirely justified from the point of view of the country's interests and the need to develop it.

Zastawny. The conditions of cost-accounting are likely to give rise to some phenomena which will clash with the abstract ideas of justice. One factory, for instance, may pay less than another for the same work. Or one factory will have a recreational centre and another will not. It should be remembered, however, that these differences take shape against the background of social security relying on a broad system of guarantees provided by society and the overall situation is different in principle from that under capitalism, where everyone faces the threat of unemployment. Naturally, such differences should be mitigated wherever possible.

There is commonly known practice of such 'mitigation', speakers observed, one of the options being different approaches to the remuneration of individual and team work.

Nick. In the GDR only managers' earnings are directly and constantly dependent on the performance of their enterprises. A fair appreciation of workers' inputs is guaranteed by the system of pay rates, which takes account of skills and job complexity. The interests of individuals and the collective are harmonised through annual bonuses, the size of which depends on the performance of the entire enterprise.

The wide application of commodity-monetary relations and the law of value under socialism naturally sharpens the interest of all the social strata in the problem of the differentiation of incomes. It should be remembered here, speakers noted, that incomes are formed in the cooperative, the individual and sometimes even in the private sector of production as well as in the socialised one. Processes of spontaneous redistribution of earnings between different groups of the population, accumulation of personal property and bequest of it have an important part to play. Is it therefore reasonable to observe a rigorous ratio between minimum and maximum wages or put 'ceilings' on them? Should pay according to work be always commensurate with results? Different views were voiced and experiences related.

Moisuc. Romania has a strict ratio between the minimum and the maximum wage, one to five. To be able to earn more, the manager has to raise the earnings of his lower-paid workers.

Feszi. Some scientists consider earnings differentials in Hungary already too large, although the opposite views are voiced as well. Studies do not support the arguments of those who would like these differentials to grow further. Very few people have high incomes.

Pachev. We in Bulgaria have no arguments about ceilings on the incomes of the working people. If anyone earns his money by honest work, let him

get more than a minister.

Nick. But then there is the question, "What is 'honestly earned income'?" To what extent should it be equivalent to the results of one's work? Should anyone producing three times as much as the next man be paid three times as much? I don't think so. Only those differentials are justified which are sufficient to encourage adequate productivity. If double pay does the job in our case, triple pay will be economically irrational and socially unfair. Individual earnings can be altogether uncoupled from the volume of output. A worker operating an automatic machine-tool will make ten times as many nuts as his fellow using simple tools. However, if the skills and intensity of work of the former are lower than those of the latter, he should be paid less.

Rogovin. There are views in the Soviet Union, too, that no 'ceilings' should be placed on earnings. But will it be fair if a minister or the manager of a large production amalgamation who bears an immense burden of responsibility earns less than, say, an individual producer growing cucumbers in his vegetable garden?

The wage differentials in our state sector are three to one between the average and the minimum pay and ten to one between the maximum and the minimum pay. Differences between the living standards of individual families, however, are higher. Sample surveys of deposits in the savings banks also testify to this fact: in Latvia, for instance, more than half of the total savings are in just three per cent of the bank accounts. Such contrasts under socialism should give food for serious thought, I think.

Przywara. The minimum of subsistence and the so-called hazardous zone have been calculated in Poland on the basis of family budgets for about 15 years now. The 1986 minimum was 10,400 zloty per person per month. Altogether 21 per cent of the working class families, seven per cent of the farming families and 31 per cent of the pensioners lived below that line. The state takes special care about such people. About one-fifth of all families have two times the minimum, 20,000 zloty per person. The view that the maximum differential between per family member incomes should be one to five is gradually gaining prevalence.

Speakers pointed out that it was necessary to continue to perfect the mechanisms of distribution by labour to stimulate people to be active in production. It is important to bear in mind, too, that the effects of changes in the managerial mechanisms differ from one section of the population to another. Reforms introduced by a number of countries benefit people with high production potentials, while the losers are those who are unable or do not want to work well. The interests of some groups of the working people who cannot work as efficiently as others for reasons beyond their control — such as the ailing and the invalids — can be affected as well. Accordingly, a special approach should be taken to each of these groups.

The consistent application of the principle of distribution by labour will help increase the economic potentials of the socialist countries, strengthen morale and improve every aspect of social relations.

Better Uses for Social Funds

Under socialism, contributors to the discussion noted, the social consumption funds perform the function of social guarantees for the distribution of incomes. A part of them is used for social insurance (pensions, benefits, scholarships), and another part to meet the needs of the highest social priority (health care, education, part of the cultural services, subsidies for housing maintenance, pre-school child care, etc.).

It is largely thanks to the social consumption funds that everyone in socialist society is secure and protected. The working people are confident of their future and this confidence exerts an immense influence on relations between people and on the moral and psychological climate in society and promotes human dignity.

Speakers held to the view that those countries which have speedily to go over to a qualitatively new, intensive type of expanded socialist production should update the practice of the distribution of social consumption funds.

Pachev. Social consumption funds should contribute to a larger extent than before towards higher economic efficiency of production and mitigate wage differentials. Bulgaria distributes through its social consumption funds as much as 30 per cent of its national income. But is the effect on the national economy adequate? I suspect that it is below what it could have been.

Several speakers linked prospects for the enhancement of the economic role of social consumption funds to an expansion of their sectoral components, namely, the social and cultural development fund formed by production amalgamations and enterprises from their profits. It is one way of meeting to an ever greater extent the needs of workers in housing, pre-school child-care centres, etc. Economic performance will be improved, labour turnover reduced and the living standards of the entire population will eventually rise: this way of development is useful and fair from the point of view of social interests. Some participants in the symposium, however, took issue with that view because every country has its own specific circumstances, traditions and methods of improving the well-being of the working people.

Another important point made in the discussion was further progress in providing equal access for various categories of the population to benefits and free services. In principle, all the members of socialist society have equal rights to benefits and free services and exercise those rights to a large extent. There are some factors, however, which put constraints of access to them. In a number of countries, for instance, families receive on average equal subsidies from the social consumption funds — but sometimes large low-income families get less benefits in per capita terms. There still are differences in subsidies for health care, maintenance of housing and leave pay between factory and office workers, on the one hand, and farmworkers, on the other. In the USSR, for instance, payments and benefits from the social consumption funds constitute 24.2 per cent of the aggregate incomes of factory and office workers and 19.1 per cent of those of collective farmers. There are other problems as well.

Widerszpil. In the post-war years the Poles welcomed the measures taken by the state to advance young people from working class and peasant families by granting them education opportunities at all levels. This policy has been continued up to date but since the 1960s children of intellectuals have been gaining an edge because of differences in the quality of education and in teacher competence and very difficult university entrance exams. The acuteness of the problem has somewhat subsided by now — because the prestige of higher education has taken a plunge due to low wages paid to young specialists. This latter circumstance is a brake on the influx of gifted young people into social production. A distortion of the principle of social justice has thus detracted from economic efficiency.

Such phenomena show, speakers concluded, that social processes need to be constantly analysed from the point of view of concrete circumstances. Changing realities can mandate new phenomena in the practice of life and twist solutions which just recently were fair and justified.

The ruling parties continue to work to ensure that access to goods and services is equal for all citizens regardless of their place of residence.

Kim Zon Khen. With the establishment of the power of the people, the Workers' Party of Korea set out to obliterate distinctions between living standards in town and countryside and to erase differences between classes, as the central task of transformations in society. We had inherited a backward countryside, where the material and technical base is weaker and the cultural standards and political awareness of the population lower than in cities. People's Korea has launched three revolutions⁴ to overcome the ideological, technical and cultural underdevelopment of the countryside and to turn cooperative property into that of the whole people. To this end large-scale ideological and educational work is being conducted and irrigation, electrification, mechanisation and chemicalisation projects carried out. A great deal is being done to educate the mass of people and to improve health care, housing conditions and cultural and everyday services.

Nick. The living conditions in the GDR countryside approximate those in cities. It takes a mere 15 minutes to get from virtually any community to a city which has everything people need, i.e. shops, cultural centres, educational establishments and health care facilities. In this way differences between opportunities to get education, occupational training or access to cultural values have been minimised.

Šolcova. There are no backward regions, districts or villages in Czechoslovakia. Today's village is a modern community with high cultural standards, which can attract young people and specialists. People in cities and rural communities enjoy roughly equal benefits from the social consumption funds.

But in a number of countries, speakers noted, inequalities in the consumption of social services due to territorial factors persist.

Zardychan. The arats (livestock-breeding nomads) constitute a sizeable part of Mongolia's population. As communications are poorly developed, this lifestyle affects the cultural and living standards of the arats and restricts their access to social services, including those provided free of charge.

Rogovin. There still are territorial differentials in the USSR, too, due to the immense size of the country and climatic, geographical, ethnic and other differences. In the years of Soviet power the regions which were once backward in every respect have 'pulled themselves up' to the highly developed ones and the distinctions between them are no longer substantial, but they remain and the party, the state and the public keep them in the focus of attention. The gap between the peak and bottom figures of per capita consumption from the social funds (Estonia and Tajikistan), for instance, is around 100 per cent. The rural population is still behind the urban dwellers in having their needs met in all the social, cultural and everyday services.

The ruling parties in a number of socialist countries are drafting and implementing long-term programmes further to even out the living standards of the population geographically, to develop social infrastructures and to improve the services.

Participants in the symposium drew attention to occasional inconsistencies and lack of clear-cut criteria in the provision of paid and free services.

Pachev. In Bulgaria those who get free housing from the state find themselves in a better situation than those who have to save money for years to buy a flat. We should be thoughtful and careful in increasing subsidies.

Feszi. There are excesses in Hungary as well. There was a time when we used to grant benefits and payments from the social consumption funds on a scale that the national economy could not support. Then the market principles began to be applied on a larger scale than they should, say, in housing construction. We should thoroughly sort out the needs and priorities as regards a possible reduction of contributions from the state and at the same time assess the possible effects of paid services, especially on low-income young people at the time they start families and embark on work careers.

Przywara. Poland channels a relatively low portion of its national income into the social consumption funds, 19 to 20 per cent (the figure for other socialist countries is 28 to 30 per cent). As personal incomes grow, there arise ideas to commercialise some of the services which are now free. To my mind, even now people spend much on housing, health care and recreation.

Zastawny. The commercial principle — though it should not be viewed as a guideline — can be applied within certain limits, many Polish scientists believe. And this should only be done to promote rationalisation and to remove some deformities in that sphere.

Examples were cited to show that a number of socialist countries have already evolved and introduced in practice various forms and methods of resolving relevant problems.

Nick. The party and the state in the GDR base their policy on the assumption that health care, both medicines and treatment, should be free. The same principle applies to some other basic human needs.

Moisuc. In Romania free housing is given only to low-paid workers, while people in the higher income bracket have to buy it. A part of the

housing is allotted by enterprises, which extend privileges to some workers depending on their production performance.

Zardychan. It is too early for Mongolia to charge for such services, and the demographic situation plays a very important part here. As much as 80 per cent of our population are people under 35, and 52 per cent of young men and women are under 16. There is one wage-earner per four. In this situation virtually every family needs help from the state as regards equal access to basic social goods and services.

Relevant problems are being extensively discussed in socialist countries and the experience of all the fraternal countries come under examination. The objective potentialities of the state are explored and new proposals put forward to update earlier solutions so as better to match the new development level of society and meet the interests of various social groups.

'More Socialism'!

Participants in the symposium linked prospects for improvements in relations of distribution to the consistent implementation of the goals and tasks of the social policies formulated in the programmes of the ruling communist and workers' parties and in the resolutions of their latest congresses. Although their experiences are diverse and the ways mapped out by them to achieve these goals differ, the overall point is to resolve problems of two closely related categories. First, it is necessary to further the security of all the citizens on the basis of the continuous growth of their well-being and guarantees for meeting their more important needs, those in health care, education, housing, security in old age and in case of disability, assistance to families with children, especially to large families, and opportunities for cultural development and recreation. Second, there should be a more consistent application of the principle of distribution by labour in combination with the total and rational employment of the entire able-bodied population, the expansion of opportunities for the development and application of one's creative abilities, and changes in the contents of the labour of the mass categories of workers through reducing low-skilled, manual and especially arduous and dull labour.

Past experience shows, speakers noted, that the extent to which these tasks can be fulfilled depends in large measure on the correlation of economic and social priorities in the policies of parties and states and on the competence with which each country will take account and make use of the objective factors, historical and national specific circumstances and public opinion.

Socialism rejects capitalist methods of improving the efficiency of production (such as the threat of unemployment, exhausting job intensity and cuts in social spending). Priority is attached to care for man. The solution of social problems, however, should not hold back national economic growth or altogether plunge the economy into stagnation. Both factors should be rationally reconciled at every stage of development.

Widerszpil. The social sphere in Poland was for a long time considered a by-product of economic growth. An attempt made in the 1970s to balance out the two failed: the cart tilted to the other side.

Zastawny. We are still paying for those mistakes. You cannot consume more than you produce. Today, accumulations are growing and the state, naturally, can spend more to meet the needs of the working people.

Przywara. But we immediately hear objections like: "It is a romantic approach!" or "State-sponsored charity!"

Zastawny. This is true when social programmes are divorced from actual circumstances.

Nick. Since the Eighth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party in 1971, the GDR has been pursuing the goal of the unity of social and economic policies. The annual national income growth rate of 4.5 per cent achieved by us in the 1980s enables the dynamic improvement of the people's living standards. The incomes of the population keep growing, prices for basic consumer goods and everyday services, housing rents and transport fares are stable. Payments from the social consumption funds are steadily increasing as well.

Šolcova. The policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is aimed at accelerating national economic growth and simultaneously improving the living standards. Although the economic situation is difficult, we have sustained and even slightly increased consumption and raised wages and other incomes in the past few years. Retail prices for basic necessities have been kept on the whole stable and the state heavily subsidises food prices, low housing rents, public transport fares and some of the services.

Rogovin. The objective demands of the economic rationale and social justice have now been harmonised in the Soviet Union. Short-term gains in production at the expense of social needs and the allocation of funds for the social sphere on the 'leftover' principle led in the long term to losses on the scale of the entire national economy. In the past, social reforms were half-hearted and inconsistent and the negative tendencies in that field kept growing. It is now clear that the piled-up deformities cannot be removed through partial, piecemeal solutions. That is why we mean by perestroika a totality of socio-economic and political transformations which are revolutionary in nature and scope. The 27th CPSU Congress put forward the goal of formulating an energetic, coherent and viable social policy aimed at generating 'more socialism', more care for man. This goal is in harmony with the essence and historical objectives of the new society.

Speakers stressed that in most socialist countries interdependencies between the economy, science, technology, material well-being and the cultural standards of the mass of the population have become so all-pervading that a setback in any field has an immediate effect on other spheres. Society can extend benefits only in proportion to its economic potentialities, naturally, never permitting social guarantees to detract from incentive to work so as to preclude parasitism and the craving of some people to give society less in exchange for more. Meanwhile, there is an obvious dependence of economic efficiency on the fulfilment of social tasks. The growth of educational and cultural standards, health building and better working and living conditions — all have an effect on production performance.

An important step towards full-scale social justice will be taken when all the groups of the population achieve the consumption level which meets

reasonable human needs. With this goal in mind a number of countries are drawing up rational consumer budgets incorporating paid material benefits, adequate housing rates and the volume of free and subsidised services from the social consumption funds. These budgets reflect the social, corporate and individual ideas of various social groups as regards the level of reasonable human needs. Failure to meet them sometimes has a negative effect on the socio-political situation and morale.

Widerszpil. Studies of the Poles' view of their living standards show that the prevalent assessments are 'average' or 'below average'. Well-to-do families are not satisfied with the range of available goods and services, especially high-quality ones. People in the middle income bracket are trying at all costs to keep out of the 'hazardous zone', fearing to lose even what they have. The view of the lower-paid ones needs no comment, I think.

Some of the young people, especially those with higher education, think that employment in the state sector does not offer a sufficiently high standard of living. There are those who seek earnings on the side, which has a negative effect on their performance of their chief duties and also on their health. Others go over into the private sector or temporarily leave the country to seek work elsewhere; still others sacrifice some of their basic needs to resolve their problems, such as housing. The continuous inflation exacerbates the differentiation.

Every country, naturally, has its own concept of the size, structure and dynamics of the socialist mode of consumption. But each of them proceeds from the assumption that people should have their needs met through their own labour. Speakers at the symposium noted that both the ideals of consumer society, a craving for material values and accumulation of wealth, on the one hand, and levelling, uniformity and artificial constraints on consumption, on the other, are equally alien to socialism.

The growth of people's needs is an objective law of socialism. Speakers characterised as a priority task for a number of countries the balancing out of the solvent demand and the supply of goods and services. So far, the growth of cash incomes is not always backed with an appropriate expansion of the production of quality manufacturers and foodstuffs or with improvements in the services. As a result, people cannot spend their money as they would like to, the incentive of pay by labour founders, the main social principle of distribution becomes twisted and a brake is put on accelerated socio-economic development. Some of the fraternal communist parties came up at their latest congresses with major economic and organisational measures to rectify these imbalances, to reverse inflationary tendencies and to improve the living standards of the population.

It is planned, inter alia, to expand considerably the production of goods and services, to widen their range and to improve their quality. New ways of offering consumer goods and services are being devised to balance out supply and demand. The idea is to increase the sales of durables, printed matter and building materials, to expand travel, to encourage a larger contribution of the population to housing construction, to boost the building of cooperatives and summer cottages and the development of

personal out-of-town retreats and to allot plots for vegetable gardening and orchard growing to all people who wish to have them. A number of countries are considering ways of perfecting the mechanism of price formation with a view to approximating prices to the socially necessary costs and methods of strengthening the stability and purchasing power of their national currencies.

As socialist society develops, speakers said, any deviations from the norms of social justice become more and more intolerable. Consumerist sentiments and a craving for possessions push some people into corruption, bribe-taking, black-marketeering, parasitism and embezzlement. Such phenomena were condemned at the symposium.

Feszi. Excessively high incomes are often derived not from outstanding production performance but from social and economic difficulties, used by some individuals to overprice goods and services and to avoid taxation. The free-wheeling lifestyles of such individuals naturally are an irritant to public opinion. It is therefore important to weed out such phenomena, which are alien to socialism. Labour should be the main source of material wealth.

Widerszpil. The Poles are very sensitive to any abuse, especially on the part of people in positions of power.

Przywara. Such phenomena are a pathology under socialism.

Duong Ngoc Ky. The Vietnamese working people are ready to overcome difficulties and the consequences of economic underdevelopment. But they are outraged to see some officials, specifically those responsible for the distribution of manufactures and food, pursue selfish interests, or traders rich from smuggling wallow in luxury. These things are an infringement on the moral standards of our people and an insult to honest citizens.

Rogovin. Any attempt of individual officials to secure unlawful privileges is resolutely rebuffed in the Soviet Union today. The press extensively exposes all abuses. Recently a few hundred luxury villas, 'restricted hotels', out-of-town retreats and hunting lodges were uncovered in Kazakhstan; they stood unoccupied most of the time and were meant for the 'inner circle' of senior officials. All of them have now been converted to hospitals, outpatient clinics, children's resorts, Young Pioneer camps, dormitories and regular hotels. The opinion is widespread in our country that the time has come to take decisions on a nationwide scale to prevent anyone from enjoying unearned goods and services.

The ruling parties of socialist countries view the eradication of unearned income, which is alien to the nature of socialism, as an important political, socio-economic and educational task and seek to bring the full force of socialist laws and public opinion against those who parasitise on society. Speakers related that the USSR, Poland, Mongolia, Vietnam and Cuba had passed appropriate party and governmental resolutions and were improving the judicial and legal system and enhancing the role of public opinion to overcome such phenomena.

Most of the speakers linked the effective implementation of the principles of social justice to the modernisation of methods of state administration, the expansion of socialist democracy and an ever broader worker control over the measure of labour and that of consumption.

Widerszpil. It takes centralism to resolve strategic questions. Simultaneously, struggle should be waged against bureaucratic distortions, technocratism, voluntarism and everything else that constrains or saps the creative initiative of the mass of people. We in Poland believe that the management of socialist property and the distribution of resources should not be policed but supervised by the working people themselves.

Zardychan. The time has come in Mongolia, I think, to draw up new legislation and specify the provisions of the existing laws to define the rights and duties of the working people.

Moisuc. The mechanism of self-management put into effect in Romania gives people equal chances in access to power and in decision-making. These chances are not yet adequately used, however. A great deal is to be done to ensure that everyone masters his or her lawful rights and could exercise them in practice.

Diaz Ruiz. The Communist Party of Cuba set out in its Programme the task of broadening worker participation in administration and management, promoting the spirit of collectivism and harmonising personal interests with those of society.

Przywara. As socialist democracy unfolds, it will be more and more difficult simplistically to interpret the principles of justice in every country, which makes it necessary that all the plans and measures under social policies should be put to public debate and approved by the people.

It was noted in the discussion that the unity of centralism and democracy geographically manifests itself in the drafting, adoption and implementation of comprehensive and special programmes for the development of major social spheres. Measures are being evolved through nationwide discussions in a number of fraternal countries better to meet the people's needs in food, consumer goods, cultural, everyday and health care services, education, etc. The major means of further asserting social justice in the new society is to harmonise more and more effectively individual, collective and social interests through improving the scientific standards of state planning and forecasting in an organic relationship with the extension of democracy and self-management.

The symposium demonstrated that the problems of distribution currently are in the focus of attention of the ruling parties, scientific communities and the public in socialist countries, although approaches to them differ. Long-term goals and current tasks in that field are formulated on the basis of the principle of justice. Progress here varies due to the specific characteristics of the development of each country at the present stage but the long-term tendencies are rather similar. They include:

- *emphasis on labour as the source of the people's incomes;*
- *further evening out of opportunities for all citizens in access to goods and services;*
- *guarantees of social security for everyone.*

The road to total and all-embracing social justice is long and arduous, of course. It will most probably take the efforts, work and will of more than one generation to achieve the communist ideal through the comprehensive perfection of socialism. But even those indubitable social achievements which have been guaranteed to the working people in the fraternal

countries prompt the conclusion that by exercising its principle, 'Everything for man, everything for the good of man', socialism has set an example of the fairest organisation of society in existence.

All the participants shared the view formulated by **Bela Feszi** of Hungary:

The fulfilment of the ideas of social justice in the fraternal countries, especially the latest changes for the better in this respect, is eloquent proof that the abolition of capitalist exploitation, the democratisation of political institutions and improvements in the cultural and intellectual standards of the mass of people have added immensely to the economic security of the working people and improved their well-being. Practice has demonstrated that new society is able to do for everyone in practice what bourgeois society merely proclaims but actually guarantees just to the chosen few.

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, Vol. Two, pp. 365-366.

² See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 369.

³ The workers' average monthly pay in Romania is roughly 3,000 lei. — *Ed.*

⁴ See Yong Hyong Muk, 'Three Revolutions', *WMR*, No. 4, 1987.

viewpoints

"Everybody Wants To Know About Soviet Perestroika"

The title comes from a letter by Marco Rosso, a reader from Italy. This is by no means an exaggeration: the process of renewal in the Soviet Union has caused broad repercussions, it is being closely watched (as far as possible, of course) and provokes interest in different countries. This is borne out, among other things, by our mailbag. Responding to articles on perestroika in the USSR, readers voice their opinion and ask for an explanation of things they do not understand.

The international aspects of changes in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have already been discussed in some of our publications, among them the articles 'The Fresh Breeze of Reconstruction' by Mohammed Harmel, General Secretary of the Tunisian Communist Party (No. 9, 1987) and 'Anti-Communism Hit by Perestroika' by Horst Schmitt, chairman of the Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin (No. 10, 1987). Gilberto Vieira, General Secretary of the Colombian Communist Party, also touches upon the topic in an interview below.

The International Aspects Of Change

Gilberto Vieira — CC General
Secretary, Colombian Communist Party
(CCP)

ONE could safely say that the renovation of the Soviet society, begun after the April 1985 CC Plenary Meeting and approved by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, has had the unflagging attention of public and political circles in Colombia and throughout our entire region. These processes have been prominent not only in the progressive, but also in the big bourgeois press, and even in its most reactionary section. It is impossible to obscure the universal historical significance of Soviet perestroika.

The Communists and all other left-wing forces, on the one hand, and the conservative, right-wing circles, on the other, have naturally given different assessments of these processes.

Our party members are making a thorough study of the changes in the Soviet Union. We hold conferences and seminars with the participation of workers and other citizens to emphasise that the purpose of perestroika is to consolidate socialism, accelerate social progress in every sphere, and boldly overcome the shortcomings and failings in the economy, culture and the institutional structure.

We regard the Soviet Communists' self-criticism as evidence of their boldness and revolutionary dynamism. Our propagandists, who are engaged in a serious study of these matters, give ever more competent answers to the questions some of our comrades ask on various specific features of perestroika, notably the establishment of mixed enterprises with the participation of foreign capital. The visit of a CPSU delegation to Colombia at our party's invitation in the first half of this year did much to explain and popularise the ideas of perestroika.

Independent left-wing circles also highly appreciate the processes in the USSR. Let me note in this context the positive statements by the well-known critic Jaime Mejia Duque, Chairman of the Colombian Writers' Union. There was a wide response in Colombia and throughout the region to the friendly meeting between Mikhail Gorbachov and our compatriot, the outstanding writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

The attitudes of reactionaries and right-wing elements in our region are fairly mixed, although there is a common denominator as well: no one has denied the significance of the changes in the Soviet society. Fearful of their consequences, some tend to console themselves with the much-tattered idea of 'concessions to capitalism', while others have invented some high-flown terms like 'the philosophy of free enterprise in the USSR'. Some of these people have been thrown into confusion by the sustained Soviet initiatives for peace and détente, but recognise that these are important; there are others, however, who could do no better than claim that these initiatives are 'verbal tricks designed to dupe the Western democracies'.

The bourgeois press of the Latin American countries is quick to highlight

the critical statements in the Soviet press on shortcomings in socialist construction or unseemly behaviour by some persons in office, failing to see that in this way it shows Colombian readers the falsehood of its own claims that there is no freedom of the press in the Soviet Union. In short, perestroika and glasnost have thrown the reactionary circles and their mass media into confusion.

Some in the anti-imperialist movement think, however, that perestroika in the USSR signifies a departure from the principles of socialism. What is your view?

With every passing day, it is ever more obvious both to the Communists and to other forces of the anti-imperialist movement, I think, that the main goal of perestroika in the USSR is to speed up the all-round progress of the socialist society and further to develop its noble policy of peace.

The CPSU is working to raise the society to a higher stage and to impart to it a new quality on the basis of the values of socialism and general human values. Of exceptional importance, we feel, is that the party believes that the way lies through the development of democracy and broad involvement of all the working people in social affairs and in tackling the tasks of perestroika. That is one aspect of the matter.

It is only the hack writers of the bourgeois press in Colombia who have claimed that perestroika means abandonment of the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

A number of other communist parties are also known to have got down to renewing ideological and political positions. Is the need for it, perhaps, international, owing to definite factors which are common to the international communist movement?

One has to agree, of course, that the revival of creative Leninism is the ideological basis of perestroika. We are sure that this historically significant process will have a positive effect on the worldwide communist and revolutionary movement, primarily because it implies the shedding of every species of dogmatism and narrowly national approaches. But it is, naturally, the prerogative of each party to be responsible for an authentic analysis of the situation in its own country and of the prospects and concrete revolutionary tasks with reliance on the revitalised power of creative Leninism.

Do the economic and social transformations in the USSR and the further democratisation of its political system make socialism more attractive to working people in the capitalist world?

It is perfectly obvious that these transformations, the rapid democratisation of social institutions, and the whole content of perestroika in the USSR help existing socialism to have a more active influence on the working masses and so also help the communist parties' struggle. For Colombia it is an invaluable international contribution to the great cause of

unity of the proletarian and popular forces fighting for a democratic way out of the existing situation, an endeavour which in our country is embodied in the emergence of the Patriotic Alliance, the Working People's Unity Centre and in the successful work carried out by the coordinating centres of the agrarian and communal movement.

Perestroika in the foreign policy pursued by the CPSU and the Soviet state signifies a new stage in the history of the peace policy, which was inaugurated by the first decree of the October Revolution. Among the distinctive features of this stage are dynamic and persevering initiatives to halt the arms race, which is such a great blight on mankind, and to save civilisation from a suicidal thermonuclear war.

For the less developed countries, the solution of their grave problems depends in large measure on the success of the policy of peace, of which the Soviet Union is the standard-bearer and crucial factor. That is why we fully back the USSR's call: 'Disarmament for Development!'

The *WMR* August 1987 issue carried interviews with some communist press correspondents posted to Moscow on perestroika in the USSR. They also spoke of public response in different countries to the developments in the Soviet Union and of whether any doubts or misgivings had been voiced by Communists. The *Canadian Tribune* correspondent in Moscow offers his view of the matter.

The Old Stereotypes Have Been Shattered

Fred Weir — alternate member, CP Canada CC, Moscow correspondent of *Canadian Tribune*

I HAVE been in the USSR for about nine months, and my coverage of changes in the Soviet Union is just developing. I feel that the role of a Canadian Communist correspondent in Moscow is quite different from that of Soviet journalists. I write for a Canadian audience, and if I were to take some articles direct from the Soviet press and publish them in my paper, some of my readers would find it deeply disturbing. In fact, one of the most devastating techniques of the bourgeois press consists in taking items verbatim from the Soviet press and just publishing them. Because they are taken out of context — the violent criticism, the very harsh examination of things, denunciations of corruption and malfeasance, and so on — these things just printed straight, without comment, appear to vindicate or substantiate anti-Soviet stereotypes. So when writing about these changes I try very hard to stress the continuities, to emphasize that

there has been a succession of achievements under socialism. It is in this context that we can understand that the process of socialist development has been uneven, that there have been towering accomplishments but also serious mistakes and things that went wrong. The main thing I try to do is to stress that the restructuring is part of a process, a revolution that began in 1917 and continues to this day. It is not an attack on socialism or a departure from socialism that is occurring, but the filling of socialism with a new content.

It is plain that Canadian public opinion is now displaying a greater interest in the Soviet Union than at any time since the Second World War. The process of change in the USSR has already had a clear impact. From an analysis of the press, it seems to me that political columnists within the capitalist establishment are deliberately very pessimistic about perestroika. I read one commentary — I think it was by William Safire from *The New York Times*, who wrote that he had been polling US intelligence experts, people who are supposed to make an objective study of the Soviet Union, and they said there was a '30 per cent chance' that perestroika would fail utterly. I think there is a purposeful line, emanating from at least a section of the big media, that insists that perestroika and glasnost are not real. To a certain extent this may be wishful thinking on the part of some ruling circles and cold war ideologues, but it is also a calculated propaganda line intended to dampen any kind of public interest and enthusiasm.

On the other hand, I see the *Toronto Star*, the largest-circulation newspaper in Canada, devoting full pages to Soviet art shows and Soviet movies. The latter were never popular before in Canada, but are now playing in many cinemas to huge crowds.

Because of the domestic process of change in the USSR, and because of the stunning impact of Soviet peace proposals, many Canadians are reconsidering and revising their views about the USSR and the Soviet people. And I suspect that the Cold War Establishment is absolutely terrified of this happening. They remember the Second World War, when the majority of public opinion became very warm and very friendly toward the Soviet Union because it was a courageous, loyal and tenacious ally. The danger they now see is that through the current process public opinion will again become friendly to the Soviet Union, prejudice will evaporate, and all of the carefully constructed enemy-images will collapse. The Cold War is founded upon anti-Soviet stereotypes, and cannot survive without them.

Canadian Communists have also felt these changes in the popular mood. Our work in the peace movement has been facilitated not only as a result of the impressive list of Soviet peace proposals, but also due to the internal processes in the USSR. Our friends and those we work among increasingly regard us as sincere people who represent a progressive and dynamic trend in world history. The harsh debates of the past, over whether the so-called independent peace groups in the socialist countries should be recognised and supported, are almost forgotten in the present context.

No one would seriously argue that the domestic policies of a state have no relationship to its foreign policies. In this sense, the issue of human rights is not entirely unconnected with the struggle for peace. There were

many in the Canadian peace movement — some honest, some with hidden agendas — who in the past raised concern about existing socialism in ways that made conflict and division hard to avoid. We Communists responded by trying to build unity around the most crucial thing, the struggle for peace. But it should be admitted that we were sometimes put in difficult positions.

Now we see Soviet society consciously renovating itself, admitting and dealing with its own shortcomings. We also see the Soviet Union going onto the offensive with a comprehensive approach to human rights, and boldly relating this to the struggle for peace. This is immensely gratifying to those honest fighters for peace who have had doubts and criticisms in the past, and it severely undercuts those hostile elements who have used the human rights issue as a Trojan horse, to try to subvert the peace movement to their own ends. For Communists, it opens up new avenues for cooperation with the broad Left, and the scope for unity is greater.

Now, about the Canadian Communists' perception of perestroika. The first thing to note is that our Party has welcomed these positive new developments within existing socialism, and has assessed them very favourably. The leader of our Party, Comrade Kashtan, has led a series of discussions across the country among Party members, and with the general public, explaining and debating the meaning of these changes with them. He has also examined these questions in some depth, both in the *Canadian Tribune* and in the theoretical journal *Communist Viewpoint*, stressing that not only are the new directions healthy for the Soviet Union and tremendously hopeful for the international situation, but they will also have extremely positive effects in Canada and open the door for a new dialogue between our Party and other forces on the Left and in the trade union movement.

Based upon many personal letters I have received from readers of the *Tribune*, and conversations held during a recent trip back to Canada, there is an intense, almost overwhelming interest in perestroika and its implications for Canadian politics. I perceive two typical responses from individuals: on the one hand, there is tremendous enthusiasm for the changes underway in the USSR, and for the new spirit of openness. The process of democratisation has attracted particular attention at least partly because it is in this area that we have had some of the toughest debates in the past with others on the Canadian Left. On the other hand, there are a few people who seem disturbed by the changes, who find them unsettling.

I know that among readers of the *Tribune* are those who grew and sharpened their political wits in very different circumstances. There was the period of growing fascism and global war, followed by the Cold War when the United States threatened the USSR — and world peace — with its atomic monopoly. Under these conditions progressive people correctly understood that the Soviet Union had to be defended at all costs. Those events, those difficult struggles are ingrained in their memories. Now some of them may be slow to recognize that not only the international situation has changed, but domestic priorities within the Soviet Union have shifted as well. I know of no one who is opposed to perestroika, but there are some who seem disturbed and confused to see all kinds of things now being

said in the Soviet press, and criticisms put forward by Communists, that they always associated with anti-Soviet propaganda in the past. The key point, which may yet take some time to be fully understood by all of us, is that these changes are the consequence of the growing strength and confidence of socialism, and are not diversionary or a sign of weakness.

Some readers of the *Canadian Tribune* have written to me and they make a comparison between current processes in the USSR and those of thirty years ago. But I do not think that even in their own minds they believe in such a comparison. In 1956, and afterward, things were revealed — such as the subversion of democratic centralism in the party and mass abuses of socialist legality — which many people rightly found to be horrifying. What is being revealed in the present time is that there was a period of subjective, ineffective leadership which failed to take timely measures to transform the Soviet social and economic structure.

Some *Tribune* readers have expressed other apprehensions as well. They worry that the political and economic restructuring — for example, decentralisation of enterprises, and the increased share of economic activity being given to individual labour — could lead to a resurrection of petty-bourgeois mentality in the USSR. I myself had similar doubts when I recently visited one of the new cooperatives, a cooperative restaurant: they seemed very happy people, they had doubled their wages and they were providing a very good service to the community. But I looked at their time-sheets and realized that the workers were putting in 12-14 hours a day to accomplish this. I know that their efforts are entirely voluntary and self-regulated, but I simply do not accept that this is what socialism is for. People should not work that long and that hard. There may be other legitimate objections. I must say that I see points and questions of this type being raised in the Soviet media as well.

As a Communist, a journalist and an historian, I do not believe that revealing problems does any harm to the image of socialism. On principle I believe that truth and openness are the best policy in the long run. Indeed, what complicated our work in the past was the fact that there were really no Soviet problems and shortcomings that were unknown in the West. A great many thoughtful Canadians know from their reading of bourgeois journalists and serious scholars that there was corruption, that there were serious economic difficulties, that there were social problems. What caused difficulties for us was that the existence of such problems was routinely denied and evaded by Soviet propaganda. That gave bourgeois propagandists a monopoly on revealing these sides of Soviet reality, and they were able to exploit this to substantiate their condemnations of socialism as a system. We Communists were not only put into an indefensible position but, more importantly, we were not able to develop a clear vision of the way forward. Revealing and examining problems is only one step on the road to solving them. When you have decisively placed your feet on that road, the motion brings with it a surge of hope and inspiration. That is what we have now to a far greater degree than in the recent past.

If you are a Marxist, you are supposed to recognize realities and reflect them accurately in your analysis. You are supposed to be a defender of the

truth, not an apologist or someone who evades the issue by appealing to 'broad patterns of history'. I feel today that Soviet life has taught us some new lessons in applied Marxism. I feel very much engaged in my work as a journalist, not because I enjoy discussing problems in the USSR but because I can now put them fully into a picture of reality which speaks very well for socialism. In the historic competition with capitalism, socialism is beginning to decisively demonstrate that its advantages are superior and far more durable. This is the reality of our time, and it strengthens our ability to fight and argue as Communists and also, incidentally, our ability to properly defend the gains of existing socialism.

Glasnost: Bane Or Boon

I've learned that many sharply critical articles are published by the Soviet press nowadays. Isn't it shocking for Soviet readers accustomed to the positive presentation of Soviet life and to the assertions of the advantages of the socialist system? Wouldn't the frank admission of shortcomings lessen the appeal of socialist ideal in the eyes of the working people of other countries?

Johann Scharf, Switzerland

THE reader of our journal is right that growing glasnost in the USSR is accompanied by a sizable increase in the number of critical publications. The Soviet people are not unanimous in their attitude to this. Let me cite several letters recently published by *Pravda*, for which I write.

"There has been so much idle talk, glorification, campaigning and eye-washing in the past fifteen years or so, . . ." Vladimir Popov writes. "Some have now gone to the other extreme of criticising all and everything. As I can judge, the ratio of positive writing to the negative one is one to nine."

"I think," another reader, Nikolai Pavlov, writes, "that the processes of democratisation and perestroika adversely affect some people who seem to have been waiting for reckless criticism and denigration of everything under the sun without giving thought to whether it was in the interests of socialism and the Soviet Union."

As if in response to similar misgivings Victor Danilov offers a more sober appraisal: "The spread of glasnost is necessary not so much to denigrate somebody, especially those who are no longer with us, as to comprehend and grasp the vistas for future victories so that, seeing clearly the negative aspects of past developments, we won't allow them to be repeated in the future. Glasnost and democracy, an invaluable gain of the Soviet people, are instrumental in this."

To my mind, Edward Volsky, a reader from Moscow, aptly observed: "Perestroika is a revolution and hardly any revolution in human history had no enemies. They are quite real today and intend to stand their ground

to the last. It is the duty of all the mass media to tell us frankly and honestly who interferes with our progress and what is to be done to eliminate the obstacles in our way. This will enable us to cope with our tasks speedily."

Indeed, perestroika has many facets, is full of surprises and raises a host of new problems. This is inevitable in a momentous undertaking, such as the radical renovation of society. To overcome difficulties and contradictions and to cope with the arising problems, one cannot do without airing publicly the shortcomings. Criticism is a powerful instrument of perestroika.

This is in line with Leninist traditions. Lenin viewed the party's attitude to its own mistakes as a fundamental and most reliable criterion of its responsibility and as awareness of its duty to the working class and the mass of the working people. He stressed that "... publicity is a sword that itself heals the wounds it makes."¹

We have every reason to be proud of the results of the seventy-year-long development of the Soviet Union, in scope equalling ages. Nobody can deny our achievements. But we want socialism to become more perfect and dynamic, as it has colossal potential and opportunities, hitherto not fully realised. The stagnation processes of the 1970s and the early 1980s impeded progress. The course declared by the 27th CPSU Congress aims at doing away with these obstacles and at enabling socialism to make a full use of its historic advantages. Perestroika reflects the vitality of our society and the ability of the socialist system for self-improvement.

Socialism has long demonstrated its advantages in many fields. After all, it is a fact that in a short span of time the USSR has overcome backwardness, emerging as the second industrial power on the globe. Our science and culture have won worldwide recognition. We have no poverty among the mass of the people, no unemployment, illiteracy or national discrimination, which is something no other social formation could have accomplished so far. It is precisely the might of socialism rather than the 'US nuclear deterrence', as is claimed by Western propaganda, that has above all guaranteed mankind the unprecedented forty-year-long state of peace in Europe, the globe's most sensitive region.

Moreover, socialism is capable of achieving even greater things. We Soviet Communists admit that at the present stage our society has not attained the status of an example (as seen by Lenin) in all fields of life. But the goal is quite attainable. When the creative plans of the CPSU are fully implemented — which, we are convinced, will be accomplished — the force of attraction of new civilisation will grow immeasurably. But this is to take place, only provided perestroika does not stop halfway.

This is precisely why we need glasnost, criticism and courage to face the truth — in order not to stop midway nor rest assured for our accomplishments.

Vitaly Korionov
Pravda political analyst (USSR)

¹ V. I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p.45.

Spiritual Values of Socialism

Culture in the GDR: Unity And Diversity

Dr Hans-Joachim Hoffmann—
SUPG CC member, GDR Minister of
Culture

THE Eighth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (June 1971) became a turning point in the social life of the German Democratic Republic. It analysed and summed up the experience and results of the revolutionary process, which included the establishment of the anti-fascist democratic system after our people were freed from Hitler's tyranny and also the building of socialism in the subsequent period. The congress mapped out the strategy and tactics of building socialist society in the republic. The 'policy of the main task' as the guideline and principle of the party's activities in all social fields was for the first time outlined at that forum and endorsed at the subsequent congresses of 1976, 1981 and 1986.

This main task is "raising further the material and cultural standards of the people's life on the basis of high socialist production development rates, greater efficiency, scientific and technological progress and growing labour productivity".¹ The successful implementation of the adopted policy is also of decisive importance for *socialist culture*. On the one hand, dynamic economic growth constitutes a basis for profound changes in political, social, spiritual and cultural life. On the other, the indispensable prerequisites of economic growth and social progress in general are the socio-political system, science and education, socialist ideology and culture, health care and the country's defence.

In 1972, the SUPG Central Committee adopted a long-term programme of the development of culture and arts in the republic on the basis of the resolutions passed by the Eighth SUPG Congress. Its principles have remained fully in force to this day. It is primarily a matter of the broad and comprehensive nature of socialist culture. The concept includes the working people's social confidence, the culture of labour, relations among people and personal style of life and also the protection and transformation of the environment. The given concept would be incomplete without strengthening further the scientific world outlook of Marxism-Leninism and its dissemination among the people, without encouraging science and education or without preserving and assimilating the humanistic, democratic and revolutionary spiritual heritage. It also presupposes the effective use of the specific functions of literature and arts and the free development of all abilities and gifts (especially among the working class) for folk arts. These provisions have been formalised in the Programme of

Dr Hans-Joachim Hoffmann (b. 1929) comes from a worker's family. He started his career as an electrician. In 1956 he graduated from the Higher Party School under the SUPG CC. He has held senior party posts since 1948. He headed an SUPG CC department from 1971 to 1973 and has been the GDR Minister of Culture since 1973. He has been party member since 1945 and was elected member of the SUPG Central Committee in 1976.

the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and in the GDR Constitution.

Cultural policy is therefore an *inalienable component of social life and state management* and it is up to all the citizens to translate it into life consistently. The Ninth SUPG Congress unanimously resolved steadily to pursue the course which is being implemented in specific and constantly changing internal and external conditions. That is why, drawing on the accomplishments already made, the congress set qualitatively new tasks for socialist culture and opened up fresh opportunities for its development and for expanding its influence.

We, naturally, have the pressing need to save resources. Our economic difficulties caused by persistent tensions in international relations are well-known. Nonetheless, the successful implementation of the main task strengthened considerably the *economic, material and technological base of culture and added to the spiritual requirements of the population*. This was, among other things, promoted by the implementation of the housing construction programme, the core of our social policy which envisages that the republic would resolve the housing problem as a social one by 1990. More comfortable flats means more room for books, beautiful paintings, ceramic ware, record players and tape recorders, for engaging in hobbies and friendly get-togethers. We have never saved on people's spiritual needs. On the contrary, the past period saw the building of thousands of community centres, youth clubs and hundreds of shops selling works of art, the choice of records and cassettes grew manyfold, library stocks and book editions expanded and state workshops were set up to take care of the monuments of art and architecture. The number of people engaged in cultural services and their wage funds rose significantly.

The 1981-1985 five-year plan envisaged a 1,200 million Mark investment, the biggest appropriation for culture so far in the GDR's history. In the period between the Eighth and the Eleventh congresses many major projects were reconstructed or renovated. Historical buildings, monuments and sculptures restored in Berlin, among them works by celebrated architects and sculptors Schluter, Knobelsdorff, Schinkel and Langhans, Rauch and Schadow, now form a harmonious ensemble with impressive residential areas and attractive parks and lawns. In general, a new environment has been created, giving the city a modern image. The division into 'rich' and 'poor' quarters has long become a thing of the past.

A cultured way of life has become an inalienable human right. Of course, other needs appear, which we so far cannot meet, but at the same time a field of high creative intensity comes into being, unceasingly generating ideas and impulses. The 1986-1990 five-year plan again envisions large-scale construction projects: for instance, the reconstruction of the museum quarter in Berlin and of Dresden and Schwerin castles will call for greater efforts than the restoration of the Semper Opera and the Schauspielhaus Theatre put together.

Fresh opportunities for enhancing the influence of culture, the 11th SUPG Congress pointed out, stem from the need to combine consciously and firmly scientific and technological progress with the advantages of socialism. It is impossible to score success in the scientific and

technological revolution or to master key technologies to the extent necessary for confident growth without the high intellectual level of all social classes and strata.

"The socialist society is even richer if the individuality of its members is developed ever fuller," Erich Honecker stated at the 11th party congress,² which confirmed our accomplishments made in this direction. The results are as follows. Ten-year schooling is the general educational level in the GDR. Already last year more than 85 per cent of the working people in the country had complete vocational training and skilled workers formed the bulk of those employed in production. The share of this class of workers, as well as foremen and cadres with higher and specialised education, is to rise to 90 per cent by 1990.

In the conditions of the scientific and technological revolution, the working class, as before, remains the chief political and social force. It faces new, previously unknown historical tasks, tests and prospects. It is impossible to perfect the economy, science, technology and culture in a society without the broad and comprehensive realisation of all its potentialities. For this reason a *steady rise in the cultural standards of the working class has been and continues to be a central goal* of the policy pursued in this field. The effectiveness and quality of our influence will primarily depend on how the intellectual needs of the working people are stimulated and satisfied and how the spiritual life and art promote the development of the personality.

Trade unions, the Youth League, public organisations and government bodies are carrying out diverse, purposeful and coordinated work aimed at establishing the *socialist culture of labour*. We mean by this a combined interaction of the material, technical, technological, production, organisational, spiritual, social, socio-hygienic, aesthetical and other factors providing the people with the working conditions worthy of their human nature.

The culture of labour presupposes a sound production environment and an end to hard manual labour, noise, dust and heat conditions, in other words, to all that makes production activities a drudgery and causes damage to man's physical and psychological state.

A reliable means of raising the working people's culture proved to be the socialist competition drive and the closely related movement under the motto 'Work, Study and Live Socialist Style'. This movement, started in 1959, now encompasses nearly 90 per cent of all work collectives. Their pledges invariably include plans for raising the cultural and educational standards and their diverse demands — both individual and collective — pertain to the quality of labour, vocational training, general educational problems, acquaintance with the phenomena of social and spiritual life and works of art and going in for sports and folk art.

Reviews of scientific, technical and artistic activities among work collectives and forums to exchange experience have become veritable events in the life of the working class, cooperative farmers and other working people. They are held as popular socialist festivals and once in two years a republican festival is organised in one of the districts in turn. It is attended by the best performing groups and soloists (primarily amateurs)

from factories, plants, farming cooperatives, National People's Army units and schools. The working people's festivals are increasingly attracting the attention inside and outside the country. For example, the 1974 festival was attended by about 18,000 amateur and professional performers, who attracted an audience of 1,650,000; a similar forum in the Magdeburg district in 1986 drew 25,000 folk art performers, who gave 750 concerts attended by more than 3 million spectators.

Scientific and technological accomplishments provoke in people the need to develop their *personal interests and inclinations* through leisure, engaging in crafts, scientific and technical work and arts both in an organised way and on their own. Growing numbers of people are showing interest in protecting the environment, studying the history of cities and districts, preserving old monuments, practices and customs, organising various festivals and promoting a healthy way of life.

Amateur creative activities are generously and in every form encouraged by society through clubs, community centres, enterprises, farming cooperatives, offices and public organisations. Along with professional theatres, the country now has 204 amateur companies with 4,000 actors. Amateurs are also active in music. There are 2,370 choirs, more than 4,000 amateur brass and folk orchestras and about 5,000 amateur dance and rock groups. All in all we had approximately 30,000 folk art groups and clubs with a membership of 1.6 million by early 1987.

Society also offers citizens considerable opportunities in other fields. For example, one can master various fields of knowledge in 110 scientific associations. Contribution to committees for holding local festivals, say, harvest festivities or celebrations of memorable events is always met with understanding and respect.

The working people's participation in preserving their historical heritage is especially useful. Several years ago a Society for the Protection of Relics and Old Monuments was formed within the framework of the GDR Kulturbund, a mass cultural organisation active since 1945. About 5,000 of its members, together with voluntary assistants representing all classes and walks of life, take part in finding, registering and describing material relics of the past, helping to preserve and popularise them. A campaign is mounting to preserve better the cities' historical centres, parks and individual monuments and memorials, organised by the GDR National Front committees under the motto 'Improve our Cities and Communities'. These diversified mass activities are a manifestation of mature socialist democracy. Attendance at our 684 museums is also constantly growing — from 17 million in 1970 to 34 million today.

Another noteworthy trend is the growing need of the people for *communication and recreation*. In 1986 more than 80 million people in the republic attended entertainment shows and more than 120 million participated in socio-political functions. This need is met, inter alia, by 9,300 clubs and cultural centres. Desire to spend their leisure in company is especially pronounced among the younger generation. At present there are over 10,000 youth clubs, that is two times as many as in 1980, and they are annually visited by more than 30 million people. The housing construction programme envisages to build this year 26 youth clubs with a seating

capacity of 3,600 in towns and 47 such clubs with a seating capacity of 3,300 in rural areas. When judging the figures quoted here, one should remember that our country is relatively small and has a population of about 17 million.

Various arts and the people's contact with them have become a solid component of the socialist way of life and rational leisure. The contribution artists make to the development of the personality and to the interpretation of the main problems of our times is indispensable.

The GDR now has 65 state theatres. With its 600 spectators per 1,000 residents, the republic is front-ranking in the world in the number of theatre-goers. We also have 88 professional state orchestras, whose concerts are annually attended on average by 3.5 million people. Moreover, our republic can be called a 'reading nation': according to statistics, it is one of the world's leaders, putting out nine books per capita a year.

Appreciation of art is increasingly becoming a *decisive element of everyday reality and the socialist way of life*. It is a result, among other things, of fully mutual trust and comradely cooperation of the working class guided by its Marxist-Leninist party with the socialist state agencies and the art people. This alliance has its traditions and has stood the test of time since our republic came into being.

We attach great importance to preserving and spreading the heritage of humanistic art. The emergence and progress of socialist national culture have always presupposed this sort of activity, together with the assimilation (both creative and critical) of all the humanistic and progressive cultural values of the past. No sound and stable development can be ensured without deep and strong roots in history, first and foremost in progressive traditions: genuine patriotism and internationalism are unthinkable without this link. We can justly state today that the cultural achievements and treasures of the past have been placed within the reach of the broadest mass of our people.

Exceptionally much attention is paid in the GDR to studying the anti-fascist and socialist cultural heritage and also to the traditions connected with the establishment and development of our state of workers and farmers. The Academy of Arts is operating effectively. It has a valuable stock of opulent material of this century, including the archives and collections of works of 160 writers, poets, playwrights and artists.

There are impressive plans afoot. The latest peak of activity was celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, whereas 1989 will mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Muntzer and the 200th anniversary of the beginning of the Great French Revolution.

To preserve, maintain and popularise cultural heritage are the tasks that can hardly be taken care of in one campaign. They call for *long-term planning and the close cooperation* of state bodies, parties and public forces, especially trade unions, the Kulturbund and the Free German Youth. The work is coordinated and guided by the GDR National Council for the Protection and Dissemination of the German Cultural Heritage formed under the Council of Ministers in 1980. The Minister of Culture is

its chairman.

Multiform socialist national culture serves to strengthen friendship and cooperation between nations and respect for the humanistic values, past and present, of all countries. *Patriotism of our culture is organically linked with its unshakable internationalism.* Chauvinism and nationalism, racism and discrimination are alien to us. We reject them with repugnance wherever we encounter them. We seek to facilitate acquaintance with other people's ways of life, which promotes mutual understanding and spiritual enrichment of each other. For this reason we maintain cultural relations with nearly all the countries in the world in most diverse forms from individual short-term contacts to broad long-term agreements at the state level.

The GDR has carried out quite a few important undertakings including representative exhibitions abroad. Mention should be made of Days of Soviet Culture in the GDR on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the victory over Nazism, the 1978 exhibition 'Thracian Gold' from Bulgaria, 'Vienna Porcelain' from Austria, the Norwegian exhibition of Munch, the French exhibition 'From Courbet to Cézanne' and the Paul Klee exhibition from Switzerland.

In the past few years on average from 60 to 80 major performing companies, music and theatre groups, about a thousand soloists, approximately up to 200 variety groups and about 450 performers from the GDR went on tours abroad. In our turn we received from 80 to 90 major companies, several hundreds of soloists and variety groups, giving preference to the representatives of the socialist community countries.

Apart from usual forms of cultural exchanges, we practise direct contacts and organise joint undertakings. Ever more efforts are being devoted to the *multilateral interaction of the fraternal socialist states*. Cooperation with the Soviet Union is, as before, central to it. The 27th CPSU Congress and the 11th SUPG Congress have shown that we are unswervingly upholding common principles, which envisage the further strengthening of socialism and its influence on the world, bearing in mind the historically conditioned peculiarities of the two countries' development. A Parity Government Commission on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Between the GDR and the USSR has been formed with the aim of primarily working out long-term tasks and strategic trends for our interaction to have a new dimension.

Our cultural relations with other states are based on both government agreements and commercial deals. For example, after long negotiations a cultural agreement has been concluded as a result of the implementation of the Treaty on the Fundamentals of Relations Between the GDR and the FRG. The development of contacts with the Federal Republic is a component of our general course of maintaining relations with the capitalist countries in this field. Our policy rests on the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. Cultural cooperation between the GDR and the FRG is in no way 'inner German relations' but ties between two states, sovereign and independent from each other as determined by international law.

For a long time now we have been maintaining fruitful cultural contacts

with many Asian, African and Latin American states, learning a lot in so doing. The broader opportunities we have to get to know what has heretofore been unknown or little known to us in the art of other peoples, the richer our spiritual life and our art become. UNESCO has an important role to play in the GDR's international contacts. The republic is active in UNESCO undertakings, defends the organisation from attacks and in every way supports its goals and practical activities.

By developing relations with other countries on stable and clear-cut principles, we have succeeded in steadily deepening and enriching the internationalist content of our republic's cultural life.

In its diversity socialist culture in the GDR is pervaded by the spirit of humanism, optimism and confidence in the future. It is involved in the fundamental confrontation of our time, the epoch of the transition of mankind from capitalism to the new social system ushered in by the Great October Socialist Revolution more than 70 years ago.

¹ *Protokoll der Verhandlungen des VIII Parteitages der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Berlin, 1971, p. 61.

² *Protokoll des XI Parteitages der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Berlin, 1986, p. 75.

Bolivian Trade Unions: The Class Way

David Moraes — Political Commission member, Central Committee, Communist Party of Bolivia (CPB)

THE Bolivian Labour Centre (BLC), a nationwide trade union association whose membership covers large sections of workers, features prominently in the history of our people's struggle for democracy and social progress, against imperialism and the oligarchy. It carries great weight in the nation's politics and is a large militant organisation comprising a broad spectrum of left forces. Now that 35 years have elapsed since the establishment of the centre, an event has occurred marking the advent of a new stage in the history of both the BLC and of the entire trade union and labour movement in Bolivia.

In July 1987 the Seventh Congress of the BLC elected a new National Leadership. The post of Executive Secretary, vacated by Juan Lechin Oquendo, was filled by Simon Reyes Rivera, a well-known leader of mineworkers and, at the time of the election, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolivia. The decisions of the July forum were a response to the need to overcome "an obsolete style of leadership, a narrow-minded, populist mentality whose authoritarian and sectarian methods were at odds with the increased maturity and consciousness of the working people".¹

The approval of strategic and tactical guidelines articulated in the Political Declaration and other resolutions, the defeat of Lechin's faction and the collapse of the anti-communist policies pursued by the opportunists are not an accident but a logical development rooted in the steady rise of the Bolivian labour movement. These momentous changes come at a time when the country is going through a difficult period: the trade unions will have to fight unswervingly against the right-wing oligarchic regime, an agent of imperialist exploitation and national subjugation.

The Working Class and the Trade Unions

The working class accounts for about 20 per cent of Bolivia's economically active population. Its core is made up of miners (whose level of class consciousness is particularly high), as well as factory, oil, transport, printing, steel and construction workers. The exploited part of the population also includes numerous hired workers in the crafts, public utilities and retail trade.

The country's specialisation in mining has led to a high concentration of mineworkers in cities and towns. The same is true of workers in the textile, footwear, sugar-producing and some other industries. Given the nation's total of 35,000 factory workers, 27,000 are employed at 161 out of the almost 2,000 factories.

Large numbers of workers have jobs at government-run enterprises, and this must be taken into account in defending the state sector and fighting for democratic change.

Some of the miners and construction and factory workers are employed at numerous small mines and factories, which makes their unionisation difficult and impedes the growth of their class consciousness.

Our trade union movement has traversed a long and arduous path. The first labour organisations emerged back in the 1920s. A popular uprising triumphed in the country in 1952, and the power of the traditional feudal-bourgeois oligarchy was overthrown. Founded in 1950, the Communist Party of Bolivia took part in the armed struggle. The masses succeeded in their drive to have an agrarian reform and to nationalise the mining industry. The socio-economic structure of Bolivia was changed substantially as a result. However, power passed to the reformist Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (NRM) whose vacillating and defeatist policy paralysed the revolutionary process. The victories that were won, as well as the opportunities that remained unrealised highlighted the degree of maturity the popular masses and the labour movement displayed at the time.

With the establishment in April 1952, as soon as the revolution triumphed, of the Bolivian Labour Centre as the single supreme body of the entire trade union movement in urban and rural areas, a determined struggle began for its independence of bourgeois reformism and against ideological and political pressure, corruption and government reprisals and provocations. Operating within mass organisations, the Communists worked for understanding and unity with the rank and file of the ruling Nationalist Revolutionary Movement and conducted ideological and

organisational activities against reactionary plots and Trotskyite forays. Promotion of trade union democracy and a higher level of class consciousness among workers were our objectives. As a result, the anti-national and anti-trade union policy of the national reformists was fully exposed for what it really was. The Trade Union Federation of Bolivian Mineworkers (TUFBM) and the Bolivian Labour Centre proved that they were genuine champions of the masses.

In the 1970s the unions spearheaded popular action against reactionary coups and fascist military dictatorships supported by right-wingers and the drug traffickers' mafia. This struggle gave rise to Democratic Popular Unity (DPU) which included the CPB and other democratic political parties representing the working class, the peasants, the middle strata and other sections of the population.

In 1982 this left coalition formed its own government on which the Communist Party of Bolivia was represented too.² But the democratic process was defeated by the large-scale conspiracy of the local reactionaries and imperialists and due to the vacillations and mistakes of the government itself. Certain trade union factions which followed the leftist-opportunist tactics of Lechin also played into the hands of the enemies of the working people. Let us consider the lessons we should draw from these recent developments.

The BLC and Politics

Past events have confirmed once again that "Bolivia's trade unions are going beyond the confines of traditional syndicalism with its economic demands. They introduce themselves vigorously into the political struggle, often acting as a decisive factor".³ This is explained by the distinctly Bolivian socio-economic conditions, by the growing consciousness of the working class, its experience and militant traditions, and by the broad composition of the labour headquarters which expresses the aspirations of the people.

The strength of all mass action lies in the organisational unity of the Bolivian working people — from local unions to the central leadership. The objectives of mass action — democracy, national liberation and socialism — are clearly defined in the basic documents of the BLC, the TUFBM and other organisations.

Even before the Seventh Congress, the trade union movement in many cases effectively combined economic demands with democratic and anti-imperialist slogans in its struggle. But during difficult periods, when the main emphasis was on defending the workers' material conditions and democratic gains, and when the alignment of forces at the leadership level changed in favour of sectarian elements, contradictions developed between the principles proclaimed and practical action. At such junctures, subjectivist assessments of the possibilities of meeting specific demands led to defeats, and the reactionaries immediately seized upon mistakes in the movement's attitude to certain issues of the democratic process.

The capitalist, dependent and backward nature of Bolivian society, the economic crisis, the policies and the ideological pressure of the oligarchy

and imperialism, as well as the motley social composition of the BLC gave rise to contradictions and were reflected in acute political and ideological clashes between the supporters of class-based trade unions on the one hand and right-wing and 'left-wing' opportunists on the other. In the course of this struggle, Lechin's scheming tactics merged with the action taken both by the ultra-left elements and by the remnants of the 'yellow unions' and other right-wing currents.

The ultra-leftists, particularly the Trotskyites and the anarcho-syndicalists who have no influence on the masses, have been thinking up all sorts of pseudo-theoretical constructs utterly divorced from reality. To this day, they overrate the significance of the trade unions and virtually ignore the role of the working class party. Sectarian and subjectivist demagoguery is used in an attempt to isolate the working class and to wreck the vitally important policy of alliances. By distorting the strategic goals of the revolutionary struggle and juggling economic slogans, these forces are trying to slow down the democratic processes born of popular action. Caught red-handed, these groups are expelled time and again from different organisations. But they keep dodging and sidestepping in an effort to secure leading trade union posts so as to keep their 'party' afloat.

Finally, we must admit that the development of the trade union movement has also been affected by the mistakes and weaknesses of the political vanguard of the working class and by the passivity of other popular, democratic quarters. This hampered joint action and impeded the establishment of a new progressive alliance.

Naturally, despite all these difficulties, one can neither deny the certain gains made by the trade union movement nor regard them as accidental. They were secured by joint action, with the help of correct slogans and methods of struggle which were advanced by the masses themselves and by their honest leaders committed to the class-based positions. In order to consolidate these gains, we need *a sufficiently high level of class consciousness, a responsible attitude on the part of the political forces striving to defend the interests of the working people, and above all, unflagging efforts by the Communists.*

The CPB's close links with factory workers and miners, as well as its growing influence with the working people are felt constantly in the course of all action undertaken by the masses. By steadily pursuing a *class-based course* in the trade union movement, Communist Party members help it to develop well-articulated, ideological positions and to define the objectives of the struggle. They uphold unity and trade union democracy and work for a representative character of the governing bodies of mass organisations. However, we are aware that the convergence of scientific socialism with the working class movement is a continuous process which should grow ever deeper. That is essential for overcoming deviations, for securing an alignment of forces facing which the right-wing oligarchic government will no longer be able to reverse the democratic processes born of popular action. Then advancement to new objectives of the liberation struggle will become possible.

The Communist Party of Bolivia maintains that *the trade unions cannot replace the party*. No doubt, they are an historically necessary form of

working class organisation. Their contribution to progressive change cannot be denied. Nonetheless, their very nature and their heterogeneous social composition prevent them from leading the revolutionary struggle or taking political power. This mission is to be accomplished by the working class party in alliance with other democratic, anti-imperialist forces. As Lenin said, the party is an association of a kind that differs from the trade unions. Expressing working class interests at different levels, both these organisations should maintain relations of brotherhood and cooperation.

Repulsing the Class Adversary

New tasks are arising before Bolivia's democratic forces. With the advent in 1985 of a government led by Victor Paz Estenssoro, head of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement, a period of economic, social and political reversal set in. Underlying the programme taken up by the NRM in alliance with the Nationalist Democratic Action (NDA) party was a new economic policy expressing the interests of the oligarchy and imperialism.

The decree setting forth the fundamentals of this official policy was prepared by the US adviser Jeffrey Sachs. Drawn up in accordance with International Monetary Fund instructions, it is a strategy for a capitalist restructuring of the country detrimental to the interests of the working class and of the entire people and to national sovereignty. Among other things, it stipulates that Bolivia should forgo its legitimate right to develop its own industry and that it should pay back its external debt and abolish the state sector. Efforts to dismantle the latter are practically under way: there is the 'decentralisation' of the Bolivian Mining Corporation and the dissolution of the Bolivian Development Corporation.

This anti-national decree was followed by several regulations concerning the financial and fiscal systems and social security. This process reflects the convergence of the interests represented by the narcomafia and the political quarters backed by the oligarchic groups.

The new economic policy dramatically aggravates living and working conditions of the people, particularly now that the country has been plunged into a severe economic crisis. The government refuses to defend the legitimate rights of the working people. They suffer from mass lay-offs, increased exploitation, wage freezes, lower real incomes and growing prices for essential goods. The flexible wage scale has been abolished. 'Freedom to hire' and 'labour relocation' (in fact, dismissals) have increased unemployment. By late 1986, another 42,000 industrial and office workers were dismissed. According to the Episcopal Conference of Bolivia, in September 1987 the unemployment rate reached 25 per cent of the economically active population affecting some 500,000 people. Industry and Trade Minister Roberto Gisbert has admitted that in the 15 months starting from August 1985, 112 enterprises ceased to exist.

The industrial working class is among those who have been hit hardest: half the permanent personnel of the country's industry has been replaced by part-time workers. The state sector employed 27,500 workers in 1985; now, only 10,500 are left. The government plans to reduce this figure to 6,000. Five mines have been closed, and three more awaiting the same fate.

Deprived of their livelihood, people accept any kind of job and are glad to earn money even by chance. Many are drawn into the 'underground economy' which produces and markets narcotic drugs, and they lose all moral or ideological ties with the interests of the people. Some 300,000 people are estimated to be employed in the cultivation of coca and in the production and marketing of cocaine.⁴

The policy of denationalisation and its social consequences take many forms — from the destruction of the state economic sector and fragmentation of government financial agencies to the transfer of mines and other enterprises to private owners or to transnational corporations against the foreign debt. Mining centres are doomed to a slow death by the lack of payroll money and by reduced deliveries of food, materials and tools.

This is in fact *a real war on the mineworkers*, the more politically conscious part of the trade union movement. An offensive is also being waged against factory workers and other sections of the working people. The government seeks to change the structure of the working class, eliminate the centres where it is concentrated, undermine its organisation and deal a blow to its militant spirit and traditions. The government is acting not unlike the narcofascist dictatorship of General Garcia Meza which, in 1980, demolished the buildings of trade unions. The authorities are hoping to destroy the unions and replace them with an amorphous and pliant association of 'company unions'.

However, history cannot be reversed. The working class and trade union movement is fighting resolutely against the new economic policy.

In August 1986 a 230-kilometre March for Life from Oruro to La Paz was organised. Marching in the front ranks of the 5,000-strong column of miners were Simon Reyes and other leaders of mineworkers committed to the class-based traditions of the trade union movement. Although army and police cordons and the state of siege prevented the participants from reaching the capital, the march was nonetheless important; it demonstrated the scope of the struggle launched by the industrial workers and all working people, nationwide solidarity with and support for this struggle, and condemnation of the policy pursued by the current regime.

A wave of strikes has swept Bolivia — general, industrial, regional, hunger strikes and other forms of mass action. That is how the people are responding to the dictatorial and repressive steps of the government. A BLC opinion poll about foreign debt servicing and anti-national tax legislation was a truly nationwide referendum. More than 97 per cent of those polled said 'no' to the policy of the authorities.

After its Seventh Congress, the Bolivian trade union movement is repulsing countless attacks of the NRM-NDA government, gaining fresh experience, improving its structure and consolidating its ranks. That is the significance of the latest forum, which was preceded by an extensive drive to explain the role of the trade union movement in Bolivia, the character, scope and methods of its work, and the need to elect honest and principled leaders. The congress marked *an historically significant victory of the working class*, brought about by the joint efforts of all forces aware of their responsibility for the future of the working people.

Confident in the initiative and militancy of the masses and awake to the difficulties that lie ahead, the new leadership of the Bolivian Labour Centre holds that only unity and democratic organisation based on class principles can ensure success in the struggle for the interests of the working people and guarantee the trade union movement's contribution to the cause of national liberation and social emancipation in Bolivia.

¹ *Unidad*, July 25-31, 1987.

² See *WMR*, No. 10, 1985, pp. 49-55. — *Ed.*

³ *Tesis Política y Lineamientos Programáticos*. I Congreso Extraordinario del PCB, abril de 1986, La Paz, 1987, p. 55.

⁴ See *Unidad*, September 15-22, 1986.

A Movement Breaking With Stereotypes

Marcelino Camacho — CC

Executive Council member, Communist
Party of Spain, Chairman, Trade Union
Confederation of Workers' Commissions

In the years of the Spanish people's fight against Franco's dictatorship the words 'Comrade Marcelino' stood for total dedication to the interests of the working people, democracy and social progress. He fought in the army of the Spanish Republic and after its defeat went underground. In 1940 he was arrested for the first time and sentenced to 12 years in prison. Two years later he escaped from a concentration camp in Spanish Morocco. In 1957 he came back home to be active in the trade union movement and in 1964 founded the first Workers' Commission, that of Madrid metal-workers. In the 1960s and 1970s he was repeatedly arrested and sentenced to long prison terms but each time world public pressure forced his release. In all, he spent 14 years behind bars. He has been a member of the CPS CC Executive Council since 1976 and between 1977 and 1982 a member of parliament.

This is his interview for *WMR*.

The Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions you have led for over twenty years now is among the most broadly based and influential organisations in Spain. How do you account for it?

ACTUALLY, at the latest elections of trade union delegates in 1986 we polled nationally 150,000 more votes than the General Alliance of the Working People, which gravitates towards the ruling Spanish Socialist Labour Party. And we did that in spite of intrigues by the government, which made available to the Alliance prior to the elections over four billion pesetas.¹ We prevailed in all big factories, railways, the telephone

communication system and even in some banks. The Workers' Commissions have bolstered their influence and their ranks continue to expand.

By the way, the name of the organisation is no longer accurate enough in terms of its composition. It brings together people other than those we might traditionally call workers, even though male and female workers prevail. Our confederation is drawing technicians and wage-earning trained specialists. A technician is no different from any worker, even if he is paid somewhat more and his status in the factory is higher. The fact is that the scientific and technological revolution is changing the inner structure of the working class itself, with distinct sections and groups emerging within it.

The Workers' Commissions seek to mirror the features of a class in transition to a new image. A new image but not a new nature, mind it! It is immutable as much as the struggle's objective, socialism.

Today it would not do to use the same methods, say, in an old car plant with traditional mass production, a robot-operated plant or a petrochemical complex where a team runs the cracking process from a controller's room three kilometres away from the other workplaces. This makes for a difference in approach. We are trying to keep pace with the changes.

We see that the working class is becoming in certain measure more pluralistic in socio-economic and, consequently, political terms. When I say that the Workers' Commissions are a *class* trade union, what I mean is precisely the broad sense of the word. Clearly, to be effective, a class trade union should be a *mass* union. This means that account should be taken of sections and groups within the class with varying ideological and religious views. Which means that we should be *pluralistic*. It is also true, though, that campaigning for the interests of the working classes will not be effective without *unity* within the trade union. We should therefore be both pluralists and unitarists, contradictory though it may seem.

Lastly, only *democratism* may help us combine the class nature of organisation, its mass character, pluralism and unity. We should make sure that no one, specifically any ethnic minority, feels underprivileged. All elections to the confederation's executive commissions and councils are held under a strict proportional representation system. Spain has no like organisation, the majority system being the general rule. Our last congress three years ago launched four lists of candidates to the governing bodies. Most decisions are taken by general meetings, and there are referendums too.

The trade union I belong to runs on the principle of *independence* from parties, government and, naturally, employers. Otherwise, if someone tried to make us bound by some 'affiliation' we would be unable to hold our confederation together and it would inevitably fall apart.

There are, to my mind, some general regularities in trade union work. I would single out two among them. First, a workers' organisation should be *militant* and continually make demands to promote the working people's interests. This helps it lead forth the entire class, allows it to accumulate experience and become convinced of the need to do away with capitalist

exploitation and move on to socialism. This is precisely the distinction between reformist syndicalism and a forward-looking trade union movement conscious of the class perspective.

Second, a trade union is not a vanguard, it has a general class nature and should be a mass organisation. The employers' resistance can be broken only if the *majority* of the working people come together in the fight against them.

How do you see the relationship between the organised working class movement and the millions of unemployed?

What makes this relationship special today is that while earlier mass unemployment resulted largely from cyclical crises, it is now also caused by the scientific and technological revolution as we know it under capitalism. Growing production is not paralleled by corresponding increases in consumption, and rising productivity does not entail shorter working hours.

Unemployment is becoming structural and stable. It now affects 3 million people or 22 per cent of the Spanish labour force. A year and a half ago people out of work for two years made up 17 per cent of the unemployed, the current figure being around 35 per cent. Consequently, enforced idleness becomes longer and the working people hit by it greater in number.

The socio-political repercussions of unemployment may differ. On losing jobs, many people lose contact with their factory, get out of touch with the trade union organisation, and become aloof from the struggle. This might lead to a situation similar to that in Germany at one time, where, as we know, the masses of unemployed made it easier for Hitler to come to power. To be sure, ours is a different situation but we should not forget the lessons of history.

So how are the unemployed to be organised? Despite some actions, meetings and demonstrations we have not yet found the means to set the masses of redundant people in motion. We need a programme of demands to be backed by the rest of the working people as reflective of their own needs too.

People often see you in the forefront of demonstrations organised by various democratic movements. Which lessons of your many years of work among the people, including in the trade unions, do you see now as the most valuable? What principles should a communist leader follow in this work?

True, Spain has lately been rocked by massive actions, like those against the country's NATO membership,² attacks on the right and gains of the working people, specifically a recent law giving the pensioners a bad deal. There was broad public reaction to social conflicts like actions by the miners, demonstrations in rural areas (for instance, a big peasants' march in Andalucia), and, finally, student unrest in early 1987.

All this is indicative of the country's need for far-reaching

socio-economic changes. It is therefore vital for us to focus all our attention on the mass movements, make out their aims, and find the right principles to follow in relations with them.

As I see it, the important thing for a communist leader is to always remember that the role of any one leader, as shown way back by Georgi Plekhanov in his book, *The Role of the Individual in History*, depends less on his individual talents (though this is also quite important) than on his ability to watch out for strong social currents, even though they have not yet made themselves felt. The important thing is to identify and appraise them classwise. For the chief protagonists in history are the people, but they often make it in rough, as it were, and popular leaders are called upon to project their interests and show them the way.

In my view there are no stereotyped rules governing the emergence of mass movements nor can the latter be standardised. Certainly the Communists try to act as an *organising* force but our experience, and also in the trade unions, proves that attempts to use such movements as 'driving belts' would actually see the end of them. They should keep their independence and their dynamics. This is not to say that the organisations within them will *oppose* the workers' parties, but even good relations presuppose either's autonomy.

Addiction to stereotypes spells death to a mass movement, for it is the spontaneous form of joining politics that is often the broadest. The bad thing about it is not when there is a spontaneous explosion and people cast off all their fetters but when the process is taken no further and degenerates into 'spontaneism', i.e. a morbid worship of spontaneity. Without precise social and political guidelines the strength of the movement may be sapped leading it to failure.

I am always conscious of Lenin's precept: work with the masses and advance the struggle of the masses avoiding any adventurism. What is its significance for us today, when we can rely on the rich experience of the Spanish and international working class movement?

To begin with, the need to respect the independence of any mass movement and its goals and perspective. Naturally enough, individual organisations see social problems their own way, and their part in political life inevitably has its limitations. On occasion they do not appreciate or are unaware of the existence of classes with differing interests and the struggle among them, which will precisely shape the outcome of social development.

The Communists have something that other social forces lack — an analytical method and theory enabling them to see social phenomena in their true perspective and recognise that the people's striving for change results from class contradictions. This helps them to correctly identify potential allies and distinguish between stages of struggle in any one concrete period.

How do you see the balance between theory and practice at the present stage of the working class movement?

In our work and appraisal of reality we Spanish Communists are using analytical methods common to our Marxist theory. But it is no dogma,

stereotype or the 'ten commandments' set down a century ago and still immutable now. There is nothing more eternal than the flow of time itself. Some theoretical postulates have inevitably become a thing of the past while others retain their vitality. What perseveres is the dialectical method itself, materialism and the approach of Marx, Lenin and other revolutionaries to the study of society.

The important thing is to relate every element of theory to practice. The latter is indeed diverse. One would be wrong to think, for instance, that the *entire* experience of every revolution might have universal significance and become a 'theory'. It always has definite specific features endemic to a given situation and country.

A theory born of generalised practice and concrete experience places the goals in sharper focus and helps one evade illusions and phantoms and avoid narrow one-sided views. In this way, taking the rough with the smooth, a person grows confident of the ultimate victory of the working people, triumph of socialism and communism, and inevitability of justice. To be sure, the outcome of this struggle will depend on our ability to correct our own mistakes.

Hence the need for every Communist to be armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism and a knowledge of things that other prominent theorists have enriched our teaching with.

What do you see as the root cause of differences and contradictions within the communist and working class movement?

It happens that even two good friends might fall apart. Why? With regard to the working class movement I would like to recall some aspects of the general theory of contradictions.

There are always differences which are not yet contradictions. Under definite circumstances the latter take hold, and, if exacerbated by some factors, say of a national character, may become antagonistic. Contradictions are in the nature of things. But one must be able to grapple with them and prevent them becoming antagonistic.

We have members of the CPS, the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain, as well as non-Communists cooperating in our Workers' Commissions. Concerning these two parties I think there is a substantial measure of agreement between them. They have some differences, though, with the other groupings.

Furthermore, a new factor has emerged in the nation's politics, the United Left coalition³ advocating socio-economic change and Spain's withdrawal from NATO. All this will certainly influence further developments and the Spanish working people's drive for unity.

¹ This equals some \$31.5 million. — *Ed.*

² See Simon Sanchez Montero, 'Why We Reject Atlanticism' *WMR*, No. 4, 1987.

³ For details, see Gerardo Iglesias, 'Re-establishing the Party's Lost Position', *WMR*, No. 9, 1987.

France Must Not Become The 'Hawk' Of Europe

Daniel Cirera — National Secretary,
French Peace Movement

France has always had an influential and well-organised peace movement. Why then have the scope, political impact and practical achievements of peace actions in France in the past few years not been as impressive as in other West European countries? *WMR* put this question to Daniel Cirera, and also asked him to outline the goals of the anti-war movement in France and the circumstances in which it is working today.

FIRST a few words about the circumstances we have been working in these past few years. The situation in France, to my mind, is very unusual. Our country was not immediately affected by NATO's decision of December 12, 1979 on the deployment of US medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe. The public mood was one of '*non-involvement*', all the more so since France does not participate in the NATO Allied Command and since there are no US military bases on our territory.

On the other hand, our own nuclear weapons gave us a *false sense of security*. A whole generation of the French have been weaned on the idea that nuclear weapons are just a 'deterrent' but are not intended to fight a war.

Clearly, when such sentiments prevail it is not at all easy to mobilise the masses for anti-war action. This does not mean that our will for peace is weaker than that of others. But there is in France none of that worry and even fear that is gnawing at the public in countries where nuclear weapons are not viewed as a factor of security.

Another thing that makes our situation different is the positions of the leading political forces. The Socialists have been displaying their absolutely negative attitude to anti-war protests ever since they came into office in 1981, doing so, moreover, at the highest level, that of the President of the Republic. What we have here is an approach that is at odds with the views of most of the Socialist International parties.

Of all the parties, only the French Communist Party, and of all the trade unions, only the General Confederation of Labour are taking part in the struggle for disarmament and in the peace movement. Proof of this fact is last April's parliamentary vote on the draft 1987-1991 military programme law, with all the deputies, from the extreme rightists to the Socialists, approving a budget of 500 billion francs for an arms build-up and only the Communists saying no.

Then there are the scandalous Greenpeace affair, the French authorities' negative stand on the prospects opened up by Reykjavik and their opposition to nuclear disarmament, demonstrated anew in connection with the Soviet-American accord on the medium-range missiles in Europe.

The Catholic Church in France is far more reticent on peace action than the clergy in other countries, which creates additional difficulties to the mobilisation of the masses. Last but not least, the French mass media are, without exaggeration, among the more persistent adversaries of disarmament and anti-war action. TV and radio networks are virtually closed to peace campaigners. Here is one example: on June 14, 1987 a 35-km-long 'human chain' of peace activists encircled the centre of Paris; that mass demonstration was reported by just one national TV channel, and even that in a 20-second announcement without any pictures. Our response was a propaganda campaign under the keynote 'For disarmament — loud and clear!'

French public opinion did not take issue with any decisions of the authorities all the way till autumn 1986. People just did not have any peace demands to make on the government or the President. We activists of the French Peace Movement thought it our primary duty in that situation to keep the people informed, to help awake their will for peace and nuclear disarmament, and to get it to manifest itself in actions of solidarity with the struggle going on in other West European countries.

We were not just sitting back waiting in the past either. A major demonstration against Euromissiles was held in Paris on October 25, 1981. Since spring 1982 we have been taking part in all the actions launched by the group of prominent personalities united at that time in 'The Appeal of One Hundred'. Responding to their call, more than 250,000 people poured out into the streets of the capital in June 1982 and since that time hundreds of thousands have been gathering every year for demonstrations or peace festivals. I have already mentioned the 'human chain' in Paris on June 14, 1987. Not at all bad, we think.

The peace movement has begun to grow faster on the basis of that experience. It has made use of the upswing to consolidate its positions and advance to new frontiers. This process is going on at a time when France is becoming more and more involved in the arms race. Our differences from other countries that have been mentioned above are therefore melting away.

Practice shows that *today's Western peace movements gain scope and momentum first and foremost when political decisions are taken against the people's mood and hopes*. The deployment of thousands of nuclear warheads in West Germany in the 1970s, for example, provoked some resistance. But it was NATO's 'two-track' decision in 1979 that triggered a mass public outcry. That move was totally at odds with what the new generations of West Germans perceived as possibilities for a life of peace, prospects for European security, *Ostpolitik* and détente.

The situation was much the same in Belgium, the Netherlands, Britain and other countries. When the USA was about to boost its military spending considerably in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a 'freeze' movement emerged. Anti-war actions in Spain centred on the government's decision to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, while in Japan they are related to the trauma of Hiroshima and the present trend towards militarisation.

Although our situation is specific, the mood in France is not very

different from that in other countries. Here are, for instance, the results of public opinion polls carried by the London *Guardian*. As many as 66 per cent of the West Germans and 60 per cent of the French are opposed to the deployment of Pershing missiles: the difference is small, as we see. Asked if they want their country to build up its nuclear arms arsenals, a mere 17 per cent of the French say yes, 40 to 50 per cent want them to remain as they are and 32 per cent are willing to let nuclear weapons go altogether. That percentage is about the same as that in Britain. One of the recent polls has revealed that most of my compatriots approve the 'zero-zero option' and that 81 per cent of them want France to join in the process of disarmament. This is what the vaunted French 'consensus' on nuclear weapons looks like today. *The situation is changing fast and there has already opened an obvious gap between the mood in the country and the stand of its leadership.*

Since autumn 1986, there have emerged new elements in the appreciation by the French of questions of national and international security. More and more people wonder today if the country's military policy is really prompted by the need for lawful self-defence and not by a drive for a superarms build-up. This is a fundamentally new development because, I repeat, the peace actions escalate when military or political decisions are viewed by the public as contravening security interests.

Here is a fresh illustration of that. In September 1986 the French Peace Movement launched a wide campaign to achieve an end to nuclear testing, including the tests on Atoll Mururoa. The campaign had been preceded by a long discussion on what could and should be done in France today to promote the peace movement. We issued an appeal urging our country to make initiatives for disarmament. That was a new development: previously such appeals had been addressed first and foremost to the two 'superpowers' and to the Geneva negotiators. But our discussion produced the conclusion that we should formulate concrete objectives in the struggle for disarmament in France herself to make the peace movement stronger and more combative. That was how we arrived at the idea that a *nuclear test ban was one of the key issues.*

The question has been posed in this way because continued testing is involving France deeper in the superarms race. An end to tests would mean a stop to the development of third-generation nuclear weapons. We make the same demands on all the nuclear powers and show how important such a development would be in preventing the militarisation of outer space and blocking the development of weapons of new types. As we see, it is a matter of extreme political importance.

At the same time that goal is clear-cut, concrete and, given proper mobilisation, quite realistic. The campaign has been given an impetus by the Soviet nuclear test moratorium and by the actions of American peace campaigners. Its relevance is especially evident now that *Soviet-American accords have paved the way to concrete disarmament measures.* Around 400,000 signatures have already been collected under an appeal for ending nuclear tests and the campaign has evoked broad response from the country's notable personalities. The response is fresh rebuttal of the alleged 'consensus' on the superarms policy.

We the French have been confronted with new questions. Since Reykjavik the French leaders have been more and more insistent on the development of a new West European defence system on the basis of a Paris-Bonn axis. They claim that it is essential to security. The government's stand makes the public wary and provokes thought and action. Clearly, a further military build-up would merely undermine stability on the continent and become another impediment to nuclear disarmament.

We are trying to improve our cooperation with the West German peace movements on these issues. We have long had contacts with them but these are not sufficient any more. There is a need for more energetic joint actions. We think it very important to reach agreement on ways of explaining to the public in both countries that peace on the Rhine can be secured through European cooperation rather than through the formation of joint military forces. Indeed, if a war flares up not even on the Rhine but to the east of it, it will bring about universal catastrophe.

On our initiative a meeting was held with the leaders of the West German movement 'For a More Secure Europe' in Paris on September 26, 1987. That first step will not be the end of it. Prospects for European security should be explored constructively. The conclusions made in Helsinki and other already widespread ideas relevant to these issues offer a good basis for such an analysis. We want to make good use of what has already been achieved and to this end we are seeking to develop cooperation with peace movements in other European countries.

Since the late 1970s, the peoples have been displaying a growing resolve to preserve and develop the Helsinki spirit and to ensure European security on this basis. The shoots of what is now called the new mode of thinking appeared at that time. But its origins go even further back, to the work of the League of Nations and to the UN Charter, which demands that relations among states be built on peaceful foundations.

With all the controversies and diverse views inherent in it, the peace movement is unanimous in *asserting the priority of political decisions over military ones*. This constitutes the basis of new thinking. What makes the current situation interesting is that peace actions are involving government circles, as is exemplified by the efforts of the Delhi Six and the leaders of non-aligned countries. The United Nations also has a role to play in the propagation of new thinking.

The idea of the priority of political decisions over military ones is manifest in Mikhail Gorbachov's peace initiatives. Since 1985 and especially in 1986 they have evoked a broad response in France in spite of all the attempts to twist them. The success of the Soviet Union's perestroika in every field is contributing, I believe, to a favourable climate of trust, which is furthered by the fact that the Soviet proposals are in concert with what the peoples want. That, to my mind, was one reason for progress on the medium-range missiles.

I would like to stress anew *the historic importance of the accord*, the first ever to eliminate nuclear weapons already in place. It is a truly outstanding development, one inspiring fresh action. Moreover, the Soviet-US accord covers those weapon systems against which we have been fighting since

1979. Yet we are to redouble our efforts: the leaders of France are openly opposed to nuclear disarmament.

Faced with their government's clearly hostile attitude to the 'zero option', people regardless of their political persuasions wonder why the leaders of the republic are so strongly opposed to disarmament and why military spending keeps growing enormously while social spending is shrinking. Similar sentiments made themselves felt in students' actions: less money on weapons, more on universities and job training! Last spring saw major demonstrations in defence of the social security system. Simultaneously, a discussion got under way about the draft law on the 1987-1991 military programme and Mikhail Gorbachov's latest peace proposals.

I think that the efforts we have been making for nuclear disarmament since the beginning of this decade are bearing fruit. It is a new and very important development that people are starting to see growing military spending as a detriment to jobs and everyday life. There are now preconditions for joint actions and for a broader struggle and unity of the peace forces. The General Confederation of Labour for its part is working vigorously on these issues.

All this makes it clear why the participants in actions last autumn included in their major demands those for cuts in military spending as well as for a nuclear test ban. Significantly, the youth 'Movement for Nuclear Zero' decided to mark the start of the UN Week for Disarmament with a 'human chain' stretching from the defence to the education ministry. And the National Day of Action called by the French Peace Movement on October 28 was observed under the slogans of an end to nuclear testing, cuts in military spending, and disarmament. The rally in Paris, moreover, was held on the square in front of the National Assembly, which, I think, stressed the importance of that action.

In the specific conditions of France our movement should preserve full-scale political autonomy and rally people around common goals. It has room for anyone who is opposed to nuclear testing and advocates the 'zero option' and further nuclear disarmament, anyone willing to act to put an end to the arms race and the escalation of military spending. We consider it our duty to unite people of goodwill regardless of their electoral preferences. That is why a rigorous approach has to be taken to the study and formulation of common goals.

The national meetings for peace and disarmament which were held on our initiative in Gennevilliers last May made a strong impact and attracted many people, including prominent personalities of different political persuasions. It turned out that the participants in those meetings had much in common despite their differences. What I mean is not unity but *proximity of aspirations*, which makes it possible to surmount obstacles posed by adverse political circumstances.

So what has changed? Where are we going now? These questions were in the focus of a very wide debate in 1987. The movement has grown stronger organisationally, although progress has been smaller than we would like it to be. Having defined our tasks at the national level, we have begun to fortify our local committees. They are working all over the country and

new ones are being established at enterprises. Young people are attracted by organised forms of struggle. Practice imperatively demands that peace activists make their actions more consistent and combative.

Given a hostile political environment, the progress of the peace movement is not always perceptible to observers outside the country. Many in France, I think, are not aware of it either. Recent actions, including those last autumn, show that *opportunities for peace action are broadening in France*. The Soviet-American accords have given it a fresh impetus.

I am confident that if people act vigorously and together regardless of their present or future political sympathies, their efforts can influence the decisions taken by the ruling circles on specific issues. Struggle is essential to preventing France from becoming the 'hawk' of Europe. We are well aware of our responsibility in this respect. Our duty is to convince millions of French men and women that our country's road to security and progress goes through disarmament.

The Stranglehold Of The Arms Business

Rodney Bickerstaffe — General Secretary, NUPE (National Union of Public Employees); member, TUC General Council; Great Britain

THE world has never been a more dangerous place in which to live. The combined nuclear arsenals of this so-called civilised world could destroy us all several times over. Western leaders preach to us that peace has been preserved in Europe for the past 40 years precisely because of nuclear weapons. Mrs Thatcher is particularly fond of using this 'argument'. It is, of course, the sort of argument resorted to to justify a subjective view incapable of being substantiated. It is equally arguable, with much greater force, that the combination of a developing and active European peace movement and the peace-oriented foreign policies of certain European states have so far succeeded in preventing war in Europe over the past 40 years *despite* the spread of nuclear arsenals on the continent.

The real question people are asking is, *what has been the cost of the arms race?* It's a fact that more people starve to death every two days than were killed by the Hiroshima bomb. Every year between 13 and 18 million people die of starvation. More than one billion people are chronically hungry. A genuinely civilised world could change this situation by making resources and scientific expertise available to combat acute world problems. In the words of Mikhail Gorbachov, "initiating active steps to halt the arms race and reduce weapons is a necessary prerequisite for coping with increasingly acute global problems — those of the deteriorating state of man's environment and of the need to find new energy sources and combat economic backwardness, hunger and disease.

The pattern imposed by militarism — arms in place of development — must be replaced by the reverse order of things — disarmament for development."

However, the amount Britain currently spends on aid to the Third World countries is equivalent to 1/15th of the money spent on arms. In 1986 Britain preferred to spend more than twice its aid budget — £3,000 million — on arms purchases abroad. These things are done at a time when the British people face record levels of unemployment and are experiencing their own North/South divide. The trade unions have to fight low pay, bad conditions, privatisation and loss of jobs.

It is important for the British labour movement to develop a vision of what kind of world we could have if all our energies were channelled into constructive rather than destructive enterprises. The government is playing on people's fears, nurtured throughout the Cold War years and now given emphasis to justify expenditure on weapons of war at the expense of the public services and the economy in general.

Of course it would be a nonsense to suggest that nuclear disarmament of itself would lead to a greater degree of international harmony and cooperation. But it would *enable both sides to effect huge savings, and it would act as a catalyst for radical change around the world*. The direct consequences would be the liberation of human and scientific resources to start to tackle the real problems, particularly in the developing world.

Workers in the defence industries are quite rightly concerned about their employment prospects should nuclear disarmament materialise. We therefore have to make clear that we have alternative policies which will see their undoubted skills harnessed to a more productive purpose.

The Conservative government likes to portray itself as the guardian of jobs in Britain's defence industry, yet despite real increases in defence spending since 1979, there has been a five per cent fall in defence industry employment. A combination of the impact of the £10 billion Trident — half of that is being spent on American jobs — and the continuing cost escalation in defence equipment threatens thousands of defence industry jobs. Arms production, like so many other areas of the economy, is becoming increasingly capital-intensive. *More sophisticated weaponry means more public money is spent, but there is no quid pro quo in terms of jobs created.*

The scrapping of Britain's nuclear capability clearly has consequences for defence industry employment. This is why planning for conversion and diversification is an essential part of the general economic policy pursued by the working class movement. Within the defence industry much work, such as that of electricians, plumbers and carpenters, is readily transferable to other industries. Job skills in armaments engineering are applicable to a wide variety of civilian products.

Major retraining may not be as necessary as some think. It is often forgotten that all industries constantly experience conversion and change as they move from one product to another. Even in the most advanced technologies there is considerable scope for alternative applications. A conversion fund to assist those companies, workers and communities and those few areas and towns affected by changes in defence policy would

facilitate conversion and economic recovery.

The task is to ensure that skills of workers in the nuclear weapons industry are put to good use and to provide alternative work for those affected by restructuring. Cancelling Trident would free billions for investment in our aerospace, electronic and shipbuilding industries, as well as the public sector generally.

The '*star wars*' programme merits special consideration because of the importance attached to it by the US administration and because of the claims made concerning the economic benefits for Britain.

The SDI research programme is only just getting underway in Britain. Therefore, it is imperative that we oppose SDI now, before it does become established. We have to expose it for what it really is — an illusory economic opportunity and a very real threat to world peace.

In December 1985 the then Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Heseltine, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with his US counterpart Caspar Weinberger. This document set out how British companies and institutions would participate in the work to implement 'star wars'.

The government went to some pains to explain that British involvement with SDI did not contravene existing agreements and did not compromise Britain's 'independence on defence matters'. The argument in support of British participation in 'star wars' research was couched very much in chauvinistic terms — which is hardly surprising given the fact that the political and economic case for participation is extremely weak.

The government claimed that our new high-tech companies could not "afford to stand apart from such research". That was George Younger, Heseltine's replacement, speaking early last year. The argument runs that research relevant to SDI is already under way in our defence research establishments and within our research institutions outside government, and that if Britain were not to be involved it would forgo 'information exchange of immense potential benefit' to our defence. "Star wars," said Mr Younger, "embraces technologies which will be widely applicable in the battlefield of the future." This is an open admission that our research in this field serves to continue the arms race.

The government claims that this work will be relevant to the civilian economy. "In the fullness of time," we are told, "there will be a substantial spin-off." However, British scientific commentators have noted that the possible civilian uses of 'star wars' technology are not immediately obvious. Besides, for all the talk of British participation in SDI being on British terms the US-imposed security restrictions on the results of this work make civilian usage almost impossible.

In any event, it is a fact that as military technology develops, it becomes increasingly difficult to adapt it for civil use. Take numerically controlled machine tools, initially developed for the military aircraft industry. Their cost and complexity made them uneconomical for less demanding jobs, and the machine tool companies had to develop simpler machines before they could penetrate commercial markets.

The United States has given no guarantees of the scale of British participation. It has been estimated that only \$1.5 billion will be available

for foreign contractors over the six years of the SDI programme — out of a total budget of \$26 billion. Bidding is expensive, and returns are far from assured — particularly as an increasing number of US commentators come to rubbish the whole workability of the 'star wars' concept. The doubts about benefits to Britain are confirmed by what happened with Trident. When Britain agreed to purchase Trident missiles, Washington agreed to allow British companies to compete on an equal footing with the US firms in the overall programme. In the event, Britain obtained contracts worth only a mere \$50 million out of a \$30-billion programme. The same is likely to happen with 'star wars'.

In the United States itself, some sections of the business community are lukewarm to the SDI idea. There are scientific doubts as to the whole programme's feasibility. Union leaders are also making their voice heard. William Winpisinger, International President of the Machinists and Aerospace Workers, has recently said in California that "currently less than a third of all jobless workers are receiving unemployment compensation, because the social budget has been cut for the military budget. 'Star wars' ought to be grounded . . . permanently." He added that "this massive and limitless waste under the control and direction of corporate and military zealots will assuredly produce economic bondage for America, if not Doomsday for the whole world first."

The Memorandum of Understanding includes a commitment on behalf of the UK to provide up to one-third of the research costs in the case of contracts concluded on a government-to-government basis. Already Britain's economy suffers as a result of too much government funding on research and development going into the arms field. Our heavy industries are now paying the price of too little research and development carried out in previous years. Over 50 per cent of government-funded research and development goes to the military: only two per cent is spent on health and environmental matters, and less than four per cent is spent on civilian industrial research and development. Overall defence absorbs six per cent of Britain's total expenditure on research and development — far higher than our trading competitors, including the United States.

Two recent reports — one by the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology, chaired by Senior Tory MP Ken Warren, and the other by Sir Ieuan Maddocks on behalf of the National Economic and Development Council — saw UK involvement in 'star wars' as a *threat to the UK's own attempts to boost high technology*. Both reports argued that one of the main reasons for the failure of Britain to exploit science and technology effectively enough to increase the competitiveness of British manufacturing was the amount of money spent on defence research and development.

We hold that there must be a certain level of investment in the development and production of modern conventional weaponry in order to ensure a modern and effective non-nuclear defence policy for Britain. *We should, however, be aiming at a reduction in the defence burden in the long term. Abandoning 'star wars' would be a start.* Research and development funding, particularly government funding, which might otherwise go to

'star wars' research, should be put to better use in the high-tech civilian industries.

"There is a link between Britain's industrial decline and high defence spending. On present trends Britain will, just after the turn of the century, be the poorest nation in the whole of Europe apart from Albania, but at least on present policy it will have Trident to defend its increasingly run-down and divided society." These words of Clive Ponting, a recently sacked high civil servant quoted in a *New Statesman* article on defence spending and the economy, reflect the impact huge military spending has on the economy. We need a credible economic programme if this trend of industrial decline is to be reversed. We need a greater emphasis on welfare spending, both at home and abroad, instead of government's obsession with weapons of destruction.

Work carried out by the NUPE Research Department has shown *how spending on public services could make a major contribution to job creation while at the same time meeting pressing social needs.*

On the eve of the parliamentary elections the Thatcher government demagogically approved a cut in income tax from 29 to 27 pence in the pound presenting it as a step to boost capital investment and employment, but coupling it with a commensurate cut in social spending. Spending on job creation through public services such as health and education creates nearly five times as many jobs as the budget savings from the recent cut in income tax.

Money spent on public services brings an immediate boost to people's living standards. Employing more teachers would cut class sizes and bring improvements in the quality of education. More doctors and nurses would help to cut hospital waiting lists and strengthen health care. More street cleaners will improve the environment.

Britain has ignored investment in its services while devoting £18 billion per year to 'defence'. As a result, inner cities face despair, roads fall into disrepair, sewers are crumbling, hospital queues grow longer, the disabled are still suffering from lack of care, the elderly die of cold and hunger, families live in decaying homes, and unemployment has become a way of life for millions. The longer we fail to tackle our fundamental problems, the worse it gets.

But it could be different! For the cost of one Type 2400 submarine we could build 3,000 new homes. For the cost of one Harrier GR5 aircraft we could build a new hospital.

NUPE estimates that an eight per cent employment growth over two years at a cost of some £3.8 billion would create a total of 400,000 jobs directly in the public services and up to half this number in the private sector. This includes 100,000 jobs in the National Health Service, 120,000 jobs in education, 30,000 jobs in social services, etc.

It is also clear that Labour Party environmental policies could create 200,000 jobs. Some 100,000 of these would come from implementing pollution control programmes. The remaining jobs would be in areas such as energy conservation and insulation; general building and renovation in the cities; flue gas desulphurisation, high-speed railways, enhanced nature conservation and boosting tourism — and that is certainly not an exclusive

list. Activities such as these will not only create a better environment, but also assist an economic recovery. This could be happening now if it weren't for the government's obsession with defence.

Here it is important to underline the fact that the government has *not* got a mandate for its disastrous waste of resources on arms spending, and especially on nuclear arms. While it won an overall majority of seats in the House of Commons in June 1987, it did so on a minority (43 per cent) of votes.

As well as the moral arguments against nuclear weapons and the 'star wars' programme, we clearly have powerful economic arguments at our disposal. Supporters of disarmament and arms control need not be on the defensive when arguing against increased expenditure on defence. Here, the trade unions have a key role to play because potentially they are organisations with a great capacity to bring about social change. Peace is a trade union issue too, and if we fail to take it up we will consign our children to live through a nightmare from which they might never wake up.

They Fought For The Cause Of The People Che Died For Us And For All Mankind

THE revolutionaries of Cuba, Latin America and the rest of the world hold Ernesto Che Guevara in great esteem. Soon after he came to Cuba, stories of his military exploits in the Sierra Maestra mountains — and later on in Las Villas, Zaire and Bolivia — were passed by word of mouth, turning into a living legend, despite the young hero's early death.

After the downfall of the dictatorship, Che served for us as an example of a builder of socialism. Later, when he went to Bolivia to bring liberation to the peoples of the continent, we loved him even more. On the 20th anniversary of the death of the fearless fighter, Fidel Castro expressed the feelings of many men and women in the world, stressing justly that his example is still with us as "an eternal and invincible symbol for all the oppressed, for all the exploited, for all the democrats and for all the revolutionaries".¹

Everybody now has a clear idea of the criterion by which the relative role of an individual in history is assessed, and that ideas, if they are just, go on living, even though the great people who have embodied them may perish in struggle. Mankind's progress cannot be stopped. That is why we feel special responsibility and reverence towards the ideological heritage of Che Guevara and pay tribute to his exploits. As never before, we share his boundless belief in man, ideals and personal example.

He loved life, which he devoted unreservedly to the cause of liberating

people. He did not look for death but neither did he try to avoid it by renouncing his convictions and principles. By his profound belief in revolution, his high sense of internationalism, extraordinary revolutionary stoicism, readiness for self-sacrifice, fighting spirit and his fresh, pure and revolutionary interpretation of Marxism-Leninism, Che Guevara exemplified the patriot and revolutionary for all the peoples of our continent.

Constant concern for the people around him, desire to understand them, personal modesty and tactfulness, profound sense of justice, absolute bravery and loyalty to his duty were the Che Guevara characteristics that embodied socialist humanism. When speaking of Guevara's merits, Fidel Castro said that mention should also be made of his exceptional sensitivity that came from his heart rather than his head.

A son of his century, who sought to transplant the seed of justice and love from the Sierra Maestra mountains of Cuba to the highlands of Bolivia, he was, of course, bound to stay in popular memory. But few could suppose that barely twenty years after his death his ideas and example would win so many minds and hearts. Years passed but his image, far from losing its appeal, stirs people even more, be it in Buenos Aires or his native Cordoba, La Paz or Valle Grande where he perished, Havana or Santiago de Cuba, which witnessed his early efforts in building socialism. He is also remembered in Paris, London and Frankfurt where the young people, sick and tired of the 'boons' of capitalism, see Che Guevara, although remote in time, as a bright beacon calling to the future.

The reality of our continent, as never before, makes topical Che Guevara's call for Latin American unity in the struggle for national and social emancipation. The victorious Sandinist revolution, Salvadoran patriots' exploits, growing revolutionary self-consciousness in Central America, the downfall of fascist regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Haiti, vigorous actions by Chilean and Paraguayan patriots against their murderous dictatorships, a more independent stance taken by some Latin American governments under pressure by the mass of the people, resistance to the sway of the International Monetary Fund, combating unpayable foreign debts and other actions by the peoples who are eager to put an end to dependence, colonialism and exploitation are all in one way or another associated with the heroic life of the glorious *comandante*. This is borne out by the fact that thousands upon thousands of people in Latin America remember his behests and have made them their creed. For that matter now, as never before, Che Guevara is a graphic embodiment of Castro's well-known thesis that "internationalism is the most beautiful characteristic and essence of Marxism-Leninism and its ideals of solidarity and brotherhood"² for the old continent and the Asian and African countries fighting against imperialist monopolies, hunger and poverty and for equality and development.

The life-giving winds of renovation sweeping through socialist countries fully accord with the fresh, profound and purely human vision of socialism characteristic of Che Guevara and with his heroic spirit of a builder of a new society. His conception of the socialist economy contains profound and daring ideas, which make it possible to avoid beaten paths.

Twenty years have elapsed since the heroic guerrilla perished but his thoughts and deeds will remain engraved forever in the minds of the coming generations.

Antonio Díaz Ruiz
representative of the Communist
Party of Cuba on *WMR*

¹ *Granma*, October 12, 1987.

² Fidel Castro, *Ideología, conciencia y trabajo político*, La Habana, 1986, p. 314.

There Ought To Be No Enemies Within The Left

Alfredo Filomeno
General Secretary, Socialist Revolutionary Party of Peru (SRP)

Juan Borea
member of the SRP National Leadership

The United Left coalition once again came second in last year's municipal elections in Peru, so confirming that it is a real alternative to Alan Garcia's bourgeois-reformist government. The SRP is a member of the United Left together with the Communists and other democratic and anti-imperialist organisations. Below are the answers which Alfredo Filomeno and Juan Borea gave to *WMR's* questions.

How did your party originate? What is its role in Peru's political life and its main tasks and social base?

THE Socialist Revolutionary Party was formed in November 1976, a particularly difficult period for the Peruvian democratic movement. A year earlier, General Morales Bermudez took over as President from General Velasco Alvarado, and did a sharp about-turn on the previous administration's policy of transformations. There was a permanent state of emergency and a curfew, along with various other curbs and repressive measures. In these circumstances, the idea of organising the party emerged in mid-1976 out of concern in various sections of the public. The idea originated among the military who had worked together with Velasco Alvarado and also strata of the population which had begun to play a more prominent part in Peru's political life following the changes brought about by General Velasco. Among them were the peasants to whom the agrarian reform had given new rights, the workers and employees who had gained access to the so-called industrial communities (joint management of

enterprises) and the progressive intelligentsia, notably those who had initiated the plan for socialising the press, which was subsequently shelved by the Morales Bermudez government.

Our organisation is a left-wing national party striving to solve the country's problems in the light of the experience of the revolutions that have taken place in the world, and on the assumption that Peru has its own independent revolutionary process with its own identity and specific features. The SRP started out by declaring that it has no enemies within the left. That may now appear to be meaningless, but a decade ago there were at least 30 separate left-wing political parties. In other words, the SRP had even then repudiated internal strife and did not regard any left-wing party as its enemy. This approach can now be seen as a prerequisite for the emergence of what was later to become the United Left. The need for the future society to be run by self-governing units is the thrust of our programme for its construction.

The SRP has had to face serious difficulties from the very outset. Within six weeks, many of its founders, including four former high-ranking military commanders, were forced to leave the country, among them the prominent political leader and retired division commander General Leonidas Rodriguez, who had worked together with Velasco Alvarado in drafting the agrarian reform and putting it through.

The SRP is effectively an heir to that policy and now commands considerable influence and popularity, mostly among the peasantry. The fact is that Velasco Alvarado's agrarian reform generated a movement whose participants did not have any clear political views, but who began, first instinctively and then with our assistance, to absorb socialist ideas as the only way to emancipation. That is not to say, however, that the peasants are the party's only social support. In the urban areas, we have the backing of the impoverished strata of the middle classes and migrants from the interior of the country now living in the hovels of the 'new townships'. There is also an important contingent of progressive intellectuals within the SRP.

What are the points on which the positions of the SRP and those of the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP) are identical? What are the problems on which they differ?

The birth of our party was not viewed with favour by all the members of the left, but it was openly welcomed by the PCP, which at one time was the only party to recognise the importance of the historical process inaugurated by Velasco Alvarado. Later on, in 1980, we made a number of joint attempts to rally the popular masses in a common electoral front, and these efforts were not on the whole successful. We only managed to set up the United Left coalition consisting of the PCP, the SRP and three small groups. The other left-wing parties preferred to stay out. One could say, in summing up, that we agree with the PCP on the main national issues: without the unity of the left-wing forces it is impossible either to democratise the country or to advance the revolutionary process with a socialist perspective.

There are, of course, some differences between our two parties, and the main one is perhaps in ideology. The PCP is a Marxist-Leninist party. We do not regard ourselves as a Marxist-Leninist party, although we recognise the importance of Marxism as a scientific method for analysing the reality and its contribution to the worldwide revolutionary practice, and that mainly because some of the conceptions which we regard as fundamental cannot be defined as being Marxist-Leninist from the ideological standpoint. While we recognise the role of Marxism in politics and revolutionary practice, for instance, we do not entirely accept the philosophical principles of this teaching (something that cannot be said, however, of many members of the SRP).

What is the SRP's attitude to the activities of the Sendero Luminoso?

Our position is quite clear: the country cannot be liberated by means of terrorism. The SRP has nothing in common with the Sendero Luminoso. We shun ideas which are an inducement to attempts, whether conscious or unconscious, to install a model similar to that which was once being implanted in Kampuchea. The refusal to recognise the role of the masses confronts them with the terrorists, who strive to achieve by terrorist methods something that can only be attained by uniting the progressive forces. The Sendero Luminoso regards the whole world as being inimical to its actions, and its members make no distinction between the wide-ranging liberation battles, the processes in building socialism, and the policy of the reactionary bourgeoisie. With that view of the world (some regard it as naive, and others, as offensive), the Sendero Luminoso claims that their organisation is the core of the 'new revolutionary forces of the globe'. In practice, that kind of approach merely goes to benefit imperialism. The Sendero Luminoso tends to create conditions in the country which the rightists, isolated by their electoral defeat, could well use to justify repression against the democrats. Almost 7,000 Peruvians have fallen victim to violence in recent years. While we condemn the mass killings by the army and the police, we have to recognise that the Sendero Luminoso is to blame for a large part of these assassinations. Despite the anti-bourgeois rhetoric of this extremist outfit, most, if not all, of these victims do not come from the ruling circles. The death of the peasants, workers, soldiers and policemen has done nothing to change the forms of domination in the country, while the number of widows and orphans in the poor families has grown.

What, in your view, are the ways of normalising the situation in Peru?

The left-wing forces have to fight for peace in the country. If the United Left wins solid positions in the 1990 general and municipal elections, it could become the ruling bloc, but it is our duty to seek a way out of the present stage of terrorism just now. From the SRP's standpoint, the policy of bringing peace to the country needs to be based on at least two main premises.

First, there must be a solution of the economic and social problems,

which have been producing the most dire poverty in some parts of the country, so as to remove the causes for which Sendero Luminoso is supported by part of the population. We believe that the way here lies through transformations, with emphasis on economic instead of military or police methods.

Second, one should bear in mind that social life cannot be democratised without combating violence. Once the United Left becomes the alternative, it must inflict a resolute political defeat on the Sendero Luminoso, so as to prevent the emergence of similar groups in the future. It is most important strategically to have the people of Peru and of other Latin American states see that the new forms of democracy are imperative for further building up our forces. Reaction is no longer capable of issuing blanket charges of anti-democracy against the left, and finds it ever harder to resist the strength of the progressive mass-backed organisations. There appeared, for instance, associations of slum dwellers, mothers and 'glass of milk committees' in Peru. Some people in other countries could well regard the latter as outlandish, but in Peru their activity is vital and most meaningful: it is to provide every child with a glass of milk at least once a day. There are also the peasant patrols set up for self-defence against police abuse, against thieves, and also against sorties by the Sendero Luminoso. If the United Left does manage to make these still embryonic forms of direct democracy more potent and supports the grassroots initiatives, the day will come when we shall triumph not only over the terrorists, but also over the local reactionaries.

What are the forces, in your view, that could make the main contribution to democratising the country?

Our coalition should certainly have the main role to play in this process, but the political efforts made by the United Left should be backed up by the trade unions, the peasants' associations and the masses generally.

The women's movement is most active in Peru. Women have been involved in all the major miners' strikes in recent years, helping to supply the strikers with food and taking part in demonstrations to condemn police repressions. In some cases, mothers with their children have taken part in protest marches, tramping hundreds of kilometres to the capital. The SRP has devoted much attention to the women's movement, but the emancipation of women is inseparable from the emancipation of all the other working people, and can be attained only through joint struggle against the common enemy.

Just a few words about our students. Their ties with the trade unions and the peasant movements show that they are capable of doing much towards democratisation in Peru.

Concerning the role of the army and our attitude to it, let us recall once again that many retired military men were among the founders of the SRP, and they are still among its members. One of our senators — Jorge Fernandez Maldonado — became commander-in-chief of the army after serving for 35 years. Leonidas Rodriguez, who has been President of the SRP since its foundation, is another general who has risen from the ranks.

We believe that it is high time for people in Peru to drop the habit of drawing a distinction between those who wear and those who do not wear a uniform, for that kind of attitude goes to benefit the rightists alone. In various periods, reaction ruled the country by means of the military and sometimes used the army to pose the threat of a coup d'état, so as to set up control over civilian governments. But the class struggle also runs through the state institutions, including the armed forces; only the adversary will benefit if the left consign the army to the enemy camp once and for all: when the crunch comes many military men then fail to opt for the popular camp.

It is now generally recognised that the Velasco Alvarado government was the most outstanding one in Peru for it did so much more for the country than any civilian administration. It put through important reforms aimed to liquidate the oligarchy, did much to enhance the role of the state in banking and finance, and set up a number of enterprises. It went beyond declarations in foreign policy and established multi-faceted relations with most countries for the first time in our history. In the light of this experience, it would be a bad mistake to deny that there are now special prospects for having the armed forces take part in the process of democratisation and national development, which could be led by the United Left in the future.

I should like to address the next question to you personally, Comrade Borea. We are aware that you are a devout Catholic. How did you find your way into the revolutionary movement? What is the role and place of the Church in Peru's political life today?

I am, indeed, a member of a Catholic community, I have made a study of theology, and intend to be ordained as a priest. I have not forgotten my calling, although I was last year elected to the National Leadership of the SRP and have had to interrupt my studies for the period of my mandate in view of my manifold duties.

Many people in Latin America are involved in the revolutionary movement precisely because of their involvement in the movements of the churches and the reading of the Bible. It is Our Lord Jesus Christ who has helped us to comprehend that it is impossible to live in the Catholic faith, that it is impossible to live as Christ taught us to live, under a social system where man is oppressed by man and where there is misery and hunger. That is totally contrary to our faith. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of Catholics in Peru and other countries on the continent have been moved by their faith to take their stand under the banners of the revolution, because they have come to be convinced of the need to change the existing order, to put an end to capitalism, and to build socialism. In other words, they have come to realise the need to translate into life the basic tenet of our religion: the brotherhood of man.

That may appear to be strange to someone who has been habituated to another kind of reality or, let us say, to a different set of schemes, but life is always far richer than any scheme. I personally would never have joined the revolutionary movement with all its dangers (often mortal dangers), if I

had not been moved by faith to do so. That is the experience of many people in Latin America.

For various cultural and historical reasons, the Catholic Church has traditionally an important part to play in Peru's political life. Priests who speak out have large audiences among our people. Our Church has many media, especially in the colleges, charities and parishes through which to maintain permanent ties with the people, especially with the poorest and those in the most dire need. We are always aware of their problems and try to solve them. That is just what often suggests the need for changing the system as such.

But we also have to admit that far from all the sections of the Church take such a view. There are reactionaries, like those in Opus Dei, who seek to defend the capitalist structures. But most of the active Catholics working in the communities sympathise with the left-wing parties, although they are not necessarily among their members. There are many devout Catholics within the SRP and on its National Leadership.

Finally, what are your wishes for *World Marxist Review*?

It would be most useful for *WMR* to arrange, in one form or another, an in-depth discussion of the question of the unity of the revolutionary forces in Latin America, for these are the problems which are most frequently behind the reverses of some highly promising processes. A theoretical elaboration of these problems could be yet another contribution by *WMR* to the efforts to shape views and inform readers throughout the world.

¹ A Pol Pot-type armed terrorist organisation. — *Ed.*

surveys, letters, and diary

Projections And Outlooks

The Capitalist Economy: Ten Years On

Collective interview with a West German, a Japanese and a US economist

The working class press gives regular coverage to the present state of the capitalist economy but rarely probes the more distant prospects. The bourgeois press, meanwhile, is fond of painting a rosy picture of the future so as to shade the current difficulties and contradictions. In a recent article on the world economy in the 1990s the US *Fortune*, for example, this year predicted a most favourable and solid growth and promised more jobs, prosperity for the 'middle classes' and lower budget and trade deficits.

But what do economic forecasters say? *WMR* asked econometricians from the FRG, Japan and the USA their view of prospects for the economic development of their countries to the year 2000. Bonn University Professor **Wilhelm Krelle**, Osaka University Professor **Chikashi Moriguchi** and Stanford University Professor **Bert Hickman** gave the following replies to *WMR* questions.

Is the current long period of slow growth about to end or will it last till the next century? What will be its impact on employment in your country?

Moriguchi. In Japan growth will be slower than in the 1970s and first half of the 1980s; I think that the long-term average growth of the GDP till the year 2000 will be around 3.5 per cent.¹

Japan is in the process of transition from export-led growth to more domestic-oriented demand growth. Japan's export to the US expanded rapidly till 1985 and its ratio of exports to the GDP went up substantially. Actually, we took advantage of the world situation, US economic policies and the over-valued dollar. But now the environment has changed. The yen rate went up drastically, which adversely affected output. There was a drop in business activity in the Japanese economy, which was mostly brought about by a sharp reduction of investment plans in export-related industries.

There is the famous question — can Japan increase its internal consumption faster and thus generate an impetus to economic growth? This is possible on the condition that there is a change from a high savings to a low savings rate. There is a series of measures about to be introduced which, according to my own studies, will lower the household savings ratio by 1 or 2 percentage points and increase consumption. Reduced taxes and higher government spending would also help here.

The rate of growth of labour productivity is relatively high in Japan. And it is going to continue to be so, moreover, on the basis of our own technologies. There are no more technologies overseas which could be borrowed, we have used them up. To sum up, the total growth of GDP will be made up from a 2 per cent rise in labour productivity and a 1.5 per cent rise in employment.

Hickman. For the US for the same period, that is till the end of the century, the growth rate of productivity will be about 1 per cent and the average growth rate of the labour force about 1 per cent, adding up to a rise of some 2.2 per cent in GDP.² It starts higher and then comes down.

Krelle. Speaking for the short run, growth rates in the FRG will decline because of the appreciation of the DM to the dollar, and because the government will continue to stabilise the budget and limit public expenditure. In the long run, I think, we will have a trend to growth rate of 2 per cent.³ There will, of course, be cyclical fluctuations around this growth path.

What will be the impact of the growth predicted by you on the unemployment level and working week?

Krelle. Labour productivity per working hour in our country will be a bit higher and that means that we will have a shrinking working time. The trade unions press for a shorter working week in order to sustain employment. I am a bit more sceptical. We will not get rid of unemployment by 1995. Now it is around 9 per cent. If you have more working places, then women, particularly non-working wives, will enter the labour market. Now they are thinking they will not get a job anyway, so they are staying at home. That is why I do not expect unemployment to shrink considerably in the next few years.

In our forecast there is a small decline in employment in manufacturing. The services will expand, but not in the public sector. The number of government employees will be reduced.

Moriguchi. In Japan we project rising unemployment. We now have 3 per cent and it will not surprise me if it reaches 4 per cent by 1995, which is very high for Japan. To compare it with rates in the US or Western Europe, one should add 4 or 5 per cent more. The reason is that there is a difference in the definition of unemployment.⁴ Japan has the so-called permanent employment system, under which labour mobility is quite low. But this situation is going to change. Major corporations are under heavy pressure of rising expenses on wages to ageing personnel and have to hire fewer young people. This is unprofitable and the system might collapse before 2000.

Further, in Japan as a whole, the average worker puts in 2,200 hours a year, while in Western European countries working hours vary from 1,800 to 1,900. This is a sizeable difference. During the 1970s all the major industrialised countries had a decline, but not Japan. With the rising unemployment rate the shortening of working hours has come onto the agenda.

Hickman. In the long-term forecast I have got the unemployment rate coming down in the USA to 5.5 per cent by 2000 as a result of special measures to stimulate the economy. This is not what I would define as full employment, of course. An attempt to get it down lower would create fairly severe inflationary pressures. Our model also involves hidden unemployment. If the level of employment increases, so also does the level of the labour force, which means that the reduction in unemployment is smaller than the increase in employment. This is usually called hidden unemployment. The unemployment that is reported is smaller than the unemployment that really exists. People are out of the labour force because they don't think they can get a job.

In the US there has been a downtrend in average hours, which is in our projection to the year 2000, too. There has not been a systematic attempt to get below the 40-hour week even on the part of the trade unions. But the long-term trend towards shorter working hours is partly a reflection of the rising proportion of part-time employment and reduction of overtime.

In other words, the working week is being reduced without an appropriate rise in the hourly pay rates. Now let us turn to the stagnant industries and the structural crisis. What are their prospects?

Hickman. It is conventional wisdom in the US that our steel industry is obsolete and that its production machinery is outdated. But economic growth has always been accompanied by structural change. Individual industries may be in decline for a long time; for example, the decline in the cotton-textile industry of the US went on for 40 years or so. There is a possibility in principle for people to move from the dying industries to others — but they get hurt in the process.

Moriguchi. In Japan the steel industry depends on the rising yen rate since it imports a lot of iron ore and coking coal, which are becoming cheaper. But because of the new entrants into the steel market, such as Brazil, Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan, Japan's position is eroded. A good deal of capacity is now idle. Major steel manufacturers in Japan are trying to diversify. For instance, Nippon Steel set up a new department for semi-conductors; but it was not a very far-sighted move because the semi-conductor industry is overcompetitive already.

Another example is aluminium. Japan's aluminium industry used to produce 2 million tons a year. Now it is down to 300,000 tons, one-seventh of the peak. The reason is that the electricity price is so high in Japan that it is more economical to import aluminium from the US and Canada, and also from New Guinea and New Zealand, where Japan's aluminium industry has moved in search of the lower hydroelectricity price.

Krelle. The FRG steel industry is the most efficient in the European Community, but it still has to shrink. There is high pressure from Brazil and other countries to export their steel to the Community so that they could pay their foreign debts.

Now let us collate your forecasts. There is the view that the United States will fall behind both Japan and Western Europe. Meanwhile, Western Europe is alarmed that it is lagging behind the US and Japan in competitiveness and the pace of technological progress. Are these viewpoints justified?

Hickman. Japan expects to achieve a per capita annual growth rate of GDP of 2 per cent and the US 1.2 to 1.3 per cent. The gap will be narrowing considerably, as we see, and one thing you can think about is some general convergence of growth rates.

Moriguchi. In the case of Japan we are edging up, coming closer to the US per capita income level. But this target is moving ahead. I think it would take about 40 years for Japan to come abreast. There is also an equalisation trend, i.e. more Japanese corporations make direct overseas investment in the US. So, maybe our 2 per cent growth rate of productivity is not going to be maintainable in the future, say, after ten years. And a sizeable portion of capital stock will be formed in the US, contributing to rising labour productivity there and slowing down growth in Japan.

Hickman. But if surplus Japanese investment goes to the US, it might or might not go to business plant and equipment. There could be financial investment. It does not necessarily follow that the inflow of capital would lead to more investment in production creating activities.

In Western Europe, unlike Japan and the US, there is much more room for growth over short periods by reducing unemployment. The European economies have been unnecessarily restricting their growth through too tight financial and crediting policies over recent years. They certainly have room for more rapid advance. I disagree that the West Europeans are lagging behind the US and Japan in technological progress. The FRG growth rate in technological progress, though it has slowed down considerably, is still much higher than in the US. What I mean is total factor productivity.⁵ In the US it is only a little over 1 per cent, although before the late 1960s the figure was around 1.9 per cent. In the FRG it went down from 5 to 3.5 per cent, but the rate is still relatively high.

Krelle. I believe that all the West European countries with the exception of Great Britain and Italy will have higher rates of growth than the US both in GDP and labour productivity. Speaking of absolute labour productivity levels, the FRG is now ahead of Japan; I mean overall, not in individual industries where Japan may have an edge. Britain is trying to catch up with the other West European countries. Production has shrunk in manufacturing in the past few years but labour productivity has been growing faster than in the past.

What do you think of the prospects for an improvement in the world economic situation through more sensible policies, arms cuts and relaxation of international tension?

Hickman. The US budget deficit is decreasing very slowly vis-à-vis GDP, I think, and will certainly not get down to zero by the year 2000. Most of the devices for reducing the deficit are deflationary and have a depressing effect on economic activity. No cuts in federal spending are planned. Higher taxes, meanwhile, would reduce the tax base, so that you are in a kind of bind.

Moriguchi. Yet one can hope that the big budget deficit in the US will be sooner or later reduced. But I would like to raise another point. Recently Peter Drucker⁶ wrote a paper in the *Foreign Affairs* indicating that the former (colonial) economy has been uncoupled from the industrialised economy of the world and that now primary goods prices have hit the low bottom since the 1930s as compared to prices of manufactured goods. He thinks that the prices of foodstuffs and other primary commodities will never come back to their high level due to structural changes in the industrialised countries, the spread of microelectronics technology, etc. If Drucker is right and this uncoupling is irreversible, the countries heavily dependent on primary goods exports will not be able to find their way out of the heavy pressure of accumulated debts. Then higher world economic growth in general will not be a real thing before the year 2000.

An improvement in the general economic situation requires, to my mind, two conditions: first, getting rid of the indebtedness of the Third World countries and, second, using the reactivation of growth in the CMEA countries and China to broaden international economic relations. A good deal, of course, depends on trade with the socialist world, which is a big untapped potential of the world economy.



As we see, specialists have a rather pessimistic view of the long-term economic prospects of the industrialised capitalist countries. Their forecasts are based in part on the protracted debt crisis and other adverse processes in the Third World economies. Neither do they see any way of reducing mass unemployment or overcoming the structural crisis. A better political climate in world affairs would undoubtedly have a beneficial effect on production, international trade and employment. But although the imperative of a breakthrough in world politics is obvious, the bourgeois economists are yet to take it into account in their projections of development to the end of our century,

¹ In Japan, the figure for 1973-1985 was 4.2 per cent and for 1960-1973, 10.5 per cent. — *Ed.*

² In the USA the figure for 1973-1985 was 2.5 per cent and for 1960-1973, 4.2 per cent. — *Ed.*

³ In the FRG the figure for 1973-1985 was 1.8 per cent and for 1960-1973, 4.8 per cent. — *Ed.*

⁴ In Japan, anyone who works more than an hour per week is not considered unemployed. Partially paid compulsory 'leaves' are a widespread practice as well. These affect around one million people employed in manufacturing alone. Corporations arbitrarily transfer many of their personnel to lower-paid jobs in affiliates. All these methods are part of the 'permanent employment' system. — *Ed.*

⁵ The total factor productivity is the aggregate efficiency of live labour and means of production. — *Ed.*

⁶ An American sociologist specialising in management. — *Ed.*

Letters to *WMR*

Readers Respond, Add And Suggest

THE arms race and the militarisation of the economy, which meet narrow selfish interests, are an obstacle for entire mankind. Imperialism intends to make use of it so as to stop progress and people's struggle for socialism. That is why disarmament and demilitarisation should be the first step towards progress. I think that then our continent would no longer suffer crises as it does now. Meanwhile mankind will get a chance to struggle for genuine well-being, peace and socialism.

J. Valle U.
(Sweden)

I have read some of the articles published by your journal with great interest. For example, I found your survey 'The Peculiarities of Imperialism in the 1980s' highly important. It is an in-depth study of the present state of affairs in capitalist society, though in my opinion it lacks analysis of prospects and contradictions stemming from the scientific and technological revolution. I think that this important topic should be studied more scrupulously. It is necessary to elucidate from the Marxist-Leninist point of view the social, political and ideological problems connected with new technology and the socio-political and economic consequences of its application. I am convinced that the publication of articles of this kind would be a stimulating endeavour.

Máximo Puente Remiro
(Spain)

The world today, as you are aware, is dominated by two ideologies — socialism and capitalism. For us in the Third World still suffering from neocolonialism it is not easy to spread the principles of socialism. This difficulty is caused mainly by the environment in which we are — University — where capitalism is waxing strong . . . But the struggle must continue.

Eric Egwuibe
(Nigeria)

At present most of West European publications denounce the apartheid regime in South Africa. But defending human rights in the south of the African continent, the bourgeois press says nothing about racial problems existing in other countries. Attention should, however, be paid to this fact, as outbursts of racism in one form or another are becoming commonplace in most of the West European states. It is especially disconcerting that these prejudices find a favourable environment among a section of the young people.

Eric Hancen
(Denmark)

I have been a reader and a subscriber to *World Marxist Review* for some years now. I have been pleased to see book reviews appearing in your journal . . . They alert the reader to sources of information about which he might not otherwise be aware.

Eric Mueller
(Hong Kong)

Of many recent reports I would like to single out those focusing on Bulgaria where the democratisation of society is becoming a key aspect of the republic's life. Reforms carried out by our Bulgarian comrades are of interest to many, first and foremost to citizens of the socialist countries. I think that *World Marxist Review* should respond with new authoritative publications analysing in detail the changes in Bulgaria.

V. Stepanov
(USSR)

I would like to thank those comrades who gave me a pleasant opportunity to read a review of my book¹ in *World Marxist Review*, a journal of paramount importance and wide distribution. Regrettably enough, the press in my own 'democratic' country — Spain — made not the slightest mention, either good or bad, of that book!

I am not going to dwell on this circumstance, so upsetting to me, I would only like to point out that trade union and political 'pluralism' does not at all favour the working class nor, naturally, Communists.

A brotherly embrace from
Gabriel Garcia Sepulveda
(France)

¹ See *World Marxist Review*, No. 2, 1987, p. 128.

Following Up A Point

By Any Revolutionary Means

Reviewing our mailbag in *WMR* issue No. 4, 1987, we called on our readers to tell us what they thought of the opinion voiced by Abdus Rahman (Bangladesh) and by Chilean resident of Paris Jose Gonzalez on the relationship between the struggle for peace and the struggle for social progress. Below is one of the responses we received.

Comrades,

Responding to your invitation to discuss the letters by Abdus Rahman and Jose Gonzalez published in the April issue of your journal, I would like to share with you my considerations. Before I do so, I wish to thank you for the idea. Keep it up and know that we are always with you and that your work, however indiscretely, helps us Communists.

I find Abdus Rahman's thought very important. Western Europe has millions of working people (the author of this letter is one of them) who for many years have been unable to find jobs nor get any support from the state. Placed in such a dire situation they, too, could be forgiven the thought that their *personal* problems are much more serious than the threat of *universal*, global catastrophe, that the former problems are important because they have an immediate bearing on them, whereas the latter represents something alien and not always quite understandable. We should not forget, however, that in whatever part of the globe it flares up, a nuclear conflict will be of a world-affecting nature. After the cold night of a nuclear war there would be no hunger nor epidemics to combat. How can such a question of life and death on Earth and the problem of preserving peace on our common planet be alien to the Third World nations?

The burning problems of hunger and underdevelopment in different parts of the world are a scourge brought about by colonialism and neocolonialism, the monstrous product of capital. Poverty, hunger, epidemics and underdevelopment can be eradicated only when the people of all lands finally put an end to the exploitation of nation by nation, man by man. Nor can we forget that impoverishment is closely connected with militarisation. *Specific* problems besetting the Third World countries can only be resolved through the solution of the *general* problem, namely, through stopping the arms race and excluding the possibility of destroying mankind. Hundreds of thousands of billions of dollars wasted today for military purposes could help put an end to those shameful phenomena of present-day capitalist society.

As for the questions raised by Jose Gonzalez, they are to a certain extent concordant with the former problem. The answer should be unequivocal: we can be consistent revolutionaries and can work consistently to accomplish the general task of the Communists *only when* we understand that the preservation of peace on the globe is the priority task of all

mankind. This by no means spells renunciation of another main task of the communist movement, namely, the revolutionary struggle for building a socialist society. Whether this will call for an armed struggle or will occur peacefully depends on the *specific country and the concrete historical circumstances*. By force of well-known circumstances the peaceful transition is very complicated though not impossible: Lenin spoke of it shortly before the October Revolution at a time when it could be started.

We would be inconsistent, if we failed to get ready to make the right choice for the victory of the proletariat. It would be a mistake, to say the least, to 'bury' the armed or violent form of the revolutions, as it may still, I suppose, be imperative depending on the place and time of action.

There is no antagonistic contradiction between the indisputable priority of the struggle for peace on Earth and the need to struggle, *by any revolutionary means*, to attain the aims of the working class or the national liberation movement. In El Salvador, Chile, Paraguay and other countries with obvious bloody or barely disguised dictatorships, I think, one concrete problem or another will be singled out and put to the forefront. It will be chosen with due account taken for the general tasks and specific development and for the dialectics of the specific and the general, depending on the existing movement, the successes and accomplishments of the mass of the people, their social consciousness and the actions by the revolutionary vanguards. It should be borne in mind that the weakening of imperialism in any of its links leads to the weakening of the system as a whole. If an obstacle is raised in front of the imperialist warmongers, El Salvador and Chile also stand to gain, together with the cause of human progress. Communist regards from

Ricardo Samorano Alfonso
(Spain)

We thank all those who have sent us letters and are looking forward to getting new responses, questions and suggestions. Our address is Thakurova 3, Prague 6, Czechoslovakia.

Press Organs Of Fraternal Parties

Brief Survey*

Mirror

People's Progressive Party of Guyana

THE newspaper *Mirror* marked its 25th anniversary in 1987. It first appeared on December 16, 1962. It was a very difficult juncture in the history of Guyana. The movement for political independence had come against fierce resistance from the British colonialists, US imperialists and local reactionaries acting in concert. The mass media, which was in the

* For previous surveys see *WMR* Nos. 8, 9, 1987.

hands of foreign capital and the reactionary local bourgeoisie, had unleashed a vicious destabilisation campaign against the People's Progressive Party, which had been brought into office in the 1961 general elections. The rightist media played a major role in inciting race riots, which caused death and destruction on a wide scale.

The paper had therefore a baptism of fire. Thugs hired by the reactionaries often seized and destroyed copies and regularly attacked the party members who helped with the distribution. But the *Mirror* survived and grew stronger.

Ever since Guyanese independence in 1966, the newspaper has been fighting neocolonialism, advocating economic independence, the nationalisation of the key economic sectors and social emancipation and exposing the corruption and bribe-taking of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie under the rule of the People's National Congress.¹

The newspaper's growing popularity coupled with its uncompromising stand in the interests of the working masses provoked ever new acts of repression on the part of the regime, whose popularity kept declining. A series of measures taken by the authorities in the 1970s forced the newspaper to reduce its size and even to cease publication on several occasions.

The *Mirror* staff firmly resisted the regime's pressure. They sued the authorities, charging them with violating the Constitution, took their case to the UN Human Rights Commission, IOJ and UNESCO and had it raised in the Parliament and with the Trade Union Congress of Guyana. They organised many demonstrations inside the country in support of their just cause.

An important though partial victory was won as a result. In July 1981 the government had to back down and the newspaper started coming out as a four-page weekly.

Every issue opens with an editorial presenting the party's position on an important issue. The 'World News' column is devoted to international events. Much space is reserved, naturally, for Guyana's domestic problems and also for party experience. The full-time editorial staff is just four persons but many authors cooperate with the paper. The *Mirror* is mostly distributed through party organisations and sold at the news-stands.

In addition to the *Mirror*, the PPP publishes the quarterly *Thunder* and the monthlies *Youth Advance* and *Women Unite*, and also booklets and handbills on individual issues.

The *Mirror* maintains close relations with the Communist and progressive press throughout the world. Whenever possible, its representatives attend the festivals of fraternal parties' papers.

The history of our paper is one of service to the working people. The *Mirror* has withstood many difficult trials and we are confident that it will grow larger and make a bigger contribution to the fight for democracy, peace and social progress.

¹ Guyana's ruling party since 1968. — Ed.

Tariq al-Shaab
Iraqi Communist Party

Tariq al-Shaab (The People's Way) began to be published by the Iraqi Communist Party clandestinely after the authorities had banned the Communist newspaper *Ittihad al-Shaab* in 1962.

Beleaguered with acute domestic, inter-Arab and international difficulties, the ruling Baath party had to enter a dialogue with the Iraqi Communist Party in early 1972 on possible cooperation, and following the establishment of a common political front of the ruling party and the Iraqi Communists in July 1973, the first legal issue of *Tariq al-Shaab* came out on September 16.

As the authorities toughened their repression of the democratic forces, the newspaper's staff began to be harassed and persecuted and in May 1979 it was banned. However, in just two months publication was resumed abroad and a part of the newspaper's press run was smuggled into the homeland. In the summer of 1982 it was decided to publish the newspaper in those parts of Iraq where Communist guerrilla groups operated. Copies are shipped clandestinely to other provinces and distributed among party members and sympathisers, who spread the word to the mass of people.

Ever since its establishment, the leading newspaper of the Iraqi Communists has been carrying two mottoes, 'Workers of the world unite!' and 'A free homeland, a happy people!' The newspaper dates its foundation to 1935, when the Iraqi Communists launched their first paper, *Kifakh al-Shaab* (The People's Struggle); that is why the *Tariq al-Shaab* 1987 issues carry the words 'Fifty-second year of publication'.

It is a monthly of 12 pocket-size pages, made by fast-printing methods. Copies smuggled out of the country are enlarged, duplicated and distributed among Iraqi emigrés and people from other Arab countries.

Tariq al-Shaab has regular columns, such as 'World News', 'Letters from the Provinces' and 'Youth News'. An editorial in every issue analyses the major developments of the month. The front page usually explains the party's stand on the more important domestic, inter-Arab and international issues.

The Iraqi Communists' newspaper gives regular coverage to the situation of the workers and peasants and carries letters from them, and also reviews of letters on developments in different parts of the country. It reports on the authorities' acts of repression and exposes the undemocratic character of the regime. The column 'Guerrilla Operations' reports on the actions of Communist guerrillas, the activities of the national resistance movement and on mass support for them; it also sketches the biographic records of party members who died hero's deaths for the people's cause.

The newspaper has a small staff, mostly self-taught journalists who learned the profession in struggle and through work in the party press. The editorial board keeps in touch with the masses through conduits maintained by the party organisations in the provinces. Emigré party members regularly supply *Tariq al-Shaab* with reprints from the foreign press and articles analysing the attitudes of political forces in different countries to developments in Iraq and especially to the Iran-Iraq war.

Presenting the party's basic stand and expounding its major policy lines, *Tariq al-Shaab* is playing an important role in maintaining a sound base for the Iraqi Communists' ideological unity. Meetings to discuss the newspaper's editorials have long become regular practice with party organisations. The newspaper also has a role to play as a means of agitation and mobilisation, rallying the masses around the slogans of the Iraqi Communists. It does not feature political research items, however, for lack of space. The gap is filled by the party's ideological journals *Al-Thaquafa al-Jadida* (The New Culture) in Arabic and *Peri Nowe* (New Thought) in Kurdish, which publish theoretical, political and socio-economic research articles and discuss problems of literature and art.

Tariq al-Shaab maintains broad contacts with Communist publications in different countries, and carries brief surveys of the more important publications in the communist press on Iraq's major problems.

The Iraqi Communist Party publishes abroad a political news monthly, *Risalat al-Iraq* (The Letter from Iraq), which is devoted mostly to the situation of the masses.

The Iraqi Communist Party's organisation in Kurdistan publishes the monthly *Regaii Kurdistan* (The Way of Kurdistan) in Kurdish.

The Arabic monthly *Nahj al-Ansar* (The Guerrillas' Course) describes the guerrillas' military operations and analyses their combat experience.

Ascending To Oblivion

Statistics On Wars Of The Past And The Nuclear Present

A GROUP of prominent US scientists publishes in Chicago the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. Its cover features the 'Doomsday Clock' — a dial showing how close we are to midnight — to the catastrophe which will break out unless we end the arms race, stop building up nuclear stockpiles and give up the development of new weapon systems. In early 1980 the hands of the clock moved from 11.51 to 11.53. In 1986 it showed 11.57. Will the year 1987 stop the clock?

Since the dawn of civilisation and to the mid-twentieth century, 14,500 big and small wars and armed conflicts were registered, in which some 3,650 million people died — nearly three-quarters of the current global population total. The Swiss scholar Jean-Jacques Babel who cites these figures estimates that throughout that period only 292 years were free of bloodshed.¹ Within a more definite span of time — between 1500 B.C. and A.D. 1860 (3,360 years) — mankind lived in peace for a mere 227 years.²

The more effective weapons of war man devised, the more devastating wars became. While the seventeenth-century average death toll in the various armed conflicts fought in Europe was 33,000 a year, the figure rose

to 53,000 in the eighteenth century and to 116,000 in the nineteenth century and up to 1938.³

The flames of World War II devoured, on average, more than eight million lives every year. The total loss of life was over 50 million — nine times that of World War I and 200 times that of all Napoleonic Wars. Civilians made up nearly one-half of all who perished in World War II. Add to that the tens of millions who were wounded and crippled, the orphaned children, and the huge loss of property.

It pays to recall these World War II facts so as to grasp the danger inherent in the arms race and in any nuclear conflict. The US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency estimates that in 1986 alone, the world earmarked 900 billion dollars for military purposes. Every minute, 1.7 million dollars was spent.

Naturally, one cannot say exactly how many people would be killed in probable nuclear strikes. It is clear, however, that the total would go into the tens or even hundreds of millions. But these colossal immediate losses are not all there is to it. Scientists warn us that nuclear explosions and the consequent fires will result in a gigantic smoke screen which will blot out the sun. A 'nuclear nightfall' will be followed by a 'nuclear winter'.⁴

As has been pointed out earlier, the correlation of war and peace periods in the past is obviously in favour of the former. Besides the threat of a nuclear holocaust so-called local armed conflicts continue to flare up now and then. For example, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 36 armed conflicts, involving 41 countries,⁵ took place in 1986. The most dangerous of them — the fierce and senseless war between Iran and Iraq — is still going on and even exacerbating.

Imperialist powers can be found behind the scenes in the theatres of war and for that matter not only behind the scenes. Since World War II the US, Great Britain and France have been involved in nearly 300 'small' wars and armed conflicts in which 20-22 million people perished.⁶ It is not that people refuse to learn from history. The reason is that there exist forces that *have a stake* in such conflicts, in continued military and political tensions. After all, war is a business which the capitalists find much more profitable than any other. Under Napoleon, the French munitions manufacturers 'earned' 45 francs from the death of a single soldier. Later, the 'rate' went on growing fast: during World War I it was nearly 1,000 dollars and during World War II, 3,000 dollars. The United States made a handsome profit out of these global conflicts. At a safe geographical distance from the theatres of war, it secured a 'return' of, respectively, 20 billion and 150 billion dollars. Small wonder that US imperialism now acts as the main opponent of a transition from the arms race to disarmament.

Washington has always had a taste for militarism. *The New York Times* has calculated that from 1798 to 1945 the United States resorted to armed intervention abroad 159 times, 73 times without declaring war. According to the Brookings Institution, from 1946 to 1975 the United States used armed force against other countries for purposes of intervention and intimidation on 215 occasions. Washington's military interventionist zeal was just as manifest in the subsequent years, especially when the current administration came to power.

So far, only conventional weapons have been used in the 'small wars'. However, the nuclear bomb has become or is becoming an open secret to several countries outside the 'nuclear club' such as Israel, South Africa and Pakistan. Hence the growing danger that a number of local conflicts may 'go nuclear', with all this entails.

A rational, constructive approach to international relations, a new way of thinking based on a sober assessment of contemporary realities are emerging as an ever more imperative necessity. To remain a prisoner of one's illusions, to rely on power politics, superiority and diktat — something to which many people in Washington are still inclined — means to demonstrate not merely a deformed mentality but even a complete absence of common sense, an attitude contrary to the instinct of human survival.

The rising graph of the loss of life and property caused by wars must be cut short because otherwise it will plunge mankind into oblivion.

Miroslav Courton
Czechoslovak journalist

¹ *Nová doba*, September 29, 1971.

² *Rudé právo*, June 12, 1987.

³ *Quid*, 1987.

⁴ For details see: "Nuclear Winter: No Illusions", *WMR*, No. 8, 1987.

⁵ *Rudé právo*, July 30, 1987

⁶ *Rudé právo*, June 12, 1987.

WMR Ties

HWANG Jan Yop, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, visited *WMR* offices and had a talk with the *WMR* editor-in-chief. They discussed problems of international solidarity with the struggle waged by the Korean people against US imperialism's aggressive actions and also the ways of promoting cooperation between the Workers' Party of Korea and the journal.

★ ★ ★

A delegation of the Communist Party of Spain (CPS) led by José Maria Coronas, member of the CPS CC Executive Committee and Secretariat, visited *WMR* offices and discussed problems of furthering cooperation between the party and the journal.

★ ★ ★

WMR delegations took part in the Third Conference of the Representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Red Sea area and also in the

international academic conference 'The Great October Revolution and the Experience of Non-Capitalist Development' held in Ulan Bator.



K. P. Silva, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, visited *WMR* offices and spoke at an Editorial Council meeting. He described ways of settling the country's burning national problem and the Communists' struggle against imperialism's subversive activity and for the brotherhood of the Singhalese and the Tamils, the deep-going democratisation of social life and the unity of the left forces. The talk that followed centred on problems of further cooperation between the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and the journal.

In Memory Of Mohammad Farhad

WE regret to announce the death of Mohammad Farhad, a prominent figure in the Bangladesh and international communist and working class movement, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh. He was a selfless champion of the working class cause, an inveterate patriot and a staunch internationalist.

Comrade Mohammad Farhad was born on July 5, 1938 into a family of a teacher in Dinajpur (East Bengal). He graduated from the political science department at Dacca University and has been in the thick of politics since his teens. In 1955 he joined the Communist Party and spent over thirty years championing the national ideals of his people and social progress. During the liberation struggle in 1971 he led a committee in charge of the CPB guerrilla forces and the student alliance of the country. He has contributed creditably to the drive against imperialism and neocolonialism and for peace and world security.

Comrade Mohammad Farhad has been through many a trial — everyday privation and many years of work in the underground. He was repeatedly arrested and imprisoned. A combination of qualities forged by his strenuous work, an unshakeable belief in the working class and a socialist future, and a brilliant organising ability made him a political figure in his country and leader of the Bangladesh Communists. At the CPB Second Congress in December 1973 he was elected CC General Secretary and has been in this post ever since. He has contributed several articles to *WMR* on the heroic struggle by the people in Bangladesh for democracy and against imperialist and neocolonialist policies.

The Communists and everyone cherishing freedom, democracy, peace and socialism will always remember Comrade Mohammad Farhad and his cause.

the book scene

Names We Hold Most Dear

THE familiar images of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and Vladimir Lenin, portraits of their relatives, friends and associates . . . The engravings and pictures recreate dramatic moments in revolutionary history. The terse explanations accompany us throughout this new encounter with the founders of scientific communism . . .

The fundamental trilogy of album books crowns many years of painstaking work by the Soviet Progress Publishers.

The first of them focuses on Karl Marx.¹ It uses materials from the archives of the Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Museum in Moscow, the Central Party Archives and the library of the Marxism-Leninism Institute under the CPSU CC. Among the 810 illustrations are all the photos of Marx and his family, relatives and associates, extracts from manuscripts of his major works, engravings and drawings kept in the USSR. Also featured are quite a few rare documents, among them cards of Communist International members signed by Marx, pages from the General Council minutes book, and pictures of members of the Russian section of the International. There are separate chapters on his work on the *Capital*, the founding and operation of the First International, and the Paris Commune.

The second book devoted to V. I. Lenin,² features materials from the Lenin Central Museum in Moscow, among them nearly 1,200 photographs, including the only surviving one of the Ulyanov family. It contains manuscript pages from the article, *New Economic Developments in Peasant Life*, Lenin's first work that we know of.

The book looks back at Lenin's efforts to set up and foster the party, its *Iskra* and *Pravda* publications, and his activities during the 1905-1907 Revolution, World War I, the February 1917 Revolution, and, finally, the Great October Socialist Revolution, when his theoretical, strategic and organisational genius emerged at its most striking. There is a special section on Lenin's diverse work as head of the Soviet government and his prodigious contribution to the practice of building socialism and the theory of scientific communism.

The closing third book is about Frederick Engels.³ It also is built around documents, photographs, engravings and lithographs from the archives of the Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Museum in Moscow and materials from the Central Party Archives and the library of the Marxism-Leninism Institute under the CPSU CC. They tell us of the friendship and collaborative effort by Engels and Marx, May Day celebrations in Europe and the USA, and the proletariat's major strikes and other actions.

The book concentrates on the advances Engels made in dialectically studying the world around us as well as his fight against militarism. 'Could

Europe Be Rid of Weapons?' the article he wrote two years before his death, compellingly shows that disarmament is no utopia and is achievable through international agreement.

The trilogy could be described as a documented chronicle of the international revolutionary working class movement. It might be interesting for readers abroad to know that the book on Marx has come out, apart from Russian, in French; the one on Engels, in English, French and Spanish; and the one of Lenin, in English, French, German, Spanish and Vietnamese. Progress Publishers are getting ready to put the book on Marx also in English, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and other languages.

Jiří Vrba

¹ *Karl Marx. Life and Work. Documents and Photographs*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1983, 416 pp. (in Russian).

² *V.I. Lenin. Life and Work. Documents and Photographs*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1985, 488 pp. (in Russian).

³ *Friedrich Engels. Life and Work. Documents and Photographs*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1986, 468 pp. (in Russian).

The Power Of Continuity

Erich Honecker. *Revolutionäre Theorie und geschichtliche Erfahrung in der Politik der SED*. (Revolutionary Theory and Historical Experience in the Policy of the SUPG), Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1987, 674 pp.

THIS is a collection of selected articles and speeches by Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, and Chairman of the State Council of the GDR. It is a reflection of the specific features of the SUPG's experience in establishing the political power of the working class, developing and strengthening the workers and peasants' state, building a socialist society, and fighting for peace and collective security.

The collection covers the period from 1971 to 1987, the most fruitful period in the development of our republic. It shows the SUPG's successful use in its policy and practical activities of the wealth of historical experience for the revolutionary transformation of the society, for peace and socialism in the guiding light of the Marxist-Leninist theory. It demonstrates the worldwide historical significance of the Great October Revolution, which ushered in the new epoch, and gives a high appreciation of its lessons and economic and social gains.

Among the author's most important conclusions is that the more effective its cooperation with the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, the more successful is the fulfilment of the tasks of socialist construction in the GDR. "From the very outset, friendship with Lenin's country has been the state doctrine for the socialist German state. The

GDR has always acted in close alliance with the USSR and this has ensured its security in the face of imperialism and has helped it to solve its internal problems. Our cooperation has gained in depth with every step on the way of socialist construction. Thanks to this common effort, our republic has become a politically stable socialist state with a highly developed industry, agriculture, education and culture" (pp. 564-565).

The blend of economic and social policy, the elaboration and implementation of the strategy of social development, which has been determining the advance of socialism in the GDR for some fifteen years now are matters dealt with in detail in the collection. "Responsible policy . . . should never be fearful of seeing the reality just as it actually is. At the same time, it should take account of the direction in which this reality *can and must* develop for the benefit of the popular masses under its influence. We in the GDR practice a state policy principle according to which we make a realistic assessment of all the material and spiritual conditions of our advance towards socialism, determine the concrete consequent tasks, reckon with their complexity, and simultaneously map the ways for their successful fulfilment" (p. 480).

The author has always taken a responsible approach to the elaboration of strategy and tactics, and to their implementation. He keeps emphasising that engaging in politics requires a scientific and sober analysis of the objective situation, and that this must go hand in hand with the most resolute recognition of the revolutionary energies, creativity and initiative of the masses, of every individual and of all parties and organisations.

Those were the principles by which the SUPG was guided in preparing and holding its Eighth Congress in 1971, whose decisions inaugurated a qualitatively new stage in the development of socialism in the republic. As a result, the author says, as early as 1971, "we got down to switching the national economy to the way of intensification, to closely tying in science and production. This has yielded gratifying results. Without the decisions of the Eighth Congress, the basis on which the unity of economic and social policy was increasingly consolidated, it would have been impossible to develop the productive forces with a marked growth in labour productivity. At the same time, we have improved the socialist relations of production . . . We have only one objective, and it pervades our party's entire policy: to do everything for the benefit of man, for the people's happiness, in the interests of the working class and of all other working people. That is what socialism means, and that is what we intend to work and fight for" (p. 649).

The works included in the collection show the author's skill in tying in questions of theory with the historical experience of the national and other fraternal parties, to analyse the results and objective trends in the development of socialism, and to draw theoretical and practical conclusions for implementing the party's general line. In the light of the experience since the Eighth Congress, he has argued the continuation of the well-tested policy of further perfecting the developed socialist society in the GDR. This policy was written into the SUPG Programme by the Party's Ninth Congress in 1976.

Implementing the general line, says the author, means a balanced development of all the advantages and motive forces of socialism, of every

aspect of social life, the productive forces, the relations of production, social and political relations, science, education, ideology and culture — of the entire set of working and living conditions — and also of national defence. The SUPG Programme says that a developed socialist society implies the need to create the material, economic, social, political and ideological prerequisites for realising the substance of socialism at an ever higher level.

Our people's working and living conditions have been markedly improved by the powerful and dynamic growth of the national economy, which has been attained through the fulfilment of the Programme. The Tenth Congress in 1981 formulated ten points of the party's economic strategy for the 1980s. Despite the much more complicated international situation and the difficulties arising from the growth of the world prices of raw materials, oil, etc., the congress decided to reaffirm the continued fulfilment of the main task: the boosting of the national economy through a sharp increase in labour efficiency and the use of the latest scientific and technical achievements. This economic strategy was further elaborated with an eye to the year 2000 by the 11th Congress of the SUPG in 1986. In the Central Committee's Report to the Congress, Erich Honecker said, in particular, that the socialist planned economy in the GDR made it possible to use modern hardware and primarily the key high technologies for intensively expanding reproduction.

The collection presents an elaborate set of arguments to show that in the present conditions the national economy can be developed only through broad intensification and the ever more effective combination of the advantages of socialism with the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution, with a simultaneous perfection of the relations of production. An exceptional role in this process belongs to the trade unions, the purposeful work of women's, youth and other social organisations, and to our party's alliance with all the strata of the population and political forces in the GDR.

In complete accord with its supreme goal — doing everything for the people's good and happiness — the SUPG has been making a big contribution to the struggle for peace. It has remained true to its historical duty — that of preventing another war ever flaring up from German soil — and has conducted a policy of dialogue, tirelessly working to establish a climate of trust in relations between states, so as to promote the relaxation of the extremely aggravated international situation, disarmament, and eventually the elimination of wars from the life of mankind.

The collection shows just how much Erich Honecker has done for the political dialogue with all the forces of goodwill that is so necessary for the survival of civilisation, and his personal involvement in it. For decades, he has been widely known as a staunch fighter for the triumph of reason, and for the mutual understanding promoting peace among all nations. Many of his works show that with the switch in the early 1980s by the most aggressive circles of the United States and NATO to the policy of confrontation and the arms build-up, the world entered upon a new and extremely dangerous period of post-war development. On the basis of an in-depth scientific analysis of the international situation, the SUPG has

reached the conclusion that the imperialist policy of confrontation is not a short-lived episode, for the preparation for it was begun in the latter half of the 1970s with far-reaching objectives. This has raised many new issues and has created a totally new situation for the political forces acting for détente, disarmament and social progress; the preservation of peace has become the most important task of our day.

At the international scientific conference, 'Karl Marx and Our Day — the Struggle for Peace and Social Progress', which was held in Berlin in April 1983, the SUPG once again drew attention to the conditions which have changed for action by the peace forces, and the consequent tasks.

"From the rostrum of this forum," said the SUPG CC General Secretary, "I should like to state that it is an imperative of our day that all the political and social forces sincerely desirous of peace should collaborate and dispose of the differences in their political programmes, ideological positions, creeds, and class barriers, indeed, everything that divides them, in order to rescue the peoples from the disaster of a nuclear war. That does not mean that they will not continue to differ in their views. The defence of peace — mankind's greatest asset — is the primary common and unifying interest. What is more commitment to peace gives great scope for mutually beneficial cooperation in various spheres" (pp. 437, 438).

In the light of this strategic conception, the GDR has been able to make its generally recognised contribution to the cause of peace at the 'watershed' between socialism and capitalism in Europe, a region which could, perhaps, be described as the most sensitive one on the globe. The SUPG's unequivocal stand — its insistence that there is no acceptable alternative to the policy of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems, and that includes the states on German soil (the democratic principles of this policy are a key element of the relations between the GDR and the FRG) — has already yielded positive results. The author draws some important conclusions, which have been dictated by experience, that undoubtedly amplify our comprehension of Lenin's idea of peaceful coexistence as a reliable way for warding off the threat of war and rescuing mankind from a nuclear catastrophe. Among these conclusions is the idea that "the preservation of peace and the all-round development of the socialist society are inter-related and should be ensured simultaneously" (p. 445).

The last item in the collection is a report on the meeting at the SUPG CC Secretariat with the first secretaries of the party's district committees in Berlin on February 6, 1987. It sums up what was achieved in fulfilling the tasks set by the 11th Congress and gives clear-cut guidelines for further advance. The SUPG CC General Secretary pointed once again to the fundamental significance of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, which he says was an event of historical importance and great international influence. "In fulfilling the decisions of the congress, the Soviet people, like the working people of the GDR, who have been striving to fulfil the tasks set by the SUPG's 11th Congress, are making a contribution to consolidating the socialist system and securing peace" (p. 648).

The works in this collection contain profound theoretical analyses and clarity of thought, and are stylistically clear. They provide convincing

answers to the cardinal questions of our day, presenting a wide panorama of the SUPG's political activities, a fact which helps the reader comprehend in greater depth the complexity of the challenging problems being tackled by our party at the present stage.

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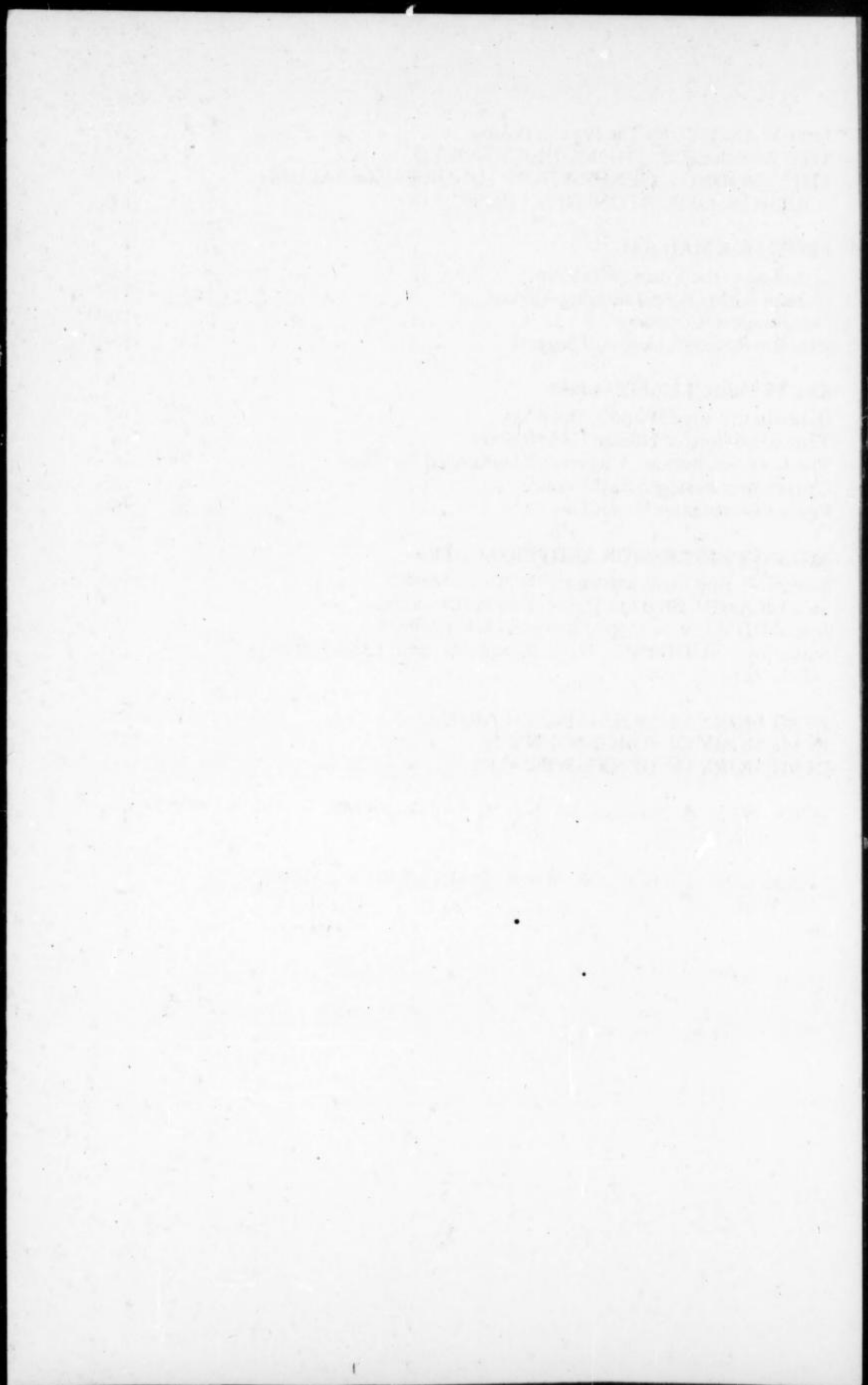
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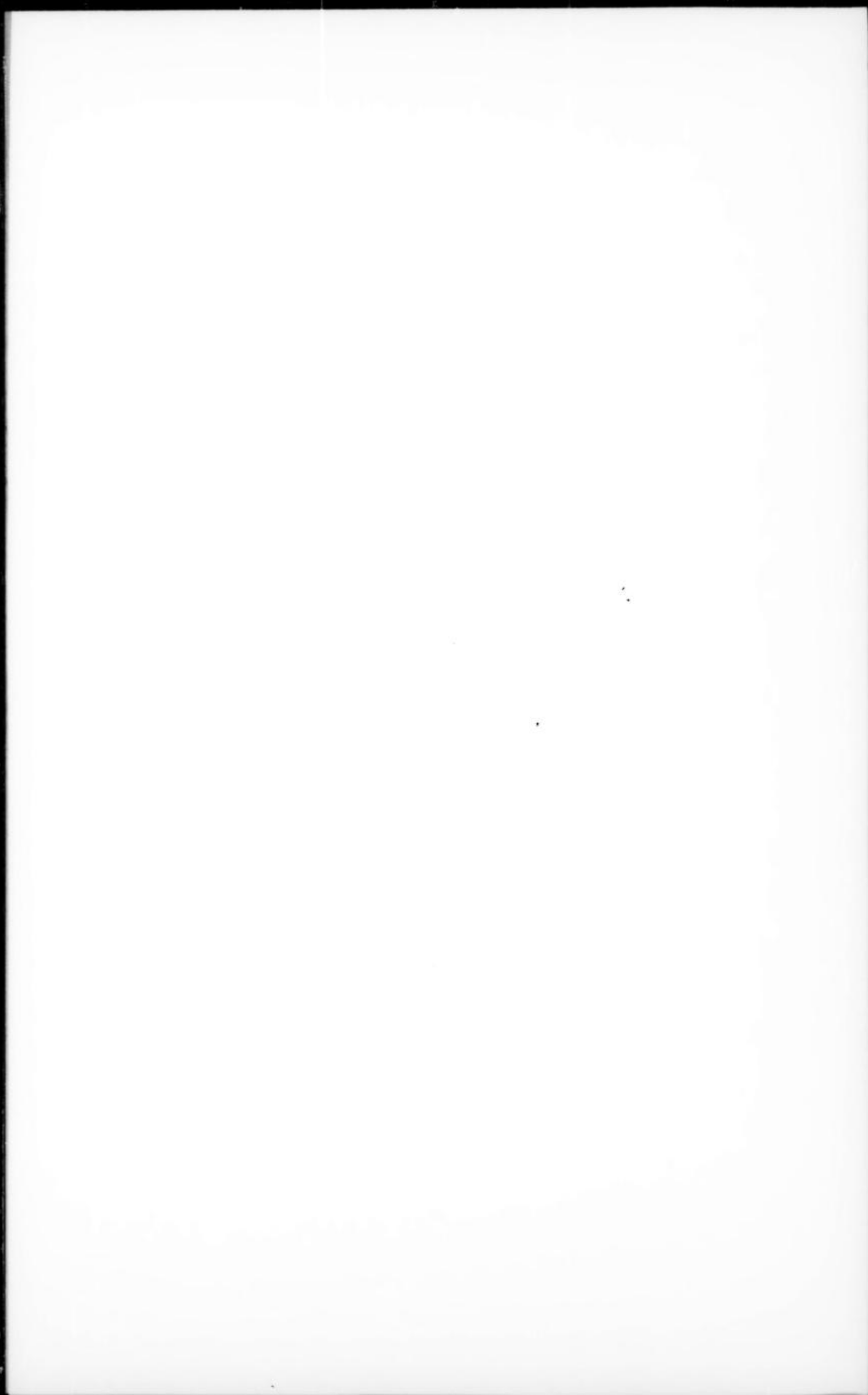
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