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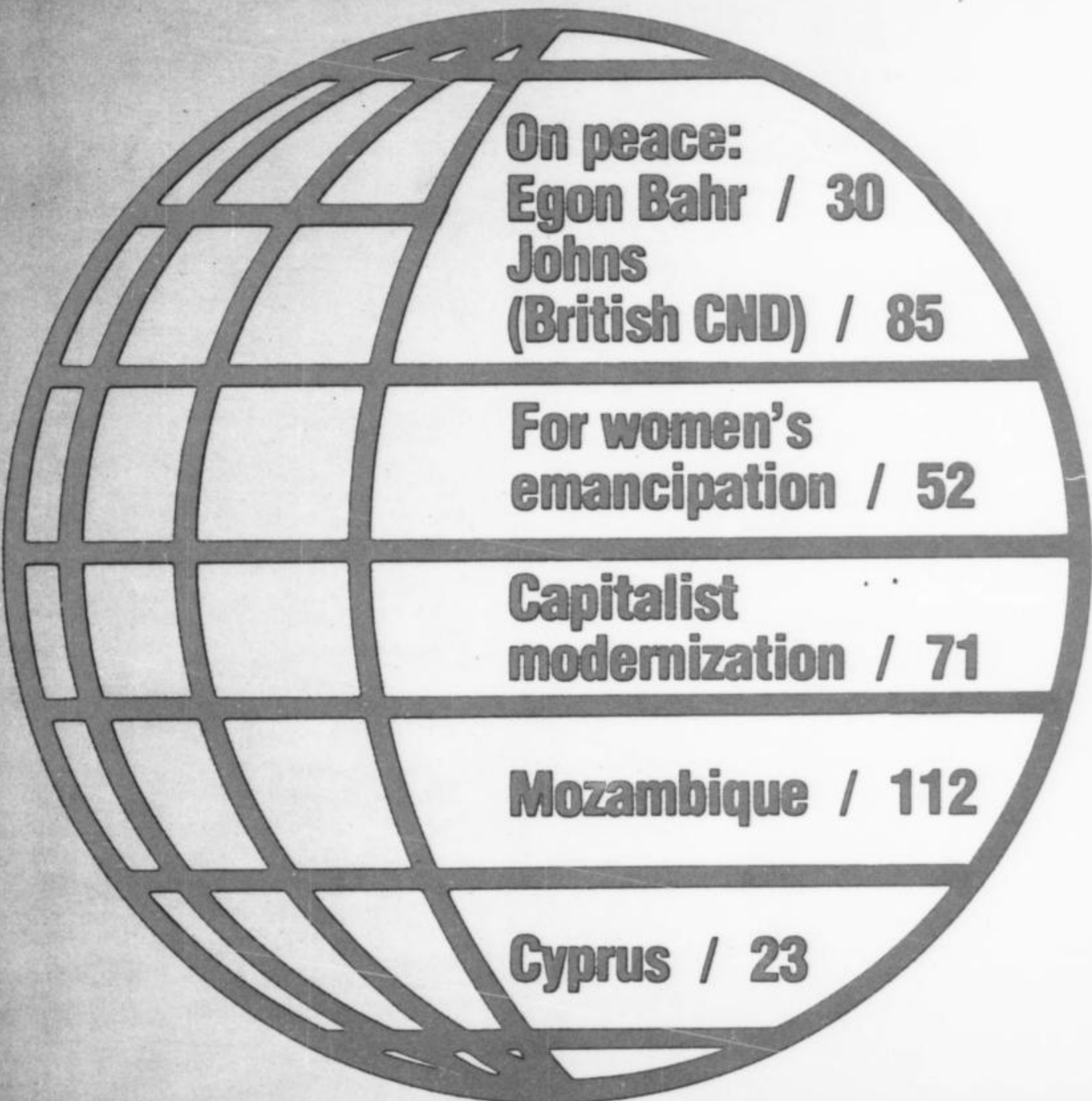
Problems of

MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

REVIEW

March 1987 Vol. 30, No. 3
\$2.00 ISSN 0043-8642



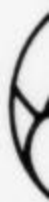
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world marxist review

VOLUME 30 NUMBER 3 MARCH 1987

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

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

WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

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Reflection on a Reality

A Long, Uphill Pull Lies Ahead

27th CPSU Congress and the Road to a Non-Nuclear World

THE 27th Congress of the CPSU, a congress of innovative ideas and decisions, took place on February 25-March 6, 1986. On the basis of an in-depth critical analysis it drew lessons from the past and worked out the strategy for accelerating Soviet Society's development, coupling it on a common platform with a wide-ranging programme for making the world nuclear-free.

The CC Political Report, delivered by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachov, the new edition of the party's Programme, the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and for the Period Ending in 2000, and other documents of this congress oriented Soviet society towards a determined effort to eradicate elements of stagnation, ensure dynamic development, clear the way for revolutionary changes in the true sense of the word, and draw the entire huge population into this work. Capacious plans were marked out. By the end of this century the economic potential that is to be built up will be approximately equal to the capacity accumulated in the past 70 years of the Soviet power. The national income is to be almost doubled, and on that basis there is to be a dramatic rise of the Soviet people's living standard and cultural level. These targets are to be attained by restructuring the economy and the system of economic management with the use of the latest breakthroughs in science and technology and by mobilising the human factor.

Let us consider the implications of these plans.

The CPSU links the future of its country to peace, seeing its consolidation as the condition for socialism's further development. The attainment of the targets that have been set will be an immense contribution to international security, and it will open new possibilities for the struggle against the nuclear threat. In this examination of some aspects of the impact that the foreign policy decisions of the 27th CPSU Congress have made on international life, we take into account the fact that this impact emanates from the peaceful achievements of the Soviet people, from the inner processes that determine the present, landmark phase of socialist construction in the USSR.

Let us recall the beginning of the 1980s. The situation in the world was highly disconcerting. The arms race got out of hand. Washington was whipping it up with

its 'star wars' plans. The deployment of US first-strike missiles was started in Western Europe. The Geneva Walks were suspended.

In the leading imperialist powers, where conservative regimes were established, the military-industrial complex was laying claim to the role of overlord. It was growing more aggressive. Undeclared wars were launched against the peoples of Afghanistan and Nicaragua. Imperialist invaders were running amok in Lebanon. In the USA the ruling circles began fuelling national chauvinism and, in an effort to shake off the 'Vietnam syndrome', they undertook a scandalous aggression against the freedom of tiny Grenada. By the mid-1980s military-political tension had risen to a critical point. To some people it looked as though the world's slide into an abyss had acquired an irreversible momentum. The danger of a global catastrophe was felt and perceived as never before: it was close, very real and could happen any time. "Each day of our life," the Delhi Six said, ringing the distress signal, "is becoming a boon, as though the whole of humanity has become a prisoner in the death cell awaiting the unknown instant of execution".

Precisely at this dramatic time the Party of Lenin, showing an inestimably high sense of responsibility for the destiny of civilisation, came forward with bold and, what for many people were, it must be acknowledged, pretty electrifying initiatives to stimulate a turn for the better in international affairs. The energetic foreign policy steps taken by the USSR after the April 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee created the conditions for clearing the international atmosphere, allowing the world, that was choking in a climate of ominous tension, to inhale some restorative oxygen. This was felt particularly after the publication of the Gorbachov Statement of January 15, 1986. The programme set out in it for a phased elimination of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000 showed the realistic way for preventing catastrophe and inspired the hope that a safe world was both possible and attainable.

The 27th Congress of the Soviet Communists explicitly affirmed that this programme would be the *central direction of Soviet foreign policy*. It declared that the time had come to relinquish the forms and stereotypes of political thinking of the prenuclear epoch. The Political Report to the congress states that "the modern world has become much too small and fragile for wars and a policy of force. It cannot be saved and preserved if the thinking and actions built up over the centuries on the acceptability and permissibility of wars and armed conflicts are not shed once and for all irrevocably."¹

Should one assess the congress provisions on 'new thinking', 'acceleration', 'openness', or 'an extension of democracy' as masterfully worded slogans coined by shrewd persons or, as 'verbal acrobatics', as anti-communist propaganda would have people believe? By no means. We see the strength of the Soviet proposals in the fact that they rest on comprehension of the new reality and on the lessons that have been drawn from it.

What, specifically, does new political thinking signify? What new element does it project into world politics?

The congress had the courage to break with old ideological stereotypes and underscore the priority of peace over all other priorities. Imperialism has always threatened the peoples with war. But in our day this would be a nuclear war and portend the annihilation of all humanity. This is a qualitatively new situation such as never existed in the history of mankind.

Those who died in the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the close of World War II were victims of US militarism. The memory of this outrage is a warning for the future. But imperialism refused to face up to the lessons of history. Its lust for world supremacy touched off an unparalleled arms race. Upon coming to power Reagan publicly called for the destruction of the USSR in order to rectify

an 'error of history' and obliterate the 'empire of evil'.

However, imperialism's plans were invalidated when military-strategic parity was attained. At the summit in Geneva at the close of 1985 the US President had to concede that there would be no victors in a future war. This was, in essence, an acknowledgement that today the socialist system is invincible from without, by means of war. Also, this was an acknowledgement that the capitalist system is likewise unconquerable from without. Of course, this is not to say that the two systems will coexist in perpetuity. It only means that the struggle between them should not proceed in the form of a war.

The USA, and its military-industrial machine, remains the principal driving force of the arms race. But, as was noted at the 27th Congress, the world is much larger than the USA and its military bases on foreign soil. In world politics one cannot confine oneself to relations with any single, even a very important, country. Experience shows that this only encourages the arrogance of strength.

The 27th CPSU Congress drew the fundamental conclusion that in the prevailing objective situation the struggle between capitalism and socialism on the international scene can proceed *only and exclusively in forms of peaceful competition and peaceful contest*.

No country is today in a position to protect itself dependably by military-technical means alone. The character of modern weaponry is such that political means are becoming the only way to ensure security. The 27th Congress proceeded from the principles of equality, reciprocity, and respect for each country's interests. This is expressed in the comprehensive Fundamental Principles for building an all-embracing system of international security covering all the key areas of state-to-state relations — military, political, economic, and humanitarian.

The documents of the 27th CPSU Congress make it clear that the demilitarisation of the political consciousness should lead to the shaping of a new type of behaviour on the world scene. *It is vital not only to think but also to act in a new way.* This linkage is a cornerstone principle of the new thinking.

In a message to Takeshi Araki, Mayor of Hiroshima, Mikhail Gorbachov wrote, among other things, that "as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world there will be the threat of nuclear war and annihilation of all humanity in such a war. What we want, therefore, is not talk about the desirability of disarmament but the practical realisation of this wish of the peoples." This attitude was strikingly exemplified by the repeatedly extended unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests.

To vindicate imperialism's militarist policy its protagonists advance the sophism that the preservation of peace over the past few decades is the result of the nuclear equilibrium. In other words, the higher the level of this equilibrium the more durable will peace be.

This would be seen as a naive argument were it not serving the preparations to destroy humankind. Its rationale is that it is permissible to escalate the arms race, to extend it to outer space through the SDI. This is plainly outmoded thinking. Also, it contains the ulterior motive that in a situation in which an armed conflict with socialism is unwinnable it would still be in order to try and undermine it economically, to hope that it would not ride out the arms race. How does one respond to this? Socialism has time and again withstood tests of its viability. The successful implementation of the acceleration strategy in the Soviet Union and the further progress of the socialist community as a whole are the dependable guarantee that imperialism's calculations will be confuted again. It is high time the West realises that blackmail, threats, power pressure, and attempts to gain unilateral advantages are not the methods for building relations with the socialist world. All of this is incompatible with the norms of civilised relations between

peoples and states. Responsible political thinking presumes not only a clear perception of the magnitude of the overhanging danger of the catastrophic consequences of a thermonuclear war but, above all, political will, a sincere readiness for talks and agreements resting on the principle of equality and equal security. At the beginning of 1987 Mikhail Gorbachov reiterated that the "USSR will travel its half of the way to a disarmament honestly, without seeking any preponderance or advantage".

Consequently — disarmament, not exhaustion in an arms race. Consequently — candour and sincerity, not blackmail. Consequently — peaceful coexistence to the exclusion of all else.

And this is vital for everybody.

Disinterestedly, voluntarily, and with the maximum responsibility the Soviet Union undertakes to do all it can to prevent a nuclear war. It is making the total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons one of the central objectives of its policy. Is there a more logical, immaculate, lofty, moral, humane, and exemplary objective?

The concepts and principles advanced by the 27th CPSU Congress have their roots in the creative heritage of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, the international communist movement, and the conclusions of preceding congresses of the Soviet Communists.

The point is that the 27th CPSU Congress reproduced all these concepts and principles on a higher level of concrete analysis commensurate with the realities of the 1980s, enriched them with a new humane content and, in the light of the entire spectrum of global present-day problems, with the objective requirements of world social progress, integrated them in a *fundamentally new system of concepts — a philosophy of forming a secure world*. It charted a platform of concrete measures coupled with this philosophy in a coherent foreign policy programme, which is likewise a new word in the science of peace, in the struggle against the threat of war.

But even this does not exhaust the innovative character of the ideas put forward by the congress. The passage of time increasingly unfolds their dynamism and the fact that they are open to everything facilitating the crystallisation of new modes of political thinking and action. In the year that has elapsed since the congress *the Soviet Communists have made it clear that they are not imposing their philosophy of peace on anybody, that they are not presenting it as an ultimate truth*. On the contrary, as we can see from the pronouncements of the Soviet leaders and from Soviet political actions, they are trying to prevail upon all social forces, including the ruling circles of the West, to join them in the search for solutions of the problems of our contradictory but interrelated world, in collectively giving shape to new thinking.

We know from history that every major social change is necessarily preceded by a revolution in social thinking. Transformation of the nuclear into a nuclear-free world which requires a fundamental restructuring of the entire system of international relations is in terms of magnitude and impact on humanity's life comparable with the greatest revolutionary changes of the past. The shifts that are now taking place towards the formation of new political thinking are the beginning of a revolution in people's minds that is laying the ground for this change. The 27th CPSU Congress gave the ideological impetus for it, generally raising to a qualitatively higher level the interaction of the struggle for peace with existing socialism, with whose dynamic development the destiny of humanity is now linked more closely than ever before.

The new Soviet initiatives have dazzled the world. But Western propaganda has disparaged their significance, focusing more — in some instances, not without

esteem — on the personal qualities of the new unc customary Soviet leader, the changes in the style of Soviet foreign policy, its considerable flexibility, and so on. However, the acclaim given in some Western countries to the 'East's new style' soon began to ebb. Those who had formerly shed crocodile tears over what they alleged was the petrification and dullness of Soviet foreign policy now felt that it was a powerful factor reinforcing peace. After the 27th Congress they saw the Soviet Union as more disturbing than previously, its new policy being less amenable to them than the old, which they had criticised.

The rationale of this attitude is that imperialism is not about to drop its ambition to destroy the new social system. It is apprehensive of any acceleration of socialist society's progress, for such progress would enable that society to make full use of its advantages in all areas — from democracy and technology to the living standard and culture. It fears the attraction that this society has for the working people of the capitalist world. Precisely this is inducing imperialism to increase its arsenals, cherish the spectral illusion that there can be a defence against nuclear weapons, and explore ways for achieving military superiority.

Nothing can now stop the new thinking and the new policy from asserting themselves in international relations. Evidence of this is to be seen in some of last year's developments.

The most dramatic of these is, in our opinion, that *a process of change has started in people's thinking, that the idea of a nuclear-free world is steadily gaining ground*. Noteworthy in this context is the UN General Assembly's approval of the concept of an all-embracing system of international security proposed by a group of socialist countries. The prerequisite was thereby created for a broad dialogue on the substance of the new philosophy of security in the nuclear-space age and on the practical ways and means of restructuring international relations in keeping with that philosophy. This was fostered also by the successful completion of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence-and-Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. The attitude of the non-aligned nations on the question of peace was stated in the Harare Appeal. The Delhi Declaration on the Principles for a Nuclear-Free and Non-Violent World has become an important document of the new political thinking.

The Soviet-US summit at Reykjavik was an event of pre-eminent significance. That was a moment when humanity looked beyond the horizon, as it were, and saw the contours of a non-nuclear world. The summit might have been the start of progress in that direction had the US President not been so heavily dependent on the military-industrial circles determining policy in the West's strongest military power. The summit confirmed that the US leadership's bid to attain military superiority and militarise outer space is today the principal barrier to meaningful disarmament. But Reykjavik showed something else, namely, that it is possible to sign agreements leading to nuclear disarmament and that *the struggle for a non-nuclear world has reached a new, higher level* from which the peace offensive must make further headway in all directions.

The foreign policy actions of the socialist countries are a vital condition propelling this offensive. The 27th Congress contributed greatly to cooperation among these countries in the struggle for peace. The congresses of fraternal parties of other socialist countries held in 1986 highly assessed the peace programme of the Soviet Communists and expressed their solidarity with its objectives. For example, at its 17th Congress the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia declared that this programme had the wholehearted support of the Communists and people of Czechoslovakia, who were using all the potentialities at their disposal to make the most effective contribution of translating into reality the vast peace prospect it had opened up.

There is no time to be lost. The situation remains very tense. Imperialism's militarist circles are trying to reverse the positive processes that have surfaced. Practical actions for peace are a high priority today. A large role can be played here by the communist and workers' parties of capitalist countries. The Communist Party of Greece shares the view that the 27th CPSU Congress gave a fresh impetus to the efforts of the Communists of all countries to avert the threat of war and solidify unity among the peace forces. A non-nuclear world is the international goal of the Communists:

The task to prevent a nuclear war now stands above all the distinctions and conflicts dividing people. That is why the public and political forces acting to reinforce peace are growing steadily. Young people, women, the Greens, believers and atheists, members of different parties, politically uncommitted people, academics, businessmen, and even former NATO generals are active in the struggle together with the socialist countries, the non-aligned nations, and the communist and working class movement. The Soviet peace programme and the steps taken by the CPSU to implement it have unquestionably been the factor promoting the militancy of the anti-war movement. This was shown by, for instance, the Copenhagen world peace congress (held at the close of 1986), at which massive support was pledged for the Soviet peace initiatives. The prevailing situation requires all the anti-war forces to be more consistent and determined in countering imperialism's aggressive policy and its plans for intensifying the arms race and spreading it to outer space. Political and ideological differences should not be an obstruction to cooperation in the struggle for these aims. The main thing is not what divides the various forces but what unites them.

The philosophy of peace, substantiated by the 27th CPSU Congress, is concurrently a philosophy of social progress. It calls for *building a just and democratic world*. Its ideal is a world free of weapons and violence, a world in which every nation exercises its right to live in freedom, to national independence and social progress, to choose freely how it wishes to develop and what lifestyle to have. The world community, which consists of many tens of states, is in a process of rapid changes. There is nobody who can stop this process. The new social system does not need a war in order to triumph. Unlike imperialism, which is trying to stop the march of history and retrieve lost positions by force and violence, socialism does not link its future to military settlements of international problems.

In marking the anniversary of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, we can say with confidence that its ideas have become an active factor in the formation of new modes of political thinking and action. But this is only the beginning of the road. It would be harmful to harbour illusions. A long, uphill pull lies ahead.

Lumir Hanak

CC member, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia,
CPCz representative on WMR.

Zenon Zorzovilis

CC member, Communist Party of Greece,
CPG representation on WMR.

¹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Moscow, 1986, p. 74.

Warsaw Treaty in the European Context

Marian Orzechowski – CC Political Bureau member, PUWP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish People's Republic

THE European socialist countries signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, known as the Warsaw Treaty in Poland's capital on May 14, 1955. This inaugurated the military-political organisation which has since then been a dependable instrument safeguarding the national and collective security of the fraternal countries against the threat of imperialist aggression. Moreover, it has become the vehicle strengthening peace in Europe.

The signing of the Warsaw Treaty was the response to the West's turnabout towards confrontation that began after Winston Churchill called for a 'crusade' against communism in his notorious Fulton speech. The cold war split Europe into two opposing military-political blocs. In 1955, in accordance with the terms of the so-called Paris Agreements (1954), NATO was joined by the FRG, which was permitted to build up armed forces in flagrant violation of the accords reached at the Potsdam Conference of 1945. The socialist countries took a determined stand against this course of the USA and its allies, advancing the concept of collective security in Europe. After consultations with Poland and Czechoslovakia, the USSR proposed the convocation in Warsaw of a conference of European states on security and cooperation, inviting also the USA and China.¹ However, only delegations from eight socialist countries² arrived in the Polish capital by May 11, 1955, the day set for the start of the conference. After analysing the situation in Europe and in the world following the ratification of the Paris Agreements, they decided to form their own military-political organisation. The defensive system of the socialist states, that had hitherto rested on bilateral treaties, was thereby reinforced with a multilateral treaty. The military-political cooperation begun at the final stage of World War II was thus raised to a new level.

Our interaction was initiated and grew strong in the struggle against fascism, when the forces championing national liberation relied on the assistance of the Red Army and cooperated with it. This cooperation enabled countries of Central and Southeastern Europe to restore their independence and then begin a wide-ranging transformation of their political and socio-economic structures.

As it became increasingly clear that the people's democratic states had external and domestic aims in common, cooperation among them took shape in defence, which was institutionalised by bilateral treaties of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance (more than 30 of these treaties were signed in the period up to the close of the 1940s). These allow identifying two phases in the process of forming the defensive system of the countries of Central and Southeastern Europe. In the period from 1943 to the beginning of 1947 allied relations took shape among a group of states (the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia) that belonged to the Anti-Hitlerite Coalition and were members of the United Nations. In the second phase (end of 1947-beginning of 1949), these relations spread to Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary that by then had embarked upon revolutionary

Marian Orzechowski (b.1931) — professor of history holding the academic degree of Doctor of Historical Sciences. He was rector of Wroclaw University in 1972-1975. At the Ninth Extraordinary Congress of the PUWP (1981) he was elected a member of the OC and then a CC secretary in the same year. He was elected a member of an alternate member of the CC Political Bureau in 1983. In 1982-1983 Marian Orzechowski was General Secretary of the Polish Council of the Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth. In 1985 he was appointed Poland's Foreign Minister. At the party's Tenth Congress (1986) he was elected a CC Political Bureau member.

transformations.

The system of bilateral treaties was given colossal international weight by the participation in it of the Soviet Union, a socialist state whose might was already then a major material factor countering imperialism's aggressive designs.

In the life of peoples and states no issue is more crucial than security. It is the cornerstone of their existence. Experience has shown that *solid foundations of national security can only be built by a progressive social system with a high level of economic development and civilisation dependably backed up by a system of international alliances consistent with the interests of the member-countries*. The consolidation of our people's independence, our society's development, and the maintenance of our territorial integrity and state sovereignty have been and remain among the cardinal concerns of Poland's domestic and foreign policies.

Prior to and during the Second World War the nation's left-wing forces formulated the basic principles of its postwar policy. Conspicuous among these principles were those that provided for restoring independence and ensuring abiding security. Moreover, the Polish Communists advocated the formation of new international alliances, notably with the USSR. The 42 years that have elapsed since the victory over Nazi Germany have shown that the successful fulfilment of Poland's development plans and the strengthening of its international positions depend to a very large extent on the solidity of its fraternal links and on mutually beneficial cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other countries of our community.

Poland is situated between Western and Eastern Europe. Winds of war have blown across our country time and again, and the specificity of defence in this situation is that our national security is linked firmly to European security. The Soviet Union was interested in seeing a strong, independent, and democratic Polish state. The conclusion of military-political alliances between the USSR and its closest neighbours was regarded by it as a means of erecting a barrier to aggression and the outbreak of another war in that part of Europe.

Article 4 of the Soviet-Polish Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Postwar Cooperation of April 21, 1945 says: "In the event one of the High Contracting Parties is drawn, in the postwar period, into hostilities with Germany, should it have resumed its aggressive policy, or with any other state uniting with Germany directly or in any other way in such a war, the other High Contracting Party shall immediately render the Contracting Party drawn into hostilities, military and other assistance and support with all the means at its disposal."³

This was the first international act by People's Poland to embody the new conception of our national defence. It had a special significance, for it served as a prototype of the bilateral treaties with the other people's democracies. The basic purpose of these documents was to consolidate peace in Europe. Alongside the Warsaw Treaty, they remain in force to this day in Poland's policies and international relations.

The signing of the Warsaw Treaty gave a fresh impetus to the socialist community's peace strategy. The member-states concentrated their joint actions, coordinated in the Political Consultative Committee, in the main areas of international relations and sought to put them into effect through the United Nations, the Disarmament Committee, and various forms of socio-economic and cultural contacts. As soon as it was set up the Warsaw Treaty Organisation began pressing for recognition of peaceful coexistence as the basic principle regulating relations between states. Here special significance was and still is attached to Soviet-US relations. The principle of peaceful coexistence was included in the Basic Principles of Relations Between the USA and the USSR signed in May 1972. Further, the Warsaw Treaty member-states worked for détente in Europe based on

recognition of political realities: the immutability of postwar frontiers and the existence of two equal German states.

Multiple efforts have been made by our community to achieve disarmament. In keeping with socialism's ideals, the fraternal countries are endeavouring to exclude war from the arsenal of means for settling disputes. *Today, when science used for military purposes has developed pre-eminently accurate weapons of enormous destructive power, general disarmament and equal security for all are the only reasonable alternative to war.*

The talks on general and complete disarmament have shown the complexity of this problem. A series of preliminary agreements is needed to create the conditions for resolving it. The Warsaw Treaty member-states have on many occasions proposed partial disarmament measures and advanced a wide spectrum of initiatives aimed at curbing the arms race and reducing existing military potentials. Their proposals dealt with nuclear tests and the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, the creation of nuclear-free zones, the banning of chemical and bacteriological weapons, a limitation on strategic and Eurostrategic weapons, and the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Central Europe.

Soon after the first nuclear tests the socialist countries, the USSR in the first place, used every opportunity to urge the USA and other nuclear powers to join it in putting an end to such tests. In recent years such calls have been made in the Prague Political Declaration of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States (January 1983) and in other official documents. The same purpose was pursued also by the repeatedly extended Soviet unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests.

In the mid-1960s one of the central foreign policy aims of the socialist community nations was to conclude an international treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Although this act did not become universal, the fact that it was signed must be seen as an advance.

Many important proposals have been submitted by Warsaw Treaty member-states, including Poland, to the Geneva Disarmament Committee. For instance, in 1969, expressing the collective will of its allies, the USSR submitted the draft of a treaty banning the emplacement of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction on the seabed and in the subsoil thereof. At the 1982 session of UN General Assembly the Soviet Union circulated a document spelling out the basic provisions for a convention prohibiting the development, production, and stockpiling of chemical weapons and stipulating the destruction of existing stockpiles of such weapons. In 1984 the Warsaw Treaty member-states offered to hold a meeting with the NATO member-states on the question of delivering Europe from chemical weapons.

An extremely promising way to scale down the arms race and eliminate nuclear weapons is to create nuclear-free zones. The socialist countries have been consistently urging this in the course of the past 30 years. Poland, in particular, has put forward many initiatives aimed at normalising the political situation and downgrading the military confrontation level in Europe. The idea of creating a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe was suggested as early as 1957 by the Rapacki Plan. Although the idea was not accepted at the time there was a wide response and it later crystallised in other regions of the world. Lastly, in 1963 Poland came forward with a proposal known as the Gomulka Plan, which called for a freeze on nuclear armaments in Central Europe in order to avert the build-up of a nuclear potential in this most vulnerable part of the continent.

At its meeting in 1986 the Warsaw Treaty Committee of Foreign Ministers called for the creation of nuclear-free zones in various regions in Europe and a nuclear-free corridor along the line of contact between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. This idea thus continues to live and its realisation may

become the first major step towards the total elimination of nuclear stockpiles.

At the different ongoing and future forums, for instance, the Conference on European Security and Cooperation, People's Poland will, in line with the traditions of its foreign policy, continue advancing constructive initiatives to remove the threat overhanging humanity.

In the 1970s the Warsaw Treaty member-states focused their coordinated foreign policy efforts mainly on convening a conference on security and cooperation in Europe. Poland was one of the initiators of the epoch-making meeting in Helsinki. That conference adopted most of the theses and concepts worked out and put forward by the socialist countries. While we assess the Helsinki results as a success, we consider that further collective efforts are needed to augment political détente with military détente so as to make the impulse towards improving the situation in Europe irreversible.

The USA and some other Western states see the European process solely as a means of attaining their self-centred political aims. Washington would like to turn the Helsinki decisions into an instrument for meddling in the internal affairs of socialist countries. This was made crystal-clear at the Madrid meeting (1980-1983), at which the USA and its allies sought to internationalise the 'Polish question', thereby dead-locking the conference for some time. Simultaneously, they tried to backtrack from comprehensively implementing the Helsinki Conference's Final Act.

Although it was hard-won, the positive outcome of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence-and-Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (1984-1986) was significant, for it meant that in world and European politics the tendency towards détente and breaking the deadlock, towards exploring the ways and means for disarmament on the continent had gained strength. This cleared the way for the Vienna meeting of the participants in the European process.

In their drive to consolidate peace the Warsaw Treaty member-states are, as in the past, making a sustained effort to limit armed forces and armaments. In 1972 they proposed starting negotiations on measures to this end in Europe, needless to say, without prejudice to the interests and security of the nations participating in the suggested agreement.

The fraternal countries see a hopeful possibility for resolving this problem positively in the principle of equal security of all the countries cutting back their armed forces. Acceding to the wishes of the NATO member-states the Warsaw Treaty countries made a series of constructive compromise proposals in the course of the negotiations. However, the North Atlantic bloc is clinging tenaciously to its interpretation of various issues, for instance, that of the armaments level and the verification system, and making unrealistic demands in the calculation of dragging out the negotiations, creating the semblance of 'goodwill', while in fact building up a military preponderance. For this reason, despite all the efforts of the socialist countries, progress is still not in sight at the Vienna talks. Central Europe remains a region with the largest concentration of armed forces equipped with sophisticated weaponry.

The Warsaw Treaty Organisation is interested in lowering the level of military confrontation in Europe in all armament components – from nuclear to conventional. This is shown by, among other things, the address issued in June 1986 by the Political Consultative Committee at its meeting in Budapest on the question of cutting back armaments and conventional weapons in the whole of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. The proposals advanced in this address substantially complement the Soviet programme aimed at complete elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons by the year 2000. The address vividly shows the untenability of the arguments advanced by the West, which charges that the motivation of the

socialist countries for seeking nuclear disarmament is to change the existing strategic parity in their favour through what is alleged to be their superiority in conventional armaments. Poland and its allies are now waiting for an answer to the Budapest address.

People's Poland wholeheartedly endorses the Soviet proposals made by Mikhail Gorbachov in Reykjavik. Acceptance of these proposals would have signified a serious advance towards an agreement on strategic armaments, intermediate-range nuclear missiles, and space weapons. But, regrettably, the USA was not prepared for this.

The congress of the fraternal parties, including the Tenth Congress of the PUWP (1986), made a large contribution to blue-printing the socialist community's programme for cutting short the negative trends in international relations and restoring détente. The actions of the socialist countries are motivated by their sincere desire to settle European problems through the dismantling, not strengthening, of military blocs, through the consolidation of peaceful cooperation among all the nations of the continent.

The European socialist countries attach considerable significance to their political cooperation, to their multilateral efforts to ensure security and peace. This was what led to the formation in 1976 of a new body of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, the Committee of Foreign Ministers, in which the allies consider the international situation and work out the political ways and means of attaining their aims. The mechanism of cooperation is being upgraded: the Political Consultative Committee is meeting more often, consultations and working meetings of Foreign Ministers are held, working groups are set up to consider specific issues, and so on.

The undeviating striving of the Warsaw Treaty member-states to reinforce the community's unity and cohesion is of no little importance for the steadfast implementation of the principles of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems. Today, when the situation in the world has deteriorated perceptibly, interaction within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation is an essential condition for attaining the alliance's principal objective, that of ensuring world peace.

The period of more than 30 years that has elapsed since the Warsaw Treaty Organisation was formed has forcefully shown that it has an immense role to play in building unshakable foundations of peace and security. The influence of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation is seen in the work of its leading bodies and also in the work of the United Nations, the Disarmament Committee, and other international agencies.

The socialist community took shape on the durable foundation of Marxism-Leninism and internationalism, and of the common basic aims of the fraternal countries. *The strengthening of the unity and solidarity of the members of our military-political alliance, particularly friendship with the Soviet Union, meets with the vital interests of each socialist country and is the condition for their successful development.* The fact that peace has reigned in Europe for more than 40 years and the recognition in international law of the postwar territorial and political realities in Europe show the effectiveness of the Warsaw Treaty.

We have always declared that Poland is a reliable member of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. This has been further reaffirmed in the decisions of the PUWP's Tenth Congress: "Poland's membership of the military-political Warsaw Treaty Organisation is of fundamental significance for Polish state interests. The Polish People's Armed Forces will continue to contribute to the aggregate defensive potential of the Warsaw Treaty. The Polish state will participate actively in coordinating foreign policy within the framework of this alliance and in collective actions on the international scene."⁴

¹ China did not send a delegation to the conference, but in an official statement the Chinese government welcomed the signing of the Warsaw Treaty.

² As well as the present member-states of the Warsaw Treaty, this document was signed by Albania. The latter nation ceased participating in the work of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in 1962, and in 1968 it officially withdrew from it.—Ed.

³ *Polska Ludowa—Związek Radziecki, 1944-1974. Zbiór dokumentów i materiałów*, Warsaw, 1974, p. 35.

⁴ *Uchwała X Zjazdu Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej o zwiększenie efektywności gospodarowania i poprawę warunków życia, o pogłębienie socjalistycznej demokracji, o umocnienie międzynarodowej pozycji Polski*, Warsaw, 1986, p. 53

The Party's Guiding Role and Accelerated Social Progress

Mikulas Beno – CC Secretary, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia

THE experience of socialist construction in Czechoslovakia and in other fraternal states bears out that the new, qualitatively higher targets marked out for us by our country's development and by the situation in the world cannot be achieved without all-sidedly reinforcing the Communist Party's guiding role. This is an objective regularity of socialism's steady advance.

The party's mission as the vanguard of the working people has neither been nor is an abstraction. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its Central Committee assess the situation realistically, creatively chart the relevant political line and, in putting this line into effect, orient party bodies and organisations on tasks upon whose fulfilment our further development depends. All levels of administration from top to bottom and grassroots initiatives have to be compatible with the party's strategic aims and programmes. The methods of persuasion, maximum organisation, and high work standards must be geared to surmounting shortcomings and obstacles. It should always be borne in mind that the party can continue to direct socialist construction in our *country only if it continues* to be inseparably linked to the people.

Today it is vital to demonstrate socialism's advantages and potentialities by accelerating scientific and technological progress. There has to be an upgrading and cardinal restructuring of economic management. Lastly, executives have to reshape their thinking and style of work in the spirit of present requirements.

The programme line set by the party's 17th Congress (March 1986) opens a new phase of socialist Czechoslovakia's development. We have built up a huge material and intellectual potential. The country's make-up has changed in the course of four decades of socialist construction. Of course, we did not avoid difficulties and had to overcome quite a few obstacles. However, the party learned from its own mistakes and attentively studied the rich experience of fraternal countries. The past 15 years, during which the general course set by the party's 14th Congress was consistently followed, saw the consolidation and multiplication of revolutionary gains in the economy, in culture, and in social relations. Czechoslovakia entered the latter half of the 1980s as a politically united and socially and economically mature nation with a high living standard and strong international positions. All this is the outcome of the selfless work of the people and the persevering efforts of the party.

Mikulas Beno (b. 1930), Candidate of Economic Sciences. He joined the Communist Party in 1950 and was elected a member of its CC in 1976, becoming a CC Secretary and a member of the CC Secretariat in 1977.

In working out our programme line at the party's 17th Congress, we proceeded from a creative application of Marxist-Leninist theory, from our analysis of what had been attained in the entire spectrum of social relations, from the jointly accumulated and tested experience of the fraternal socialist countries and, above all, from the inspiring conclusions drawn by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. The innovative character of this line is that it envisages far-reaching social changes in all areas of society's life, a significant growth of the productive forces, and an enhanced development level of production relations and of the political and ideological superstructure.

It is our aim to carry out much more complex and bigger tasks than ever before within a relatively short span of time. That is why the strategy of socio-economic acceleration and the orientation on attaining a qualitatively new level in all areas of society have become the foundation of our party's general line. There is nothing artificial or unrealistic in this line, which rests on a scientific understanding of the laws governing the building of socialism. It provides for a sustained effort to address the contradictions arising in the course of transformations, and is fully consonant with the interests of our people and the struggle for general progress and peace. We constantly bear in mind Lenin's warning that "anybody who tackles partial problems without having previously settled general problems, will inevitably and at every step 'come up against' those general problems without himself realising it. To come up against them blindly in every individual case means to doom one's policy to the worst vacillation and lack of principles."¹

Revolutionary Task of the Day

The Communist Party is initiating bold projects. Its activity is compatible with Lenin's behest that the old world must be vanquished by the higher social labour productivity, the new system's overall high maturity level, by the socialist way of life. This opens up clear-cut prospects and gives a powerful impetus to the efforts in all fields of endeavour, to the use of innovative methods, to the quest for and the testing of the most effective ways of carrying out the party's plans.

A major feature of the party's strategy is that it gives growing scope for the operation of the human factor in accordance with present-day requirements and possibilities. This explains our tireless concern for giving the people a profound understanding of the party's course and of how to resolve problems as they crop up, fortifying their conviction that the policy being pursued is correct both for themselves and for the whole of society, and drawing them into active participation in charting and implementing this policy.

We link the growing significance of the human factor with, above all, the enhanced activity and consciousness of the working class and other contingents of working people. Despite the argument of bourgeois ideologues and revisionists that the role of the working person has receded into the past, we stand firmly on the soil of reality. Indeed, even in the course of rapid scientific and technological development the working class not only retains its key position but acquires a crucial significance in introducing technological breakthroughs and speeding up socio-economic progress as a whole.

Our party is uninterruptedly expanding the role played by the working class in society, relying on its consciousness, organisation and experience, and promoting its initiatives, creative abilities, and participation in social life.

In other words, it is our view that without expanding socialist democracy it is impossible to cope with present-day tasks and attain the targets that have been set. The magnitude of our projects is such that they can only be fulfilled with the all-embracing participation of the vast majority of the working people. This means that there has to be a substantial enhancement of efficiency in every element of society's

political system, targeted on promoting the development of the individual, satisfying his or her requirements, and consolidating socialist values.

The strategy adopted at the 17th Congress of the CPCz underscores that it is imperative to raise the efficiency level of the party's own work. After all, attainment of the aims we set ourselves depends chiefly on the party, on every Communist, on his or her energy output and dedication. As Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the CPCz Central Committee, declared, the people's confidence in the party's policy "should be constantly replenished through the solution of current problems and the attainment of programme aims".²

This principled guideline makes no allowance for shrugging off pressing problems, grinding to a halt, or marking time. It obligates the party to exercise its leading role at a steadily higher level, skilfully direct the energies of the people, and use practical achievements to inspire the people. Currently, our principal revolutionary task is to put into effect the strategy of socio-economic acceleration.

On the Road of Intensive Economic Development

The Main Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the CSSR for 1986 — 1990 and for the Period Ending in 2000 is a document answering the question of our aims and intentions in material production. In the next 15 years the national income is to increase by more than two-thirds and there is to be a significant reduction in the consumption of primary materials and energy. Labour productivity is likewise to rise by nearly two-thirds. The people's living standard is to climb more dynamically. Under the eighth five-year plan the rate of individual consumption is to be doubled, while the social consumption funds are to grow by 22 per cent compared with the previous five-year period. It is quite obvious that these indicators can only be achieved by an intensive economy. What does the new quality of economic growth require of us?

It requires a more rational use of all production resources and processes, a purposeful mastering of advanced technologies, and an upgrading of the technical-economic specifications and consumer qualities of output. To this end it is necessary to modernise the production base, restructure the national economy, and substantially upgrade the economic mechanism. Of course, this approach calls for a vigorous social policy, for placing social relations on a higher level.

A plenary meeting of the CPCz Central Committee, held last December, noted that progress had to be accelerated, that scientific and technological achievements had to be brought into use faster. The significance of this guideline is obvious to everybody, yet its implementation encounters difficulties — attempts are still being made to follow trodden paths, to avoid the risk that is inevitable when something new is being developed.

A key economic and, concurrently, fundamental political task is, thus, to step up the intensification rate. A germane question here would be: What does this signify from the stand-point of the party's vanguard role?

Vigorous Action and Exactingness

It seems to me that here mention must be made above all of the political logistics ensuring the attainment of these objectives, of the enormous organisational and ideological work involved, and of correct personnel policy. That is why we are calling upon party bodies, upon all Communists to head the working people, effectively reinforce the link between science and life, facilitate the tapping of potentialities, and guide the creative energies of the people.

A concrete example of this is the initiative taken by the Prague City Party Committee to speed up the utilisation of scientific and technological achievements in production. Increasing importance is being acquired also by the initiative of the

Central Council of Trade Unions calling for the cost-effective use of primary and other materials.

Winning support for such initiatives has become part and parcel of the party's politico-organisational work. An example is being set by advanced work collectives. Party organisations at factories are making a steadily bigger effort to have the composite rationalisation teams, the modernisation teams, the scientific and production collectives working together on their own initiative, and the adoption of individual plans by the technical personnel contribute more tangibly to the attainment of the new targets. Trade unions, youth organisations, and managerial personnel are joining in this process. In this way obsolete habits and work methods are being extirpated, economic growth is being accelerated, and thinking is undergoing a change. It is unquestionably important that the influence of party organisations should not be confined to established forms; it should expand and grow as the tasks become more complex.

The changes that are now being put into effect in Czechoslovakia's national economy should make central planning and management more flexible, enhance the role of financial-economic levers, and give people a bigger incentive for raising the standard of the end product of their work. Once more, this means that we have to give the human factor substantially more weight and ensure stricter compliance with social justice in the spirit of the principle of "to each according to the quantity and quality of his work".

The ongoing comprehensive experiment to give economic organisations more independence and make them more accountable for the efficacy of development, an experiment started selectively in Czechoslovakia's manufacturing industry at the outset of 1987, is based on tested principles underlying socialist economic management. Along with the retooling of the production base, these include greater participation by work collectives in management and decision-making. In addition, better conditions are being created for exercising the right of controlling the work of managements granted to another 7,000 party organisations by the 17th Congress of the CPCz. The importance of this control grows where the new economic mechanism is in operation. Further, primary party organisations have the authority to state their view about appointees for top executive posts. This prerogative has now been extended in the practice of recalling executives. The democratic, collectivist foundations of our system are thereby being substantially reinforced.

The Communists are active in all areas of society's life. The implementation of the strategy advanced by the 17th Congress rests on the work of almost 48,000 primary organisations that unite more than 1,680,000 members and probation members of the CPCz. By their personal example, drive, consciousness, and conscientious work the Communists win the entire nation's unanimous support for the party's policies.

It is not accidental that at one of its first postcongress plenary meetings the CPCz Central Committee focused on the qualitative aspect of the increment to the party's ranks. This concern for the party, for its healthy growth, for reinforcing its unity and capability is indicative of the loftiest sense of responsibility for the development of socialism, for the future of our people. The party acquires increasing maturity as it implements its policy, as it daily comes to grips with intricate problems linked to socialist construction, surmounts obstacles, and explores new avenues of activity. Practical experience makes it plain that this requires a dependable ideological and political back-up, which is provided by the Communists and all other working people acquiring a profound understanding of the party's policies and scrupulously studying the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism.

Restructuring Thinking

The CPCz Central Committee has focussed the party education of Communists in the 1986-1987 academic year on the study of congress documents and of issues linked directly to the strategy of acceleration. This same purpose is served by Communists acquiring a clear understanding of the amendments introduced into the CPCz Rules by the 17th Congress.

Efficacy, efficiency, commitment to principle, and support for all innovations that facilitate socialist society's progress are now factors of development.

The degree of the party's effectiveness determines how dynamic society becomes. This time-tested relationship underlies the long-term concept of the party's numerical growth and the qualitative level of its membership. Last June this principle was used as the guideline by our Central Committee to define the party's work in this sphere. We are applying the following precept of Lenin's in our conditions: "Our party, the party of the revolutionary working class, is the only government party in the world which is concerned not with increasing its membership but with improving its quality, and with purging itself of 'self-seekers'.³ The quality, ideological maturity, vigour, and social composition of its membership are what define not only the party's character but also its ability to lead the people.

That the CPCz's development is healthy is seen in the fact that during the past five years there has been a further strengthening of the class character, ideological cohesion, and singleness of purpose of its ranks. At present 44.6 per cent of the CPCz's members are workers and almost two-thirds of its entire membership are of working class origin. One in every three members and probation members of the CPCz is under age 35. The growth of the party's effectiveness is a continuous process. We hold that the strengthening of the party's working class core and the spread of the influence of the Communists in key sectors of society's life should be linked closely to the implementation of the policy charted by the 17th Congress. It is the Communists who should, in the first place, set an example for everybody. They have no privileges or benefits; but extensive duties and responsibilities devolve upon them. Speaking on behalf of the whole party, Gustav Husak noted: "Selflessly, with discipline, enthusiasm, and courage the Communists are heading the drive to carry out the programme marked out by the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia."⁴

The time that has elapsed since the 17th Congress shows that much has already been accomplished by party bodies and primary organisations. It has been noted that particularly great attention has been given to the assignments in the national economy. The problems being encountered and the work of executives and party cadres are being examined in a more open and exacting atmosphere. Energetic efforts are being made to improve the style, forms, and methods of work, and our priority concern is to promote the exemplary influence of the Communists at their place of work and residence.

The depth and efficacy of the party's influence in all areas of society's life depend largely on how the party bodies of different levels address their work. For us it is important that it should be absolutely clear to everybody that the party implements its policy together with and for the people. The political approach unchangeably remains the central feature of party leadership. Hence the concentration of our efforts on upgrading the work and, also, the role that elected party organs, their plenary meetings, and meetings of primary organisations play in the life of the CPCz. It is heartening that at the meetings held in early 1987 to consider the results of the past year there was a candid exchange of views and explicitly targeted criticism, an exacting review of how the congress decisions were being put into effect and of what had to be done.

We are putting particularly great emphasis on the requirement that people — their work, life, thoughts, and problems — should constantly be in the focus of our attention.

Communists in executive posts must perform their duties consistently in the party spirit, show all their abilities as organisers, and stand by their responsibilities. To a large extent their efforts determine the situation in this or that sector, and also the style of work, the level of exactingness, and the state of criticism and self-criticism in that sector. We emphatically condemn superficiality, non-critical attitudes, empty talk, and needless tutelage, all of which equally obstruct effectual political work by the party.

To apply modern criteria in the activities of party bodies and organisations means to exercise party leadership correctly. The task facing us is not to supplant governmental or economic bodies but purposefully help to make them operate more efficiently and heighten their sense of responsibility, assist all levels to carry out their functions creatively, to rid themselves of formalistic practices, and concentrate mainly on specific and effective organisational work.

Masters of Their Country

The successful implementation of the acceleration strategy is linked closely to personnel policy. Higher standards consonant with the new requirements apply not only to the selection, education, and appointment of people to executive posts but also to the guidance given them and to the control exercised over their work. The recent comprehensive certification of cadres, beginning from central governmental and economic bodies down to factories and individual workplaces, was one of the measures taken in fulfilment of congress decisions. It became clear that the lag in some sectors was due precisely to misjudgments in the selection and appointment of people for executive posts.

Practice is showing that today it is particularly intolerable to have executives who spend more effort on explaining shortcomings than on rectifying them. There is no room today for those who see the whole purport of their functions in drawing up directives and instructions. In the interim between congresses (1981-1985) 45 per cent of the executives in governmental and economic bodies have been replaced as inadequate to their jobs. These include deputy ministers, heads of ministerial departments, persons holding posts in the middle level of administration, and directors and deputy directors of factories.

Cadres constitute the party's main asset, and the party treats them with consideration. The requirement that each should discharge his duty is combined with effective support, with the creation of the conditions for systematic political and professional study. Here we lay stress on training with a certain measure of anticipation in accordance with the party's strategy, and are very exacting towards young promising cadres. We seek to promote tested, alert, and energetic people to executive posts. An essential point here is that there must be harmony between the executive's political, professional, and moral qualities. Party bodies and organisations are called upon to give careful thought to personnel changes in executive posts and avoid subjectivism and fortuity. We consider it proper when executives are accountable not only to higher bodies but also to the collectives headed by them. In the work with cadres it is vital to extend democratic practices, to rely on the experience and opinion of working people.

The outcome of the drive to carry out the party's programme will unquestionably be decided in the work collectives, where primary organisations function. That is precisely where effort is concentrated and the CPCz's links to the working people are deepened. It is thus all the more important for every party body and organisation to inject greater exactingness and a critical attitude into its work and

to orient its politico-organisational activity on the people.

It is exceedingly important that party organisations should sustain the people's incentive for upgrading production, develop and direct their energy into specific assignments (modernisation, cost-effectiveness, better quality), and consistently implement the principle of remuneration for labour. Remuneration must be consistent with the social benefit of the work that has been done and with its actual quality and quantity. The point is that over-fulfilment and underfulfilment of assignments should be properly assessed. This is the only correct approach.

Another object of concern of party organisations throughout the country is to create a political atmosphere conducive to resolving the problems that arise. We are doing our utmost to give a tangible content to production conferences, alternate upward planning, collective bargaining agreements and, in particular, the team form of work organisation and remuneration, and make them effective vehicles encouraging initiative by the people. This, it was emphasised at the December 1986 plenary meeting of the CPCz Central Committee, is re-affirming in the minds of the working people the understanding that they are the true masters of their enterprises, of their towns and villages, of the whole country.

We expect that with the implementation of the party's economic policy its primary organisations will acquire steadily growing influence, especially with the growing independence of enterprises, the upswing of the working people's initiatives, and their widening participation in the administration of society's affairs.

By Our Constructive Work We Strengthen Peace

The CPCz's line towards acceleration implies a meaningful expansion of close cooperation with the other socialist countries and the further development of socialist economic integration. Interaction is a factor stabilising the expansion of the international division of labour and economic growth. Moreover, it significantly reduces the Czechoslovak economy's vulnerability to world imperialism. Czechoslovakia is increasing its contribution to the fulfilment of the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the CMEA Countries for the Period Ending in 2000 and to the long-term bilateral scientific and technological cooperation with the Soviet Union. The direct links between production organisations of the CMEA member-states are of inestimable significance.

The party's activities in carrying out the decisions of the 17th Congress and the assignments of the eighth five-year plan are facilitating not only the growth of the people's living standards and the reinforcement of their social confidence but also the attainment of the basic aim of our time — the preservation and consolidation of peace in the world.

The CPSU's flexible, dynamic attitude and the many initiatives it has advanced in the struggle to remove the threat of a nuclear war, achieve disarmament, and promote constructive international cooperation are entirely in accord with the will of all the peace forces. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia will go on making a creditable contribution to the coordinated policy of the socialist countries and undertaking initiatives to achieve our common lofty goals.

The CPCz is clearly aware that close interaction among the fraternal countries is of paramount significance as a factor accelerating their growth and ensuring world peace. Imperialism is going to all lengths to break the unity of the nations building socialism. However, our fraternal cooperation will continue to develop on the basis of the tested principles of Marxism-Leninism, socialist internationalism, equality, mutual benefit, and mutual assistance in all areas.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 489.

² Sbornik hlavních dokumentů XVIII. sjezdu KSČ, Prague, 1986, p. 38.

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 63.

⁴ Sbornik hlavních dokumentů XVII. sjezdu KSČ, p. 44.

Disturbed Period Calls for Action

Ezekias Papaioannou – General
Secretary of the Progressive Party of the
Working People of Cyprus (AKEL)

OUR epoch abounds, as no other, in intellectual achievements. The scientific and technical revolution has made it possible to put into practice much of what seemed no more than a dream some three decades ago, both in understanding the Universe and in raising living standards on the Earth. But there is also this reverse side of the coin: the unprecedented progress of science and technology has made it possible to develop and stockpile weapons for political maniacs to rattle in an effort to attain world domination and run the risk of annihilating all that lives.

The threat of a thermonuclear catastrophe hangs over every man and woman wherever they may live on this planet of ours, which has become so small. The only way to rid mankind of this nightmare is nuclear disarmament along the bold and realistic way proposed by the Soviet Union. The year which has passed since the 27th Congress of the CPSU adopted its historic documents has made it perfectly clear that Lenin's party is in the habit of matching words and deeds. AKEL and the people of Cyprus are immensely grateful to Moscow for everything it has done and continues to do in defence of peace throughout the world.

In this contradictory and alarming situation, our party's 16th Congress in November 1986 reaffirmed that in the face of the militaristic preparations of imperialism it is everyone's urgent task to intensify the struggle for averting a nuclear war, for a controlled halt to nuclear testing, for preventing the militarisation of space, creating nuclear-free zones in various regions of the world, destroying nuclear weapons, and for general and complete disarmament.

Analysis of the international situation and the party's tasks in this sphere was a keynote of the Congress itself and of its documents, and that for a very good reason. After all, because of their history and geographical location, our small country and its people are more exposed to foreign policy issues than many others. The external and internal aspects of the Cyprus problem are so interwoven that it is virtually impossible to separate them, as it is impossible to separate, let alone oppose, our own security to the security of our neighbours and to peace in the region.

Ezekias Papaioannou was born in 1908 into a poor peasant family. At one time he worked as a miner. From 1929 to 1945, he was in Britain, where he carried on communist agitation in the Cypriot community. He took part in the Spanish people's revolutionary struggle (1936-1939) as a member of the international brigades. Upon his return to Cyprus, he joined actively in the national liberation struggle against British colonialism. Ezekias Papaioannou was editor-in-chief of the AKEL organ *Demokratis*, and party CC secretary for organisational matters. He has been AKEL General Secretary since 1949. He was hounded for his revolutionary activity, and in 1956 escaped from prison. Since 1960, he has been a member of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, and head of AKEL's parliamentary group.

Two Aspects of the Cyprus Problem

When the agreements for the independence of Cyprus were signed in 1960, the late President Makarios was compelled to grant base areas to the British imperialists, 99 sq.miles of Cyprus territory, and 32 other points all over the island, including the use of our roads, our ports, our airports, and our airspace for military purposes, plus the right to use additional territories for military exercises. In this way, *a time bomb was placed under the sovereignty of the young state from the very outset.*

Imperialist intervention and schemes against the Republic of Cyprus have never ceased. These subversive acts culminated in the coup by Cypriot fascist reaction led by the Greek military junta in the summer of 1974, to be followed by the Turkish invasion and occupation of 37 per cent of the island's territory, on which the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was a few years later proclaimed and recognised by Turkey. There are now between 35,000 and 40,000 Turkish occupation troops, and over 60,000 settlers — colonial settlers, for all practical purposes — from Turkey, who have been given the best arable and other lands at the expense of the local population.

The events of almost thirteen years ago — the most tragic chapter in the history of Cyprus — threw a harsh light on the role of the so-called guarantors of the country's sovereignty, namely, Greece, Turkey and Great Britain, as was provided for in the 1959 Zurich agreement. All three guarantor powers proved to be aggressors. The Greek junta engineered the fascist coup in Cyprus, and five days later Turkey started its Operation Attila and invaded the island, with Britain pandering to both. The putschist tanks were allowed to pass through the British 'sovereign' base areas to pursue President Makarios all the way to Paphos, at the other end of the island, while the Cypriot National Guard were not allowed to go through in order to defend the country against the Turkish aggressors.

The occupation and actual partition of Cyprus led to faster penetration of US imperialism into the island. Not content with the use of British military installations, US imperialism now has in Turkish-occupied territory an air base, a naval base and a missile-launching ramp, and three radio-monitoring spy stations. Incidentally, the construction of a huge military air strip in the area of Lefkoniko, capable of accommodating heavy troop-carrying aircraft, was a totally illegal act on the part of the United States, because it obtained permission to do so not from the government of the Republic of Cyprus but from the separatist Denktas regime.

Under pressure from the United States and NATO, the current President Spyros Kyprianou has also lately been making quite free with the country's sovereignty. Recently he allowed the United States to build a new major spy radio station on the country's territory. During the Lebanese crisis in 1983, four NATO powers — Britain, France, The United States and Italy — were granted facilities in the sea ports and the international airport at Larnaca, a decision unprecedented for a non-aligned country and one taken not only behind the back of parliament, but even without discussion by the full Cabinet. As far as we are aware, it remains in force to this day.

We find, therefore, *that just over a quarter-century since the proclamation of independence, our small island has been literally fragmented, leaving virtually nothing for the Cypriots themselves.* Add to this the problem of refugees, which arose after the Turkish invasion, when almost 230,000 Greek and Turkish Cypriots were deprived of hearth and home, and many families still know nothing of what happened to their sons who disappeared during Operation Attila. Our country's economic integrity has been shattered, with the occupation of large areas which have at least one-half of its economic resources.

The aggressive acts against Cyprus have been staged by imperialists seeking to turn the is'and into their largest military base in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle

East. They are perfectly satisfied with the country's partition, and regard the Cyprus problem solely in the light of their own strategic interests in the region. Turkey, for its part, has colonised the north of the island and has even more far-reaching intentions. The chauvinists in Ankara are waiting for an opportune moment to resume their offensive with the aim of occupying the whole of Cyprus.

Those are some of the true causes of the Cyprus stalemate, and they explain why the issue is not being settled in accordance with the UN resolutions and the aspirations of our people, who are carrying on an anti-occupation, anti-imperialist, liberation struggle. The NATO bases and Turkey's Operation Attila are interconnected and interdependent phenomena. There is no truth in all this talk about some 'fatal incompatibility' of Cypriot Greeks and Turks, who have lived side by side for ages. *The aims of our struggle for a free, independent, federal, united and non-aligned Cyprus are to get the occupation troops and settlers out, the foreign bases dismantled, and the country completely demilitarised.* It is hardly possible to attain all these aims simultaneously, but every step forward will bring the victory nearer.

How to Get Out of the Stalemate

The Cyprus question is still in a stalemate. All the efforts made by the UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar since 1983 through the good offices mission have failed to yield any results mainly because of the intransigence of Denktas and his illegal regime, which is being maintained and fed by Ankara and NATO. But one also has to note Kyprianou's mistaken attitude when he delayed using the positive aspects of the UN Secretary General's proposals. Such a deliberately ambiguous stand was subjected to just criticism by AKEL.

However, the most serious flaw in the good offices negotiations is that they have yet to produce a mechanism for discussing and settling the international aspects of the problem, although it is quite clear that such issues as the withdrawal of the Turkish occupation troops and settlers, or the question of reliable international guarantees cannot be settled at an inter-communal level.

Our party has on the whole given a positive assessment of the UN Secretary General's good services and the constructive aspects of his proposals, repeatedly stressing *the need to call an international conference under UN auspices for promoting the solution of the Cyprus question.* Such a conference is most necessary today, with the problem in a stalemate. We are convinced, moreover, that its deliberations under UN auspices should run parallel with an inter-communal discussion of issues bearing on the internal aspects of a settlement.

In this context, the 16th Congress of AKEL once again drew attention to the USSR's January 1986 proposals on principles for the solution of the Cyprus problem and ways of achieving this, which were supported by the Cypriot people, the government, the House of Representatives, and our country's political parties. These proposals are clear and concrete. They emphasise that the internal structure of the Cypriot state, including the possible establishment of a federation, must be settled by the Cypriots themselves through negotiation with an eye to the legitimate interests of the two communities, and without any interference or attempts to impose a solution alien to the interests of the people. Demilitarisation of the island, which fully accords with the non-aligned status of Cyprus, is an essential condition for a settlement. The use of its territory by other states for military purposes is unacceptable. All foreign troops must be withdrawn from the island, and the activities of the foreign military bases and installations must come to an end. The unequal treaties and agreements which mutilate the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Cyprus must be abolished.

The Soviet proposals provide for the convocation under UN auspices of an

international conference on Cyprus with the participation of representatives of both communities in the country, and also of Greece, Turkey and all the members of the UN Security Council. Other countries, notably non-aligned countries, could also be invited to attend. The object of the conference would be to sign a treaty or some other document providing for the dismantling of all foreign bases and the demilitarisation of Cyprus.

In view of what has been said about the perfidy of our present 'guarantors', much significance attaches to the conference adopting a system of effective guarantees for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Cyprus and respect for its status of a non-aligned state. Among the guarantors could be the permanent or all the members of the UN Security Council, Greece, Turkey, and some non-aligned countries, without the right of their taking any unilateral acts with respect to Cyprus without common approval.

The Soviet proposals on Cyprus are thorough and well balanced, but ahead lies a hard struggle for their implementation. They have come up against stubborn rejection by the imperialist circles and Denktas, who sings their tune. The argument they have trotted out is that Cyprus is allegedly within the Western sphere of influence, and that the USSR wants to assert its own influence by having a say in solving the problem through an international conference.

This argument is a false one through and through. The Communists do not generally recognise any division of the world into so-called spheres of influence which is invoked. In proposing ways to settle the international aspects of the Cyprus problem, the USSR takes a principled stand in defence of the peoples' right to self-determination and seeks to improve the situation in the region and the whole world. However, it cannot but also look to its own security. The United States and the other NATO countries situated, as they are, thousands of miles away from Cyprus, have military bases on the island, while the USSR's southern borders run a mere half-hour's flight from them. We believe that the USSR has a legitimate right to demand the dismantling of foreign bases and the withdrawal of missiles from the territory of a neighbouring state.

That example shows once again that *the Cyprus problem, like many other so-called local problems in the modern world, is closely bound up with the situation in the region and even beyond:* with tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, the provocations against Libya and Syria, the presence of the US Sixth Fleet off our own and other shores, the continuing fratricidal war between Iran and Iraq, and so on.

As far as I can recall, in the postwar time only one major problem has been settled by means of an international conference, that is the signing of the State Treaty with Austria providing for its permanent neutrality. But at that time the situation in the world was more favourable. Today, tensions run high and there is little optimism to be drawn from the Reagan administration's stand at Reykjavik and since. I think that *as long as the United States persists in its urge to attain world domination, one can hardly hope for an agreed political settlement of any international problem.*

That does not mean, however, that we have the right to sit idly by and hope for better times to come. I merely want to emphasise that *the solution of local problems, including the Cyprus problem, now largely depends on the successful outcome of the struggle by all the peoples for peace, for a return to the policy of détente, for the destruction of the nuclear arsenals, against 'star wars', and against a fresh escalation of the arms race by imperialism.* For our people, it is struggle both for our country's salvation and for social progress. That is why *AKEL believes that its patriotic and internationalist duty is to work to enlarge this struggle and carry it to a new and higher level.*

The Internal Front

A considerable part of the Action Report of the Central Committee to the 16th Congress of AKEL and the subsequent discussion (with 115 comrades taking the floor) dealt with the internal front. The situation on our domestic front, given the conditions of the anti-occupation, anti-imperialist, liberation struggle, is not what it should be. *When we are fighting for survival against powerful enemies, the class struggle between labour and capital, which goes on under any conditions since our society has opposing classes, is not the most important duty. The most important duty is the struggle for liberation and independence.* Regrettably, that has not been understood by our political opponents. For them, the class struggle, and the urge to harm the Communists and the left-wing movement as a whole always takes pride of place.

Our party has had a disappointing experience of cooperation between AKEL and the Democratic Party (DIKO), which materialised in 1982 on the basis of a Minimum Programme, only to be unilaterally repudiated two years and eight months later by Spyros Kyprianou, who was elected President of Cyprus in 1983 with our support. The leadership of DIKO saw the democratic cooperation as a chance for party gains, and not as the basis for a wider patriotic unity in the interests of the anti-occupation, anti-imperialist, liberation struggle by our people, something for which AKEL has always called and striven.

Foreign pressure has undoubtedly had an effect in this matter. There is clear evidence of the NATO circle's stake to replace democratic cooperation between AKEL and DIKO with an alliance between DIKO and the right-wing Democratic Rally Party on an anti-communist basis. All the attempts by AKEL to overcome the differences and save the Minimum Programme, which we still believe to be a viable platform for strengthening the internal front of struggle to save Cyprus, have proved to be futile.

DIKO's destructive approach to democratic cooperation caused some Communists to express doubts concerning the usefulness of cooperation with other parties, all of which in Cyprus now represent the interests of the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeois strata. Questions were raised as to the correctness generally of our approach to the policy of alliances. The answers were given by AKEL's 16th Congress.

History teaches that the policy of alliances, especially at the stage of the anti-occupation, anti-imperialist, liberation struggle we are going through, is correct and imperative beyond any doubt, provided it is based on principle and the lessons that we learn from the experience of the past. An alliance may be short-term or long-term. It may even be formed for a specific question, for this or that common specific goal. *We are against any cooperation for the sake of cooperation, because for us it is not an end in itself, but the means to attain a specific goal.*

AKEL is the party of the working class and the working people of our island, and it is guided by the invincible theory of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. It is fighting for the complete independence of Cyprus, its ultimate aim being to transform the society into a socialist one. *The main thing for our party at the present stage is the approach of our potential allies to the Cyprus question.* That is why, while we reject any cooperation with those who want to attach Cyprus to NATO, we are prepared to cooperate with anti-imperialist anti-occupation political forces, *provided the programme on which such cooperation rests is one of principle, and serves the interests of the people of Cyprus and its liberation struggle.*

The party's task now is to implement the policy of alliances worked out by the Congress. We seek to negotiate with other democratic forces in order to set up a

united front against the occupation and imperialism, and especially for successful action in the forthcoming February 1988 presidential elections. In view of the presidential system of government in Cyprus, the outcome of these elections will be of great importance to our country's future.

As a major national force, backed by up to one-third of the electorate, a force which in the spring of last year won nine of the 18 mayoral posts in the cities, AKEL has a big, if not crucial, say in the election of the president. *Our strategy is to block the way of the extreme right, pro-imperialist circles in their attempt to grasp power*, because they want to settle the Cyprus question in the NATO spirit, to end our republic's non-aligned status, and to hit the working people's social and democratic gains.

At its Congress, *the party decided to work for a candidate supported by all the democratic patriotic forces who could win the election*, and whose policy would meet the requirements of the people's struggle. If such a candidate is not found, we shall have to nominate our own. But AKEL will do its utmost for unity with the other democratic forces to ensure the victory of a common candidate on the basis of a joint platform and agreed policy in the interests of the people.

For all the importance of the political struggle in the electoral campaign, the Communists are aware that *the policy of alliances cannot and must not be confined to inter-party relations*. A broad popular movement, and vigorous action by trade unions, youth, women's and other mass organisations are the basis on which the positions of the party of the working people within the framework of possible inter-class alliances remain firm, enjoy the people's trust, and command the respect of our partners.

It is highly important in this context not to lose sight of the ideological, economic and social aspects of the struggle which directly affect the broad masses. *The emphasis on the tasks of national liberation does not imply any neglect of the class interests and vital needs of the working people*, for without their support and active participation it is impossible either to defend peace or to win freedom.

That is why the Congress gave much attention to matters like the struggle to raise the wages of the lower-paid working people, to bridge the 6- to 8-fold gap in the wages of different categories of wage-earners, to improve the health and education systems, and to stem the corrupting tide of Western anti-culture that has swept the island. True to its traditions, the party will continue to deal with all these issues and to improve the forms and methods of its work in the masses.

International Solidarity

The year 1987 began in our country with two mass political campaigns bearing on the forthcoming presidential elections, and on the search for a solution to the Cyprus problem. There was the protest against the plans to set up a customs union between Cyprus and the European Economic Community, and efforts to muster public participation in a nation-wide peace march in the area around the foreign military bases.

We cannot accept the idea of Cyprus joining the EEC, because that would be a direct blow at the principles of non-alignment to which our state adheres, since the EEC countries are members of the NATO bloc. Cyprus only stands to lose economically by becoming a member of the customs union, because its economic structures would be unable to withstand pressure from the multinational monopolies of the West, while damage would be done to the existing equitable trade ties with some of the other countries.

It is no exaggeration to say that peace marches are the most massive political demonstrations bringing together men and women of every age, from every walk of life, and backing all the various political parties. They are successful because of

good preparatory work, and formulation and explanation of correct slogans showing the close intercorrection between such issues which directly affect Cypriots as the dismantling of military bases, the withdrawal of the Turkish and all other foreign troops from the country, and global problems in defending world peace and improving the international climate.

When organising political campaigns, AKEL and the mass organisations working under its leadership or together with it, have always given much attention to international solidarity. We strive to have the protesting voice of our people and its working class party heard whenever imperialism encroaches on the rights and freedom of other countries and peoples, be it in Southeast Asia, Central America or the South of Africa. The progressive forces of Cyprus have also given invariable support and utmost assistance to the Palestinian, Lebanese and other Arab peoples carrying on their hard fight in the most immediate vicinity of our island.

The Cypriots are deeply committed to the ideas of international solidarity, because that is what Cyprus itself needs so badly, and because it itself has felt such solidarity in practice on many occasions. *Without the assistance of the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries, the non-aligned movement and the democratic forces of the capitalist world, there would have been no independent Republic of Cyprus today, I am sure, even in the curtailed and partitioned form in which it exists.* Their support has enabled us to survive and has given us the hope that we shall ultimately succeed in winning freedom, despite all the hardships and obstacles.

The Cypriot people feel a special sense of gratitude to the Soviet Union, the land of the Great October Revolution. Everyone knows that the USSR has no special interests in Cyprus and does not seek to acquire any bases or economic privileges. But true to its Leninist principles of supporting the fighting peoples and victims of aggression, it gave us crucial help in the period after the Turkish invasion, when the whole of our economic life was on the brink of collapse. It purchased, without any advantage for itself, the agricultural produce we could not sell to the EEC or to the other capitalist countries, and so literally rescued the Cyprus economy. Not long ago, it helped us through its space surveys to discover oil deposits in the seabed in the Limassol area. That is a truly unique chance for us to improve and strengthen the country's economy, unless the authorities hand over the working of these national resources into the grasping hands of Western oil concerns.

The USSR, the other socialist countries and the non-aligned states stand on the side of Cyprus in the United Nations and at all the international fora, which is also highly important because it helps to internationalise the Cyprus problem to the utmost for the purpose of its peaceful and just solution.

Our party seeks by every possible means at its disposal to show world opinion that the Cyprus problem is international and has international significance, because a peaceful, united, and non-aligned Cyprus is a bridge of friendship between the peoples in a highly important region of the globe, at the junction of three continents. Meanwhile, Cyprus, turned by the imperialists into an 'unsinkable aircraft carrier', is a constant source of threats, a base and ferrying point for aggression, a hot spot whose flames could break out any moment, with all the unpredictable consequences.

In this context, we believe, the working class and the democratic forces of the developed capitalist states, the NATO countries in the first place, should try to exert greater pressure on their governments to make them take real steps towards a Cyprus settlement. The best help and expression of solidarity on the part of the working people of Great Britain, France, Italy, the FRG and, of course, the United States with respect to Cyprus would be a strong and sustained demand for an international conference, as the Soviet Union has proposed.

At AKEL's 16th Congress, we had occasion to welcome 33 delegations from

fraternal parties. Dozens of others, and also many liberation movements, cabled messages of greetings. The communist parties of Greece and Turkey were represented by their General Secretaries, and they brought to the Congress the solidarity of the Greek and Turkish peoples which we so badly need. This fact itself shows not only the sympathy and profound concern for the destinies of the Cypriot people on behalf of our comrades and fellow-fighters, but also the Communists' abiding loyalty to the principles of internationalism, and their ability to seek and find common ground, however the conditions of their struggle may differ.

Mutual understanding among Communists is necessary more than ever before today, in the disturbed period through which mankind is now passing. It is time, I think, to start preparations for an international conference of communist and workers' parties. I do not mean that it should be held right away, but that there should be fuller awareness of the Communists' duty as the well-knit vanguard force in the struggle for mankind's survival. Regardless of any existing differences on other issues, the problem of war and peace is, I believe, acute enough to unite the Communists, to induce them to meet and discuss ways of rallying all the peace-loving forces round our common goals: peace, détente and disarmament.

What the Non-Nuclear States can do

Egon Bahr – Bundestag deputy, Presidium member, Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)

I know of no event since the Second World War to compare with Reykjavik. For the first time, the heads of two powers had to meet to find out whether they could meet again. The main purpose was to determine the content of future summit talks. It is obvious that decisions on bilateral strategic relations can be taken only by the top leaders; they alone can outline the framework for understanding which their foreign ministers and their officials subsequently fill with concrete content.

Reykjavik was effectively a political summit, and its outcome gives ground both for disappointments and for hopes. Let me start with the hopes. For the first time, the two great powers were able to reach an understanding on deep cuts in strategic nuclear weapons. It was not control, but reduction that was on the agenda. The talks came close to fundamental agreements, but foundered on SDI.

Nevertheless, the situation after Reykjavik has changed completely. Mankind saw for the first time that it is possible to achieve disarmament, and that both sides are capable of reaching agreement. The world saw the sweet fruits, and would like to taste of them. Such have been the changes since Reykjavik.

Now for the disappointments. They naturally spring from the fact that the whole thing foundered on SDI. A close look will make it clear that agreement is possible wherever and whenever the parties are guided by the principle of common security, a recognition that one's own security cannot be greater than that of a potential

Egon Bahr, FRG public and political leader, was born in 1922. He started out as a journalist, and from 1945 to 1966 contributed to the radio and various printed media, and was in charge of West Berlin's Press and Information Service. From 1967 to 1974, he was ambassador, state secretary, and minister without portfolio; he has been a Bundestag deputy since 1972, and a member of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security (Palme Commission) since 1980. In 1984, he became head of the Peace and Security Research Institute in Hamburg. He is chairman of the Bundestag subcommittee on disarmament and arms control. This article is based on his report 'Nuclear-Free Zones in Europe', which he delivered at an international symposium in Sofia in October 1986.

adversary, and that one must allow the adversary the same measure of security as one's own. In that sense, security has become truly common security. Those are the principles on which it is possible to agree on strategic weapons and medium-range missiles, and those are the principles on which it was possible to agree at Stockholm.

But as soon as one side starts to seek superiority over the other, namely, to implement SDI, there is a breakdown even of those agreements that rest on the principle of common security. SDI is evidence that one-sided security destroys common security. SDI is evidence that the urge for superiority can imperil the world.

That is why it is certainly necessary to strengthen the principle of common security. This principle is the product of new thinking, because for the first time in human history people begin to think about the security of a potential adversary. That has never happened before. Up to now it was assumed that when one is strong, one has security; when one is stronger, one has even greater security; if it cannot be done alone, look around for allies; and one has utmost security when the adversary has been crushed. That was also, incidentally, what the other side thought. What followed is well known: the history of wars.

That kind of thinking will no longer do in the nuclear age, if one is not to perish. There is only one kind of security — mutual security — in this age of mutual assured destruction. In the context of Reykjavik this means: what was possible needs to be followed up. In Budapest,¹ we reached the conclusion that we must demand of both great powers that the momentum should be maintained, and that what was attainable at Reykjavik should be followed up and realised.

I should also like to make a few remarks on the specific character of nuclear weapons. It is a part of nuclear weapons that those who possess them do not share with anyone else the decision to use them, and that because the decision to use these weapons in definite circumstances means deciding on the existence of one's own people. I believe it was General de Gaulle who gave such a definition. It remains and will remain valid as long as nuclear weapons are there.

But that also means that those who are in possession of nuclear weapons decide on the existence of states which have no such weapons. I do not believe that for the time being this fundamental inequality can be abolished. We shall have to live with it.

This inequality can be breached at one point only, namely, where the non-nuclear states declare: we reject the stationing of nuclear weapons on our soil. When one has consented to the stationing of nuclear weapons on one's soil, one can forget about the rest. In the West, the rest is called consultations. But consultations do not mean much, because they are not binding; they are merely conversations which do not affect the right to decide on the use of nuclear weapons. Indeed, the representatives of a non-nuclear state are even unable to veto such a decision. They cannot spike the guns of those who intend to set off these weapons.

But if the non-nuclear states have no right of veto and no right of decision, two consequences follow. The first is that there should be no nuclear weapons on the soil of the states who do not possess them, which means that it is necessary to rid the non-nuclear states of nuclear weapons. The second is that states not in possession of nuclear weapons, not having a say in the decision, and not having the right of veto, could at least take part in negotiations on such weapons as the parties immediately affected. For one thing is clear: these weapons can be abolished by the nuclear powers themselves, and they alone can reduce these weapons, and no one else.

For me the problem boils down to *what the non-nuclear states can do*. The first thing is to congratulate all those who have no nuclear weapons on their soil. And I

can congratulate those who say: we want to make the nuclear-free status a binding norm of international law, i.e., to make sure that they do not acquire these weapons. Such is generally the situation in the Balkans and in Scandinavia. I believe that it is in the interests of the states concerned to insist on the institution of nuclear-free zones as legally binding norms of international law.

I come from a country where the situation is, regrettably, a different one. We have the highest concentration of nuclear weapons: medium-range, short-range, and theatre nuclear weapons. That means we must tackle nuclear disarmament together with our colleagues from the GDR.

We have spoken of establishing a nuclear-free corridor in the light of many factors. Our French neighbours, for instance, do not like the idea of nuclear-free zones, and one can well understand that when one thinks of the Pacific.² Besides, these zones in Europe would appear in the immediate vicinity of French territory, and their emergence would affect France's independent nuclear weapons doctrine. Nor did we want to interfere in the negotiations between the two great powers at Geneva and Reykjavik. Our discussions were confined to a corridor 150 km wide on either side of the FRG-GDR border, or a total width of 300 km. Within that corridor there are medium-range missiles, short-range and theatre weapons. Characteristically, the two latter types have not even been considered at any talks. We have established that both great powers are naturally concerned in the first place with strategic arms, which are of vital importance for each of them and for the rest of the world. It is a fact, after all, that roughly 96 per cent of the nuclear potential consists of the strategic weapons of the United States and the USSR. That which is absolutely lethal for Europe, that which would mean the end of the European existence, comes to no more than 4 per cent of the nuclear arsenals of the two great powers.

But for us even that is enough. If nuclear weapons are to be removed from this corridor, it would naturally be simplest to do so by removing the nuclear warheads, something that could be done in one hour, given the goodwill. But it would also take one hour to put them back in their old place. In short, that would not produce security. Consequently, not only the warheads, but also the carrier systems must be taken away. Once these are removed, another problem crops up: there is artillery on both sides capable of firing both conventional and nuclear shells. We are faced with the so-called dual-purpose problem. Although a nuclear role is designed for only a small number of these artillery pieces, the bulk of them, designed for firing conventional shells, could be used for firing nuclear munitions, depending on the calibre. It stands to reason, therefore, that all the artillery must be taken away, including the pieces not designed for a nuclear role. Only then can the establishment of a nuclear-free corridor be guaranteed. In other words, a meaningful leap must be made in the field of conventional armaments.

Those are the conclusions we reached with our colleagues from the GDR, when we put our heads together. Both sides stated: hardware has been developed to a point at which it is no longer possible — with the same precision as in a chemical lab — to distinguish nuclear weapons from conventional weapons. The one type shades into the other. Development has run from the most powerful strategic weapons in the megaton range towards small, miniaturised nuclear weapons, so that they have lost their character of political deterrent and have acquired the character of combat weapons.

Still, any stepping over the nuclear threshold would signify a qualitative leap. That is just why it is so important to take theatre weapons out of the forward zone. The temptation to use these weapons or the fear of losing them will lead to them being used at the early stages of an armed conflict. Consequently, the establishment of a nuclear-free corridor raises the nuclear threshold, gives time for

political management of the crisis in the event of a dangerous aggravation of tensions, and also favours a leap in the conventional level.

Let us consider the present situation. The Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) has proposed in its Budapest Address the holding of negotiations on a military equilibrium in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. It also contains proposals on tactical nuclear weapons. NATO turned out to be entirely unprepared. Our decision at Halifax³ was to get down to considering the proposals without delay. This work, it is true, has not yet been completed. I hope that NATO gives a constructive response to the Budapest Address.

There should be an agreement on the framework and venue of talks on conventional weapons stability from the Atlantic to the Urals, involving mainly the armed forces of NATO and the WTO, because these are the only contingents capable of creating the danger of a clash in definite circumstances. Besides, one should bear in mind that a meeting of the states participating in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is under way in Vienna. In the light of the record of earlier meetings, one could assume that it will take a year to work out a final document, if the going is fast.

I am in favour of preserving the highly constructive experience of Stockholm and continuing the Helsinki process. The Europeans were more fortunate than the two great powers. The 35-nation conference at Stockholm has been the only successful conference in strengthening confidence over the past eight years. Meanwhile, the two great powers have not achieved anything since the conclusion of SALT II. Let us keep to this framework and see whether within it a special working group could hold negotiations in NATO and the WTO on conventional arms stability and also on tactical nuclear weapons.

This will be a matter of some complexity. In this connection, the non-nuclear corridor on which we have agreed with our colleagues from the GDR could be of interest. It could help to bridge the gap left by the great powers at Geneva, and it could lead to medium-range missiles and to that which would need to be considered at conventional arms talks over the next few years. It would pay to use the potentialities created by the corridor to enlarge it into a region from which all types of heavy conventional weapons have been removed. It would be highly important to withdraw the bulk of the artillery from the zone because its barrage inevitably precedes any attack, before the first infantryman starts to march, and the first tank to move. The tanks could also be pulled out, so that both sides have nothing in the zone with an attack capability.

A nuclear-free corridor would signify a great leap in the conventional field. My assumption is that our colleagues from the GDR have had consultations on all these problems with their friends in Moscow; indeed, one cannot think otherwise, since the Soviet troops on GDR territory are naturally affected.

On both sides of the border, we are speaking of weapons which do not belong to us. That is what we also did when discussing the establishment of a zone in Europe free from chemical weapons. It is interesting, by the way, that we were not reproached by anyone for talking about weapons which do not belong to us; there have been various other reproaches, but not that one. One should like to focus attention on this point as confirming the right of the party concerned to deal with the cardinal issues of its own existence.

No one denies the responsibility of the great powers, but a share of the responsibility also falls on the small powers, which have their own potentialities.

As for the USSR's attitude to our initiative, I had an opportunity of speaking with Soviet representatives. The Soviet Union has evidently given its consent with the awareness that this means a reduction in its conventional strike potential. That is of exceptional importance, because NATO is firmly convinced of the WTO's

superiority in conventional weapons. It is not a matter of troop numbers, for of these NATO has slightly more, though the Spanish armed forces are not all that important for us in the heart of the continent. This is the crucial point: is the Soviet Union prepared to abide by the same principle by which it was guided at Reykjavik — to do away with superiority in conventional weapons, wherever that may be, in accordance with the principle of common security? I personally am convinced that it is.

One of the oddities of Reykjavik is that the Americans came poorly prepared, having fallen captive of their own propaganda, and assuming that what Mikhail Gorbachov said on January 15, 1986, was not all that serious. A closer look at the proposals the Soviet Union made at that time shows that they contain almost everything he proposed at Reykjavik. If we take the Budapest Address and assume that the USSR takes a serious approach to it, an exceptionally interesting situation will take shape in Europe. In that case, there will be the prospect of stabilising conventional armaments which will disadvantage no one, and give no advance to anyone. A situation will arise in conventional and nuclear weapons — including medium-range missiles — in which a conventional weapons attack will also become impossible because the risk would be too great.

Even if it takes the USSR and the United States a while to settle their strategic problems, I see no reason why Europe should not go ahead in setting up a zone of stable security that would ultimately benefit both great powers as well. Nuclear-free zones and our nuclear-free corridor could acquire even greater significance (especially in view of the development of conventional weapons). I hope that the Europeans will have enough stamina to concentrate on these questions, because it is up to them to take the decisions on these questions.

¹ A reference to the meeting of the Palme Commission in October 1986, when Egon Bahr was elected chairman, following the death of its founder—*Ed.*

² A reference to French nuclear tests.—*Ed.*

³ A reference to the meeting of the NATO Council.—*Ed.*

the party

Meeting of Central Committee Secretaries of the Fraternal Parties of the Socialist Countries

CENTRAL Committee secretaries in charge of international and ideological affairs of the fraternal parties of the socialist countries held a meeting in Warsaw on January 22-23, 1987, attended by representatives of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Cuba, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the Polish United Workers' Party, the Romanian Communist Party, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of Vietnam.

The participants exchanged their views on a series of topical issues of the building of socialism, world politics and ideological and political work in the light of the decisions taken at fraternal party congresses and of the results of the working meeting the leaders of the CMEA countries' parties held in Moscow.

In the course of the discussion it was noted that, creatively applying the principles of scientific socialism, the fraternal parties contribute their rich and diverse experience and their accomplishments to the practice of building a new society.

Stressing the importance of implementing the socio-economic acceleration and intensification programmes adopted at the fraternal parties' congresses, the participants emphasised the need to enhance and perfect the socialist countries' cooperation in all fields and to gear its mechanism to current conditions and demands, to national and common interests. More effective cooperation on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, equality, independence, mutual respect, greater initiative and creative spirit displayed by each party and country, while promoting the unity of all, increases the prestige and the international appeal of socialism.

The exchange of views approached the means, methods and forms of the socialist countries' cooperation with a view of making the fullest possible use of the reserves available to each country. Special emphasis was placed on the importance of resolute and effective measures to implement long-term economic cooperation programmes and agreements and the CMEA countries' Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress Until the Year 2000.

Having underlined the unique significance of the October Revolution which opened a new era of human history, the participants exchanged information on their national and international plans to mark the 70th anniversary of that historic event.

Addressing questions connected with ideological work and political education, the participants shared their experience in the field and discussed ways to improve the form and content of ideological and political education work in the spirit of patriotism, internationalism, vigorous efforts to build socialism and communism in each of the countries, and greater international understanding to promote peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

The need was stressed to work more convincingly in highlighting the socialist countries' policies and accomplishments in the field of human rights and liberties, in the perfection of socialist democracy and interethnic relations, and in broadening the involvement of citizens in the management of the entire social fabric. Questions of intensifying theoretical and practical studies of socialism were examined.

The fraternal parties representatives exchanged their views on the broad application of scientific methods in educational work and on efforts to modernise and develop the material and technical infrastructure of the mass media and agencies of culture in the socialist countries.

The participants denounced the information and propaganda aggression of the reactionary imperialist forces and their attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of the socialist countries, specifically under the fraudulent pretext of defending human and ethnic rights and religious freedoms, and to foment nationalist and chauvinist sentiments. In this connection special stress was laid on the socialist countries' cooperation in objective, extensive and accurate coverage of their people's historical achievements and problems currently tackled.

In the discussion of issues of international politics it was stated that the efforts undertaken by the socialist countries throughout the International Year of Peace to combat the nuclear threat and create a comprehensive system of international security exerted a positive influence on changes in the world's political climate and on international public opinion.

The January 15, 1986 Statement of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on a stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of the century was a major contribution to the struggle against the war threat.

The fraternal parties representatives stressed the particular importance of the Soviet proposals in Reykjavik which demonstrated the strength of the new way of political thinking and convinced millions of people that rapid and substantial reductions of nuclear arsenals were feasible.

The Soviet programme for nuclear disarmament, the Budapest programme for reducing armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, as well as other constructive initiatives of the socialist countries display a truly innovative approach to the key problems of world politics and the socialist world's high sense of responsibility for the future of mankind. Various political parties, broad civic movements and religious organisations have become more active in the struggle for disarmament, security, cooperation and peace.

At the same time, the participants noted, there has been as yet no noticeable breakthrough in world affairs. The international situation remains complicated and grave. This makes it necessary for all peace-loving nations and anti-war forces to be more purposeful, consistent and steadfast in resisting the aggressive policies of imperialism and its plans to escalate the nuclear and conventional arms race and transfer it to outer space. Differences in ideology, politics and world-view must not be an obstacle to cooperation in the struggle for these objectives. Of prime importance is that which unites, not disunites different forces.

The participants reiterated their parties' and countries' determination to cooperate with other socialist nations, with all states irrespective of their social system, and with all anti-war forces in order to contribute tangibly to the strengthening of the potential of peace, reason and goodwill. They will work persistently for the solution of the cardinal problem of our age — that of attaining nuclear disarmament, promoting universal security and building a world in which use of force in international relations would be ruled out and freedom and dignity guaranteed to every individual, every nation and all mankind.

In discussing problems related to the situation in Central America, Southern Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, the participants expressed their solidarity with all peoples fighting against imperialism, racism and neocolonialism. They noted the destabilising effect of the policy pursued by imperialism, particularly US imperialism. They stressed the need to settle various regional conflicts through negotiation, and on the basis of respect for national sovereignty and independence, for the right of all peoples to shape their future without outside interference. Peace and disarmament are inseparable from development, from global efforts to tackle the problems of underdevelopment and of the developing countries' external debt, from the establishment of a new international economic order.

The conference was conducted in a constructive and warm atmosphere and in a spirit of comradely unanimity.

The Hard Conditions of Illegality

Ali Alptekin – CC Political Bureau member,
Communist Party of Turkey

THE Communist Party of Turkey has honourably stood the test of the past several years, a period of effort to safeguard the party against persecution by the dictatorship, which took over on September 12, 1980, and to make sure that our struggle goes on. At the same time, we strove to formulate a new strategy to meet the conditions of the period by analysing the characteristic features of imperialism and of Turkish capitalism in the 1980s.

The CP Turkey's Fifth Congress, which was held deep in the underground in 1983, showed the party's capacity to remain ideologically, politically and organisationally united, and to go on working, despite the great losses it had suffered. The programme adopted by the congress formulates in a spirit of dialectical unity the immediate and long-term goals in the struggle for peace and social progress.

That was the first attempt to give a realistic answer to this question: how is Turkey's working class to carry on its revolutionary struggle in the complicated conditions of the 1980s? Since the party congress, we have continued to elaborate on its conclusions, and the contribution to the theory of Marxism-Leninism made by the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has done much in our search for a new approach to the problems of our day. The work started after the Fifth Congress was completed by a national conference of the CP Turkey which was held successfully at the end of last year, marking a new turning point in our party's militant history. This assessment rests on the outcome of the conference: the CPT's political influence has grown; party organisations have clarified for themselves the content of the party's policy, and have got down with greater vigour to tackling the set tasks: inner-party democracy has been further developed; our ties with the masses have grown stronger; dialogue and cooperation with other left-wing and democratic forces have widened.

The Sixth Plenary Meeting of the CPT CC in May 1986 approved and put up for discussion theses for a national conference formulating proposals bearing on the main problems in the life of our society, as an alternative to the current state of the country. The demands in the struggle for national democracy, national security and sovereignty, reform of the armed forces, and economic and social policy measures made up a concrete, realistic and well-founded programme of transformations. The theses also determined the main lines for democratising our culture.

Inner-party life has been markedly enlivened by the discussion of the theses. All the organisations, from the grass-roots on, examined the documents and assessed their work. Delegates to higher-level regional conferences were elected in clandestine conditions, a method used successfully for the first time in the CPT's history. Along with party conferences, there were conferences of non-party workers, youth, women, and trade union activists, with the participation of progressive-minded people. The circle of those who sympathise with the Communists has widened. Party organisations abroad met to discuss the problems of Turkish workers in Western Europe.

What is most important is that the national conference of party organisations acting within the country was held in clandestine conditions of Turkish territory under the chairmanship of CPT CC General Secretary Haydar Kutlu. That dealt a blow at anti-communism and enhanced trust in the party.

The conference of party organisations abroad was attended by a delegation of the Turkish Labour Party led by its Chairman Behice Boran, a fact which reaffirmed the urge of both organisations to set up a united communist party.

During the conference, the Central Committee urged the delegates to give special attention to the need to strengthen inner-party democracy and develop democratic centralism. Practice has driven home to us that democratic centralism is a necessary prerequisite for formulation new ideas meeting present conditions, strengthening the party's unity, invigorating the activity of its members, inculcating a spirit of comradeship, developing criticism and self-criticism and improving party control. The more inner-party democracy is developed, the higher the authority of the Central Committee, and the more solid are centralism and party discipline as a whole.

Objective and subjective prerequisites for a proletarian revolution have not yet matured in Turkey, which is why we have called the package of reforms proposed by the national conference an alternative Programme for Peace and National Democracy. The reforms are aimed to help the working class exert a more active influence on social development, and promote change in the balance of political forces in favour of peace and democracy, while enhancing its own role in social and political life and strengthening its alliances.

When working out such a programme, the CPT took account of current development trends. Qualitative changes in the basis and superstructure of imperialism and Turkish capitalism depending on it have taken place in the 1980s. Imperialism is now characterised by extreme reaction and militarism. Neo-conservatism, which has become highly influential in the capitalist world in the 1980s, mounted an offensive against democratic rights and freedoms, and has conducted a policy of social claw-back with respect to the working people's economic and democratic gains. The role of force and violence is a growing element of its foreign policy.

All of that has also left an imprint on the situation in Turkey in the 1980s, and because our country is relatively backward and depends on imperialism, it has suffered especially great harm.

The whole state repression machine has been revamped from top to bottom since the 1980s military putsch, and although political parties are now allowed and elections are held, even bourgeois leaders like former prime ministers Suleyman Demirel and Bulent Ecevit have said that there is no democracy in Turkey, but a reign of state terrorism.

What kind of democracy can there be when representatives of the progressive and democratic forces of the working class movement are unable to act freely and are subjected to brutal police persecution? This is exemplified by last December's trial of the leaders and activists of the Progressive Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (DISK), a judicial farce which went on for more than five years and which led to the military tribunal in Istanbul deciding to disband the confederation with its membership of half a million members and sentencing 264 of its leaders and activists to long prison terms — up to 15 years — for 'communist propaganda'.

The working people's real incomes have plummeted as a result of the monetarist economic policy which has been conducted since 1980. Meanwhile, the local monopoly bourgeoisie has been enabled to multiply its profits, even at the expense of other strata of the bourgeoisie. Efforts have been made to turn the national economy into a field of operations by transnational monopolies. State enterprises, the backbone of the national economy, have been reprivatised on a massive scale.

The Pentagon was simultaneously given new military bases in Turkey, and an even freer hand for its activity. US plans assign to our country the role of bridgehead in the fight against the socialist states and the peoples of the Middle

East and Southwest Asia.

The state and the army are now being run by generals who are rabid advocates of the arms race and who regard the world through the prism of geopolitical doctrines; by monetarists bred and educated in Washington; and by fascist-minded fanatics of neoconservatism advocating 'Turkish Islamic synthesis'. Their policy has created a favourable situation for provocative acts by the US administration, which is capable of dragging Turkey into war against its neighbours at any time.

In December 1986, Washington and Ankara made a deal to extend the defence and economic cooperation agreement for another five years. It has further expanded the US possibilities of using the military bases in Turkey against socialist and other countries whose leadership the White House 'does not like'. US nuclear weapons are now deployed on these bases, so posing a threat to Turkey's own security and that of its neighbours. The US administration intends to site new types of nuclear and chemical weapons on these bases.

Extreme reaction and militarism are now the chief adversaries of the working class in Turkey. They rely on the collaborationist oligarchy at home, and on the most aggressive circles of imperialism abroad. The Communist Party's Programme for Peace and National Democracy is a platform for fighting these forces. Its main goals are: to prevent Turkey from becoming an instrument for realising the US government's aggressive course, and to help to turn it into a factor for peace; to end the dictatorship and establish democracy; to prevent the militarisation of our economy and its use for the benefit of the transnational monopolies; to put the country on the way of independent national development; to stop the worsening of the people's condition, and then substantially to improve it; to prevent the disintegration of our culture, and to help preserve and develop it.

The enemies of peace and democracy in Turkey have a narrow social base, but because they have a grip on state power and are supported by the imperialist circles, there is a need to unite all the democratic forces, if these enemies are to be defeated. Such a unification is possible. Broad social strata — ranging from the working class to a sizeable section of the bourgeoisie — now suffer from the dictatorship and its policies. Along with Left Unity, of which the Communists are a part, demands for democracy have been made by the movement of the intelligentsia, two social-democratic parties, and even by the traditionally conservative members of the big bourgeoisie and anti-dictatorial religious circles. The trade unions and other mass organisations have combined their specific demands with slogans for democracy.

The opposition forces have been gaining in strength and coming out against the danger of war, militarism and dictatorship. That was made evident by the results of the additional elections (in ten provinces) held in September 1986, when the number of votes cast for the ruling party dropped from 42 to 32 per cent, while the parties campaigning for democracy won 60 per cent of the vote. Fragmentation is the main weakness of the forces of peace and democracy; they have yet to unite round their common goals. The Communist Party has taken account of the specific interests of the potential allies of the working class and strives to unite them on the basis of general human and general democratic demands. We believe that the working class can unite the forces opposing extreme reaction and militarism only if it takes a consistent stand for this platform.

When putting forward the alternative of peace, national security and sovereignty, the party emphasised the need to effect a radical turn in foreign policy, to prevent the country from being drawn into a war against its will, and to ensure Turkey's contribution to the defence of peace. Turkey should develop good-neighbour relations with all states of our region and oppose the use of force in

regulating disputes between them. While remaining a member of NATO, Turkey could maintain useful and extensive ties with its socialist neighbours, the Soviet Union in the first place. The party's alternative also shows how to take a constructive approach to solving the problems of Cyprus and the Aegean, and also how to build good-neighbour relations with Syria, Iran and Iraq.

The basic prerequisites for fulfilling these tasks is that Turkey's foreign policy should be determined by its own national interests, and not by those of the United States. US imperialism must be prevented from meddling in our country's internal affairs and the conduct of its foreign policy. All the instruments of such interference must be eliminated. That requires above all efforts to close down the US military bases in Turkey. Resistance to US imperialism is the key condition for successful struggle not only against the danger of war, but also for democracy, national independence and social progress.

The CP Turkey sees its programme of reform as the way to establish national democracy, which should ensure bourgeois democratic rights and freedoms without questioning the class character of the state and pursue two main goals: first, it should reduce to the utmost the ability of the government repression machine to use force against the people, and second, it should increase to the utmost the people's opportunities for setting up their own organisations, fighting for their own interests and having a say in shaping state policy. Our programme lists the measures which are necessary for a democratic reorganisation of the police, the courts, and the prisons, and also for a review of criminal legislation.

The Communist Party was the first of the country's political forces to formulate a programme for reforming the armed forces. It should be the army's duty to defend national independence, sovereignty and peace under the leadership and control of a democratic parliament and government elected by the people. If that is to be done, the army needs to be purged of the pro-US, fascist and reactionary cadres, freed from US domination, and released from ties with big monopoly capital. The army should be turned into an institution of the democratic state. Military personnel should be trained in a spirit of peace, democracy and defence of national sovereignty. There is also a need to democratise the army's inner life, help it to make a contribution to the national economy, put it in touch with the people, and purchase its weapons with national funds.

The Communist Party's alternative is designed to implement fully all the basic democratic freedoms and human rights, with special significance attaching to guarantees for freedom of world outlook, the citizens' freedoms in setting up their own organisations, recognition of the existence of a Kurdish nation, and extension of national democratic rights to the Kurds living within Turkey's state borders.

Trade unions, other mass bodies and associations, elected organs of local administration, universities and the press once used to have important functions in political life. These rights were abolished by the 1982 constitution, which the military dictatorship imposed on the people. The CPT programme lists the measures enabling these institutions to take an even more active part in determining the country's domestic and foreign policy and security measures, and also in economic, social and cultural activity. These measures envisage the workers' right to have a say in running state enterprises, democratisation of local organs of power, the right of teachers, students and workers to have an influence on the higher education system, and the right of democratic mass organisations and trade unions to participate in the framing of laws.

The party believes that the common interests of all the classes and strata of the society that suffer from the current policy, think about the country's future and wish to contribute to its democratic development could provide a common platform for their joint action. The Alternative for Economic and Social Policy envisages a

wide spectrum of measures: defence of the national economy from imperialism; independent economic development; a review of the role of the state in the economy, enhancement of that role as well as of the state's potentialities of economic management for the benefit of all national classes and strata of the society; defence of the working people's gains and an increase in their incomes.

We have put forward concrete proposals for tackling problems of boosting industry and agriculture free from the domination of the big landowners and solving such problems as unemployment, housing crisis, faulty education and health systems, social security, urbanisation, protection of the environment and safeguarding of the interests of the family, mother and child and youth.

The CP Turkey wants economic and social development for the benefit of the people and is aware that many of these problems cannot be solved within the national framework alone. Our programme envisages Turkey's mutually advantageous cooperation with all countries, its active role in the international struggle against colonialism, and for the establishment of a new international economic order. It has emphasised the vital significance of high technology for industrialising the country and has proposed a number of relevant measures.

The CPT's programme of reforms to democratise every sphere of social life draws a distinction between the urgent measures to be taken by a democratic government, and long-term goals. The struggle for the solution of urgent problems should drive back reaction and militarism, and the struggle for long-term goals — to unite the forces that defeat them.

The CPT's programme shows the democratic way out of the present situation. As for the future, its implementation is to prepare the way for the coming revolution. The socialist perspective of democratic transformations entails a greater role for the working class. The struggle for peace and national democracy will enable the working class to multiply its own forces and win over other working people and middle strata. For the working class, national democracy is a bridge linking the present and the radiant future.

It stands to reason, therefore, that these objectives require a new approach to the working class policy of alliances. The CPT is now conducting a policy which enables it to work with everyone who can and wants to help drive back reaction and the forces of militarism. It wants a dialogue and cooperation with all those who support even a single plank of our programme.

The way in which the national conference was prepared and held exemplifies the new constructive approach to those of our partners with whom the party wants to form alliances. When drawing up our reform programme, we included a number of proposals put forward by other progressive circles. Despite our illegal status, we conducted a dialogue in the second half of 1986 with various left-wing and progressive forces, explained our theses and heard out their views. The party's views were explained at open meetings in Western Europe, where there are many workers and political émigrés from Turkey.

The Communist Party is aware that it is not enough for it to become stronger in order to tackle the problems facing the country. There is also a need to consolidate the positions of all the progressive circles. Our 1986 national conference marked an important step on the way to discussing joint action with other forces of progress.

The conference showed that the CPT, guided as it is by Marxism-Leninism, is capable of outlining democratic ways for solving the country's main problems with an eye to the interests of all the forces which have linked their own future with that of our country. The Communist Party is a reliable partner for everyone who stands for peace and democracy. It is a democratic and national party resolutely and tirelessly fighting against US imperialism and its henchmen.

The acceleration of economic and social development in the Soviet Union and

other socialist countries, their growing influence in the international arena, the mounting strength of the working class and general democratic movements, the strengthening of the positions of the non-aligned states opposing militarism and neocolonialism, and the ever wider movement for peace are all a great help in the struggle of the working class and the other social and political forces in Turkey which stand for peace and democracy.

In the Midst of the Masses, in the Interests of the Masses

Lucet Langenier – Central Committee secretary, Réunion Communist Party (RCP)

Articles about Réunion* appear rarely on our pages, and so the first question is about your party's assessment of the current situation in the island.

THE steady deterioration of the economic situation over the past few months has been a cause of grave concern. The decline is explained above all by the fact that, as an overseas department of France, Réunion is tied closely to the French economy and consequently to the Common Market, with all that this entails. It is extremely difficult, if at all possible, to integrate the island's underdeveloped, monocultural economy (without strangling it, that is) into the giant industrial-agrarian conglomerate of the EEC.¹

Each day brings us additional proof that membership of France and, consequently, of Réunion, in the Common Market produces pernicious results. For example, the production of our traditional commodities — sugar, rum and vanilla — is slowly expiring, unable to withstand the competition of the sugar beet-based products in the EEC countries. Fluctuations of prices on the world market plunge whole industries in Réunion into decline, thus giving rise to an extremely acute social problem of rapidly growing unemployment. By now 36 per cent of our population have lost their jobs. Moreover, thousands of skilled and educated workers are left unemployed, and that is an unprecedented development for us. All this gives rise to acute discontent with French policies.

To give your readers a better idea of the gravity of the situation, let me add that two-thirds of our people live at or below the poverty level, while a minority wallows in luxury. Forty per cent of the people are illiterate. As Comrade Paul Verges, RCP Secretary General, put it, we have "two worlds existing back-to-back". Many people realise that, if continued, this inequality may end in an explosion.

We know that the elimination of the essentially colonial system of government in favour of democratic popular autonomy is a policy goal of the RCP. Did it prove possible to advance towards that goal while France was ruled by a left government?

Between 1981 and 1985, when FCP representatives served on the cabinet, the government did take some positive steps which consolidated the social gains of the

*Réunion is a French possession (overseas department) in the Indian Ocean. Area: 2,500 square kilometres; population: 550,000 (as of 1983); administrative centre: Saint-Denis; basic economic branch: sugar industry. —Ed.

working people, improved the position of the retired and the disabled, and alleviated the plight of those dependent on government support. The decision of the authorities to 'legalise' the Creole language, the islanders' traditional tongue, was of special importance to Réunion. Prior to 1981 this language had been barred from schools, university, radio and television. That was a major victory for the RCP which, for decades, had been Réunion's only political force to defend the distinctive culture of the island's population. But the struggle is not yet over: Paris still refuses to recognise Creole as a full-fledged language.

However, all this has done nothing to solve the problem of autonomy. For all practical purposes, the people of Réunion are still unable to chart the way of the island's development themselves. And so the left forces' term of office in France failed to meet our aspirations. Indeed, it would have been unrealistic to expect a different outcome: the FCP, the only French party supporting the RCP demand for autonomy, constituted a minority in the government.

How have the conditions in which the RCP wages its struggle changed since the formation of the Chirac government in France in March 1986?

The contradictions I have listed have become more acute with the rise to power of the right-wing forces, above all because of their essentially neocolonialist attitude to overseas departments. The rightists even planned to severely curtail the activities of communist parties there. But, bogged down in the problems plaguing France, the authorities have so far failed to develop a concerted policy vis-à-vis these territories. Besides, it has turned out that there is no unanimity on this question among the right-wing parties of France. Some of them concede the possibility of granting Réunion, Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana the right to manage their own internal affairs.

The parliamentary elections of 1986 resulted in a retreat for the left prompted us to consider who we could rely on in France aside from the FCP in furthering our objectives. Naturally, the RCP will continue to cement and develop its relations with the French Communist Party. At the same time, we are trying to establish contracts with other political entities and individual figures that can support our demands. Still, reliance on others is not the best of policies. First and foremost one must rely on one's own resources, the way we are proceeding at home by mobilising the masses around the demand for Réunion's right to decide its own future. On the whole, the people respond with understanding to the efforts of the Communist Party which is the most influential political force in the island. This is clear from the fact that the RCP has a membership of 10,000 and usually wins more than 30 per cent of the vote in elections.

Since the illiteracy rate in Réunion is quite high, it would be interesting to learn how your party communicates the mission, thrust and objectives of its struggle to various strata of the population, especially to the low-income groups — and not only communicates but also, judging by the RCP's influence, rallies the masses around the party.

True, illiteracy is a wall you have to negotiate anew every day. It is a distinctive feature in the social fabric of underdeveloped countries, including Réunion, that oral traditions and person-to-person contacts are very important. Hence the tremendous role of radio and especially of television which has an audiovisual impact on the viewers. Bourgeois ideology which is prevalent in France and in Réunion dominates this field and considerably hampers our struggle. Nevertheless, the RCP does have certain opportunities and means for conducting a permanent

dialogue with the masses.

In addition to a daily newspaper, we also have a radio station of our own — Radio Corail, broadcasting practically all over the island. We also have access to one cable TV channel. The costs of telecasts are covered from municipal budgets. Besides, the RCP makes wide use of videotapes to reach illiterate masses. One can say that in Réunion, the Communists were first to introduce these tapes into political work, as far back as 1975. Today, every important statement by the RCP Secretary General is recorded and shown in frequently visited bars and cafés which have video equipment. Finally, in the municipalities run by the Communist Party we have the financial and the technical means to publish local newspapers, bulletins and leaflets on specific problems; we can also talk to people via public address systems mounted on cars or vans.

Of course, we use traditional forms of work too — meetings, rallies, conferences and discussions attended by representatives of different social groups, even by businessmen. Although generally voting for the Right, the latter often support our proposals of Réunion's development.

Our party is working hard to explain its policy to the more affluent social groups. As a rule, they refrain from coming to our popular rallies, and so we strive to begin a dialogue by organising dinners at which debates are held, dancing parties and meetings to commemorate important anniversaries. Facts prove that this work does bear fruit: many members of the middle strata vote communist in municipal elections. Naturally they are guided by the specific record of this or that communist mayor in office.

We pay particular attention to the low-income communities where dialogue with the residents sometimes proves difficult. The meetings there are held in Creole, the generally spoken language, and not in French. Our activists try to speak slowly, avoid sophisticated terms and turns of phrase, and often repeat the same idea, wording it differently several times, so that everyone could grasp the meaning. To sum up, the RCP uses every opportunity to counter the powerful propaganda of the reactionaries and to acquaint the public with our stand. This is a basic principle of our work because we maintain that there can be no genuine democracy without information.

Could you dwell in greater detail on the work of the RCP's Radio Corail?

Before beginning work to establish it, we asked the FCP, which had the necessary expertise and personnel, to make a feasibility study, prepare technical documents specifying performance characteristics and help us build the station. A competition for the best project was announced. Then we used the financial resources earmarked by the RCP-controlled municipal councils to equip the studios, purchase the transmitters and install the relay facilities.

But that's not all. Before the broadcasting began, the RCP joined the subscribers of a French news agency run by the progressive forces. In Réunion, we have set up our own news agency, the Indian Ocean Channel. It distributes international, French and local news programmes and prepares music broadcasts geared to the traditions of the island's different areas. The news agency operates on a pluralistic basis: its services are used not only by Radio Corail but also by other radio stations, and this reduces our financial outlays to a certain extent. And so, while some of the problems remain unsolved, we have accumulated interesting experience and can now say with pride that our central radio station and our news agency are among the most popular in Réunion.

When you discussed ideological work you often connected it with the activities of communist-run municipal councils. Could you elaborate on this interconnection?

Indeed, we think that these two spheres are closely inter-related. The RCP sees municipal councils both as channels of the ideological struggle and as tools for the solution of many urgent problems affecting the people. Since 1983, the Communist Party has controlled one-third of Réunion's municipal councils with communities accounting for 200,000 people

In 1983 we decided to pool the resources and abilities of the communities we controlled so as to tackle jointly major problems of municipal engineering, transport, employment and leisure. This was the reason for the establishment of the trade union association SIVMOR. The acronym stands for the Intercommunal and Multi-occupational Trade Union of Réunion. The project was a complete novelty to us, but the first results are reassuring. We have succeeded in pooling government and private resources and in channelling them into community development and into improving the transport network and the infrastructure of the tourist industry. The value of SIVMOR's experience is also borne out by the fact that the Right and the Socialists are trying to set up similar associations of their own.

However, if viewed dialectically, every multifaceted phenomenon has both advantages and disadvantages. And since our party is suffering from a shortage of skilled personnel, the same people often have to discharge party, municipal and trade union duties. In other words, combination of different functions is an acute problem.

You don't have to go far and wide to find examples. Take my own case. Aside from my duties as secretary of the RCP Central Committee, I am also mayor of Sainte-Suzanne, a regional and a general councillor of Réunion, and vice-president of the regional tourism and recreation agency. Besides, I teach. And my case is by no means an exception. Many of my party comrades work 14 to 18 hours a day. This strain has an adverse impact on these people, on their families and finally, on the results of their work. You know what happens when you have too many irons in the fire. To allay the problems of overwork, we grant as much responsibility as possible to young people. This helps them to get firsthand experience, to be in constant contact with the people, and to learn to take the right decisions from their own mistakes.

Could you tell us about your work on the municipal council? How do you help the poorer sections of the population?

Sainte-Suzanne has a population of 13,000. Economically, it is mostly a rural community which cultivates sugar cane, vanilla and fruit. We have small sugar refineries there too. They produce not only sugar but also rum and molasses which, mixed with vegetable fibre, makes excellent fodder. But signs of crisis have been recently spreading in the economy of our community, just as they have in the economy of all Réunion. One of the results is that Sainte-Suzanne now has 2,000 unemployed. To make matters worse, at least 500 families are deprived of any means of livelihood. Assistance to them is a constant concern of the municipal council.

Our budgetary policy is aimed at making the better-off strata pay as much as possible and at redistributing this revenue to benefit the dispossessed. This enables the municipal council to provide some people with temporary jobs and to issue those in particular need with 'food packages' which include a minimum of staple foodstuffs.

Finally, we use community funds to build housing. Many get it free of charge because they simply cannot pay the rent. Keys to new apartments are handed over in a highly emotional ceremony. Not long ago I presented such keys to 30 poor families. I wish you could see their eagerness and joy! Each new tenant hugged and kissed me. Honestly, making people even a little bit happier is worth fighting for!

The 'food package', the free housing, the temporary jobs are our way of responding to the most urgent pleas and needs of the poorer section of the population. At rallies, poor people often tell Communists: "We accept the future you propose for Réunion, but if we have no food today, we will not live until tomorrow." And they are right. Therefore let me repeat that the municipal council enables the RCP to respond promptly to the needs of the poorer part of our society. But in providing relief we tell the people that only radical socio-political change in Réunion will really make their future secure.

¹ The RCP Programme envisages nationalisation of the sugar industry, democratic agrarian reform, and control over foreign economic ties. The RCP regards colonialism as the prime source of the island's economic underdevelopment and insists on bigger French government subsidies and a revision of their use.—Ed.

Contribution to Peace

Forums Open to Everybody

Peace forums have been functioning in Hamburg, Bremen, and other cities of the Federal Republic of Germany for a number of years now. In the autumn of 1986 they sponsored major actions, and were active in arranging the peace demonstration at Hasselbach, where a base for US cruise missiles is located. WMR asked Kurt Schacht, an official of the Board of the German Communist Party, to give some details about these forums and the role the Communists play in them. The following is his reply.

IN the FRG we do not have an umbrella peace organisation, but the movement operates in many forms, among which are the peace forums, in which diverse political and social forces — notably Social Democrats, Communists, Greens and Christians — cooperate constantly on the basis of a joint platform. Frank and sometimes polemical discussions take place at these forums that also include the most vital issues of the struggle for peace. Those who take part in these discussions strive to see each other's point of view and reinforce and extend the positions they hold in common.

This is the spirit in which the Communists act in these forums. GCP members, together with Social Democrats and Christians, initiated their formation in Hamburg and Bremen and try to conduct the discussions in such a way as to promote understanding and cooperation and buttress the effectiveness of the entire peace movement.

A major peace forum rally took place in Bremen in October 1986. The focus was on matters of the utmost importance after the Reykjavik meeting, namely, how to conduct the struggle against the plans for militarising outer space and the FRG-USA agreement on collaboration in the 'star wars' programme. The rally was addressed by the leader of the Bremen Social Democrats Herbert Bruckner, the chairman of the GCP local district organisation Dieter Gautier, and Martin

Thomas, a Green deputy in the Bremen city parliament. They spoke of the great significance of Mikhail Gorbachov's proposals at Reykjavik and of the agreements that were within reach but were blocked by the stand of the US administration, which clung perversely to its SDI. The Communists and their forum partners were unanimous on the point that the struggle against the militarisation of outer space had to be redoubled.

Speakers at the rally declared that the FRG had to contribute to the cause of peace by inducing Washington to abandon the SDI. The consensus in the peace movement is that an agreement between the USSR and the USA on the basis of the Soviet proposals would be completely in harmony with the interests of the FRG since a major component of these proposals is the elimination of nuclear missiles in Europe — both Soviet and American. Were an agreement to be signed it would spell out the attainment of one of the principal objectives of the West German peace movement: an end to deployment of more missiles in the FRG and the removal from its territory of those that have already been deployed. This would be the first step towards freeing the republic from nuclear weapons.

The peace forums are a major factor mobilising the population for mass actions on a national scale, such as the 200,000-strong demonstration in Hasselbach. The demonstrators demanded disarmament, the cessation of nuclear tests, and the removal of US missiles from the FRG. As a resident of Hamburg I personally know how much effort was put by the city forum into the preparations for this action. Its participants got in touch with peace fighters in other cities and booked several trains to carry demonstrators to Hasselbach from Hamburg. Altogether, more than 6,000 people came.

The peace forums are open to all who support the principal demands of the movement. The Communists are striving to enlist the Greens into the activity of these forums on an equal footing with other parties.

Moreover, we consider that it is extremely important to bring into the peace movement members of the academic community, those who can tell the truth about the SDI to people who are still unaware of what it really stands for. The number of academics joining the struggle for disarmament is gradually growing. Today they are taking part in almost every action of the peace movement and are becoming increasingly more active in the Bremen and Hamburg forums.

The academic community is seriously disturbed about the plans for militarising outer space. In the FRG there already are initiative groups of specialists acting against these plans. Let me give just one illustration: some 1,500 researchers working at a big facility of the Siemens A.G. concern have declared they would have no part in the SDI under any circumstances. Their refusal to contribute to the development of space weapons is of vast significance to the struggle against the designs of the US administration, which is eager to enlist the FRG's scientific potential into its researches.

Yet another notable feature of the peace movement in our country is that it is being joined by members of parliament. There is now hardly a single SDPG or Green deputy of the Bundestag who is not participating in the struggle for peace. Among the Social Democrats in the Hamburg forum there are 30 members of the city parliament. It was on their initiative that a majority of its members (the SDPG and Green parliamentary parties) spoke out against the SDI and the FRG's participation in it. In adopting this decision the city parliament called upon the Bundestag to take a stand in favour of creating a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe.

In the run-up to the January Bundestag elections the Hamburg and Bremen forums urged people to vote for candidates who had committed themselves to seeking the realisation of the peace movement's demands. However, the peace

movement does not link itself to any party. It is working to expand its base by recruiting new sections of the population, including those who do not see the SDPG, the GCP or the Greens as their political spokesmen. In the movement there are supporters of the FDP and even the CDU. For the peace fighters it is important that in deciding whom to vote for people should take into account the stand of the various parties on issues related to peace and disarmament.

The participation of GCP members in the peace forums has unquestionably given the party valuable experience and, I am certain, has had a positive effect on the peace movement itself. Cooperation between the Communists, Social Democrats, and Greens has been fostered by the considerable concurrence of their views on questions of war and peace. Moreover, this cooperation has helped them have a better understanding and estimation of each other and thus made it much more productive. There has been a growth of mutual confidence. In Hamburg and Bremen the chairmen of the SDPG and CPG district organisations and a representative of the Green leadership together strive to bring their ideas home to the population and undercut the influence of forces hostile to peace.

Cooperation to this extent has still not been achieved everywhere. But the experience of the Hamburg and Bremen peace forums is eloquent evidence of new possibilities and prospects. The Communists are working to make the efforts within the framework of these forums an example for organising interaction at other levels as well.

Human Rights

Truth on Trial

A trial opened in Luxembourg in January. The defendants are four journalists of *Zeitung vum Letzebuerger Vollek*, the central newspaper of the Communist Party. The charges were brought by two Belgian senators, one of them chairman of the so-called World Anti-Communist League. In connection with a conference the League held in Luxembourg in September 1986 the journalists published several articles exposing the fascist and racist character of this international organisation active in the 'crusade against communism'

In court, the defendants justly stress that their articles did not contain any personal attacks; the facts and the assessments cited were also published by other organs of the world press, including *The Washington Post*. The persecution of the *Zeitung vum Letzebuerger Vollek* journalists is yet another reactionary attempt to muzzle those who openly oppose aggressive anti-communism.

The Communist Movement Today

Meeting in Lima

A meeting of South American communist parties was held in Lima, the capital of Peru, from December 6 to 8, 1986. It was also attended by representatives of the CP Cuba and El Salvador. It met to discuss the new aspects of the political situation

on the continent and the consequent tasks for the Communists.

There was special emphasis on the need to strengthen solidarity with the peoples of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, Paraguay, Puerto Rico and Haiti in view of the imperialist attempts to prevent the peoples of these countries from deciding their national problems independently, and in view of the ever harsher repression by the local reactionary circles, above all the militarists, who are also engaged in political genocide in Colombia and Peru. Support was expressed for Argentina's demands to extend sovereignty to the Malvinas (Falklands), and for Panama's demands to transfer the Panama Canal to it and withdraw US troops from that country.

The meeting decided to start extensive preparations to mark the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The Communists of the continent came out for the convocation of an international meeting of communist and workers' parties to discuss problems of the struggle for peace.

Commitment to Common Goals

General Secretary of the CPSU CC Mikhail Gorbachov and General Secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party Alvaro Cunhal met in Moscow on December 29, 1986. They had a thorough exchange of views on the major problems of the international situation: on ways to end the arms race and strengthen security in Europe and other regions. They discussed the development of cooperation within the framework of the international communist and working class movement at this turning-point stage in historical development, and spoke of the importance of seeking new forms of cooperation between Communists in the spirit of the day. Unanimity of views and mutual understanding between the CPSU and the Portuguese CP were reaffirmed on all the matters they discussed.

Full Support

The Bulgarian Communist Party and the Communist Party of Great Britain support the programme put forward by CPSU CC General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov on the establishment of a comprehensive international security system through a phased reduction of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, down to their total elimination by the year 2000. Both parties gave a high assessment of the Soviet proposals at Reykjavik. That is what was said at a meeting between BCP CC General Secretary Todor Zhivkov and CPGB General Secretary Gordon McLennan, which was held in Sofia in December 1986.

Mutual Concern

First Secretary of the CP Cuba Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of State and Council of Ministers Fidel Castro and General Secretary of the French Communist Party Georges Marchais, who visited Cuba with a FCP delegation, held a meeting on January 1, 1987. They discussed the present domestic situation in Cuba and France, and international problems. They said that the crisis of capitalism has created great hardships for the developing countries and has increased hunger, poverty and mass unemployment. The two parties came out for the establishment of a new international economic order as the basis for an equitable dialogue between the European states and Latin America. Both parties supported the idea that the struggle for development, peace and disarmament are inseparable. They noted with satisfaction the strengthening ties between the French CP and the CP Cuba, and expressed their readiness to go on expanding these ties.

Strengthening Solidarity

The peoples of the Korean Democratic People's Republic and the People's Republic of Benin intend to continue strengthening their solidarity and cooperation

in the struggle against imperialism, neocolonialism and racism, it was said at the talks held in KDPR in December 1986 between the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and President of the Republic Kim Il Sung, and Chairman of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party of Benin and President of the government Mathieu Kerekou. They noted the great importance of the efforts of the non-aligned movement for stronger peace and international détente.

Initiatives Discussed

The Political Bureau of the CP Belgium invited the Communists and other progressive parties of Central and Northern Europe to call a series of meetings to discuss plans for joint struggle for disarmament and peaceful cooperation on the continent in 1987. That is said in an appeal published in *Le Drapeau Rouge*, organ of the CP Belgium. Within the framework of that initiative, a meeting was held in Brussels last January between delegations of the Communist Party of Belgium and the German Communist Party led by the chairmen of the two parties, Louis Van Geyt and Herbert Mies. The discussion showed a broad community of views of the problems discussed.

Unity of Views

A delegation of the CP Greece led by CPG CC General Secretary Harilaos Florakis paid a visit to Czechoslovakia in January 1987. It met with Vasil Bilak, member of the Presidium and Secretary of the Central Committee of the CP Czechoslovakia. They held an exchange of views on some pressing problems, including those relating to the communist and working class movement, and also to cooperation between the CP Greece and the CP Czechoslovakia. They reaffirmed the complete identity of their views on international developments, which are characterised by a sharpening of tensions through the fault of the aggressive forces of imperialism.

In Brief

CONGRESSES SCHEDULED

- The leadership of the Brazilian Communist Party has decided to convene an extraordinary congress of the BCP from May 8 to 10, 1987.
- In accordance with a decision taken by a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, the 27th Congress of the CPC will, be held in early 1988.
- The Ninth Congress of the Peruvian Communist Party, originally slated for December 1986, has been rescheduled to take place from May 27 to 31, 1987. The decision on the matter has been taken by a plenary meeting of the PCP Central Committee.

CHINA

As reported in *Renmin ribao*, the central newspaper published by the CPC Central Committee, 60 volumes of *A History of the International Communist Movement*. Documents will be published in the People's Republic of China over the next five years. The first volume — *Protocols of the Executive Committee of the First International* — has already appeared. The edition is to include materials of the

Communist International and the documents of the international communist movement which were published in the press.

COLOMBIA

The Executive Committee of the Colombian Communist Party Central Committee has released a message to the people noting that the consolidation of the Patriotic Alliance (PA), a democratic political coalition including the Colombian Communist Party, and the establishment of the Unitary Trade Union Centre of Working People, a major new trade union association, are the most important results achieved in the course of recent class battles. At the same time, the message stressed that in 1986 internal reaction launched a campaign of terror against the democratic forces, murdering more than 300 activists of the Communist Party and the PA. The Executive Committee of the CCP Central Committee has called on the people to form a united front in defence of democracy.

IRELAND

The Irish Communists have marked the 25th anniversary of *Unity*, a weekly newspaper published in Belfast (Northern Ireland). The paper covers major domestic political developments and international issues from positions of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. An exhibition was mounted in Belfast to highlight the history of the Irish communist weekly.

ITALY

The typical member of the Italian Communist Party is committed to the lofty ideals of solidarity and justice and yet is a 'pragmatist'. Nowhere abroad does he see a model for a future society in Italy, where he thinks the emphasis should be on providing jobs for all, equality of the sexes, and people's participation in political decision-making. Such was a January comment of *l'Unita* on a computer analysis of a 1986 survey among delegates to the 17th ICP Congress. The survey also showed that 49 per cent of the party members were not 'hereditary' Communists but came to the party from student movements (half of them), women's organisations (13 per cent) and Catholic organisations (18 per cent).

MEXICO

Representatives of the United Socialist Party of Mexico, the Mexican Party of the Working People, the Revolutionary Patriotic Party, the People's Revolutionary Movement and the Left Communist Unity Movement have announced the formation of a new nation-wide party. In a document they have released, these organisations note that the progressive forces need a powerful party which is to embody the finest revolutionary and national traditions and to become a genuine champion of the working people. A unification congress is planned for the latter half of 1987.

MOROCCO

Al Bayane, the newspaper of the Morocco Party of Progress and Socialism, resumed publication on January 10, 1987. On October 30, 1986 publication was suspended by the authorities, although no reasons were given. This generated vigorous protests on the part of the Communists and other progressive forces of the country.

URUGUAY

A festival of the left press was held in Montevideo in late December 1986. For four days, an area adjacent to the biggest stadium of the Uruguayan capital hosted

exhibitions mounted by *El Popular*, the weekly published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uruguay; by *La Hora*, a newspaper reflecting the views of the Broad Front, a coalition of the country's democratic and patriotic forces; and by other progressive publications.

VIETNAM

The Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam elected 173 people to the CPV Central Committee (124 full and 49 alternate members). Of these, 92 were re-elected. The average age of the full and alternate Central Committee members is 56. Communists aged 40 to 59 make up 67 per cent of the membership; those aged over 60, 32.3 per cent; CC members with a higher education account for 43.3 per cent.

The Women's Movement Today

Our Motto: Equality, Progress, Peace

Fanny Edelman – WIDP Vice-President,
CC Political Commission member, Communist
Party of Argentina

MARCH 8 was proclaimed International Women's Day on the initiative of Clara Zetkin (1857-1933) at a conference of women Socialists held in Copenhagen in 1910. The decades that have passed since then enable us to appreciate the epochal significance of this event for millions of working women on all the continents. In capitalist states they are fighting for their rights. In countries that have won liberation from colonial bondage they are fighting for a new life. And where socialism has triumphed women are involved in all the affairs of state and society. March 8 is a festival of solidarity and friendship with the focus on democracy, national liberation, social emancipation, and peace. The UN has inscribed this date in the calendar of the world community.

Today, with the threat of a nuclear war overhanging our planet, with our civilisation and species facing the menace of extinction, we can see the full significance of Clara Zetkin's great contribution to the world democratic women's movement, which is in the vanguard of the planet's peace forces. At the turn of the century, she wrote: "Peace can be ensured for the peoples of the world only when the slogan of 'War Against War' is supported also by a considerable majority of women motivated by a profound inner persuasion." These words acquire a special meaning in the present situation when imperialism is savagely attacking the aspiration of nations for peaceful coexistence, cooperation, solidarity, and friendship.

Clara Zetkin gave more than 40 years of her life to the fight to emancipate women, spreading the tenet of Marx and Engels that full emancipation can only be won for women when the working class fulfils its historic mission. The fact that the women's question became an inalienable part of the theory and practice of the proletariat's class battles is due largely to the efforts of this outstanding

Fanny Edelman joined the revolutionary struggle when she was very young. She fought in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) as a member of the International Brigades, and has been holding leadership posts in the Communist Party of Argentina for a long time. She has written a number of books on the women's movement.

revolutionary. In our day Clara Zetkin's behests are a lodestar for the huge army of her followers, who have been able, even when capitalism was still supreme in the world, to secure a substantial expansion of their civil rights and liberties.

The global magnitude of the liberation process that commenced under the impact of the Great October Revolution reaffirms that women have an active role to play in the epoch-making battle for far-reaching social changes, democracy, and peace.

In this context it is imperative to re-emphasise the need for fundamentally reappraising all of capitalist society's norms and practices that in effect deny equality to women. In speaking of conformity between the letter of the law and reality it must be noted that here we are dealing with a complex process whose starting point is that *all* citizens, men and women, should enjoy equal rights. August Bebel wrote that the unequal status and oppression of women "are rooted in the essence of bourgeois society", which "is unable to extirpate this evil and emancipate women".

Diverse aspects of the issue of the emancipation of women have been substantively elaborated by the classics of Marxism-Leninism, who pointed out that *this issue is not one of drawing distinctions between the sexes but a social problem, whose solution is a prerequisite for the renewal of society as a whole.*

Our approach to women's problems differs from the attitudes adopted by some sections of the feminist movement. We emphasise the close interconnection which links the exploitation and oppression of women with the nature of capitalist society. To blame men for the inequality from which women suffer means to confuse the causes of this inequality. To ignore the real problems that affect working women means to isolate the female masses from the struggle against the actual culprits responsible for this discrimination and profiting from it; it also means to underrate the degree of consciousness women have attained. Despite these differences, the common views that bring the feminists closer to other democratic currents in the women's movement explain its growing unity and make it possible to expect new advances in the consolidation and development of the joint struggle for the emancipation of women.

Impressive progress has been made by the women's democratic movements. The times are irretrievably gone when the predominant view was that the "woman has been given to man to continue the species and for that reason she is his chattel just as the fruit-tree is the property of the gardener". The role of women in the economic, social, and cultural life of the modern world has undergone a dramatic change. The 'weaker sex' is now an active force of advancement, democracy, and peace, and this is inducing women to develop their identity, to win guaranteed, all-embracing rights by their day-to-day struggle for a new quality of life, a life in which they are assured of justice and happiness.

Hence it is fair to say that *in the world today the conditions exist for the emancipation of women in the true sense of the word.* This is manifested in the consciousness of the people and in concrete actions, and it is further invigorating the struggle against capitalism and the fight for peace. This harmonises with the process of transformation that characterises our epoch of transition.

On the international scene there is a new alignment of strength in favour of socialism and peace. The movements for national liberation, independence, and the self-determination of nations have grown powerfully. The potential of the peace movement is gaining strength. We are witnessing mounting actions by the working class and other sections of the people for the satisfaction of their vital needs, for social progress, against war, imperialist exploitation, nuclear blackmail, aggression, and oppression. All this is bringing women into the struggle both for their own rights and for the destiny of humankind.

"The experience of all liberation movements has shown," Lenin said, "that the

success of the revolution depends on how much the women take part in it."¹ These words have been and continue to be borne out by practice.

Everybody knows of the role played by women in the Cuban revolution. With arms in hand they fought for the freedom and independence of their country. They were active in the drive to wipe out illiteracy, and today they continue to be active in promoting economic development. Fidel Castro had every reason to declare at the Third Congress of the Communist Part of Cuba that "the participation of Cuban women in all the tasks set by the revolution and the party throughout all these years merits admiration and universal acknowledgement".²

Many Nicaraguan women were directly involved in the guerrilla war against the Somoza dictatorship and in forming the Sandinist National Liberation Front. In that Central American republic women are participating in the process of revolutionary transformations and helping to defend their country against the designs of US imperialism and its myrmidons. By their visible, massive contribution to the revolution, said Tomas Borge, one of the leaders of the SNLF, women have won the right to be in the front ranks of the builders of a free Nicaragua.

The leader of the Angolan revolution Agostinho Neto, who proclaimed the independence of his country, declared that the People's Republic of Angola would do everything to facilitate the emancipation of women and protect their rights, which they won by their participation in the war of liberation and in the people's resistance to the mercenary gangs and aggressive acts of the South African racists.

Once downtrodden, women in Afghanistan have become a dependable pillar of the new life. Nobody will put the tag 'slaves of slaves' on those who are fighting the dushmans side by side with men, studying at institutions of higher learning, and working at factories and building sites.

Thousands of women in the African National Congress have been fighting for freedom in South Africa for years on end. They are inspired by the example of Winnie Mandela, now a symbol of the patriots who have risen against the apartheid regime.

There have been significant changes also in the women's movement of the whole of Latin America. In the past, reaction used large numbers of women for its purposes. Today, the women's movement has a perceptibly larger social base, and the movement itself has grown more mature in political terms. This is exemplified by my own country, Argentina, where women constitute nearly 30 per cent of the economically active population.

Set up in 1947, the Union of Argentinian Women has done much to draw working women not only into the discussion of the nation's major social problems but also into the efforts to resolve these problems. Despite the repressions and interdictions during the sinister years of the dictatorship (1979-1983), the Union's grassroots organisations went on functioning, the journal *Aquí Nosotras* continued publication, and much was done to protect human rights and find out what happened to patriots sent to prison or listed as 'missing'. The Political Women organisation was formed to bring more women into the actions against the tyranny. Together with the UAW it enlisted thousands of Argentinian women into the movement to safeguard national sovereignty and peace in the region and throughout the world during the conflict between Britain and Argentina.

The Union of Argentinian Women constantly stirs public opinion with its initiatives aimed at safeguarding the rights of mothers and children and winning equality for women in the family and the state. For its part, reaction preaches 'moderation' in order to divert Argentinian women from public activity.

"The struggle for the emancipation of women," states the CC report to the CPA's Congress (November 1986), "is part of the struggle of the working class, of the whole people. In order to achieve its objectives the women's movement should

unite its destiny with that of the proletariat. There can be no emancipation for women without a revolution guaranteeing peace, happiness, progress, food, jobs, and equality."³

At this congress it was noted that "passiveness or indifference in regard to the problem of organising the women's movement, underrating this sector of our work, or any attempt to rate this movement as the business of women themselves are incompatible with membership of the party."⁴

Having set the highly important target of forming a Front for National and Social Liberation, the congress noted that Argentinian women should play a major role in it and that women Communists should do everything in their power to marshal the enormous energy potential of the mass of women workers.

A change in the character of the women's movement is to be observed not only in Argentina. This has been shown by the many national congresses and meetings in Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and other Latin American states. Our movement's problems were discussed in detail at a meeting in Havana in June 1985. This meeting was attended (a notable fact!) by delegates from 39 states of Latin America and the Caribbean basin. Latin American representatives contributed actively to the World Women's Conference in Nairobi (July 1985), raising issues such as the economic crisis, the foreign debt, and the struggle to end the arms race and ensure peace among nations.

This mass participation of women in the class struggle, the anti-imperialist movement, and the battle for peace is thus becoming a highlight of our epoch of social renewal. *The women's movement is now a major socio-political force.* It has never been so extensive as today, and has never before displayed such a powerful aspiration for unity.

Formed in 1945 immediately after the Second World War, the Women's International Democratic Federation has united millions of women throughout the world. As one of the initiators of the International Year of Women (1975) and the Decade of Women (1975-1985) with the motto 'Equality, Progress, and Peace', both of which were proclaimed by the United Nations Organisation, our Federation gave a further demonstration of its unitary spirit, wide representation, influence, and dynamism.

By virtue of innumerable objective reasons, the aims advanced by the WIDF have still not been attained and remain on the agenda to this day. But we have reinforced the unity of the women's movement globally and drawn new sections of women into it. They are *beginning to realise that the success of the struggle for social and economic equality cannot be ensured solely by legislation, that it depends to a large degree on the extent to which this struggle fuses with the actions for a radical restructuring of society on the basis of social justice.*

The Federation's basic aims until the end of the present century are to help eliminate the nuclear war threat, prevent the militarisation of outer space, ensure a turn towards détente and peaceful cooperation among the nations, do away with racism and the atrocious apartheid regime, establish a new international economic order, and guarantee human rights. These aims are indicative of the maturity and all-embracing character of our programme.

The World Women's Congress, to be convened by the WIDF in Moscow this year, will unquestionably contribute to the further growth of the women's democratic movement and the struggle for the equality of women and a better life for everybody.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28. p. 181.

² *Informe central. III congreso del Partido Comunista de Cuba*, Havana, 1986, p. 80.

³ *Frente y acción de masas por la patria liberada y el socialismo*, Informe del Comité Central del Partido Comunista al XVI Congreso, Buenos Aires, November 4, 1986, p. 7-E/8-E.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14-G.

The Unerring, Socialist Way

Nguyen Thi Dinh – IDWF Vice-President,
CPV Central Committee member, President,
Women's Union of Vietnam

MARXISM sees the status of women as part of humankind's historical development and as dependent upon the actual conditions prevailing under different socio-economic systems.

In pre-capitalist society the problem was chiefly in defining the role of women in relation to the family rather than society, for with rare exceptions the activity of women was limited to the household. State and church, legislation and ethics formalised sex inequality, reducing women to a humiliating status and brutally persecuting those of them who were not submissive.

Capitalism initiated the employment of large numbers of women in industry, exploiting their labour and doubling their burden — at the workplace and in the home. Under pressure from progressive public opinion women's civil and political rights were gradually expanded in formal terms. But discrimination continues in exploiting states to this day, although under a veneer of decorum in some of these states.

Working women can become really free and take part in all areas of material and intellectual life on an equal footing with men only where private property exploitation has been eliminated. But social emancipation does not come of itself. It has to be won by struggle. This is precisely why *the aims of the women's movement coincide with the revolutionary objectives of the working class. The women's question is part of the question of the proletarian revolution, of its potentialities and motive forces, and of the building of socialism and communism.*

Let me remind you of words spoken by Lenin on this subject: "If women are not drawn into public service, into the militia, into political life, if women are not torn out of their stupefying house and kitchen environment, it will be *impossible* to guarantee real freedom, it will be *impossible* to build even democracy, let alone socialism."¹

This thesis applies directly to the historical destiny of the women of Vietnam as well. Sixty years ago, in spreading the Marxist-Leninist teaching in Indochina, Ho Chi Minh wrote that the Russian revolution owed its rapid triumph and unbreakable strength to, among other things, the participation in it of women of all ages.² This link is to be seen also in the Vietnamese revolution. Ho Chi Minh wrote: "Women bear a terrible burden of suffering and are therefore brimming over with the spirit of revolutionary struggle. They are a significant force of the revolution, and we shall not be able to triumph without their participation . . . If women want to be free they have to rebel and join the revolution of their people and their class."³

Marxist-Leninist postulates on this issue are reflected in many documents of the Communist Party of Vietnam. I shall name only one, which was adopted back in 1930, immediately after the CPV⁴ was formed. This was a resolution of a CC plenary meeting on the mobilisation of women, saying that women had to be drawn

Nguyen Thi Dinh was one of the leaders of the Vietnamese people's revolutionary liberation movement. She was active in the August Revolution of 1945, and organised women's armed units that fought the American aggression. She has the rank of General. She was held in prison for three and a half years, and during the American aggression she lost her husband and son.

Since the victory in 1975 and the reunification of Vietnam Nguyen Thi Dinh has been active in socio-political work. She is a member of the CPV Central Committee, a member of the State Council, a deputy to the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and laureate of the International Lenin Prize 'For Strengthening Peace Among Nations'.

into the revolutionary struggle and that it was vital to work for their emancipation, for sex equality, and for the conditions allowing talent to flourish.

This approach is to be seen in the resolutions and other documents of all of our party's congresses. At the Sixth Congress of the CPV (December 1986) it was noted that the targets for the country's socio-economic development could be attained only with the active participation of mass public organisations, including women's organisations, and with a fuller account of the specific distinctions of the various groups of the population. The role played by women in all areas of life will continue to expand in the coming years. The number of women in the party is expected to grow. This is recognition of their enormous contribution to our country's liberation and of the role played by them in the national-democratic and socialist revolutions.

The August Revolution of 1945 opened a new era for the Vietnamese nation — the era of national independence, freedom, and socialism. Legislation has recognised the equality of women in the family and in society. The Constitution has proclaimed: "Women and men shall enjoy equal rights in all areas of political, economic, and cultural life, in society, and in the family . . . Women shall receive equal pay with men for equal work. Women shall be entitled to a paid maternity leave . . . The state and society shall concern themselves with enlarging the network of maternity homes, kindergartens, and pre-school upbringing groups . . . Marriage and the family shall be under the protection of the state." The marriage and family law, passed in early 1960, was aimed at extirpating survivals of feudalism.

However, the peaceful and gratifying life in which the enforcement of these legislative acts had been started was cut short by aggressions by two leading imperialist powers — first by France and then by the USA. *Throughout all the war years the Vietnamese women, free and equal daughters of their people, participated selflessly in the resistance to the invaders, worked in the rear areas, and brought up their children by themselves.* It would be impossible to count how many women's militia units guarded villages and hamlets in the North and the South, or how many women's special-purpose units and women partisans fought the enemy on occupied territory.

Artillery batteries with women crews fought gallantly in many pitched battles with US naval vessels and aircraft. Units of women volunteers blazed trails to the firing lines with bombs and shells raining down on them. One of these strategic trails runs across the Truong Son mountain chain and is known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail. These young women carried food and munitions to the front on their shoulders. Hungry and suffering in turn from cold and from heat, they guarded every grain of rice, every bullet, and every set of clothes designated for troops of the people's army.

The girls never retreated an inch from the bridges and road sectors entrusted to them, rapidly repairing them to ensure the transportation of supplies for the troops and the civilian population.

Thanks to this secret route established by women behind the enemy's lines, our troops struck deadly blows at the enemy, sowing confusion in his ranks and paving the way for the general offensive of the spring of 1975.

Then there were the women's units called the 'long-haired army' by the people. Unarmed, they formed an insuperable wall, halting puppet punitive units and compelling them to retreat and go back to where they came from. Countless women bore with suffering in prisons and in exile, in so-called tiger cages, staunchly enduring brutal torture and remaining true to their credo that it was better to die than to betray the revolution. None of this will ever be forgotten by the people. Women who displayed valour and gallantry in the struggle for the salvation of their country are called 'heroic, indomitable, true, and intrepid' by the people.

The country showed how highly it valued the services of its daughters. Our Union was decorated with the Gold Star, which is the nation's highest award. Eleven women's collectives and 122 women were decorated with the title of Heroine of the Armed Forces, 4,000 were awarded the title Courageous for destroying enemy troops, tanks, or aircraft, and 5,000 were decorated with the title Winner of Labour Emulation.

After the victory the working people of Vietnam addressed the tasks of the new period of their society's development — the building of socialism on the scale of the entire country and the defence of the socialist homeland.

In this work we are experiencing the bitter effects of the war of attrition and of continuous natural disasters. Our economy is as yet unstable and poorly developed, and the rapidly growing population encounters serious material difficulties. In this situation the Vietnamese women are displaying a high level of consciousness and sense of responsibility in their approach to their political and social duties, and are helping to carry out three revolutions: the revolution in the relations of production, the revolution in science and technology and cultural-ideological revolution.

Independence, freedom, and socialist construction have led to visible changes in our society's socio-economic structure. Every working person has the right to decide his or her own destiny. Relations of equality between citizens are being consolidated and the conditions are being created for the encouragement of initiatives and talent. Socialism has laid the foundation for the emancipation of female labour. A steadily expanding network of crèches, kindergartens, and cultural, medical, and general educational facilities is partially unburdening women of concern for the family and giving them time for recreation, study and health care.

The socialist state protects the rights and interests of women and helps them to improve their cultural, educational, and professional level. In the Socialist Republic of Vietnam women now constitute 58 per cent of the workforce with a secondary technical education and 33 per cent with a higher education. Many women now have the scientific degree of candidate or doctor of sciences and the title of senior lecturer or professor. This spells out significant progress because formerly there were practically no women with a vocational training, and very few with a higher education. Prior to the 1945 revolution 95 per cent of the population and 99 per cent of Vietnamese women could not even hope to have any education at all.

Today women comprise 46 per cent of the workforce in the state sector and 60 per cent in the cooperative sector. Most of them work in such key sectors as agriculture, the light industry, handicrafts, the trade network, education, and public health. In high tech industries they at first performed ancillary duties, but a persevering striving for knowledge and their diligence permitted many to become highly-skilled in their chosen professions. In agriculture they play a vital role in converting an obsolete mono-crop economy into a new diversified, intensive, and specialised industry. It is important that women of the ethnic minorities should discontinue antiquated customs, put an end to nomadic life-styles and, together with their families, go over from slash-and-burn farming to settled rice-growing.

Traditional crafts such as weaving and silkworm-breeding have been revived and are being developed in response to an appeal by the Women's Union: this was done to help meet the population's demand for clothes. Many artisan cooperatives are today producing items for which there is a big demand in Vietnam itself and abroad.

More and more women are being promoted to executive posts in the government and the national economy. It no longer surprises anyone when women are

appointed deputy ministers and directors of industrial facilities, research institutes, and educational establishments, or elected to head provincial or city people's committees and agricultural producers' or marketing cooperatives.

Our Union has always played a major role in shaping the consciousness of Vietnamese women and in defending their rights as citizens, mothers, and working persons. It has been functioning for 56 years and throughout all that time it has been active in the revolutionary movement of the Vietnamese people, uniting, enlightening, and mobilising large numbers of women for the struggle for freedom and equality.

There are over ten million members in our Union, whose work is best described as organising the mass movement under the motto: 'The New Woman Builds and Defends Her Country'. We hold that *every woman of socialist Vietnam should be a conscious citizen and patriot, a person who is ideologically educated and does her work creatively. She has to be able to combine her personal interests with those of her work collective and of society as a whole. She should steadfastly add to her knowledge of all areas of life. In parallel, she should be an exemplary mother, bringing up a happy family, in which all members are equal and respect one another.*

Our Union helps women to find their role in carrying out the tasks being set by the Communist Party of Vietnam. The emulation movement for high standards in production is spreading far and wide. The slogan 'Quality and Efficiency Are Criteria of the Consciousness of Women' is sinking ever deeper roots.

To help mothers the Union has organised courses on the care and upbringing of children. In the past three years these courses have been attended by 5,500,000 women. We cooperate with institutions providing health protection for mothers and children and help to improve gynaecological and pediatric services and the services at maternity homes.

To this day our country has to counter the subversive activities of reactionary forces and be ready to resist aggression. In this situation our Union is showing untiring concern for the troops in border areas and supports them morally and materially so that they can creditably perform their duty. Women are working in industry on assignments from the Armed Forces, helping the families of wounded soldiers and of soldiers killed in action, and taking care of orphans.

All these aspects of life are components of 'The New Woman Builds and Defends Her Country' movement. Participation in this movement has made working women more mature in political and moral terms. For five years in succession 4,500,000 women have been earning the title 'New Woman', this being evidence that the people have a profound understanding of the country's vital needs.

Of course, there are many difficulties in Vietnam even today. They have been substantively analysed at the Sixth Congress of the CPV. In particular, it was noted that production assets and investments are not used effectively enough, that the quality of output is not satisfactory, and that natural resources are used irrationally and wastefully. The sphere of commodity-money circulation functions fitfully and there is still no precision in the sphere of distribution; this is adversely affecting production and the people's life. Inflation is running at a high rate, and prices are rising quickly. A large proportion of the able-bodied population is not provided with full-time or part-time work. Cases of abuse of office and corruption on the part of a section of cadres and civil servants are not cut short strictly and opportunely. The social infrastructure, including the network of crèches and kindergartens, schools, and services enterprises, is underdeveloped, and this limits productive economic and social activity on the part of women. The predominant small-scale production, which involves arduous and stressful manual labour, negatively affects their health.

All these problems have the constant attention of the party and the government.

Their solution will foster the further emancipation of women and enable them to make fuller use of their rights and opportunities in all areas of life.

Our aspirations can be realised only if there is peace on our planet. In an epoch when science and technology have reached unparalleled heights, war, if it breaks out, will incinerate civilisation within seconds. It is the duty of all people of goodwill to speak up for peace, to bend every effort to remove the threat of a nuclear war. *Without peace there can be neither equality nor development. Peace signifies the life of the human beings and is the indispensable condition for building the new life.* We wholeheartedly support the Soviet peace initiatives put forward by Mikhail Gorbachov and aimed at eliminating all nuclear weapons in the world by the end of this century.

Vietnamese women, who have endured nameless hardships during the 30 years of war against the French colonialists and then the US imperialists, know the value of peace more than anybody else and they cherish it. Millions of women in Vietnam annually sign petitions to the United Nations calling for the preservation of peace. Anti-war meetings, rallies, and demonstrations are held throughout the country.

We are marching in step with the women of socialist countries and all the other progressive, democratic forces in the world. There has been warm support in Vietnam for the appeal 'For the Right of Peoples to Peace' issued in 1985 by the International Democratic Women's Federation. We are expanding cooperation with many women's organisations and anti-imperialist movements on all the five continents, particularly in Asia and the Pacific region, that are involved in the struggle for freedom, national independence, democracy, and social progress. These aims were discussed at the international seminar on 'Equality, Development, and Peace' held in Vietnam in 1984.

Peace is the aspiration of all women in the world. To defend it is to counter the aggressive designs of monopoly capital and international reaction, who are out to perpetuate national and class oppression. Participation in the struggle for national and class liberation and in building the new society is the only way to freedom and equality for women.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 329.

² See *A History of the Vietnamese Women's Movement*, Vol. 1, Hanoi, 1981, pp. 39-40 (in Vietnamese).

³ Ho Chi Minh, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, Hanoi, 1981, pp. 215, 219 (in Vietnamese).

⁴ Called the Communist Party of Indochina in 1930-1951, and the Working People's Party of Vietnam in 1951-1976.—Ed.

Documents

EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN AND THE FRATERNAL PARTIES

CANADA

The majority of women's organisations are united on the main demands — equal pay for work of equal value, affirmative action, universal, free, quality child care, fully-paid maternity leave, the right to choose birth or abortion and above all, the fight for peace.

Our task is to strengthen the organisations of the people, to win whatever gains are possible and, equally importantly, our task is to fight for clarity of ideas. Concretely that means combating sexism, criticising bourgeois feminism.

From the Main Resolution of the 26th Convention of the Communist Party of Canada

COLOMBIA

The party is to make the women's movement realise the need to work for the attainment of both general and specific tasks, to involve most women in the struggle for urgent economic and social demands, and to step up political work among them. In order to win women over to their side, the Communists must know the problems and the interests of peasant women, women intellectuals, housewives and coeds.

Although an equal contribution to the revolutionary struggle is being made by both men and women, the latter encounter certain additional difficulties — primarily, the household chores that take up a great deal of their time and, above all, the lack of opportunities to upgrade their ideological and political awareness. Our objective is to overcome the cultural backwardness of the Colombian women in society and especially in the party.

From documents of the 14th Congress of the Colombian Communist Party.

CUBA

The revolution has laid the basis for and attained unprecedented advances in the liberation of women. It is a common task, a task for both men and women to achieve, within the next few years, complete equality, to involve more women in the affairs of society, and to promote them to leading positions in accordance with their abilities and level of training. As the nation's economic potential grows, the solution of this task will be furthered by the creation of new forms of child care which will enable women to take part in production; services and facilities to alleviate household chores will be perfected and expanded.

From *Programme of the Communist Party of Cuba*

FRG

Taking part in the women's democratic movement are female members of trade unions; feminist-oriented associations which consider themselves independent; women members of the Social Democratic Party, the GCP, the Green Party and alternative movements; women's church councils and members of national and international women's organisations.

The GCP is a staunch advocate of broader rights for women. At the same time the Communists believe that the oppression of women cannot be eliminated completely as long as private property in the principal means of production exists. The revolutionary working class movement and the women's movement have a common enemy in their struggle for emancipation — big capital. Both these movements must unite. The success of each depends on the promotion of the class struggle and on vigorous involvement of both men and women in it.

We are resolutely combating prejudice against women and the traditional views of the women's role in society which are still current even among the working class. We strive for equality and solidarity of men and women in our own ranks. This is furthered both by the development of political consciousness among women and by educational work among them.

From the Theses of the Eighth Congress of the German Communist Party.

FRANCE

The vital demands directly concerning women and the future of their children cannot be secured without women's direct participation in the struggle. Attainment of these demands is no utopia but one of the means of finding a way out of the crisis. The nation needs the work women do; their subordinate status inflicts heavy losses on our country. The assertions that 'female nature' is immutable are

designed to conceal our society's responsibility for the conditions that create inequality.

Emancipation of women is an objective constantly present in the work of the French Communist Party, an integral element of its struggle for democracy. This is clear from the role and place of women in the party, their performance in the party's leading positions, and the number of women candidates the party nominates in elections. :

From a statement by the Central Committee Politburo of the French Communist Party (October 1986)

INDIA

The Communist Party of India stands for strict enforcement of laws concerning women to improve their status, to give them a place of equality, to improve facilities for their education and technical training; for more employment opportunities; for enlarging facilities for maternity and child care.

The activities of the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) and other women's organisations . . . as well as objective social developments, have brought awareness to large sections of women. The incidence of bride-burning, dowry deaths, of crimes against women are being actively taken up by the NFIW units, which have also campaigned for a deterrent central legislation on these issues.

Our party members in the women's movement are trying to ideologically combat 'feminist' ideas which have gained some ground recently among a section of educated young women in urban areas . . . This ideological struggle can be carried on more effectively if the party as a whole and our mass organisations also actively take up campaigns to defend the interests of women.

From documents of the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of India

ITALY

Emancipation and liberation is the path women must travel in the interests and for the benefit of all people. In defining common tasks and a plan of action, each must proceed from one's own experience. Women strive for self-assertion, full employment, freedom of choice in matters of sex and childbirth, greater appreciation of their intellectual efforts, and equality in all spheres.

Such are the general aspirations of women. Such is the powerful political challenge facing the Left which seeks to manage the society of the future. Regarding our interests and the historical lessons of our struggle as the starting point, we must form a strong women's movement without which our party will be unable to implement its programme of action successfully.

From a document of the Women's Commission of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party (November 1986)

SENEGAL

The Communists are working to develop the women's movement, to enlist women members into the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour (SPIL), and to train female party activists capable of leading women from all social strata. The SPIL stresses the need to step up educational and organisational efforts and to encourage bold initiatives not only by the party cadres but also by rank-and-file members.

Directed by the SPIL, the Senegal Women's Democratic Union mobilises women to join the struggle for medical care accessible to the masses; for specialised mother-and-child health care; for education to promote the social advancement of youth and women; for a balanced employment policy; for effective assistance to

women in the organisation of viable small enterprises; against arbitrary layoffs, difficult working conditions and rising prices.

From documents of the Second Congress of the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour

SUDAN

In their work among women, the Communists proceed from the fact that the national women's organisation — the Sudanese Women's Union — (SWU) — unites representatives of different classes and social strata. Unlike the trade unions of teachers, workers or professionals which also include women members, the SWU champions the demands advanced by all women — the right to employment, political and civil liberties on an equal basis with men, as well as mother-and-child care. The union mobilises not only those who have jobs but also unemployed women, housewives, etc., urging them to take part in various democratic movements. The struggle of women for their rights enjoys the support and solidarity of the working class and the national democratic forces. It is assuming ever greater scope and bringing tangible results.

From a document of the Central Committee Secretariat of the Communist Party of the Sudan (February 1986)

USSR

A matter of continuing concern to the party is a further improvement of the status of mothers. To this end favourable conditions will be created that will enable women to combine motherhood with active participation in work and social activities. Special attention will be devoted to mother-and-child care, and the period of prenatal and child-care leaves will be extended. The network of sanatoria, rest homes and boarding houses that accommodate families on holiday will be expanded. Diverse forms of employing women will be further developed. Sliding work schedules, a shorter working day, and work at home will be introduced on a wider scale in accordance with the wishes of women.

From *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (A New Edition)*

Problems of Emancipation

Attitude of the Portuguese Communists. A Survey of 'Avante!'

THE role played by women in Portugal's political and social life, their status at work and in the family, and the protection of their specific rights and interests are issues that get constant coverage in *Avante!*, the central newspaper of the Portuguese Communist Party. Yet it will not be an overstatement to say that nation-wide attention was attracted by one of the newspaper's last issues for 1986 in which it carried guideline pronouncements made at a recent PCP-sponsored conference on the emancipation of women in post-April Portugal.

The constructive participation of thousands of people (many of whom were non-Communists) in the run-up discussion of draft documents and in the debates at the conference, the range and depth of the problems on the agenda, and the

conference's resolutions and recommendations for the basic directions of the PCP's efforts on behalf of the emancipation of women, made this forum an event of national significance.

In opening the conference, Dominges Abrantes, member of the Political Commission and Secretariat of the PCP Central Committee, noted the discussion in the run-up period had shown the complexity and even polemical nature of the question of the emancipation of women. "The debates did not proceed smoothly in all cases. Many conflicting opinions were articulated, heated arguments broke out, and there were misgivings and questions." All this was normal on account of the character of the problem that was being discussed, the distinctions in the socio-cultural level and class origin of party members, and the habitual thought patterns, traditions, and even pressure of social factors in the various regions.

The key issues on the conference agenda were considered at plenary meetings and in four workshops. One of these focused on the *emancipation process and status of women in Portugal following the April Revolution of 1974*. It was underscored that for the Communists the emancipation process signified, on the one hand, the liberation of working women from capitalist exploitation and, on the other, their deliverance from sex discrimination, inequality, and injustices.

There was a consensus on the point that *the revolution of April 25 laid the beginning for the process of far-ranging changes in the status of Portuguese women*: this is to be seen in the new rights won by women and also in their day-to-day life, in their status in the family and in society.

Following the revolution, the conference's final document noted, "many thousands of women began, for the first time in their lives, to attend meetings, speak of politics, discuss their problems, and demand an improvement of their conditions. Women took part in managing enterprises abandoned by reactionary owners, were elected to the leadership of trade unions and to local and central organs of power, and joined in the work of tenant's and working people's commissions". An end was put to the ultra-reactionary attitude to the status of women cultivated by fascism for decades on end in labour relations, education, the family, maternity rights, and many other areas.

The life of the population, particularly of women, it was declared, had improved in many respects as a result of the efforts of local organs of power, especially of those in which the Communists and their allies hold a majority. In this context, *Avante!* cites the view of Maria Emilia Sousa, who was a delegate to the conference. It is indisputable, she said, that women were the principal beneficiaries of the nearly 600 parks for children, the scores of crèches and kindergartens, the recreation centres for schoolchildren, and other social services projects built by democratic municipal councils.

However, it was noted at the conference, although Portuguese women are widely involved in all political movements, they are less than adequately represented in organs of authority and in the nation's leading political posts. *Avante!* points out that of the 250 members of parliament 5.6 per cent are women (five deputies from the PCP, one each from the Greens and the Socialists, four from the Social Democrats, and three from the Party of Democratic Renewal). It is noteworthy that in all convocations of the parliament the PCP parliamentary party had the largest number of women.

From its analysis of the experience of the past 12 years, which have been marked by a frontal assault by a reaction on the gains of the revolution, the conference drew the conclusion: *inadequate legislative embodiment of the rights of women in society, the family, and at the workplace makes it impossible to immediately exercise these rights*. The revolution of April 25 and the progressive reforms did not do away with all retrograde institutions and thought patterns rooted in millennia-long

history. The currently predominant ideology and outworn reactionary attitudes continue to resist and impede changes. As *Avante!* makes plain, the policies pursued by right-wing governments have warped the revolution's gains in all areas, returned women to the status of a pool of cheap labour, and depressed the socio-economic conditions of the people's life.

At the conference there was angry censure of the authorities for attempting, by means of a discriminative policy towards women, to perpetuate the latter's social bondage. On this point *Avante!* cites the opinion of Paula Coelho, a leader of the Portuguese Communist Youth League. The ruling circles, she says, are seeking, on the one hand, to revive and disseminate traditional archaic values, hypocritically canonising the image of a fragile keeper of the hearth totally subservient to the will of the husband, and continuer of the species. But, on the other hand, by aggravating the socio-economic situation in the country, the Right drives hundreds of young women into prostitution, connives in the spread of pornography, and corrupts young people.

This reasoning was behind the conference's other conclusion that *the protection of the rights of women and a further advance towards their emancipation required efforts to compel social policy to return to the road opened by the April revolution.*

The second workshop concentrated on *the problem of reshaping the mass consciousness in regard to the emancipation of women.* Sex discrimination, it was said, has a material foundation, in other words, it is rooted in the nature of a society dominated by private property in the means of production. This is mirrored by legislation, religion, the prevailing ethics, official policy, habits, and everyday life, and it is what makes the extirpation of prejudices, a change of the way of thinking, and the adoption of a respectful attitude to women so important in the struggle for emancipation and democracy.

At the conference speakers warned against some extreme feminist views of these problems. "To blame men for the subjugation of women, to see them as the 'social adversary', to say that emancipation will only come with a reshaped consciousness, and to reduce discrimination mentality to the subjective factor (to regard women as the victims of 'male autocracy' and 'male chauvinism') without seeing that the social subjugation of women is rooted in the nature of a class society," it is said in the final document, "is to divert the women's struggle for emancipation from its main direction, from the joint struggle of men and women to abolish the exploiting socio-economic system."

Within the PCP itself, it was said at the conference, there are persons who are still captive to prejudices and misconceptions about the role of women in society. Many speakers, *Avante!* writes, stated that quite a few men in the PCP often hinder and in many cases refuse to countenance the participation of women in political or social activities. In response to these attitudes the conference stressed that *the struggle for the emancipation of women is an issue that concerns the whole party* and that misguided or negative thought patterns had to be jettisoned.

A wide range of issues linked to making certain that women had the right to work was on the agenda of the third workshop. Economic independence, it was accentuated, was the *prime condition for their full emancipation.*

Despite the efforts of the right-wing forces to re-confine women to household chores, the final document declares, working women constitute 38 per cent of the nation's workforce. After the revolution of April 25 there has been a visible expansion of job opportunities for women. They now have access to posts in the judiciary, the diplomatic service, and organs of local authority. Another significant development is the introduction of a national minimum wage, including for women working at home.

However, in the matter of jobs there is still considerable discrimination against

women in Portugal. Women are employed mostly on the lowest-paid jobs, and least of all in spheres of creative work. It is extraordinarily hard for women to win promotion to top executive posts. This was illustrated with the following statistics: women comprise 52 per cent of the persons engaged in scientific work and the liberal professions, and over 46 per cent of the managerial personnel, but only 10.8 per cent of the top executives.

The fourth workshop dealt with the ways and means of promoting the women's movement in Portugal and with the role played by women in the PCP.

For women working in production and the services industry the trade unions are the main form of organisation. But the level of their participation in trade unions is totally inconsistent with the proportion of women in the workforce and in the struggle of the masses. The Communists are calling for a further vitalisation of the movement to draw women into trade unions despite the existing objective difficulties (the soaring unemployment, the attacks on trade union rights and liberties by reaction, and so forth).

There was a comprehensive review, *Avante!* writes, of the various forms of social activity by women. Particularly great emphasis was laid upon the role of the unitary Democratic Women's Movement — the single national organisation uniting women of the most diverse political and religious persuasions. High tribute was paid to the organisational flexibility and informal character of the work of the unitary women's commissions and to the women's meetings sponsored nation-wide jointly by the Democratic Women's Movement, the trade unions, and the unitary women's commissions.

The closest attention, naturally, was given to the role and tasks of the Communist Party in helping to resolve problems relating to women. "This conference," said Alvaro Cunhal, General Secretary of the PCP, "has affirmed that in the struggle for women's rights and their emancipation our party has indisputably outdistanced all the other political forces... This is not a triumphal estimate. It is an historical fact that nothing and nobody can obscure."

The reports carried by *Avante!* convincingly show that in everything accomplished by the revolution, in safeguarding its gains, and in major actions by the people, women Communists have played a prominent role, while in many cases this was a pre-eminent role. The PCP gives unflagging attention to the problems of women, often coming forward with initiatives aimed at resolving them. Among the illustrations of this are the draft bills submitted to the parliament by the party on basic rights of women: maternity protection, family planning and sex education, voluntary abortion, and the equality of spouses. These drafts had considerable repercussions in Portugal and were the impetus for the appearance of a series of laws. Although these are not impeccable laws they have reinforced the judicial foundation of the status of women in the family and in society.

The facts, it was noted at the conference, indicate that more and more women in Portugal see the Communist Party as the most consistent champion of their interests and show a determination to fight for these interests as members of the PCP. Figures bear this out: in 1985 the proportion of women in the PCP was over 22 per cent (numbering more than 40,000), up from 15 per cent in 1975. Substantial progress is also to be observed in the number of women drawn into vital decision-making within the party.

Avante! highlights the fact that *for the Communists unquestionable successes do not overshadow shortcomings, omissions, and errors*. At the conference this was telescoped by Alvaro Cunhal: "The problems of women and the struggle for their specific interests," he said, "did not always get the attention they merit. The attitude to unitary organisations and movements is often narrow and sectarian. In the party itself — this applies to many of its organisations and members —

inadequate encouragement is given to training and promoting women engaged in party work. And then, of course, partially on account of objective social reasons, which cannot be brushed aside, and also of prejudices and ideological bigotry many comrades, men and women ... are in the grip of attitudes, views, and feelings that are a manifest obstacle to understanding the basic problems confronting women, fetter the struggle in defence of their rights, and hinder the process of emancipation, and a more vigorous and militant participation of women in the social and political struggle and in the life of the PCP itself."

A painstaking, objective analysis of the party's efforts on behalf of the rights and interests of women served the conference as the point of departure for defining the following priorities of the Communists in this sphere:

- political activity and work among the masses not only to secure the solution of the relevant socio-economic and political problems but also to *protect the concrete interests and needs of women*;

- tangible and dynamic support for the various unitary women's movements* as it was emphasised by the conference;

- unrelaxing ideological work in society and in the PCP itself aimed at putting an end to prejudices and archaic traditions in the attitude towards women;

- solution of organisational and personnel questions giving *much more attention to admitting women to PCP membership and a bolder approach to promoting them to leadership positions at all levels in the party*.

An essential point made in the articles in *Avante!* is that *success in winning real recognition and the implementation of the rights of women, in the struggle for their emancipation, is inseparable from progress in the political battle for the democratic transformation of Portuguese society.*

Sergio Tatais

Pages of History

Remembering Claudia Jones

VISITORS who come to London's Highgate Cemetery see that next to the grave of Karl Marx there is the tombstone of Claudia Jones. Many wonder what earned her the honour of being buried beside the founder of scientific communism.

Few people outside the Caribbean and the United States know about the life and work of Claudia Jones, one of the most outstanding women to come out of the Caribbean. Until recently, there was nothing even in the progressive press and literature on the role Claudia Jones played in the class struggles, on the contribution she made to the fight against racism and colonialism, for the rights of US and Caribbean Blacks and for women's equality, or on her journalistic record. But she has every right to be remembered as one of the finest women revolutionaries of our turbulent twentieth century.

Claudia Jones was born in the British colony of Trinidad on February 21, 1915. At that time, the terrible colonial oppression and the depression in the Caribbean helped to awaken national self-awareness; the anti-colonial movement was gaining strength, producing leaders like Captain Cipriani in Trinidad and Marcus Garvey in Jamaica. At the same time, the poverty and the unemployment which were rampant in conditions of economic underdevelopment were forcing many in the Caribbean to migrate, particularly to the United States and Great Britain, in search of a livelihood.

Claudia's family migrated to the US in 1924. They settled in New York's Harlem and immediately encountered brutal racism. Poverty became more painful when Claudia's mother, a garment worker, succumbed to exhaustion and died. Claudia cherished forever the memory of her mother, of her kindness and the cruel blows life had dealt her. The title of the first book about Claudia which appeared many years later was *I Think of My Mother*.

After her mother's death, Claudia had to quit school and get a job at a factory. As a worker, a Black person and a woman, she was herself subjected to the triple oppression a large part of the US population was suffering from.

She refused to remain passive. At 19 she became active in mass democratic movements and fought fearlessly against racism. "It was out of my Jim Crow experiences as a young Negro woman," she wrote later, "experiences likewise born of working class poverty that led me to join the Young Communist League and to choose the philosophy that not only rejects racist ideas, but is the antithesis of them."

Thus began a lifelong struggle. In 1936 she refused a scholarship to study drama, a cherished dream, and joined instead the technical staff of the *Daily Worker*. Her commitment, backed by tireless work, earned her the confidence and respect of her comrades, and she was given increasingly responsible assignments. In 1940 she was elected chairperson of the YCL National Council and then she became editor of the YCL paper.

During World War II Claudia put her journalistic talent and her skills as a party propagandist into the struggle against fascism and all it represented. She called on everyone to take a direct part in the fight against fascism and urged women to be as active as men "because the young women of our nation are as important for the defence of our homes, our liberty and our country as are the men".

In the postwar years, Claudia was elected to positions at the highest levels of the US Communist Party. She became a member of its National Executive Committee and secretary of its National Commission on Women. She was also active in the Black liberation struggles and in the peace movement. She had to conduct this work amid the vicious anti-communist hysteria of the period.

Extreme reactionaries and 'cold warriors' were gaining the upper hand in the US ruling circles. In 1948 Claudia, along with other progressive activists, was arrested on charges of seeking the "overthrow of the government by force and violence". She was taken to Ellis Island, and a warrant was issued for her deportation. A broad campaign of protest forced the authorities to drop their plans and free her on bail — but it was only a short respite. In 1950 she was rearrested under the McCarran Act.

Despite the intense harassment, Claudia was undaunted. She told the court at her trial: "That I have learned to interpret . . . history and to work to influence its change for the betterment of the people with the indispensable weapon of Marxist-Leninist ideas, that is the real crime against me."

Claudia spent several years in US prisons. Her health was failing rapidly. But standing with her and her comrades were broad progressive forces in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and Asia. The Women's International Democratic Federation called "upon all women and women's organisations to protest and help save the life of Claudia Jones".

In December 1955 she was deported from the United States. Hundreds came to the port to bid her farewell and to express their solidarity.

Claudia arrived in Great Britain and immediately began work as a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, becoming particularly active in its standing Forum of West Indian Members and in its Committees Against Racism and for

International Affairs. She was also active in trade union work and in anti-racist campaigns.

She never lost touch with Caribbean struggles and joined the London branch of the Caribbean Labour Congress. She was founder and editor of the *West Indian Gazette* which sought to raise the internationalist consciousness of the Black workers and analysed the problems of racism from a class-based point of view. Together with her comrades, she worked to expose the criminal activities of US and British imperialists, fought against Britain's racist immigration laws and took part in the campaigns for the release of Nelson Mandela and other South African political prisoners. A vigorous champion of peace, she was a delegate to the Tenth International Conference to Ban Nuclear Weapons, where she was vice-chairperson of the Drafting Committee and moved an important resolution in support of national liberation struggles.

Claudia visited the Soviet Union as a guest of the Soviet Women's Committee. She was received very warmly. "To visit the Soviet Union was long an ardent desire of mine," she wrote later. "Like millions of ordinary people the world over . . . I wanted to see for myself the growth of society, its culture, its technological and scientific advance. I was curious to see a land which I already knew abhorred racial discrimination to the extent of making it a legal crime and where equality of all people is a recognised axiom.

Claudia Jones died in Britain in December 1964.

Tributes came to London from all parts of the world. "Progressive America will always cherish the memory of Claudia Jones," Gus Hall and Henry Winston, the CPUSA leaders, said in their message. "For two decades hers was a passionate voice for truth and justice resounding in our land."

In Jamaica, the name of Claudia Jones is well known. March 8 began to be observed as International Women's Day in our country and in some other Caribbean nations only in the 1970s. Observance was spearheaded by communist women in alliance with other women of various anti-imperialist currents and organisations such as the Committee of Women for Progress (now the Organisation of Women for Progress), the People's National Party Women's Movement and the Sistren (women's) Theatre Collective. We mark March 8 with rallies, meetings and seminars. Women review their struggles, analyse their successes and difficulties and outline tasks for the future.

With the advent of the reactionary Seaga government which began an onslaught on the political and economic rights and cultural accomplishments of the people, the women's movement had to redouble its efforts. To protect the hard-won gains of the 1970s like the Maternity Leave with Pay Law, the movement strives to step up its struggle and to forge broader links with other sectors of the country's progressive forces. Conducting various mass campaigns, women rededicate themselves to play their full part in the fight for "Peace, National Independence and Happiness of Our Children".¹

Paying homage on March 8 to those comrades who, before us, gave their lives to advance these ideals, we remember Claudia Jones. We are convinced that her image and her work can inspire new fighters.

Those who would like to know more about that remarkable woman revolutionary can turn to the book I mentioned earlier . . . *I Think of My Mother* by Buzz Johnson.²

Elean Thomas
Political Bureau member,
Workers Party of Jamaica

¹ The slogan of the Organisation of Women for Progress.

² Buzz Johnson, *I Think of My Mother. Notes on the Life and Times of Claudia Jones*, Karia Press, London.

Against Repression and Persecution Stop Executions and Free Political Prisoners!

INTERNATIONAL public opinion is still in turmoil over the executions of our comrades in October 1986,¹ but tragic reports are coming from Jakarta again. The reactionary military regime is about to send before a firing squad another group of Indonesian Communists and other patriots who have spent many years on death row. They were convicted on the framed-up charges of attempting to overthrow the government of the Republic of Indonesia, although the whole world knows that it was the reactionary military that ousted the legitimate government of President Sukarno in 1966.

Those convicted include Ruslan Widjajasastra, a leader of SOBSI, the all-Indonesian trade union centre; Secretary General Sukatno of the People's Youth organisation, our party's prominent activists Iskandar Subekti and Acep Suryaman and other patriots. The ruling regime ignores the demands voiced by people of goodwill urging an end to the executions and respect for the humanitarian standards and basic human rights recognised in the civilised world. The leaders of this regime, while zealously claiming an important role in international relations, are in fact grossly and ostentatiously flouting the opinion of the international community.

The unending reign of terror unleashed against the patriotic forces is being intensified at a time when different sections of Indonesian society are stepping up their criticism of the authorities' repressive and anti-democratic policy and of their anti-popular economic course which leads to a severe deterioration in the position of the working masses.

Under these conditions the reactionary regime is trying to consolidate its grip on the country and to secure a victory in the forthcoming elections. The executions of the patriots are designed to intimidate those who oppose the ruling élite, terrorise the people, demonstrate the regime's alleged strength and distract public attention from the economic decline. It is an attempt at using the fraudulent bugbear of the so-called communist threat to avert an upsurge of a mass movement for the restoration of democracy. But these actions of the Suharto regime increasingly expose its true nature.

The crimes committed in Indonesia are giving rise to ever harsher criticism among all those who hold the ideals of democracy and humanism dear. The demands are growing for the Indonesian authorities to call off the executions, to end the repression and to release all imprisoned patriots immediately and unconditionally.

The Indonesian Communists are calling on all people of goodwill to strengthen their solidarity with Indonesia's democrats, broaden their support for the champions of democracy and humanism in Indonesia and move effectively to stay the hand of the butchers who, on orders from the reactionary military regime, are ready to murder our people's finest sons.

Satiadjaya Sudiman

member of the leadership of the Communist Party of Indonesia;
member of the WMR Editorial Council

¹ See Satiadjaya Sudiman, "Stop the Executions in Indonesia!", *WMR*, No 12, 1986.—Ed.

The Double Face of Capitalist Modernisation

Scientific and technical progress is having an ever more pronounced influence on the development of the productive forces in the industrialised capitalist countries, causing deep changes in every sphere of economic and social life, and in the class relations of the capitalist society. What are the consequences of this process for the working class?

An international symposium on "Scientific and Technical Progress and the Working Class of the Industrialised Capitalist Countries (1980)" was held in Frankfurt-on-Main by WMR together with the Institute of Marxist Studies (IMSF) of the FRG. It was attended by Robin Williams and Bert Ramelson (CP Great Britain), Zenon Zorsovilis (CP Greece), Esbon Andersen (CP Denmark), William Somerset (CP Ireland), William Stewart (CP Canada), George Jackson (Socialist Unity Party of New Zealand), Carlos Aboim Ingles (Portuguese CP), John Pittman (CPUSA), Gerd Deumlich, Johanna Hund, Helmuth Lange, Lothar Peter and Stephan Voets (German CP), Jean Speilmann (Swiss Party of Labour), Urban Herlitz (Left Party—Communists of Sweden), Heinz Jung, Andre Leisewitz, Jorg Goldberg, Eberhard Dahne, Jurgen Reusch and Klaus Pickhaus (IMSF).

Below is a summary of the discussion.

A report presented by Jorg Goldberg and Andre Leisewitz of the IMSF said that capital investments in modernisation and rationalisation of production began to grow rapidly in the industrialised capitalist countries in the 1970s, and introduction of new hardware and technology was further accelerated in the early 1980s.

Many speakers said the process was comparable in significance to the industrial revolution of the late 18th-early 19th centuries, with the essential difference, however, that the main feature then was the transfer to machines of the functions of manual labour, and the manual use of instruments, whereas today machines are being invested with many of the functions of mental activity, the collection, transmission, processing and use of information in production. The authors of the report said: "*The new wave of rationalisation projects radical changes in the character of labour, with the main role now belonging to information facilities based on microelectronics, which can be used to develop various devices performing the functions of management, control and data processing. The current transfer to technical facilities of these human functions . . . is now the fundamental process in the scientific and technical revolution/STR/ which is, in effect, its distinction from all the earlier revolutions in the productive forces system.*" By linking up technological operations generated by the STR, informatics helps to organise the production cycle in such a way that man ceases to be a necessary element not only in manual operations, but also in the management of production.

It is true that actual practice still has a long way to go to the mass emergence of fully automated, 'unmanned' factories, the picture often projected by the futurologists. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, only one in five working persons in the FRG handled new automated means of production, but the use of electronic facilities is being rapidly expanded. By the end of the 1980s, the number of computers and read-out devices in the FRG is expected to double (to 800,000—900,000) and the number of industrial robots to multiply fivefold (to 30,000).

The '*break-in*' of new technologies into the world of labour, the authors said, now determines the working conditions and everyday experience for a steadily growing section of the working class. A poll taken by the Metal Workers' Union in the FRG in 1985 showed that in one year alone roughly 50 per cent of those polled had been affected by changes in the workplace connected either with the installation of new

equipment or with organisational changes; more than 50 per cent of those polled were already operating electronic devices in various areas, whether numerical-control machine tools, automated assembly systems, display terminals for text processing and document recording, computer-aided design, and so on.

In the Foothills of the Mountain

Other participants in the symposium spoke of similar changes in the economy of other industrialised capitalist countries, with special emphasis on the ever faster pace of change. *Robin Williams* described the situation in Great Britain and stressed that the range of new electronic devices is now being sharply widened as compared with the automation and computerisation of the 1960s. Informatics helps to tie in more closely the design, manufacture and marketing of goods, causing changes in the structure of production and making it more flexible and operational.

The 'chip and robot revolution' in many industries in the United States is, in fact, just beginning, noted *John Pittman*. "The fact is that high technology has reached only the foothills of the technological mountain it will climb" said Gus Hall, CPUSA General Secretary, in assessing the prospect of the mounting tide of technological innovations in the years ahead and the vast changes in every sphere of social life which it entails. The AFLCIO Committee on the Evolution of Work issued a report in 1985 predicting that by 1990 the country would have 100,000 robots and 20 million computers. Entire industries are being restructured under large-scale projects for the technical re-equipment of enterprises on the basis of electronic devices.

New technologies in Switzerland today, said *Jean Speilmann*, make it possible to turn out millions of watches without a single watchmaker. The components are fed in at one end of the automatic line, and the finished watches emerge at the other. One microprocessor substitutes for over 900 components in teleprinters, cutting down their production time from 75 to 17 hours.

The STR has been developing along a number of lines — new sources of energy, new materials and totally new technologies. The monopolies make use of these achievements in their efforts to reduce the crisis factors in the development of the capitalist economy, to modernise their production facilities and to adapt them to the new conditions. They look for ways to boost the labour productivity of the 'aggregate or collective worker', to make more intensive use of hardware, to save on fuel, and raw and other materials, to reduce manufacturing time and so become more competitive. Their strategy, the authors of the report said, is based on the idea of integrated, full-cycle and flexible production rapidly responding to marketing conditions, ensuring a wide range of products and operational replacement of models and types of goods with others.

The urge for greater flexibility of production is also reflected in the structures of industrial associations and enterprises. Along with the further concentration of capital and production by the major monopolies in recent years, there has also been evidence of their internal differentiation and the emergence of smaller independent units which are easier to manipulate and manage. 'Flexibility' is also a consideration in the use of living labour, its organisation, regulation of working hours, etc.

The new technology has brought about deep structural changes in the economy, with the priority going to high-tech industries, which have been developing most rapidly. By contrast, other industries have stagnated or declined. The use of new materials, various alloys and plastics, more economical technologies and designs has led, along with other factors, to lower demand, for instance, in ferrous metals and the shutdown of steel-making capacity in many areas. There is also a geographical relocation of enterprises.

The STR and modernisation of production have had an uneven effect on the various capitalist states. In the less industrialised countries, the pace and scale of the process are much more modest than in the leading imperialist countries. In Portugal, for instance, *Carlos Aboim Ingles* said, there are still only a dozen or so robots at four enterprises. On the whole, the monopolies want to leave the most high-tech lines of production in the industrialised countries, while transferring the less sophisticated, dirtier more labour-intensive industries to the LDSs, where labour power is cheaper and environmental protection laxer.

The uneven use of STR achievements in the capitalist economy is also pronounced in the fact that its fruits go primarily to the militarised industries. It is there that the monopolies reap the benefits of R and D projects copiously irrigated by the shower of government military appropriations, while many areas of civilian research are starved of funds, so that there is a widening technological gap between the military and the civilian sectors. The military-industrial complex is getting to be the main consumer of STR advances.

What effect have all these changes had on the working class, on its status, and on its living and working conditions?

People and Robots

Various aspects of the impact of the restructuring of production on employment were considered at length by the participants in the symposium, who said that the large-scale improvement of the productive forces and the ever wider use of resources and labour-saving technologies were doing much to increase the mass unemployment, but they warned against any simplistic view of the problem.

Unemployment, which always goes hand in hand with capitalist economic operations, is generated by the laws inherent in capitalism and is determined by a set of factors. Their common denominator today is the interpenetration of cyclical and structural crises, with capital trying to find a way out through rationalisation on the basis of the STR. Cyclical crises in the capitalist world, the report said, have characteristically become deeper and longer, with the phases of recovery and expansion more superficial and running more slowly. The relation between the size of the reserve labour army and the state of the economy has become looser. *In the past, the number of unemployed used to grow in the phase of economic recession, but would then decline as the able-bodied population was drawn into the labour process in the phase of expansion. Nowadays, labour is laid off not only in the phase of recession; with a few exceptions, the phase of recovery does not lead to any marked decline in unemployment.* Every cyclical economic crisis expels 'redundant' labour power from production, while the subsequent phase of flabby expansion blocks its way back. That was how the mechanism of the 1974-1975 and the 1980-1982 crises worked.

But new contradictions produced by the capitalist use of high technologies are superimposed on these processes in the functioning of the capitalist economy. The new technologies are designed to raise the competitiveness of companies, especially those working for foreign markets, both through higher productivity and economies in living labour, and in this sense mass unemployment and the current rationalisation of production are closely bound up with each other. *John Pittman* cited the example of the General Motors auto plants, where the installation of electronic systems for controlling production processes — from executive suites down to the shopfloor — makes many 'redundant'. The installation of 14,000 industrial robots at GM plants is expected to eliminate 60,000-70,000 jobs by 1990. For the whole of US industry, the figure is expected to be as high as 1 million. From 2 million to 3.5 million jobs could well disappear in the FRG economy by 1990, the IMSF has estimated. The falling demand in the number of those directly involved in

the production process is one of the main social effects of the technological restructuring under way in the capitalist countries.

At the same time, the discussion clearly brought out the idea that the STR not only eliminates jobs, but also creates opportunities for the involvement of labour power, because it spins off new lines of progress and new types of products. High-tech industries keep coming on the scene, with new forms of services, so adding significance to such spheres of labour power reproduction as education and public health. The scale for the growth of employment could be fairly considerable, but at the present stage there is no adequate compensation for the labour power that is being laid off. *Urban Herlitz* gave this indicative example: 70 welders at a Volvo assembly line in Sweden were replaced by 27 robots, and it takes only seven persons to keep the robots going and in good repair. A large number of working people face the prospect of losing their jobs, said *John Pittman*, if General Motors manages to realise its Saturn project, i.e. the replacement of the conveyor auto assembly with the module assembly, allowing one worker to perform several operations with computerised automated facilities. It will take only 6,000 employees to turn out half a million cars a year.

By way of exception, employment may go up by virtue of various factors in some countries and in some periods. There was mention of Japan, where the growth of officially registered unemployment was much lower than that in other capitalist countries, while STR innovations were being rapidly applied. Japan's competitiveness on the world market is being enhanced by its more active remodelling of the economic structure, a factor that enables it to 'export' unemployment to other countries. There is also the peculiar system of employment in Japan, which helps to ease the effects of structural shifts, while getting the working people to shoulder the costs. Different results may be produced by the different concrete conditions in the various countries. *Zenon Zorzovilis* said: "Whereas in the developed capitalist countries the workers who are made redundant by high technology are to some extent absorbed by its manufacture, in our country, which is dependent on imperialism, the redundant workers are thrown out permanently, because almost all of the high tech is imported."

The overall trend in the use of labour-saving technology clearly operates against the working people, and that is increasingly true not only of industry, but also of management and the services, where over one-half of the wage and salaried workers in the industrialised capitalist countries are employed. In Britain, 45 per cent of office workers will be affected by automation in the next few years, and in the FRG 40 per cent. Computerisation in the banks could well result in a 30-40 per cent cut in their staff.

The technological restructuring of the capitalist economy is having an effect not only on the scale of mass unemployment, which has now risen to an unprecedented level in the OECD countries: 31 million, which is roughly equal to the population of countries like Portugal, Greece, Sweden and Ireland taken together. In view of the structural changes in industry, unemployment is also becoming structural. The replacement of traditional raw materials, the switch to the manufacture of less material-intensive products, the use of energy-and-resource-saving processes have led to a fold-up of production and a decline in the erstwhile importance of industries like mining, metallurgy, shipbuilding, textiles, leather etc. The laid-off working people find it hard to get work in their old trade or to learn a new one. Steel Labor, the journal of the United Steelworkers of America, says that of the 219,000 steelworkers laid off from 1980 to 1983, less than one-half — 45.7 per cent — were able to find new jobs.

The situation is being compounded by the traditional concentration of 'old' industries in some geographical areas, such as the Appalachia in the United States

or Clydeside in Great Britain. Many of those laid off from production move into the army of 'unwanted people' for a long time because of the difficulty of retraining. That is why unemployment tends to become stagnant. Thus, almost 40 per cent of the unemployed in Western Europe are unable to find new jobs for more than a year.

The participants in the discussion spoke with special anxiety about the fact that unemployment affects a large masses of young people: between 40 and 50 per cent of the jobless in the various countries are young. Hopelessness pushes young men and women who have no experience in the class struggle, into extremist forms of protest against the injustices of the capitalist society, making them also susceptible to right-wing demagoguery. The massive influx of women into the labour market is having a serious effect on employment. Women have to make do mainly with low-skilled work, which is now the first to be modernised, and that is why a larger percentage of women, as compared with men, are jobless in all the industrialised capitalist countries. The level of unemployment among members of ethnic minorities, immigrants and foreign workers, who are the first to be fired, is also disproportionately high.

Unemployment can no longer be measured by the number of the officially registered 'unwanted people', *William Stewart* emphasised, because the structure of unemployment is itself undergoing changes that have a negative effect on those who are employed. Officially registered unemployment in Canada stands at 11.2 per cent, but together with part-time employment, the figure is over 15 per cent. In the United States, along with the 8 million fully unemployed, there are close to 20 million part-time workers.

Many speakers said that part-time and temporary work has spread widely to reach an unprecedented scale. Part-time working in various capitalist countries affects between 7 and 30 per cent of the working people, including 9.5 per cent in the FRG, 19.2 per cent in the United States, and 20 per cent in Great Britain. In Greece, said *Zenon Zorzovilis*, 70-80 per cent of those who are hired at textile mills, and at garment and footwear factories receive contracts for only 2-4 months. For the sake of 'flexibility' in labour relations, employers are quick to use part-time or temporary employment, because the uncertain status of those employed and their uncertain future makes it possible to step up their exploitation: labour is intensified, breaks are shortened, and wage rates lowered.

The formation of two labour markets is one effect of the STR's multi-faceted impact on the capitalist society. On the one market are the high-skilled specialists and workers handling the high-tech hardware and receiving relatively high wages and salaries. The level of unemployment here is low, and job vacancies are available. On the other market are the low-paid categories of low-skilled working people with outdated trades. Here the level of unemployment is high, and job tenure is extremely precarious. That is a source of poverty and deproletarianisation of some groups of the working people.

This new phenomenon on the labour market meets the urge of capital to differentiate between the employed and unemployed, the long-seniority high-skilled and the general and temporary workers, the high and low-skilled workers, between those for whom high technology poses the grave threat of layoffs and those for whom it opens up prospects for advancement. *Klaus Pickshaus* drew attention to the fact that such stratification may be established through the 'segmentation' of the various groups of working people, which leads to the emergence and promotion of special corporative interests, so enabling the capitalists to manoeuvre in order to split the working people through a 'divide and rule' policy.

In this context, the participants in the symposium spoke with anxiety about the offensive which the monopolies and the bourgeois governments have mounted

against the trade unions in some countries. Their first objective is to break the strength of the unions by enacting legislation to restrict their rights and powers. Bert Ramelson said that the conservative Thatcher government made use of anti-union laws to force the miners to call off their almost year-long heroic strike in 1985, and to thwart an impending nation-wide strike by railwaymen. The right-wing Kohl government in the FRG, said Johanna Hund, has amended No. 116 of the labour code and so jeopardised the union's right to strike. The bourgeois Schluter government in Denmark has tried to restrict the unions' right to collective bargaining, an unprecedented development in the history of the Scandinavian countries, said Esben Andersen.

But the employers' intentions go beyond the mere desire to bring the unions to heel. They have set themselves long-term objectives in curtailing their functions as a social force and even in getting rid of them altogether. High-tech is regarded, among other things, as a battering-ram against the trade union movement. Efforts are being made to prevent the establishment of unions in the new high-tech industries, making use of the fact that the working people are in a sense out of touch with each other in the production process. They have managed to do so above all in the services, where, in the United States for instance, only 20 per cent of the working people are unionised. Capital regards the weakening of the trade union movement as a necessary condition for stepping up the working people's exploitation in new forms.

Various Dimensions of Knowledge

The deep changes in the general education and occupational training of the working people and the content and level of their skills, it was stressed at the symposium, are among the most important social effects of the STR. These changes are most intricate and complex, and have a tremendous influence on the working people's awareness, mentality and general make-up.

There is, on the whole, a trend towards a higher level of education and skill standards of the 'aggregate or collective worker', and an expansion in the volume of the working people's general and specialised knowledge. Thus, the number of workers with a primary education in the FRG dropped by 4 per cent from 1976 to 1982, that of graduates from secondary schools went up by 21 per cent, and that of persons entitled to enrol at higher schools increased by 41 per cent. Educational standards among the young are markedly higher than those of the older generations. There has also been a rise in the level of occupational training. The share of skilled workers among the employed has topped 55 per cent (in FRG industry, a distinction is made between untrained, or general workers; trained workers; and skilled workers).

There has, on the whole, been evidence of growing quality in manpower standards in the other capitalist countries as well. In the early 1980s, those who had a secondary education in the United States made up 77.1 per cent, as compared with the 65.9 per cent in the early 1970s, and complete and incomplete higher education — 36.2 per cent, as compared with 27.2 per cent.

The changing structure of the active population and the rising percentage of office workers, foremen, technicians and engineers within the working class likewise as a whole tend to raise its educational and skill standards and to increase the share of workers by brain, instead of workers by hand, within its ranks.

The authors of the report said that "*the intensive type of expanded reproduction of capital is also paralleled by an intensive expansion of the reproduction of labour power capable of performing more complex work. The growing significance of the use of such wage labour is one of the essential changes in the system of exploitation arising from the STR under capitalism.*"

But this tendency is realised in an extremely contradictory form. The peculiar thing about the development of the productive forces under capitalism today is that it is increasingly effected through a depreciation of wage-workers' skills and trades (de-skilling), and as these are made 'superfluous'. That is strikingly instanced by the reduction in the numbers of skilled workers as a result of the use of robots in car assembly, the introduction of new type-setting facilities in printing, and the automation of many operations that once used to take years to learn.

Experienced workers losing their jobs are often forced to switch to other jobs requiring lower skills. Even when they have a high level of general education and occupational training, they are unable to use their knowledge in practice.

There is a widening gap between an acquired skill and the functions workers actually have to perform. Thus, in the 1970s, over 300,000 skilled workers in the FRG had to change their jobs and to be posted as trained or untrained (general) workers. Polls taken in the United States indicate that nearly 85 per cent of persons with a specialised education have to make do with work which falls short of the level of their knowledge.

The spread of unemployment, as a result of which ever larger groups of working people have to leave the process of production for a long time entails the loss of their labour skills and standards, and increases the number of those who lag behind the headlong pace of innovation, with a widening gap between those who have acquired a new trade and expanded the knowledge now in demand, and those who have been deprived of the opportunity to do so.

But even for those who manage to stay in their jobs, contact with the new and much more sophisticated technology does not always entail a corresponding rise in skill standards. The owners of capital intend to economise on wages by rationalising production, and so seek not only to get rid of the 'superfluous' labour power, but also, and wherever possible, to take on working people with lower — and so lower-paid — skills. Now and again, the introduction of new sophisticated hardware requires not a raising of the skill standards of service personnel, but, on the contrary, a minimum of knowledge and ability merely to push buttons and keep an eye on the instrument read-outs.

The de-skilling of a section of the workers is also under way in connection with the structural shifts in the economy, such as expansion of the service sphere, where the level of special knowledge among the working people is mostly lower than it is in the sphere of production. *John Pittman* said that by 1990, 72 per cent of the manpower in the United States (almost 90 million) is expected to be employed in the services, where the demands of skilled training are, on the whole, lower than those in industry.

Groups of the population, such as immigrants, who usually have to do the dirtiest general work, are bypassed by the growth of skill standards. A sizeable section of the young has difficulties in learning a trade. The rise in the level of occupational training among women has been very slow. Thus, in the early 1980s, only 6 per cent of working women in the FRG were classified as skilled, while 50 per cent were untrained.

Employers seek to economise on the costs of occupational training by getting the state to take care of it. Meanwhile, conservatives in the organs of power have been reducing the scale of occupational training, cutting back on various courses, technical trades schools, etc., under the pretext of 'trimming' government spending.

The cost of educating and retraining personnel, said *William Somerset*, is regarded by employers as unacceptable because it goes to increase the cost of the product. He gave the following example: British Telecommunications, one of the major employers in Ireland, began to reduce its training schemes immediately upon

being privatised: a number of free courses were abolished, and correspondence studies were almost entirely folded up. The employers, he said, want the working people to bear the costs incidental to occupational training, and to deduct these costs from wages.

The participants in the symposium considered changes in skills among the working population and said that in the drive for cheap labour power, the monopolies have been transferring to the LDCs many lines of production requiring less complex labour, so in a sense exporting low-skills to the LCDs and thus keeping them economically backward. The industrialised capitalist countries have set themselves up not only as keepers of the new, more sophisticated and perfect technology, but also as centres with the most experienced, skilled and educated personnel. Such a 'division of labour' is designed to give the imperialist powers additional levers for dominating the peoples of the Third World.

Who needs a 'Glass' Worker

The content of labour under the STR was a problem considered at length by the symposium. The advocates of capitalist rationalisation often praise high-tech as relieving the workers from arduous labour, as a source of more imaginative work, and as giving the working people a greater interest in what they are doing. Technical progress is presented as an instrument of radical change in the workers' status in production.

Some sociologists in the FRG, the report said, preach "new concepts of production" and "neoindustrialisation", claiming that modern technologies help to overcome the system of labour fragmentation and to rid the workers of their sense of 'alienation'. Thus, right-wing social democratic ideologists say that, given the right 'modernisation strategy', it is possible to fit a 'social safety net' to the high-tech, which can be turned into a crucial instrument in 'humanising the world of labour' even under the capitalist relations of production.

But, speakers said, technology alone is incapable of bringing about any radical change in the content of human activity. It does, of course, create the prerequisites for easing labour and eliminating arduous, noxious and hazardous operations, in which men can be replaced by robots to perform many monotonous and repetitive operations. But the capitalist use of high-tech is dictated not by these considerations, but above all by the capacity of high-tech to help the employer to economise on the costs of variable capital, i.e., living labour. That is why high technology is introduced only where its use holds promise of higher profits: capitalist 'profitability' is a yardstick that falls short of measuring the ways to ease labour and make it healthier.

Extensive studies of various aspects of rationalisation in the metal-working industry in the FRG were carried out by the Metal Workers' Union from 1982 to 1984. Members of production councils at roughly 1,000 enterprises employing over 100 persons each were asked about the changes ensuing from the introduction of new technology and new forms of labour organisation.

(Their answers are shown in the table on the next page).

While the physical strain has diminished, most workers found that the pace of work, the monotony and the noise levels had gone up. What is more, the eyestrain for office workers was much greater. The social isolation had also sharply increased.

"Practical experience," said William Stewart, "has dispelled the illusion that the introduction of electronic devices, robots, and flexible production systems would put an end to exhausting and stupefying work. Many types of arduous labour are, indeed, now performed by robots and flexible systems, but the changes in production

Form of workload	(percentages)			
	Decrease Blue- collar workers	White- collar workers	Increase Blue- collar workers	White- collar workers
Pace work	1	3	77	28
Arduous manual labour	38	—	13	—
Eyestrain	—	1	—	68
Noise	32	12	41	17
Monotony	7	3	41	34
Social isolation	4	1	35	68

connected with scientific and technical innovation, create jobs where labour is as exhausting and dangerous. Studies carried out in some countries where microelectronics are widely used show that working people handling new equipment suffer more often from headaches, chronic fatigue, insomnia, ear and eye complaints, and some diseases.”

Many speakers stressed that high-tech helps the employers to step up control over the employees, their work and behaviour. This kind of ‘glass’, ‘see-through’ worker is easier to exploit and to use as a pliant tool attached to the machine. There is ever wider use of systems for collecting and processing data on the pace of production and on personnel. In the course of the poll taken by the Metal Workers’ Union in the FRG, 48 per cent of the members of production councils and 53 per cent of the employees noted increased control over the work collectives.

Who Wins and Who Loses?

The introduction of high-tech which sharply boosts labour productivity should, it would seem, create the objective prerequisites for a corresponding growth in wages. In practice, however, the very opposite has been taking place under the impact of the laws of capitalist production. *Employers strive to use the growing labour productivity in order to extract higher profits and to appropriate as much of the surplus-value created by the labour of the working class as possible.* In consequence, wages are kept at the lowest possible level, and go up only after bitter struggles by the working people and the trade unions or whenever there is a temporary rise in the demand for some categories of labour power.

But even when there is an increase in wages, it falls far short of the growth of profits. In the FRG, for instance, the nominal wages of workers and employees went up by 10 per cent from 1980 to 1985, or by a total of 50 billion marks. Meanwhile, the capitalists’ net profits went up by 100 billion marks, or by 40 per cent. As a result, the share of wage workers in FRG’s national income in 1985 came to only 62 per cent, or less than the 1970 level. The exploitation of the working class was intensified, even if wages did grow in absolute figures.

Some bourgeois economists and politicians assert that it is unemployment and the layoffs of some that assure the rest of high incomes. They claim that one cannot have it both ways: it is either high wages and low employment, or high employment and low wages. This line of argument does not hold water.

Unemployment, which keeps growing under the impact of the capitalist use of high-tech, helps the employers to pressure the working people, who live in constant fear of losing their jobs, and so become more amenable and less demanding on working conditions, wages, shopfloor safety and social security. Part-time employment and 'flexible' forms of labour organisation also create more favourable conditions for employers in their drive against the working people's rights and wages. Temporary workers have less protection than full-time workers under social and labour legislation and wage contracts, and bend more easily to pressure from the employers.

Many speakers said that the tendency to freeze and depress wages was strongest just where unemployment was rampant. Thus, in Ireland, where the percentage of 'redundant' people is especially high (18.5 per cent), wages are among the lowest in Western Europe, and the authorities have been driving home that point as a lure for investors. "Whenever one lands at Dublin Airport," said *William Somerset*, "one sees the billboard which says: 'Welcome to the land of lower labour cost in Europe'."

Many examples were given to show the employers' use of the threat of layoffs to reduce wages. *Carlos Aboim Ingles* cited this amazing fact: the workers of many enterprises in Portugal go on working for months (often up to half a year) without getting any pay at all — merely to keep their jobs. Almost 120,000 working people are victims of such practices. Unemployment among able-bodied young people enables the employers to exploit most savagely the 'lucky ones' who manage to find jobs. A government plan to 'expand employment' for young people under the age of 25 provides that young men and women employed under the plan are to receive only a third of the national minimum wage.

Nor does that apply only to such less industrialised capitalist countries as Portugal, Ireland or Greece: it is true of all industrialised capitalist countries. Indeed, it is true even of industries where the high degree of hardware renewal and rising skill standards among the working people create, one would assume, prerequisites for raising wages: they are effectively limited or reduced, especially where trade unions are weak or non-existent. What is happening is described more accurately by *William Winpisinger*, president of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and a member of the AFLCIO Executive Council. Speaking to the National Lawyers Guild at Detroit in November 1985, Winpisinger said: "Today, in that pitifully small portion of the labour force represented by trade unions, employers in the supereconomy and the mini-economy alike, are demanding their workers take wage cuts, wage freezes, give up cost-of-living adjustments, reduce health care coverage, cutback pension and retirement benefits, give back break periods and wash-up times, pay full costs for meals in company cafeterias. God knows what's happening where workers have no unions or collective bargaining rights."

Speakers dealt with the impact of modernisation in production on the living standards of the population and noted that the rising labour productivity, and the declining labour inputs per product-unit could make goods cheaper and so help to raise the working people's living standards. But something different has taken place. On the plea of the need to cover the mounting costs of production arising from the installation of expensive high-tech, higher wages, more expensive fuel and raw materials, big capital has more than recouped its outlays both by expanding output and by raising product prices. In this way, what the working people gain through higher wages on the shopfloor is taken out of their pockets in the market-place.

Thus, *actual wages* in the FRG in 1985 (considering the rise in prices) were in fact 6 per cent down from 1979. *The fruits of the STR went to the capitalists and not to the*

working people. The redistribution of incomes in favour of the monopolies has intensified.

The picture was similar in the other capitalist countries. In Canada, said *William Stewart*, the working people's real incomes shrank by 12 per cent from 1979 to 1985. In Sweden, said *Urban Herlitz*, real wages dropped by an average of 10 per cent during the economic recession of the early 1980s, and have yet to return to the mid-1970s level.

Big capital makes money on inflation, but puts up a fierce fight against linking up prices and wages, and it is no accident that sliding-scale wages (indexation), which the trade unions had won earlier in hard struggle and which gave some protection for working people's incomes against depreciation have been abolished in some industrialised capitalist countries over the past few years under pressure from the right-wing forces.

The need to modernise production and to fund investments so as to regain 'market leadership' is also invoked in the drive against the working people's living standards through cutbacks in social spending, the 'social dismantling' which has recently been pushed through in many capitalist countries, 'Reaganism' in the United States, and 'Thatcherism' in Great Britain are apt examples: spending on public health, education, social security, relief for the poor and various other aids, including unemployment insurance, is being slashed. In the FRG, for instance, one-third of the almost 2.3 million registered unemployed in 1985 did not receive any relief at all.

Taking Up the Challenge

The sharpening crisis of state-monopoly capitalism and new forms of exploitation appearing under the influence of the STR and the mass unemployment confront the working class movement with complicated tasks and open up a new field in the class struggle.

"The challenge we face from the development of the new productive forces", said Heinz Jung, "demands of us Communists a response in our strategy and policy . . . For the working class under capitalism scientific and technical progress is a double-faced Janus, who looks on it mostly with his grim face." What Marx said in his Capital "about the contradictions and antagonisms inseparable from the capitalist employment of machinery" still holds true.¹ He stressed that the productive forces cannot develop on their own, while the methods of appropriating surplus-value predominant in the society are reflected in the concrete forms in which technology is used. With the passage of time, the class struggle is bound to widen and grow more intense.

The representatives of the IMSF and the German CP stressed that how high-tech is used depends on whose interest it serves. By its very nature, high-tech provides a diversity of opportunities for its use, and the choice of this or that version being debated at the enterprises and in the industries results from the balance of the forces in the class struggle.

Over the past several years, there has now and again been a more or less uncritical approval of high-tech and rationalisation of production within the working class movement. Bourgeois propaganda presented radiant prospects, while the limited scale of the changes did not seriously affect the interests of the mass of working people. *Robin Williams* spoke of trade union attempts to adapt to the ongoing processes, to secure the maximum advantage at minimum cost, and to ensure their balanced use. In the late 1970s, the British Trades Union Congress signed 'high-tech agreements' with employers under which the trade unions were given consultative rights. However, these applied mainly to the traditional issues: wages, labour protection and, to a lesser extent, job security and retraining.

Important matters like high-tech planning, investments and labour organisation remained outside the framework of the consultations. With a few exceptions, the unions are not ready to propose alternative models for the use of high-tech, and blindly follow the employers. As a result, some of the advantages that had been gained were distributed most unevenly, in favour of high-skilled workers at the expense of the less skilled. The question of new jobs remained in the background.

It was said in the discussion that the growing burdens for the working people resulting from modernisation and experience of actual class struggle for jobs have helped to develop a more critical attitude to the use of high-tech by capitalists. The substance of this approach was concisely formulated by *George Jackson*, who said: "If capitalism wants new technology and higher labour productivity, we must support these objectives, but not allow the queues for unemployment benefits to grow, and see to it that the wealth created is distributed for the good of all." Formulating one's attitude to high-tech impels one, therefore, to take a critical view of the whole capitalist system, to wage struggle against the use of the STR to step up the working people's exploitation.

At the same time, speakers said that the working class movement and its allies were still at the initial stages of this process and had little experience, which is why information, explanation and orientation of the working people become vastly significant in the activity of the communist and workers' parties. *Stephen Voets* suggested that there was a need to formulate policy ahead of developments, clearly showing the contradictions in the capitalist use of scientific and technical progress and formulating the Communists' response. The Theses approved by the Eighth Congress of the German CP, for instance, say: "The working class and its organisations must counter the technological policy of big capital with their own strategy for an exclusively peaceful development and application of hardware in this area for the benefit of the working people. It must insist on getting advance information on scientific and technical breakthroughs, and have a greater say on research, technology, rationalisation, labour organisation, general education and technical trades training . . . Action for rational use of scientific and technical progress needs to be closely tied in with the struggle for peace, democratic and social progress, and for an end to monopoly rule."²

How is one to withstand the wide offensive mounted by capital on the working people's rights and gains with the aid of high-tech? In what way could scientific and technical progress, in the view of representatives of the working class, be made to serve the society as a whole, instead of the greedy monopolies alone? Participants in the discussion spoke in the light of their parties' policy documents, and set forth answers reflecting the complexity and diversity of the problems under discussion.

It was recognised that one of the main tasks is to fight for shorter hours with full wages. In some countries of Western Europe, the target is a 35-hour working week, and in the United States and Canada, a 32-hour week. The sizeable growth in labour productivity from high-tech makes these demands economically grounded and realistic. Experience shows that capital has stubbornly resisted any reduction in working time, and wherever it has accepted the idea, it has insisted on cutting wages, i.e., in effect, imposing part-time employment on the working people. It is obvious that working hours cannot be actually reduced without class battles against capital and without a strengthening of the working people's class consciousness and organisation. That is evidenced, for instance, by the experience of the 1984 struggle by the West German working people, who subsequently got a 38.5-hour working week.

Shorter hours could also help to ease the burden of unemployment, because it is a way of providing additional jobs. At the same time, if the number of 'redundant' people is to be markedly reduced, there is a need above all to create new jobs, and

here the demands contained in the communist parties' policy documents concerning state employment programmes through government investments come to the fore. There is also a need to do everything to protect existing jobs, without reducing any overdue renewal of production, but combining it with ensuring the rights and interests of those who want to go on working.

Scientific and technical progress should essentially improve working conditions, making work easier and more meaningful. But capitalist rationalisation, as a rule, speeds up labour and increases the workload. Speakers said that protection against such effects must include the right of veto by trade unions and work collectives whenever new technology entails more overloading for the working people. Alongside the task of improving or, at any rate, not worsening the working conditions, there is also the task of preserving and expanding the social gains.

The training and retraining as new hardware and technologies are introduced is an ever more pressing problem. That can be done by extending and modernising the occupational training system with funding by the state and the employers, to make the working people's adaptation to the new demands in production less painful. Special attention needs to be given to young people, whose entry upon adulthood depends on the training they get and the chance of finding a job to match it.

The working people find absolutely unacceptable the control and surveillance of their behaviour at the enterprises and the efforts to find out their political views, something that computer facilities make it possible to do. All the democratic forces must take a resolute stand against such pressure on the individual and against the curbs on the freedoms.

Speakers stressed that it is not enough to provide protection against the negative social consequences of high-tech: work collectives must have a say in how it is introduced and how labour is organised. That is why the working people and their unions should have access to plans for remodelling production so that they could exert and influence on these, and put forward their own alternative proposals.

In the course of the discussion, attention was drawn to the fact that structural shifts and the differentiation within the working class, the drawing in of some strata into production and the rejection of others, especially of young people, pose the threat of contradictions between various groups of working people. Part-time and temporary employment make it very hard to unionise the categories of the population affected, and employers and the bourgeois state make use of the fact in order to inject divisions into the midst of the workers, and undermine the positions and curb the functions of the trade union movement. That is why, speakers said, one of the key tasks is to preserve well-knit trade unions and to extend their influence among new groups of working people and also the unemployed, for on that largely depends success in the fight against the social effects of the capitalist use of high-tech. The transnational corporations operate on an international scale, with capital from various countries joining in anti-labour attacks, which means that the working people and their trade unions can and must confront them with the strength of internationalist solidarity. Joint programmes for struggle and concerted action on an international scale, it was said in the discussion, could help the working class to tackle such a priority problem as the introduction of a shorter working week, without any cuts in pay.

How effective the working class movement is largely depends on the extent to which it succeeds in drawing into the common struggle for the working people's rights and interests such burgeoning groups as office workers and intellectuals, and in taking account of their specific requirements. The objective basis for doing so is there, because the working and living conditions of a sizeable section of office

workers and intellectuals in scientific and technical fields are similar to those of the workers.

The negative effects of the capitalist use of high-tech cannot be curbed unless the working class movement puts forward more general, politically meaningful demands, some of which were indicated by speakers in the discussion. There is, for instance, the need to protect the environment from being polluted and poisoned, something that requires the allocation of large funds both by local capital and by the state, an approach that could create new jobs and ease the unemployment. Research should be made more relevant to the needs of the working people and to the creation and satisfaction of new and rational wants. What is most pressing is the demand for an end to the orientation of science and technology towards the development of the instruments of war, for it diverts vast material and manpower resources from civilian production. Protests against the militarisation of science provide good ground for better contacts between the working class movement and the scientific and technical intelligentsia, and the latter's involvement in the common struggle for peace.

There is also the question of formulating alternative economic and structural policy conceptions envisaging more balanced and all-round development of the productive forces under democratic planning and control. If that is to be done, the key sectors of the economy need to be nationalised, with the trade unions and the working class having wider democratic rights and a say in the management of production. With the awareness that socialism alone offers opportunities for truly harmonising the interests of the working people, the whole of the society, and the use of new hardware and technology, the participants in the symposium emphasised that the demands and proposals put forward in the course of their discussion nevertheless constitute a realistic basis for the struggle for the interests of the popular masses at the present stage of the scientific and technical revolution.

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1956, p. 441

² *Thesen des 8. Parteitages der DKP*, Neuss, 1986, p. 49.

How can we Remove the Threat of Omnicide?

This is a question of paramount importance for the international community, affecting each and every nation, each and every one of us no matter where we live. For nuclear arms recognise no borders, and their destructive force does not distinguish between 'our side' and 'their side'. These weapons threaten everything created by man, man himself and even life on Earth with annihilation.

Today, it is imperative to accord priority to universal human values and to recognise the right of every nation and every individual to life, liberty, peace and the pursuit of happiness. There must be universal renunciation of the threat or use of force; universal respect for the right of every people to its own social, political and ideological choice; and universal repudiation of policies rooted in ideas of superiority over others.

These humanistic provisions of the Delhi Declaration on Principles for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World, ¹ a document reflecting the stand of the socialist countries and of the non-aligned movement, are shared by those who have formed a broad coalition of peace, reason and conscience. The contributions published below echo the ideas partners in the common

struggle for a safe, nuclear-free world often express in discussions. For all the differences in their assessments and attitudes to the key problem of our age, participants in the peace movement are united in their conviction that nuclear weapons must be destroyed if civilisation is to be preserved and progress ensured.

It is Pernicious to Trust in the Bomb

Paul Johns – Chairman, Campaign for
Nuclear Disarmament (Great Britain)

SOME people argue that the East-West conflict is mainly sustained by the need of the leading protagonists — the Soviet Union and the United States — to retain power over their subordinates. It is necessary to sustain the image of a threatening enemy to keep them under political and economic control.

Some argue that there is an historically inevitable conflict between the ideologies and systems of capitalism and socialism. Looked at one way the most important task in international relations is to protect the democratic way of life against the threat of totalitarianism which some connect with socialism. Looked at the other, the conflict is caused by the predictable resistance of degenerative capitalism to the onward march of socialism.

It does not, for the purposes of my argument, matter which explanation you prefer. The important point is that two dominant alliances are prepared to defend themselves, each against the other, with weapons of mass destruction, and their nuclear arms race is threatening all humankind with the risk of catastrophe.

For both sides the nuclear weapon has become the principal symbol of security. On both sides the people are told to trust in the bomb. One of the Psalms in the Bible has a perceptive observation about peoples who trust in the gods of metal, which neither see, nor hear, nor speak. "Those who make them and those who trust in them grow like them."

Nuclear deterrence is not and never can be a sound foundation for the security of a state or an alliance of states. It is a fundamental requirement of any defence policy that in a crisis it should appear both credible and non-provocative to a potential aggressor. The threat to use suicidal nuclear weapons (especially modern fast and accurate ones) cannot meet that requirement. It only serves to cloak the risk of catastrophe with the illusion of security. But it is not the dangerous ineffectiveness of nuclear deterrence that I want to dwell on. I want to say something about the moral consequences of trusting in the bomb, of accepting the official doctrine that it is essential for our security.

Firstly, it means putting bombs before bread, spending resources on weapons which are useless (or which, if they ever were used, would be catastrophically destructive) rather than on feeding the world's starving and investing in the development of impoverished countries. Every day £1.25 billion is spent on arms and 10,000 people die for lack of proper food. Of course nuclear weapons do not account for all the arms expenditure, but the nuclear alliances are responsible for most of it. The bomb is the outstanding illustration of the way in which militarism has deafened us to the cries of the world's poor.

Secondly, nuclear deterrence means threatening to kill millions of innocent people supposedly to protect a way of life based on values which are the foundation

of civilised society. But how civilising is any adherence to 'democracy' or 'socialism' if to protect it I am prepared to condone a genocidal attack upon a society allegedly inferior because it does not share the values of my society? If a society can protect 'its' democracy, or 'its' socialism, or for that matter, 'its' Christianity only by licensing its government to inflict mass destruction on those who think differently, then I question whether that society really believes in the values it professes.

Thirdly, nuclear weapons are comfortably remote from most of us. The political and military decisions which nuclear deterrence requires are for a handful of experts and specialists, and we neither know nor understand in detail the targeting plans and firing instructions they issue and would observe in a crisis. The cloak of secrecy and high technology dulls our senses. Reports of soldiers killing women and children in, say, Africa, rightly horrify us. But the British government is training crews of Polaris submarines to do precisely the same thing on a genocidal scale, and the British people are not outraged.

Fourthly, nuclear deterrence makes for dishonest government. A nuclear government has to signal to its supposed enemy that in certain circumstances it would really use its missiles, otherwise the deterrent is not credible. At the same time it has to assure its own people that threatening to use the missiles is the best way to ensure that they never are used, in order to prevent public anxiety. Now, if the threat to use missiles is really bluff it is an extremely dangerous bluff because the enemy could so easily misread the preparations for using the weapons as actual intention to use them, and take pre-emptive action. If it is not bluff, then the domestic population are being told that they are safe when they are not. Morally speaking, the threat to use the missiles is as bad as the use of them. Nuclear deterrence is a crime against humanity in the making, and like all crime preparation it is based on deception.

Finally, nuclear deterrence is the tap root of social violence. Most societies have to cope with the problems of crime and violence, law and order. Certainly in Britain these problems are mounting in large cities which are suffering social and economic deprivation. This is partly due to the way in which the Thatcher government has increased defence expenditure, reduced housing expenditure and responded half-heartedly to the problem of unemployment. But the ironic thing is not just that the British government proclaims itself to be an upholder of law and order in order to gain public support for tough measures against social violence which is in part, at any rate, born of frustration at the government's own social and economic policies. It is that the government which proclaims the necessity of preventing violence and upholding the law at home, is the government which enshrines violence on the grand scale in its defence policy, which indeed proclaims it as a virtue and which refuses to accept that international law imposes any constraint on the use of nuclear weapons. As long as a government — any nuclear government — bases its defence policy on maximum violence without international constraint, it is doing nothing to discourage a value system which tells people that they are entitled to respond to violence when they believe their interests to be threatened or neglected by impersonal, uncaring authorities and institutions.

International law of course quite clearly proscribes the use of weapons of mass destruction, but the nuclear powers do not accept that this constraint applies to nuclear weapons. To do so would be to nullify the policy of nuclear deterrence.

Here we come to a fundamental problem. The sovereign state, or sovereign military alliance in practice recognises no overriding authority, no external constraint on its freedom to take whatever action is considered necessary to protect its interests, including inflicting mass destruction on other states. The historic concepts of sovereignty and national independence have contributed greatly to the development of political institutions and communities, but when connected to the

principle and practice of nuclear deterrence they have become wholly corrupted.

And when in the interests of preserving strong nuclear defences against an enemy it becomes necessary to limit peoples' freedoms (either by eroding established freedoms or preventing the development of freedoms where none have been) in the interests of 'national security', then nuclear deterrence is not just a dangerous illusion of a defence policy, it is a moral sickness in international society.

So what is the cure? Certainly not SDI, which is another kind of man-made technological god, whose advocates are deceitfully promising a measure of security which the god could not possibly deliver. 'Star wars' is a god for protecting weapons, not people, and set alongside the strategic nuclear deterrent it will make international relations less stable, not more so.

As Gorbachov has said, echoing the Western peace movement, the cure for the arms race is not ballistic missile defences but disarmament.

The problem is daunting. We are up against unprecedented concentrations of political power which have surrounded themselves with strong vested interests and which established democratic systems (where they exist) cannot effectively control.

We cannot wait for the creation of a supranational authority strong enough to rein the superpowers in, or for the radical transformation of international society. It is not clear how the superpowers will ultimately be forced into substantial arms reductions. But it is clear enough that the West European peace movement has a crucial part to play in starting the process and that it has already made considerable impact. It is the Western peace movement, with some East European response, which has broken the tacit consensus which supported nuclear deterrence until 1979, and which has refused to accept as decisive the deployment of theatre nuclear weapons in Europe since 1979. Both Reagan and Gorbachov recognise the power of the peace movement. This is why negotiations on European weapons are now being given priority at Geneva. In explaining his challenging proposals for arms reductions in January 1986 Gorbachov said: "It is not an accident that the new Soviet initiatives are directly addressed to Europe. In achieving a radical turn towards the policy of peace, Europe could have a special mission."

It may well be that a third world war is unlikely to begin in Europe, but it is likely to be in Europe that the political credibility of nuclear deterrence will be decisively broken and the disarmament process begun.

As a Christian I believe that God works not only in individual hearts and minds, but through the political processes and power structures of society also. I am convinced that the European peace movement, however one may wish to explain it in secular or political terms, is an instrument of God's purposes with a mission to force peace upon the decision-makers from below and to begin to purge society of the moral corruption which devotion to the nuclear deterrent has brought upon us.

Only Working Together

Georg Kwiatowski – representative
of the German Communist Party on WMR

DIVERSE government, civic and individual peacemaking efforts make up the mosaic of the International Year of Peace. The pieces making up this priceless universal mosaic were created everywhere — in New Zealand, in the North of Canada, along the routes of the Great Peace March in the United States and of the

Peace March in India, in picket lines around the Greenham Common missile base, during the anti-war referendum held by millions of young people in the Soviet Union and in the course of various actions taken by the peoples of other socialist countries. Along with the 200,000-strong demonstration organised in my country, the FRG, six months ago to protest against the deployment of US cruise missiles, I feel I must also mention the hundreds of municipal and neighbourhood initiatives, the peace groups at factories, the educational activities and peace actions of scientists, physicians, lawyers, athletes and people representing many other professions and occupations. At the Copenhagen World Congress on the International Year of Peace, delegates from all over the globe voiced their determination to prevent nuclear war and 'star wars', to fight for effective disarmament and to bring compelling pressure on the powers-that-be.

One wonders what motivates peace champions today and why rejection of nuclear weapons has assumed such great dimensions. Apparently, the foremost reason is the realisation that what may happen will not simply be just another war but a disaster posing a very real threat to human survival. To die together or to survive together is an inexorable law which has blended billions of lives into a single life.

The new forces and governments that are joining the struggle for survival are injecting different ideas and philosophies into it. But all are united in the awareness that Earth is too small and fragile a world for wars and positions-of-strength policies, that it can only be saved if there is a clean break with the old stereotypes in thinking and behaviour, the stereotypes that were dominant for centuries and treated wars and armed conflicts as acceptable. This is why all these people are fully resolved to stop the arms race and take the first steps in a new direction — towards disarmament. This is a colossal task dwarfing political and ideological differences.

The paramount question is, *how* can we survive together and *what* must be done to guarantee this survival? The search for an answer is on everywhere, and different forces offer different opinions. There can be no monopoly on the truth in a broad dialogue, just as alienation or isolation because of differences in views is, I believe, inadmissible. All those who are searching have a place in the peace movement, and each has a right to have a say. Advocates of capitalism, just as supporters of socialism or any other system, have a common duty: above all, they must save Earth and put an end to the arms race. A joint struggle to deliver civilisation from the perils of nuclear extinction does not imply that people must give up their political views, their philosophy. The debate about which social system is better will go on. But there must be a common understanding that as a means of preserving or enlarging any social system, war is out. The search for common ground is a daily quest, conducted in the course of efforts to attain peace, security and disarmament.

A dialogue on morals, on basic and universal human values is extremely important in today's world. The great humanists of the past bequeathed to us all a philosophy of care and respect for life and for man. But humanism, morals, ethics are not abstract notions. They are the yardsticks by which millions of people judge the actions of governments, responding with approval or condemnation.

Some hold that possession of a certain military capability and of nuclear weapons sets the USSR and the United States apart from the rest of the world and lumps these two nations together as 'equally responsible for the threat to peace'. We Communists see clearly a fundamental difference above all in the morals and ethics underlying the policies of the two powers and, more broadly, the two social systems they belong to. And if the leader of one of these powers declares the other to be an 'evil empire', thus trying to 'morally' justify plans to deliver a *first* nuclear strike against it and inevitably, against all mankind, can one really talk about 'similar morals' allegedly leading to 'equal responsibility'?

Concerned over the world's future, people from all continents are addressing pleas and demands to Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachov. Political figures, scientists, peace activists and many others want to meet and talk with them. But in fact the two powers even respond differently to these expressions of alarm and concern (which I defy anyone to dismiss as propaganda): the Soviet Union conducts a serious dialogue, explaining its stand, listening attentively to others and taking their views into account. The United States disdainfully ignores the peace movement, continuing its war preparations. Have US diplomats talked with anti-war delegations in Geneva and other peace cities so as to take the activists' views into consideration? Has the White House replied to the message of the Delhi Six?

One can continue the discussion of morals by reviewing both nations' record at the UN. Which of them, in 1986 alone, voted 'no' in complete or almost complete isolation on 26 motions to uphold peace and disarmament and to condemn hostilities? The record is common knowledge. Therefore one cannot equate the two powers in this sphere either.

All this shows that possession of nuclear weapons by no means determines the same logic of conduct in the case of two countries belonging to different social systems. Differences are obvious, and they prove the assertion that 'the two superpowers are equally responsible for the arms race' to be wholly untenable. It was the USSR which proposed that the world be freed from nuclear weapons and conventional armaments be reduced by the year 2000. It is Reagan who, out of his obsession with SDI, not only blocks progress towards disarmament but also intends to infest the still peaceful outer space with weapons of a new and incomparably deadlier generation.

The realities of the nuclear age demand that we all re-appraise our past positions and learn to respond to change. Like many others, the Communists are learning too, giving up obsolete points of view and displaying a readiness to keep an open mind in their approach to new developments, primarily to the fact that for the first time in history, mankind now has more weapons than would be necessary for its self-destruction. This new reality makes it imperative to regard the security of one side in direct connection with the security of the other, because any attempt to build up the armaments at the expense of this other side escalates the war threat and destroys everyone's security. It follows that realisation of security for all, of common security is the only way to survive.

Equal security implies honest partnership, that is, respect for the principle of equality among sovereign countries. This is what has given the Reykjavik meeting its unique significance: it has shown that agreement on global security that each nation could safely rely on is possible. It is also the reason why the Soviet programme of nuclear disarmament was welcome on such a grand scale. Millions of people connect it with their hopes for survival and security — all the more so because a true 'zero option' with regard to nuclear weapons provides for the concomitant of mutual reductions in conventional armaments and for removal of other barriers of military and political mistrust. To cleanse the world of weapons, of threats is very convincing 'propaganda', particularly for the underdeveloped South. And the humanism of the way the Communists and other forces approach the termination of the arms race is quite tangible: we demand that a considerable part of the funds thus saved be channelled into the eradication of poverty, hunger and epidemics.

There exists a body of opinion which maintains that nuclear weapons and nuclear policy cannot be subject to popular control. But mankind refuses to follow those who advocate the arms race. This race would have assumed much greater scope had it not been limited by the imposition of serious restrictions which, incidentally,

some would like to ignore. Foremost among these restrictions and obstacles are international public opinion and its resistance to the policy of the arms race.

There are also legal obstacles — treaties on the partial prohibition of nuclear tests, on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, on keeping outer space free from nuclear arms. The pledges of the USSR and People's China not to use nuclear weapons first and the Soviet moratorium on nuclear tests are also tremendously important self-imposed restrictions. Besides, demands are growing for nuclear testing to be renounced completely and forever and for this step to be formalised under international law. On the other hand, it is becoming increasingly clear who seeks to wreck the machinery of the restrictions and bans operating under treaties that relate not only to nuclear missiles but also to the use of force in international relations in general.

This is how an abstract precept about the evil inherent in force and in weapons as such acquires a concrete meaning and points to the source of the threat to peace. We see this source in imperialism, particularly in the diversified self-serving interests of the military-industrial complex, especially that of the United States. As for the government of my country, the Federal Chancellor protests his devotion to peace and arms reductions while at the same time increasing the number of the US nuclear missiles deployed on our soil. After Reykjavik, Helmut Kohl dutifully and hastily flew to Washington to help put the brakes on possible steps to nuclear arms reductions. His words are clearly in conflict with his deeds. And so the peace movement in the Federal Republic demands that the government abandon its destructive position on matters of disarmament and contribute to the strengthening of peace and security.

To end the race in nuclear and other weapons, to keep outer space peaceful, to replace mistrust and suspicion with a life free from fear, to enable man to fully develop his creative potential and his talents, all people of goodwill must be mobilised. The peoples are to become the force which, in the final analysis, will decide on matters of policy, on matters of development, and on matters of life itself. Historically, this is where our civilisation is headed.

It is now particularly important for different countries to pool their efforts in order to return to détente and build a safe and nuclear-free world. These efforts must be undertaken by the Soviet Union, by the United States and by other nations, big and small. This is what motivates the work of peace champions in the Federal Republic within the framework of local and national initiatives and on the international scene. The coalition of peace which includes individuals, movements, parties, nations and groups of nations is gaining strength. No one can lay claim to leadership in such a coalition.

The scope of the task to protect Earth and the foundations of our life calls for the understanding that we must all act together and push whatever makes our disunity to the background. The age we live in tells us that we must rally together and work jointly for universal peace.

¹ For details, see Unni Krishnan, 'A Document Reflecting a New Way of Political Thinking', *WMR*, No. 2, 1987.—*Ed.*

Criticism under Socialism

Stefan Opara – Professor, Ph.D.

IN the socialist society criticism and self-criticism are traditionally seen as a vital factor of development. However, creative discontent with what has been achieved, critical views of reality, and the striving for renewal often encounter barriers and impediments. This problem is not that simple. We get instances where criticism is reduced to hollow negation, which can only generate doubt and discourage people from action. Lastly, we should not ignore the hostile attacks on the socialist system with the aim of destroying it. In our country, in particular, there has never been a dearth of destructive criticism. But does counter-action to the enemy's malicious attacks necessarily imply that the attitude to the new society's realities has to be uncritical? On the contrary, it calls for a critical attitude motivated by concern for socialism's successful development.

The considerations presented in this article are based on my observations of the discussions and the restructuring of various aspects of life in the Soviet Union following the April 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and the 27th Party Congress. The changes have aroused keen interest in Poland. Having the atmosphere at these discussions in mind, Wojciech Jaruzelski, First Secretary of the PUWP Central Committee, noted that as socialism develops, gains strength, and wins the hearts and minds of people, the Communists level ever sharper criticism at existing shortcomings and jettison with growing determination all that has become obsolete and stands in the way of their advance into the twenty-first century.¹

With the conceptions advanced at the 27th CPSU Congress as my point of departure, I should like to examine the role played by criticism in the development of Marxist-Leninist theory and in the actual building of a socialist society. Although this theme is neither new, nor momentary, nor in any way trivial, it has many theoretical aspects that are not very often analysed by our social sciences.

The critical spirit of the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communists was in keeping with the finest traditions underlying Marxist ideals and the Bolshevik programme propositions. The Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the congress called for an uncompromising attitude to the lessons of the past, for an end to shamefaced side-stepping of difficulties, and for clearing the road to the future by stating the truth about the negative processes of the 1970s and the early years of the 1980s. Some of the points made by Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, were: "The Party can resolve new problems successfully if it is itself in uninterrupted development, free of the 'infallibility' complex, critically assesses the results that have been attained . . . More urgently than before there is now the *need to promote criticism and self-criticism and step up the efforts to remove window-dressing* . . . Criticism and self-criticism are a natural principle of our society's life. Without them there can be no progress."²

This is also what the PUWP is saying. During the tense crisis of 1980-1981 our party saw criticism and self-criticism as a major means of eradicating errors and of the Communists showing that their work reflects the people's non-acceptance of deformations of socialism. This was later given expression in the documents of the PUWP's Tenth Congress (1986). The CC report draws attention, in particular, to the significance of criticism from below in a socialist society. "When people are outraged with shortcomings," Wojciech Jaruzelski said, "when they protest against the squandering of national wealth, when they want to influence what takes place at

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their own enterprises and in their own environment, this is not disappointment with socialism but, on the contrary, dissatisfaction with the fact that there is still not enough socialism, that there are departures from socialist ideals."³ The fact that criticism and self-criticism are fundamental to the party's work is also highlighted in the PUWP Programme adopted by the Tenth Congress. On this point the programme states that "criticism and self-criticism, the readiness to rectify mistakes and eradicate obsolete methods of work, and vigilance in regard to attempts to slow down the processes of socialist development are vital conditions for achieving the party's programme aims".⁴

These political assessments embody important questions of theory.

In the Marxist tradition criticism is an indispensable element for dialectical thinking and one of the principles of the theory of social development. Colloquial usage identifies criticism with negative assessments. But for the Marxist to find faults and to complain is just the beginning of the act of criticism. Many people may complain, but only few can suggest meaningful criticism. To criticise means give a thoughtful analysis, in other words, not only to finger evil but also to explain how and why it survived and exists, to get to its sources, its roots and, moreover, find the ways and means of removing it. This is the kind of criticism — understood as an analysis not only of manifestations but also of the causes of social shortcomings, as a quest for methods of taking determined steps against them — that has always been one of Marxism's central functions. A distinctive, implicit hallmark of the philosophical, economic, and political views of Marx, Engels and Lenin was their critical approach to reality.

Let us ask: what is there in common in such works of Marx, dealing with entirely different themes as *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, *The Civil War In France* or the monumental *Capital* (whose subtitle, incidentally, reads *A Critique of Political Economy*)? Let us ask: what is there in common between *The Holy Family* and the *German Ideology*, both written jointly by Marx and Engels? Or what is common between Engels' works *Anti-Dühring* and *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*? What is the underlying purpose of Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, *What Is To Be Done?*, *The State and Revolution*, and *'Left-Wing' Communism — an Infantile Disorder*?

The answer is obvious. The entire heritage of our classics consists of dialectical and materialistic works that provide critical analysis of bourgeois philosophical, economic, and political theories, of the various schools of utopian socialism, the traditions of metaphysical materialism and, most importantly, the economic and political processes in the development of the capitalist system, the class contradictions running through bourgeois society and all manifestations of exploitation, injustice, and the humiliation of the individual. It is useful to recall these principles for the benefit of those of our social scientists who have not written a single critical work in their lives and see their main attribute in having written *a priori* laudations of socialist reality and conflict-free theory.

For Marxism criticism is an instrument for society's revolutionary transformation, for changing it for the better. It serves not only destructive, but also creative, constructive purposes. This approach has nothing in common with anarchic and leftist petty-bourgeois interpretations of our world-view's critical function. For instance, in the initial period after the October Revolution there were some in Russia who regarded criticism as a form of breaking entirely with the past, of totally negating previous forms of ideology, philosophy, and culture. 'Ultra-revolutionary' views proclaiming the need for 'upheavals' in the economy and in politics and

science were widespread among students. They urged tearing down 'the entire superstructure of the old world' and, in particular, rejecting modern biology, logic, and so on. There were publications with screaming titles such as "Jettison Philosophy!"

In that period Vladimir Mayakovsky succumbed to these sentiments: in 1918 in a poem entitled "It Is Early to Rejoice" he urged demolishing museums and renouncing Russian classic poets, including Alexander Pushkin.⁵ But these extremes were alien to Lenin and made no impact on the policies of the Soviet government (for instance, People's Commissar for Education Anatoli Lunacharsky stressed that national traditions and the wealth of national culture had to be preserved).

The negativism of the early post-revolutionary years might have remained an historical curiosity had it not been for its latter relapses in revisionist and leftist thinking in the West. Take, for example, the 'negative dialectics' of the well-known philosopher of the Frankfurt school Theodor Adorno.

In my opinion, it was the 'Western Marxist' Karl Korsch who first formulated theories absolutising the negative aspect of dialectical criticism. In the late 1920s and early 1930s he presented the fallacious interpretation of Marxism as a philosophy of negation, reducing it to revolutionary criticism of capitalist society interpreted as a total rejection of all that society's ideological, state, and economic forms. Contending that Marxism does not delineate the contours of the future, he wrote, that it was a critical rather than a positive theory.⁶

Korsch thereby unfoundedly reduced Marxism's critical function exclusively to negation, although the founders of our philosophy had advanced many ideas and notions about the society of the future. Let us take an early example. Alongside criticism of capitalism the *Communist Manifesto* marks out positive tasks of the socialist revolution. The constructive thrust of Marxist theory was even more compellingly demonstrated by revolutionary practice, the beginning for which was laid by the Great October Revolution. Guided by Marxist ideas, the Bolsheviks showed in the very first post-revolutionary years that they were able to translate radical criticism into constructive, positive practice and adopt a considerate approach to issues related to the successiveness of civilisation.

A splendid example of this attitude, an attitude permeated with realism and common sense and free of revolutionary bombast, was Lenin's speech at the 11th Congress of the RCP(B) in 1922. He called upon Soviet Communists to be self-critical, declaring that it was necessary to take a bolder stand in applying the achievements of bourgeois science in the interests of the socialist state and drawing upon state-capitalist forms during the transition to the new economic system. He spoke of the New Economic Policy, of cooperation with knowledgeable specialists regardless of their social origin, of compliance with the principles of rational economic management, of the laws of the world market, and so on.⁷

It is accidental that the overall tone of the 27th CPSU Congress is reminiscent of the turn in 1921. The decisions adopted almost half a century after that turn enlarge upon Lenin's line of thought in which criticism was followed by suggestions for new constructive measures.

Socialism cannot develop normally without the active movement of critical thought. Of course, this does not apply to hostile assault from without or to sentiments that revisionism in some cases injects also into the working class movement. Positive criticism, dictated by concern for the destiny of socialism, must be accompanied by resistance to anti-socialist propaganda.

The distinctions between these two disparate forms of criticism are seen clearly in a concrete situation. Hostility for socialism is manifested, for example, in assessments of this or that aspect of the new society made usually on the basis of

information from alien class sources. Bourgeois ideologues see socialism solely as something evil, passing over or denying its achievements and besmirching everything about it. They present shortcomings not as departures from the new system's principles but as the logical outcome of the way it functions. Regardless of the facts, socialism is portrayed as the source of all evil — moral, economic, political, and even ecological. When this biased interpretation runs short of arguments it has recourse to rumours, lies, and political provocations. They say that in our society shortcomings are inherent and ineradicable. Hence their assertion that socialism does not lend itself to reform, that nothing in it can be corrected or improved.

However, in practice negative and constructive criticisms often prove to be interrelated. For instance, attempts (even with the best motivations) to prevent the exposure of actual shortcomings in socialist reality more often than not fuel interest in the enemy's inventions and widen the circle of those who heed them. Letting the enemy have a monopoly over criticism is, as experience has shown, a symptom that all is not well in the development of socialism.

It must be remembered that, first, constructive criticism allows identifying tensions and social contradictions, and this means getting the opportunity to block their sources in time and preventing them from erupting into open conflicts. This is a *preventive and regulating function*. It diagnoses inflammations in the social organism and safeguards it against crises requiring surgical intervention.

Second, criticism and self-criticism are an essential component of any self-evaluation. In the discussion of plans and programmes for society's development they help to lay bare miscalculations and errors, and this builds confidence in leading bodies of all levels. In this case *criticism is an element of control, assessment, and punishment of those who have been remiss*. This may be belated, antediluvian wisdom, when blunders have already been made, but it is wisdom nonetheless.

Third, criticism helps to accelerate the advance since whatever is good can be made even better. In this case criticism is a *catalyst of progress*. This sort of criticism is to be seen with crystal clarity in the documents of the 27th CPSU Congress. Its decisions give people the firm expectation that the great socialist power will develop more dynamically and rationally. The significance of this function of criticism was aptly underscored by Marian Orzechowski: "The socialist system is humane only if it is simultaneously dynamic and rational. Dynamic in the sense that it identifies and utilises its own values, advantages, and creative and motive forces, adapts to the constantly changing conditions of civilisation's development, is self-critical, and creates the mechanism for detecting and resolving the contradictions that surface again and again. Rational in the sense that it makes wise and efficient use of natural wealth, energy sources, and human intellectual and physical resources, and sustains optimal coexistence of society and the environment."⁸

A fundamentally significant question arises here: what social forces are vehicles of constructive criticism? There are three. First, the working people with their initiative, energy, creativity, and conscious commitment to society's successful advancement. It is only the all-sided promotion and deepening of socialist democracy, including the working people's functions of control and criticism, the reinforcement of elements of self-management, the day-to-day active participation of working people, of work collectives, in the process of governmental and social decision-making that give the possibility of coping with the challenging tasks facing socialism in our day. From this point of view openness and publicity, the reinforcement of control from below, and the strengthening of the democratic foundations of the work of all governmental and public organisations are of immense importance.

The second force consists of the communist and workers' parties of the fraternal socialist countries that are giving a creative impetus to the development of our society. Criticism and self-criticism are the duty of each and every member of these parties.

Lastly, the social sciences constitute the third force. Their mission is to produce in-depth analyses of society's life, forecast its further course, and work out the strategy of development. At the 27th CPSU Congress Mikhail Gorbachov noted: "The intricate range of problems stemming from the present landmark character of the development of our society and of the world as a whole is in the focus of the Party's theoretical thinking . . .

"Time sets the questions of the social sciences broadly tackling the concrete requirements of practice and demands that social scientists should be sensitive to the ongoing changes in life, keep new phenomena in sight, and draw conclusions that would correctly orient practice. Viability can only be claimed by those scientific schools that come from practice and return to it enriched with meaningful generalisations and constructive recommendations. Scholasticism, doctrinairism, and dogmatism have always been shackles for a genuine addition to knowledge. They lead to stagnation of thought, put a solid wall around science, keeping it away from life and inhibiting its development. Truth is acquired not by declarations and instructions, it is born in scientific discussion and debate and verified in action."

Marxism-Leninism is a revolutionary world-view that has shown the attainability of the most humane aim that humankind has ever set itself: to build a just social system. This theory is the key to a scientific understanding of social development that is integral and law-governed in all its diversity and contradictoriness, teaches people to understand the character and mutual influence of economic and political forces correctly, and to select the right ways, forms, and methods of coping with the tasks facing them, and to feel sure of themselves at steep turns in history as well.

¹ *Trybuna Ludu*, February 27, 1986.

² Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Moscow, 1986, pp. 88, 91, 102.

³ *X Zjazd Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej. Podstawowe dokumenty i materialy*, Warsaw, 1986, p. 67.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147

⁵ In order to disperse possible misunderstanding, the journal *Iskusstvo kommuny*, which printed this poem, made the reservation in a subsequent issue that Mayakovsky's words should not be taken literally. The poet himself later reconsidered his attitude to the classical heritage.—*Ed.*

⁶ See Karl Korsch, *Three Essays on Marxism*, London, 1971, pp. 33-34.

⁷ See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 276-279.

⁸ *Trybuna Ludu*, October 31-November 3, 1985.

⁹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, p. 96.

Under a Canopy of Absolutism

Mahdi Habib – CC General Secretary,
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IN the 1970s and early 1980s, including the period of the 'oil boom', Saudi Arabia went through a distinctive and extremely important phase of socio-economic development. This was a highly contradictory development. On the one hand, colossal revenues gave the regime the opportunity of enlarging its social base and more space for political manoeuvring. On the other, there was a further advance

towards capitalism and a faster embourgeoisification of the social structures. This exacerbated the contradictions in Saudi society and objectively aggravated the conflict between its 'modern' basis and the decayed superstructure, which remains a specimen of medieval survivals with the absolute monarchy as its central element.

The 'Oil Boom' and Its Consequences

The developments of the early 1970s (the leap in the price of oil, the growth of the oil output, and the increase of the government's share of Aramco property) brought Saudi Arabia a windfall in the shape of fabulous, incomparable wealth. In the course of a single fiscal year, 1973/1974, oil revenues shot up from 4.3 to 22.6 billion dollars, following which they continued to grow rapidly, exceeding 100 billion dollars in 1981.¹ The country found it was getting incalculably more money than it could absorb for its socio-economic development. This was an historical opportunity that would have allowed, had it been used rationally, to build at least a good material foundation for ending our society's appalling backwardness.

But how was this colossal wealth used?

The ruling Saudi clan and its corrupt hangers-on went on a spending spree, squandering the people's property right and left. This was in fact a race for quick and ever larger fortunes by the most diverse — lawful and unlawful — means. Many members of this clan soon began to number among the richest people in the world. Their insatiable, profligate consumption became the talk of the world.

True, a portion of the enormous revenues was invested in socially-significant areas (education, health, the infrastructure, and some industries) with the result that there was perceptible progress in these areas. But these were by no means the cardinal orientations of the government's investment policy. The regime had no purpose other than to win popularity in the bourgeois milieu and prevent any growth of mass discontent with its policies.

By and large, the 'development plans', for which sizeable allocations were made (for the first two five-year plans — 1970-1975 and 1975-1980 — these totalled about 152 billion dollars²), envisaged little emphasis on production. It would be enough to say that in the 1970s the investments in all the basic branches of production (industry, agriculture, power engineering, and so on) did not amount to 4 per cent of the government's aggregate expenditures.³

The regime redistributed the oil revenues in favour of the class forces it could count on and also in such a way as to enlarge its traditional social base. The entire internal budgetary-fiscal mechanism was geared to this end — large, profitable governmental contracts, particularly in the services industry, commerce, construction, direct financial aid, the creation of inducements, large, low-interest loans, and so forth. In order to draw the entire national bourgeoisie (active in production) closer to the ruling bloc, the regime, moving cautiously, satisfied some of its demands and extended lavish assistance to it.

The regime courted other segments of the people, virtually deluging the country with money in order to create 'objective obstructions' for any opposition political activity. Although this policy led to a notable rise in the people's individual incomes and living standard, its main outcome was the conspicuous concentration of wealth in the hands of a small and influential social group: the monarchic élite, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and other parasitical sections of the bourgeoisie — brokers, profiteers, contractors, real estate speculators, merchants, and financiers. Astronomical profits flowed also into the safes of foreign monopolies.

The leading item of the government's expenditures has been and is the upkeep of the armed forces and the security agencies. Our party estimates that in the period from 1973 to 1982 Saudi Arabia spent nearly 130 billion dollars to purchase armaments. In fact, Saudi Arabia tops the list of developing countries in terms of

military expenditures (including the purchase of arms). We regard this wanton spending as the most dangerous and imprudent element of the regime's policies and as supercilious contempt for the interests of our people. Besides, this irresponsible frittering away of the nation's wealth is inflaming tension in the region and increasing the threat to neighbouring countries, to Democratic Yemen in the first place. Imperialism, chiefly US imperialism, is expanding its direct military presence in Saudi Arabia, using the huge funds being spent by the Saudi regime to finance its own far-reaching programmes for building up military arsenals and turning Saudi Arabia into one of the bulwarks of its aggressive strategy in the Middle East.

In the 1970s, on the pretext that the Saudi economy had 'a limited capacity for utilising' its financial resources, there was a torrential outflow of petrodollars, especially to industrialised capitalist states. This became one of the major factors sustaining the balance of payments and national currencies of the imperialist powers, and giving them a stronger financial-economic position.

Undisguisedly hostile to the working people's interests and anti-national in content, the regime's economic policy has had damaging consequences, which will remain the root cause of our people's distress for a long time to come. The most dangerous of these consequences is the situation in which the country gets its revenues from the export of crude oil and meets its domestic requirements — both basic and ancillary — with imports, notably from industrialised capitalist countries. This is making Saudi Arabia hostage to the capitalist world market and reducing it to total dependence upon the forces dominating that market. A result has been the demolition of traditional sectors of the economy accompanied by a painful break-up of the economic structures based on these sectors. But no powerful industries capable of satisfying the nation's requirements were built to replace these sectors.

The national industry (excluding oil production) consists, in effect, of several medium and even large plants producing petro-chemical items, building materials, aluminium, fertilisers, foodstuffs, household goods, and so on. But this is a weak and deformed industry. The share it contributes to the national income is diminishing and the principal reasons for this are the absence of efficient planning, the regime's lack of interest in building a developed national industry, and its dependence on foreign state-monopoly capital and the transnational corporations out to make maximum profits.

Our party has cautioned over the years that confining the country's foreign economic relations to the capitalist world would imperil national interests. It urges, as it has always done, the restoration of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and the establishment of mutually-beneficial productive cooperation with all the socialist states on the principled basis of equality.

The regime is now tending to shift the task of industrialisation to the private sector, which, on account of its class nature and limited potentials, is unable to tackle this difficult mission singlehandedly. In the conditions prevailing in Saudi Arabia the leading role in building a national industry can, in fact, only be played by the state, by the state-capitalist sector, to be more exact. It has the large material resources needed for this purpose. In addition to the oilfields (and, of course, the revenue produced by them), the state owns, outright or partially, many important industrial enterprises, transport, communications, power-generating and water-supply networks, banks, insurance companies, educational establishments, medical centres, apartment buildings, and so on.

If all the resources of the state sector were mobilised and the sector itself purged of corruption, bureaucratic practices, and protectionism and given a genuine national orientation it would be in a position to address the most vital problems, chiefly those of industrialisation, employment, agrarian reforms, and resist the

subversive activities of the foreign monopolies. The preservation and enlargement of this sector are now a national priority. But the regime is stepping up its efforts to dismantle it under the pretext that it is afraid that this sector will 'unwittingly lapse into the sin of socialism'. The state sector has been converted into a source of quick and shameless enrichment and is the main instrument by which big foreign and Saudi capital dominate our country economically.

Misshapen Capitalism

Large infusions of funds accelerated the development of capitalism in Saudi Arabia and reinforced its influence on various aspects of society's life. Because money was invested mainly in the non-production sphere there has been a sharp growth of the activities of parasitical bourgeois elements. The most significant characteristic of the way capitalist relations spread in Saudi Arabia in the 1970s was that it was a sort of explosion in the sphere of circulation rather than in production. This is one of the most striking indications that the capitalist development in Saudi Arabia followed a misshapen pattern. An unusual outburst of activity in commerce, services, finances, profiteering, brokerage, and other operations was to be observed throughout the country, even in backward rural and desert areas where pre-capitalist relations prevail (but the condition of the population in these areas remained pitiful).

An outcome of such development was the proliferation of structural deformations and imbalances in the economy and its increasing attachment to the capitalist world system. From the 1964/1965 to the 1979/1980 fiscal year agriculture's share of the GDP declined from 8.5 to 0.7 per cent, while that of the processing industry (including oil refining) fell from 8.3 to 4.5 per cent. However, the share of the oil-producing industry rose from 46.2 to 75.9 per cent.⁴

Using its scientific and technological capabilities, control over the sale of various commodities and direct participation in many Saudi ventures, foreign capital reinforced its domination in all sectors of our economy and made certain of the subordinate status of the local, including industrial, bourgeoisie. Saudi Arabia became increasingly dependent on the capitalist world, the USA in the first place. This dependence has grown so pervasive that it is now hard to name any area of our society's life that has not yet been taken in hand by US imperialism and its monopolies.⁵

The establishment of capitalist relations led to the employment of wage labour on a large scale. There has been a considerable numerical growth of the working class. According to official statistics 4,400,000 persons were employed in all branches of the economy in 1984/1985, and of these, as our party estimates, about 2,500,000 were Saudis (including clerical staff and engineering and managerial personnel), the rest were immigrant workers. If we use the data in official publications, we can estimate the number of Saudi workers at approximately 1,150,000.⁶ Very few women, not more than 3 per cent of the total female population, are engaged in socially-useful work. The choice of occupations open to them is very small: medical nurses, teachers, and some of the occupations to which, by royal edict, men are not admitted.

Deformed capitalist development pre-determined the concentration of labour chiefly in non-production branches — these employ 52 per cent of the working population; the building industry employs about 20 per cent, agriculture not more than 14 per cent, and the processing industries 9.3 per cent of the nation's workforce.⁷ On account of the feeble concentration of production (with the exception of the oil industry), the industrial proletariat is scattered among a large number of enterprises all over the country. Also indicative is that quite a large proportion of Saudi workers has not entirely broken with former occupations.

The Saudi regime would be happy to perpetuate this situation, which is incompatible with the development of the working class movement, and is doing all it can to sow divisions in and weaken the working class, which is the main social force that has the capability and experience for resisting tyranny. Because of the abundance of money at their disposal, the ruling circles raised the workers' wages and living standard generally in the calculation of diverting them from the problems of national and class liberation and creating an influential 'workers' aristocracy'.

In addition, the door was opened wide for the spontaneous, ungovernable influx of hundreds of thousands of foreign workers; this generated a serious social problem. The immigrants suffer from harassment and injustice. They live in dwellings not fit for human habitation. They work far beyond the officially established working day, nothing is done to ensure their safety, and they get less pay than Saudi workers. They are not eligible for even the limited rights won by the Saudi workers in a hard-fought struggle and at the price of enormous sacrifices. These rights are now institutionalised in the Statutes of Labour and the Working People.

The regime let huge numbers of immigrant workers into the country with the intention of intensifying economic exploitation and thereby achieving some political aims. It wanted to provoke friction between Saudi and immigrant workers and use the latter to pressure the Saudi proletariat into accepting the outrageously unjust terms of hire, break up strikes and popular actions, and undermine the unity of the Saudi working people.

Despite conspiracies, repression and persecution, the struggle of the working class steadily makes headway and gains strength. This is most strikingly illustrated by the broad, active participation of workers in the heroic uprising of November 1979 in the Eastern Province. In our country's modern history this was the largest revolutionary action against the autocracy and its imperialist patrons.

The founding of the Communist Party of Saudi Arabia signalled the continuation of the revolutionary movement and, simultaneously, 'marked the beginning of a qualitatively new stage of that movement. It gave a new revolutionary impetus to the struggle of the proletariat. Armed with Marxist-Leninist theory and the principles of proletariat internationalism, our party is coming forward as the militant vanguard of the working class, of all the working people of Saudi Arabia.

The Crisis Is Deepening

In the early 1980s, against the background of an unstable economic situation, the world oil market was hit by a crisis precipitated by the Saudi regime itself. This crisis seriously damaged our economy, shaking it to its foundations. Oil revenues tumbled — to less than 30 billion dollars in 1985.⁸ Government spending, which is the backbone of economic activity in our country, was cut correspondingly. The economy lost its growth momentum and then went into reverse.

Between 1981/1982 and 1984/1985 the oil industry's output fell by an average of 25.6 per cent annually. As a result, the economy began to shrink at a rate that reached 12.3 per cent annually.⁹ In 1984 the national income was smaller than in 1979. There was a marked decline in construction industry (whose productivity is second only to that of the oil industry) and also in real estate, commerce, and financial operations. Delays in payments owing to firms and individual businessmen from the state exchequer triggered a wave of bankruptcies, involving hundreds of small, medium, and even some large, nationally known companies.

For their part, such firms resorted to subterfuges (in particular, appealing to religion and refusing to pay interest on debts on the grounds that the practice is a variety of usury)¹⁰ to avoid their own obligations. Moreover, they dismissed personnel en masse, leaving workers, immigrants in the first place, homeless

paupers.¹¹ Currently, employment is increasingly affecting Saudi working people, with the result that more and more are queueing up at the labour exchanges.

All of this clearly shows the bleak state of our national economy and the dimensions of its structural imbalances, and it demolishes entirely the propaganda claims that the country is 'flourishing' and 'prospering'.

In spite of all this, the Saudi regime is continuing its reckless economic policies, which are aggravating the situation further. Instead of channelling funds (even today there are enough, provided they are used rationally) into socio-economic development programmes, the regime has begun to cut back allocations for such purposes, having already scrapped or frozen many important projects. However, it is still making large allocations for the armed forces and the repressive apparatus — in the past fiscal year¹² these allocations amounted to 32 per cent of the state budget. In the same year the appropriations for agricultural development did not exceed 1 per cent, and for industry and power engineering they amounted to 2.7 per cent of the budget.¹³

In parallel the regime is using the pretext of 'rationalising expenditures' to extract money from the working people, to whose shoulders it is shifting the burden of the economic crisis. Their real incomes are shrinking on account of the annulment or drastic reduction of cash compensations and allowances (for instance, for rent, transportation, labour in remote localities, overtime, and so on) and also of the abolition or significant decrease of state subsidies to maintain the stability of the prices of basic consumer goods. The prices of these goods went up by 50-100 per cent in the past two years alone. There have been roughly similar rises in the price of electricity, telephone calls, heating, water, and other services.¹⁴ Religious taxation has been resumed. An edict, made public in early 1985, reintroduced the 'purification tax'¹⁵ amounting to 2.5 per cent of income, although earlier this major 'pillar of faith' was all but buried in oblivion.

The statement issued by the extended plenary meeting of our party's CC noted: "The Saudi regime's economic policy, which conflicts with the interests of the nation and the working masses, is unchangeably directed towards perpetuating the semi-colonial structure of the national economy. This is seen in the economy's crippling imbalances, total dependence on oil, and close links to the capitalist world. It is the paramount cause of the economic crisis and our people's suffering. The obstinate continuation of this policy will only aggravate the economic situation and increase the distress and hardships of the people."¹⁶

The Absolute Monarch Is the Main Obstacle to Progress

While they affected all base structures, the capitalist changes were not accompanied by the corresponding changes in the superstructure, in the institutions of the political system. The state system of Saudi Arabia remains backward and reactionary, and the absolute monarchy continues to be the prevailing form of administration. Nor has there been a change in the class bloc, whose interests are represented by the regime — this bloc consists of feudals, large property owners, the top echelon of the bureaucratic and compradore bourgeoisie, and other parasitical groups.

The Saudi clan, which exercises supreme power through the king and monopolises all the key posts in the government, heads this class alliance. However, Saudi society's increasing embourgeoisification, the growth of the bourgeoisie's economic influence, and the regime's striving to enlarge its social base were the factors that induced the ruling élite to incorporate some big capitalists and appoint technocrats of bourgeois origin to important government posts, especially posts related to economic affairs. A careful modernisation of the state apparatus, which in no way affects the essence of this apparatus, is under way.

The regime's activities, laws, and policies bear the imprint of medievalism. To this day the country has no constitution and no legislatures, and no elections are held. All political and trade union activity is prohibited. There are no democratic freedoms, enlightened thought is persecuted, and human rights and dignity are trampled. A swollen police apparatus, equipped with the most sophisticated implements of violence is the regime's mainstay. An atmosphere of fear is created by brutalities such as decapitation, the amputation of limbs, and lashing, and by stoning women to death.

Islam is the ideological foundation of the Saudi regime's policies and practices. Religion is used to stir the people emotionally, spread conciliatory attitudes to imperialism and colonialism, vindicate oppression, exploitation, and autocratic rule, and kindle communal friction. Religious minorities — Shiites, Zaidites, and others — are mercilessly oppressed and subjected to discrimination. In recent years, the authorities have begun to send Wahhabi sheikhs to places inhabited by these minorities, where they deliver provocative sermons, insulting people's religion, inciting fratricidal hostility and discord, and thereby diverting the people from their struggle for the solution of vital issues. The regime uses international Islamic organisations and religious traditions (for instance, the hadj) for insidious propaganda campaigns and fomenting hostility for socialism and the Soviet Union, for the ideas of freedom and progress generally.

In the name of religion the people are denied the most elementary (by present-day standards) facilities for leisure such as cinemas and theatres and they remain isolated from world culture. The corrupt apparatus known as the 'agency for encouraging virtues and condemning sin', which is controlled by a group of religious bigots and swindlers, interferes in all the affairs of the people — public and private. The burden of oppression borne by Saudi women is unparalleled in the world today. Everything possible is done to prevent them from engaging in socially useful activities, keep them in ignorance and backwardness, and hold them prisoner within the walls of their homes shackled by patriarchal bondage to the male.

As the crisis situation gets more acute the regime's inherent predilection for demagoguery and social hypocrisy increasingly comes to the surface. Its activities are acquiring a more clearly pronounced religious slant. This is the context in which one should see the official statement made last October about the Saudi monarch having dropped all his former titles ('His Majesty' and others) and adopted the title of 'Servant of Two Holy Shrines'.¹⁷ The notorious 'agency for encouraging virtues and condemning sin' has become more active in recent months. The ruling circles are continuing their harsh suppression of political and popular opposition, refusing to make any concessions or radically change anything related to the exercise of authority.

This policy does not preclude political manoeuvres and false promises, for example, regarding the creation of a consultative council or local administrative bodies. There is usually talk about this in periods of crisis. But any step in this direction does not go beyond the creation of fictitious agencies consisting of appointees of the authorities and operating under full control of the ruling clan, particularly of the wing headed by King Fahd. This wing, whose influence has mounted during the past decade, is known for its despotic practices, deadly hatred of democracy, and servile submission to US imperialism.

In foreign policy the Saudi regime pursues a course that is totally dependent on imperialism, chiefly US imperialism, and rabidly hostile to the forces of freedom, progress, and socialism in the region and the world at large. Some public 'differences' with the Americans over this or that issue (for instance, the Palestine problem) do not change the essence of the matter. These differences are due to the

peculiarities of the situation, the alignment of strength regionally and globally, and are often dictated by the need to reinforce the regime's prestige so as to give it the possibility of later performing its reactionary role more effectively.

Saudi foreign policy objectives and guidelines are entirely in harmony with imperialism's overall strategy. This is exemplified by Riyadh's continued efforts to form anti-people, pro-imperialist military-police alliances (such as the Gulf Cooperation Council) and to bring the plans of the imperialists to fruition in the Arab world. Financial 'aid' is used as a means of supporting reactionary Arab regimes and forces and also as an instrument for eroding the Arab national liberation movement and destabilising patriotic regimes.

This conspiratorial activity is not confined to our region. The world press carried the information that in 1985 Saudi Arabia contributed some 500 million dollars for the undeclared war against Afghanistan. The NBC TV network has reported that the Saudi regime gave military and other aid amounting to 15 million dollars to the contras fighting revolutionary Nicaragua. It is playing a dangerous subversive role in OPEC, using various means to impose its will upon that organisation, debilitate its opposition to imperialism and the oil monopolies, and prevent any damage to the 'free enterprise' economy.

The fact that in the social structure of present-day Saudi Arabia there are remnants of feudalism (notably the absolute monarchy supported by world imperialism, by US imperialism in the first place) is the main obstacle not only to a transition to freedom and democracy but also to any marked advance in the direction of capitalism. Proceeding from the character of the present stage in our country, a stage defined by the Communist Party of Saudi Arabia as that of the consummation of national liberation, the Communists note that the basic contradiction today is between the ruling class bloc, on the one hand, and the workers, peasants, Bedouin masses, revolutionary intellectuals, petty bourgeoisie, and influential groups of the national bourgeoisie, on the other. The central task facing the people is "to put an end to the absolutist administration and establish a national democratic government that would be independent of world imperialism politically and economically".¹⁸

The party is calling for the formation of a broad patriotic front expressing the interests and aims of the overwhelming majority of the people. Without such a front it will not be possible to achieve tangible headway and win democratic rights for the people.

The heroic rising of November 1979 and the seizure of the main mosque in Mecca were the beginning of a new phase in the struggle against the Saudi regime. This stage is characterised by a widening of the spectrum of patriotic forces as new social groups join the opposition, and by the disappearance of the 'barrier of fear' built in the course of long years of terrorist rule. The struggle of the masses for their vital interests and democratic rights has begun to mount as the economic situation deteriorates and the living standard of the people falls. Protests in various form are to be heard throughout the country — from collective petitions to calls for strikes. There was a series of strikes in 1986, with the largest in Dammam, Al-Jubail and Al-Katif.

There is unrest among petty-bourgeois circles, artisans, junior clerical workers, students, the middle, and even a fairly large section of the big bourgeoisie, especially the section that has been hit by the economic decline. The regime is responding with harsher repression. But this can no longer break the morale of the people who are responding to terror with massive protest actions and by continuing their struggle for freedom, democracy, and the country's independence.

¹ *Monetary-Financial Agency of Saudi Arabia. Statistical Bulletin for 1985, p.76 (in Arabic).*

- ² Ministry of Planning. *Second Five-Year Plan*, p. 758 (in Arabic).
- ³ Ministry of Finance. *Statistical Yearbook*, No. 9 (1983), p. 523 (in Arabic)
- ⁴ Statistics for 1964/65 in *Annual Report of the Monetary-Financial Agency of Saudi Arabia*. Riyadh, 1970, p. 118; statistics for 1979/80 in *OPEC Statistical Yearbook*, Kuwait, 1980, p. 130 (both in Arabic)
- ⁵ However, this period saw many signs of formal independence appearing in Saudi Arabia's foreign policy. Earlier, the relations between the USA and Saudi Arabia were unmistakably of a semi-colonial nature, but since the beginning of the 1970s they have gradually acquired a hue consistent with imperialism's neocolonialist policy.
- ⁶ Ministry of Planning. *Fourth Five-Year Plan (1985-1990)*, p. 69 (in Arabic).
- ⁷ Ibid., p. 66.
- ⁸ *Statement of an Extended Plenary Meeting of the CC, Communist Party of Saudi Arabia, June 1986*, p. 4 (in Arabic).
- ⁹ Ibid., p. 5.
- ¹⁰ Islam censures and forbids usury.—Ed.
- ¹¹ Some 750,000 immigrant workers left Saudi Arabia in 1985 (see *Statement of an Extended Plenary Meeting . . .*, p. 7).
- ¹² It usually ends in March, but in 1986 it was extended twice, up to the end of the year. The adoption of the new budget was postponed on account of the confusion caused by the fall in oil revenues and of a desire to avoid publishing further embarrassing disclosures.
- ¹³ *Statement of an Extended Plenary Meeting . . .*, p. 9.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 13.
- ¹⁵ Absolution tax, or *zakat* prescribed by the Koran.—Ed.
- ¹⁶ *Statement of an Extended Plenary Meeting . . .*, pp. 15-16.
- ¹⁷ Mecca and Medina.—Ed.
- ¹⁸ *Programme and Rules of the Communist Party of Saudi Arabia with Amendments Introduced at the Second CPSA Congress, August 1984*, p. 10 (in Arabic).

Prospects of a Nuclear - Free Northern Europe

The establishment of nuclear-free zones in different parts of the world features prominently among the moves that could effectively help to promote détente and reduce the nuclear threat. Responding to our readers' interest in examining this issue, *WMR* has published articles on the Balkans (November 1985), the Pacific and Asia (June 1986), the Mediterranean (October 1986) and Europe (February 1987). Discussion of a relevant proposal has intensified in Northern Europe, and so we bring you articles from Finland and Denmark on the history and the present state of the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the region.

The Reason why Kekkonen's Proposal remains Topical

Arvo Kempainen — member of Politburo,
Central Committee, Communist Party of
Finland; member of Parliament

NORTHERN Europe is becoming an increasingly important region in global terms. This is where two military alliances — NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation — are next-door neighbours. Submarines and fleets of surface warships with substantial military capabilities are cruising in the North Atlantic, the Arctic Ocean and the Barents Sea. NATO maintains important military bases in

Norway and Iceland; the Soviet Union has troops stationed on the Kola Peninsula. The Baltic is an international sea open to nuclear-capable ships. Strategic missiles have long become a routine fixture, but after US medium-range missiles began to be deployed in Western Europe in accordance with a NATO decision, a new situation developed with regard to the security of the North of our continent. It is not only that the air space of the Nordic countries is going to be violated in the course of a possible armed conflict. NATO strategy makes them targets of a nuclear strike. Press reports indicate that NATO has long planned to deliver a 'warning nuclear strike' at Finland's biggest cities in the event of a 'threat of nuclear war'.

Naturally, the Nordic peoples cannot remain passive and silent observers. For more than two decades, they have been working hard to implement a proposal on the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe. The proposal was voiced by Urho Kekkonen, the then President of Finland, on May 28, 1963. The initiative was motivated by concern over the security of the region amid the aggravation of the international situation caused by the sharp escalation of tensions around Berlin and by the 'Cuban missile crisis'. There was also great alarm over the intentions of the Swedish military to acquire nuclear weapons. True, Sweden's political leaders overruled and buried these plans.

Addressing a session of the Paasikivi Society¹ in Helsinki, Urho Kekkonen proposed that all non-nuclear countries pledge, within the framework of regional agreements, not to manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons or their delivery means, and that they demand international guarantees from the nuclear powers. Kekkonen said that the Nordic countries in fact already constituted a non-atomic zone. Formalisation of the existing state of affairs under a treaty would neither change their policies nor weaken their security. Nor could it upset the global alignment of forces and thus prejudice anyone's interests. At the same time, designation of the region as a nuclear-free zone would add considerably to the stability of all countries within it. A treaty of this kind would protect them fully against all possible perils the development of nuclear strategy could give rise to; it would also guarantee that international tensions would not spread to the region.

Initially, however, the governments of other Nordic countries failed to welcome Kekkonen's initiative. Denmark and Norway rejected it citing their obligations to NATO and the fact that there were no nuclear weapons on their territory. As early as 1957 the leaders of these two countries declared that no nuclear weapons would be allowed to be deployed on their soil 'in contemporary conditions'. These were subsequently specified to refer to peacetime only. Then there was talk about 'crisis situations', words that could be interpreted as arbitrarily as possible. Sweden initially adopted a reserved but fundamentally positive stand, preferring to increase military spending and to strengthen its conventional armed forces.

The initiative of the President of Finland did not come out of the blue. The first proposals of nuclear-free zones appeared as early as the late 1950s. The Soviet Union and Poland advocated such a zone for Central Europe; Romania, for the Balkans; and China, for Asia and the Pacific. Several countries wanted to see the Middle East, Africa and Latin America free from nuclear weapons. In 1958 the Soviet Union put forward the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the North of Europe, that is, Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea. In 1961 Foreign Minister Osten Onden of Sweden suggested a 'club of non-nuclear powers'. A survey the UN Secretary General conducted among the UN member-countries revealed their generally positive attitude to the idea.

The first modest success was scored with the Treaty on the Antarctic of 1959 which barred nuclear weapons from the sixth continent. In 1967 the Tlatelolco Treaty banning nuclear weapons in Latin America was signed in Mexico. Despite

certain drawbacks, the Tlatelolco Treaty formalised the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in one of the world's largest regions.² The spread of nuclear weapons was further restricted by international treaties banning their deployment in outer space (1967) and on the seabed and ocean floor (1971). Of exceptional significance was the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed and ratified, among others, by all Nordic countries.

In 1975, with due regard for the interest expressed in the establishment of nuclear-free zones and for their role in the strengthening of peace, the UN General Assembly asked a group of experts to conduct an in-depth study of the issue. The experts' report set forth some of the more general and more important principles agreed upon for the establishment of nuclear-free zones. Specifically, the report noted that the initiative should emanate from the interested region and that participation in the zone should be on a voluntary basis only. The First Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament (1978) approved resolutions which demanded that the nuclear powers respect the status of nuclear-free zones and provide the states participating in such zones with so-called negative safeguards, that is, a pledge to refrain from attack with the use or threat of nuclear weapons.

Finland has repeatedly raised the issue of a nuclear-free zone in the North of Europe before the UN General Assembly. It was also suggested that this item be incorporated into the agenda of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. However, it proved impossible to achieve agreement on this matter, and the question was not considered in Helsinki in 1975. Addressing the all-European forum on behalf of Finland, President Kekkonen said that although the Non-Proliferation Treaty had in fact created a 'club of non-nuclear powers', the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the North of Europe merited discussion on a new basis, in connection with the general talks on armed forces and arms reductions in Europe.

The international situation has become more alarming since the first proposals on the establishment of nuclear-free zones were advanced. While arms limitations and disarmament talks proceeded at a very slow pace, new types of weapons of mass destruction were developed rapidly. Strategic missiles emerged as the principal component of the nuclear powers' arsenals. The United States began to manufacture neutron bombs and cruise missiles. This prompted President Kekkonen to revive his initiative in May 1978. Speaking in the Stockholm Foreign Policy Institute, he said: "The Nordic countries would do well to begin, in their own interests, arms control talks among themselves and between them and other powers concerned. The talks should be aimed at the establishment of a separate system of treaties that would isolate the Nordic countries as much as possible from the influence of nuclear strategy generally and from new nuclear military technology in particular." The President of Finland stressed the importance of the following points: every nation's security concerns, expressed in the relevant positions of its government, should be taken into consideration; the initiative for the establishment of the zone should emanate from the countries of the region of their own free will; steps to establish it can be taken within the framework of the existing security arrangements; the great powers whose strategic position and security may be affected to this or that degree are entitled to state their point of view from the outset; the countries acceding to the treaty on the zone should be assured that nuclear weapons would in no case be used against them — that is, they should receive security guarantees.

Urho Kekkonen expressed a very important idea which is now gaining ever greater support, namely, that smaller countries are not objects but also subjects, makers of the international climate. The Nordic governments, he said, have a right

and a duty to their peoples to try and influence the status of the region "amid the changing patterns of world politics".

Again, bowing to NATO and the United States, the then governments of Denmark and Norway evaded a discussion of the nuclear-free zone idea. At the same time, their military cooperation with other NATO countries developed on a broad scale, including the construction of various military facilities and the holding of numerous military exercises.

Nevertheless, the changes in international and domestic politics gradually brought about a change in the official attitude to the concept of a nuclear-free zone. Today, Denmark, Norway and Iceland approve the idea in principle, although they do advance conditions and reservations which makes it difficult to proceed from discussions to any practical steps.

Sweden holds a different position, clearly articulated by its former Prime Minister Olof Palme. Specifically, he rejected the idea of a so-called minimal zone which was supposed to comprise only Finland and Sweden. In his view, a nuclear-free zone should cover the territory, waters and air space of Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland. He also listed several imperative conditions — respect of the status of the nuclear-free zone, guarantees from the nuclear powers, etc.

Finland's policy in these matters remains unchanged. Mauno Koivisto, the current President of Finland, reaffirmed in his 1983 speech to the UN General Assembly that, having acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Finland pledged not to acquire nuclear weapons or allow their stationing on its territory. Our country has a right to expect and demand that there be no use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against it under any circumstances. Finland has responded positively to the assurances given by nuclear powers and hopes that they agree on the provision of equal and effective security guarantees.³

Here one must add that the attitude of the great powers to the idea of nuclear-free zones is by no means unanimous. Soviet leaders have repeatedly voiced their support for the establishment of such zones both in Europe and in other regions. The Nordic countries comprising such a zone could receive security guarantees from the Soviet Union. Moreover, the USSR has expressed its readiness to consider the possibility of adopting effective measures on its own territory adjacent to the zone in order to facilitate its establishment.⁴ This position stems logically from the overall Soviet position on issues of peace and disarmament. Our region's sincere champions of peace set great store by the Soviet support for the idea of a nuclear-free North, by the USSR's pledge never to use nuclear weapons against countries possessing no such weapons, and by its principled renunciation of nuclear first use.

The US position is completely different. Washington's political and military leaders invariably reject the establishment of nuclear-free zones in general and of such a zone in Northern Europe in particular, claiming that this would weaken NATO's 'defence strategy' and adversely affect the disarmament talks between the great powers. US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger has dismissed Olof Palme's proposal on a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe as artificial and totally pointless. After visiting Finland in the summer of 1984, his assistant Richard Perle denounced the idea of a nuclear-free zone in the region as senseless. The United States declines to give security guarantees to the non-nuclear countries of the zone, refusing to respect neutrality and the nation's right to self-determination and territorial inviolability. Gross interference in the internal affairs of many countries is typical of US policy; the world has witnessed this in cases of Grenada, Nicaragua and El Salvador. It should be noted that, following the US example, France and Great Britain have also assumed a negative attitude to the

establishment of nuclear-free zones.

Despite the sabotage on the part of the NATO quarters, the proposal of a nuclear-free North has won widespread support. The credit belongs to the mass peace movements which have succeeded in devising a variety of forms to express the popular will. These movements stage projects such as the 'Spring of Peace' in Helsinki, when people made a live chain linking the embassies of the Soviet Union and the United States. The slogan of a nuclear-free North is a permanent feature in various actions organised by the peace activists. It is particularly important that this slogan is supported by the trade unions which have done a great deal to keep it alive despite some bourgeois politicians' efforts to have it dead and buried. Naturally, the communist parties of the Nordic countries have been upholding, both individually and jointly, the will of their peoples to deliver the region from the nuclear threat.

The current view is that the creation of such a zone can begin with the interested countries issuing a joint declaration, to be followed by negotiation of a treaty. Drafts of the declaration and the treaty have already been suggested. Then guarantees from the nuclear powers should be received — the Soviet Union has repeatedly expressed its readiness to give them. The negotiations should then cover the Baltic Sea and other sea and land areas of the zone.

Although the creation of such a zone would first and foremost safeguard the security of the Nordic countries themselves, there is no doubt that it would also have a much broader political significance. For steps leading to détente, better international understanding and cooperation between countries of different social systems and different political blocs are of particular importance in today's tense international situation. The establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the North of Europe will promote trust, fully in accordance with the mandate of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence-and-Security-Building Measures and Cooperation in Europe. It would be one of the moves that open new opportunities for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and assisting progress towards disarmament. Our region's peace supporters have every reason to say that a nuclear-free North is the beginning of a nuclear-free Europe.

¹ Juho Kusti Paasikivi, President of Finland from 1946 to 1956, was instrumental in the adoption of the country's postwar policy of peace known as the 'Paasikive-Kekkonen course'.—*Ed.*

² The treaty designating the South Pacific as a nuclear-free zone, signed in 1985 by ten countries of the region, entered into force in December 1986. The USSR signed its Protocols 2 and 3, the ones specifying the nuclear powers' obligations to respect the non-nuclear status of the zone.—*Ed.*

³ At a session of the Paasikivi Society in October 1986 President Koivisto delivered a report entitled "The Security of Northern Europe: Evolution Analysed". He reviewed the situation in the region and among other things said: "The establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the North of Europe would help the promotion of trust. There is an obvious and direct connection between the security of Northern Europe and the security of the entire continent. A nuclear-free zone (given the assistance of the nuclear powers) would enable certain non-nuclear states to abandon their fears about the use of nuclear weapons on their territory; specifically in the North of Europe . . . The expression of Soviet readiness to take relevant steps with regard to its own territory proves that the USSR attaches considerable importance to regional confidence-building measures. This is also clear from the fact that the Soviet Union is prepared to discuss the question of granting a nuclear-free status to the Baltic Sea." Koivisto proposed that the Nordic countries discuss confidence-building measures connected primarily with sea areas, the air space above them, and naval activities.—*Ed.*

⁴ In November 1986 the Soviet Union declared that, fully supporting the striving of the Nordic nations to free themselves from nuclear weapons, it had dismantled medium-range missile launchers on the Kola Peninsula, most of them in the Leningrad and Baltic Military Districts, and had also withdrawn several battalions of theatre-tactical missiles from them. The USSR also announced the possibility of withdrawing ballistic missile-carrying submarines from the Soviet Baltic Fleet should agreement be reached on assigning a nuclear-free status to the Baltic Sea. With a view to enhancing confidence-building measures in the naval sphere, the USSR has proposed reductions in the intensity of major naval exercises in sea areas adjacent to Northern Europe and raised the question of preventing incidents on the high seas and in the air space above, citing the positive record of relevant agreements with the United States and Great Britain.—*Ed.*

Overcoming the Resistance of the 'Atlantists'

Kurt Lund – member of the Peace Commission under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Denmark

THE idea of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe is more than 20 years old. From the outset, it was opposed by influential political forces both in the region and elsewhere because they feared that such a zone could be a hindrance to NATO's nuclear strategy and to the deployment of nuclear weapons in Denmark and Norway.

A turning point came in the early 1980s. The impetus which activated public opinion came from Norway where a fierce debate developed when the government agreed to the stationing in Norway of heavy arms for US troops due to arrive there in case of what was referred to as a crisis situation. The public demanded that these troops carry no nuclear weapons. A stormy campaign over the issue reinvigorated the idea of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe.

Another factor behind increased activity by the peace champions was the 'double-track' decision NATO adopted in 1979. It opened the eyes of many people to the dangerous strategy pursued by the United States whose leaders emphasised 'first strike', 'deep strike', 'decapitation' and so on. The grave deterioration of the situation as a result of NATO's moves affected our countries too: they could not escape the adverse effects of the military build-up in Western Europe.

The arming of US and NATO warships and submarines with cruise missiles is now very likely, given the continued escalation of the US nuclear capability in the North Atlantic. In Denmark itself, the defence force is exercising in the use of tactical nuclear weapons. It is integrated into the command structure of NATO, especially through BALTAP.* Although no nuclear weapons are stationed in Denmark, we are tied to the US nuclear forces in West Germany just south of our border. This means that in case of war, Danish military units will be involved in the use of nuclear weapons. The officially declared nuclear-free status of Denmark is thus in fact already undermined. Should a serious international crisis, let alone a war, break out, this status will not be worth much, if only because all important decisions will be delegated to SACEUR** where a US general is invariably in charge. It is naive to think that in a deteriorating situation, NATO would give any consideration to Denmark's reservations about having nuclear weapons deployed on its soil.

Understanding is therefore growing that Norway and Denmark (which like Norway has also signed agreements with the United States) could become a springboard for an attack on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and thus invite retaliation. Awareness is spreading in our countries that a nuclear-free zone would help enormously to strengthen peace not only in our region but also throughout Europe and to implement other security — and confidence-building measures, such as the establishment of a zone free from theatre nuclear weapons in Central Europe, or of nuclear-free zones in the Balkans, in the Iberian Peninsula, etc.

The Danish peace movement has repeatedly demanded reliable guarantees that the country's nuclear-free status would be respected under *all* circumstances — in

*BALTAP stands for Baltic Approach, the common military command for Denmark and the northern part of the FRG.—*Ed.*

**NATO's Supreme Allied Command, Europe.—*Ed.*

peacetime, in 'crisis situations' and during war. This could be effectively achieved by the creation of a nuclear-free zone under an international treaty. Since 1981 the slogan 'For a Nuclear-Free Northern Europe' has been one of the central demands of the peace movement, together with calls for an end to the stationing of new nuclear missiles in Europe, for disarmament in the East and in the West, and for giving up 'star wars'.

The demand for a guaranteed ban on nuclear weapons in the North of Europe reflects the view of broad sections of the public in all Nordic countries whose security problems can be solved only through joint efforts to defuse tensions in the region. The present situation increases the urgency of adopting a new approach to this idea, an approach that would differ radically from the stand influenced by Denmark's and Norway's membership in NATO which has tied them to the US strategy of deterrence and 'positions of strength' policy.

The striving for a common Nordic solution is a reflection of both historical traditions and popular sentiments stemming from a common political and cultural background. In Sweden and Finland, the slogan of a nuclear-free zone is motivated first and foremost by a desire to contribute to détente. In Denmark and Norway, as well as in Iceland, it expresses the wish to reduce their dependence on the US and NATO nuclear strategy and even to extricate themselves from NATO.

The scope of concerted action for a nuclear-free zone began to expand quite rapidly not only on a national scale but also throughout Scandinavia in the 1980s. The Scandinavian peace conference with trade union participation, held in the Danish city of Aalborg in 1981, was a very important step in that direction. On an international scale, the Copenhagen-to-Paris peace march of 1981 and the 1982 Stockholm-Moscow-Minsk-Vienna peace march generated a particularly broad response. More than 2.5 million people signed a demand to make Northern Europe nuclear-free, supporting this idea as a step closer to nuclear arms limitation in Europe and the world. In 1983 the emphasis shifted to the struggle against deployment of US medium-range missiles in Western Europe. But from 1984 on, the demand for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone under an international treaty has again been growing. The launching of a Nordic Treaty Now campaign did much to help mobilise public opinion.

Under the impact of popular movements, important changes have occurred in the attitudes of the social democratic parties in Denmark and Norway. Formerly, they expressed their sympathy with the idea, but invariably refused to take any concrete steps. Today these parties are actively considering how this idea can be realised.

The all-Nordic conference for a nuclear-free Northern Europe, held in Copenhagen in November 1984 and attended by delegates representing political parties, trade unions and women's youth and religious organisations, as well as the January 1985 meeting of the Cooperation Committee of the Nordic social democratic parties and trade unions in Oslo have been major landmarks of the campaign for a nuclear-free North of Europe. The former considered the entire range of relevant issues, including the international legal aspect of creating a nuclear-free zone. The latter decided on convening a conference of Nordic parliamentarians which was held in Copenhagen in November 1985; nearly 100 members of five parliaments represented most of the political parties of the region. The participants came out in support of the idea of turning Northern Europe into a zone free from nuclear weapons. The sceptics and the opponents of the idea found themselves in isolation. The conference called on the government to take practical steps, specifically, to set up an all-Nordic group to consider the question at government level.¹ As proposed by the Social Democrats, a commission of parliamentarians was formed to study the issue in depth and to trace the outlines of

a possible treaty concerning such a zone.

Although the idea of delivering Northern Europe from the nuclear threat is supported by the vast majority of the Nordic peoples, many conservative politicians (except those in Finland and Sweden) are sceptical of or opposed to it. Leading the governments of Norway (until May 1986) and Denmark, they prefer to keep close to the US course. Even those of them who consider the foreign policy of the current US administration unwise, unrealistic and dangerous, are still not willing to break with it. Total loyalty to the United States and NATO under all circumstances is more important to them than the security interests of their own countries. Shamelessly and with frantic and hysterical anti-Sovietism, they follow Washington's cue and dismiss as 'propaganda' the Soviet initiatives aimed at delivering the world from nuclear weapons and backing the commitment of the Nordic peoples to their region's nuclear-free status.

The liberal and even some social democratic quarters are also wavering. They are seeking different ways of establishing a nuclear-free zone, ways that would be acceptable to NATO and the United States, even though the latter firmly reject any and all such proposals. This rigid stand is likely to help the wavering circles gain a clearer political awareness.

The Communists of the Nordic countries have always seen the call for a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe as an important and legitimate demand. Sharing the views of the peace movement, the Communist Party of Denmark stresses that the following circumstances should be taken into account in tackling the issue.

The Nordic countries must themselves take the necessary steps, without waiting for the emergence of a broader collective security system in Europe. Only in this way can they give a new impetus to and promote détente in Europe. The creation of a nuclear-free zone in the North of the continent will pave the way for the formation of similar zones in other areas, including Central Europe, as proposed by the Palme Commission.

The Communists hold that a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe would be the region's important and independent contribution to disarmament efforts. The very existence of the zone would objectively clash with the rearmament course of the present US administration. That is the reason why Washington rejects all relevant projects out of hand. Therefore, the Communist Party of Denmark connects the struggle for a nuclear-free Northern Europe with the struggle against 'star wars' and all other US rearmament programmes.

Our party maintains that a common declaration of their nuclear-free status by the Nordic countries could be the first and most important step towards the establishment of a nuclear-free zone. After this, negotiations could be started with the nuclear powers on guarantees. It would be best if the zone included, together with our five countries, Greenland and the Faroe Islands (their local authorities have declared them nuclear-free). That is the long-term goal, but we are ready to accept the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in several stages. It is not necessarily a matter of taking a 'big leap' here and now.

The Communists value the positive attitude of the USSR and other socialist countries to the idea of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe. The only hindrance stems from the US plans to turn the Scandinavian countries into a nuclear springboard for attack against the Soviet Union.

The Communists underline the need for immediate action — on the one hand, to contribute to a positive turn in the present international situation through concrete confidence-building steps in the region and, on the other hand, to prevent the dangerous erosion of today's relative stability in Northern Europe; this stability is undermined by the agreements on US 'reinforcements' in case of so-called crisis

situations and on the NATO nuclear build-up in the North Atlantic.²

Strong popular movements have brought about almost a majority in favour of a nuclear-free zone in the parliaments of the Nordic countries. In Finland, it has long been official policy of the government and of all political parties. In Sweden, the social democratic government and most members of parliament want a nuclear-free zone; the bourgeois opposition also supports the idea in principle, although with a degree of scepticism. In Norway the Conservatives who were against it have been ousted from power, and the Cabinet of the Norwegian Labour Party is, on the whole, in favour of a zone. In Denmark, its establishment is a goal of official policy since this is what a majority in parliament supports. But even majorities in parliaments are not enough to make this zone a reality.

Social Democrats, Liberals and members of Christian parties must understand clearly that the concrete peace steps taken in this direction by the Nordic countries are clashing with the US policy of confrontation and will be met with furious and wild accusations charging that those who advocate the idea are 'tools of Moscow'. This means that a nuclear-free zone can be established only if the right-wingers are pushed back firmly, especially in the member-countries of NATO, that is, in Denmark and Norway where the peace movement continues its grassroots pressure on the authorities.

Obviously, the efforts to make Northern Europe nuclear-free are part of the overall struggle the peace movement is waging for détente and for an end to the arms race. By adopting 'star wars' and a colossal programme of nuclear build-up, the Reagan administration has challenged all mankind. Steps towards the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe will contribute to the isolation of Reagan's policy on the international scene. Such a zone will be a great help to those forces in Western Europe who strive to get rid of the US nuclear umbrella because they realise that it is merely a cover for nuclear first-strike plans, for the concept of 'limited' war and for the insane hopes to win a victory at the expense of the Europeans.

The idea of eliminating the nuclear threat in Northern Europe is also quite close to the 'common security' concept advanced by the West German Social Democrats — a policy built on the recognition of peaceful coexistence as essential for peace and security in Europe and of progress towards a system of collective security. The establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe can become an important step in this direction.

¹ At an unofficial meeting in Denmark in August 1986 the heads of government of the five countries agreed that it was necessary to set up a commission of experts. At a subsequent meeting of foreign ministers it was decided to study the question on the commission's powers and to discuss its establishment in March 1987.—*Ed.*

² At a meeting in Stockholm in September 1986, the communist parties of Denmark, Norway and Finland and the Left Party — Communists of Sweden adopted a joint statement protesting against NATO military exercises in Northern Europe and calling on the peace forces and governments of the Nordic countries to take new steps and initiatives towards the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the region.—*Ed.*

Countering Destabilisation

Gideon Ndobe – Central Committee
member, Frelimo Party (Mozambique)

FOR more than a decade, our people have been fighting staunchly and courageously to consolidate our national independence and to build the foundations of a socialist society in Mozambique. The present stage of this struggle is particularly difficult. Since the early 1980s imperialism and, above all, racist South Africa have sharply stepped up external subversion against our republic. The racists launch acts of aggression using the services of the armed bandits on their payroll — the so-called Mozambique National Resistance (MNR).

A destabilisation campaign of unprecedented intensity has been mounted against our nation and other countries of Southern Africa. The hands of the racists are stained with the blood of 100,000 Mozambicans, and the economic losses our country has incurred as a result of sabotage have reached 5.5 billion dollars. In South Africa itself the authorities, in the face of an unheard-of crisis of apartheid, have imposed martial law and are trying to suppress the powerful upsurge of popular action and to give the racist order a new lease of life.

In October 1986 Samora Moises Machel, our outstanding leader and founder of the People's Republic of Mozambique, died in a tragic accident. But the people emerged from this ordeal having consolidated their unity and fully resolved to repel hostile forays, defend national independence and the country's progressive accomplishments. Now that Pretoria is hatching new schemes of aggression against the Frontline States, the patriots' firm unity is extremely important.

Our enemies are acting in many different ways. In a bid to isolate Mozambique and to prevent it from restoring and enhancing its economic ties with the neighbouring countries of Southern Africa, our foes are trying to wreck communications, staging railroad and highway accidents and conducting economic sabotage. On orders from their masters to undermine law and order in rural areas, armed bandits are also destroying the social and cultural infrastructure. The country has lost 800 rural shops and more than 500 schools where 90,000 children studied. The terrorists set fire to crops and commit atrocities against the population. They have tortured and murdered many of our comrades and innocent civilians. The racists' mercenaries show no mercy to women, old people or children. Frequently, they force Mozambicans, especially young people, to follow them into their camps where South African instructors train new cut throats.

The elimination of armed banditry is our foremost task today, and we intend to wage this struggle unrelentingly and without compromise. Victory can be achieved only through steady efforts to strengthen national unity and the party's ties with the people, through effective use of domestic resources and the development of a reliable economic base without which armed banditry cannot be suppressed.

The racists' policy in South Africa pursues the strategic goal of forcing independent countries to accept the diktat of South Africa. Pretoria still wants to set up a 'Constellation of Southern African States'—CONSAS.¹ Destabilisation is an essential component of this policy. The racists want us Mozambicans to recognise South Africa's supremacy, fall to our knees and plead for 'assistance'. In other words, we are encountering the same old course which is historically obsolete but which imperialism has been recently pursuing with particular zeal vis-à-vis many newly independent countries. Viewed from the global angle, it is a policy of nuclear blackmail and military threats conducted against all peace-loving nations.

Mozambique is countering this imperialist challenge by mobilising the efforts and the potential of the people. Working against great odds, when acts of armed

banditry occur in all of the country's ten provinces, the Frelimo Party and the government are organising a nation-wide fightback against the subversion directed from South Africa. Forged in the crucible of the liberation struggle against Portuguese colonial rule and Ian Smith's Rhodesian regime, our army has acquired valuable experience in more than 20 years of military operations. Today the army is fighting against Pretoria's mercenaries. Mozambique is a vast country, and the struggle will take time. At the close of 1986 the armed forces conducted several successful operations against the MNR. Besides, the servicemen take part in peaceful efforts to benefit society: they help rebuild the projects damaged in raids, work at construction sites, assist in the literacy drive and in many other endeavours the country has undertaken. This ensures the unity of the army and the people.

In factories, offices and villages militia units have been formed and many veterans of the war against Portuguese colonialism, as well as young peasants and workers, have joined them. The militia is being armed under strict control. Efforts to develop the system of self-defence are essential to organising resistance to the terrorist gangs.

Information and explanatory work among the people is a major aspect in the activities of the party, the government and the civic organisations because the enemy works incessantly to disseminate all sorts of rumours and inventions in order to set people against the legitimate authorities and to foment panic. For example, when MNR bandits drove civilians from some northern areas at gunpoint into neighbouring Malawi, Pretoria's propaganda declared that they were refugees, although in actual fact the terrorists threatened to kill their victims if they did not leave their homes. They became the bandits' hostages.

Faithful to the tradition of maintaining close ties with the masses, the Frelimo Party wants the people to have a full picture of the actual situation, to be aware of the difficulties and to learn to overcome them. Explanatory work and political education is conducted via party channels: party members receive the necessary information at conferences, meetings and various workshops. The current tasks of our struggle are regularly covered by democratic civic organisations (youth and women's associations) and by journalists, writers and other members of professional unions. The latter play an important role in reporting on military operations against the gangs and in explaining the policy of the party and the government to the masses.

All our organisational and political activities went through a rigorous test in the course of the general elections which began in August 1986. It was the second election campaign in the history of our republic (the first was held in 1977). The elections were conducted in several stages, beginning with the establishment of local administration in communities, districts and cities.

The enemy tried to disrupt this major political campaign. People often displayed veritable heroism, voting literally the following day after a terrorist attack. Weapons captured from the bandits a few hours earlier were displayed at election rallies. And, although it proved impossible to meet the election deadline in some of the communities, the MNR outcasts failed to demoralise the people. Here one might mention that new government bodies were formed, besides other places, in the Gorgongosa area, the site of the bandits' headquarters which government troops overran in August 1985.

The tragic death of Samora Machel and the sixty days of mourning throughout Mozambique interrupted the election campaign, but it was resumed without delay. Within the first weeks of December 1986 assemblies were formed in all the 10 provinces. The campaign entered its final stage, that of nominating candidates to the People's Assembly, the supreme legislative body. Its first session was convened in mid-January 1987, as soon as elections were over.

Compared to 1977, many more voters took part in the elections this time. A festive mood reigned at polling stations. The people demonstrated their confidence in the Frelimo Party, in the party and government leadership. A democratic electoral procedure was adopted. There were fewer seats on provincial government bodies than there were candidates, and people could choose those they considered particularly worthy. Previously, provincial assemblies were elected by a show of hands, but now the voting was by secret ballot. Voters did not hesitate to criticise those elected officials who failed to live up to what had been expected from them. A number of candidates who had proved to be incompetent, high-handed or immoral were turned down. Election of this or that public servant depended above all on his or her record and ability to tackle the problems the majority of the people were facing.

The elections have shown that most of the people are responsible citizens ready to cope with the numerous privations our country is still suffering from. These are caused not only by the forays of South Africa and its puppets. There is also hunger, natural disasters and the underdevelopment we have inherited from colonial rule. Nevertheless, people remain loyal to the revolutionary goal of building a new, independent and socialist Mozambique.

This goal can be attained only through peaceful development. Therefore, Mozambique traditionally advocates greater international security and peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems both on the global and on the regional level.

At the stage of the anticolonial struggle we were already aware that Mozambique was part of a region where countries of different orientation were next-door neighbours and that we would have to promote their coexistence. I do not refer only to the dangerous neighbour — South Africa. Aside from countries that have opted for socialism, our neighbours also include states where feudal traditions persist (such as Swaziland). Zambia, a Frontline State, pursues a consistently antiracist course while Malawi conducts a different policy. But this does not mean that normalisation of relations is impossible in this case. For example, last year armed bandits often infiltrated the north of our country from Malawi. Mozambique exercised the necessary restraint and, supported by other Frontline States, worked hard to make Malawi put an end to the use of its territory by the MNR gangs. Late last year our two countries concluded an agreement on joint efforts to combat terrorist forays.

Commitment to peaceful coexistence does not imply a renunciation of principles and convictions, and this is clear from our history. Led by Samora Machel, the people of Mozambique not only won independence for their country but also helped the people of Zimbabwe to defeat the colonial rulers. Revolutionary solidarity opened the way to close neighbourly relations: both peoples have an equal stake in comprehensive cooperation which promotes their countries' social and economic progress. Moreover, this cooperation is a vital necessity because Zimbabwe's rail and other links with the ocean and the outside world pass through Mozambique. In turn, Zimbabwe is helping us to repulse the attacks of the MNR bandits who try to paralyse the shortest and most convenient route connecting Zimbabwe with the Mozambican port of Beira (the Beira Corridor).

Given the incessant aggressive acts of the Pretoria regime, economic and political cooperation of the Southern African Frontline States shows a steady trend towards expansion and intensification. I have mentioned how its influence helped to bring about the first signs of genuine peaceful coexistence in relations between Mozambique and Malawi. But this cooperation is also important economically. It is common knowledge that the racists deliberately obstruct any steps sovereign African nations take to alleviate their economic dependence on South Africa.

Mozambique, too, remains a thorn in South Africa's side because Mozambique's ports and railroads offer not only Zimbabwe but also Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and even Zaire convenient access to the sea. Working to upset our communications, the racists would like to perpetuate the dependence of these countries' transport on South Africa.

This imparts a highly topical significance to the initiative of the Southern African Development Coordinating Committee (SADCC) aimed at the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Beira Corridor. The plan proposed by the SADCC Transport and Communications Commission is supposed to be completed within ten years, but its implementation has already begun. Priority construction projects have been identified, and a number of West European nations and indigenous private capital in several neighbouring countries have agreed to finance the effort. The importance of the Beira Corridor is also increasing because, in retaliation for the policy of economic and political sanctions several Frontline States have adopted against the apartheid regime, the racists threaten to close these states' access to the South African transport network.

I would like to conclude by stressing that it is not the first time imperialism refuses to heed the lessons of history. In a bid to slow down progress, it has not hesitated to resort to crimes and to assassinate leaders of liberation revolutions, the way Eduardo Mondlane, Frelimo's first president, was murdered. But as long as the people endure, they will always produce outstanding leaders. In Mozambique, it was Samora Machel, a figure of national, African and Global stature whose untimely death caused profound grief among us.

And still imperialism miscalculated and, in its continual destabilisation drive, failed to shake our confidence in the future. Samora Machel's place in the Frelimo leadership has been filled by his comrade-in-arms Joaquim Alberto Chissano, who is now president of the party and of the People's Republic of Mozambique. The people of Mozambique are now filled with an even stronger spirit of unity. They cherish the destiny of their country, of the republic they have built themselves.

South African and international imperialist propaganda broadcasts boastful claims of military 'successes' by the MNR gang-leaders. The West presents the raids of the contras in Nicaragua and of UNITA in Angola almost as signs that 'victory is around the corner'. But the terrorists and bandits who represent no one and who fully depend on the financial support of their imperialist sponsors are unable to defeat a people building a new and truly just society.

¹ See Dan Tloome, "Foul Play by the Pretoria Regime", *WMR*, No. 7, 121986 — *Ed.*

Brief Commentary

'Irangate': Hypocrites Exposed

EVIDENCE has been recently piling up that the more aggressive and irresponsible imperialist quarters, particularly in the United States, stubbornly refuse to grasp and recognise the realities of our age, to take a sober look at the multifaceted, at times disparate, but nevertheless interwoven fabric of the world today. They cannot resist an urge to 'dig in' in the tumbled trenches of the cold war and to resort again to the discounted methods of threats and blackmail, and often, to blatant violence.

If only for a moment, Reykjavik seems to have highlighted the truth even for

those who had closed their eyes to it deliberately and mulishly. But, judging by the stand of the Reagan administration, the influence of the military-industrial complex has once again made the White House succumb to its ancient pathological obsession. The prospect of agreements on key international issues — something that became a quite tangible possibility in the capital of Iceland — scared the living daylights out of the enemies of détente. They panicked and shied back. Anti-Soviet and anti-communist hysteria is mounting in the United States again, and bellicose calls are heard, urging a new crusade against socialism, against the forces of social emancipation and national liberation. The latter-day crusaders violate universally accepted norms of law and the requirements of proper international conduct; they stoop to the lowest and dirtiest tricks, seeing nations and governments merely as pawns to be used in their hegemonic policies.

The scandal around the covert deliveries of US weapons to Iran is additional proof of this chauvinistic approach which, not too long ago, was given political and ideological shape as the doctrine of 'neoglobalism'.¹ It all has the makings of a TV crime drama — secret cargoes, renamed ships, false passports, clandestine meetings, the lot. But most importantly, it has again put the spotlight on the duplicity of the policy pursued by the leading imperialist power. The affair shows how little one can trust the assurances and official statements of US leaders.

'Irangate' broke out in the autumn of 1986 and, although not all its details have been made public (some may be suppressed forever), world public opinion has formed its impression of the affair. Let us sketch the events, if briefly. For many years the United States has posed ostentatiously as an uncompromising 'fighter against terrorism'. The White House took up the practice of blacklisting countries arbitrarily accused of aiding 'terrorists'. Iran was one of these nations. The US administration exhorted its allies to ostracise Tehran.

However, it turned out that while Washington noisily urged a boycott of Iran and an embargo on arms deliveries to it, sizable shipments of US weapons arrived there via secret channels from the United States. A scandal ensued. High-level officials of the Reagan administration tried to dampen the upsurge of criticism with devious excuses. They even claimed that the deliveries offered an opportunity for using US influence in favour of establishing a 'just peace' in the region. As was revealed later, the CIA simultaneously and, apparently, with the same 'peace-making motives' supplied Iraq with thoroughly prepared intelligence data on Iranian military and economic centres. Every sane person will interpret these and other US moves as an attempt to add fuel to the fire of the Iran-Iraq war, the pretext for the imperialists to build up their military presence in the Persian Gulf area.

The bitter armed conflict is a drain on both countries, bringing untold sufferings and privations to their peoples and threatening international peace. The Iranian Communists are working tirelessly to end the tragically absurd bloodshed. They rely for support on the solidarity of the world's peace loving forces, particularly of the Soviet Union which, as has been stressed in its government's statement, "invariably advocates the soonest possible termination of the Iran-Iraq conflict and the settlement of the disputed questions between Iraq and Iran at the table of political negotiations, not on the battlefield".²

As one can deduce from statements of US government officials after cutting through the demagoguery and rhetoric, the true motives behind these moves were not only to make the Iran-Iraq conflict drag on but also to control the sources of Mideast oil, to regain the ability to manipulate Tehran's policies, and to secure a new strategic military foothold in the region. One need hardly add any comment to these words of Ronald Reagan: "Iran encompasses some of the most critical geography in the world. It lies between the Soviet Union and access to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean."³

Intending, in the words of the US President, to bring Iran back to the "community of responsible nations",⁴ — that is, to gear its policy again to the wishes and objectives of US imperialism as it had been under the Shah, Washington began to seek contact with pro-US elements. The arms deliveries were actually designed as bribes to be offered to such people. The long-term goal was to lay the basis for rapprochement with Iran in case of any drastic shifts in the higher echelons of power, and to support and strengthen the hand of the 'more moderate' forces.

But 'bridge-building' attempts had begun much earlier, almost as soon as the popular revolution had ousted the corrupt monarchy. They were based above all on anti-communism. One might recall that when in 1953 the CIA began to put into effect its conspiracy to overthrow Mohammed Mussadeq's national government, the strong and well-organised People's Party of Iran (PPI) was the main obstacle to the scheme. The imperialists had to remove it to bring their treacherous plan to fruition. A brutal and large-scale attack was mounted against the Communists, and the foul plot succeeded.

This time, when US imperialism decided to hatch a plot so as to return its relations with Iran to the desired track, it also realised that the PPI, the most consistent champion of national interests, had to be removed. In 1983, the CIA contrived a situation in which Tehran 'stumbled' on a fabrication about 'Soviet agents' in Iran; this led to a wave of savage reprisals against members and supporters of our party. Ayatollah Khomeini publicly thanked God for the 'miracle' that helped to expose and punish the 'traitors'. Thousands of Communists and other patriots were imprisoned, tortured and executed. Only then did the Williamsburg Summit of the seven leading capitalist powers decide to give the go-ahead to contacts with the ruling quarters of the Islamic Republic.

By way of insurance against the possible turn of events 'in the opposite direction', the United States also scattered largess among Iranian émigré opposition groups such as the Iran Liberation Front. The latter, led by former Prime Minister A. Amini, openly called for the restoration of the monarchy. The Americans also provided a miniature TV transmitter for illegally beaming to Iran a broadcast by the son of the deposed Shah.

As the destructive socio-economic policy of the theocratic regime plunged the nation deeper into crisis, Washington stepped up its efforts to contact the leading figures bent on eroding the content of the Iranian revolution. In the spring of 1985 the CIA produced a top secret memorandum. Analysing the situation in Iran, its authors concluded that the regime was about to collapse and that the United States was to be ready to seize the first opportunity so as to 'strike first' and 'anticipate the Russians'. The main idea of the memorandum was that Washington and its allies should take advantage of the current political situation for intensive infiltration of Iran and for improving relations with would-be collaborators so as not to be left out in the cold should a new revolution break out.

Essentially, these recommendations formed the basis of the operation which ended in a scandalous fiasco. It was staged on a truly global scale — quite in keeping with the doctrine of neoglobalism. Israel, which maintains a ramified network of agents in Iran, played the key role in providing the channels necessary for the arms deliveries. Facts about Saudi Arabian complicity in the affair have come to light as well. According to the bourgeois press, these shipments also arrived via Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines, Italy, the FRG and Great Britain. And the weapons were destined not only for the Iranian army. Some were used to expand the undeclared war against Afghanistan. The funds received as payment went to finance the terrorist activities of the contras fighting against the legitimate Sandinist government of Nicaragua.

One must emphasise that 'Irangate' is not an accidental mistake or blunder. On

the Iranian side, it proves that the ruling quarters have swung sharply to the right to betray the ideals and the tasks of the popular revolution. As the PPI Central Committee noted in its statement, "the secret talks with the White House undertaken by the authorities of the Islamic Republic to establish covert ties are a consequence of a series of steps and moves made in the nation's domestic and foreign policy".⁵

On the US side, the Iranian operation is a link in the chain of the strategy of 'neoglobalism'. In this context, the person who has been made the principal scapegoat to divert attention from more important figures is a remarkable man indeed. Oliver North, a functionary of the National Security Council under President Reagan, had commanded a platoon of Marines during the Vietnam War. In Washington, he became very active in operations usually concealed from public scrutiny. Judging by reports in the US press, his White House office was the 'nerve centre' during the US invasion of Grenada and the seizure of the Egyptian airliner. It is a fact that Eugene Hassenfus, the CIA agent on board the plane which airlifted weapons to the contras and which was shot down over Nicaragua, had direct contacts with North. On his trips to Central America, Oliver North made no bones about the fact that he was preparing a US invasion of Nicaragua. He was also involved in clandestine ties with certain quarters in Iran and was in charge of transferring the money received in payment for the arms shipments to the Nicaraguan contras — in violation of explicit congressional decisions. One is inclined to agree with the well-known US journalist Anthony Lewis who says that "Colonel North's game was the Reagan Doctrine: helping guerrilla armies around the world to carry on what they call wars against communism".⁶

The fire-eater of a soldier had to be dispensed with: the high-handed acts of those who, with the President's blessing and disdainful of elementary morals, international law and the law of their own nation, interfered in the affairs of other countries caused too great an uproar. It was deception of the American people, of the US Congress and of the international community that resulted in a scandal exposing the depths of immorality to which Washington's leaders had plunged and the crisis of their double-dealing policies.

Indeed, lies are a distinctive feature of bourgeois diplomacy. But history also tells us that it is peoples who pay for this deception, and the price is exorbitant. One example will suffice: when Washington wanted a pretext for aggression against Vietnam, the lie about an attack against US vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin was cooked up. We all remember the price the peoples of Vietnam and of the United States paid in blood for this lie.

The current US administration is going farther still: it has openly proclaimed deception to be a 'legitimate means' and turned it into a 'principle' of its foreign policy. Inevitably, one wonders how one can maintain relations with those who say one thing but do the opposite and what new calamity this political duplicity may produce in today's tense situation.

Quite understandably, Washington's reckless and irresponsible policy encounters growing resistance. President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, one of the Mideast politicians particularly loyal to the United States, has said that the action taken by the White House has caused it "to lose its credibility if not in the whole world, then at least in the Arab world".⁷ The League of Arab States issued a communique in which it stressed the duplicity of the US stand, noted that Washington had violated its pledge not to interfere in the Iran-Iraq conflict, and emphasised that the complicity of Israel introduced a new element of tension into Arab-US relations. Significantly, the communique was published almost simultaneously with the news report that the UN General Assembly condemned

the US pirate raid on Libya as a violation of the UN Charter and of international law.

Exposing the Reagan administration's attempts to find and rely on the collaborationists among the ruling quarters of the Islamic Republic, *Namee Mardom*, the newspaper published by the Central Committee of the People's Party of Iran, wrote: "Those who try to secure US imperialist support and thus consolidate their position at the helm of government are making a grave mistake. Did the US imperialists save the regime of the Shah even though they were fully behind it? The struggle of our working people against the anti-popular regime will continue until it is overthrown. No force can block the will of the people, and the experience of the revolution of 1979 bears this out."⁸

Despite the scandalous exposé, the neoglobalists have no intention of abandoning their objectives, strategic goals or methods. President Reagan has said he will not revoke his directive of January 17, 1986 in which the order was given to ship military hardware to Iran.

This is additional proof that the United States is confident it can pursue its hegemonic policy with impunity. Who can tell what other 'surprises' Washington has in store, and for what regions? Who else is to fall victim to imperialist provocations? In order to oppose these plans, the fighters against neoglobalist plots and attacks must close their ranks and strengthen international anti-imperialist solidarity.

Mahmoud Azad
Representative of the People's Party
of Iran on *WMR*.

¹ The doctrine is treated in greater detail in "What's Behind the Aggressive Doctrine", *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.—Ed.

² *Pravda*, January 9, 1987.

³ *Newsweek*, November 24, 1986.

⁴ *International Herald Tribune*, November 21, 1986.

⁵ *Namee Mardom*, December 4, 1986 (in Persian).

⁶ *International Herald Tribune*, December 23, 1986.

⁷ *Newsweek*, December 22, 1984.

⁸ *Namee Mardom*, November 20, 1986.

surveys, letters, and diary

Nicaragua: Self-Determination of Nations—Yes

Francisco Gamboa – CC Political
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Party of Costa Rica

AS these lines are being written the Reagan administration is stepping up its threats, manipulations, and provocations against Nicaragua, obviously clearing the way to direct aggression. The reasons for and objectives of this pressure are obvious. As well as being viewed with hostility by world reaction, the developments in Nicaragua are distasteful to the US President and his bellicose entourage. They dream of overthrowing the Sandinist government. Why? Because it is a revolutionary government and has put into effect reforms benefiting the people.

The Sandinist leadership is committed to political pluralism, a mixed economy, and non-alignment.¹ In Nicaragua these principles are instruments of revolution and serve the interests of the working people. This is what arouses the fury of reactionaries. As Washington sees it, this is 'sedition' in a region which US imperialism has long regarded as all but its own territory.

Of course, not even the most diehard hardliners in the North American administration can state this so openly. Camouflage is needed, and it is used. Basic elements of this camouflage are the lie that the system established in Nicaragua is 'undemocratic', and the hypocritical concern for 'restoring' democracy in that country.

The Sandinist leadership is in fact doing everything to consolidate and extend democracy. It is not the democracy over which Reagan is agonising, but the real thing that is consistent with the aspirations of the working people, of the majority of Nicaraguans. "Let us go on defending this democracy, for it is imbedded in the aspirations of Latin America," Daniel Ortega, President of Nicaragua, said at the celebrations of the revolution's seventh anniversary.² He was speaking in the town of Esteli in the north of the republic, near the frontier with Honduras, where sanctuaries have been set up by Reagan's mercenaries, the 'contras', who are enemies of everything that delivered the nation from the bloodthirsty Somoza dictatorship and led it onto the road of freedom, democracy, and social progress.

Momentous Transformations

The situation prevailing in Nicaragua today may be characterised by the following excerpt from a document on the priorities of the nation's technological and economic policy in 1986: "In view of the present difficult problems we cannot think of either reconstruction or development. Our top priority is survival, in particular the need to sustain the living force of the revolution morally and materially in order to defeat the aggressors."³ Indeed, this is a concise, terse, and stern definition. It

indicates that all the efforts and sacrifices now being made are for the main thing, the country's defence. Plainly, with the US Congress allocating tens of millions of dollars to fund the piratical actions of the 'contras' against Nicaragua (in addition to the money given them out of the proceeds from the secret sales of armaments to Iran), what we are confronted with is a war, even if it is undeclared. Also, it is quite obvious that large sums of money are given in bribes to the ruling circles of Nicaragua's neighbours, which are playing the role of Washington's henchmen.

This undeclared war is inflicting enormous damage on the Nicaraguan economy. The expected foreign trade deficit in 1986 has been estimated at over 600 million dollars; inflation is running at a very high rate; between 1981 and 1985 the external debt rose by 2,170 million dollars; the GDP has begun to decline. In this situation the revolution cannot give the people tangible material benefits. But let us recall that the situation was different in the initial period, when the US administration had not yet embarked upon a policy of aggression against Nicaragua.

In the 1979-1981 period the building was started of 7,800 new dwellings, 1,200 elementary and 200 secondary schools, five hospitals, 100 polyclinics and a large number of first-aid centres. Large outlays were put into the development of transport and the building of power-generating units; a number of projects were completed.⁴ Thanks to the illiteracy abolition campaign conducted by young people, the proportion of illiterate persons diminished from 62 to 12 per cent.

Social progress was not halted even when top priority was later given to defence requirements. The revolution, which had brought a people's government to power, signified a steep turn towards social justice, towards genuine democracy. The agrarian reform was its biggest achievement. Under that reform more than 104,000 needy families (constituting 70 per cent of the entire rural population) received plots of land totalling almost two million hectares. One way or another, the process of change affected half of all the registered property in land. The latifundia — land possessions of over 500 manzanas⁵ — earlier comprising 46 per cent of the arable land, were reduced to 11 per cent. A strong cooperative sector was formed.

The principles of free will underlay all this work, which proceeded in the extremely difficult situation created by the 'contra' raids. The people showed unswerving devotion for what the First National Peasants' Congress (April 1986) called an "alliance of the new type formed by the personnel, managements, and technicians of state enterprises with agricultural cooperatives, credit and marketing cooperations and small producers".⁶

The deeds for the land were handed out together with weapons to defend this land. On the revolution's seventh anniversary President Daniel Ortega cited as models the villages of Teotecacinte and San Juan del Rio Coco. These had been destroyed by the 'contras' but continue to live on account of the determination and courage of their inhabitants. Hundreds of other villages now being restored after 'contra' raids could be named. As the most democratic of all revolutionary changes, the agrarian reform made the deepest impression on the people. Hence the energetic support expressed for the revolution by the Peasants' Congress, by its over 400 delegates from cooperatives, farm workers, and middle and small farmers.

Meeting the People

The peasants, workers, and all other working people continue to give their unconditional support for changes that signify the establishment, for the first time in Nicaraguan history, of real and deep-going democracy. Its mechanisms, to mention a few, include the trade unions, the peasants' associations, the student federations and, in particular, the Sandinist defence committees.

The leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front and the government of Nicaragua hide nothing from people, no matter how bitter the truth is. An

illustration bearing this out is the regular television programme called "Meeting the People". in which the President and ministers reply to questions and listen to criticisms. This programme has been running for more than four years in various parts of the country, including those affected by hostilities. All Nicaraguans take part in it in one form or another. The frankness and sincerity of the revolution's leaders as they address the people are unmistakable.

This is particularly significant in view of the grave economic crisis in Nicaragua. There is no quick way out of this crisis. But, as President Ortega noted in one of his speeches, even "confronted by the economic crisis we will never accept the philosophy of exploitation, the philosophy of the International Monetary Fund, whose prescription, adopted in other countries, is that economic problems are resolved at the expense of working people".⁷

Washington's bogus insinuations about there being 'no democracy' in Nicaragua are repeated by bourgeois governments and dictatorial regimes in Central America. The President of Costa Rica has gone so far as to draw up a time-table for the 'democratisation' of Nicaragua in the mould of his own country. This and other 'moralists' should, however, take a closer look at the situation in their own backyard, particularly at the social inequality flourishing under the cover of bourgeois democracy. In Costa Rica a handful of latifundistas, comprising 1.3 per cent of all owners of land, have more than 36 per cent of the land. At the other extreme, over 32 per cent of the small and tiniest farms have only 1.7 per cent of the arable land. There 'democracy' is not a means of ensuring social justice, of meeting the interests of the poor sections of the peasantry, of all working people, but the guardian of the power and privileges of the land barons and other wealthy persons.

Imperialism's propaganda agencies are perseveringly repeating the lie that human rights are abused in Nicaragua. The revolution is shattering one lie after another.

For instance, it is claimed that 'some people' had been shot, but not a single piece of evidence is given in support of this claim. It is charged that prisoners are harshly treated, but an international commission that visited Nicaragua demolished this piece of slander as well.

General elections were demanded. The Sandinists held such elections in the presence of hundreds of observers and newsmen and they won with a convincing lead.

It is alleged that religion is suppressed, but the generally known fact is that the attitude of the people's government to religion is one of respect. The government, on its own initiative, is conducting an open dialogue with representatives of the Vatican and the higher church hierarchy. This dialogue, whose purpose is to establish mutual understanding, involves President Ortega, Cardinals Obando and Rossi, the North American Bishop Law, and the papal nuncio in Nicaragua.

As a matter of fact, not a single cleric has died a violent death in Nicaragua since the triumph of the Sandinist revolution. Within the same period, 138 priests and other clerics have been assassinated in other Central American states. One of them is Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero of El Salvador. A total of 268 clerics have been kidnapped or have disappeared in the region, and not a single one of these cases occurred in Nicaragua.⁸

Another charge levelled at the revolution is that it restricts the freedom of the press. Indeed, one newspaper was closed temporarily in Nicaragua (it was financed by the CIA and played the role of a 'fifth column' for over four years). But this suspension was ordered only after the newspaper lauded Reagan's plans for escalating the war against the revolutionary republic. Would an honest person deplore such a decision by a people's authority?

Or take the following. Propaganda agencies in the USA — a country where

flagrant violations of the rights of Indian communities have long been taken for granted — suddenly 'found' that the Nicaraguan Misquitos' 'rights were being violated'. What are the facts? Nicaragua is putting into effect a programme envisaging autonomy for the Misquitos. This is an innovative and revolutionary programme reinforcing the ethnic unity of the Amerindian communities and, at the same time, providing safeguards ensuring respect for their customs and forms of organisation, and their "rights, land, an end to their separation from society, and the elimination of landowners and the transnational corporations".⁹

In drafting this solution to the problem, a solution that is of immense significance for the whole of Latin America, consultations were held with the participation of the Church, the trade unions, governmental institutions, and even groups of Misquitos that had fought the government and with whom an armistice had been reached. As a matter of fact, this programme, which is in line with the principles of democracy and respect for human rights, was approved also at last July's international symposium on the Amerindian problem, held in Managua and attended by experts from Canada, the USA, Europe, and Latin America, and by Amerindian leaders in Nicaragua and other Latin American states.

Despite the grave situation, a draft Constitution was discussed and adopted in Nicaragua. While this draft was being drawn up, the commissions, which consisted of deputies of all the political parties represented in the National Assembly, visited various countries in the American and European continents to study their experience. The draft, drawn up with account of the collected information, was publicised. Hundreds of thousands of people joined in the free discussion of this draft. Was this not a democratic approach to the question of the nation's fundamental law?

The Paramount Objective

There is a state of emergency in Nicaragua today. It was proclaimed to defend the revolution and the people's gains, to prevent an internal front from being formed by enemies of the revolution with the complicity of the Reagan administration and its gangs of hired thugs.

The defence of the revolution has been proclaimed as the paramount objective. This objective is being served by everything now being done in the economy, on the diplomatic front, and in other areas. Hundreds of thousands of rifles have been put into the hands of workers, peasants, and students. Moreover, the revolution has an army capable of repulsing aggressors.

With backing from Washington the 'contras' are continuing their criminal activities against the Nicaraguan people. The number of victims of this aggression is nearly 15,000, with a considerable proportion of children under age 12 among them. The damage that was wrought in the period up to last July is estimated at 3,500 million dollars. This is giving the imperialists satisfaction. Relishing the effects of Washington's criminal policy, the journal *Newsweek* carried an article on Nicaragua headed: 'Poor and Getting Poorer'.

The USA has converted Honduras into a centre of military operations in the region, locating the camps of the mercenaries along the frontier with Nicaragua, in a strip that the Honduran government no longer controls. The 'contras' are making raids also from Costa Rican territory. Both countries are thus sanctuaries for gangs lavishly funded by the Reagan administration and having supply bases, hospitals, and recreation zones.

The mercenaries will not achieve their foul aims. Despite the crisis and the hardships the Nicaraguan people have the strength to defend their revolution. A struggle for the nation's future, for the right of peoples to self-determination is going on in the very same mountains where 60 years ago Augusto Cesar Sandino

raised the anti-imperialist banner of Latin America. This struggle did not erupt overnight, nor did the artifices of the Yankee imperialists, who, as in the last century, now evidently consider that the Latin American peoples are incapable of building their lives independently.

With the same colonialist lust that Yankee imperialism seized half of Mexico's territory and imposed a semi-colonial status upon Cuba, with the same insolence that it time and again sent troops to invade most of the Latin American states, and with the same brutality that it had time and again occupied Nicaragua, it is again planning to strip that nation of its right to sovereignty and its freedom to choose its own road of development.

The International Court at The Hague, to which Nicaragua appealed, established that the US government was showing contempt for the Nicaraguan people's right to self-determination. Washington refused to recognise the court's jurisdiction. Subsequently, the US representative on the UN Security Council vetoed a resolution censuring US policy in Central America. It was then that Reagan declared that if the Sandinist government did not begin a dialogue with the 'contras', on which he insisted, he would have no option to overthrowing that government. It was with this insolence, imperiousness, and superciliousness that the White House incumbent defined his interventionist policy.

Submit or die — that is the dilemma offered by Reagan to Sandino's successors. Their perception of its colonialist essence gives the Nicaraguans enormous moral strength and reinforces their will to fight for the choice they had made in 1979.

This struggle has repercussions in all continents. This is seen not only in the political and economic support of many countries, of the socialist and developing nations in the first place. Let us note, for instance, the important role of the Contadora Group. A massive campaign of solidarity with the revolutionary people is unfolding in the world with 'Nicaragua Must Survive!' as its motto. This motto reflects the stern and, at the same time, inspiring reality of the heroic defensive war of a numerically small nation against the mercenaries of the world's strongest imperialist power. In defending their right to self-determination, their revolution, and their peaceful future on the continent, this nation is setting an example of determination, staunchness, and dedication to all who are suffering from overt and covert imperialist oppression.

With diplomatic tact and patience Nicaragua's representatives are speaking out at forums where a political solution can be found to the problem. The republic's leaders are offering to hold direct talks with the USA. They have even invited Reagan to visit Nicaragua. This is compelling evidence of maturity and restraint, of a responsible approach to the preservation of peace in our region.

¹ In Nicaragua, prior to the revolution, there were two legal parties: the Conservative and the Liberal. Today there are 12, of which seven are represented in the National Assembly, the nation's supreme legislature. Six trade union associations of different ideological and political orientation are functioning without hindrance. More than 60 per cent of all the means of production are in the private sector.

² *Barricada*, July 20, 1986.

³ *Lineas del Plan Tecnico Economico 1986*, Managua, p. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.6

⁵ One manzana is roughly equivalent to 0.7 hectare. — *Ed.*

⁶ *Informaciones agropocuaras MIDINRA*, April 26, 1986, p.5.

⁷ Daniel Ortega, *De cara al pueblo, Con trabajadores de COMPANIC*, Managua, 1986, p.13.

⁸ *Barricada*, July 20, 1986.

⁹ *Barricada International*, July 24, 1986, p. 11.

The Reader Wants to Know **An Irresponsible Step** The United States Destroying Nuclear Arms Race Curbs

A great deal has been said and written in recent months about the SALT I and SALT II Treaties. It has been some time since they were signed. What are these treaties about and what explains the negative Soviet response to the United States putting another cruise missile-equipped bomber on operational status?

Alejandro Mendoza, Colombia

The reply to this question, published below, has been prepared by the *WMR* working group on scientific information and documentation.

THE process of strategic arms limitation began in November 1969, when the Soviet Union and the United States launched talks that were held alternately in Helsinki and Vienna. They culminated in the signing of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Systems (a treaty of unlimited duration) and of the Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms on May 26, 1972, during a Soviet-US summit in Moscow. Earlier, on September 30, 1971 an agreement of unlimited duration on measures to reduce the risk of outbreak of nuclear war was concluded. This latter agreement can be regarded as part of the overall package of accords referred to as SALT I.

The importance of these agreements was rooted in the fact that for the first time tangible measures were negotiated on effective quantitative and qualitative curbs applying to the build-up of strategic offensive arms. Moreover, the USSR and the United States agreed to regard these accords merely as a first step towards further limitation of the weapons in question.

In 1979 the SALT II Treaty was signed in Vienna, following up logically on the previous agreement. For the first time, it imposed a ceiling on the aggregate totals of strategic armaments, including intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launchers, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), heavy bombers equipped with cruise missiles, and air-to-surface ballistic missiles with a range of over 600 kilometres. While the 1972 Interim Agreement established aggregate allowable limits only for ICBM launchers and SLBMs, the SALT II Treaty also imposed such restrictions on heavy bombers. The entire strategic 'triad' was made subject to limitation and even reduction.

Some Western observers tend to belittle the significance of the SALT II Treaty because the US Senate has not ratified it.¹ But, as *The New York Times* wrote, "however modest an accomplishment, it provided the most meaningful limitations on strategic offensive weapons to date. Moreover, SALT II was never touted as the final word in arms control. Rather . . . it was to be followed by deep reductions . . . in SALT III."

That was the intention. However. . .

On May 27, 1986 President Reagan announced that further observance of US-Soviet treaty obligations on the limitation of strategic offensive armaments ran counter to US national interests and that the United States would therefore no longer abide by them.

On May 31 news agencies distributed a Soviet government statement which said:

"The principled approach of the USSR to the existing agreements on arms

limitation is well-known. The Soviet side has been observing all its obligations strictly and fully. It holds that continued observance on a mutual basis of the obligations stipulated in the SALT II Treaty would be of substantial importance for the maintenance of the strategic balance and for the strengthening of security." The statement emphasised that the US leadership was taking an extremely dangerous step aimed at destroying the system of treaties curbing the nuclear arms race.

Nevertheless, on November 28, 1986 the 131st B-52 bomber took off from Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio where it had been re-equipped. The United States effectively violated the SALT II Treaty.

In its statement of December 5, 1986 the Soviet government said: "The United States has recently added the 131st heavy bomber modified to carry cruise missiles to the active service force without dismantling any comparable nuclear-capable carrier in compensation. By taking this step, the United States has exceeded the aggregate ceiling of 1,320 envisaged in the SALT II Treaty for the number of MIRVed strategic ballistic missile launchers and of heavy bombers carrying cruise missiles."

As for the arguments cited by the United States to explain its violation of the treaty, here is what Paul Warnke, chief US negotiator at the SALT II talks in 1977 and 1978, says: "The administration justifies the action on the basis of alleged Soviet violations of SALT I. These charges boil down to two main questions. First, is the Soviet Union's SS-25 a prohibited second 'new type' of intercontinental ballistic missile? (Each side is allowed one. We selected the MX; they, the SS-24.) Second, is the Soviet Union encrypting telemetry (missile test data) in excess of what the treaty allows?"

"In both bases, the answers are unclear. We do not have enough evidence to determine conclusively that the SS-25 is not a permitted modification of an older missile. As to encryption, SALT II's language is ambiguous. What is clear is that in neither case are the Soviet actions militarily significant. *Moscow has* not violated the treaty's core provisions, its numerical limitations. This dubious honour, apparently, will be ours."² (Emphasis added.)

One might add that the Soviet side has repeatedly clarified the questions raised by Paul Warnke.

For example, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman stated on December 12, 1986 that "with the help of contrived charges accusing the Soviet Union of creating a second ICBM banned under the treaty, the United States wants to reserve the 'right' to acquire another strategic missile in addition to the MX — the Midgetman. The decision on its development had been taken long before inventions about a new Soviet missile appeared . . .

"As for the US 'concern' over the encryption of telemetry in missile tests, one is struck by the fact that each time constructive options were proposed to the US side on removing this 'concern', it invariably declined to discuss them."

While on the subject of the US arguments, one must note that the Soviet Union has serious reason to doubt US observance of the obligations under the SALT II Treaty. For example, ignoring the special limitations set forth in a protocol to the treaty, the United States has launched large-scale deployment of long-range cruise missiles. The US administration obviously dodged the treaty by stationing medium-range missiles in Western Europe in addition to the American strategic capability.

Besides, work is underway at Warren air force base making it possible to deduce that an ICBM launching silo is being built there. A special awning has been erected over the construction site to prevent observation by Soviet national technical surveillance means. This gives one sufficient grounds to assert that at Warren, the US side has violated the provisions banning the construction of additional ICBM

stationary launchers and the camouflage of the work being performed.

This means that both sides have several mutual complaints regarding compliance with the SALT II Treaty. There is no denying that strategic arms limitation and reduction is a complex and intricate problem. Some of the difficulties have objective roots. For example, the Soviet and the US strategic capabilities differ considerably from each other in terms of their structure. Some 70 per cent of all Soviet strategic nuclear warheads are mounted on land-based ICBMs. In the US case, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers account for more than 80 per cent of the capability.

There are other substantial differences which made it quite difficult to set up a balance sheet of the two powers' nuclear capabilities. And even when this balance sheet was finally drawn within the SALT II framework, the same objective difficulties kept bringing forth the need for additional negotiations — which was actually regarded as perfectly natural both by previous US administrations and by Soviet leaders. But, as *The New York Times* said in an editorial on SALT II, today "Mr Reagan's solution is radically different: tear up the rule book."³ In other words, abandon the existing limitations and the machinery for the settlement of disputed questions. Or, even more clearly, jettison the SALT II Treaty.

"The most damaging thing about our SALT II violation may be its timing," Paul Warnke says. "The Kremlin has just offered some of the most promising arms proposals ever. If the two sides can compromise on 'Star Wars' testing, the most far-reaching arms accord of all time is within reach. If we too are serious, then this is hardly the time to drop a purely political stink bomb. And if the President thinks that violating SALT II will shock Moscow into further concessions, he is wrong."⁴

The President's decisions have been condemned in Congress. The Senate and the House of Representatives have added a rider to the defence budget bill urging the administration to continue abiding by the SALT II Treaty. Senator Albert Gore Jr., Democrat of Tennessee, backed by several other members of Congress, stressed that "the logic of this move is unfathomable. In the wake of Reykjavik, it will create an uproar in the [NATO] alliance."⁵

The senator was right. Disapproval of the US administration's decision was expressed by the governments of France, Belgium, the Netherlands and several other countries. The FRG and Great Britain did not directly criticise the United States but let it be understood that they were not happy with Washington's renunciation of the SALT II Treaty. They called on the US and the USSR to show goodwill and observe the arms limitations imposed in 1979.

Obviously, commitment is needed on both sides to curb the arms race. But Washington is moving in the opposite direction: witness the modification of the 131st heavy bomber enabling it to carry long-range cruise missiles (on December 22 another, 132nd B-52 heavy bomber armed with cruise missiles joined the US strategic forces), the more than one-third completed programme for the building of 20 Ohio-class submarines, each having 24 ballistic missiles on board, and the development of the MX and Midgetman ICBMs. Meanwhile there has been no hint of any compensatory dismantling of strategic arms of other types stipulated in the SALT II limitations.

The situation being what it is, the Soviet Union has every right to consider itself free from its obligations under the 1972 Interim Agreement (SALT I) and the SALT II Treaty. However, the USSR is in no hurry to do this. "*With due regard for the paramount stake mankind has in this issue,*" the Soviet government underlined in its statement of December 5, 1986, "*and for the need to preserve the key constraint on the strategic arms race, the USSR will, for the time being, refrain from abandoning the limitations under SALT I and SALT II.*"

This gesture of Soviet goodwill was hailed throughout the world and welcomed

by prominent statesmen and political leaders in many countries. At the same time, world public opinion increasingly understands that the Soviet Union cannot exercise unilateral restraint forever.

¹ Although the US Senate failed to ratify SALT II, the United States has been observing its limitations since the treaty was signed in 1979.—Ed.

² *The New York Times*, November 10, 1986.

³ Quoted from *International Herald Tribune*, December 5, 1986.

⁴ *The New York Times*, November 10, 1986.

⁵ *International Herald Tribune*, November 28, 1986.

From Our Mailbag

Our Readers' Comments

The letters coming to our desk daily differ widely in content but all indicate that our readers are staunch supporters of *World Marxist Review*. For that reason they write of their impressions of the issues read by them and offer critical comments and suggestions. The following extracts are from some of their letters

Abdus Salam (Bangladesh) writes that the journal plays an essential part in promoting international solidarity with the struggle of peoples for national liberation and social emancipation. This is also the opinion of **El Khalaf Hassan (Morocco)**, **Abdoulay Ndoeye (Senegal)**, **Magdalena Sueiro (Uruguay)**, and other readers.

Specific articles that vividly impressed readers are named in many letters.

Jorge Alejandro Ovando Sanz (Bolivia): "I read your coverage of the symposium 'Amerindian Masses in the Revolutionary Movement' held in Quito under the joint sponsorship of the Communist Party of Ecuador and your journal. It gave me great satisfaction. Its scientific approach to this ethnic problem of Latin America makes it a valuable source material orienting the Amerindian movements in Bolivia."

Also, there are critical comments. For instance, **Antonio de la Rosa Coello (Canary Islands)** says that the journal gives little attention to 'inconspicuous' parts of the world, although politically arresting developments quite often occur in these places.

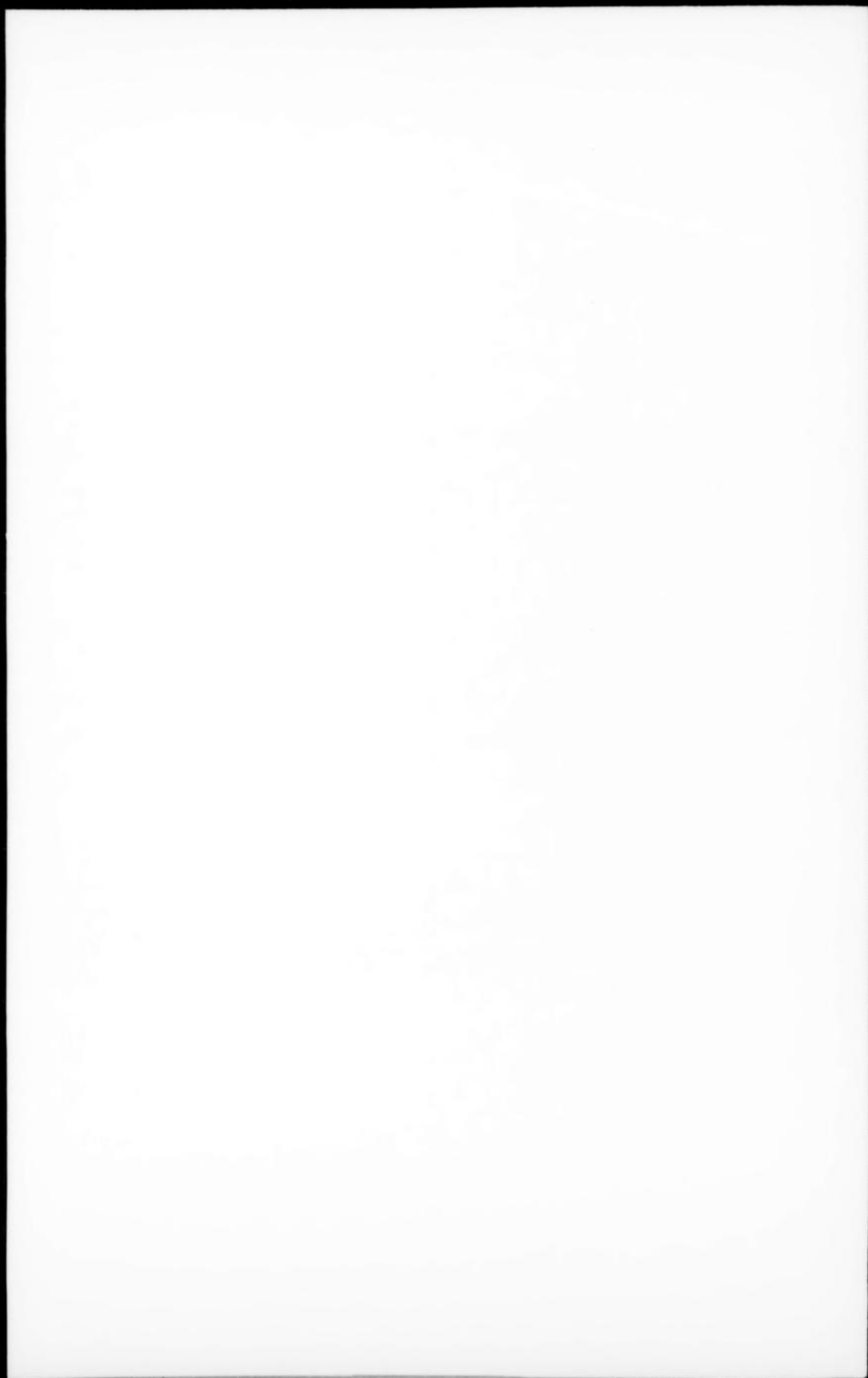
A. Ignastenko (Kiev, USSR) writes: "*World Marxist Review* is an indisputably important and needed publication of the communist and workers' parties. It deals with various aspects of the international communist movement. However, it is my opinion that it should respond more quickly to the most important developments of the day. This would make it more attractive and further enhance its prestige."

The editorial staff of *WMR* thanks all readers for their comments and will endeavour to take their advice and wishes into account.

We await your letters.

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World Marxist Review is the North American edition of the monthly journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* published in Prague.

Subscription rates:

Canada and United States: \$20 a year.

Institutions: \$40 a year.

All subscribers receive the monthly *Information Bulletin*.

Subscriptions — available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic — may be obtained through Progress Subscription Service,
71 Bathurst Street,
Toronto, Canada M5V 2P6.

In the USA from
Imported Publications,
320 West Ohio Street,
Chicago, Illinois 60610.

World Marxist Review is published by Progress Books,
71 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 2P6.
Second class mail registration number 2352.

Printed in Canada.

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