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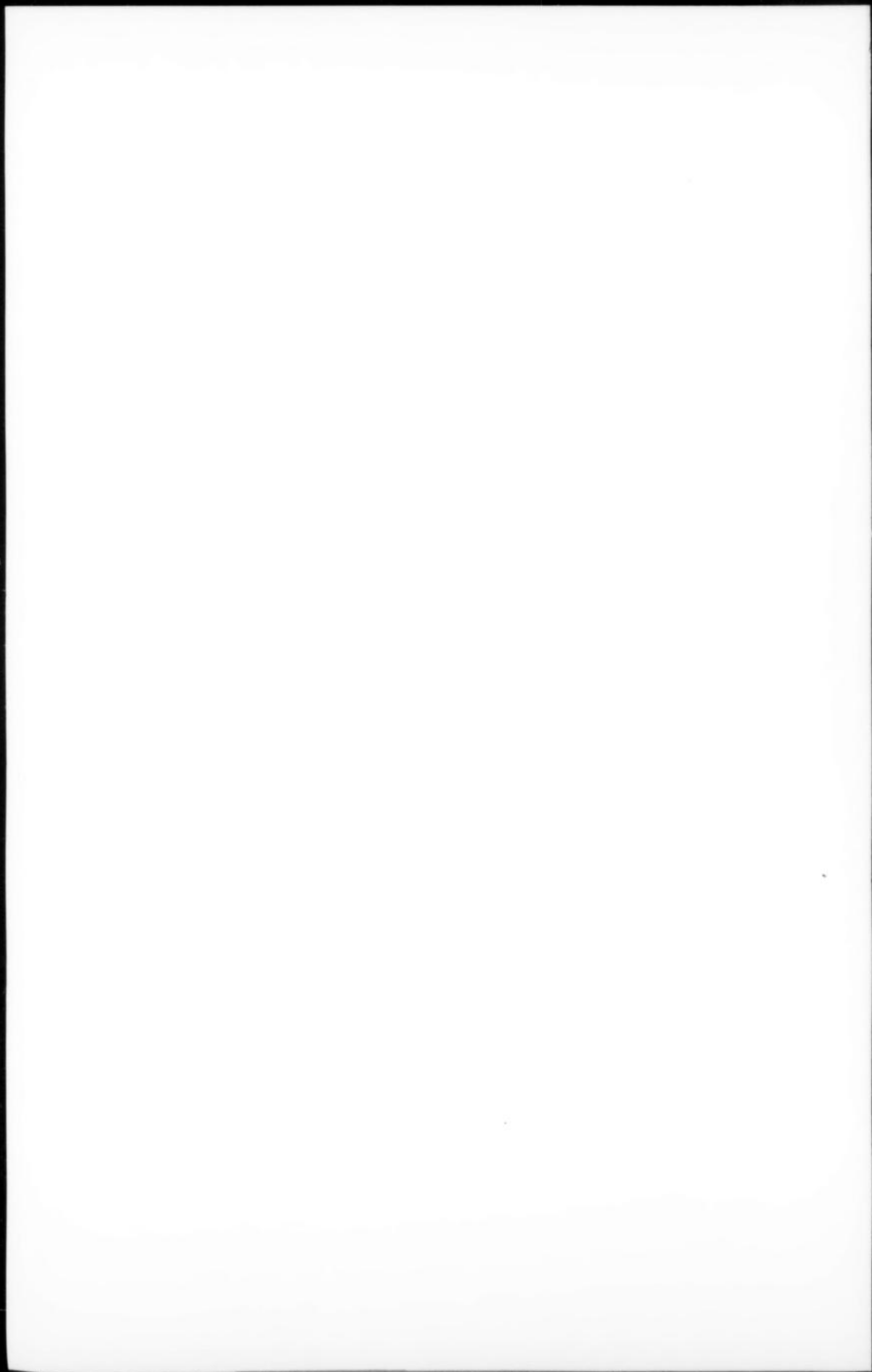
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Our Common European Home

Vasil Bilak — Presidium member and secretary of the CPCz Central Committee

MAN has always built and defended that which he called home. He has had to escape many dangers, mainly that of devastating war. Societies divided into classes elevated war to the rank of policy. There were armed conflicts that lasted a year, seven years and even thirty years. Crops, peasant huts, palaces and temples were destroyed. Whole cities were razed to the ground and entire peoples were exterminated. But never before was the very life on Earth threatened.

Methods of warfare and types of weaponry were steadily perfected. Special research centres staffed by skilled experts were established to develop ever deadlier weapons; strategies and tactics for exterminating the enemy were drawn up. By now man has reached a stage at which he is able to destroy everything he spent millennia to create. Together with the enemy, man can now destroy his own home, the soil which gave him life and received the remains of his forefathers. He can now destroy himself, the whole of human civilisation. Unfortunately, understanding of this truth has not come to all who should be aware of it. In their blind hatred of socialism, they are ready to 'try their luck' in reckless adventures. The greatest danger is looming over our European home. And when our common home is threatened, we must defend it together.

In various cities all over the world one comes across different people — old and young, believers and non-believers, Catholics, Protestants, Judaists, Moslems, Socialists, Communists, democrats, rich and poor. Hence the differences in interests, views, lasting loyalties and hot hostility. *People should agree on at least one point — they must not let their common home be destroyed.* In the wars of the past, one could at least flee and save one's life. No one would have this chance in a new war. There would be nowhere to flee to. Moreover, there would be no one left alive to do so. The conclusion is simple: no one can or has a right to act recklessly or remain indifferent. Everyone is duty bound to learn from history, to fight for the future and to believe in it, believe that reason will prevail. We in

Czechoslovakia want to remain on good-neighbour terms with those with whom we share our European home.

An increasingly clear line is being drawn in Europe between two fronts — the *forces of war and the forces of peace*. This is not an exercise in castigation but simple blunt talk. The crux of the matter is that, in this confrontation, the foremost question of everyone's concern is being decided — the question of life or death.

I believe that if one adds up the major initiatives advanced by the USSR and other socialist sister countries, it will be clear that we have done for peace incomparably more than anyone else. This enhances the appeal of our social system and makes the peoples of the socialist countries justly proud. But today, events may take such a turn that there will be no one left to hear out different sides, to compare and judge their records. *The propaganda forms of the class struggle which have been used on the world scene up to now may prove ineffective, and an ideologically overcharged foreign policy may be extremely dangerous if each side continues thinking in the old way. Projection of ideological contradictions and of ideological struggle onto the plane of international relations, particularly onto the negotiating process dealing with issues of peace, is an example of the old way of political thinking, of obsolete capitalist practices.* In fact, this is no longer ideology — it is blackmail and irresponsibility.

We must allow no pause or let-up in our effort to win over our friends and our opponents to the side of a new way of political thinking. In the nuclear age, negotiation is the only acceptable method of settling disputes or problems. This calls for a good grasp of the changes occurring across the world and for sufficient goodwill. But goodwill is both a moral and a political category. Therefore, political will is also necessary. In turn, *commitment to settle problems through negotiation means that both sides should be ready for reasonable mutual accommodation on the basis of trust, and trust cannot be won by threats. Reasonable compromise is the only way to forge ahead.*

I do not mean indiscriminate concessions, least of all a situation in which we would demand that our ideological opponents give up capitalism and they would urge us to abandon socialism. The concessions I mean should stem from an understanding and recognition of the fact that we can and must live side by side, that peace and peaceful coexistence of the two systems are the most important thing.

This view of ours is based on the Helsinki Final Act in which the feasibility of such an approach has been officially confirmed by 35 signatures of heads of state. Europe and the rest of the world were beginning to believe that a bright future was dawning. However, the US Chief Executive again put forward a purposeful, though well-worn (and ideologically oriented) programme for the elimination of communism. He openly said that war against the USSR and other socialist countries was 'necessary', clearly indicating his political will to wipe out socialism.

But we are an integral part of the socialist world.

We cannot forget the way the ultra-reactionary bourgeois quarters of the day turned our country into a welcome mat for Hitler at Munich, so denying us our geographical and political Central European identity.

Czechoslovakia came to be regarded as an 'Eastern country' not in the wake of World War II but as a result of the Munich sell-out of 1938. This view was promoted by the force which was already dictating its policy to Europe at that time. Today this force is represented by the *supranational military-industrial complex in which US monopolies and militarists call the tune. It seeks to impose its will on all countries, and its policy can only mean war.* For this mightiest complex in the West has established worldwide industrial and financial ties and shows its face, as the most detestable form of capital, only in war preparations and war itself. Ending the manufacture and perfection of armaments would be contrary to the very nature of this complex, otherwise it would have ceased to exist. Historians tell us that the United States has waged 200 wars over the past two centuries. This is not just a fact of anti-capitalist propaganda; it simply lifts the veil, just a little, to show the true face of capitalism.

If anyone chooses to reproach us for loving Europe, we will not deny it. For our part, we want to see Americans, Africans, Asians and Australians love their homes. That benefits all of us.

The desire to exert a positive influence on European affairs is a long-standing tradition in our country. The building of socialism in Czechoslovakia has created extremely favourable conditions for the implementation of a political course consonant with this noble stand. *The consolidation of the positions held by the socialist world and Czechoslovakia's extensive cooperation with the Soviet Union and other sister countries have opened before us unprecedented opportunities for vigorous efforts on the international scene.*

We are fully aware that Czechoslovakia's international prestige and influence depend on a comprehensive and successful development of socialist society, on the firmness of our status as an integral part of the socialist community. This was stressed unequivocally at the 17th Congress of the CPCz.

The efforts to strengthen European security and expand co-operation are among the key issues of international relations. The future of the world hinges on the state of European affairs. A very special feeling grips us when we refer to ourselves as Europeans. The entire history of the Czechs and the Slovaks — a history dominated by unbearably long periods of national oppression and by threats to our national existence, particularly during the years of Nazi occupation and World War II — has been marked by a struggle for peace for ourselves and for Europe. This is what has made us patriots, patriots who take pride in our will to resist the enemy, in our defiant and glorious defence of national existence, free thought and social justice.

Now that alliance with the USSR has guaranteed our national existence forever, now that, in the words of Klement Gottwald, Czechoslovakia's ship of state has found a safe haven, our European awareness is making itself felt stronger than ever before.

Our peoples have made more than an 'average minimum' contribution to the treasure-house of European and world civilisation and culture. Europe is where the basis was laid for the Industrial Revolution, where capitalism emerged as a progressive force, where the most advanced class

was born and where Marxism-Leninism appeared. Europe is where the socialist revolution won its first victory and opened a new historical era, the era of communism.

But even that is not the main reason for our European self-awareness and our way of thinking. We are motivated by a sense of common responsibility for the future of Europe and of the world. Europe, the continent where a large part of the global economic and intellectual potential is concentrated, has also acquired a huge arsenal of both conventional armaments and of weapons of mass destruction. This is where NATO and the Warsaw Treaty, the main forces of the imperialist camp and of the socialist community, are facing each other. Europe can easily turn into a powder keg capable of tearing the globe asunder. *Any war is terrible, but it is not every war fought anywhere in the world that could necessarily escalate into a global nuclear war. However, a war in Europe will lead to just that. Such a war would spell universal destruction. Therefore, if only for this reason, the role of Europe is of prime importance. It follows that the defence of peace in Europe meets the interests not only of the Europeans but also of all mankind. European security means universal security.*

In this sense our continent is the nerve centre of the globe, the potential ground zero of universal destruction. Militarisation of outer space would not improve the position of Europe, or of the world. Getting caught in a flow of molten lava is no better than jumping into the crater of an active volcano.

Our common responsibility for the 'Old World' accounts for our closeness to the other European peoples — not only in the socialist but also in the capitalist countries. A European travelling from Leningrad via Moscow, Budapest, Prague, Vienna, Bern and Rome to Paris, Brussels or another city is always in Europe, in his home. Conversely, a US citizen feels like a stranger even in South or Central America. Sheraton and Hilton hotels are built for US tourists so that a New Yorker or a San Franciscan could, even abroad, find an oasis of the 'American way of life'. But Europeans have no need of such 'national' hotels. They feel at ease anywhere in Europe. For example, wherever they are in our continent, they can listen to Italian, French, Russian or Czech opera. The works of brilliant European artists are close and dear to us and make our common heritage. Of course, we are also familiar with and full of respect for the spiritual and artistic values of all other peoples.

The shaping of a common European culture and civilisation was a difficult process, and conflicts were part of it. We did not always learn about one another in rational ways. Europe has had its share of wars, and few of them bypassed what is now Czechoslovakia.

This brings us to the reasons behind the distinctive European situation which prompts the Europeans to adopt a new way of thinking, to act rationally and thus acknowledge the need to live together in peace as good neighbours.

I have already mentioned one of the reasons — the high cultural level of the population. I have also mentioned another — the grim lessons we have learned from wars, particularly from World War II. I could add that we

have a good knowledge of all European peoples — knowledge that comes from positive and negative experience and from close and diverse contacts. Modern transport and communications have really made us all neighbours. World War II, the last conflict of the previous type, nurtured among Europeans a profound revulsion against settling political problems by force of arms, as well as a sense of foreboding. Conversely — and this is not an accusation but a statement of fact — the United States made money out of the two world wars, and many people there see things differently.

Let us recall the recent tragedy at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. It affected not only the Ukraine or the Soviet Union, it made an impact on all of us. Europeans began to realise that merely an accident at a nuclear power plant — not an explosion of a nuclear warhead — can give rise to a threat the likes of which we have never seen before. But the accident occurred at only one of the dozens of nuclear power plants scattered all over Europe. *One can imagine how many people have realised that you do not even need a nuclear war to destroy the continent: it will suffice to use conventional weapons against peaceful nuclear installations.* The danger of nuclear destruction thus made itself felt. It undermined the Europeans' feeling of security and made people see this threat as something quite tangible and think about effective protection against deadly armaments.

In a sense, fear is already in the air in Europe, and one cannot understand why attempts at downplaying the threat of nuclear catastrophe, at diverting attention from it still go unpunished.

Some time ago President Reagan said he was concerned over the effects the fear of nuclear war had on the Americans too. He said that the White House received the most incredible letters from terror-stricken schoolchildren. We must, he said, free them from this fear. *But one must not let people regard the threat with apathy. It is therefore imperative to fight against missiles, not against fear.*

As I have said, the peoples of Europe know one another well. That is a positive starting point on the way to salvation: a full and prompt understanding of the way your partner thinks makes it easier to take joint decisions so as to safeguard Europe. *European security is global security because security today can be either universal or non-existent.*

We are convinced that the struggle for the salvation of Europe gives no one cause to accuse us of European chauvinism. We seek no advantages for the Europeans. We merely stress the importance of the European peoples' efforts in the struggle for peace, for joint occupancy of a home from which there will be nowhere to flee should disaster strike. For Europe and the Europeans, this implies only obligations.

We are accused of trying to isolate Europe from the United States, to destroy the unity of NATO. But there are no grounds for such charges either in our policy or in our words and deeds.

Meanwhile, what really deserves attention is the unscrupulous and self-serving attitude of the United States both to the socialist countries and to the rest of the world, including its own allies. Obviously, the latter do not need our help to see how things really stand.

Could it be that they have not yet realised that since the deployment of the US medium-range missiles the entire western part of the continent has

turned into a hostage of the Pentagon? And, to think things through, *could it be that the hostage is unaware that he is a captive, to be sacrificed if the need arises?* Or is it that no one is willing to consider whether the United States, obsessed with its own global interests, will even for a moment ponder the dilemma of whether Europe should be sacrificed or not?

By deploying the Pershings, the Pentagon began to prepare a new theatre of operations. The United States decided to combat socialism in Europe even at the expense of the destruction of the Continent's western part in the vain hope that war would fail to cross the ocean. Eventually, it became absolutely clear to people in Europe that the nuclear umbrella of SDI was supposed to keep the United States unscathed by war. But Western Europe did not even dare to really protest. There was only a vague desire to assert its 'independence' by adopting the EUREKA programme — which, however, can in no way compete with the Strategic Defence Initiative. Besides, one doubts that EUREKA's mission is what it is professed to be.¹

In the early 1980s we witnessed Washington's moves to test the discipline of Western Europe in what may be described as 'war games'. It all began with a 'credit war'. Under orders from the United States West European Banks refused to grant loans to the socialist countries. The objective was to damage their economies as much as possible. I think that Europe's moral losses outweighed material ones. Several socialist countries even reduced their foreign debt at that time, and Czechoslovakia paid back all its loans. The 'credit war' ended without winners or laurels. Contrary to what some people expected, socialism stood its ground.

Then a 'technology war' was launched. The United States is telling its West European partners what they may or may not sell to Eastern Europe. Again, Western Europe is paying for the new US folly by losing important markets.

We could gloat over the losses our capitalist neighbours incur because of their growing dependence on the United States. But we are not gleeful. We do not need strained relations either in the world at large or between our class opponents. Besides, we are by no means indifferent to the fact that as tensions grow, ever more weapons are stockpiled along our frontiers and new obstacles hamper the solution of the foremost issue facing all mankind — the issue of peace.

Let me repeat that we have no intention of isolating Europe from the United States. The fact is that Washington is pursuing a European policy which does not take either history or today's realities into account, and people cannot understand this policy. The fact is that the United States is isolating itself from Europe as a whole.

We have no stake in crisis developments, in growing poverty or unemployment, because that is what has twice led to world wars. In the West this situation now breeds hatred for migrant workers, revanchism and pro-fascist sentiments and movements. We have every reason to be alarmed by this harbinger of a very real threat to security.

We must truly abandon the notion that the worse it is for our opponent, the better it is for us. That is a task for both sides.

I agree that there are many things in the East the West does not like and

vice versa. Naturally, Western industrialists are not happy with the nationalisation of industry in Czechoslovakia. They are also disappointed over the fact that their hopes for a return to the old ways were defeated both in 1948 and in 1968. In the field of ideological warfare, the anti-communists are attacking our concept of freedom in all fields of human activity. For our part, we are far from happy with certain things in the West too — above all, with the lack of guarantees of the right to employment. We know that the huge army of the unemployed can be easily placed at the service of an even greater evil. We understand the concern of West European industrialists and statesmen over the mounting social unrest. They fear popular action for civil rights. At the same time these leaders, including some Socialists, regard the arms race and a policy of intimidation as a remedy.

We and the West hold different views on many issues, and it is often difficult to attain understanding. But how can this justify a war that will spell not only murder but also suicide?

An extremely important process has got under way in Europe. On the one hand, US and NATO moves have aggravated the threat of nuclear war to an unprecedented degree. On the other, this has stimulated mass action against the arms race.

A stubborn struggle has once again confirmed that the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are the mainstay of resistance to the aggressive and militarist policy of imperialism. We have countered the 'positions-of-strength' policy with the strength of a political approach. The socialist community is unswervingly, purposefully and militantly pursuing a policy of peace aimed at *removing the threat of nuclear war, strengthening universal peace and security, taking tangible steps towards disarmament, easing international tensions and promoting the principles of peaceful coexistence in the practice of relations between states.*

A new stage began with the election of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. The USSR and other Warsaw Treaty countries drew up and put forward a series of projects and initiatives consonant with the realities of Europe and of the world. At the Berlin meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in May 1987 the Warsaw Treaty member countries again advanced specific proposals. The socialist community is working steadily to keep strategic military parity to the lowest possible level, to gradually defuse the state of armed confrontation and to revive détente. The socialist countries' proposals concern all aspects of disarmament — nuclear and chemical weapons of mass destruction and conventional armaments. Implementation of these proposals would prevent military capabilities from growing in quantity and quality.

The document 'On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty Member States' which was adopted in Berlin is truly a Golden Bill of Peace. Every word in it must seem dangerous to imperialist politicians. Otherwise why would the Western mass media try to suppress all mention of it and to hide it from the public in their 'democratic' countries?

In their military doctrine the Warsaw Treaty countries emphasised: *It is geared entirely to preventing war, whether nuclear or conventional, and that*

it is aimed at a rational adequacy in volume and nature of armaments and armed forces designed merely for the purposes of defence. Hence the logical proposal to the NATO countries: let us discuss and compare the military doctrines of both blocs at the summit level. After all, nothing actually prevents us from agreeing on the exclusion of the very military-technical possibility of attack on each other. The West has, regrettably, given no intelligible answer to that proposal either.

Meanwhile, speculations over the alleged superiority of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty countries in conventional weapons have been stepped up. Under this pretext, for instance, there has been more irresponsible and dangerous talk in Bonn, with the claim that it is generally unacceptable for the FRG and NATO to allow a way to be opened towards a non-nuclear Europe as long as the socialist community countries have 'a preponderance in conventional armaments'.

Nevertheless, the Political Consultative Committee meeting in Berlin once again invited the men in NATO to reduce armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe down to a level at which neither side, while ensuring its own defence, would have the means for a surprise attack on the other side, and for mounting offensive operations generally.

These are clear words and a clear-cut proposal.

Nor should one forget that NATO has not repudiated the right to use nuclear weapons first. Meanwhile, the Warsaw Treaty countries reaffirmed in Berlin their determination never and under no circumstances to start military operations against any state or alliance of states unless they are subjected to armed attack. They declared once again: *the socialist countries will never use nuclear weapons first*. They do not regard any state or people as their enemy.

Czechoslovakia is entitled to bring the lessons of history to the attention of all those who engineered the Munich sell-out and incited fascism to launch World War II. Likewise, their latter-day heirs are doing nothing to bar the deadly threat from our common home. They would like to base their confidence in the future on intimidation, on nuclear deterrence. That is something the sane mind will not believe, just as the peoples of Czechoslovakia could not believe that the Western allies would betray them in 1938. But betrayed they were.

Our people may seem to be too intent on recalling Munich. But we have no right to act otherwise. *Aside from everything else, the deal between the West and Hitler was a warning not only to us but also to all mankind. It was a disastrous crisis of bourgeois foreign policy.* The class-based interests of the French and British bourgeois states led them to betray the Czechoslovak bourgeois state. It is therefore our duty to draw everyone's attention to the egoism of big capital and to its crimes, for which ordinary people and whole nations had to pay the high price of their lives. Is there any reason to expect US capital to behave differently with regard to Europe?

Many West European countries were colonial powers not too long ago. Although exploitation has taken on new forms and still persists, the power and the glory of colonialism are a thing of the past, and former centres of colonial empires have become medium and even small countries.

Naturally, this gives rise to certain economic difficulties and psychological hang-ups — all the more so when an unstable situation is compounded by dependence on the United States, with the latter profiting from West European disunity. But surely it is inadmissible to cite neocolonialist interests to justify the use of armed force against newly independent peoples.

The experience of World War II has made people justifiably cautious and necessarily vigilant. We cannot be indifferent to what is happening at our neighbour's place in our common home. We are not indifferent to the fact that munitions factories in Bavaria — next door to Czechoslovakia — are again 'shifting into high gear for the sake of victory', as the phrase went in the past. It is in the factories of the infamous and extremely reactionary military-industrial complex that machine tools are working at capacity 'for the sake of victory' in the war capital is preparing to wage against socialism. Another West German development that alarms us is the policy of flirting with the revanchists — a policy increasingly swayed by militarism. Certain quarters would do well to recall the Nuremberg trials at which history condemned aggression.

We must patiently explain that the world is threatened with destruction. The West is deliberately underestimating this threat. One must admit, however, that in the socialist world, too, there are people who have grown so used to day-to-day stability that they refuse to admit the possibility of a tragic outcome. *I think we must keep stressing that the world is indivisible and that we have a common responsibility for its future. All must be made to realise that. We have, but this realisation has not turned us into conquerors. We must convince people and win them over to the side of an international policy based on a new way of political thinking.* The beginning of peaceful coexistence between the two systems should usher in an era, an age of humanity's salvation.

The new political thinking is an objective result of the search for opportunities to break out of a vicious circle. *Today, old habitual formulas which were once rooted in reality can no longer be applied automatically. Class-based antagonism between the two socio-economic systems has evolved into a contradiction in which the universal human aspect has precedence over class aspects.* But by acknowledging this we do not abandon our position of principle. The class struggle will continue as long as classes and socially different systems of government exist. But a war must be prevented. We have never regarded it and we cannot regard it as a means of proving the advantages of socialism as a system. Affirming social truth in the course of a peaceful rivalry has been, continues to be and will be our principle.

The new political thinking could and objectively had to emerge as a Marxist-Leninist response to the dialectics of our time. The novel aspect of the current situation is that we live in a nuclear age and that a war in Europe will destroy the world.

The strategic military equilibrium that has taken shape between the East and the West is of crucial importance. However, one should not make an absolute out of this parity: if it reaches a level that is too high, its role may change — if it is not changing already. Here, a positive factor may turn into

a negative one, into a factor which is, to a certain degree, self-contained and uncontrollable and which may lead to the outbreak of war. This is why we are interested not only in strategic military parity as such but also in maintaining it at the lowest possible level.

The Communists, who are in the front ranks of the struggle for mankind's salvation, are the first to adopt the new political thinking. Theirs is the loftiest humanitarian mission. They are the first to adopt the new thinking because the notion of war was alien to them even in the pre-nuclear age. There is a profound reason for this: peace and a better future not only for the working class but also for all working people have always been the programme of the Communists since our movement's inception.

The leaders in the capitalist world and politicians in bourgeois countries will also have to accept the new thinking. It is imperialism which has initiated all armed attacks against socialism. Only the more aggressive reactionary forces are still unable to understand that implementation of the Pentagon's plans for 'computer-controlled' warfare would be suicidal for the West. In other words, clinging to obsolete stereotypes is not only the worst kind of dogmatism but also — in today's world — evidently a crime against humanity. This is true above all of Europe.

During his visit to Prague in the spring of 1987 Mikhail Gorbachov posed the following question: *Where else if not in Europe is it time to promote the new political thinking?* The answer is clear: Europe is, indeed, best prepared for it.

The new thinking has led us Communists to the awareness that we must lead the struggle for nuclear disarmament and peace. This awareness prompts us to do all we can to be worthy of our mission. The 17th Congress of the CPCz set us major tasks of accelerating Czechoslovakia's socio-economic development. Following the example of the Soviet Communists, we are beginning to reorganise our socialist society in all its spheres. Our efforts are highly meaningful. They are an expression of our commitment, of our ethics. We the Communists of Czechoslovakia are working to make life on Earth better, to keep improving our own ability to build, to ensure happiness for the present and succeeding generations. There is no smooth, well-travelled road leading to this goal. *Responsible tasks call for selfless effort, discipline, order, boldness and firm conviction that we have chosen the right path.*

On the international scene we will act jointly with the other socialist countries and all those who are ready to cooperate with us in the step-by-step attainment of these objectives. We support the Soviet proposals aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000 and at the immediate removal of the Soviet and US medium-range missiles from Europe. We are consistent advocates of the peace initiatives put forward by the Warsaw Treaty member states. We welcome the efforts to create nuclear-free zones in the Balkans, in Scandinavia and in Central Europe. In October 1986 the CPCz co-sponsored the idea advanced by the SUPG and the SDPG on the creation of a 150km-wide nuclear-free corridor in the FRG, the GDR and Czechoslovakia on both sides of the demarcation line between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. Our project contains an appeal to all

governments maintaining their troops in this zone to begin negotiating the establishment of such a nuclear-free corridor as soon as possible. In April 1987 the governments of Czechoslovakia and the GDR proposed to the government of the FRG that they start discussing this issue without delay.

We regard the development of mutually beneficial economic ties among all signatories of the Helsinki Final Act as an extremely important part of the all-European process. In the past the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe did not tackle these questions, and we think this was unfair. That is why Czechoslovakia has proposed the convocation of an economic forum in Prague to consider the opportunities for and the most promising forms of cooperation in the commercial and economic spheres. We are convinced that an improvement of business ties in Europe will have a positive political effect.

Summing up, one should stress that Czechoslovakia has taken an imaginative part in all the joint initiatives of the Warsaw Treaty countries. *We see the foreign policy of the socialist community as a selfless manifestation of the new political thinking designed to benefit all mankind.*

The changes the CPSU is directing in the USSR, the resolutions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the personal contribution of Mikhail Gorbachov and the call for peace which is ringing from Moscow strengthen us in our conviction that the Czech and Slovak peoples made the right choice after World War II. They chose the path of socialism, peace, democracy and freedom. We are forging ahead shoulder-to-shoulder with the USSR, our loyal ally. That is the guarantee of our national existence and sovereignty. That is our choice, and neither cunning lures nor threats will make us abandon this path.

The documents adopted by the Warsaw Treaty countries at the Political Consultative Committee meeting in Berlin fully confirm that *peace and disarmament are the supreme goal of socialism. Together with all people of goodwill everywhere, we are striving to do as much as we can to consolidate peace, international security and cooperation. Disaster must not strike. Disaster can be prevented.*

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is fully determined to help make our European home forever secure and worthy of man. We intend to contribute effectively to the promotion of good relations among individuals, peoples and countries and to look for ways to accomplish this without resorting to old stereotypes. We want our work, our intellectual potential, our technology and our art to strengthen the foundation of the home the Europeans are jointly building. The life of our continent will be able to rely on constructive good-neighbour relations involving all states.

The 'theory' of deterrence must give way to the practice of trust and extensive cooperation. With firm determination and optimism, we will be working jointly to build a common European home so that the people of our continent would never face a common European grave.

¹ For details, see Jurgen Reusch, 'Space Age Research: For Peace or For War?', WMR, No. 1, 1987 — Ed.

Kampuchean-Thai border. Only the forces of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and the Kingdom of Thailand should be stationed in the area. We want both states to deny foreigners the use of the zone for actions aimed against the other side. An agreement could be reached on the width of the zone, as also on the procedures for international control. We have also reaffirmed our readiness to discuss with Thailand the problem of the Kampuchean refugees in that country, and of the Thai subjects who have found themselves on our soil.

However, Bangkok, which had made a deal with Washington, has stubbornly maintained its hostile policy with respect to Kampuchea. It has continued to provide asylum on Thai territory to the remnants of Pol Pot bands and other reactionary Khmers, has helped them to infiltrate our territory, and has supported their acts of sabotage inside our country. Thailand's armed forces have repeatedly committed acts in direct violation of Kampuchea's territorial integrity. Thailand has continued to play up the Khmer refugee problem for its own political and military purposes, which cut across the rules of international law. These moves and schemes of the Thai authorities are the cause of the present tensions on the Thai-Kampuchean border and are a serious impediment to attaining peace and stability in the region.

You have spoken of a 'special relationship' between Kampuchea, Vietnam and Laos. What does the term mean? What do you think of the Western claims about some kind of inequality between the members of the trilateral alliance?

This is a 'special relationship' because, with the passage of time, the combat solidarity between the peoples of Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam has become a vital necessity for defeating the common enemies and winning independence for our countries. Our solidarity has become a law of revolutionary development in all the three countries and the fundamental factor behind each people's successes. Whenever a blow is dealt at this solidarity, each of the countries' independence is jeopardised. That is why the three peoples of Indochina are fully resolved to keep strengthening their combat alliance, and invigorating their cooperation in every field on the basis of mutual respect, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs. The 'inequality' is a figment of the imperialist and reactionary circles' imagination, for they keep trying to 'divide and rule'.

The socialist way of development chosen by Kampuchea implies, as your party's documents say, the expansion and deepening of international cooperation along with self-reliance. The imperialist powers have continued their policy of trying to isolate Kampuchea. That being so, how have your country's external ties been developing?

Our people have mainly practised self-reliance, while drawing strength from all-round cooperation with Vietnam, Laos, the Soviet Union and other socialist and friendly countries in successfully defending the country

and gradually building socialism. The Kampuchean people's major achievements over the past eight years have resulted from our own great efforts, but they cannot be viewed in isolation from the vast and valuable assistance and support we have been getting within the framework of effective ties with the fraternal socialist countries or from the support being given to us by the international forces of peace and justice. In diplomatic and political terms, this support and cooperation have been largely instrumental in consolidating our country's international positions. Despite the moves by imperialism and other reactionary forces, which have been trying to isolate Kampuchea, progressive-minded people on every continent are well aware of the difference between Kampuchea's government, which is the only truly legitimate representative of the Kampuchean people, and the so-called coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea, which does not have an inch of the country's territory, which has no population, and no capital, a government which is nothing but a screen to cover up the true nature of Pol Pot's criminal clique.

Your speeches and articles invariably express your commitment to the cause of world peace. How do you assess the package of proposals made by Mikhail Gorbachov in Vladivostok and Delhi?

All the peoples cherish peace and survival, and that is especially true of the Kampucheans, who have had to endure great suffering inflicted by colonialism and US imperialism, and who were put to the most brutal trials under Pol Pot's man-hating regime. That is why our party, our government and our people put a high value on all of the Soviet Union's peace initiatives, notably the historic Statement of January 15, 1986, the Vladivostok Statement by General Secretary of the CPSU CC Mikhail Gorbachov on the problems of the Asian-Pacific region, and the Delhi Declaration on the Principles for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World.

These outstanding proposals are of great international significance, they spring from a noble sense of responsibility to mankind, and are a source of hope and inspiration for us. Together with the fraternal peoples of Vietnam and Laos, of the socialist countries and of the rest of the world, the Kampucheans are fully resolved to spare no effort in fighting for the elimination of nuclear weapons and for the preservation of life and civilisation.

The fight is not an easy one, considering the outdated thinking of the US leadership, which has continued to conduct its policy of neoglobalism. But the Soviet Union's peace policy, as formulated by the historic 27th Congress of the CPSU, and the major initiatives coming from Lenin's country, the bulwark of the world revolution and peace on the Earth, have won the hearts and minds of the peoples of the globe; they have awakened a sense of responsibility among the masses and have given them fresh energy. The struggle for peace and for survival has assumed unprecedented proportions. The Kampuchean people seek to join their efforts with those of the other peoples, and look to the future with well-justified optimism.

There is no doubt at all that the forces of progress and socialism will score further victories.

In summing up, how would you describe the substance of the foreign policy strategy of your party and the Kampuchean state?

Our party's Fifth Congress in October 1985 adopted a full-scale programme for the country's economic and social development. This programme provides for the rehabilitation of the national economy, transformation of the relations of production, re-organisation of material and technical basis, and the laying of the foundations of national education and culture on socialist principles. There is to be a special effort to stimulate agriculture, forestry, the wood-working industry and fisheries. All of that is aimed to make the economic basis solid. We need to strengthen the alliance of workers and peasants, tirelessly seek the right forms for the working people's participation in government, and rally and unite all the patriotic and progressive circles of the population, religious-minded people, ethnic minorities and the middle strata.

Accordingly, we have also formulated the goals of our foreign policy, which are to fulfil the strategic tasks in defence of the homeland and gradually, step by step, to advance society along the way to socialism. It is a policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation, a policy pursued under the banner of patriotism and internationalist solidarity, a policy closely tying in Kampuchea's revolutionary tasks with the common interests of the world revolution, and blending the strength of the nations with that of the epoch. Our external economic policy devotes special attention to further strengthening the combat solidarity of the three peoples of Indochina, and solidarity and all-round cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other fraternal socialist countries.

Alternative To The 'Grand Coalition' Line

Franz Muhri—Chairman, Communist
Party of Austria

THE Austrian Communists believe that the restructuring process in the Soviet Union is a new and important factor in the present international situation which has an influence on developments in the world, and our party voiced its solidarity with the process at its 26th Congress (Vienna,

Franz Muhri was born in 1924 into a miner's family. Following Nazi Germany's *Anschluss* of Austria, he took part in action against the Nazis. He joined the CP Austria in 1945 and was several times elected district committee secretary. In 1953, he became a board member of the Lower Austria provincial organisation, and from 1958 to 1961 was secretary of the Styria provincial organisation. In 1954, he was CC alternate member, and since 1961 has been a member of the CC and the Political Bureau. From 1965 to 1968 and from 1970 to 1978, he was a member of the CC Secretariat. Since May 1965, he has been Chairman of the CP Austria.

March 1987), both because it makes socialism more attractive, and because the tasks set by the CPSU are in complete accord with our common communist ideals.

The changes in the Soviet Union have embarrassed the propagandists of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. One bourgeois paper in Austria even wondered whether the Soviet Union would 'still remain communist' after these transformations. The answer is, of course, quite clear: the revolutionary transformations are being effected on the basis of socialism, and they are designed for more, rather than less, socialism.

The opponents of the socialist system claim that the frank criticism and open discussion of problems, mistakes and difficulties in the USSR are evidence that they have been right all along in saying that the system itself does not work. The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution seventy years ago and the building of a new society in one country naturally involved the solution of challenging problems and the surmounting of formidable obstacles. There have also been some 'bitter moments', as Comrade Gorbachov put it, but the Soviet Union's successes have been much more significant. Its development, like that of the other socialist countries, shows that our party's programme was right in saying: "Advance is only possible through a resolution of contradictions even under socialism . . . In contrast to capitalism, whose irreconcilable contradictions can be resolved only with its own elimination, the resolution of contradictions under socialism is not only possible, but is a specific form and key motive force of its development."

The realities have confirmed our conviction that, *for all its problems, mistakes and difficulties, existing socialism has always had basic advantages over capitalism, and that is all the truer today.* In the present international situation, moreover, the fundamentally different lines of the two systems' development are manifested even more clearly and strongly.

As socialism once again shows its capacity to find a just solution for such basic problems as ensuring the right to work, social certitude, equality of nations, and extension of democratic rights and freedoms, the historical breakdown of capitalism and its general crisis are now ever more glaring: these are reflected in the growth of mass unemployment, the deepening contradictions between imperialism and the peoples of the Third World, and the spread of reactionary anti-democratic tendencies. The achievements of the scientific and technical revolution under capitalism increasingly turn against human beings, whereas they go to benefit the people under socialism.

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have acted as a powerful international factor for peace, providing international support for all the forces fighting against imperialism and oppression, for the people's freedom and social progress, and for averting a nuclear war.

From its analysis of the present situation, our 26th Congress drew the conclusion that *international solidarity and the CP Austria's friendship with the USSR, the first socialist state, and with the other socialist countries are also in complete accord with the Austrian people's national interests.*

The bitter clash between the forces of war and of peace is a key feature of our day. There is still no evidence of any readiness on the part of the

Reagan administration to get down to implementing the Soviet Union's constructive proposals for preventing the militarisation of space, for ridding the Earth of nuclear and chemical weapons by 2000, for starting general disarmament in the West and the East under the most stringent international control, and for creating a world without weapons and without wars. These initiatives have met with a wide response everywhere. Action against Washington's policy, which threatens mankind's survival, have multiplied in various public circles.

The CP Austria is on the side of the forces of peace. We are sure that the peoples can avert a third world war and ensure lasting peace through concerted action. Austria, with its permanent neutrality status, can and must make a contribution to the worldwide struggle by conducting an active and peaceful foreign policy, and also by refusing to take part in the arms race, and gradually dismantling its military establishment. The CPA's 26th Congress demanded that the government, the National Council, and the President should come out for international détente, for all-round implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, for elimination of all nuclear weapons in Europe, for general disarmament and especially for a halt to the policy of militarising space.

The Austrian Communists have made a significant contribution to the struggle for peace over the past several years. They have acted both as an independent force, and within the ranks of the national peace movement, with its effective mass actions. The main resolution of the 26th Congress formulated our principles as follows: "The CP Austria has not wavered in its assumption that the successes of the peace movement are crucially determined by two factors: its breadth, with cooperation between people of differing world outlooks, and the maintenance of its independence despite all the attempts to turn it into an appendage of some organisation or trend; its capacity to agree on demands aimed to remove the gravest threats to peace and their causes. Many CP activists have displayed initiative in helping to extend the peace movement and to stand up for its objectives. The Communist Party has been making its own indispensable contribution to the struggle for peace. It regards the movement not as a means for changing the social system, but for uniting all those who seek to strengthen world peace, regardless of differences in world outlook. The Communists have made it clear, however, that the roots of war lie within the system of monopoly capitalism, whose ruling circles are always inclined to reaction, and never to democracy. If the struggle for peace is to be effective, it must be carried on outside the class framework. It meets the interests of mankind as a whole. The Communists have no doubt at all that the struggle for peaceful relations between states does not signify abandonment of the class struggle or a freeze on it in countries where it is generated by internal contradictions."

Our solidarity with all the liberation movements, with the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America coming out against imperialism, reactionary regimes and fascist dictatorships is unwavering. Wide-ranging and diverse actions have been made possible in Austria over the past few years by cooperation between Communists, Socialists, Christians and non-party people. The record shows the need for more closely concerting

the activity of the movements for anti-imperialist solidarity and in defence of peace, which should retain their specific features and remain independent.

Our party believes that it is of great significance for the peace struggle in the present international situation to restore and consolidate the unity of the international communist movement. That does not cut across contacts and cooperation with Socialists, and social-democratic and other peaceable and progressive forces. The Austrian Communists have met with approval the re-establishment of ties between the CP Austria and the CP China, which were interrupted for over two decades.

The situation in our country is determined by the sharpening general crisis of capitalism. The prolonged favourable economic environment, with relatively high economic growth rates in the 1960s and the early 1970s, helped to bring about a marked rise in the working people's living standards. Capital simultaneously made fat profits and a tiny minority became immensely rich. Both happened without major class clashes, on the basis of social partnership, the specific form in which state-monopoly capitalism has ruled Austria.

Since the parliamentary elections in November 1986, there has been a coalition government of two major parties — the Socialist Party and Austrian People's Party — which were up to then in the opposition. The task of the 'Grand Coalition' is to provide a broad political basis for the policy of big capital, and that is met by the coalition pact and the government programme. These are designed to have the working people shoulder new burdens through higher taxes, higher cost of housing and rents, lower wage rates, worse pension provision, and so on. The thrust of capital's offensive is to fragment and reprivatise the public sector, which has key positions in the Austrian economy. Reprivatisation would strengthen the influence of foreign capital. In view of the desire on the part of influential political and business circles for closer ties with the European Community, that would pose a threat to the country's independence and permanent neutrality.

All of that has proceeded simultaneously with an ever more pronounced political shift to the right. Neoconservatism is dominant in the leadership of the Austrian People's Party, while state-monopoly managers wield the main influence among the leaders of the Socialists, who have adopted conservative attitudes and have conducted a conservative line. In the past, the Socialist Party of Austria insisted on reforms, but the line of counter-reforms and abandonment of the working people's gains has been gaining the upper hand.

The seating of eight deputies from the Greens after the November parliamentary elections is a new element in the country's political life. Both bourgeois-conservative and critically-minded democratic circles are represented by the Greens, who have put forward a number of progressive demands, among them environmental protection, disarmament, and abolition of privileges for those in power, all of which paves the way for our cooperation with them in attaining these objectives. But we have not desisted from criticising essentially conservative proposals, such as additional taxes to fund environmental protection, and no building of new

power plants on the Danube.

The so-called Freedom Party, under its new leader Jorg Haider, has strengthened its positions in parliament. It is a nationalistic, German-oriented party which has a policy that is farther out to the right than the neoconservative policy of the present coalition, and which is ideologically and politically linked to neofascism. It has engaged in wild social demagoguery in an appeal to working people discontented with the effects of the crisis and the government's actions, in an effort to win them over, and to prevent any shift to the left, and so to help preserve the system of capital's domination. Exposing the demagoguery of Haider and his party is an important component of the general anti-monopoly and anti-fascist struggle.

Social partnership continues to be the main form of monopoly domination in the new situation. The government, trade union and business leaders have found common ground for taking important backroom decisions, and for preventing the working people from having a real say in administration and management. Their main purpose is to split up and paralyse the working class, undermine the ties of solidarity and to go on preventing the establishment of a broad united resistance front. Social partnership has robbed the unions of their independence and has turned them into an appendage of government policy, so also narrowing down democracy within the unions.

The 'Grand Coalition' policy does not open up a way out of the crisis, but on the contrary, keeps driving the country deeper into it. By catering for the interests of capital, the rich and the privileged strata, the government tends to aggravate the interrelated contradictions which are characteristic of state-monopoly capitalism in Austria. There are the contradictions between wage-labour and capital, and the contradictions between the big bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy and technocracy catering for it, on the one hand, and the majority of the people who are being increasingly subjected to oppression and exploitation, on the other. The result is growing political differentiation, but it does not run between the traditionally bourgeois Austrian People's Party and the Socialist Party of Austria (and we do not equate the two), but rather within them: the leaders' policy tends to be increasingly at odds with the interests of the rank-and-file members and voters from the working class and the other labouring strata. There are, therefore, *fresh potentialities for joint initiatives, joint action and alliances between Socialists, Communists, and populists at the grassroots in the fight against the present government*, which is most pro-capitalist since the Republic of Austria was restored in 1945. The readiness to resist has been increasing gradually, and there is growing discontent among Socialists who are members of production councils and trade union functionaries. New forms of joint action and alliances have been appearing, such as civic initiative groups urging effective protection of the environment, committees in defence of state enterprises, and so on.

At the same time, there are many doubts and much lack of faith in success being implanted by the ruling circles, and that requires of the Communists more persevering efforts to convince the masses that their interests can, in fact, be defended, and to affirm their sense of solidarity

and confidence in their own strength. The resolution of the CPA's 26th Congress emphasised: *"It is an important task for the Communists, when taking action and standing up for the working people's gains and reforms, to put forward the alternative to the system of state-monopoly capitalism, and to mould the anti-monopoly consciousness among those who are involved in these actions, among all to whom we address ourselves."*

We Communists are sure that there is a *progressive alternative* to the 'Grand Coalition' policy, and our 26th Congress issued an appeal to the working people to act together for such an alternative. It provided for an economic policy to be conducted in the national interest, including full-cycle production of high-quality products and more funding of research and development for that purpose. Safeguarding the state industry from reprivatisation and handover to foreign capital, and resistance to the country's closer integration with the EEC hold out the prospect not only of preserving existing jobs, but also of creating new ones. That simultaneously signifies a consolidation of Austria's permanent neutrality and independence.

A public employment programme could help to reduce mass and long-term unemployment. Jobs could be provided for 200,000 persons by a switch to a 35-hour working week without pay cuts, and abandonment of flexible working time.

Our alternative is aimed to ensure social certitude, and that requires a regulation of wages, including the establishment of a minimum wage of 10,000 schillings, an active social policy, a tax reform at the expense of the rich and the super-rich, a reduction of the gap between middle and high incomes, and a switch to the equal-pay-for-equivalent-work principle. The effects of these measures on mass purchasing power could help to increase the number of jobs. We demand a return to the social policy of housing construction and tenancy, no raising of pension age, and no cuts in pensions.

Our party's approach is the following: meaningful participation by workers and employees in solving economic problems, instead of deals behind the people's backs; effective elimination of privileges, instead of spurious reforms; equal opportunities for advancement, instead of greater discrimination against women. We want a reform of the electoral law to make each vote count equally. We also want a comprehensive school system for all children under 15. A democratic reform of the secondary and higher school should rid it of the conservative spirit and pressure on students. Implementation of the provisions of our constitution and of Article Seven of the State Treaty on the equality of ethnic minorities should enlarge, instead of folding up, the bilingual schools in Carinthia.

Finally, the Communist Party believes that policy on environmental protection and development of the energy industry must be conducted under democratic supervision, with the working people's participation in management, and funded from profits. Tens of thousands of jobs can be provided by a development of the resources of the Danube and investments in environmental protection.

All these proposals and demands are realistic, and if they are to be put through, there must be a change in the balance of political forces, a shift to

the left, instead of the shift to the right, The working class, in alliance with other strata of the working people, is the most powerful factor in developing the situation in the country, provided it carries on the struggle for its interests with unanimity and cohesion.

The CP Austria has advanced over the past several years in struggle for the working people's interests. That applies especially to its activity as a working class party along two main lines: preservation and strengthening of peace, and defence of the working people's economic, social and environmental demands. We have had some increase in the number of votes and seats in elections to communal councils and production councils at enterprises, and the party's influence in several provincial elections and in the latest elections to the National Council has increased. The CPA's role in the political battles has grown, and it is much larger than the election returns suggest. But the party's organisational efforts still fall short of its political successes. Strengthening and improving organisational and political work, a balanced cadre policy, and recruitment of young people are the exceptionally important tasks we have set ourselves for the period ahead.

Strengthening the political aspect of the activity of our governing bodies and local organisations is the key problem on whose solution depend the level of the CPA's work and attractiveness and, consequently, its greater strength. It was said at the 26th Congress: "The whole point of strengthening the political aspect is to develop the capacity of the party committees to implement the party's main line, and to conduct an independent course within the immediate ambit of their influence." Realisation of our main line is, therefore, not only an organisational, but also an important political matter.

It is highly important to raise the level of ideological work within the party and among the masses. If the weak points in this sphere are to be surmounted, the Communists must have *a deeper knowledge of the party programme, show in more concrete and comprehensible terms the substance and mechanism of social partnership as the main form of state-monopoly capitalist rule in Austria, and act more vigorously to explain the advantages of socialism, without glossing over the difficulties.*

Local CPA organisations have had some success in their agitation work among the masses and the public at large. We now believe it to be necessary to overcome the weakness of our agitation on a national scale. The first steps were already taken in the latest elections to the National Council. Now we are seeking consistently and purposefully to take account of the interests of the various groups of the population in our agitation practice. Our attention is focused on the rising generation, especially on young people from the working class, and here we must not ignore the ongoing structural changes. There is ever wider participation in party work among the public by progressive workers of culture, and that has yielded results.

The CPA's organisational strengthening on the basis of its ideological and political positions, the policy of joint action and alliance along the two main lines of our activity are important conditions for the party to be much more equal to its tasks and potentialities than it was in the past. On that

depends the course of the struggle for lasting peace and the right to work, the struggle in defence and expansion of democratic gains, for national independence and international solidarity, and for Austria's socialist perspective.

The 70th Anniversary of the October Revolution

Impetus of Revolutionary Renewal

Gildo Gasperoni — Chairman, San
Marino Communist Party

Committed to the working class movement since he was a youth, Gildo Gasperoni (b. 1906), whose father was a San Marino artisan, has faced many severe tests. He joined the French Communist Party in 1926 and worked in the Communist Party of Luxembourg in 1930-1936. During the anti-fascist struggle of the Spanish people he joined the Communist Party of Spain, becoming the political commissar of the Garibaldi Battalion in the Twelfth International Brigade and then commissar of the international centre for recruiting and training volunteers. In 1941 he was among those who restored the San Marino Communist Party, holding the post of General Secretary for more than a quarter of a century. In 1973 he was elected the party's Chairman.

Below, in response to *WMR*'s request, Gildo Gasperoni considers the significance of the traditions laid down by the October Revolution.

"I WAS only a boy at the time but the changes that shook Europe, particularly those that took place in Russia, the October Revolution and the now legendary name of Lenin stirred my young imagination and awakened a revolutionary spirit in me," Gildo Gasperoni, veteran of the international communist movement, writes in his recollections of the events of 1917. "The force of attraction of these events was so great that even I, a 12-year-old, could not refrain from getting some paint and inscribing Lenin's name on a colonnade in my home town of Borgo Maggiore. Although the letters are weathered, they can be seen to this day."¹

The 70th anniversary of an historic event, the Great October Socialist Revolution, is coming closer. As well as opening the road to socialism in a concrete country that revolution has become the paramount landmark in humanity's liberation from all forms of spiritual, intellectual, political,

economic, and social oppression. This revolution and the building of the new system in the USSR laid the foundation for the most advanced society in technological, industrial, and cultural terms.

Highest Manifestation of Freedom and Democracy

The October Revolution was not merely a repetition of revolutions of the past. It triggered a series of dramatic upheavals in human history. The peoples got their first-ever opportunity for winning genuine social emancipation, sovereignty and national independence, and radical reforms were inaugurated that fundamentally altered the course of the historical process.

The October Revolution led to the emergence of a favourable situation for the formation of many communist parties with the resultant new correlation of forces in the revolutionary struggle of the working class. The further expansion of relations and cooperation between the fraternal parties enabled them to consolidate their position and reinforce their influence in the course of political and ideological battles. The relations between them underwent an evolution in the direction of steadily growing democratisation. The dissimilarity of the situations and tasks that had to be addressed in different countries in different periods predetermined the shape of the international links of the Communists that allowed each party to be an active, dynamic and united force. Although this crucial process did not embrace the entire working class, democratic and revolutionary movement, it must nevertheless be seen as a powerful factor of contemporary history.

It would be an irreparable mistake to underrate the significance of the October Revolution, its immense force of attraction, its influence on people's suffering from capitalist and colonialist oppression, and the impetus that it gave to the struggle of the international proletariat and other progressive forces. Of course, since then there have been momentous changes in the world, and this revolution cannot be regarded as a canonised prescription. The directions of the struggle for the new society are now determined not according to *a priori* models but on the basis of present-day realities, one of which is that widening socio-economic, democratic, and cultural circles, who cherish the ideals of pluralism, people's power and freedom, are turning to socialism.

I should like to remind conservatives and dogmatists, those who love to command, that socialist democracy is the underlying condition of the development of world socialism.

Lenin's teaching helps us to appreciate this relationship. On the one hand, the proletariat cannot accomplish the socialist revolution without clearing the ground for it by a struggle for democracy. On the other hand, the triumphant new system cannot consolidate its victory without institutionalising full democracy. For that reason in the USSR and the other socialist countries it is not only possible but normal to extend socialist government by the people with account of society's structure, traditions, and forms of political, economic, and cultural life. With the contradictions between the two socio-economic systems growing deeper and with the capitalist world in the grip of growing injustice, arbitrary rule,

unemployment, and impingements upon human dignity, socialism is today seen as the highest manifestation of freedom and democracy, the lodestar of the present and future struggles of the working class movement, of the masses. The question of socialism's democratic content and the problem of defending peace are of equal significance for those who are determined to see socialist transformations in the capitalist countries and for the peoples of the developing nations.

Do Not Cling to Abstract Patterns

We see a need for a new international solidarity resting on the changed potential of the working class, democratic and popular movements, on their actions to resolve pressing problems, ensure détente and peaceful coexistence of states, and do away with the logic of blocs and relations based on positions of strength. Such solidarity would foster unity among the peace forces, promote their mass actions, and thereby create the conditions permitting socialist ideals to prove their superiority in the political and ideological struggle.

In accordance with the principles formalised in international documents of the communist parties and at their congresses, each party makes its own contribution to the new understanding of internationalism, which is consistent with the ongoing far-reaching social and economic changes in the world and the altering combination of cohesion and autonomy in the international communist movement. I am referring to a concept that harmonises with the growth of the forces of socialism, enriches its ideological content, and takes the diversity of its manifestations and prospects for further development into consideration. It presumes recognition not only of general laws but also of the various ways for building the new society seen not as a national variant of some universal model but as a concrete and specific form of revolutionary transformations, as a contribution to the development of Marxist-Leninist theory.

The Soviet Union and the other European socialist countries have attained a high level of progress. This is a reality that has to be studied without, of course, engaging in apologetic rhetoric. Those who cling to abstract patterns and ignore the lessons of history are the only ones who may doubt the socialist nature of the system in these countries and their role in the struggle against imperialism, or belittle the significance of the competition between the two systems. Countries like China, Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Cuba are likewise an important factor of the modern world. The liberation movements of the peoples who have shaken off the yoke of colonialism, withstood severe trials, won independence, and embarked upon the building of the new society are a major locomotive of the world revolutionary process.

The 20th Congress of the CPSU, which for us remains an unforgettable historic event, was a turning point in the socio-economic processes in the USSR and in the relations within the international working class and communist movement. Despite the mistakes made by Nikita Khrushchov it may be said that in that period there was an undeniable drive against conservatism and dogmatism that were denounced in the decisions of that

congress. After Leonid Brezhnev was elected to head the party the principles of that congress were not applied consistently: the process started in 1956 went into reverse and this undermined the Soviet Union's socio-economic development and, in our view, the quests for new initiatives in foreign policy, disarmament, and the preservation of peace.

Mikhail Gorbachov's election to the leadership of the CPSU marked an emphatic break with the negative phenomena of the past and the assertion of new attitudes in foreign policy and in issues related to the country's socio-economic development. I subscribe wholeheartedly to the view stated in the Soviet journal *New Times*: "We apply the term 'new thinking' to, above all, the new line taken by our party on world affairs, to the settlement of the most pressing international problems. But are not the radical steps that the party is taking in the country itself — they constitute, it may be said, a revolution within a revolution — are they not illustrative of the new thinking? Dialectical, profoundly innovative thinking. Thinking based on a sober, realistic analysis of the objective processes of social development and presupposing the need for similarly realistic conclusions for practical purposes."²

A Turn Towards New Levels of Achievement

The significance of the sharply critical discussions at the CPSU's 27th Congress is that they not only brought to light unmistakable signs of stagnation and indicated that in recent years there had been a decline of the rate of socio-economic development in the USSR. *This forum of the Soviet Communists prompted an innovative turn towards new levels of achievement, charted the road to reforms, including a reassessment of foreign policy, and called for a constant, strict, and unvarnished analysis of the actual state of affairs.* Proposals were made for a reduction of nuclear weapons and it was stressed that there was an urgent need for negotiations to ban all types of space weapons which were intensifying the risk of a cataclysmic thermonuclear conflict in which the human species would be wiped out.

The central concern of our day is to find the ways and means for putting an end to the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, as soon as possible. Every effort must be made to attain this vital objective and, in the first place, to rule out the threat of a nuclear confrontation on our continent, by negotiations. An agreement on the abolition of intermediate-range missiles and a steady downgrading of the level of the military equilibrium would be a major step towards a nuclear-free Europe. For that reason the relevant Soviet proposals are regarded as a new contribution to peace and disarmament.

The Soviet peace initiatives, put forward by Mikhail Gorbachov over the past two years, have no precedent in history either in content or for their impact on world politics. They spell out a detailed programme for freeing the planet from nuclear and chemical arsenals, dramatically cutting back armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, and preventing an arms race in any form in the future.

In the Interests of All Nations

The 70th anniversary of the October Revolution comes at a time when the question of peace is decisive to the destiny of democracy, the progress of nations, and the life of civilisation and of the human species as such. Understandably, worldwide attention is focussed on this question.

After several years of intense crisis of the system of international relations Mikhail Gorbachov's meetings with Ronald Reagan in Geneva and then in Reykjavik generated much hope in the world. But the US President was not inclined to part with his 'star wars' programme. The situation's subsequent deterioration was also due to the policies of US imperialism, which is kindling flashpoints of tension and orchestrating new aggressive provocations. We consider that these policies must be counteracted by mobilising the peace forces, by broad united actions with the participation of all sections of the people.

It is in the interests of all nations that the differences which surfaced in Reykjavik should be surmounted and that negotiations should produce agreements. Of course, much will have to be done by the two great powers in the first place, but it is very important that all the peace forces and all governments, regardless of their affiliation to military blocs, should develop their own disarmament initiatives. This would take the détente process off the ground.

The time has come to stop balancing on the brink of disaster. Today, as never before, life is imperatively demanding a serious dialogue on the start of détente, an impulse towards peaceful coexistence of states with different socio-economic systems, the settlement of all problems by negotiations, and the undeviating observance of the sovereignty and national independence of every country, big or small.

Disarmament, development, a new international economic order, human rights, and national independence constitute the fundamental principles of peace and progress in all areas of national and international life.

¹ Gildo Gasperoni, *Itinerario politico: a San Marino e in Europa in difesa della democrazia*, A.I.E.P. Editrice, 1983, p. 1.

² *Temps nouveaux*, No. 45, 1986, p. 4

the party

For A United Front Of Progressive Forces

Ajoy Roy — CC Secretary, Communist
Party of Bangladesh

THE Fourth Congress of our party was held in Dhaka from April 7 to 11, 1987, amongst tremendous enthusiasm. Thousands of people gathered for the formal opening ceremony and the opening session started amidst resounding slogans, with red flags fluttering overhead. Representatives from patriotic, democratic and left parties conveyed their greetings to the Congress in the opening session, which was attended also by delegations from fraternal parties of other countries and *World Marxist Review*.

The Congress was held at a critical juncture of the national life. As a result of development along the road of capitalism, dependent on imperialism, and ever-growing neocolonial exploitation, the national economy, extremely backward as it is, is sinking deeper into the mire of the crisis. While foreign debts have been steadily piling up, the productive forces in industry and agriculture have remained undeveloped, leading to further indebtedness for the simple reason of keeping the country going. The payment of instalments and interest on the already piled up loans exceeded the safe limit of 20 per cent of the export earnings in 1983-1984. The terms of foreign aid are growing tougher and more and more harsh conditions are imposed by the IMF and the World Bank, to which the Bangladesh government is conceding at every step.

The adverse terms of trade are causing grave problems. Contrary to the government's rhetoric, food shortages have remained an insoluble problem. Factories are working far below their installed capacity. Lay-offs have become a regular feature, mainly in the private sector. Illegal trade has assumed awesome proportions. Easy profit in such trade is tempting, too, to those who would like to invest in industries. This vicious circle in the economy entails most grave economic and socio-political consequences.

The objective possibilities of doing away with the legacy of long colonial rule, under which Bangladesh suffered and was exploited for more than two hundred years, which opened up with independence in 1971, were reversed with the violent political change-over in 1975. Since then, the country has been enmeshed more and more in the web of the neocolonialist economy of imperialism to the benefit of the compradore and bureaucratic bourgeoisie, which is tightening its grip on the state machinery.

Since the coming to power of the present government through a coup d'état in 1982, the strictures and prescriptions of the World Bank have been followed more energetically. A large-scale denationalisation process

has been launched. Not only jute and textile mills have been handed over to the private sector, but also financial institutions like banks and insurance companies have been transferred to private ownership. Credits have been extended liberally to them, industrial policies have been formulated to their advantage, and the doors have been thrown wide open to the TNCs.

As a result, though there has been no industrial development, the growth of compradore and bureaucratic capital has proceeded at a fast pace with the blessing of the state machinery, which is increasingly coming under its sway. In the interests of this narrow stratum, dictatorial military rule, naked or in disguise, has become the order of the day.

On the other hand, exploitation has increased manyfold in recent years, pauperisation of the peasantry has assumed tremendous proportions, and unemployment has grown unprecedentedly. Education and the health services, always meagre, have plunged into further crisis. On the insistence of the World Bank, the national currency has been devalued 37 times since 1982 and the resultant inflation cause bad hardships to the majority of people. To sum it all up, more and more riches have accumulated in few hands while the condition of the majority has further worsened.

All this is giving rise to discontent amongst all the sections of the population. The people are fighting against continued military rule, expressing their wrath against the government in repeated general strikes and other actions. The unity of the democratic and left forces has been forged in this struggle. All that has kindled new hopes in the people's minds. But the bourgeois leadership of the democratic movement has failed to live up to the expectations of the people. The unity of the workers' federations and student organisations, achieved in the course of the movement, has also been disrupted. And it is because of the sectarian attitude of the leftist demagogues that unity in these fields has not been reforged till today. Governmental intelligence agencies have made deep penetrations into all political parties except a few, which gives the government extra advantage for manoeuvre and causes more problems to the popular movement.

Taking advantage of the disarray currently prevailing in the camp of the democratic and left forces, the government is trying to consolidate its position through its party, the National Party, which it formed by using all the state machinery. Until now, however, it has failed to gain ground amongst the people, and stands isolated because of its anti-people policy.

In this situation, the fascistic and fundamentalist forces are also trying to forge ahead. With liberal backing of reactionary Middle East powers, they are trying to consolidate their hold of the people. Though they have as yet been unable to extend their influence amongst the broad masses, they use a section of the youth which has fallen for their ideas to build up a shock force to be used in case of necessity. They also try to take advantage of the anti-government sentiments of the people by sloganising for democracy and democratic rights. The party of the late President Ziaur Rahman, which has the same class basis as that of the government, also tries to pose as a champion of democracy along with some tiny groups and with the backing of a section of the Army.

Though martial law has been formally lifted, and a parliament exists, yet

in reality it is the military junta that remains the real source of power. Moreover, in order to make their rule constitutionally permanent, the military intend to change the constitution, already amended many times, by incorporating a clause which would ensure the constitutional participation of the military in state affairs in the name of providing for the participation of different segments of society. To guarantee the safe passage of such an amendment, they want to have fresh general elections, which the government expects to give it a clear two-thirds majority in parliament. In fact, the government is merely looking for an opportune moment to carry through its plan.

The Third Congress of the Communist Party of Bangladesh held in 1980 adopted the slogans of bread, clothing, land and work, and the Communists laid emphasis on building up under those slogans a movement of the working class and other toiling people. Much has been done along these lines since then. Trade unions have grown stronger and the federation in which our comrades work is the strongest in the country. The party's success amongst agricultural labourers is worth mentioning. Numerous local struggles and actions on individual issues have helped agricultural workers to get organised, and their union is an influential mass organisation today. The struggle of the peasantry has also picked up in this period. Work amongst students and women has been stepped up as well. Of course, much remains to be done and there is no reason to be complacent about the results. Of particular importance is the task of politicisation of the working class and the other toiling people.

The party's prestige amongst the people has increased not only because of the struggle of the working class and other working people. All through these years, particularly since the promulgation of martial law in March 1982, the party has always been in the forefront of the struggle for democracy. Along with other democratic and progressive forces, our comrades have been doing their utmost everywhere to organise and advance this struggle. *The party has pursued a policy of combining the task of organising united action against military rule with that of advancing the movement of the toiling people.*

The Communist Party of Bangladesh has played an important role in forging the unity of the democratic and left forces and in stepping up and broadening resistance to authoritarian rule. In the past four years, it has brought people out into the streets many times on different occasions. It was on our party's initiative that large-scale working class actions took place in 1984. The party's initiative and influence were most important in forging the unity of all the trade union federations of the country, culminating in the establishment of the Coordinating Committee of the Bangladesh Trade Unions.

This approach has consolidated the positions of our party amongst the working people and, moreover, added to its prestige on the national scene. As a result, the numerical strength of the party tripled between the two congresses. By the beginning of the Fourth Congress, the party had its organisations in 300 subdistricts (*uprazillas*) and in 60 districts (the total number of these administrative units is 460 and 64 correspondingly).

Though the bourgeois parties are still larger and more influential than

the CPB, the people are pinning ever greater expectations on us because of the failure of the bourgeois political organisations to lead the movement against the military rule. The people hope that the Communists will be able to find a way out of the present impasse. Against this background, the party's Fourth Congress assumed national importance.

The congress discussed and adopted the political and organisational reports of the Central Committee, a revised programme document and a political resolution reflecting the immediate tasks of the party.

The documents of the congress characterise the country's ruling classes as bureaucratic capital having the nature of compradores, who depend for their interests on imperialism. Pursuing their selfish ends, they readily bow to imperialist diktat, which leads to further deepening of neocolonialist exploitation and the aggravation of the economic and socio-political crisis. The congress concluded that *stable democracy and democratic rights were related to the question of removing from power the present ruling classes, whose interests were looked after and guaranteed by the military junta.*

Having made an in-depth analysis of the social and economic conditions prevailing in the country, the programme document brought out the slogan of *a socialist-oriented national democratic revolution*. The Communists point out the dialectical relationship between a national democratic revolution and socialist orientation and stress that it is the only way of overcoming the age-old backwardness and achieving national regeneration. The programme document further says that capitalism has no future in Bangladesh and cannot lead to independent development even in a relative sense.

To develop the necessary subjective factor for the revolution, the document calls for *a united front of all the anti-imperialist, democratic and progressive forces*, including not only the working class, agricultural labourers, the peasantry and the middle strata but also all patriotic sections, among them religious leaders and representatives of communal and ethnic minorities. The programme document states the possibility of finding a common language even with that section of the bourgeoisie which is interested in national industrial growth and therefore has reason to be against imperialism. Dealing with rich peasants (the document differentiates in this case between those whose main sources of income are from agriculture and those who derive their major earnings from usury, trade, etc., categorising the latter as enemies of the revolution), the programme document points out the possibility of their being friendly towards the front. In both cases, it is necessary to win them over towards the front in spite of their vacillations.

Analysing the experience of Bangladesh, the programme document points out that unless the working class and its party assume the role of the chief initiator, the front will not materialise and the revolution will not advance. While assigning this role to the working class and its party, the programme document speaks highly of the role of revolutionary democracy, specifically the revolutionary intelligentsia, which has a real potential for development. *But it is the firm unity of the working class, agricultural labourers and peasants that will be the driving force of the whole process.*

The programme document further clarifies the party's attitude towards religion, especially Islam. The Communists are opposed to the use of religion by the reactionary forces for their ends but honour the deep-seated religious beliefs of people, and share the feelings of social justice, peace and service to humanity which to the common people are the essence of their religious beliefs.

While advancing the slogan of a socialist-oriented national democratic revolution, the party, aware of the alignment of forces in the country today, has a realistic view of its own positions. We stress the necessity of building up immediately a nationwide movement on *a minimum programme* encompassing the slogans of democracy and democratic rights and the present-day demands of different classes and sections of society. The political resolution declares such a programme, which stresses the need for strengthening and widening class and national movements, the struggles of the working class, agricultural workers, peasantry and middle strata and the necessity of channelling them towards a united movement against the present government, whose policies have only brought a crisis to the country and the mass of people.

The political resolution does not rule out the possibility of immediate revolutionary change and declares that in such a case the party, having taken the concrete situation into consideration, will determine practical steps to be taken. The congress underlined the particular danger of a further drift to the right and of strengthening of the fascist-oriented forces.

The party emerged from its forum even more united and better aware of its increased responsibility. The congress stressed in this context the necessity of raising the efficiency of the party at every level and of further deepening the links with the mass of people. The party will encourage criticism and self-criticism and promote a democratic atmosphere in its ranks.

A new Central Committee of 39 members was elected unanimously. Mohammad Farhad was re-elected CC General Secretary and Saifuddin Ahmet Manik Assistant General Secretary. The delegates approved a special resolution paying respects to Mani Singh, one of the pioneers of the communist movement in Bangladesh and the party's chairman till the Fourth Congress, who had withdrawn from active work because of illness.

Undoubtedly, there are difficult times ahead. The decisions of the Fourth Congress, however, will certainly guide the party through all the difficulties and trials in the coming days and embolden it, in unity with other democratic and progressive forces, to brave all adverse situations and overcome the class enemies.

The Position Of The Dutch Communists

Joop Morriën — member, Central Committee, Communist Party of the Netherlands

IN the past few months, the meaning and specific value of the active presence of the Dutch Communists has strongly been coming to the fore. This applies to the struggle for peace and nuclear disarmament and to the organisation of opposition to the right-wing policies of the present coalition cabinet which seeks to undermine the social attainments of the working people.¹ Of course, the main goals the Communists are campaigning for are not their monopoly. In various important movements of today, people of different party and political backgrounds are closely working together. Within the framework of these movements, the Communist Party is an indispensable political factor playing its distinctive and essential role.

At the 30th Congress of the Communist Party of the Netherlands, held in November 1986, the main aspects of the present political and socio-economic situation in the country were analysed. The congress indicated which steps the Communists should take to make the opposition more active. The delegates discussed the results of the May 1986 general elections to the Second Chamber of the States-General which proved unfavourable for the Communist Party. Through loss of votes the party lost its parliamentary position.

As Chairwoman of the party's Central Committee Elli Izeboud noted at the congress, "we have suffered severe losses. But already — even before the start of this congress — we could establish that there are more than enough good reasons to carry on and that there is a firm footing for continuing the work. In evaluating the election results the Communists have shown to possess great resilience and perseverance."

This assessment was borne out by the elections to the Provincial States² this spring. The CPN recovered strongly and — here and there in combination with other left-wing parties — will be amply represented in the Provincial States. If these election results could be turned into parliamentary seats, the CPN could obviously have regained its position in the Second Chamber.

The elections to the Provincial States have shown that the CPN is present at the national level as a political force. They have created a basis for further recovery. The coalition cabinet of the Christian Democrats and Liberals suffered such losses that, strictly speaking, it can no longer count on the support of a majority of the people. The Social Democrats have emerged as the strongest party, but part of their electorate reproaches them for their half-hearted opposition and for their attempts at closer relations with the parties of the ruling coalition.

Much will depend on the force of the extraparlimentary struggle. Communist union workers played an important part in the campaigns of the Rotterdam dockworkers who, by staging short strikes for five weeks, successfully opposed the threat of dismissals and deterioration of their

working conditions.

On March 19 and 20, 1987, Amsterdam saw a two-day strike of public transport workers, and many other public services also were on strike.

The 30th Congress of the CPN stressed the need for effective opposition to the attempted economic and social cuts. Many speakers indicated that "what the government wants cannot be done, that we are up against stubborn cutbacks lacking any vision of the future".

The struggle for peace and the strengthening of international solidarity were the main themes at the congress. In their decisions the Communists expressed their vision of the future. The party will campaign for international dialogue and cooperation and will try to bridge and put an end to splits and dividing lines that have arisen among Communists.

We hold that it is particularly important to enhance practical international solidarity with freedom fighters all over the world. It is necessary to organise tireless campaigns for peace, reliable security through nuclear disarmament and overall arms reductions. It is important to look for effective ways of opposing the crisis and its consequences. In this we proceed from the need to struggle for equality for all people, to maintain vigilance against all forms of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, and to develop new and just relations between men and women.

Since 1980 the struggle against the stationing of US cruise missiles in the Netherlands has been a main objective of the peace movement. With powerful mass demonstrations, the peace activists were able to force the government to postpone the final decision several times, and only by resorting to deceptive manoeuvres did the cabinet succeed in forcing it through the Second Chamber.

"They have not been stationed yet" was the response of the peace movement which launched a campaign to boycott Woendsrecht, the town where construction work to install the missiles was being conducted. The congress said in its resolution that our party "forcefully continues the struggle against the stationing of cruise missiles in the Netherlands".

The CPN considers the Gorbachov proposals on medium-range missiles an important and courageous step which makes a breakthrough for disarmament possible. We demand that the Dutch government put an immediate end to the construction of the Woendsrecht missile base and vigorously promote an agreement on the 'zero option'. After years of thinking in exclusively military terms, a new situation is emerging, thanks primarily to the Soviet proposals aimed at freeing the world from nuclear weapons. However, the mass popular struggle for peace remains indispensable. Here one should add that the spectacular developments in the Soviet Union evoke a growing interest in our country.

In a special resolution on international solidarity the CPN voiced its support of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, of the struggle in defence of Nicaragua, against the Suharto military regime in Indonesia and against 'Berufsverbote' in the Federal Republic of Germany.

¹ The present cabinet is a coalition of the Christian Democratic Appeal Party and the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy. — *Ed.*

² Elected provincial government bodies. — *Ed.*

INFORMATION

The Communist Movement Today

THE CREATIVE FORCE OF RENEWAL

THE Vietnamese Communists are inspired by the profound revolutionary changes in the USSR, Nguyen Van Linh, CC General Secretary, the Communist Party of Vietnam, said during his official visit of friendship to the Soviet Union in late May 1987. These changes embody the creative force of Marxism-Leninism and generate valuable experience which the fraternal parties can use in the specific conditions of their countries.

Mikhail Gorbachov for his part spoke highly of the creative and realistic course of renewal, formulated by the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, reaffirmed Soviet support for this course and wished the Vietnamese people success in fulfilling the resolutions of the congress.

The participants in the talks in Moscow noted their countries' desire for the normalisation and improvement of relations with the People's Republic of China, which would be a major positive factor of stronger stability in Asia and in the world, said a joint Soviet-Vietnamese statement. The Soviet side gave support to Vietnam's proposal that Vietnamese-Chinese talks should be called to reach an early settlement of contentious issues.

FRIENDSHIP FORGED BY REVOLUTION

Both in past struggles against imperialist aggression and for independence and in building socialism and seeking each country's peaceful reunification, the parties and the peoples of China and Korea have constantly shown care for and supported each other, and forged profound friendship. This was stated by the Chinese side at the reception in honour of Kim Il Sung, CC General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea, who paid a visit to the PRC. Talks were held between Kim Il Sung and Zhao Ziang, Chairman of the CPC Central Advisory Committee and Acting General Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of China.

The DPRK leader stressed at the reception that the peoples of the two countries were close associates, true class brothers and dependable allies, who had joined their destinies and shared joys and sorrows in the course of the long historical period that they had marched under the banner of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism. Their common task today is to work shoulder to shoulder to defend the gains of the revolution, fully to bring out the superiority and viability of socialism and to safeguard peace.

Kim Il Sung said that the key issue facing mankind was that of averting war and protecting peace. The socialist countries, the non-aligned states and all the other peace forces, he noted, should rally closer together and energetically mount a powerful anti-war movement. Having ended his visit to China in late May, the CC General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea said that in the course of their meetings and talks, the sides "reached unanimity on all the issues under discussion".

RESOLVE TO JOIN FORCES

In the course of Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to Romania in late May 1987 and his talks with Nicolae Ceausescu the sides reaffirmed, inter alia, the resolve of the CPSU and the Romanian Communist Party to work consistently so as to promote cooperation and unity among the communist and workers' parties, and to broaden their interaction and dialogue in the spirit of comradeship, respect for each party's independence, full equality and internationalist solidarity.

The RCP and the CPSU will also continue to cooperate with all the socialist and social-democratic parties, other democratic parties and national liberation movements, and all the anti-imperialist and progressive forces and organisations striving to achieve disarmament and a stronger and fairer world peace.

The results of the visit reiterated the sides' mutual resolve to promote and extend bilateral cooperation between the two fraternal parties and countries, included on the international scene, said a joint Soviet-Romanian communique.

FRESH IMPETUS TO LONG-STANDING RELATIONS

The Presidium of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia heard an account of Presidium Chairman Milanko Renovica of his visit to Italy and talks with Alessandro Natta, General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party. It noted the two parties' close stands on efforts for peace and disarmament, and also on the international working class movement. The sides voiced their readiness to continue efforts to maintain the momentum of constructive cooperation among the progressive parties and movements of the Mediterranean.

The participants in the talks reiterated their mutual interest in promoting comprehensive cooperation between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Italian Communist Party on the basis of respect for the principles of equality, independence and each party's responsibility before its working class and the people in general. The talks between Milanko Renovica and Alessandro Natta constitute an important contribution to the further expansion of traditionally good relations between the Yugoslavian and Italian Communists, said the Presidium of the LCY CC.

INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A document on the international contacts of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has been released in Prague. Such contacts are making especially good progress with the fraternal parties of the countries of the socialist community. Working meetings between the leaders and other party officials as well as CPCz delegations to party congresses have an important role to play in bilateral relations. Substantial progress has been made in relations with the Communist Party of China, which has been noted in the course of reciprocal visits.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia maintains regular contacts with the German Communist Party and the communist parties of Austria,

Portugal, Greece, Denmark, Luxembourg, the USA, Canada, the Left Party — Communists of Sweden, AKEL and other parties in industrialised capitalist countries. There are signs of an improvement in relations with some of the communist parties with which relations were broken off or deadlocked in the past over fundamental differences of approach to a number of issues. A major breakthrough has been achieved in relations with the Japanese Communist Party: agreement was reached during the visit of a delegation of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to Japan in September 1986 on the full-scale normalisation of relations between the two parties and concrete forms of cooperation were discussed.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia assigns much importance in its international activities to the promotion of contacts with communist and revolutionary-democratic parties of Latin America, Asia and Africa, including the ruling parties of socialist-oriented and progressive states, such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Angola, Nicaragua, Mozambique, Syria and Algeria. India has a great role to play in the struggle for peace and international security. The Czechoslovak Communists have long maintained good relations with the Communist Party and the Communist Party (M) of India; fruitful contacts are being broadened with the ruling Indian National Congress (I) as well.

Together with the fraternal parties of the socialist countries, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is seeking broader mutually useful contacts with socialist and social-democratic parties in the belief that, in spite of deep ideological and political differences, dialogue aimed at strengthening peace and security and broadening international cooperation is essential and fruitful.

WMR Introduces

KAARE ANDRE NILSEN CHAIRMAN, COMMUNIST PARTY OF NORWAY

AT its May 1987 Plenary Meeting held following the 19th Party Congress the National Board (Central Committee) of the Communist Party of Norway elected a new Chairman of the CPN — Kaare Andre Nilsen.

Kaare Andre Nilsen (b. 1945), a journalist by training, began working after school. He joined the staff of *Friheten*, the newspaper of the Communist Party of Norway, in 1967. From 1972 to 1975 he was in charge of *Avantgarden*, a youth newspaper, and simultaneously served on the governing body of the Norwegian Young Communist League; later he rejoined the staff of *Friheten*. He was also active in the people's movement against membership of the EEC as a member of its board, and has been a member of the Norwegian Peace Council since 1976.

In 1978 Kaare Andre Nilsen was elected alternate member of the National Board and in 1981, member of the National Board and the Central Board of the Communist Party of Norway.

From the Press

L'Unità

REASONS BEHIND THE CHANGES

Last April the Italian Communists' newspaper changed its format and content. Recently it ran a series of commentaries on the change and its results, which are reviewed in brief below.

ALL sections of Italian society have been familiar with *l'Unità* for a long time. With a daily print of 200,000 copies, it is the sixth largest Italian daily and the leading party publication overall. Its renovation started immediately after the 17th ICP Congress in April 1986, says Renzo Foa, a deputy editor-in-chief and member of the ICP Leadership. The purpose of the change is to make the paper more efficient in terms of not only coverage but also the formulation of the Communists' policy and discussion of major issues of domestic and international politics so that, as Palmiro Togliatti said in his day, "the party's policy should become an everyday concern" and "be put to tests and even formulated to some extent" in the newspaper.

The renovation of *l'Unità* reflects the Communists' desire to take into consideration deep-seated changes in the social structure and psychological make-up of society under the impact of the technological revolution and information explosion. The newspaper's readership, too, has grown more diverse in the past few years. Hence the need to pay more attention to the problems of the youth and women's movements and to subjects related to the creative quests of intellectuals.

Another goal is to make the newspaper more accessible to the other left forces of the country. Massimo d'Alema, a member of the ICP Secretariat and chairman of the CC working commission for propaganda and information, says in this context that such a political force as the Italian Communist Party needs not merely a news medium but a major national periodical that would conduct a dialogue with those democratic quarters whose views are shunned by the other parties' newspapers. Expounding the ICP's positions, *l'Unità* is offering common ground to those Italian left-wing forces which stand for a political alternative to the current government course, notes another member of the party Leadership, Emanuele Macaluso.

The new *l'Unità* has more regular columns and 24 instead of 18 pages. Better coverage is given to history, culture, the progress of social thought, peace efforts, and also to nuclear power and ecology. New authors have been attracted and greater effort made to solicit readers' views on urgent political and social problems. A full page is devoted to readers' letters. In presenting material, editors strive for vigour, brevity and clarity.

Campaigns to boost circulation were conducted in April and May, with *l'Unità* experimentally raising its print to 500,000-1,000,000 copies. Judging by the results, the demand for the newspaper keeps growing: in Emilia-Romagna alone, up to 200,000 copies (including up to 50,000 in Bologna) were sold. The number of readers in large cities, such as Rome,

Milan and Florence, also grew substantially.

The Sunday and holiday issues of *l'Unità* now rank third among Italy's leading dailies, Armando Sarti, a member of the ICP Central Committee and chairman of the *l'Unità* publishers' group, says. Authors contributing to the newspaper note that it has fresh opportunities to boost the number of its subscribers and readers by publishing special supplements and booklets covered by the subscription fee (one example is a collection of articles about Antonio Gramsci, put out in April).

The change in the newspaper's format and content, such as the promotion of a discussion between the Communists and other left forces, the publishers believe, will raise the political awareness and cultural standards of the readership and increase the role played by the ICP organ in the social life of the country.

A. Monti

Zeri i Popullit

CADRE ROTATION IS NOT A PURGE

The newspaper *Zeri i Popullit* of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party of Labour has devoted a leading article to cadre rotation. It is a party method of enhancing the revolutionary spirit of cadres, not dismissal, the newspaper says. Any cadre, regardless of personal qualities, who holds the same post for a long time, especially in the party apparatus, government administration bodies or central departments and agencies, may become accustomed to bureaucratic methods and style of work, which are contrary to the dynamics of life and to the tasks of the moment. Hence the need for cadre rotation. The party believes that officials holding the same post for eight to ten years should be subject to rotation.

Reassigned cadres can make use of past experience and gain new knowledge. If anyone realises that the job has grown stale and he is in a rut, he should not hesitate to say so, and ask the party organisation or work collective for a new assignment. But not everyone is willing to do so. That is why party organisations are called upon to control cadre rotation and substantiate the need for replacement in every particular case, thus neutralising the danger of time-serving and routine.

The editorial says that the dismissal of inefficient cadres, intriguers, loafers and immoral people should not be confused with rotation. Yet in practice, senior officials of some central agencies, especially research centres, and also some district authorities have tried escaping complications by concealing the true reasons for the dismissals, passing them off as rotation. Party organisations are called upon to fight that sort of thing and punish the guilty. It is Communists' duty to see to the fulfilment of party policy to that effect.

In Brief

EXCHANGES OF EXPERIENCE

Editors-in-Chief of party journals published in socialist countries met in Moscow and Zakopane in late May. The Moscow meeting, sponsored by the CPSU Central Committee's journal *Politcheskoye Samoobrazovaniye* (Political Self-Education), was devoted to urgent tasks of improving the political and economic education of the working people, while the Zakopane meeting dealt with the tasks of party journalism in summing up and popularising the experience of primary organisations in fulfilling the resolutions of the latest congresses of the fraternal parties.

ARGENTINA

Last June, the Communist Party of Argentina and other left anti-imperialist forces of the country formed an electoral alliance, the Broad Liberation Front, which will nominate candidates to contest the governorships of the provinces and a part of the seats in the lower house of Parliament in elections on September 6.

BENIN

An advanced course of ideological and political education was organised in Cotonou last May for those who were willing to join the People's Revolutionary Party of Benin. More than 1,500 people, including 210 women, were enrolled. As the PRP CC Political Bureau has noted, the course gave them a better understanding of the tasks facing the party and the people.

CHINA

A conference in Biejing, People's Republic of China, summed up the results of the work done to reorganise the party. Addressing the conference, CPC leaders noted that in the three and a half years since the campaign had been launched, the ideological standards and the discipline of party members had been improved, and that the party's style of work and organisation had been upgraded. The conference also outlined the basic tasks of party development today.

CONGO

A second national campaign to bolster the organisational structure of the primary party organisations was carried out by the Congolese Party of Labour in May-June 1987 (the first such campaign was held in 1985). In the course of this campaign, party cell leaders were advised on the collection of membership dues, enrolment of new members, organisational and propaganda activities and cadre education and training.

FRANCE

The national conference of the French Communist Party, held in Nanterre, a suburb of Paris, on June 12-13, had two items on its agenda: the Communists' participation in the 1988 presidential elections and the

nomination of a candidate to contest the elections. The 1,200 delegates to the conference unanimously supported the Central Committee's recommendation to nominate André Lajoinie, a member of the Political Bureau of the French Communist Party and leader of the Communist parliamentary faction in the National Assembly. Georges Marchais, FCP General Secretary, said in his report that the party's election campaign coincided with preparations for its 26th Congress, which was to adopt a programme defining the Communists' long-term strategy.

GDR

The annual festival of *Neues Deutschland*, the newspaper of the SUPG CC, was held in the GDR capital on June 13-14, to celebrate the 750th anniversary of Berlin. At the festival in the Friedrichshain Park, the newspaper's staff met with readers, who also viewed an exhibition of the history of the German press and visited the Solidarity Centre, devoted to the struggles of the peoples of Southern Africa, Palestine, Chile and Nicaragua for national liberation and against imperialist aggression.

ITALY

The Italian Communist Party polled 26.6 per cent of the vote in the early parliamentary elections on June 14-15 (as compared with 29.9 per cent in the 1983 elections). The Communists remain the second largest parliamentary force after the Christian Democrats, who slightly improved their positions (34.3 per cent of the vote, up from 32.9 per cent in 1983).

SPAIN

A coalition of the country's left parties, including the Communists, won 7 per cent of the vote in the municipal elections on June 10; this showed that the ruling Spanish Socialist Workers' Party on the whole held its ground. In the country's first elections for the European Parliament, the SSWP took 28 out of the 60 seats. The United Left coalition will send three deputies to the European Parliament.

for human survival

Rescuing Civilisation: The Political Principles

The nuclear threat has sparked wide public debate on the destinies of modern civilisation. Competent studies by authoritative scientists have shown that civilisation could, and even definitely would, perish

in the event of a nuclear-missile war. This should serve as a warning and must have a profound effect on political thinking from now on.

At the same time, there is a continued search for ways of saving civilisation, and more and more forces in support of its survival are being mobilised, forces capable of breaking the drift towards nuclear war, and of effecting a turn towards building, instead, a world without violence.

This demands research into what is necessary and what is possible in the foreseeable future, and it was given a powerful impetus by the ideas of the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the peace-making efforts of the Soviet Union, a major nuclear power.

Some of the questions concerning the dialectics of modern civilisation and clarification of the possibilities for neutralising the impending danger (and also the conclusions which might follow for the Marxist theory of the class struggle at this time) were examined by an international study group of the WMR Commission for General Theoretical Problems. Below is a summary of the discussion.

Nuclear-Free World Conception

THE nuclear powers have acquired the capability of destroying each other (and civilisation along with them) and that has altered the course of the contest in the world arena out of all recognition. The historical process has entered a sphere of total uncertainty. Only a half-century ago, the continuance of the human race seemed assured, regardless of the brutal and barbarous methods used by the belligerent states. Today, with the advent of the nuclear-space age, there is no longer any such certainty. The problem of human survival has become crucial for every people and for all the classes of the modern society, including the ruling classes. There is no guarantee that mankind will manage to teeter on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe for very long. Its continuance, therefore, urgently and crucially depends on the political will for peace.

This problem does not have a military-technical solution. No kind of shelters or defence systems can shield human beings from nuclear death in face of a nuclear strike. The only possible way out in the present situation is, therefore, *a political one: the way to the peaceful coexistence of states.*

The ruling circles of the imperialist countries would like to take up an intermediate position at the critical point, one between the extremity of global war, the suicidal risk of which they variously comprehend, and this peaceful coexistence. They have not given up the illusion that high-technology-based 'limited' or 'star' wars could be that alternative. Preparations for such wars are being carried on by stepping up the arms race. That clearly increases the danger of world war, including one that is unpremeditated, and such a war could flare up suddenly and inextinguishably from some international crisis. NATO's war games envisage a clash between the nuclear powers with the use of conventional weapons only as a short prelude to nuclear exchanges run riot on the Earth (the 1983 war games, for instance, assumed only a six-day prelude).

Strategic stability would certainly be strengthened by a lowering of the level of military confrontation respecting the principles of mutual security

and equality, but that still falls far short of guaranteeing man's survival. Scientists have shown that the use of less than one per cent of the total force of the nuclear arsenals could have disastrous climatic and ecological consequences for terrestrial life, bringing on a 'nuclear winter'. *No, it is necessary to give up nuclear weapons altogether, and to cut off the channels for their production, as is already provided for by the proffered Soviet plan for phasing out nuclear weapons by the year 2000.*

"But would not the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the strategic balance give scope for non-nuclear war?" "Would it not undermine the very idea of total nuclear disarmament?" Such questions are being asked of those who favour nuclear disarmament.

These doubts spring from the erroneous notion that nuclear disarmament concerns only the ways and means of warfare, leaving intact one of mankind's most ancient institutions, the institution of war. But the fact is that the abolition of nuclear weapons means more than removing the danger of the war which threatens the survival of the human race. It is the beginning of the road to removing armed force generally from the practice of international relations.

The Warsaw Treaty Summit in Berlin on May 28 and 29, 1987, came forward with yet another peace initiative based on the new thinking, on the new approach to the issues of war and peace, disarmament and other complicated global and regional problems, and on the demand for a repudiation of the 'nuclear deterrence' concept. They signed a document, 'On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States', which is "dominated by the task of preventing war, both nuclear and conventional".¹ The socialist-community countries' military doctrine is of a defensive nature, proceeds from the need to maintain a balance of military forces at the lowest possible level, and from the advisability of reducing military potentials to the limits of sufficiency necessary for defence.²

It implies the building of a *non-nuclear world that would be more than a temporary state between wars, as it has hitherto been the case in history.* From the seventeenth century on, flames of war engulfed all the then great powers roughly once every half-century. There were the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), and the wars fought by revolutionary France and Napoleon (1792-1814). These were followed from 1853 to 1870 by a succession of armed clashes between individual great powers or groups. In the era of imperialism, large-scale wars have become all-embracing and their frequency has increased, while local conflicts have proliferated. Over one-half of the states of the world were involved in World War I (1914-1918), while virtually all the states (with the exception of only six) took part in World War II (1939-1945). And more than 20 million people have been killed in the wars fought since World War II.

The problem which mankind is now compelled to tackle by the mortal danger hanging over it is not only to save the world, but to so restructure it as to prevent it from giving rise to wars. In this concept the total abolition of nuclear weapons would put civilisation *on the way to realising the humanistic ideal of everlasting peace*, a peace not interrupted by wars, a just and democratic peace for all the peoples.

A Theoretical Trap

Bourgeois political thinking itself has been probing for a solution to the problem of human survival through a review of the 'armed peace' doctrine. It makes an effort to adapt it to the dangers of the nuclear age. The doctrine is based on the most ancient postulate that a state's security is based on its armed might and preparedness for war. Yet historical experience shows that security is not guaranteed by reliance on force. Indeed, a nation's life is put at risk again and again by inviting solution of international disputes by setting aside just reason and resorting to naked force. Historians have estimated that roughly 90 per cent of all the extinct states perished in armed clashes.

What the nuclear age has done, in effect, is to produce an absolute weapon against which there is no effective defence, precisely the premise of the 'nuclear deterrence' concept formulated more than forty years ago by Bernard Brodie's US students of military strategy.³ Their premise was that the only solution to the problem of peace for states in possession of nuclear weapons, whose military function for the entire period until the war-generating world order is transformed, is to be not the conduct of war, but its deterrence by the threat of inexorable retaliation.

That concept marked a break with the pre-nuclear logic of the 'armed peace' doctrine, for it accepted that nuclear might is unsuitable for attaining victory in war. But it still followed the traditional militaristic logic, for it regarded nuclear might as a political instrument enabling the state to attain its objectives in the international arena by threat.

However, insoluble contradictions arise from the mix of two mutually exclusive types of logic within a single theory: the new says, 'war is unacceptable', and the old says 'preparedness for war and threat of force' are imperative. It enjoins the nuclear powers to perfect the mechanism of mankind's annihilation allegedly for the purpose of reducing the wisdom of setting it in motion. However, it does not guarantee that the disaster can be avoided. It recommends a readiness to use nuclear weapons, so that the fear of the consequences of war is grounded in reality. It simultaneously warns that the use of such weapons would mean equally dooming oneself to annihilation.

'Deterrence', therefore, fails to show a way out of the nuclear trap; on the contrary, it encourages the growth of the forces of war and the arms race. National security cannot be ensured with the postulates of 'deterrence'. Until nuclear weapons have been destroyed, the powers in possession of them can maintain no more than a state of extreme mutual danger, a danger that is also a mortal one for all the other countries. The vital interests of civilisation and of every people demand, therefore, *a repudiation not only of the traditional militaristic thinking, but also of this, its successor, nuclear-strategic thinking based on deterring war by military-technical means.*

The policy of the nuclear powers takes on a mystical form whenever attempts are made to interpret it in terms of 'deterrence'. It is suggested that the United States has taken a 'defensive stance' or that the two 'superpowers' are engaged in mutually deterring each other from war. But

in fact, it is not an urge to 'deter' war that determines the political thinking of the aggressive circles of imperialism. On the contrary, this thinking is fed by the false hope that strategic superiority can be gained through military-technical progress. The men in the Pentagon believe that such a scenario does exist — in theory, at any rate — and have been developing weapons along new lines. That is what lies at the root of Reagan's idea of 'de-coupling' strategic-nuclear and space weapons, an approach which blocked the way to an understanding at Reykjavik. Behind this plan is the wish to have a free hand in preparing 'star wars'.

Policy: Means and Ends

Universal peace cannot be ensured without a new political thinking by which governments, parties and public movements are guided in approaching and solving international problems. This thinking stems from the comprehension and acceptance that nuclear war is a totally rejected option, and is aimed to remove the threat of nuclear war and guarantee, instead, the peaceful coexistence of the states. Consistently developed, this thinking leads to a repudiation of the use in international relations of any means of violence as being to the detriment of security.

Such a repudiation is not the same thing as unilateral pacifism, which is non-resistance to force by violence. It is based on mutual self-restriction by all the countries of their armed forces and armaments to that minimum which gives reasonable adequacy of security but which makes it impossible to wage aggressive war.

The switch to this non-violent approach is a most acute issue in the class struggle in the international arena. Behind the clash of the new view of world politics and the traditional but outdated view is *a conflict between the realities of the nuclear age and the aggressive ends imperialism might hope to attain by violent means.*

The lack of this new political thinking is most evident nowadays at the imperialist power centres, in the first place the United States. *Washington's commitment to an aggressive dominating line is the main obstacle to building a non-nuclear world.* "Only by combining a change in the goals of American foreign policy and the means used to implement this policy can the arms race be controlled and then reversed," says Professor Edgar Bottome of Norwich University in the United States.⁴

The imperialist powers' aggressive, neoglobalist course is antagonistic to the ensuring of their own security, *the ultimate and supreme state interest.* The steeper the spiral of the arms race, the more compelling is the need to choose between real security and the policy of aggression based on force.

The means of policy are determined by its ends. The fighters for peace want to see the policy of international security, repudiation of wars and acceptance of disarmament prevail in each and every country in this nuclear age.

War and the State

In theoretical terms, the solution to the problem of human survival is connected with the question of the state. The organisation of violence, including external violence which is embodied in the armed forces, has

always been a characteristic role of the state. The material guarantees against war can, therefore, be provided by stripping the state of this military function, by overcoming militarism as a political creed and dismantling the military-industrial complex which battens on it. It is, therefore, not only the foreign policy of the state, *but also its structures, those geared to the preparation and conduct of wars that need to be combatted if mankind is to survive.*

Can capitalism, in principle, exist without militarism? That was a question which pacifists of the Manchester school of bourgeois political economy pondered back in the nineteenth century. This possibility has been effected in history quite exceptionally. Costa Rica, for instance, was a state without an army for the lifetime of a whole generation: from 1948 to the late 1970s. But it has been wholly an exception: the main trend in the imperialist world is for the military function of the state to grow and for the military-industrial complex to increase its influence on every aspect of life. Nevertheless, this trend is not fatalistically determined in any sense, for it is influenced by the contest within the country, including the ruling class itself, and in the international arena. It is a realistic task to keep militarism in check and to dismantle it.

Our time has brought forth the need *to avert the dangers produced by the capitalist system and to prevent it from exercising its aggressive nature.* That is the role of existing socialism, the democratic movements for preventing war, and also of the class and the anti-imperialist struggle. That is also promoted by the contradictions within the capitalist class over the attitude to militarism. *The peoples' will for peace and mankind's elementary urge for survival could be embodied in a reliable international security system covering the world community as a whole and guaranteeing the legitimate interests of all the states, big and small, in every sphere: military, political, economic and humanitarian.* It has a prototype in the already existing international mechanisms and institutions which help to find an optimal balance of national, state and human interests (the United Nations, the non-aligned movement, groups of states seeking the establishment of nuclear-free zones, and those in favour of settling international conflicts by political means, and so on).

There is also the view that so long as sovereign states decide the issues of war and peace the threat to mankind's existence cannot be removed. It is suggested that the present world order should be replaced by one in which the powers of controlling armed forces and nuclear might are vested in a 'world government'. Such a government would have no inducements to use nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. Even if the need to resort to force to maintain international order remains, there would, at any rate, be a return to the rational balance between violent means and political ends. That, they say, would help to ward off the threat of mankind's annihilation, if not to end all wars generally.⁵

However, is it right to make mankind's redemption from the nuclear threat contingent on transition from national statehood to world statehood? *The world of sovereign states and their coexistence is the basic pillar of modern civilisation, without which its vital activity is inconceivable.* This world has behind it the objective trends towards national

self-determination and the winning of political independence by every people, with choice of ways and forms of social development. Behind it also is the *historically inevitable*, the long contest and interaction, over the lifetime of several generations, between the two world economic and social systems, between capitalism and socialism. The world of sovereign nations is not, of course, an everlasting pillar of civilisation, for at some time in the future these sovereign nations will merge into an all-embracing humanistic organism, but the prerequisites for that will mature only at the stage at which all the countries go on to socialism,⁶ and fuller interdependence is on the agenda.

The advocates of 'world government' seek to resolve a perceived contradiction between 'peace' and 'independence', 'international security' and 'national sovereignty', generated by imperialist policy, but they do so by seeking to abolish the nation-state.

In theoretical terms, such a solution means ignoring the fact that *the historical fortunes of war and of sovereign states are not identical*. From, presently, an instrument for the preparation and conduct of war, the state can be transformed into an instrument of international security. In political terms, this solution is akin to attacks on the independence and equality of the peoples, for it frustrates their desire to eliminate diktat, arbitrary acts and violence from world politics. *International security in the nuclear age is about mankind as a whole, and such security cannot be attained without respect for every people's right to independent development.*

The Self-Preservation Potential

The survival of civilisation depends on the extent to which its potential for self-preservation is brought out. This potential consists, on the one hand, of socialist and other peaceable states, and also of the diverse social forces coming out against the nuclear threat and the aggressive policies and reactionary thrusts of imperialism. On the other hand, this potential is created by the operation of *the centripetal trends in modern civilisation as a whole towards the formation of a world community of states and peoples*. These trends spring from the internationalisation of mankind's economic, political, spiritual and ecological life. In the historical perspective, these trends prevail over the opposite, centrifugal trends causing mankind's polarisation and division into fragmented blocs along military, political, economic and social lines, and according to the degree of the countries' economic, scientific and technical development. *Constructive interaction between the two economic and social systems* at the present stage has become the condition for the continued existence of civilisation with all its opposites and complexities.

The need for such interaction is dictated above all by the emergence of a *fundamentally new basket of problems bearing on efforts to avert the disastrous consequences for mankind* resulting from the use of technical might for self-seeking political ends and for the purpose of deriving direct economic advantage. It prescribes the removal of the nuclear threat and of international wars, the prevention of a worldwide ecological crisis, the safe operation of nuclear energy, and so on.

There has also been a growing objective requirement for joint regulation by the nations of *mankind's constructive efforts*. It is postulated by the gigantic scale of the problems in material production. No country, however mighty, can cope with these problems by national means alone. The search for new energy, raw material and food resources for the Earth's growing population, the surmounting of economic backwardness, the elimination of hunger and poverty, the peaceful exploration of space and the development of the resources of World Ocean, all of these call for a global pooling of efforts by the states. The actual results depend on the swift release of the vast resources now going into the production of weapons of destruction.

The sphere of the peoples' constructive cooperation is not confined to these problems. Civilisation is faced with the need to *moderate the basic divergence of the interests of states* and not to allow it to prevail over their common concern for survival and to develop into a worldwide armed conflict. There is the pressing need *to prevent any explosive exacerbation of global contradictions between the different social systems, and also between the centres of imperialism and the less developed countries*. These contradictions are being deepened, for instance, by the Third World countries' huge external debt, and by the desire of imperialism to reserve high technology for itself. The solution of this problem largely depends on the extent to which the relations of interdependence of states are improved on the basis of equality. Interdependence based on the subordination of some states to others, and on the political, economic and financial coercion of the peoples is certain to undermine the foundations of peace.

Moderating the clash of interests in the world arena also means *preventing the spread of ideological differences to the sphere of interstate relations*. Anti-communist crusades cannot halt or reverse social progress, which has continued nevertheless. The nature of the social conflict between socialism and imperialism is such that it cannot be circumvented by wars or other foreign policy instruments.

Despite the claims of ill-founded anti-communist prejudice, existing socialism has no intention of overthrowing capitalism as a social system in other countries. Its concern is that the contest between the forces of progress and reaction should not cause wars between states. If this danger is neutralised, it would mean the abolition of the various military-strategic 'interests' on the political map of the world which provide the pretexts for intervention in the internal affairs of other peoples.

Global problems are becoming ever more important in world politics and the class struggle. The urgency of solving these multiplies the chances of peaceful coexistence between the two social systems and peaceful evolution (without international wars) of capitalism towards the new system. There are prospects, therefore, for a relatively long period in which civilisation could develop on the basis of political cohabitation of the opposite state organisms for the benefit of their peoples. Constraints on the aggressive nature of imperialism are the basic prerequisites for this process.

The Class Struggle and Violence

The Marxist theory of the class struggle puts the life of mankind and the society's interests above all else. The progressive forces are now working out and testing in practice a diversity of forms that could, in concrete conditions, be the most effective combination of the struggle for social emancipation and national liberation, and the defence of peace. The actual situation in a given country is, of course, crucial to deciding how politically advisable any of these forms are.

Marxists have continued their theoretical discussions on the role of the class struggle in safeguarding civilisation. The difficulty here appears to be the following one.

The working class has no need of wars to attain its liberatory goals and prefers peaceful forms of struggle. However, so long as militarism exists, so long as there remains the threat of external armed intervention by imperialism, crisis situations will keep arising in which the people have no alternative but to take up arms.

It is not merely a possibility, but also a reality of our day that the class struggle may sharpen to the point of armed struggle. Imperialism and reaction are, as a rule, the first to resort to the use of force in order to recover social concessions or prevent overdue social transformations. Thus, in the less developed world there is now a prevalence of wars caused and fanned by foreign intervention, by external support for 'contras', wars against lawfully established popular regimes. These are counter-revolutionary wars. The fighting people want to see an end to such wars, but in the meantime they have to defend themselves. There is another type of civil war: popular uprisings against governments or regimes imposed from outside. Together with the national liberation struggle, they were characteristic, for instance, during the collapse of the colonial system. The soil for them is still there, especially where anti-people dictatorships are installed.

In such cases, the justice of the popular struggle is obvious. The right of each people to defend its chosen social order and to overthrow an undesirable government is indisputable. *Once this right is secured, the world community will be capable of preventing internal social conflicts from developing into imperialist wars against peoples choosing their own way of development.*

In the nuclear age, the distinction between just and unjust wars continues to be politically valid. At the same time, *the interests of international security and global consequences* are crucial criteria in assessing armed struggles. The present stage of history is an exceptional one because a world war can now be fatal for the destinies of civilisation. There would be no one to start social development from scratch on the nuclear ash-heap. The concepts of morality and politics do not apply after global disaster.

The survival of civilisation is occasionally linked to a repudiation of armed forms of class and civil struggle on the plea that their use could spark off a regional war or even a world war.

Such references to the possible situation are not convincing. What is

crucial after all is not this or that *form* of struggle but above all *the outcome which tends to change the political and social status quo*. The real point is: what effect do these changes inside a country have on the world situation? How is it possible to prevent the readiness of reaction to instigate war between the peoples in order to put down social upsurge in a country? What is to be done to prevent external armed intervention or to mount resistance to the invaders? Answers to these questions will have to be found in the concrete situation as the struggle proceeds, and not in the light of the general conditions of the nuclear age. Hence, the need for concrete analysis *in each individual case* to determine which political demands, and the forms of struggle to win them, in the given situation meet also the interests of world peace, and which cut across these and need to be rejected.⁷ The choice of the right political line and tactics also implies, therefore, mastery of all the forms of the class struggle and their skilful use, depending on the circumstances, even in this nuclear age.

There is also the widely accepted view in pseudo-Marxist quarters that a sharpening of the class struggle and the progressive forces' successes in it are bound almost inevitably to lead to a nuclear cataclysm. Hence the fear of struggle for the working people's class interests and the calls to abandon it or put it off until universal disarmament, at least. That is yet another attempt to apportion blame for the nuclear threat between imperialism and those who resist it and block the way to war by carrying on the class struggle.

The essence of the question, however, is that contrived social peace, a playing down of the class struggle, and efforts to curtail its sweep and dull its edge would be connivance at imperialism and its policy of aggression and the arms build-up. The masses have no other means of saving civilisation except the political struggle, in the course of which a balance of forces is shaped in favour of the maintenance of international peace and cooperation of the states. The anti-militarist line of the class struggle is brought to the fore by the realities of the nuclear age. Militarism must be checked if civilisation is to survive and if the working people are to achieve social emancipation.

Summing up the results of the discussion, let us note that the traditional concepts of world politics and class struggle are being reviewed and a new political thinking is being hammered out in terms of man's survival. This has produced many questions requiring analysis and discussion with an eye to the fact that the boundaries of what is possible in effecting a turn towards a nuclear-free world in which to guarantee mankind's survival are exceptionally fluid. They are extended by socialism's peace offensive and the upsurge of popular anti-war action, but they could be narrowed down in a more acute international situation and by new attacks on the social, democratic and national gains of the masses.

Mankind is paving the ways to survival in hard and intense struggle. The diversity of these ways, determined by the changing concrete conditions in the international arena and in each country, also implies the need to determine the basic reference points in the advance to a non-violent world. These are resistance to the aggressive policy of imperialism, restraint of the military-industrial complex, and nuclear disarmament, conversion of the

state into an instrument of international security and cooperation, and the development of mass anti-militaristic activity and its combination with the struggle for social and national justice, democracy and progress.

Study Group of the WMR Commission
for General Theoretical Problems

Eugene Yorgen
Hugo Campos
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¹ 'On the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States', *Pravda*, May 30, 1987.

² See 'Communique of the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Member-States', *ibid.*

³ See Bernard Brodie, ed. *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order*, New York, 1946, p. 76.

⁴ Edgar Bottome, *The Balance of Terror*, Boston, 1986, p. 242.

⁵ See Gwynne Dyer, *War*, New York, 1985, p. 262.

⁶ See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 342.

⁷ We find the methodology for analysing such situations in Lenin's works. "Let us assume," he wrote, "that between two great monarchies there is a little monarchy whose kinglet is 'bound' by blood and other ties to the monarchs of both neighbouring countries. Let us further assume that the declaration of a republic in the little country and the expulsion of *its* monarch would in practice lead to a war between the two neighbouring big countries for the restoration of that or another monarch in the little country. There is no doubt that all international Social-Democracy, as well as the really internationalist section of Social-Democracy in the little country, *would be against substituting a republic for the monarchy* in this case. The substitution of a republic for a monarchy is not an absolute, but one of the democratic demands, subordinate to the interests of democracy (and still more, of course, to those of the socialist proletariat) as a whole. A case like this would in all probability not give rise to the slightest disagreement among Social-Democrats in any country. But if any Social-Democrat were to propose on *these* grounds that the demand for a republic be deleted altogether from the programme of international Social-Democracy, he would certainly be regarded as quite mad. He would be told that after all one must not forget the elementary logical difference between the *general* and the *particular*. To be an internationalist Social-Democrat one must *not* think only of one's own nation, but place *above it* the interests of all nations, their common liberty and equality" (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, pp. 345-346, 347).

NEW DIMENSIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Diverse forces and quarters in different parts of the globe are seeing the realities of our nuclear-space age and of our interlocked world with growing clarity. From this they are drawing conclusions about their new predestination, their largely new role and responsibilities, and the new directions and prospects of the actions to preserve their own life and that of the human species as a whole.

Eminent Western civic and political personalities offer their considerations in their replies to questions put by WMR.

Agreement Or Disagreement?

John K. Galbraith — Economist and Political and Civic Figure (USA)

What are, in your opinion, the main problems of the world economy today?

WELL, I put the problems of the world economy second in importance to the problem of getting nuclear weapons under control. Nothing we are doing in economics is going to be important if we have a nuclear war. I've said many times that even the most accomplished ideologist is not going to be able to tell the ashes of communism from the ashes of capitalism. It was the importance of that problem that has brought me here to Moscow.¹ But having said that, I would be happy to go on to the problems of the world economy.

They are numerous, but the one great problem that both capitalism and socialism share is how you come to terms with the great organisation, the great bureaucracy. This is the problem which one hears constantly discussed in the Soviet Union. And it is the problem which one hears constantly discussed in the United States. When I first ventured that this was going to be one of the problems of the future, 20 years ago, I was severely criticised in both countries — both the Soviet Union and the United States. Now I find myself accused of being commonplace when I mention this. I nevertheless abide by my opinion.

The second problem of the world economy is that we are still not solving the wide disparity between the rich countries and the poor. I flew the other night from India, from New Delhi to Moscow, and I'd been the previous day in Bombay. One is reminded once again that the difference between the poverty in India and the affluence of Moscow is far greater than the difference between Moscow and New York. One, in a certain sense, comes home from India to Moscow. And we are not making progress in solving that difference. We might talk about that a little later, because I have some very strong ideas on the mistakes that we have made.

And then there is the third problem of the world economy that the older industrial countries, such as Britain, the United States, and, in a lesser measure, West Germany, have fallen into a situation where unemployment persists and is coming to be taken for granted, partly because in our older industries, such as steel, automobiles, chemicals, we are no longer able to compete with the new countries of the Pacific basin and we have not been able to solve the effects of that in our old industrial areas.

I put these problems because they are real and concrete. I hear that there are more mystical problems of international finance. I put them even ahead of the problems of the debts of the Third World countries. The problem of the debt of the Third World countries is something that is exaggerated. The solution will be in almost all cases that they won't pay. And we must avoid the financial mentality which can't accept that reality. We will disguise and gloss over the fact of non-payment. But the fact is that

the loans cannot be paid.

I would suggest negotiations on these loans and postpone their repayment indefinitely. The banks will perhaps need to carry them in their books. But it must be recognised that the developing nations, particularly in Latin America and Africa, are not going to be able to repay these loans.

That is a quick survey of the world economy as I see it. But nobody should despair. There are also great successes, in both the socialist and non-socialist world. The standards of living of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, the United States, Canada, and Western Europe are much higher than when I was a boy. When one comes to Moscow, you hear about the housing shortage. I always come here and am in absolute astonishment that so many houses could be built.

Some of the problems of the world economy obviously influence international security. What is that influence?

There is no question that economic security is necessary for political stability. The agonising tragedy of the Great Depression was the encouragement that it gave to the rise of fascism and extremist governments. We learnt that politics is the child of economic despair.

I do not see in the developed countries any likelihood of such serious economic instability that would affect political security. But in the Third World we have many of the conflicts — the Middle East, Africa, Asia — that are the result of economic deprivation.

What is the impact of the arms race on economic development?

There is no question that the arms race, both in the socialist and the non-socialist world, is a very great barrier to economic development. In the course of 30-40 years after World War II there was rapid economic development in West Germany and Japan, in other words in countries, particularly Japan, which have not been burdened by arms expenditure. They had their capital and they had their trained manpower, their scientists and engineers for the production of civilian goods. We and the British had no similar development, in very substantial measure because we were using capital, human resources, and our scientific and technical potential for the production of armaments. I do not know the details in the Soviet Union, but I'll be quite persuaded that the Soviet economy would be much more successful if it could be relieved of arms expenditure, of military spending. When people serve in the army they are not available to produce goods. And when scientists and engineers are occupied with the manufacture of arms, they are not available for making things that the people want. No one should imagine that the military is the stimulant to the modern economy.

Our readers would be interested to know your opinion about the SDI and, especially, about the social and economic aspects of such programmes.

Well, I only derive my knowledge of that from my scientific and engineering friends. It's my impression, strong impression, that the

socialist world exaggerates that issue.² The SDI probably will not work technically. That is our problem, not the problem of the socialist world.

It is unquestionable that the SDI is extremely costly, but is it really illusionary? Scientists are discussing it quite seriously.

I will leave that to the technicians. I oppose it, but I frankly do not regard it as being central to American-Soviet relations. I put my energy not behind opposing the SDI but behind the comprehensive test ban, no-first use, and the freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons.

The last question is: What is your opinion about the role of scientists, economists, and other knowledgeable people in the strength for humanity's survival?

The role of the scientist, the public citizen, is very clear and it is to recognise and communicate this recognition to others, that survival — the survival of life on this planet — is the highest obligation that this generation has. And it's the obligation that transcends the differences between capitalism and socialism, and it transcends national concerns. I've said many times that militarism is the great problem of our time. That is the power that we must now get under control.

¹ This interview was given while the Moscow forum 'For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Humanity' was in session. — *Ed.*

² Some leading Western scientists and political and civic personalities have stated their apprehensions about the SDI programme. John Galbraith's view on this issue is not shared by many distinguished US scientists, including George Wald, Carl Sagan, and David L. Parnas. — *Ed.*

People Should Think Not Only Of Themselves

Pierre Galand — President, Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the European Communities, OXFAM-Belgium General Secretary¹

Security for all is seen differently within each individual country and in the world community at large. What is your attitude and what are you suggesting?

UNIVERSAL security presumes that the society is aware of its responsibility, that it is learning to analyse the situation and uphold its own stand, and that it is putting pressure on the political structure of power. Many are coming round to the thought: "If I want security for myself and the other person wants the same, we should be concerned about each other's security."

I believe that paramount attention should be refocused on the Helsinki programme for security and cooperation as being fundamental and all-embracing and that this programme should be deepened. The Gorbachov initiatives are significant in that they not only envision a nuclear-free Europe but can, in addition, imbue all plans and projects with the Helsinki spirit and give them a fresh impetus. In order to adopt political decisions on Europe's future, all of us need realistic projects, a concept and an action programme, consistent with common interests.

But the problem lies in the incongruity and even certain breakdown of the attitudes of Western governments to European security and the Soviet initiatives, which even Reagan does not dispute. One gets the impression that the British, the West Germans, the French, and others have suddenly found themselves unsure, out of their bearings. They contend that these initiatives are designed to separate them from each other and drive a wedge between them and the USA. What lies behind this contention? It is, I feel, that in some countries they are not doing enough to work out and realistically balance the policy of non-bloc development and surmount the bloc thinking. A peaceful alternative based on the Helsinki decisions is needed for the whole of Europe.

In advancing towards disarmament we Europeans could put forward international projects that would reinforce world security. This is what would express, above all, the responsibility of the European peoples and their awareness of the relationship between their own and global security. In the interests of peace the European orchestra must learn to play a harmonised political melody.

Aren't you talking of all-embracing security, including all its aspects — political, military, economic and humanitarian?

Of course, both in the context of the diversity of relationships and with account of the involvement of all countries in world affairs, of their growing mutual dependence. Ever since the peace movement came round to appreciating this integrational process, thanks to the efforts of Olof Palme, Egon Bahr, and others, we began to think in terms of security for all nations. Proposals founded on this concept, for instance, the idea advanced by the West German SDPG jointly with the governments of the GDR and Czechoslovakia for a corridor free of nuclear and chemical weapons, and the projects for making the North and the Balkans non-nuclear regions or establishing security zones, worked out as far back as the close of the 1950s by people like the Belgian Albert de Smaal, fit perfectly into the framework of a political settlement of European security problems.

Besides, the very concept of security is now widening because it implies not only people's right to life but also the ways for establishing and promoting relations between countries and between opposing blocs. Military-political alliances exist — that is a reality. A settlement of the question of abolishing some types of missiles will not signify the dismantling of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. It is our common duty to understand *what type of cooperation* among the European

countries can ensure the development of the concept of a new type of security based on the opportunities arising from the dialogue between the two major powers.

This is made all the more important by the fact that the economic crisis can no longer be seen as transient. It is increasingly becoming a structural crisis, and is manifesting itself — albeit in different ways — in both the West and the East. For all of us its consequences are, unquestionably, negative.

Lastly, to top it all, as a result of the bipolarisation process and the Cold War, even the South is now in some sense divided on the pattern of the North, i.e., into a 'West' and an 'East'. How then within the framework of a third, non-bloc way can our joint, European responsibility serve the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the world?

I would say that Mikhail Gorbachov's initiatives allow developing international relations to a level making it possible to conduct negotiations and assist nations where problems arise: help to reinforce confidence between the FRG and the GDR or between the states of Indochina and ACEAN, or normalise the situation in the Horn of Africa, Central America, or around Afghanistan. *We cannot afford to think exclusively in terms of regional security.* If we have understood that the Helsinki decisions open the way to security in Europe, it is vital to make them a sort of model for the whole world. Indeed, *why should this process, these methods not prove to be effective for Central America or for Asia?*

In order to show their advantages, nations always need some sort of competition. So let us get together to put their competition on a peaceful track — not to serve the ambitions of this or that social or ideological system but in order to resolve humanity's fundamental problems. Do we have to compete through 'star wars'? Why not in areas where we have to measure up to the challenges of the epoch, for instance, the peaceful development of outer space? And why, in the search for ways that would give people self-respect, should we not return to jointly signed charters, to recognised norms of international relations? No peace policy will take shape and there will be no prospect for security if there is no ethical concept. Ethics in politics signify respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and respect for the economic and social rights of nations.

Would you say that the ethical concept is mirrored in the work of the international committee and national association headed by you?

The Liaison Committee is a sort of West European lobby helping to promote the comprehensive development of Third World nations and ensure their right to self-determination. Our influence led the EEC to finance hunger-relief and disease-eradication in Africa and some projects in Nicaragua. Civil service volunteers are being sent to developing regions to give people education and vocational training. In the EEC and on the national level the Committee is currently pressing for sanctions — over and above economic embargoes — against the Pretoria regime.

As for OXFAM-Belgium, it holds that it is not enough to aid refugees from Southern Africa and the people of the front-line states victimised by

racist aggression, that it is not enough to demand the release of Nelson Mandela and 25,000 of his fellow countrymen. *Changes must be fostered in South Africa itself by bringing pressure to bear on Pretoria and those who are in a position to influence that regime. Public pressure will be effective only when people are informed and drawn into concrete actions.* To that end OXFAM sponsored conferences, concerts, and film-showing in some cities in Belgium last March, boosting our Stop Apartheid Solidarity Fund. Money from this fund is used for, among other things, positive actions, in other words, to expand contacts with trade unions and church circles in South Africa and launch alternative anti-apartheid educational, vocational training, and human rights programmes for the indigenous population.

What makes you say that respect for human rights and the rights of nations is a fundamental principle?

I have had occasion to mention the following example: in 1970, despite pressure from the USA, the people of Chile put their faith in Popular Unity and were able to elect Salvador Allende as their president. He was a Marxist, an atheist. And in the United Nations he delivered a remarkable speech about human rights and the rights of nations, about what has to be done to make progress. The world heard the voice of the 'South' the opinion of Third World nations, a speech of colossal significance, of incredible scope and depth. Pope Paul VI spoke earlier from the same podium. Indeed, it is worth taking the trouble to compare these speeches in order to appreciate their lofty understanding of international morality and see the identity of Marxist and Christian thought in analysing the rights of nations.

The mid-1970s were marked not only by the successful conference in Helsinki but also by the USA's withdrawal from Vietnam. One of the mightiest military powers had been made to pull out by the heroism of the Vietnamese people and by the pressure brought to bear by millions of Americans themselves. This was a period when it became possible to start important talks on the market prices of raw materials, of oil, in the interests of developing countries. This was an exceptionally favourable period for the cause of peace and the assertion of human dignity.

Naturally, these developments were not consonant with the interests of big capital and the transnational corporations. It was then that a departure from and later the destruction began of the judicial foundation of international relations: it was then that Allende was assassinated and energetic activity was started to undermine the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Washington refused to pay damage compensation to Vietnam, although this was agreed upon in Vienna. Dollar speculation began and, with it, the erosion of the international monetary system. As a consequence, there was a sharp escalation of the arms race. The peoples thus found themselves pushed outside the pale of the judicial framework within which there could be respect for the opinion of the United Nations and for negotiations.

The principle of 'one man one vote' within countries and of 'one nation one vote' in international relations is valid for everybody; it is not the

prerogative of any single segment of humanity. The principle of renunciation of aggression is mutually-binding; each side has equal grounds for demanding compliance; to develop without foreign economic or political pressure is likewise a natural and legitimate right of each nation.

For me the Gorbachov initiatives are, above all, a reminder that we should return to the judicial foundation of nations. This is vital to all peoples, to all countries — not only to the West and East but also to the North and South. The Soviet leader's proposals are of a comprehensive nature, directly or indirectly influencing much, and have a strategic orientation.

In order to survive, humanity also needs outstanding, imaginative state leaders. While I am not a Communist I am gratified to see that a political leader of such stature and thinking is at the head of a major power. I can only hope that leaders of a comparable calibre appear in the immediate future in the USA and countries of the South. Humanity needs such personalities at the landmark turn into the new millennium. We of the West European peace movement openly and categorically declare that we are up to the hilt in favour of Gorbachov's proposals.

Has this total support of the West European peace movement had a definitive influence on the governments of Belgium and the other NATO states?

No, not yet. This needs time. That is precisely why we are conducting such work. It is being done in equal measure by, for instance, our friends in the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which organised a huge peace march on April 25. They are seeking to influence their government and Margaret Thatcher, candidates standing for election, and members of parliament, telling them that they have to listen to and reckon with the peace movement. The Easter marches in the FRG have strengthened the peace movement in that country. The Dutch have declared they would go out into the streets to put pressure on their government and make it heed public opinion.

What new developments in the Belgian peace movement would you single out as noteworthy? Can it be said that it is making progress? Or, on the contrary, with a number of missiles already deployed, have some of its participants lost heart?

The Belgian peace movement has gone through three phases during the past ten years. The years 1978-1985 were a time of 'pre-missile' mustering and organisation. The second phase began in 1985: it witnessed the deployment of US intermediate-range missiles on our territory. That year 16 of these missiles were brought to the Florennes base. But that was when Belgian peace activists conducted powerful mass demonstrations. At first, before Tomahawk missiles were deployed, a quarter of a million people went out into the streets to demand that the government reconsider its decision. Then, immediately after the October 1985 parliamentary elections returned to power the persons who in fact gave the green light to

cruise missiles, 250,000 demonstrators in Brussels demanded that the government redefine its policy. We had public support, and that was important.

This determined the nature of the third phase of the anti-missile, anti-nuclear struggle. We made an effort to follow up the broadening of the movement by giving it a deeper content, for which purpose we held four 'meetings for reflection' in 1986. Hundreds of people came — not merely to protest, to demonstrate, but to study the problem, to consider what the security of Europe signified and what should be the projects that we the Europeans were trying to work out in order to find a mutually acceptable solution.

At the October 'meeting for reflection' we got together not only people belonging to different political parties and trade unions. For the first time our forum was attended by military men. They declared their opposition to the SDI programme. In the first place, these generals and other officers know that in NATO they are already now developing strategic concepts springing from the realities of the SDI programme. This means that, in spite of everything, it is being suggested even to competent people that preparations can proceed for a war that would be tantamount to suicide.

In the second place, they took a stand against the SDI in the realisation that it would *interminably* escalate the arms race, drawing the deadliness of conventional weapons ever closer to that of nuclear armaments. This dangerous process will be pushed by the mutual desire of industrialists and the military to rush the approval of the new technologies being developed for the SDI. In other words, the logic of the system, where the law of profit is linked to the capitalist market, induces the production of more new weaponry.

The attitude of the military, who oppose SDI, is of great importance for the peace movement. It stimulates the confidence that one, the nuclear, branch of the death-dealing tree can be cut off. If that is the case why cannot the same be done with the other branches — with armaments generally? In April our National Action Committee for Peace and Development sponsored a peace festival in Floreffe, which was attended by thousands of people. We are planning a mammoth anti-war demonstration for October 25.

Still the question remains: What can the public achieve?

I would say that public opinion played an unquestionable role during the 'second cold war' (the closing years of the 1970s and the early years of the 1980s. — *Ed.*). We did our work, and the East European countries likewise made, as they are still making, their contribution to the peace movement. Regrettably, there has been no adequate response to those efforts from the political leaders of some Western countries. I hope that today, with new proposals on the table and with public pressure having acquired a qualitatively new dimension, the European countries will finally assume their full responsibility for their own home, for the whole of Europe, for the preservation of our planet.

¹ The Liaison Committee coordinates the operations of more than 600 organisations promoting development in the 12 Common Market states. OXFAM, a humanitarian-philanthropic association, set up in some West European countries, now has an international network implementing programmes in less developed countries. — *Ed.*

'We Are Entitled To Be Participants In Our Future'

Tony Benn — member of the National Executive, British Labour Party; Member of Parliament

Ideas about guaranteeing the security and the future of Europe are being advanced all over the region. At the recent international seminar in Prague you submitted several concrete proposals for consideration by world public opinion. What is their essence?

THERE were three such proposals. The *first* is that we should try to build up a pattern of friendship and collaboration treaties inside Europe. As a model I can cite the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1942 which was signed by Stalin and Churchill. If you remove the references to the war, you are left with an excellent text even by today's standards. It has all that is necessary to ensure peace, security or collaboration, it prohibits territorial aggression or aggrandisement, rejects interference or hostile treaties against each other, and is consonant with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Along these lines we could have, say, an Anglo-Czechoslovak treaty, or a Hungarian-Portuguese, or a Spanish-Romanian one. We could have a network of treaties reflecting the map and the realities of Europe. The underlying humanitarian principles, the mutual interest, the methods of implementation and even some practical tasks would be similar to those you see in the twinning of towns.

What would be the objective of such treaties, of such a network?

The objective would be to build up direct links within the system of blocs, not as a substitute for the blocs but in order to overcome the divisions. Meanwhile, the immediate objective would be to provide new opportunities for all-European dialogue and collaboration.

The *second* proposal is to revive the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe which was set up after the war to promote economic development over the whole of Europe. Instead of the world and Europe being divided between the CMEA and the Common Market, the European countries from the Atlantic to the Urals would jointly tackle the issues of collaboration, and do it at relevant inter-ministerial forums.

The greatest crime that we commit in Europe is the creation of weapons

that use up the money, the skills and the resources which should instead be spent on roads, hospitals, tractors, and development in the Third World where 20 million people die every year of starvation — and we are partly responsible for that too. Hence my *third* proposal — that of the non-aligned countries purposefully complementing and reinforcing the Soviet peace initiatives. We might get the UN Secretary-General to invite three of the major non-aligned leaders — I suggested Gandhi of India, Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Castro of Cuba — to come to the Soviet Union, to other socialist countries, to Western Europe, to the United States and maybe to Japan too — and to say, “You must divert your resources for our needs because you are killing us by your arms programmes.” This would be *a way of reinforcing, from outside Europe, the processes of peace that are developing inside Europe.*

Another idea or, rather, an appeal of mine, is that we should find a way of bringing the world trade union movement together. There was a split after the war, and now the World Federation of Trade Unions and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions are functioning separately. I think the United Nations could perform some role here — why not? — perhaps in promoting a congress of all unions in the world. They could meet and discuss the common problems of employment, industrial development, management, labour safety, social security and cooperation of the labour movement in different regions.

Those are the concrete ideas which I hope will be taken seriously.

The impression is that the objectives of your proposals are something far greater than simply meeting and discussing some common platform. One can feel the emphasis on the idea that smaller nations alongside the big powers and the public alongside the governments can tangibly help to strengthen peace, beginning with Europe. Besides, smaller countries can submit proposals that will prompt the big powers to advance closer to the solution of the bigger issues.

Yes, we have to do it at every level. The big powers have to talk about the big questions, about strategic weapons and other matters. But if you take European countries such as Czechoslovakia, or Britain, or France, Hungary, Bulgaria or Portugal, they all have special interests and often have old links.

If you leave all these diverse questions to the big powers, then you become spectators of your fate instead of participants in your present and your future. *We are entitled to be participants in our future as nations, as people, as working people.* That is the broader thrust of my proposals.

As a veteran Member of Parliament and as a participant in a mass civic movement, could you explain how people in general can influence the decision-making process?

I represent in Parliament a little town called Chesterfield — a town of 100,000 people, with mining, industry, agriculture and so on. The Labour Party in our town has set up an international committee of our own. We

have our own foreign policy in Chesterfield, and last year we had a summit meeting of our own between two diplomats representing the Soviet and the American embassies. It was the week after the bombing of Libya, and hundreds of people came from all over the locality, from other towns to listen to an American and a Russian discussing peace. The effect was to make people feel that they were part of the peace process. *We don't want to sit at home and merely watch Reykjavik, we want to be active.* On May 1 the Chesterfield Labour Party had another meeting attended by a *Pravda* correspondent and by representatives from Nicaragua and several other developing countries; our town was again discussing peace. That is our contribution to the creation of a climate favourable to disarmament, cooperation and détente. *We do not leave politics to the important people, because politics is about my children and my grandchildren and your family. We all should have our say in shaping the structure of the future and in finding a place in this structure because we all have an interest in it and in our survival.*

This is seen best of all in practical action such as solidarity campaigns. You remember the historic strike of the British miners, the strike that lasted for almost a full year. Who came to support us? French unions sent a million pounds. The Russians invited the miners' families to go on holiday. The Americans sent money. I myself went to the United States and I raised many thousands of dollars for the British miners. This is therefore not a theoretical, academic discussion of foreign relations, it is the daily business of supporting each other. We support the African National Congress of South Africa, the Nicaraguan government, and the people in Turkey who are on trial for their lives.

We have to bring the whole question of world affairs into our homes, although in our homes we don't think much about disarmament. People think that the issue is too complicated, that they personally cannot stop 'star wars'. But at least they can invite foreign visitors to their homes, give them a platform or raise money for them. *So that is the purpose of our efforts — to bring global issues down to the people where they can participate.*

In this connection, how would you describe the changes that have occurred in British public opinion on peace and security over the past two or three years?

It's difficult to speak about it briefly, but I think one thing is clear: Gorbachov has broken through. Previously, Soviet disarmament proposals were dismissed as propaganda. But there is something about Gorbachov and his approach which is quite different. And the reason people believe in him is this: he says, just as they do, we all bear a heavy military burden and it's expensive, it denies us the hospitals, the schools and the houses we need. Gorbachov wants disarmament from the point of view of the Soviet people. But just as he is speaking for them, he is also speaking for us, for other nations, and he is now seen as a spokesman of the peace movement. That is something that has never happened before.

And Reagan with his 'star wars', with 30,000 American troops in Britain

is now seen in a different way. So I think that if Gorbachov came to London, he would get as good a welcome as the Pope because he is seen to symbolise the hope for peace. And that is something which not only has an effect on world affairs but also gives people hope at home. And if you have hope, you are no longer frightened, frozen into the status quo. Hope can liberate a lot of progressive ideas in Britain.

To be perfectly candid, if you put aside ideological differences between Marxism and capitalism for the moment, I think that the following becomes clear: technology has created a huge power structure. And the question is, who controls that power? Is it controlled at the top or at the bottom? Therefore, the democratic argument which is now emerging in the Soviet Union is also a very big argument in the West. We want more democracy in Britain, and the democratic developments in the Soviet Union are giving us more strength. We want more democracy because we can see our democratic rights shrinking, and we are concerned over the dominance of technology in the hands of people who are trying to protect their privileges.

I think the public in Britain is now ahead of the political leaders. I think our public would respond to a much clearer leadership from the top — but political party leaders are a bit cautious. But underneath, the tide of opinion is shifting. Of course, some in the British peace movement are not friendly to the Soviet Union, and there is even a Cold War element. But noticeable changes are occurring quite rapidly. Now, for example, we'll host a European Nuclear Disarmament Convention this summer, and for the first time delegations from Eastern Europe have been invited. That is a big change. Some of the old ideas are beginning to shift, and some of them have been very good. But some of them have had a Cold War element in them which I don't think has been very helpful.

exchange of views, discussion

Witnessing An Exciting Process

Communist Press Correspondents in Moscow on Developments in the USSR

The processes under way in the USSR are epitomised in 'perestroika' (restructuring) and 'glasnost' (public openness), two terms that are now part of accepted international usage. This internationalisation of

two Russian words is a reflection of the growing worldwide public interest in what has been dubbed in the West 'the new Soviet revolution'. More than 300 journalists accredited in the USSR, among them those from the fraternal parties, make up the impressive contingent helping readers in their countries to quench their thirst for news from Moscow.

What do communist correspondents think about the present phase of the Soviet society's development, and what do they accentuate in their reports? What is the public response in their countries to what is going on in the USSR? Do Communists have any doubts or apprehensions on this score and, if so, for what reasons? Finally, does the perestroika stimulate or hamper the fraternal parties' political and social activity?

Those were the questions put by *WMR* staff member Sergei Yastrzhembsky to the Moscow correspondents of *Rizospastis* (Greece), *New Age* (India), *l'Unita* (Italy), *El Popular* and *La Hora* (Uruguay), and *l'Humanite* (France). Below are their answers.

Learning The Art Of Criticism

Jannis Lichos — correspondent of *Rizospastis*, the central printed organ of the CP Greece CC

I HAVE been working as a journalist in the USSR for more than thirteen years. I find the current changes of tremendous interest. We are witnessing some exciting processes. My reports to *Rizospastis* are determined by such phenomena under way in the USSR as glasnost, perestroika and acceleration. My paper does not confine itself to publishing daily reports from Moscow, and often dispatches special correspondents to the USSR to write about various aspects of the renewal process, so as to give readers a wide and objective panorama of the ongoing events. It is, of course, quite impossible to give a full picture of perestroika because it has so many different facets.

Perestroika is something that also applies to the professional activity of the journalists accredited in Moscow: it is quite impossible to provide the necessary information without keeping in step with the rhythm now throbbing through the Soviet society. The press corps has been most directly affected by glasnost. We have had almost 200 briefings at the Foreign Ministry's Press Centre in the first three months of this year alone. Then there are the regular statements by Soviet leaders and items in the Soviet press, which is now so rich in content that one could literally file a report after reading through any one of the central papers. The work is now much more exciting, but the going is harder. I would say there is no longer any trace of stagnation phenomena in our journalistic life.

There has also been a change in what we write about the Soviet Union and how. I think that many communist press correspondents accredited in Moscow, including myself, are partly to blame for the fact that before the 27th Congress of the CPSU we tended to spotlight only the positive aspects of life in the Soviet society. One felt that if one wrote about something negative, one would almost be likened to a malicious slanderer. I now try to be objective. I report on the positive, but do not conceal the negative elements and difficulties. Nor do I ignore the doubts which some have as perestroika proceeds. As a result, the tone and character of my reports on the realities have, of course, become more realistic.

I am often asked about the Greek Communists' perception of perestroika: are they all unanimous in assessing the developments in the USSR? Judging by readers' letters to *Rizospastis*, there is tremendous interest in the unfolding process of renovation, glasnost and democratisation. But the opinions are far from being all of a piece. On the one hand, the vast majority of readers have a positive perception both of the changes and of the sharp and principled criticism of various shortcomings and omissions, especially such negative phenomena as corruption, abuse of power, hard drinking, drug addiction, and so on. On the other hand, some fear that this 'bursting the bubble' of socialism could result in some people being disillusioned in their socialist ideals. Capitalism has its shortcomings, they reason, and now it turns out that socialism also has its own, so what is the point in carrying on the fight?

We have to do some scrupulous work to show in our reports that all of that has nothing to do with socialism as a system. We have to show that the negative phenomena were caused by the departures from the political ideals, and the ethical and moral values of socialism, and the gross violations of law, but keeping silent about these flaws would also be a retreat from socialism, because shortcomings can be corrected and surmounted only with the instrument of truth. The whole truth must be known to the people.

I want to emphasise that there is a growing interest in the changes in the Soviet Union not only among the Communists, but also among the Greek public as a whole. Their assessment has been positive on the just assumption that these changes go to benefit the Soviet people, make socialism more attractive, help to improve the international climate and also to give our people greater strength in fighting US influence and for changes oriented towards socialism. Their interest is manifested, for instance, in the fact that perestroika in the USSR has become one of the leading topics on the pages of the Greek bourgeois press as well. On the whole, the press has been reporting on the Soviet realities in a spirit of goodwill, but a part of the conservative, right-wing press has simultaneously tried to use the atmosphere of glasnost, criticism and self-criticism, which is being established in the Soviet society, to try to discredit socialism, by laying stress only on the shortcomings and mistakes, quoting out of context only the critical points in statements by Soviet leaders, and saying nothing about the successes.

This kind of smear campaign against socialism sets the communist press the important task of mastering the art of criticism. There is a need for

reports exposing the various negative phenomena, there is a need for criticism, but there must be no carping or fault-finding. When criticising, one should not forget the positive achievements of the USSR under socialism, and thanks to socialism. We shall go on widely presenting these successes, with special emphasis on what could be called the taboo topics for bourgeois journalists. One of these is production democracy, which offers a wide field for demonstrating the advantages of socialism. Has there been a single instance in any capitalist country of plant director, or even shop superintendent, being elected by the work collective as they do it now in the USSR? That is incredible for our society. No wonder the Greek bourgeois press pretends not to be aware of this aspect of perestroika.

I feel that it is important for us communist press correspondents to help our readers avoid yet another bourgeois propaganda trap: the efforts to create the impression that there is a strong opposition to perestroika in the USSR. The Soviet reality offers no grounds for such an assumption. There are, of course, various difficulties facing the process of renovation, which also has its opponents, who resent being deprived of their unmerited privileges and cushy jobs. But it would be a travesty of the truth to talk about some political opposition.

To be quite frank, what I, as a journalist, am worried about is something else, and the gist of my worry was concisely expressed on television by Yuri Vlassov, the famous weight-lifter of the 1960s. He spoke about some kind of 'collective enlightenment' in the society, when suddenly it seems to have dawned on one and all that the old way is no good and there is unanimous support for perestroika. But only yesterday decisions were also approved unanimously.

Perestroika is, of course, only at its beginning: just the first few steps have been taken, and the results are yet to come. But it is already clear that it has dealt a heavy blow at anti-communism. The CPSU leadership has shown that socialism is not a closed society, but is, on the contrary, capable of well outpacing capitalism in democracy, glasnost and human rights. This could do a great service to the fraternal parties in demonstrating the advantages of socialism and also in finding answers to the many problems which now agitate the minds of working people in the capitalist world. A correct presentation of what is going on in the USSR undoubtedly offers the communist parties greater opportunities in their daily struggle for the solution of national problems in their countries.

For History Without 'Blank Spots'

*Masood Ali Khan, Ph.D. (Hist.)—
correspondent of New Age, CP India's
weekly*

I HAVE worked here for more than thirty years, and have attended seven congresses of the CPSU. I can now say without any doubt that this is the happiest time, a time of great hope and expectations. The policies

introduced and developed since the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC, and further elaborated at the 27th CPSU Congress, and finally, the decisions of the January 1987 CC Plenary Meeting, which confirmed and further concretised the course of glasnost and all-sided democratisation of Soviet life — all these developments are of immense and revolutionary significance not only for the Soviet people, but also for all the communist and progressive forces in the world, and for the future of socialism. The course of restructuring and renewal, and its first results have greatly enhanced the prestige of the USSR and are having a decisive effect on the political perspectives and development of the world.

The democratic reforms in economic, political and party affairs, the changes in management, in election procedures and, above all, the free and open discussion country-wide on all important topics — these changes are being followed with bated breath.

Things are moving fast. New developments and significant changes have been coming in a continuous succession, old habits and modes of thinking are being challenged, conservatism and the entrenched bureaucracy are being forced to give way and retreat. Of course, all this is not just smooth sailing. The laws of dialectical development do not stop operating under socialism. Contradictions appear, difficulties arise, and only by overcoming these, the society moves forward to the next and qualitatively higher stage. The acceleration of change and transformations now under way in the USSR is truly revolutionary in this sense.

As a student of history, I now often find myself reviewing the past. What inspires me is the new approach to history and past experience now emerging in the days of new thinking and fresh reappraisals.

Earlier, I could never understand why the names of certain people who had played an important role in the history of the revolution and socialist construction had to be relegated to oblivion. I have the 10-volume *Shorter Soviet Encyclopedia*, which does not mention the name of V. Molotov. A *Soviet Encyclopedic Dictionary*, published in 1986, does not mention G. Malenkov and a number of Soviet leaders who occupied high positions in the party and state. Some works on military history say nothing about M. Tukhachevsky.

I read with great interest an interview given by Academician Mints, who dealt with the bearing of perestroika on historians and history. He said that much that was wrongly or deliberately consigned to oblivion from the early history of the revolution and the Soviet state has now to be restored. The names of many revolutionaries and fighters for the Soviet power, especially those who were purged in 1937-1938, were forgotten, despite the fact that there were people among them who had notably contributed to the revolution. It is the duty of historians to bring their names back to the history of the Great October Socialist Revolution, says Mints.

The question arises why there are no biographies of Stalin, Khrushchov, and other leading figures. Speaking of the 20th Congress of the CPSU without acknowledging the role of Khrushchov is like playing Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. As an Indian, I must also mention his visit, along with N. Bulganin, to India, the first visit of top Soviet leaders to my country, which was just as epoch-making in the development of

Indian-Soviet relations as Nehru's first visit as the Prime Minister of free India to the Soviet Union. As the Russian saying goes, you cannot throw the words out of a song. Much more so, people who really existed and played an important role cannot be deleted from history.

That is the positive effect of perestroika and glasnost. This realistic and just approach to history, and the lessons to be drawn from it, are having an important impact on the movement of the left in other countries. It also means that those mistakes which frustrated democratic reforms after 1956 and 1964 will now be made impossible. Openness, democratisation, faith in the people, the irreversible course of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the hopeful and far-reaching transformations in the life of the Soviet people — all of these are developments which revive the old Bolshevik faith and ideals. In the year of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the rejuvenation and renewal of socialism with reliance on its own resources are a shining hope and inspiration for all mankind.

Perestroika In The Light Of Glasnost

Giulietto Chiesa — correspondent of *l'Unita*, Italian CP

A POSITIVE and much-needed process which has been delayed and held up too long is under way in the USSR. On the one hand, the 'breaking mechanism', as M. Gorbachov called it at the January 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, had made itself felt for years, and on the other, optimistic phrases and calls had kept resounding, while steadily losing credibility. That led to a slow-down of the economic growth rate and of political and social life, and, moreover, to a serious deformation and degeneration of some relations in society to a point when certain groups of the country's population grew apathetic, indifferent, drew away from public affairs, and became downright cynical. Those were, I think, the symptoms of a real socio-political crisis.

It is a task of daunting proportions and complexity to stem and reverse the tendencies which appeared under L. Brezhnev, when old approaches were being revived during a long period of time, to say nothing of uncovering the true, deep-seated causes behind the 'breaking mechanism', which emerged in the early 1970s but which, in our view, was rooted in the planning concepts introduced under Stalin. Small wonder that there is now talk of *radical* transformations and even of a veritable *revolution*.

That is the point I try to make in my dispatches from Moscow. I see, among other things, that the process of change is not a painless one and seek to explain to the reader the political and ideological aspects of the struggle for perestroika. Indeed, going ahead with change means hitting out at someone's interests, cancelling privileges which some take for granted, restoring justice and gradually reintroducing the citizenry to the democratic process. Those who laid claim to uncontrolled authority and enjoyed unjustified (and unjustifiable) privileges will, of course, never

readily agree to part with them. It is there, though not only there, that I perceive a strong and dangerous source of resistance to the ongoing change.

I have watched with great interest every sign of the broadening of democracy and the people's participation in the ongoing processes because it is my conviction that perestroika will never fully get into its stride unless the need for it is recognised by the general public. In turn, no growth in the activity and awareness of the mass of people will be possible, I think, without profound reform of the political and constitutional structures of the country, without broader self-expression at the grassroots in the cultural, economic, political and other fields, and without giving free vent to various public interests. That is precisely what I say in my articles on the actual developments in the USSR.

Frankly, I have not had to apply perestroika to myself: when I came to Moscow almost seven years ago, I saw with utmost clarity the problems which are now being openly discussed in the Soviet media. I did not censor myself in the least, while *l'Unita* published all my dispatches.

My work, of course, is now different in many ways from what it used to be — but not in terms of content. I now have to work much harder: I write every day, sometimes more than one article a day, and the coverage has widened. Since the Soviet press, radio and television offer much more information, and since it has become more accessible, there is now the problem of choice. I therefore try to read as much as I can and to keep a closer watch on developments in domestic and foreign policies. The need to 'decipher' some event arises more and more rarely, analysis gains in depth and the real picture of the country with its achievements and difficulties gradually comes into view. But there is still a long way to go to the ideal, of course, and even today a good deal has to be gleaned by reading between the lines.

I give special attention to problems in the promotion of glasnost. Most of our readers welcome open information about Soviet society: my meetings with them at home in the past few years offer massive proof of their attitude. True, quite a few people are puzzled by some reports in *l'Unita* on the once-known aspects of Soviet reality, and also (especially in the early years of my posting) by the views which clash with official stories. Lastly, there still is a segment of our readership, and not a small one either, who are not happy with the frank coverage of developments in the Soviet Union. They would like news dispatches from Moscow to contain less criticism, even less, perhaps, than is to be found in the Soviet press or in statements by Soviet leaders. But my overall impression is that the Italians' genuine interest in the USSR has grown since three or four years ago and that they are keen on everything the CPSU CC General Secretary personally says and does.

As for the fears that a critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet society will obscure socialism's obvious superiority over capitalism, my stand as a Communist and a journalist on this score is unequivocal: a society which has a scant or wrong idea of itself cannot either come to grips with the problems facing it or resolve them. I am well aware that quite a few people in the USSR and other countries would not

like to shed their old illusions. They are wrong. The prestige of socialism was badly eroded in the past precisely because of silence, reticence, propaganda exaggeration and lack of glasnost.

Today, people in the Soviet Union are discussing their problems, even very serious ones, with sufficient openness, yet the popularity of the Soviet leader keeps growing all over the world, and the change in the USSR is winning approval from ever broader sections of the world public. But a retreat to the old ways, to a 'double-standard truth' would irreparably damage the favourable view of socialism.

I think that, as M. Gorbachov has pointed out on more than one occasion, there is no alternative. As everyone knows, there are those in the USSR who do not see any other way out of the crisis but nevertheless cling to the old mode of thinking when it comes to management and administration, way of life or the very concept of socialism. Let us hope that those forces and views professed by them will not prevail and that their proponents will not dare to put a brake on the process of renewal of Soviet society. The success of perestroika will, beyond doubt, not only mean an upsurge of the Soviet economy and culture but also add to the appeal of socialism. As for foreign policy since the April 1985 Plenary Meeting and the 27th CPSU Congress, the new mode of thinking, I feel, has already made an exceptional contribution to relations between the different socio-political systems and to the efforts of all the progressive forces which, for different motives and diverse ideals, are fighting everywhere for peace and social justice.

People Need The Whole Truth

Ricardo Saxlund — correspondent of the weekly *El Popular*, the printed organ of the CP Uruguay CC, and the newspaper *La Hora*

MY reports accentuate the just objectives and the innovative spirit of the USSR's foreign policy, and its relations with other socialist countries and the less developed world. I also concentrate on the burgeoning internal processes, notably glasnost, perestroika and socialist democracy. Democratising the society is especially important, I think, because the negative phenomena which had earlier accumulated and which in some cases originated in the mistakes made over the past fifty years, frequently deprived the Soviet people of the badly needed sense of involvement in the affairs of the society and the state. Democracy is also important because not very long ago anti-communists and anti-Soviet propaganda, echoed in some circles, kept harping on its 'shortage' in the USSR.

Essential changes have taken place in my work as a communist correspondent over the past two years. It is no longer humdrum and is much more intense. Up until recently, we tended to engage in some kind of

idealisation, assuming that people could be inspired only by a picture of the Soviet reality that was painted in radiant tones. We kept stressing that things were all fine, and accused our foes of lies and falsifications, whereas now and again our ill-wishers were telling the truth which we concealed. Many journalists made that kind of mistake, but it was an incorrect approach which was not shaped under any external influence. It was the result of a frame of mind which had taken shape within our communist family, and I think that current developments show just how harmful such a mentality was for the international communist movement and the progressive and democratic forces. It gave our foes the exceptional opportunity of telling the truth about some things, while heaping slanders on the Communists in others, and hushing up the successes of socialism in their efforts to get people to be disillusioned about it.

I shall not be so bold as to produce any kind of generalisations, but I should like to say that there is a totally different attitude to current events in the USSR, as compared with anything in the past on the part of Uruguayans, not only Communists, Socialists and the progressive-minded part of the population supporting the Broad Front,¹ but also of many leaders of ruling parties and even of members of the right-wing press. There is also more trust in our reports, because we now show the whole truth, although it does sometimes produce a sense of bitterness.

It is common knowledge that there are differences in the approach of Uruguayan Communists to various aspects of the Soviet society's perestroika and renewal. Some still think that the efforts to overcome negative phenomena, the stagnation, and the frank criticism and self-criticism, that is, the practical implementation of Lenin's principles, which were often forgotten in the past, allegedly tend to lower the prestige of socialism.

However, unless we tell the whole truth, people will begin to doubt us and our reports. One could object, of course, that it is better to withhold the truth from someone who has cancer. I myself do not think so. There was evidence of some 'malignant tumours' in the Soviet society about which we said nothing, but that did not mean that by doing so we were helping to cure them. I believe that the USSR is now especially in need of understanding and support from all the Communists. And we have no right to take a wait-and-see attitude, for life demands a new approach and a new thinking.

The international communist press, I feel, must carry to people the truth about socialism, about all its virtues and vices, although the latter are very much fewer. We journalists should move even closer to the broad popular masses, we should carry our theory closer to daily life, to the life that is real, and not imaginary; we must find simpler forms of speech that anyone can understand. Here we have much support from the policy aimed to democratise and restructure the Soviet society.

¹ The Broad Front (*Frente Amplio*) was set up in February 1971 by the Communist Party of Uruguay, the Christian Democratic Party and the Socialist Party, and a number of other left-wing organisations and groups. Under the repressive regime (1973-1985) it was outlawed and had to operate underground. Its programme is anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic, and provides for radical economic and social reforms for the benefit of the popular masses. — *Ed.*

Socialism And Democracy Are Indivisible

Bernard Frederick — correspondent of *l'Humanite*, printed organ of the French CP

THE French Communists have watched with sustained attention what is going on in the USSR. I think that these events amount to a revolutionary turning-point which is significant not only for the Soviet Union, but also for the other countries, for the international working class and for all the communist parties. We live in a world in which domestic policy has a direct effect on foreign policy. So when processes are started in the Soviet Union to renew socialism, which amounts to a revolution within the revolution, these processes must necessarily affect the struggle carried on by the communist parties in the various countries, although they have to work in totally different conditions. There is, of course, no question of imitation, of trying to set up perestroika as some kind of model, as we, regrettably, at one time used to turn the socialist construction in the USSR and other socialist countries into a model for our own political projects.

When I came to the USSR, it appeared to me that perestroika was most manifest in the sphere of culture. Why was that so? I think because for years many workers in culture wrote books, shot films and produced plays which the bureaucratic apparatus then shelved. One could say that some writers were hidden from audiences at large, while the existence of others was ignored. Now glasnost and democratisation have at once made it possible to recall the names of Osip Mandelstam and Boris Pilnyak; there was once again talk about Boris Pasternak, whose novel *Doctor Zhivago* is being prepared for publication. The works of Vladimir Nabokov and others have been published. It has been possible to print such new works (of which *l'Humanite* has written) like Anatoly Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat*, Chinghiz Aitmatov's *The Scaffold*, Daniil Granin's *Zubr*, and Vladimir Dudintsev's *White Vestments*. We find a similar process in the cinema: films which had lain on the shelves for years have been screened.

The renovation in culture, which does not bar any debate whatsoever, has, I feel, become a mark of democratisation. That is the atmosphere in which the clash of ideas imparts dynamism to the society, especially a socialist society. I may be wrong, but I think that for historical and present-day reasons, the intelligentsia is that stratum which is the first to be massively involved in perestroika. That is also because the intelligentsia was itself instrumental in paving the way for the new policy.

I report for the organ of the French CP, that is why it is important for me not only to present an overall picture of the Soviet reality, but now and again also to focus attention on the issues constantly being harped upon in the West. One of these is the destiny of culture in the USSR and the policy of the French bourgeoisie with respect to the intelligentsia in France. Why the intelligentsia, one may well ask? It is because the bourgeoisie finds the

idea of the intelligentsia's alliance with the working class unbearable; it cannot tolerate the fact that many outstanding figures in our national culture in the past, among them Pablo Picasso, Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, and Frederick Joliot-Curie, were active in the French CP. The bourgeoisie, therefore, has set itself the goal of breaking up this alliance, making use of various facts from the Soviet reality, that, regrettably, could be found in the period of stagnation.

There is an objective link between the right-wing forces' urge to present the USSR and socialism as a whole in the image of an apocalyptic world, a Gulag system, on the one hand, and stagnation in the socialist society which used to fuel the anti-Sovietism, on the other. Unless I am mistaken, Mikhail Gorbachov once said that it was in the period of stagnation that one of the fiercest anti-Soviet campaigns was mounted in the political, ideological and military fields, with the imperialist fire being directed at a country which was socially stagnant and weakened by inadequately developed democracy.

Although I had a fairly good notion of the Soviet Union's political history before I came here, my first-hand experience with the Soviet reality obviously helped me to shed some of the preconceptions and stereotypes in thinking which had prevented me from seeing the surrounding world with all its contradictions. There must be a self-critical approach to what one writes, being mindful of the responsibility falling on the communist journalist. Nor should one succumb to any outbursts of emotion or anyone's bias. But, being a Communist, I have no right, at the same time, to take a neutral stand, to say nothing of meddling in the internal affairs of the country where I am accredited. One always has to take a clear-cut stand on which camp one is in. I must frankly say that I stand for perestroika.

There is now a veritable thirst for information about the USSR in France. Apart from my reports, *l'Humanite* also has reports from its special correspondents and articles, including analytical articles, which are written in Paris and which have a wide response. I think that our readers are well informed as a result of these collective efforts.

Concerning the feedback effect (reader-newspaper) I became aware of it on my visit to Paris. People now have a much better knowledge of Soviet problems, and there is evidence of some enthusiasm among readers over the changes in the USSR, while the Communists also see it as support for their struggle. But many of them also tend to ask new questions about the future of perestroika, because it is just as true of Soviet people as of French Communists to say: once bitten, twice shy. Let us recall that in the past, say after the 20th Congress of the CPSU, we also entertained some hopes which were then blighted.

But for considerations of principle I am flatly opposed to any apprehension about glasnost doing harm to the new system. One cannot do any harm to socialism by calling a spade a spade. On the contrary, socialism cannot live either without glasnost or the truth. Whenever any problems arise under socialism, they need to be tackled with the help of the masses, and that can be done only in an atmosphere of democracy, which involves a clash of differing opinions. Those are the kind of conditions in

which the correct policy originates and the right course is worked out.

There is yet another matter of principle. Socialism is a realistic prospect only in a democratic state. The Soviet state had to beat back the external forces of aggression and to stand up to the internal counter-revolution with a display of the full force of power in certain historical conditions, but that was no more than a temporary expedient. Democratic centralism should never degenerate into centralism alone, and care must be taken to preserve the dialectics of the principle. Democracy, I must repeat, is the best means for solving any problems and for developing socialism.

I am not only an advocate of perestroika, I am sure that it will be a success. It can be effected because it helps to mobilise the masses and relies on democracy. Besides, it is a crucial turning-point towards a new quality in the development of socialism and, one could say, of notions about socialism on a world scale. It is a vivid demonstration of socialism's capacity for self-renewal and self-correction, for generating fresh ideas and imparting new impulses, which is of exceptional importance. Socialism has proved that it is capable of moving out of any crisis and advancing, no matter how dramatic these may have been.

The call 'All Power to the Soviets!' was sounded at the dawn of the revolution. Today, as I understand, the CPSU says: 'All Power to the Soviet people!', which means power to the people with self-governance in an atmosphere of democracy. That, I believe, is what makes perestroika revolutionary.

TRUTH: THE ULTIMATE BEGINNING

On Overcoming the Malaise of Conservatism and Hastiness in Socialist Construction

Vu Hyu Ngoang

Head of the Propaganda and Education Department, Hanoi City Committee, CPV.

SINCE the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in December 1986, the Communists and people of Vietnam have been moving boldly to change their way of thinking and the methods of socialist construction in the country. The ideas of the 27th Congress of the CPSU are a powerful inspiration for the CP Vietnam, which believes that a *renewal of thinking* is what it needs in the first place.

Our party seeks to *bring about a radical change in the style and organisation of work and to bring in new blood* so that its actively would lead to success, and that economic development would run in accordance with the objective laws of socialist construction in the transition period.

The renewal of thinking and restructuring of the economy in the light of the new approach are a process that is common to a number of socialist

countries. History itself has set the Vietnamese Communists the task of restructuring as the condition for consolidating the internal forces of socialism, raising its quality and extending its gains. Our assumption is that *socialism is now at the stage of all-round intensive political, economic and social development*, and that it has been strengthening its positions in the world. It is wishful thinking on the part of the bourgeoisie to expect socialism to run into crisis, or even to collapse at the present stage.

The contest between the two world economic systems has long since outgrown the theoretical comparison of social ideals: we are witnessing and taking an active part in the new phase of acute and complicated rivalry between socialism and capitalism. The socialist system has not yet fully manifested its objective advantages and its vast potential, we believe, because the people building and perfecting it have not yet put in a sufficiently vigorous effort. Meanwhile, capitalism has camouflaged the fact that it is historically doomed by making use of STR achievements. Success in the peaceful competition between socialism and capitalism largely depends on how well the Communists are able to make a critical analysis of their own experience in building the new society, on the extent to which they are capable of constantly suiting their mode of thinking and action to the demands of our day, and on how boldly and straightforwardly they speak of their shortcomings, including the malaise of conservatism, inertia and simultaneous haste which we ourselves have been afflicted with.

Conservative thinking and action in the socialist society tend to originate in specific conditions, and in the absence of any antagonistic class contradictions. But conservatism can be long-standing unless the leaders have keen insight and political instinct, and do not succumb to the illusion that there are no contradictions in the socialist society at all. The record shows that contradictions do arise, in particular, because of poorly organised economic management and administration. These contradictions may sharpen and create a situation of crisis in the country. This threat of crisis is not, of course, anything like a law-governed process, and it does not spring from the nature of socialism.

Our experience suggests that conservatism and mental sluggishness can also be produced by economic factors. Competition is alien to socialist economic management, but we have yet to clarify the kind of mechanism that needs to be put into place to make the economy dynamic and to develop the economic instincts of those who run it, much as competition does.

Haste, as a rule, is displayed when the communist party is already in power, for it could be under the illusion that, with power in its hands, it is capable of doing anything it wants to do. The result is a tendency to neglect the objective laws of social development. Haste leads to confusion of the notions of socialism and communism, of the transition period and fully built socialism, and the initial and subsequent phases of the transition period.

Conservatism and haste obviously feed on the advantages of socialism, and that is why they are a complicated disease that cannot be cured all that easily. But cured it must be. Once haste is got rid of, the builders of

socialism stride forward with surer step, and that is the guarantee of their rapid advance. It is also possible to move forward faster and to accelerate the development of socialism by combatting conservatism and sluggish thinking.

Vietnamese society has paid a high price for the oversimplified notion of socialism as pure and abstract, ignoring the actual conditions, and the diversity of its manifestations. Following the victory in the Patriotic War against US imperialism, South Vietnam's complete liberation, and the country's reunification, all of which was an embodiment of the people's age-old vision of their country's unity, party and state cadres continued to think under the momentum of the impressive victory. The party saw nothing but the favourable results, and so failed to be aware of the difficulties on the way forward.

The Vietnamese Communists were not fully aware that the situation in the country corresponded to the period of transition towards socialism, and that it was only at the very start of this period. We inherited a backward agriculture and living standards were extremely low. In external economic conditions, there were growing internationalisation and interdependence of the world economy. Because we failed to understand these and many other factors we made some major mistakes.

These apply, in particular, to socialist industrialisation. Vietnam got down to building up a heavy industry, while investments were scattered among many projects. At the same time, investments for agriculture came to only 20 per cent of the total. As the new relations of production were shaped, there was a breach of the law that these should correspond to the character and level of the productive forces. There was a separation of property in the means of production from the system of administration and distribution. We failed to make use of all the potentialities of the multisectoral economy to develop production and improve our people's living conditions more rapidly. The efforts to reshape the bureaucratic mechanism in administration and supply were much too slow and hesitant. We were late in switching to economic calculus and new methods of socialist economic management, and failed to attach due significance to economic laws and the use of commodity-money relations in planning.

The building of the economic foundations of socialism in Vietnam has made slow headway over the past ten years. Not that there have been no achievements at all, but these, like the history of our great and triumphant struggle, should not obscure our mistakes and shortcomings. Our party has made mistakes in major political propositions, strategy implementation and organisation of executive work. Life itself has made us think again about Lenin's profound idea: "History has allotted us the task of completing the great political revolution by slow, hard, and laborious economic work, covering a very long period."¹

The CC Political Report to our party's Sixth Congress urged the need to *face the truth, to make a truthful assessment of the state of affairs, and to tell the people the truth*. This call testifies to the party's intrinsic strength, its dedication to noble ideals, and boundless trust in the people. *The search for the right strategy of the country's economic and social development starts from the truth.*

In accordance with the tasks set by the Sixth Congress, the party has to work out and effect three programmes: *a food programme, a consumer goods programme, and an export goods programme*. Once the priorities have been determined, the present economic structure will have to be substantially remodelled. With this end in view scientific and technical achievements will be applied in production, and economic methods of administration and management will be resolutely introduced.

Our party has stressed that the way from petty-commodity production to modern, large-scale socialist production involves efforts to bring out the commodity character of production and circulation, and to make active application of the law of value and other economic laws in socialist construction. The CPV has also urged the need to make intensive use throughout the entire transition period of all the economic sectors in the country: the socialist, the state capitalist, the private capitalist, the petty-commodity and the subsistence sector. The task has now been set to give vent to all their producer potentialities. Henceforth, the social results of production development, greater output and higher product quality are to be the sole yardstick of efficient management and administration in the country. Its advance towards socialism will be promoted by shedding the old preconceptions, like the *mistaken notion that being well off is a breach of socialist morality*. As more manufactured goods and farm produce are turned out and the working people's living standards are raised higher, the quicker these preconceptions will be done away with.

In accordance with the decisions of the Sixth Congress, the party has the firm intention to have the national economy develop at the pace established for the initial phase of the transition period. Throughout that whole phase, the party and the people have this goal before them: *to stabilise every aspect of the economic and social situation and to create the prerequisites for getting down to socialist industrialisation at the following phase*. The CPV has held firmly to this line, and intends to make essential changes — as the need arises — in the pace and forms of its activity in organising the guidance of the national economy and life in the society.

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 174.

'Religion Is For God, The Homeland Is For All'

This slogan was repeatedly echoed at the round table attended in Nicosia by representatives of fraternal parties and Marxist scientists from 14 countries to consider the experience of communist work among the Moslem masses. Taking part in the symposium sponsored by WMR and the *Al-Nahj* quarterly in conjunction with the CC of the Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL) were **Youssef al-Hassan** (Bahrain), **Agamemnon Stavrou** (Cyprus), **Masood Ali Khan** (India), **Satiajaya Sudiman** (Indonesia), **Faleh Abdul Jabbar** and **Nassir Al-Kadhemi** (Iraq), **Rouzbeh Navid** (Iran), **Said Salem** (Jordan), **Abdul Rahman Awadallah** (Palestinian Communist

Party), **Hamad Mubarak** (Saudi Arabia), **Semou Pathé Gueye** (Senegal), **Ali Ahmed el-Tayeb** (Sudan), **Zahir Abdul Samad**, **Khaled Hammami** and **Jubran al-Jaber** (Syria), **Ali Ileri** (Turkey), **Akhmed Iskenderov**, Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and **Famri Karim**, Editor-in-Chief of *Al-Nahj*. **Ezekias Papaioannou**, General Secretary of AKEL, delivered a speech of greetings.

Some of the fraternal parties invited to the symposium were, unfortunately, not able to attend for various reasons. Their positions and experience will, therefore, not be reflected in this survey.

THE contemporary Moslem does not only think of 'paradise in heaven' but also wants a happy life on Earth as well. The other world does not stand in the way of the Moslem loving the homeland so dear to him and fighting for its freedom and prosperity. These ideas are reflected in the slogan chosen for the heading. It was raised by enlightened Moslem clergymen¹ at the dawn of the liberation struggle of the peoples of the East. It is still valid today. That is why it has the support of communist and workers' parties working among the Moslem masses. All participants in the Nicosia symposium are of the opinion that upholding this slogan is evidence of *the Communists' respect for the feelings of believers and of their striving for the unity of all the popular forces, irrespective of religious persuasion, for the sake of their countries' liberation and social progress, and for peace on Earth.*

Hegel Was Wrong

In the early nineteenth century, some Western thinkers had assumed Islam to be a thing of the past. In his lectures on the philosophy of history, Hegel said that "Islam has long since left the world scene of history and has again returned to its Oriental state of repose and immobility"², a conclusion we now find to be hasty, to say the least.

The development of the national liberation movement in the countries of the East, which has been influenced by the Great October Socialist Revolution, the formation of the Soviet power in vast areas of the former Russian empire inhabited by Moslems and many subsequent events in the world, including Asia and Africa, have demonstrated the vitality of the faith in its spiritual, social and political manifestations.

In contrast to the West, where at the stage of anti-feudal revolutionary struggle for the unity of the nation, the ideologists of the bourgeoisie had usually opposed religion, nationalism in the East marched hand in hand with religion. Indeed, religion in countries with a predominantly Moslem population and an embryonic class structure has, more often than not, been the pivot of the society's spiritual life.

Zahir Abdul Samad recalled that at the inception of the national liberation revolution the al-Nouri mosque in the *Syrian* town of Homs was the site from which massive demonstrations proceeded against French colonialism. When the occupation forces tracked down student protesters, fierce street fighting broke out around the mosque. **Satijaya Sudiman** said that when the Communist Party of *Indonesia* was founded in 1920 several

of its leaders came from the left wing of the religious movement, Sarekat Islam. **Faleh Abdul Jabbar** stated that it was the prominent clergyman al-Afghani who formulated one of the earliest slogans demanding the liberation of *Iraq* from British dependence. Many similar examples were cited in this context.

The most interesting discussion at the symposium ensued over what is often called the 'Islamic boom' and the 'Moslem renaissance'. Today, at the end of the twentieth century, many Moslem countries are the scene of a new resurgence in the Islamic movement. Most of the speakers affirmed that it first started in the 1970s.

The changes that have taken place were so swift and unpredictable that they generated differing and sometimes contradictory assessments and evaluations. Some researchers have turned to the genesis and history of Islam, comparing its tenets and the positions of various clerical quarters. **Akhmed Iskenderov** said that, paradoxically, these studies instead of clearing up matters often lead researchers away from an understanding of these processes and phenomena which are directly linked to the impact of the Islamic factor and which now constitute an important element of internal political developments in the predominantly Moslem countries.

The Soviet scientist said that the answer would not be found in Islamic dogma. In most cases, Islam is not merely a religion but rather an ideological and political trend with far-reaching and quite secular goals. **Semou Pathé Gueye** generally agreed with this point of view and drew attention to the fact that the revival of religious, particularly Islamic, consciousness also results from a failure to meet the spiritual requirements of the people who, in the face of 'the world of things' and the surfeit of information, seek an idea, even utopian, like the one for which many had given their lives in the past.

Be that as it may, there is evidence of an increase in the number of believers. According to the data cited at the symposium, *there are now some 800-850 million Moslems in the world*. The political and ideological influence of the Moslem clergy has, at the same time, been growing. They are in full control of state power in *Iran*; they are represented on the government in the *Sudan*; they run state institutions in *Saudi Arabia* and other Gulf states; they have been expanding the old religious organisations and setting up new ones.

Although the law in many countries bans religion-based political parties, Islamic groups have been successfully seeking involvement in politics and exerting an influence on the economic and social spheres and even on external relations. The *Organisation of Islamic Conference*, comprising tens of countries with a predominantly Moslem population, has been active on the international scene.

The intensification of the Islamic factor occurred in the 1970s and early 1980s against the background of growing crisis developments and trends which covered the political, economic and social spheres where the ruling circles failed to consolidate national independence or to ensure social progress. The failure of the bourgeoisie alienated the urban petty-bourgeois strata and the peasantry. The situation was further aggravated by widespread corruption, bureaucratisation of the state apparatus,

parasitism and embezzlement of state funds. This opportunity was seized by the religious forces, which acted as the political leader of the broad popular masses.

These forces were able to use the tenacity of archaic social and spiritual structures characteristic of the countries of the East. The desire to speed up the social restructuring of former colonies and semi-colonies aggravated the confrontation between those who posed as advocates of modernisation and the fundamentalists, all the more so as this desire did not materialise in actual measures aimed at economic, cultural and social development but was confined merely to borrowing and implanting bourgeois development models and the worst aspects of Western civilisation.

Lenin once remarked that "political protests in religious guise are common to all nations at a certain stage of their development".³ Thus, *Moslem clergymen happened to be in some countries at the head of most revolutionary upheavals in recent years, as it was strikingly manifested by the overthrow of the Shah monarchy in Iran.* **Rouzbeh Navid** pointed out that in the past period, religion was virtually the only possible form of protest and struggle.

The February 1979 revolution in Iran had a national-democratic character, with a popular, anti-monarchic and anti-imperialist content. A large section of the Shiite clergy, led by Khomeini, supported the people's revolutionary demands under the Shah regime and promised freedom and justice within the framework of Islamic rule. This extended the clergy's social base and assured it of the support of millions of working people. During that period, the clergy was the main opposition force which was able to establish direct contact with the masses and spread its ideas through the mosques. The other organisations, especially the People's Party of Iran, did not have such an opportunity.

The February revolution in Iran overthrew the Shah regime, but failed to fulfil its main tasks: economic and social transformations and a consistently anti-imperialist course. **Abdul Rahman Awadallah** explained the Iranian revolution's quick reversal precisely by the fact that it did not take a clear-cut stand on progress and did not apply the slogan, 'Religion is for God, the Homeland is for All'.

The ideas and positions of many contemporary Islamic political movements are similar to the way of thinking and work adopted by revolutionary Christians in Mediaeval Europe. These movements also advocate a return to the 'golden age', to the social system that existed at the time of the Prophet Mohammed. Hence the *narrow-mindedness and dogmatism of their ideology, and the poor results of their programmes when put into practice.*

In sixteenth-century Europe, peasant movements produced only weak and fragmented communal religious groups, while creating a favourable climate for the consolidation of feudal despotism. On the peasant war in Germany, Engels wrote: "The most magnificent revolutionary effort of the German people ended in ignominious defeat and, for the time being, in redoubled oppression."⁴ The participants in the symposium were of the opinion that this characterisation also applies to the outcome of the Islamic revolution in Iran, which was led to a 'defeat' at the hands of the

reactionary religious leaders, who took over power after the popular insurrection.

The Iranian revolution has, at the same time, left a considerable and patchy impact on the ideology and practice of popular movements in the Moslem countries. It has served as an incentive for the creation of Islamic-oriented organisations. In Iraq, for instance, many religious groups became more active in advocating the establishment of a religious state. Similar currents have sprung up or are active in other Arab countries and also in Turkey, Indonesia and Senegal. The present Tehran regime has made no secret of its intention to export the 'Islamic Revolution', something the Communists resolutely oppose, Faleh Abdul Jabbar emphasised.

In this context, this question was raised at the Nicosia symposium: are there any grounds for Western media allegations that 'the Islamic boom' has affected the population of regions in the Soviet Union traditionally influenced by Islam?

The experience of the socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, has shown, **Akhmed Iskenderov** said, that the question of religion is one of the most intricate problems. Marxism-Leninism links the weakening influence of religion and its gradual disappearance to the restructuring of the society. *If there are no easy ways to building the material and technical basis of socialism, it is even harder to reshape human consciousness, especially religious consciousness. It calls for unflagging attention, painstaking work and much time.*

Failure to meet material and spiritual requirements, insufficient attention to the individual, and bewilderment in the face of the extremely complex and diversified problems of our day, such as the threat of thermonuclear catastrophe, the contradictory consequences of the scientific and technical revolution, and the environment degradation — all of these can promote a yearning for religion as a compensation for what man is denied by the society.

The CPSU has always taken the creative Marxist approach in assessing the social role of religion and the durability of religious mass consciousness. The Soviet state has never waged a struggle against believers or belief in God, but it has always been resolutely opposed to attempts by the exploiter classes to use the religious sentiments of believers, and against the manipulation of religion to shape an ideology expressing the class interests of the enemies of socialism. Article 52 of the Constitution of the USSR states: "Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion." Incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds is prohibited by law. Article 34 of the Constitution states: "Citizens of the USSR are equal before the law, without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language and attitude to religion . . . The equal rights of citizens of the USSR are guaranteed in all fields of economic, political, social and cultural life."

The CPSU's policy with respect to religion and believers is now based on the truth and realism, as it is in every other sphere of social life. The Party has made a realistic assessment of the state of things in this sphere and, in the

light of the decisions of its 27th Congress, demands scrupulous observance of the constitutional guarantees of freedom of conscience. That is not a policy of expedients, but the Communists' strategic line based on principle and on Marx's idea that "to practise his own particular religion is expressly included among the rights of man".⁵

Bourgeois propaganda has made futile allegations that believers in the socialist countries are persecuted for their religious faith, that the Soviet Union is intolerant of Islam, and that it is even taking steps to banish it from the life of the Moslem population of the USSR. It was said at the symposium that there are now more than 1,300 mosques operating in the Soviet Union, and that scores of new mosques have been opened in recent years. Moslem clergymen are trained in a theological academy and medrese, which operates legally. The participants in the symposium pointed out that the class enemy has maliciously slandered the Soviet Union and inflated the 'Islamic problem' out of all proportion not out of any concern for believers or human rights, but in order to incite discontent in the liberated countries and even hostility to the socialist perspective.

Wide Spectrum of Forces under the Green Banner

Among the factors promoting the spread of religious ideology and Islamic political movements in many Moslem countries the participants in the symposium mentioned the repression constantly conducted by governments against communist and workers' parties and the secular progressive forces. Here are some of the facts. Among the 13 parties from the non-socialist world represented at Nicosia eight are banned. The Sudanese Communist Party has only recently come out from underground, following the overthrow of the Nimeiri dictatorship in 1985. The Lebanese Communist Party, which is operating in the open, had the intention of delegating to the symposium its CC member Hussein Mroue, a doctor of philosophical sciences, but he was assassinated on February 17, 1987. Terrorism against Communists has become daily practice in Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Jordan and the Israeli-occupied Arab territories. They are blamed for all kinds of mortal sins, from betrayal of national interests to attempts to undermine the moral foundations of society. They are even accused of advocating the 'socialisation' of women and children.

Reaction represented by the big comprador bourgeoisie, feudal lords and politicians connected with imperialism has often used the green banner of Islam, its ideology and religious organisations in actively attacking forces of progress and democracy. Many speakers dealt with the specific development and characteristics of the activity of conservative Islamic groups in their countries.

The 'Youth of Mohammed Society', which emerged in Syria immediately after World War II and expressed the interests of the exploiter classes, conducted anti-Communist and anti-Soviet propaganda through the mosques. It later became the 'Moslem Brothers Movement', and also attacked progressive-minded religious personalities like the well-known Moslem theologian Ahmed al-Bawwab, who tried to reconcile Islam with socialist ideas.

There is a ramified network of reactionary Islamic organisations in *Jordan*. Irrespective of their names — the 'Challenge', 'Holy War', the 'House of the Koran' — they are essentially mere branches of the stronger 'Moslem Brothers' organisation, which receives actual support from big landowners and capitalists. It is out to extend its influence among students, employees and intellectuals, but it is essentially active through mosques. **Said Salem** stressed that the 'Moslem Brothers' in Jordan makes no secret of its goal to wipe out the Communists as its main enemy.

In the *Arab territories occupied by Israel*, the 'Moslem Brothers' acts as a Trojan horse propagating the idea that the occupation has come as a punishment to Moslems for departing from the tenets of Islam. That is why the occupation can only be eliminated by a stronger faith in Allah. The 'Moslem Brothers' has virtually renounced every form of struggle against the occupiers and has declared, instead, a war against the 'godless' Palestinian Communists. The Israeli authorities have, characteristically, not banned the organisation but have, on the contrary, given it certain privileges, specifically freedom of movement in the occupied territories.

The participants in the symposium pointed out that, despite this complex and alarming situation, one should also look at the other side of the question, namely, *the emergence of a growing number of Islamic organisations and trends actively fighting against imperialist influence, dictatorial regimes and inhuman repression that run counter to any religious thinking.*

Deep-going differentiation in the religious quarters is characteristic of virtually all the countries represented at the symposium. Thus, the demands of the working masses in *Iran*, irrespective of their subjective understanding, have largely determined the scope of the February revolution and limited the urge of the Shiite orthodox clergy to reduce the tasks of the revolution solely to restoring 'the laws and rules of the Shariat'. According to the representative of the People's Party of Iran, this contradiction between the people's interests and the government's actions underlies the growing dissatisfaction of the masses and the alienation from the reactionary regime of growing strata of believers, including some religious quarters.

In *Saudi Arabia*, opposition has become more active among the Shiites in the eastern part of the country particularly after the events in Iran. Another movement representing the Sunni majority of nine million is against the corruption and bribery in the state apparatus, and against the US presence, under the religious slogan of 'liberation from the infidels'. In 1979, its supporters took over the mosque at Mecca. In *Bahrain*, the government has made unsuccessful attempts through its loyal clergy to control the patriotic and democratic-minded religious forces.

Religion is becoming one of the most important channels for the opposition to establish contacts with the masses in *Indonesia* and *Turkey*. Islamic trends are developing with explicitly anti-imperialist and humanitarian tendencies. Haydar Kutlu, CC General Secretary of the Communist Party of Turkey, has said that growing political activity by religious trends was one of the important factors that frustrated the US attempts to depoliticise Turkey, that is, to wean the people away from

thinking about their future. In Indonesia, differentiation has sharpened between opposition Islamic groups advocating a religious state and those demanding real democracy and freedom of religion like abangan Moslems.

In the *Sudan*, the 'Moslem Brothers' is demanding an Islamic constitution, while another organisation, the 'Republican Brothers', is opposed to this demand as running counter to the spirit of Islam and the realities of the time, which call for realism in attending to celestial and secular affairs. The population in the south of the Sudan has also resisted the Islamic constitution.⁶ The country's Communist Party believes that the confrontation between the revolutionary-democratic and the right-wing forces does not spring from the antithesis of Islamic ideas and atheism, but from the antagonism between democracy and dictatorship, between justice and social oppression. Those are the lines on which the battle over the nature of the future constitution is being fought: it will either entrench the people's gains, the country's sovereignty, and the basic rights and democratic freedoms, or it will legalise the dictatorship of the ruling class and deprive the people of the fruits of their struggle.

In *India*, the most reactionary religious party, Jamaat-e-Islami, advocates 'pure Islam', but its policy makes it evident that much of its inspiration comes from fascist dictatorships. On the other hand, the ideas of early Islam provide a basis for progressive scholars advocating the principles of equality, brotherhood and mutual help.

A paper presented by *Al-Nahj* makes an attempt to sum up the ideological trends of the religious political forces active in the Arab countries. Most of them make ethical and moral criticisms of the evils of the ugly development of dependent capitalism. Apart from a few exceptions, however, they do not question the 'sacred' right of private property. Some, like the 'Al-Madrasi' group in *Iraq*, have proposed a 'middle-of-the-road' Islamic solution through the creation of a wide network of cooperatives.

In the political sphere many, including those opposed to the existing dictatorships and suppression of democracy, reject the idea of a modern secular state and call for a return to the past when religious and secular powers were in the same hands. Thus we have here a wide spectrum of views, ranging from direct defence of the feudal-capitalist social system to various forms of petty-bourgeois reformism. The latter trend has, as the authors of the paper say, the potential for developing towards what is now known as 'liberation theology', especially in view of the anti-imperialist tendencies predominant in it: resistance to US domination, against Israel's expansionism, and against the plunder of the region's natural resources.

The development of dependent capitalism in the Arab countries and the intensifying struggle over national and social issues create an objective basis for growing anti-imperialist, patriotic tendencies.

A major role in this struggle belongs to the peasantry and the middle strata of town and country which are most susceptible to Islam and consequently tend to protest in religious forms. A correct assessment by Communists of the existing potentialities and the spread of their parties'

influence among the masses will make it possible to channel this protest into liberation theology and so prevent reaction from using it against the forces of progress.

Alliance Policy — a Line of the Masses

The Communists regard cooperation and interaction with progressive Islamic organisations and a section of the Moslem clergy as *a strategic line of their alliance policy in countries where believers form a majority of the population*. The fraternal parties are guided by Lenin's idea that "unity in this really revolutionary struggle by the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth is more important . . . than unity of proletarian opinion on paradise in heaven".⁷

Many speakers at the symposium stressed that Communists have no right, consciously or accidentally, to play up to Islamic reaction, which lays emphasis on the tenets of faith and rejects any ties with atheists. *Religious credo is the personal affair of every individual, while political and social forces should proceed from existing realities and the requirements of the struggle at each concrete stage. Ideological differences should be moved into the background when it comes to solving common and vital problems, for that is the only way to success in developing alliances.*

These problems range over a wide area, including the struggle for national interests, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and against imperialist and Zionist aggression. They involve a host of economic and social problems relating to underdevelopment and neocolonial exploitation, to the establishment of political democracy and defence of human rights under dictatorial regimes of various stripes. They also include international solidarity in solving global problems of today, above all, in averting a world nuclear war.

The imperialist 'divide and rule' policy has left a deep scar on the life of the less developed countries, although colonialism has long since been eliminated. Following the establishment of Pakistan and Bangladesh, *India* has been left with a 100-million Moslem 'minority'. Turkish occupation and NATO schemes have led to the partition of *Cyprus* and the establishment of a secessionist state inhabited by Turks on 37 per cent of its territory. Peace in the *Sudan* has for several years been disrupted because the non-Moslem minority in the south has been denied legitimate rights.

Of especial importance to the Communists of these countries is the slogan: 'Religion is for God, the Homeland is for ALL', together with the principles of freedom and equality of all religious persuasions and struggle to safeguard the nation and its cohesion. That is the basis on which the Sudanese Communist Party is cooperating with the forces advocating a secular constitution, and it believes that Shariat can be no more than a component element of the fundamental law of the state. The Communist Party of India has been fighting against Hindu chauvinism and for the protection of Moslem lives and property, and for the official recognition of the Urdu language, which many of them speak. At the same time, the CPI has strongly condemned the separatist tendencies, fuelled, in particular, from Pakistan. The party has campaigned for the unity of the labour

movement against reactionary attempts to split the unions and isolate the Moslem working people.

Agamemnon Stavrou said that AKEL, among whose co-founders were also people from the Turkish community, has for over six decades been defending the principle of equality and brotherhood of all Cypriots regardless of origin and religious persuasion. Today, with the island partitioned and occupied, the party cannot openly reach out to the Moslem masses in the north. The majority of those are Cypriots who have for centuries lived in peace and security with their compatriots from the Greek community. There are, however, religious fanatics who have mostly come from Turkey in recent years. In this difficult situation, AKEL has done everything it can to support the progressive, anti-separatist forces and to promote a spirit of national unity and solidarity among Cypriot émigrés. In London, for instance, where there are now more Greek and Turkish Cypriots than there are in Nicosia, the two communities work together to restore their common homeland's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The specific aims of the Communists and of the progressive Moslem movements in the struggle against despotic regimes are ever more frequently identical. In *Turkey*, for instance, there is the demand for a repeal of Articles 141 and 142 of the Criminal Code, which effectively outlaw the Communists, and Article 163, which bans political activity by religious forces. The latter article is by no means designed to safeguard the secular character of the state, but to suppress any opposition taking a religious form. The Communist Party of Turkey, **Ali Ileri** said, is fighting for the repeal of the three anti-democratic articles.

In the struggles against dictatorship under the banners of democracy for the people and respect for their elementary political and social rights, Communists and Moslems sometimes find themselves not only on the same side of the barricades, but also fighting shoulder to shoulder. That is what happened during the November 1979 uprising in *Saudi Arabia*, which swept through 80 towns and villages. When the religious leaders saw that the Communists were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the common cause and that they were being imprisoned and tortured in the same way as Moslems were, a realistic basis was created for militant cooperation.

Dictators and imperialism backing them are worried by the merging of the Moslem movement and the general democratic movement. Those who were but recently encouraging the 'Islamic boom' to wipe out progressive ideas and their advocates with the aid of religion are now having second thoughts for they regard the 'fanatics' as a threat. Indonesia's President Suharto bluntly named the three enemies of his regime: the Communist underground, Islamic fanaticism, and Western-oriented liberalism. The reactionary Turkish paper, *Tercüman*, has accused the 'radical currents' cooperating with 'godless Communists' of betraying the faith. The Islamic scholar Abdurrahman Dilipak replied by saying that he saw the hand of the United States behind these accusations, who would like to play off the Moslems and the left against each other and so get a free hand for its dirty business.

The participants in the round table pointed out that Communist awareness of the importance of a policy of alliances with the organised religious forces

and the desire to establish and develop cooperation on the basis of equal rights have so far, regrettably, seldom yielded any tangible results. The reason is not only repression by the authorities. The influence of anti-communism is still prevalent in Moslem movements of all orientations. Finally, the relative weakness of the communist parties in the social life of their countries tends considerably to impede the policy of alliances.

It is the task of the fraternal parties to overcome these difficulties. They attach great importance to it in their mass agitation and political and party work. Lenin showed one way of solving the problem in his remarks on the report delivered by A. Sultan-Zade at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920. Lenin felt that it was necessary to adapt the Communist Party — its membership and special tasks — to the level of the peasant countries of the colonial East.⁸

The grassroots membership of most of the parties represented at the round table consists of people brought up on the principles of religious faith or of believers. Many of them had their first schooling in political struggle in progressive-oriented religious movements. The party rules do not require of members to be atheists, but to fight for political goals. Nor is atheism a stipulation for joining the party or serving on its governing bodies. The head of the Auditing Commission of the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour is a sheikh who comes from a well-known Moslem family.

In contrast to many other religions, Islam is not only a faith but also an integral part of the way of life of the Moslem faithful and their behaviour and daily routine. Communists have to take this fact into consideration in their activity. That is why it is customary in Senegal, for instance, to interrupt rallies, meetings and other political activities, including CC sessions, at the time of prayer prescribed by the Koran. A document of the Sudanese Communist Party, 'On Correcting Mistakes in the Work Among the Masses', requires of all party members, irrespective of their attitude to God, to conduct themselves with respect for the traditions and feelings of Moslems, so as to deprive reaction of any pretexts for anti-communist attacks on this issue.

Communists in the Moslem countries, even if they are confirmed materialists, do not find it necessary to carry on wide-scale atheistic propaganda among the masses or to criticise this or that religious trend. They believe that their mission of enlightenment is to help eliminate illiteracy, and to set up various cultural and sports clubs. What is more, in some cases they succeed in spreading the ideas of humanism and socialism through sermons in mosques by progressive clergymen. Communists make it a point, at the same time, to unmask the actions and attitudes of religious forces serving reaction and imperialism against the national and people's interests.

The fraternal parties believe that their main task is not to conflict with the faithful but to work tirelessly so as to explain and implement the political aims meeting the class and national interests of the working people and the majority of the nation.

The discussion and exchange of experiences were held at the Nicosia round table in an atmosphere of frankness and self-criticism that has been

growing in the communist movement. If the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour has not developed into the kind of party its members want it to be, **Semou Pathé Gueye** said, it is not the fault of the religious forces but the result of shortcomings in the party's analysis and mistakes in its practical activity. **Satiajaya Sudiman** pointed out that despite all the attention paid by the Communist Party of Indonesia to believers before it was banned, this had been done at the time by trial and error, without due scientific analysis. Besides, many Communists had taken a prejudiced attitude towards believers, and reaction was quick to capitalise on that.

Rouzbeh Navid recalled that the People's Party of Iran had made mistakes in the period after the February 1979 revolution. Loyal to their duty, the Communists fought alongside the people against the despotism of the Shah and then supported the early steps taken by the Islamic Republic and took part in various referenda. However, at one point they agreed to relegate the issue of the people's democratic rights into the background, and that should not have been done. The party failed to see in due time the sharp turn to the right by the Islamic leadership, and so to switch from the policy of 'critical support' for Khomeini to all-out opposition, in anticipation of the repressions that later claimed the lives of hundreds of Iranian Communists and patriots.

It was stressed at the symposium that international cooperation between the Communists of various countries is of great importance in charting a correct course towards Moslems and their organisations. It is also necessary, when organising joint practical actions in response to attempts by reaction and imperialism to use the Islamic factor for their own purposes on an international scale. The progressive forces in the Moslem countries need to coordinate actions and exchange information to strengthen mutual solidarity in the struggle against the Zionist aggression and Pakistan's chauvinist line towards India, for a halt to the imperialist interference in the affairs of Afghanistan, for a just and lasting solution to the Cyprus problem, and for an end to the destructive Iran-Iraq war.

The paper presented by *Al-Nahj* says that, despite all their activity, Moslem organisations and movements in the Arab countries do not give enough attention to the paramount issue of our day: that of removing the threat of thermonuclear war. At the same time, many speakers gave examples to show the growing concern of the masses and political forces over this issue, and told of the contribution made by religious figures, including Moslems, to the worldwide movement for mankind's survival.

Indeed, the question of peace in the Moslem countries has become a matter of constant concern not only for the fraternal parties; it is being increasingly echoed in the mosques and discussed in religious publications. The ideas of Islamic humanism, as **Masood Ali Khan** rightly said, can today become our natural ally in the antiwar struggle. *The new thinking, which can help to save civilisation, demands of the Communists flexibility and an ability to widen the spectrum of the peace-loving forces by involving large masses of believers.*

The participants in the Nicosia round table stressed that the consistent application of a long-term strategy towards religion and its votaries, and

the fraternal parties' discovery of the right tactical solutions and adequate forms of party activity among the masses, largely determine the communist movement's own prospects in the Moslem countries and the orientations towards social progress. The socialist alternative will become a reality only when it is accepted by the overwhelming majority of the faithful. It is the duty of Communists to work for this goal.

The survey was prepared in the Commission on the Exchange of Party Experience by **Ali Ahmed al-Tayeb**, Representative of the Sudanese Communist Party on the *WMR* Editorial Council, and by **Yevgeny Novikov**, Cand. Sc. (Philos.).

¹ The term is used to designate ulemas, Moslem sheikhs and other persons performing Moslem rituals but not constituting special corporations — *Ed.*

² Georg Hegel, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Moscow, 1935, p. 339 (in Russian).

³ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 243.

⁴ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 478.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 162.

⁶ The ethnic minorities in the south of the Sudan do not profess Islam. For years they have been subjected to exploitation by the commercial Moslem bourgeoisie from the north of the country.

⁷ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 87.

⁸ See *ibid.*, Vol. 42, p. 202.

viewpoints

Democratisation and Self-Governance

The 70th Anniversary of Lenin's 'The State and Revolution'

Fyodor Burlatsky — Dr. Sc. (Philos.),
USSR

SOVIET sociologists felt until recently that it was somehow awkward to use the term of 'democratisation' with respect to socialism. The accepted phrase was: 'the further development of socialist democracy'. That had a reassuring ring, for it implied that democracy in the Soviet Union was progressing normally at all times and in any political weather, and what had to be done was to take the next long or short step forward.

Vibrant Thought

An essentially new, revolutionary light was shed on the whole set of problems in the interaction between socialism and democracy by the January 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC, which focused attention on democratisation and self-governance. Its main idea was that the Soviet society cannot attain the goals of its economic, technological and social restructuring on qualitatively new principles without genuine democracy widely developed in practical terms, without an independent status for the work collectives, and without the crucial participation by the masses in administration and management.

Such an approach signified *a return to Lenin's conception* of socialism and democracy, as he formulated and substantiated it in his classical work, *The State and Revolution*, which he wrote in August and September 1917, just before the Great October Socialist Revolution. The record shows that it is important and useful to return to Lenin's ideas on these two basic conditions.

First, *Lenin's ideas have to be considered in development.* *The State and Revolution* is based on what Marx and Engels said about the state, and on their analysis of the experience of the Paris Commune and earlier social revolutions. Moreover, Lenin also relied on the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905-1907 and February 1917, and also on the lessons he had drawn from the ideological struggle against the opportunists and anarchists. But it is also perfectly obvious that the ideas about the interdependence of socialism and democracy, which he set forth in *The State and Revolution*, were subsequently elaborated and modified in many respects in the light of the experience of the Soviet power. Indeed, Communists and Lenin had essentially to start from scratch in working out the principles on which the new society was to be run. At one point he said this in a jocular vein about state capitalism: "It did not occur . . . to Marx to write a word on this subject; and he died without leaving a single precise statement or definite instruction on it."¹

A comparison of Lenin's works on the eve of the revolution, during the Civil War, and at the beginning of socialist construction clearly shows the long way the leader of the new power, his fellow-fighters and the party as a whole had to travel in mastering the business of running the new society in practice. In this context, Lenin's works which in the 1920s were called his political testament, are especially valuable. Among them are *Letter to the Congress*, *On Cooperation*, *How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection*, and *Better Fewer, But Better*. Those are the works in which Lenin concretised, elaborated and — I have to repeat this — modified many of the ideas he had expressed before the October Revolution.

The other condition is that there must be *an analysis of the development of socialism* over the more than sixty years since Lenin's death, which means analysing the Soviet experience and the most diverse specific historical and national experience of all the other socialist countries. It is, of course, impossible to understand the development of socialism outside the context of the present state of the struggle and cooperation between

the two worlds — the socialist and the capitalist — and of the threat posed to the very survival of the human race by the development of nuclear weapons.

Government With the Participation of All

There is one perennial stereotype that Lenin was a 'stateman' in contrast to Marx, who wanted the state to wither away. That is a notion based on a misunderstanding or deliberate distortion of the truth, because it was Marx who, in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, showed the need for preserving the state at the first phase of communism, in the socialist society. Like Marx, Lenin criticised Lassalle in *The State and Revolution* for his attempts to deduce a concept of the proletarian state from abstract wishes. The main thing for Lenin was to change the economic foundations, the class structure and the social relations in the society. He stressed that, once the instruments and means of production have been converted into social property, there continues to be a need for the state which, while safeguarding the common property in the means of production, would safeguard equality in labour and distribution of the product.²

Lenin pointed out that the development of capitalism "creates the *preconditions* that *enable* really 'all' to take part in the administration of the state. Some of these preconditions are: universal literacy, which has already been achieved in a number of the most advanced capitalist countries, then the 'training and disciplining' of millions of workers by the huge, complex, socialised apparatus of the postal service, railways, big factories, large-scale commerce, banking, etc., etc."³ By contrast, he says elsewhere in his work, all under socialism will learn the art of administration and management and will, in fact, run social production on their own.⁴

Lenin elaborated this general theoretical formulation of the problem, which he set forth in *The State and Revolution*, in the light of the experience of the early years of the Soviet power. He gave this fundamentally important description of the Soviets: "The result of . . . [the] low cultural level is that the Soviets, which by virtue of their programme are organs of government *by the working people*, are in fact organs of government *for the working people* by the advanced section of the proletariat, but not by the working people as a whole."⁵

Much water has, of course, flowed under the bridge since then. It is no longer the representatives of the working classes but the working people themselves that are now on all the organs of the USSR's political system: in the Soviets, the party and state organisations, the trade unions, the cooperatives and the Young Communist League. That has been and will continue to be the vast superiority that socialist democracy has over bourgeois democracy, under which it is the members and representatives of the privileged classes, the élite, that are mainly and often exclusively at the helm of the ship of state, whatever may be said or written to the contrary.

But has this great attainment rid us of serious problems? One need merely ask this question for the answer clearly to suggest itself: no, it has not. The 27th Congress emphasised the pressing need for restructuring and

not just of some single unit, but of the entire system of economic administration and management. For what reason? First, because this system is not efficient enough in terms of having an effect on economic and social progress; second, it does not express the interests, the legitimate wants and aspirations of the people and its individual groups quite fully, in all things and at all times; and third — and this we have to admit with a keen sense of regret — it has not rid the society of the tendency towards bureaucratisation.

Accordingly, the new edition of the CPSU Programme, which the 27th Congress adopted, lays down as the key task *the need to work to have administration and management not only effected for the benefit of the working people, but also increasingly made the actual business of the working people themselves, so that they should know of no other power over and above them except the power of their own association*. Our party wrote its proposition on socialist self-governance into its main document not out of any doctrinaire considerations or for the purpose of once again kowtowing to the founder of our state, but as a thoroughly considered conclusion drawn from the whole of the Soviet experience.

Relative Independence of the State

There is nothing dramatic about the fact that serious problems have arisen in the development of the Soviet political system, for the Communists have always regarded its improvement as a process involving both the raising of the general and political culture of the masses and their growing activity, and the discovery of new forms of organisation, administration and management so as to overcome the age-old traditions of bureaucracy.

But one also has to say that Soviet society has responded with some delay to the pressing problems in the practice of the people's socialist self-governance. It made a couple of starts in the mid-1950s and in the early 1960s, but there was often a lack of skill and much haste, all of which threw a shadow on the very scheme and idea of self-governance. We then let slip at least ten or fifteen years, and so firmly preserved forms of management and administration which no longer met the new requirements of the much more sophisticated economy and culture of the working masses.

A look at the existing problems from a general theoretical standpoint will probably show that they are rooted *in the measure of independence of administrative functions in the society*, as Marx and Engels used to point out. Here is one of the most notable points made by Engels: "Society gives rise to certain common functions which it cannot dispense with. The persons appointed for this purpose form a new branch of the division of labour *within the society*. This gives them particular interests, distinct, too, from the interests of those who empowered them; they make themselves independent of the latter and — the state is in being."⁶

In the past, Marxists assumed that what Engels had said applied solely to the exploitive society, and here there has been no change in our concepts. But the experience of Soviet construction has shown that socialism, too, is not free from a definite tendency towards the state's relative independence. That is, of course, far from saying that some kind of special stratum or class comes on the scene to stand over and above the society and

to command it. Both the governed and the governors are working people, whose relations rule out exploitation, one man's domination of another, and antithetical class interests.

Nonetheless, the tendencies towards a measure of independence of the state, just as towards manifestations of bureaucracy in the Soviet apparatus of administration, have not disappeared. That is a tangible fact. These tendencies do not spring from class antithesis, as they do under the exploitive system, but from the fact that the function of administration has hived off as an independent branch in the division of labour in the society. Administration requires specialist knowledge, skills, habits and stereotypes in responding to different situations. At this phase of socialist development, such a hiving off of the function of administration is, to some extent, inevitable, but the dialectics of this on the whole positive process involves serious costs.

The gist of the problem consists of a fairly trivial and obvious thing: persons in office frequently begin to think not about serving social interests, but about self-preservation, about keeping their jobs, and going higher up, whenever possible, to take up a more important post and so receive additional benefits. While the party urges the people to act more independently and with initiative, and even to take risks for the sake of the common cause, many administration officials are primarily concerned with keeping a firm footing, trying not to thrust themselves forward, not to expose themselves to attack and so jeopardise their own positions.

What is the way out? It is obvious: it is once again the development of the people's socialist self-governance. For many decades to come, self-governance will not, of course, be a substitute for the state forms and mechanisms of administration; it will exist alongside of them and within them, so imparting greater depth to democracy in every part of the body politic. But unless that is consistently practised, the Soviet state could find itself doing that against which our teachers had also warned: while propelling economic development forward along some lines, it will create impediments along other lines, and do harm by generating a massive waste of effort and materials. Democratisation should, of course, be a process running in step with the actual changes in the people's working and living conditions and with economic and social reforms.

Production Democracy

The people's self-governance is of crucial significance to restructuring economic relations at the present stage in the development of socialism in the Soviet Union. In this context, special theoretical interest attaches to Lenin's polemic with Karl Kautsky in *The State and Revolution*. Here is what Kautsky wrote (the question marks are Lenin's):

"The most varied forms of enterprises — bureaucratic [??], trade-unionist, cooperative, private, . . . can exist side by side in socialist society . . . There are, for example, enterprises which cannot do without a bureaucratic [??] organisation, such as the railways. Here the democratic organisation may take the following shape: the workers elect delegates who form a sort of parliament which establishes the working regulations and supervises the management of the bureaucratic apparatus."⁷

What is Lenin's response? Does he, perhaps, reject his ideas on the diversity of the forms of socialist social property? Not at all. Lenin does not reject Kautsky's ideas but goes much farther, setting the task of *overcoming bureaucracy in every sphere of administration of the socialist economy*. Lenin says that at every enterprise technology prescribes an unconditional and stringent discipline, greater care on everyone's part in handling his share of the work under the threat of stalling the whole business or damaging the mechanisms and the product. At all such enterprises, the workers will, of course, elect delegates to form *a sort of parliament*.

"The whole point, however, is that this 'sort of parliament' will *not* be a parliament in the sense of a bourgeois parliamentary institution." In the socialist society, the workers themselves will elect a 'sort of parliament'. Let us note that in this connection Lenin elaborated the need for measures to prevent those who work on the apparatus from turning into bureaucrats. What are these measures? With reference to Marx and Engels, Lenin puts forward three well-known propositions: "(1) not only election, but also recall at any time; (2) pay not to exceed that of a workman; (3) immediate introduction of control and supervision by *all*, so that *all* may become 'bureaucrats' for a time and that, therefore, *nobody* may be able to become a 'bureaucrat'."⁸

We find, therefore, that Lenin formulated the principle of organising management at all the socialist enterprises on the basis of the broadest democracy. What, then, is the role that the democratisation of economic administration and management should have to play in the present conditions? How is it to be embodied and in what form, so as to become an ever more efficient instrument of influence on social progress?

Here is a possible short answer to these questions: the pressing need in the USSR for fundamental changes in the relations of production under the domination of social property implies and demands the development of *production democracy*, the consistent practice of the principles of socialist *self-management in the work collective*. The object of such changes is to put the actual producers — workers, peasants, intellectuals — into conditions that would stimulate high-quality labour, with profound concern for the use of the latest scientific, technical and technological achievements, and improvement of skills and professional capability. This implies a more consistent implementation of the basic principle of social justice in the socialist society: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work."

Developing production democracy is a fairly intricate task. There is a need to enhance the personal responsibility of those who are in charge of enterprises and institutions, to give them a free hand, and free rein to their initiative, while simultaneously developing collectivism and seeing that all the working people take part in supervising the activity of administration and management bodies, whether in solving the wide range of problems facing the work collective or — and especially — in its social development.

The record shows that the correct allocation of powers, functions, rights and duties of all the institutions of the work collective and a clear understanding of his role by each participant is possibly the most

fundamental aspect of self-management. The administration and management, the party organisations, the trade unions, and the working people's general meeting must all have a clearly defined ambit of powers and duties, and must function as a well-adjusted mechanism.

The administration and management, the party organisation and the trade union do, of course, see to it that the interests of the state, of their collective and of each working person are correctly balanced, that the enterprise fulfils its plan, and that the social wants of the staff are satisfied. Still, there are also some distinctions between those interests. If the administration, by virtue of its status, displays primary concern for plan fulfilment and takes other tasks into consideration, the trade union and the general meeting should concern themselves above all with protecting the interests of the work collective and the legitimate rights of each working person.

Pointing out this specific status of the trade unions under socialism, Lenin said that they protected the interests of the working class against bureaucracy. That is precisely the role of the working people's most massive organisation that was indicated by Mikhail Gorbachov in his speech at the latest trade union congress in the USSR.

Public Opinion

A greater role of public opinion in the whole of political life, in decision-making, in criticism of shortcomings and of those who are actually responsible for them is an exceptionally important line in democratising socialism. There has been an unprecedented growth in the role of public opinion since the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC and the 27th Congress. The Soviet society is permeated with a critical spirit and, with a few exceptions, this process is meaningful and constructive. People are now speaking out and writing with the object of improving the state of affairs in various sectors of socialist construction, and of promoting more successful advance.

We have seen the powerful impact that the party's demand for the truth has had on the activity of the mass media, and on the creativity of writers, journalists, and scientists. The idea of accelerating economic and social development has been essentially complemented by efforts to clean up the society and to develop public openness and criticism. With a sense of great pain, the vital problems of the Soviet society have been presented in literary works and films, such as Valentin Rasputin's *The Fire*, Chingiz Aitmatov's *The Scaffold*, and Tengiz Abuladze's *Penitence*, all of which are signs of a new and wider view of the way of the Soviet society's moral renaissance.

The mass media are increasingly evolving into one of the influential institutions of socialist self-governance, acting as a mouthpiece for public opinion often expressing different and opposite viewpoints. Public opinion itself is becoming an important instrument of socialist democracy, helping the party to take overdue decisions in the most effective way.

The development of the people's self-governance system depends directly on *the example set by the party*, both in its inner life and in the methods it uses to guide the society. It is the party that in April 1985

Dr Nguyen, chief surgeon of the central hospital in the city of Tay Ninh was the first to speak.

"Just like a desert," he said softly and, after a brief pause, added: "That's how almost 15,000 hectares of forests now look in our province."

It was Agent Orange. There is hardly a person who has not heard about this chemical weapon. I also read about it, and the things I read made me uneasy. But what I saw in Vietnam sent me into shock. Only in Vietnam can one understand why the American GIs who sprayed this defoliant over the jungle called it 'hellbroth'. It is not even that the chemical is what you may call omnivorous; the main thing is that those who developed it made it water-insoluble. Tropical rains can do nothing to Agent Orange. It dissolves only in the soil, slowly poisoning it inch by inch. This is why, even after so many years, the land of Vietnam has not been able to heal its wounds.

"It all looked quite simple," Dr Nguyen recalled. "At that time US planes often flew over the jungle, sometimes trailing white streaks. People did not know what that was, and felt no fear at first. But soon grass began to wither, and then trees crumbled into dust. People were watching the forest die, but they were helpless."

Maimed nature is a painful sight, but crippled human lives are an agony to behold. Agent Orange causes irreversible damage to human beings. Dr Nguyen spoke about it on our way to the village of Tan Thanh.

A rich forest used to flank this village, one of the hundreds of others which happened to be in the zone where Agent Orange was used.

"Here," Dr Nguyen said, approaching a hut. A middle-aged woman came out to welcome us.

"Meet Nguyen Thi Ut," he said. Even in the shadow of the bamboo hut I could see deep furrows that lined her face.

The war treated this woman with unbearable cruelty. During one of the bombing raids she was a second too late in starting for the bomb shelter. That second saved her life. A direct hit destroyed the shelter, killing her husband and three children. I will not describe the state she was in then. The important thing is that Nguyen Thi Ut found the courage to start her life anew. She built a new family and later a new house — the hut we were in. The war was drawing to a close, and it seemed that the terrible nightmare was in the past.

But the war sent her an unexpected and cruel reminder. The first child of the new family, the boy Wo, was born a cripple. He was deaf and he could not walk. Wo, now 12 years old, was sitting beside his mother, watching us closely with unmoving eyes. Ut took a long time to explain who we were in sign language.

"We were harvesting rice," she recalled. "Wo was about to be born, but I could still work, and I was helping my folks. Then airplanes appeared again from beyond the Black Mountain and started spraying their powder. At first they sprayed the rice paddies but then came straight at us. When that white dust settled, our eyes were watering, there was nausea and a salty aftertaste in the mouth. But then these unpleasant sensations passed. If only I knew what would happen!"

At that time the Tan Thanh villagers did not yet know that the main

purpose of Agent Orange was to slowly kill all living things.

Dr Nguyen wanted to take a photograph of Wo and asked him to come outside. Wo reached for his little crutches, began to move towards the door, stumbled, fell and laughed. I heard his carefree boyish laughter with a heavy heart.

We said goodbye to Nguyen Thi Ut and walked to another hut, then to yet another one, on the outskirts of the village. In every home we met helpless victims of the defoliant. The children were glad to see us, they smiled and laughed the way Wo laughed, unaware of the tragic life ahead of them.

Still, the children of Tan Thanh will live — unlike the babies they showed me in the city hospital. I saw bloated heads, deformed bodies and disfigured limbs. In the bloodstream of pregnant women, Agent Orange did what it was expected to do. It destroyed life. That was why the days of those newborn cripples were numbered.

I realise that it is hard to read these lines. Writing them is harder still, but they must be written.

"People must know and remember what moral irresponsibility leads to," Dr Nguyen said, "otherwise tragedies like that may happen again. Banning chemical weapons is a task to be tackled by all mankind. And someone must take the first step."

I planned another rendezvous in Tay Ninh Province. I hurried from Hanoi to the village of Tan Thanh so as to meet Holly G. Platt and ask him only one question. But I was too late: he left two days before I arrived.

Holly Platt is an American Vietnam War veteran. He returned to Vietnam with a group of journalists to make a film about the consequences of that reckless military venture. He filmed the forest we later visited with Dr Nguyen, walked the only street of Tan Thanh and saw Nguyen Thi Ut and her 12-year-old son. I wondered what he thought about and what he felt there, on the soil he had turned to dust himself.

That was the question I wanted to ask Holly Platt. Dr Nguyen said Platt kept his feelings to himself and, before leaving, promised to make an honest and truthful film about everything he saw in Vietnam.

I wanted to believe that this would be so. Holly Platt has a particularly good reason to come out against chemical weapons: he, together with tens of thousands of GIs, is also a victim of Agent Orange. When they watched carelessly the defoliant being sprayed, hardly any of them expected retribution to catch up with them many years later, thousands of miles away from Vietnam. Serious disorders and irreversible physiological damage are the fate of those Vietnam War veterans who, in this way or another, came into contact with Agent Orange. But more terrible things are happening to their newborn babies — the same things that happened to the babies of the Tay Ninh Province.

Perhaps what prompted Holly Platt to return to Vietnam was the understanding how much the Americans needed his film. They need it particularly badly today, now that the Pentagon, spurring on the chemical arms race, has launched binary weapons into mass productions. US military strategists say that compared to binary ammunition, Agent Orange is just a toy.

Unfortunately, the film the Vietnam War veteran shot has not materialised as a documentary motion picture. The forces that wanted to suppress it proved too powerful for Holly Platt to hold out. He, an ordinary American, could fight them only with his conviction that America needed his film as a reminder of the bitter mistakes — and crimes — of the past.

The Warsaw Treaty proposals, including those on chemical weapons, are an important and promising step. But disarmament is a two-way street. Let officials in Washington think about it. There is no other choice. Otherwise, tragedy may strike again.

Serge Hoffman

A Bridge to Friendship, Not a Springboard of Aggression

Resat Dogan — CC Political Bureau
member, Communist Party of Turkey

OUR party has addressed its current and possible allies and all the politically aware compatriots with an Alternative of Peace, National Sovereignty and National Security, which the Party's National Conference adopted, among other documents, in 1986.

The Turkish Communists attach much importance to this document not only because it formulates a concept of security which meets the country's interests and offers a counter to the dominant militarist doctrine laid down by the Pentagon, but because they view it in a broader context. As the Fifth Plenary Meeting of the CPT Central Committee noted in December 1985, "fighting for the ideals of socialism, which envisions total liberation from every form of exploitation and oppression, we are also responsible for human survival. The world we live in is such that we will either survive together or perish together".

It is this broad approach to reality that constitutes the essence of our Alternative.

'A Junior Partner'

For the 35 years since Turkey joined NATO, the Pentagon and the NATO military leaders have been considering it as a springboard in the struggle against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and a staging area in the Middle East. Although it has the second largest army in NATO and is its third biggest military spender (in per cent of the GNP), it is looked upon as a 'junior partner' and is well down the NATO pecking order. Turkey depends on the imperialist powers in many ways, particularly as a result of special bilateral agreements with the USA, and they use it to protect their

own interests. The country is therefore constantly running the risk of involvement in armed ventures, sustaining crippling economic losses and letting poverty and misery grow worse.

The strategy of the more aggressive imperialist forces for attaining world dominance has further firmed in the 1980s. Washington's nuclear arms build-up, its policy of confrontation and its plans to develop a first-strike nuclear potential to attack the Soviet Union are threatening the human race as a whole and the national sovereignty of every country, including the countries of our region which, in Reagan's words, is the 'key to Western interests'.

The reactionary forces of the United States and its allies would like to use the geostrategic advantage offered by the region and its oil and other resources to further their own ends, and also to control its transportation routes. Washington is imposing anti-Soviet policies on Middle East countries and trying to bring them under its influence. Using the bogey of a 'Soviet threat' and urging 'a crusade against Communism', US imperialism seeks to bolster its political, economic and in the first place its military presence in that region. Intervention in internal affairs, blackmail, threats and other similar methods to the point of using armed force are stock-in-trade components of imperialist strategy.

The coup pulled off by the generals in Turkey seven years ago brought to power the Pentagon-manipulated military, who crushed the democratic opposition to prepare the ground for their policies. The dictators, faced with the growing demands of the population and international public pressure, have had to make concessions. But the dictatorship still holds sway, and an undemocratic constitution is in place. All the old parties and organisations are banned and the repression of the democratic forces and armed operations against the Kurds are gathering momentum, all under the guise of parliamentarianism (the sitting 'parliament' has not been elected democratically). The Özal government, avowedly seeking 'to depoliticise the population', closely cooperates with the former junta leader, General Kenen Evren, and is pursuing a pro-American foreign policy. National economic growth was stymied and the door thrown wide open to transnational corporations and banks in line with the recipes of the International Monetary Fund. Turkey's foreign debt rose dramatically. Arms imports grew, a munitions industry dependent on the West began to be developed and the influence of the US military-industrial complex increased. Foreign policy was revised to comply with Washington's demands and Turkey approved, openly or implicitly, all the NATO decisions, even those to which some of the allies took exception, such as the expansion of NATO activity in the region.

A joint Turkish-US defence group was set up in 1981 to take 'quick decisions in crisis situations'. Then the USA was granted the use of two strategically important bases, one in Mus and the other in Barman, in the south-east of the country. The Pentagon used them to airlift troops of its 'rapid-deployment force' to the Middle East. A defence and economic cooperation agreement, concluded in 1980, was this year extended for another five years. The news has leaked out that the USA now has new opportunities, in addition to military bases and electronic surveillance

facilities, to support the operations of its 'rapid-deployment force'. There is talk about the deployment of more nuclear weapons in Turkey and a new agreement, on the host country in the event of war, is being negotiated. When it is concluded, Turkey will be obliged to provide every support to US military operations in the region.

Turkey's relations with Israel, once dormant, have been looking up of late. Along with the Pakistani regime, Turkey has undertaken to train military personnel from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other Persian Gulf countries, thus effectively helping the United States in its plan to draw, step by step and acting jointly with Israel, the reactionary pro-American regimes of the region into a 'security system' which could eventually become an anti-Soviet bloc.

Threat to Sovereignty

A study on operations in Southwest Asia has been under consideration in NATO since 1982. It demands that America's allies support its actions in that region. NATO's Delta Ensure military plan envisages the transportation of additional American military personnel to Greece and Turkey; yet it has so far been approved only unofficially because of the differences between the two countries.

Turkey today is firmly enmeshed in US plans, which envisage the use of the 'rapid-deployment force' in the Middle East under the direction of the Central Command (CENTCOM). US military bases in Turkey have installed additional facilities in line with these plans.

Edward Teller, a spokesman for the more 'hawkish' US quarters, said at a conference in Munich in February 1986 that the construction of four laser stations in Turkey would be instrumental to the fulfilment of SDI. Other US specialists also commented on the strategic geographic advantages offered by our country for the implementation of the Pentagon's 'star wars' plans. To make Turkey accommodate nuclear-capable F-16 fighter-bombers and also Pershing I and Lance missiles (in case they were removed from West Germany), strong pressure was exerted on it following a meeting of the NATO nuclear planning group in 1983. The US plan to station binary chemical weapons in Turkey in a 'crisis situation' became public knowledge in 1986. It transpired simultaneously that the US Air Force F-4 planes at the Incirlik base were going to be replaced with F-16 fighter-bombers. In addition, there were plans to modernise nuclear arms depots here and at four other bases. It is US officers who take decisions on those weapons, although technically they are under joint Turkish-American control. A former US Assistant Secretary of Defense, Richard Perle, once said that the American troops deployed at military bases outside US national territory would take their orders from the Pentagon regardless of whose territory they were on. This would amount to a gross breach of Turkey's sovereignty. The country may become involved against its will in an armed venture at any moment.

Under the military regime, the Turkish mass media, bowing to 'self-control' imposed on them by the authorities, keep silent about the peace initiatives coming from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, from the non-aligned states, from the states who issued the

Delhi Declaration, and from the world peace movement. They are spreading myths about a 'Soviet threat' and every now and then launch chauvinistic campaigns against Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus and Syria. Hostilities have been unleashed against the Kurds both on Turkish territory and outside the country, moreover, without parliamentary approval but merely on orders from the government and the Army General Staff. Three armed operations have been carried out on Iraqi territory.

All these actions of the military regime highlight the dangerous role in which the United States is casting our country while grossly violating its national sovereignty. Turkey is viewed as an anchor of Washington's aggressive strategy of neoglobalism which threatens to turn our region into a staging area for aggression against the socialist community and for the suppression of the national and social struggles of the peoples. There thus arises in the region another seat of tension, which may erupt into a world conflagration if armed conflicts and national, ethnic and religious clashes are exacerbated.

A Platform for the Consolidation of Forces

In this situation the Communist Party of Turkey has come up with a *platform of action for the consolidation of the broadest possible political and social forces* with a view to countering the course of the aggressive imperialist quarters and the actions of the military regime, lessening the threat of nuclear catastrophe and getting the country to make a contribution towards stronger peace. Our national interests, sovereignty and national dignity have to be consistently protected to achieve that goal.

The Turkish Communists' Peace Alternative recognises that *Turkey's security is closely linked with collective universal security*, including that of all the neighbouring states. All countries, big and small alike, should contribute towards nuclear disarmament because nuclear war will wipe out, among others, even those who are not going to fight it. A consistent policy of peaceful coexistence is the only option available to Turkey. What is needed first and foremost is opposition to the 'star wars' plans and action for nuclear disarmament and for the establishment of nuclear-and-chemical-weapon-free zones in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

As for Turkish national territory, it is important to have the US nuclear weapons of every type removed from it, to close it to any other weapons of mass annihilation, to prevent Turkey from becoming involved in the SDI programme and to deny port services to the nuclear-armed ships of the US Sixth Fleet. Under the Alternative, Turkey's defence and economic agreement with the USA should be cancelled, no new military accords with it concluded and talks started with a view to removing the US military bases from our territory.

The Communist Party is opposed to any US attempt to cobble together a military bloc in the Middle East with Turkey as a member and to intervention in any form in the Iran-Iraq war. It calls for relations of good-neighbourliness with Syria. Turkey must take a firm stand against a *de jure* or *de facto* expansion of NATO's sphere of activity in that region and

become a bridge to peace, peaceful cooperation and friendship among nations there.

We support the Palestinian people's fight for their lawful rights, including their right to establish an independent state, and also the right of every country in the region to exist; we also stand for the convocation of an international conference to find a just solution to the Middle East problem; we demand that Turkey make a constructive contribution to this process. Our party hails the results of the Algiers session of the PLO National Council as a major success for the Palestinian people.

One of the basic provisions* of our Alternative says that it is necessary not only consistently to uphold Turkey's national sovereignty but also *to seek respect for the national sovereignty of all the states* and for their right independently to decide their future and choose their political and social systems on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence and renunciation of the use of force. These principles are offering a realistic opportunity for the settlement of contentious issues in Turkey's relations with some of its neighbours.

The Communists' Alternative calls for *a settlement of the Greek-Turkish differences over the Aegean Sea without US and NATO intervention*. Such dialogue should be based on mutual respect for sovereign rights, national independence, territorial integrity and lawful interests. Paying a visit to Athens in February 1987, Haydar Kutlu, General Secretary of the CPT Central Committee, said that the two countries should recognise each other's lawful rights, show readiness for compromise and view a settlement as an accomplishment, meeting their mutual interests, rather than as a victory or a defeat for either side.

We are explaining to the other opposition forces in our country that Turkey's policy on Cyprus should be revised so as to respect its sovereign rights and be free from anything which could contribute to the involvement of the island in the Reagan administration's strategy of aggression. A UN-sponsored international conference should be convened to settle the international aspects of the Cyprus problem. When the intervention of the military regime in the internal affairs of the Turkish Cypriots ends, guarantees must be provided for the existence of an independent, sovereign and non-aligned Cyprus, which would have no foreign (Turkish in the first place) troops or bases on its territory.

We believe that these principles will eventually win the approval of the other opposition forces in Turkey. The USA will be able to make its demands to us, restricting our sovereignty to an ever greater extent, as long as Turkey itself does not follow these principles in practice. Our country, faced with this 'arrogance of force', will be able to assert its independence solely by respecting the sovereignty of other countries. This is the only way of winning broad international support as a guarantee of respect for its own sovereignty.

The Turkish Communists are exposing false 'Soviet threat' propaganda. We have a more stable relationship with the USSR than with any of our neighbours even under the current Ankara regime. If we take a look at the history of the Turkish Republic, no contentious issue has been resolved by means other than peaceful with the Soviet Union, which has always been

true to the principle of good-neighbourliness.

Broad sections of our public are displaying an interest in today's Soviet domestic and foreign policies with their new dynamism, which provides an effective counterbalance to the plans of the more aggressive imperialist forces, and in the Soviet course of broadening socialist democracy to the utmost. All this helps rebut anti-Sovietism and promote a realistic perception of the USSR even among those who do not champion socialism.

As for the problem of security, we do not confine ourselves to *the narrow aspects of military strategy but take a broader approach. This problem is related not only to foreign policy and the maintenance of peace but also to domestic policy, the economic situation and respect for human rights.* The risks run by our country, which may become involved against its will in armed conflicts, are inseparable from the absence of democracy, the denial of a role in political decision-making to the mass of the people, growing economic dependence, indebtedness and social insecurity, systematic gross violations of basic human rights. The interests of such a country as Turkey could be furthered by the establishment of a universal security system, which would help resolve the problems of backwardness, dependence, foreign indebtedness, etc.

A Strategic Goal

Can such an alternative be implemented in the current circumstances in our country? A few observations are in order here.

The Communists' proposals do not project the future onto the present day but explain what can be done today to bring that future nearer. The Communist Party has been demanding Turkey's withdrawal from NATO ever since it joined the bloc, but even such a step could not save the country in the event of nuclear war. That is why we attach priority to *efforts for nuclear disarmament and the abolition of weapons of mass annihilation* and consider it necessary simultaneously to dissolve NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, which has been proposed by the socialist community on more than one occasion. Turkey should work for détente and peaceful coexistence and oppose the expansion of NATO's activity in any form and the US 'star wars' programme. In the North Atlantic alliance it should look after its national interests and oppose its territory being turned into a 'forward staging area'. This constitutes a realistic platform for rallying together very diverse forces, including those which no longer support Washington's policy in every respect. Many of them are seeking to ease the economic burden imposed on the country by its membership of NATO and to have Turkey's relations with the alliance revised.

In the 1980s, new forces, representing a very broad political spectrum, have joined in the struggle for peace and nuclear disarmament and against the involvement of the country in armed ventures serving US interests. Scientists have condemned the 'star wars' plans, physicians opposed to nuclear war have organised, and anti-imperialist clergymen attended the World Peace Congress in Copenhagen in 1986. Former Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel has stated that Turkey should approach the situation "in the context of its own interests rather than those of other countries". A mass protest movement was launched in Konya after a NATO air force

base had been redeployed to the city, and all the political parties, including the ruling one, are opposed to the deployment of new nuclear missiles in Turkey.

This situation is facing the government with a dilemma: on the one hand, its further existence depends on US support and it is therefore trying to comply with all the American demands, while on the other, this course is coming against the mounting opposition of the broad sections of the population and drawing negative reactions from neighbouring countries.

The anti-democratic regime will find it more and more difficult to keep the reins of power at a time when the social forces advocating peace, nuclear disarmament and relations of good-neighbourliness are rallying together. The working class and other working people will therefore have better opportunities to carry on their struggle. The Political Bureau of the CPT Central Committee said in a report to the Seventh CC Plenary Meeting in February 1987: "Our strategic task is the termination of the arms race and the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. For this reason we will fight for Turkey to pursue a vigorous foreign policy of peace in accord with those goals regardless of the regime or government in power. We will be seeking to rally together the broadest possible forces in this struggle."

Although the movement for peace and national democracy is not revolutionary in the conditions found in our country, it determines a *strategic goal* at the present stage. It is necessary simultaneously to work for economic growth and the development of democracy and defend the social interests of the working people in order to prevent Turkey from becoming involved in Washington's policy of confrontation, which imperils peace, and to protect our national sovereignty. This alone will make it possible to mobilise to the greatest possible extent the potential of the peace forces at home. This makes the Alternative of Peace, National Sovereignty and National Security a priority aspect of the strategy pursued by the Communist Party of Turkey.

Militarisation And Structural Crisis Of Capitalism

Victor Perlo — Chairman, Economic
Commission, CPUSA

THE scientific-technological revolution of the second half of the twentieth century required major structural changes in the world economy. Under capitalism, these changes could not take place smoothly, and with great benefit to people. On the contrary, they occurred in distorted form, incompletely, subordinate to the profit drive, and with harmful effects on

people. This brought about a structural crisis of the capitalist system which began in the early 1970s, and which is not yet resolved.

The main features of the structural crisis afflicting world capitalism are: a marked slowdown in industrial production; the special weakening and decay of traditional basic industries, only partially offset by the growth of the electronic-computer complex; marked imbalances in international trade and payments; financial frenzy and speculative excesses; new forms of plundering developing countries and the intractable international debt crisis; the declining trend of the real wages and living standards of the working class, along with the unprecedented enrichment of the élite capitalists and their military-bureaucratic cohorts; acute financial crises; deep economic crises in some countries; depressions in large sections of the United States; and increasing portents of a severe global capitalist crisis of overproduction; and last, but far from least, militarisation of the economy, especially in the United States, and the rising power of the military-industrial financial complex.

This analysis probes the scope and principal features of militarisation of the US economy, and its interaction with other features of the international structural crisis.

Explosive Growth of US Militarisation

Direct military spending in the United States increased to 6.6 per cent of the GNP in 1986 and 10.3 per cent, when indirect military spending is included — mainly interest on the federal debt caused by rising military budgets, veterans' benefits, 'foreign aid' to the military of other capitalist powers and to neocolonial puppets, and space expenditures. Even allowing for the inflation factor, there is a doubling of 'real' expenditures from fiscal 1977 to fiscal 1987.

The militarisation of the US economy in the 1980s has had an industrial impact roughly equivalent to that of major conflicts such as the Korea and Vietnam wars. However, the impact is more important because the wars ended, whereas *the present build-up, if the dominant ruling circles have their way, will continue to expand indefinitely*. Furthermore, the build-up is taking place in a domestic and international environment decisively less favourable for US imperialism than it was during the Korea and Vietnam aggressions. While those conflicts brought with them economic booms, the current build-up at most only partially offsets the weakening of the civilian economy, while contributing significantly to its structural distortion.

True, overall military spending is a smaller share of the GNP than it was during the Korea and Vietnam wars because of the great outlays for military manpower then. But the impact on the core industries of the country — the capital goods industries and their suppliers of materials and components — is greater. In the US budget, these goods are included in the sub-categories of military outlays as 'procurement', and as 'research, development, test and evaluation' (R & D).

The following table shows the budgetary course of these outlays, in dollars of constant purchasing power, for selected years and periods since 1953 — the peak year of the Korea war.

**Table 1: Military Expenditures For Procurement, R&D:
Selected Years 1953-1989**

Fiscal Year or Years	Procurement (billions of 1982 dollars)	R&D
1953	54.2	6.6
1956-60 average	37.3	8.1
1961-65 average	36.7	16.5
1968	52.0	17.3
1974-78 average	23.7	13.0
1980	33.9	15.3
1985	63.1	24.3
1989 (budget plan)	72.3	31.3

Source: US Budget, various years; Economic Report of the President 1986; Survey of Current Business, various issues. (Price adjustment according to 'imputed price index' for GNP).

By fiscal 1985, real procurement was well above the peaks reached during the Korea and Vietnam wars. And continuing increases were projected through the decade of the 1980s. By 1989, as budgeted, 'real' procurement will be three times the annual level of the mid-1970s. R & D outlays have accelerated even more, and have been sustained. R & D spending redoubled during the 1980s, with special emphasis on the 'star wars' drive for first-strike space weapons. By 1989, as budgeted, real R & D outlays will be nearly five times the Korea war level.

The US Commerce Department has published a breakdown of new capital goods orders between the military and non-military sectors of the economy. New orders for military capital goods¹ jumped from \$34 billion in 1979 to \$96 billion in 1985 and \$103 billion in 1986. Adjusted for price increases, the 'real' multiplication of military capital goods orders was 2.09 times. Meanwhile, adjusted for price increases, non-military capital goods orders in 1986 were 21 per cent below the 1979 level. Military orders had reached 24.3 per cent of total capital goods orders, nearly the ratio of 1968, i.e., the Vietnam war period.

However, the data on military capital goods orders are understated. They are limited to large producers of specific types of military equipment. They exclude small producers and producers of other types of goods. Furthermore, machine tools, computers, etc., ordered by producers of military equipment are classified with civilian capital goods. It seems certain, therefore, that in reality military orders by 1986 accounted for at least one-third of all orders for capital goods, directly and indirectly.

Thus it is apparent that militarisation of the economy, while not preventing the 1982 crisis, has provided much of the stimulus for the subsequent cyclical recovery, but that continued increases in military orders may not be sufficient to prevent the US economy from sliding into a new cyclical crisis in the relatively near future.

A feature of the structural crisis afflicting the US economy, then, has

been the deterioration of the civilian capital goods sector of the economy, and its partial replacement by and dependence on military equipment.

How Militarisation Weakens Industry

The militarisation of the economy has contributed to the weakening of the basic industrial sector and has become part of the structural crisis in a number of ways.

The items procured by the military require little steel and other basic industrial materials. The increasingly important R & D sector, especially of the military, calls mainly for computers, software, and research without any material content. Doubtless the military build-up has spurred the rise of the computer and related electronic industries, which is a factor in the fundamental change that the economy is undergoing as part of the structural crisis. However, even the computer industry and related electronic industries have passed the stage of continuous growth, and have become subject to cyclical crises and fluctuations — and severe crises, at that.

The military build-up has been the most important factor in the multiplication of the government debt. This has resulted in historically high rates of interest, a shifting of money capital from material investments to financial investments, and a curtailment of mass consuming power through taxation. This in turn slows the growth of material investments, and the consumer market for durable goods.

Estimates of the military share of all US R & D spending were around 60 per cent in the 1960s, and 40 per cent in the mid-1980s. The main capitalist rivals of the United States, West Germany and Japan, spend about the same proportion of their GNP as the United States on R & D, but much less for the military. Hence their civilian R & D is relatively greater, providing them with an advantage in developing new and improved products for civilian markets.

While there is some feedback of US military research to the civilian economy, Professor Seymour Melman² argues persuasively that it is minimal. On balance, there has been a major diversion of effective R & D from the civilian economy, contributing substantially to the drastic deterioration in the US balance of trade and consequent weakening of industrial output.

The Runaway Electronics Industry

The militarisation of the US economy and the deepening structural crisis have led to a transfer of production to developing countries where wages are one-tenth or even less than those in the United States. The US military plays a decisive role in this, placing in power or supporting military-capitalist ruling groups that encourage one-sided development of industry for export.

US imperialism has used its military power to build for itself a neocolonial empire larger than any colonial empire of the past. It has military installations and troops at hundreds of major bases in scores of countries. Backed by arms, it has extended its operations throughout the capitalist world, deriving extra profits from its foreign investments. But

this in turn has led to *internationalisation of the structural crisis*, especially in trade and finance. It also facilitated the offensive of capital against US labour. Many plants were closed in the United States, while production was shifted to lower-wage plants owned by the TNCs abroad. The resulting large-scale unemployment provided leverage to reduce wages and worsen working conditions in the United States.

The movement of basic industry out of the United States and Western Europe to other regions has led to the 'hollowing' of their industrial power. There are fears that this process, if carried far enough, may make the capitalist countries economically vulnerable. Their economies will more and more emphasise services, many of them parasitic, and the military.

In the past two decades, there has been major industrial development in Asia, Latin America and parts of Africa, but this development has not been accompanied by corresponding social developments, rising mass living standards and a balanced domestic market. The former traditional neocolonial and colonial industries, such as primary processing of raw materials and garment manufacture, have been surpassed by modern steel and other basic industries.

Especially notable has been the output of high-tech electronic components and completed products for export to capitalist countries' retail markets. In the United States, the manufacture of a number of items of mass consumption has almost, or completely, stopped, with imports providing up to 100 per cent of the market.

High-tech facilities are set up by a combination of capital supplied by the ruling cliques in the developing countries and by capital exported from the United States, Japan, and Western Europe. Financing is supplied through direct investment, through joint ventures, and through loan capital, which puts the big capitalist banks in a dominant position in indebted countries.

The countries of Southeast and East Asia are especially important, as indicated by the following table showing the source and growth of US imports between 1975 and 1984:

**Table 2: US Imports
(billions of dollars)**

	1975	1984	Times 1984 to 1975
Total	96.9	325.7	3.4
from Canada	22.2	66.5	3.0
Latin America	11.8	42.3	3.6
Western Europe	20.9	71.2	3.4
Japan	11.4	57.1	5.0
East and South Asia:	10.3	51.9	5.1
Taiwan	1.9	14.8	7.6
South Korea	1.4	9.4	6.5
Hong Kong	1.6	8.3	5.3

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the US 1986*, pp. 810-811.

Even allowing for the part played by increased prices, the additional imports from Japan and from its neighbours have, indeed, been spectacular. There has also been important development of high-tech industries and other manufacturing in such formerly almost wholly agricultural countries as Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines. In general, US imports from these countries are two to three times US exports to them. On the other hand, Japan dominates the East-South East Asian markets, so the imbalance of trade between Japan and the United States is doubled by the combination of Japan-South and East Asia-US balances.

It is not accidental that the two developing countries with the largest involvement in the capitalist investment and trading network are Taiwan and South Korea, both under direct US military occupation. The United States also has a growing military and political presence in Thailand and some of its neighbours.

Herman Rebhan, President of the International Metalworkers' Federation, in an introduction to a study prepared for a conference held in Bangkok in May 1986, wrote: "Japan is ahead of other Asian countries in all sectors of the industry. However, Asian Newly Industrialising Countries, for example, are catching up rapidly through the change in the structure of the industry from a labour-intensive one to a technology-intensive or high-value added one." The study gives the number of workers in the industry as follows (in thousands): Japan, 1,495; South Korea, 251; Taiwan, 188; Malaysia, 180, etc. The hourly earnings, including cash and other benefits, are given in US dollars, as \$7.25 in Japan; \$1.61 in Hong Kong; \$1.58 in Taiwan; \$1.53 in Singapore; \$0.89 in South Korea; \$0.42 in Thailand; \$0.40 in the Philippines; down to \$0.26 in Bangladesh. Most of these countries have savage working conditions and hours. In South Korea, workers put in an average of 55 hours per week.

The newly emerging monopoly groups in South Korea and some other countries invest heavily in these industries. Most of the major US electronic-computer firms have plants in these developing countries. A large proportion of the products are components for advanced military products assembled in the United States.

There is a contradiction between the specific interests of the TNCs and armament firms, and the overall economic interests of US capitalism. On the one hand, the huge import surplus of the United States, especially from Asian countries, Mexico, etc., contribute heavily to the record US balance of payments deficits, making the United States a net debtor country. This trade imbalance is one of the major distortions threatening to erupt in a major capitalist world cyclical crisis that will be very difficult to resolve.

On the other hand, the TNCs derive superprofits from the foreign production of components they import, while the armament-related industries enjoy large export surpluses, and in many cases a virtual market monopoly abroad. However, a large and growing part of the items sold abroad is made in foreign factories, so the US balance of trade is not improved.

On balance, the movement of production abroad has reached the stage where it contributes decisively to *a record imbalance in international trade*.

Simultaneously, the emphasis of research and development on military ends led to the relative decline in the quality and production efficiency of US civilian goods in competition with those of its rivals, notably Japan and West Germany.

From an approximate balance of exports and imports in the mid-1970s, the excess of US imports over exports (or trade deficit) rose to \$25 billion in 1980, \$132 billion in 1985, and \$170 billion in 1986, when imports exceeded exports by 73 per cent. Such deficits have never heretofore been known in world trade. Understandably, they gravely undermine manufacturing and agriculture in the United States, while causing a huge financial imbalance in international payments, that threatens eruption in an especially acute financial crisis.

Financial Crises

Rising military expenditures are the main cause of the increased federal budget deficits in the United States, reaching \$220 billion in 1986. But 'national defense' expenditures alone came to \$273 billion. Add the \$14 billion of subsidies to governments acting as military fronts for US imperialism, such as Israel. Another \$26 billion goes for veterans' benefits, and \$136 billion for net interest paid, mainly on debts incurred during periods of exceptionally high military spending. In all, including these indirect items, \$449 billion of federal government spending was military based, accounting for 45 per cent of all federal spending, and more than twice the budget deficit.

Capitalists and their bankers are fearful of the excessive budget deficits and growing debt, but refuse to tackle its root cause, *the militarisation of the economy*. The debt, \$300 billion in 1967, first passed a trillion dollars in 1982 and \$2 trillion only four years later. Starting with the federal government, living on borrowed money has spread to the business world and to private consumption.

Business debt has risen faster than business activity and has become more and more a portion of business capital. Corporations are retiring stock — equity capital — and increasing indebtedness. In the merger wave taking place, some borrow on a huge scale to 'take over' other companies. Working class consumers, trying to maintain living standards in the face of declining real wages, turn more and more to borrowing. The ratio of consumer debt to consumer income constantly reaches new highs. The total domestic non-financial debt³ in the United States went up three and a half times between the end of 1973 and the end of 1985, considerably exceeding the growth of nominal GNP — not to mention real production. This situation has contributed importantly to inflation and to record-high interest rates.

As economic activity weakened in 1985-1987, there was a notable increase in business bankruptcies, foreclosures of people's homes, and repossession of cars. With the reduction in unemployment insurance and other forms of relief, jobless workers can no longer meet their mortgage payments or pay their rent. The Reagan Administration has virtually ended the public housing programme, which provided homes for some of the poorest families.

This has culminated in a phenomenon not seen since the prolonged depression of the 1930s — large numbers of homeless people. Their number seems to double each year, and mayors of large cities await the winter with trepidation, not knowing how to handle the tens of thousands of homeless families they have to cope with. In the case of Los Angeles, the number of homeless people is estimated to run into six digits.

The rise of poverty in the United States, the reduction in real wages and the *increased rate of exploitation of labour*, serve as a lure to capitalists of Western Europe and Japan, who have been buying up more and more businesses in the United States. The flow of direct investment capital into the United States now exceeds the outflow. Relatively little of the inflow leads to additional employment, however, as most of the capital is invested in the financial sphere or in buying up existing enterprises.

US Working Class Versus the Pentagon

In difficult conditions, US workers are struggling to preserve their wage levels, working conditions, and their jobs against the attacks of the government and the monopolies. There are many strike actions not reported by the media or not included in government statistics.

For a long period, following the mass expulsion of Communists and other progressives from unions, the government and corporate bosses imposed on many unions leadership that supported the militarist foreign policy of US imperialism. Now there is increasing recognition among both rank-and-file workers and among union leaders that *this policy not only threatens them with annihilation in a nuclear war, but more immediately causes severe losses in their economic and social status*.

The AFL-CIO and its member unions call for an end to the international runaway shop and the 'hollowing' of US industry. While Lane Kirkland, longtime head of the AFL-CIO, and his clique continue to insert anti-Soviet articles in their weekly publication, even this group is forced to call for restraining the military budget and to cease outright support for an aggressive foreign policy.

At its meeting in October 1986, the AFL-CIO's Industrial Union Department, comprising 56 unions and the core of the US working class, adopted a series of resolutions dealing with peace and disarmament, and opposing the policies and foreign interventions of the Reagan Administration. The resolution adopted on arms control was submitted by the United Automobile Workers. And the United Steelworkers, at its convention in September 1986, passed a similar resolution.

The basic industrial workers, principal victims of the anti-labour offensive of big capital, now clearly see the connection between that assault on their rights and militarisation. Labour sees the need to oppose the TNCs and for international labour to cooperate in this.

William Winpisinger, President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, one of the large industrial unions, has been particularly active in exposing the harm done to workers by the militarisation of the economy. Moreover, he has the support of members of his union, many of whom are employed in armament firms, for his pro-peace policies.

The majority of the workers support these emerging anti-monopoly and anti-war policies against the right social-democratic reactionary forces still active in the AFL-CIO.

The people of the United States face increasingly difficult and complex economic and social problems. Victories in the struggle for nuclear disarmament, for détente and fully normalised relations with the USSR, for the end of imperialist interventions, for switching budget priorities to the urgent needs of the working people — these are the key requirements, if the deepening structural crisis and threatened cyclical crisis are to be met in ways that are positive for the United States, for its people, and for the peoples of the world.

¹ Military hardware, as distinct from items of current military consumption. — *Ed.*

² A US economist and the author of several studies on the negative effects of militarisation of the economy. — *Ed.*

³ The total debt of the federal state and local governments, households and non-financial business, i.e. other than the banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions. — *Ed.*

Revolutionary Nicaragua Tackles the Ethnic Question

Tomás Borge — a member of the National Leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front and Minister of the Interior of Nicaragua

THE Nicaraguan Revolution is making good headway. Immediately upon victory, it set out to achieve national unity with due respect for regional distinctions. A new Constitution went into effect in January 1987, laying the foundations of democratic state structure. It attaches special importance to the rights of ethnic minorities on the Atlantic coast. Draft legislation on the autonomy of the indigenous population,¹ which concretises constitutional provisions, envisages the formation of two administrative-territorial units. Local government bodies, including a Council, a regional coordinator and municipal councils, are to be chosen in universal, direct and free elections by secret ballot. People living in the autonomous regions are full-fledged citizens of the republic and will, moreover, enjoy additional rights. Their languages, for example, will be considered official on a par with Spanish in those regions. This is an important step towards practically involving ethnic groups in every field of the social life, including politics, the economy and culture.

The past few months have dashed US hopes that tribes will provide manpower for counter-revolution.

Jaime Barrios, a member of the *WMR* Editorial Council, interviewed Tomás Borge in Managua, who described the situation in the Indian lands and ways of resolving the acute problems inherited from the past.

The Nicaraguan Constitution defines the nation as multiethnic and the State as one and indivisible. What do you think of the dialectical relationship between national unity and ethnic cultural distinctions? What could you say about the class structure of the Indian communities on the Atlantic coast?

In the first place, the Revolution recognises the diversity of dialectical links between national unity and ethnic cultural distinctions. This, however, should not cause a split. On the contrary, it should help engender a sense of common nationality. More, not only awareness of the multiplicity of ethnic groups will enhance national cohesion: unity in diversity, as we say, will grow stronger through the involvement of the entire population in the battle for national liberation as an essential condition for the full-scale exercise of our rights as a nation.

Can the land and forests owned by transnationals be turned over to the communities? How can part of the profits from the Atlantic coast mines be used to promote the region's development unless the mines are taken from the imperialists and nationalised? National liberation, therefore, is a necessary condition for real autonomy. And autonomy, for its part, is a guarantee of our political programme of liberation.

True, the progress towards autonomy has had its snags. We had mistaken ideas about the specific features of the Atlantic coast, and our approach was wrong. But that was an inevitable side effect of our revolutionary fervour and inexperience in the early period of the Revolution rather than a product of our policy.

Prejudices, a legacy of the dictatorship, and the specific economic activity on the Atlantic coast also had their effect. As a result, Blacks mistrusted Miskitoes, and Miskitoes mistrusted Sumoes and all 'Spaniards' (as the Indians call Creoles and Mestizoes). The class structures were shaped by the old domination patterns and partially by the communal social organisation, which held its ground despite the invasion of capitalism. The locals are engaged in their traditional pursuits, such as fishing, hunting, woodwork and other crafts. Ownership of the means of production is both collective and private and the population is not stratified into exploiting proprietors and exploited labourers selling their labour.

Even trade is not always private: the proceeds from the sale of farm produce are often used in the community interest.

There are former factory workers and miners who were once employed by US companies. After Atlantic coast forests had all been felled and the region's other resources had been depleted, the companies departed, leaving behind a legacy of widespread respiratory diseases.

It was there that the first national trade unions came into being. The country's first strikes broke out at the woodworking factories and banana plantations on the coast in the 1920s. They were momentous events in the history of the Nicaraguan proletariat, though we do not yet know enough about them.

When the British and then the North Americans held sway,² men from English-speaking communities had a better chance of being appointed to middle-level administrative posts in the enclave. This bred social

stratification, whose primary cause was dependence on the US market.

Since the victory of the Revolution, we have defied all difficulties to advance towards the establishment of a class structure that would reconcile community traditions and forms of organisation with the revolutionary nature of the state which protects the interests of the working people.

The forms of property traditional for the Atlantic coast today are supported by our Revolution: there is state, communal (by far the more widespread) and private property. All of them coexist within the regulations laid down by the Revolution and are playing a constructive role in the socio-economic life of the region. Industrial-type fishing is developing alongside the traditional fisheries, and communal activities are making progress along with major strategic programmes.

The situation today is fundamentally different from what it was when imperialism dominated. There are eloquent statistics illustrating that dark age. The *Engineering and Mining Journal* cited in a 1920 issue some figures to characterise transport options available at that time. The journal mentions coastal launches, rowboats, draught oxen, and women carriers (sic!). The journal notes that one ton-mile by oxen cost four dollars while women carriers did the job for two. This is utterly disgraceful.

Zelaya Department accounts for 56 per cent of Nicaragua's territory. The Revolution has inherited from colonialism and neocolonialism a very complex situation there, not so much because of the size of the region as due to ethnic disparity. It is even argued that there is an Atlantic and a Pacific Nicaragua. Is that true? And if so, what are the causes of the regional and ethnic differences between the two parts of the country?

The figure cited by you needs clarification. Zelaya does occupy 56 per cent of national territory, but its population is a mere 9.5 per cent of the total, i.e. 300,000. Spanish-speaking Mestizoes are the prevalent group (182,000), followed by Miskitoes (70,000) and Sumoes (7,000). Each group speaks its own language. As for the English-speaking population, it consists of 26,000 Creoles and 1,500 Garifon and 700 Rama Indians, whose own languages are extinct.³

The diversity between the Pacific and Atlantic regions of Nicaragua are the result of physical, geographic, and socio-economic factors. British and, later, North American capital found it easy to expand into the Caribbean. As for the Spaniards, ever since the age of colonisation, they did not have either the incentive or the pluck to hew their way from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua.

In wave after wave, settlers kept coming to the region ever since the seventeenth century, mixing with the indigenous population. The British, for instance, brought Black people who had fled from the French colonies to Sumo and Miskito tribal lands.

British pirates vied with the Spanish crown for control of the Atlantic coast and eventually won thanks to clever stratagems and trading deals with the Miskitoes. The decline of Spain's colonial policy in the early nineteenth century also contributed to the disparity of the two parts of the country.

The activity of North American capital, which took over from the British in the region, grew most rapidly during the gold rush. The growth of trade made it necessary for North Americans to secure unchallenged control of the isthmus between the Caribbean and Pacific coasts of Nicaragua.⁴ Foreign capital introduced elements of slavery and, eventually, commodity production, and the local social patterns changed accordingly. The established political parties, the Liberals and Conservatives, were totally indifferent to the problems of the Atlantic coast, and their squabbles only exacerbated the divisions between the two parts of the country. As capitalism began to grow in the 1870s-80s, good prospects appeared for the implementation of the patriotic plan of Liberal President José Santos Zelaya⁵ for nation-building. The North Americans, however, opposed it, and the President had to resign under their pressure.

Foreign capitalist predominance on the Atlantic coast led to the plunder of its natural resources, making that region of the country a territory apart.

You have mentioned mistrust, fears and prejudice between people of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the country. What could you say about the communal demands on the Atlantic coast before and after the Revolution? Also, why do we talk about ethnic groups and communities rather than nationalities when referring to Nicaragua?

The long and unimpeded exploitation of the Atlantic coast by North American imperialism and its attempts to divide the country were breeding strife and mutual suspicion prior to the triumph of the people's Revolution. External forces still are trying to exploit the prejudices, deeply rooted in the mentality of the local population.

What are the aspirations of the Atlantic coast people? They have always linked their hopes for the future to the assertion of their lawful historical rights and a revival of their culture and traditions. Even before the Revolution, people demanded the right to use the land, forests and water resources. But those demands were mere murmurs, which went unanswered, and which the ruthless Somocist dictatorship would not tolerate.

The demands of the local population have not changed much in substance. What is new is that imperialism has tried to steal from the revolutionaries their slogans of struggle for these lawful aspirations and to exploit them for counter-revolutionary ends. Although at first imperialists succeeded in duping some of the people, our honest and self-critical attitude has enabled the Revolution rightfully to regain and raise aloft the banner of Indian hope.

As for the second part of your question, we talk about communities because, in our view, this term aptly describes a specific demographic situation. The term 'ethnic group' would not cover the Creoles and Mestizoes. Strictly speaking, they cannot be considered ethnoses although they live in large communities on the Atlantic coast.

In describing the local population, we do not use the term 'nationality' because, among other things, it does not fit our objective historical realities. We can hardly call Rama a nationality, for instance, because the

Ramas number a mere 700, and, besides, there are other communities on their traditional territory. The concept 'nationality' as it is used by social scientists does not reflect the social realities of the region in question.

Why does the Revolution support the autonomy of the Atlantic coast? What is the difference between the Sandinistas' approach to the Indian (or ethnic) problem and the interpretation of similar problems in other Latin American countries?

As I have already said, the current ethnic and social difficulties are a product of the dark age of colonialism and the submission of the former corrupt governments to imperialist diktat.

The early measures of the Revolution on the Atlantic coast unfettered the social forces of the region and buoyed up the will of the people to fight for their rights. At first, we failed to see all the controversies, disillusionment, mistrust and bitterness there. As time went on, however, we realised that solutions to those problems could not be solely ethnographic or depend on goodwill alone: essentially, such solutions ought to be political and revolutionary.

Our enemies had laid their destabilisation plans well in advance, since they viewed the Atlantic coast as the right place to carry out their strategy of counter-revolution. They sent in arms, money, agents and mercenaries to exacerbate our domestic differences into a split and thus create a pretext for outside interference. The region could then become a springboard for a full-size military intervention.

The principle of autonomy has been written into the Constitution, because it was our conviction that national liberation is no more possible without autonomy than autonomy is without national liberation. They are mutually complementary.

We believe that the past hostilities on the Atlantic coast were not ethnic strife but a patriotic battle against external aggression.

The approach of the Sandinist government to autonomy stems from our singular historical process. Throughout the American continent, Indians are victims of exploitation and disgraceful segregation, with their traditions and culture being suppressed. The situation in our republic is different. After our Revolution, the ethnic problem was included in a programme of deep-going social change. I would not draw comparisons with other Latin American countries. Ours is the first people's democratic and anti-imperialist revolution that has had to face up to such problems. No country on the continent has any experience in dealing with them. Indianism⁶ and other surrogate solutions offered by the imperialists are ploys designed to perpetuate the isolation and segregation of Indians.

The group-nation contradiction cannot be considered out of the context of the conflict between the nation and imperialism, and from this point of view all the peoples of the American continent are in the same boat. What we can take pride in, not to speak of the blood spilt by our men, is that we have proved that a state ruled by the people must tackle political, economic, social and ethnic tasks as an integral whole. Fighting for national liberation and against imperialism, it must show consideration for

the specific minority demands.

Autonomy is the only sensible solution for Nicaragua. True revolutions can admit their mistakes and consciously stand up for the interests of the people. We have already achieved some progress: there is virtual peace in the whole of the Atlantic region, and there have been no clashes, with rare exceptions, since 1986.

Most of the communities contribute to the discussion of the draft autonomy law and take interest in the experience of the Yulu community, which has already introduced effective autonomy.

Ever since the victory of the Revolution, North American imperialism has been exploiting the Atlantic coast problems to provoke a counter-revolutionary war of aggression. What is the stand of the Indian communities? And what is the relationship between the introduction of autonomy and the Nicaraguan's desire for peace with honour?

The Indian communities are fighting for broader autonomy and against the intrigues of small rebel groupings which, goaded on by the USA and backed by foreign mercenaries, smear the cause of autonomy. Most of the indigenous population support the autonomy programme, and those who have emigrated would like to return. An airlift has been organised between Nicaragua and Honduras, for example, to fly home some 300 Miskito Indians.

Autonomy and peace are synonymous for people on the Atlantic coast. The Nicaraguans want peace and know its price in blood. We are ready to counter any attempt at fanning the flames of war. We will spare no effort to achieve a lasting peace. This means that the United States should respect the right of the peoples, big and small alike, to self-determination. It is high time for the US government to realise that most of the Nicaraguans are ready to fight for their land and skies, lakes and volcanoes, for the Revolution, and also for the autonomy programme.

¹ In late April 1987, at an assembly in Puerto Cabezas, 220 delegates from six ethnic groups approved a draft law and submitted it to Parliament. — *Ed.*

² In the 17th-18th centuries, the Miskitoes made alliances with the British to repulse Spanish intrusions into the Atlantic coast. Britain set up there a puppet monarchy under 'Rey Mosco', who in the 1860s granted land titles to North American entrepreneurs to start banana plantations. Although in 1894 Mosquitia became a part of Nicaragua, US influence in the region remained strong. — *J.B.*

³ Miskitoes and Sumoes lived in what is Nicaragua today well before the Spanish conquests. Creoles are people of a mixed Afro-American, European and Indian stock; Garifons, who come down from fugitive Black slaves and Caribs of the Lesser Antilles, migrated from Honduras into Nicaragua late last century. A few small Rama communities are the remainder of a large tribe which once lived in southern Nicaragua and Costa Rica. — *J.B.*

⁴ In 1850, Britain and the United States signed the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty on the status of a future canal on Nicaraguan territory. The treaty totally disregarded the stand of the Nicaraguan government. — *J.B.*

⁵ José Santos Zelaya tried to contain the penetration of Nicaragua by North American capital. In 1909 he secured a British loan and entered into talks with the Japanese to build a canal to link the two oceans. To block the project, the USA instigated an uprising by conservative groups and sent in the Marines, thus forcing Zelaya to resign. — *Ed.*

⁶ A movement widespread in Latin America to improve the condition of the indigenous population. It covers a variety of schools — from reactionary to bourgeois democratic. — *Ed.*

Need A Cure For The Crisis? – Try Coloured Rice

Sully Saneaux — Central Committee
member, Dominican Communist Party

ARE there new winds blowing in the Dominican Republic? Only an outsider could think so: grim realities, such as the dashed hopes and empty stomachs of most Dominicans, show to the contrary.

Since August 1986, the country has been led by Joaquin Balaguer. A lawyer by training and president by occupation, he began his fourth term, if, of course, we do not count the time, totalling 31 years, when he collaborated or even co-governed with former dictator Trujillo.

Having come to the helm in 1966, on the crest of the second US armed intervention in my homeland this century (the first one lasted from 1916 to 1924), Balaguer unleashed political terror. The early period of his rule was marked by suppression of opposition, unlawful arrests, the banishment of undesirables and the crushing of progressive political parties and trade unions. The Dominican people paid a high price for their defeat while the counter-revolutionaries were gloating.

Yet the time came when the President, wary of the verdict of history, decided to convince his coterie that reforms had to be introduced to save the foundations of the system. It was not 'divine inspiration', of course: Balaguer had to yield to the protests of the working people and the solidarity shown with them by the world public.

Balaguer, an old hand at such tricks, pushed through the tame Senate a package of agrarian reforms which seemed a serious blow at the latifundistas' age-old privileges. But the laws have not come to anything: while there are 255,000 farm holdings in the country, a mere 216 large estates have 23.21 per cent of all the ploughland.

The reforms have remained on paper . . .

Yet it should be said, for justice's sake, that there was a period of relative prosperity during Balaguer's long rule thanks to high prices for sugar, the country's chief export, in the early 1970s. A shrewd construction programme, which concentrated on the infrastructure, also contributed to the boom. That was the only praiseworthy achievement of the long years of his rule.

In 1978, Balaguer was unseated by the 'social democratic' Dominican Revolutionary Party (DRP), which rose to power in a haze of promises and popular illusions. But in a few years, 'vindicated' by the blunders of the successive corrupt DRP governments, he, like Phoenix, rose from the ashes. Fresh hopes were pinned on Balaguer, 79, when he assumed the presidency in 1986 after eight years in a political limbo.

Have these hopes, too, been dashed? Undoubtedly so. Let us turn to facts.

A Show Amidst the Crisis

The Dominican Republic has piled up a foreign debt of more than 4 billion dollars. The 1987 interest payments alone will total 700 million dollars, which is more than the country's entire export revenue. But unlike those in Latin America who think that such debts are impossible to repay, Balaguer claims that all his cabinet needs to cope is "debt rescheduling, a cut in the interest rates and the easing of some other terms". To meet its obligations to creditors, the government is willingly sacrificing the interests of the country, already weighed down with many other, no less serious, problems. Under the current administration, the Central Bank has authorised a payment of some 170 million dollars towards the onerous debt obligations, and at a time when total joblessness has exceeded 30 per cent of the employable population and when the economy is fully controlled by ten corporations of moneybags, 16 consortiums of billionaires and 161 mammoth latifundia.¹

This is what the real situation in the country is like. Can Balaguer find resources to meet the Dominican people's urgent needs, which have always been put off? True, one can hardly deny him resourcefulness and the amazing ability to evade change while creating a semblance of 'great deeds'. Having just assumed office, the President did not even stir a finger to prevent the layoff of 55,000 public servants or introduce price controls. Instead, he launched a well-orchestrated public relations campaign under the banner of 'moral cleansing'. A show amidst the crises.

The first act of the show, Selva Negra (Black Selva), had the avowed objective of saving the country's forests from indiscriminate felling (64 per cent of the population use charcoal for fuel). A worthy idea, no doubt, but one affecting primarily the poorer sections of the population. It was not the generals and well-heeled timber dealers who were hit by the repressive measures but the poor for whom timber and charcoal were the only source of livelihood. Meanwhile, poverty reached unprecedented proportions in the Dominican Republic and only Haiti, considered the poorest country in the continent, outran it for the dubious honour of the hungriest land. "People can be killed by hunger as well as by bullets," says Narciso Isa Conde, General Secretary of the Dominican Communist Party.²

To keep its reputation of 'a champion of renewal', the regime is doing what it can to conceal its inability to cope with acute unemployment. Balaguer is again relying on his time-tested war horse of construction policy. For instance, a capital investment of 500 million pesos, creating 9,000 jobs, is announced. The move seems effective at first sight but the government has already laid off 55,000 public servants in a bid to improve the administrative machinery in compliance with the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). As a result of the authorities' 'care' for the working people, the unemployed army has swollen by 46,000.

It should be admitted, however, that the President has taken a different line on the IMF as compared with his predecessors. When the Fund recently offered to send officials for consultations, he said that "it does not seem an opportune moment for either concluding or negotiating a new agreement".³ He thus displayed the cunning which the previous

administration had not had. It needed directives and clues — but Balaguer does not need anyone to tell him how to carry through the criminal initiatives of the International Monetary Fund!

'Moral Cleansing'

The President is starting the second act of his show, a 'war' on corruption, in an explosive situation. Its purpose, Narciso Isa Conde noted, is "to prevent the government's prestige from slumping at a time when inflation is assuming alarming proportions and pushing up the number of starvation-related deaths". He continued: "What Balaguer considers immoral is primarily corruption in the administrative apparatus, influence-peddling, embezzlement . . . , swindles . . . and bribery."⁴ The President has indeed taken in some cases ostentatious measures against his own subordinates. But the thrust of his campaign is directed against former President Jorge Blanco and his associates, who are charged not only with large-scale embezzlement but also with other crimes, such as the assassination of a well-known banker and the death of 100 Dominicans in April 1984, when police opened fire to disperse public demonstrations. Some other functionaries of the previous government, including retired generals and senior officials, have been imprisoned pending trial while Jorge Blanco is under investigation. The Dominicans, however, are doubtful that bourgeois justice will be done when the bourgeoisie itself goes on trial.

Moral cleansing is the demand of the people. Although Balaguer launched it himself as 'the father of the nation', he has now come under strong public pressure: the people do not lose sight of the gravest problems, such as unemployment, hunger and diseases, and demand that the war on corruption be waged to the end.

"It is a moral duty of society as a whole to take most effective measures to minimise . . . if not uproot altogether, the blight of corruption . . . We are aggrieved that the country is afflicted with degradation, especially as a consequence of the administration's abuses which have long been a drain on our society," the Dominican Episcopal Conference said in a statement. The Conference unites the country's senior Catholic clergy and is headed by Monsenor Lopez Rodriguez, who was recently elected Vice President of the Latin American Episcopal Conference. The statement doubtless reflects the sentiments of the people, whose patience is running out. The church is not alone in putting across the public mood: well-known public figures, whose personal integrity is unblemished, have come out for strict respect of the law and attacked corruption; they have launched a movement, Action for Public Morale.

A Stab in the Back

Our party says that "not only morale but also the social, economic and political life of the country has been hit by the crisis".⁶ Compounded by adverse external effects, the crisis has assumed especially dramatic proportions in the economy.

In December 1986, the US government cut drastically, from 302,000 to

160,000 short tons (one short ton equals 909 kg), the quotas on Dominican sugar supplies to the 'preferential American market'. The 'great ally' thus stabbed in the back a small country whose economy was in dire straits. In 1987 alone the shortfall in the Republic's revenue will amount to some 60 million dollars.

It was therefore in vain that Balaguer and his retinue kept courting Washington. It was in vain that the Dominican rulers sang their praises to the 'positive results' of the Reagan Plan for the Caribbean, which was a resounding flop.

Under that plan, the United States promised duty-free access for a number of commodities, including sugar, to make them competitive on the US domestic market. But Reagan's demagogic promises are one thing whereas his actions, necessitated by the crisis gripping the United States itself, are something very different. What should the Dominican Republic now do with the surplus of its chief export commodity?

It follows from statements by Miguel Guerrero, President of the Dominican Sugar Institute, that another regular buyer of our sugar, the Soviet Union, is arranging for purchases through French middlemen. "But why the middlemen?" the reader will ask. The point is that, scared of provoking the ire of its mighty patron, the government does not yet have normal relations with most of the socialist countries.

The decision taken by the USSR is invaluable to the Dominicans. Meanwhile, Reagan, mired in the Iran-contras affair, keeps begging Congress for hundreds of millions of dollars to give aid to the criminal gangs which are rampant in Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Angola, while invoking sanctions against those small and impoverished countries which are of little interest to the White House war-mongers.

The DCP Political Committee has said in a statement that there can be no justification for "the sugar sales to the Soviet Union being negotiated and arranged through middlemen while this can be done direct with greater benefit to the country".⁷

Undoubtedly, stop-gap measures are no cure for the growing impoverishment of our people. Faced with a severe crisis, the government has launched its 'moral cleansing' campaign. Yet it is the achievement of independence from the United States that would give the best boost to morale. Subservience breeds immorality, as you will hear from hundreds of thousands of Dominicans who go to bed hungry and from thousands more who depend for their livelihood on the sugar industry, pushed to the wall by the arbitrary decision of the US administration.

Coloured Rice

A highly dependent country, the Dominican Republic badly needs dollars to pay for essential imports. Hence its trade balance deficit.⁸ The ebb and flow of the dollars exchange rate on the Dominican market (currently the dollar is worth 3.4 Dominican pesos) has an ill effect on the cost of living while the prices are running riot in the absence of any effective controls or even the government's desire to concern itself with them. The people are paying through the nose for the debilitating effects of currency speculation.

The Balaguer government has proved unable to check the rise of prices

but would like to avoid the resultant social conflicts. What is to be done? And then a cabinet minister has come up with a bright idea — coloured rice. Under his 'epoch-making' plan, rice should be graded according to quality and dyed to protect buyers and scotch dishonest traders. Top-quality rice will be white, second-grade red (coloured by vegetable dyes) and third-grade green (coloured with mint), with the prices pegged to the colour.

Our rulers really are fun! Many Dominicans now wonder when they will sell milk by the meter to rein in the crisis.

But Balaguer's time is running out. The people's struggle is gathering momentum. The farmers are clamouring for change, for the land they were promised. With new battles ahead, the Communists attach priority to "the task of fighting hunger, renouncing foreign debts, introducing state controls on the currency market and banks, cancelling agreements with the IMF and carrying out an agrarian reform".⁹ These measures alone can pave the way to true change which is badly needed by the Dominican Republic.

¹ *Hablan los comunistas*, Santo Domingo, February 12-19, 1987.

² *Hablan los comunistas*, December 4-11, 1986.

³ *Granma*, November 28, 1986.

⁴ *Hablan los comunistas*, February 19-26, 1987.

⁵ *El Sol*, Santo Domingo, December 5, 1986.

⁶ *Hablan los comunistas*, February 12-19, 1987.

⁷ *Hablan los comunistas*, February 5-12, 1987.

⁸ It totalled 329 million dollars in 1985.

⁹ La crisis se profundiza y Balaguer se esfuerza por contener el desgaste. Documento del Comité Ejecutivo del PSD, May 1987, p. 9.

AFRICA: THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

With the following contributions from Congo and Guinea-Bissau, we continue discussion of the problems of the socialist orientation raised by Amath Dansokho in his article 'The Destiny of Capitalism and the Prospect Before the Developing World' (*WMR*, No. 1, 1987). We subsequently hope to discuss some aspects of the theory and practice of revolutionary-democratic transformations in the newly-liberated countries.

Life Versus Dogma

Vital Balla — CC member, Congolese Party of Labour

WE in Congo are able to deal with political and economic problems as a complex, so speeding up the building of our new society of freedom, equality, and social justice, because we have chosen the socialist way.

True, things have not gone as smoothly as we should like.

Revolutionaries encounter many difficulties of a subjective as well as objective nature. To cope with them, we must command the art of manoeuvre, have the courage to renounce habitual dogmas and outdated blueprints, and never set up any specific method or pattern as an absolute. There must always be scientific analysis of the concrete situation.

Let us look at the practical side of things. The problem we face today is that of determining the optimum proportions of the country's economic structure — the correlation between state, mixed, and private sectors, between democratic methods of administration and centralism, and between indicative and directive planning.

Our first five-year economic development plan (1982-1986) was a marked success, with the party and government leadership concentrating its efforts on eliminating the aftermath of almost a century of colonial rule, raising the rate of economic reconstruction and lessening the country's dependence on the capitalist world market, building an up-to-date infrastructure, invigorating the economic ties between various parts of the country, and raising living standards.

But various disturbing symptoms surfaced at the junction of 1983 and 1984. With the drop in oil prices, our country found itself in a difficult situation, for it ranks fifth among the oil producers in Tropical Africa after Nigeria, Angola, Gabon, and Cameroon.¹ In fact, oil exports yield over 80 per cent of its convertible revenue.

The CPL Central Committee Plenum of May 1986 noted that the price of a barrel of oil had dropped from \$26 at the end of 1985, when the rate of exchange stood at about 450 Afrofrancs² per dollar, to \$13 in May 1986, when a dollar was worth 350 Afrofrancs, thus cutting the country's revenue by nearly 200 billion francs.

Other weaknesses also came to light. In the state sector, production losses from 1980 to the end of 1986 totalled over 72 billion Afrofrancs, though subsidies topped 366 billion francs. A recent National People's Assembly session reviewing the results of the first five-year plan noted that our economic difficulties were in many ways due to lack of experience in long-term planning, financial and material shortages, and dependence on the capitalist market.

There were also some outright blunders. The investment plan had not been up to the mark. Nor was it directive, and had to be altered over and over again. The bulk of the funds went into the infrastructure or to cover administrative costs, while production did not get enough of a boost. A large number of projects — as many as 615 — was in excess of the capacities at the building organisations, and the availability of material resources, specialists and manpower had not been realistically assessed. Large funds went into the building of highways to the south and north of the country, but so far the economic effect has been fairly low. There had been a predilection for erecting luxury office buildings to the detriment of economic and social projects.

Or take the debt to the Western countries, to private banks, the Paris and London clubs, the IBRD and the IMF. The government is negotiating

a deferment of interest payments and a review of the debt structure. We have reached understandings to that effect with the Soviet Union, Algeria, and the People's Republic of China, and are doing our best to solve the problem with the international financial institutions.

That is the background to the emergence of our new society, which is something nobody can ignore — much less a ruling party which has never failed to reconsider its political line thoroughly at each period of trial.

The guidelines for the economic and social development of the People's Republic of Congo for the present stage were set at the Third Congress of the Congolese Party of Labour (July 1984). Considering the complexity of the situation, the Party forum charted a *policy of decentralisation*, namely, a set of measures making for a more flexible and prompt use of the country's economic potential. That policy was taken a step further by the June 1985 Plenum of the CPL Central Committee: its *Programme of Structural Adjustment* is central to the party's current economic policy. It envisages reduction of allocations for current spending and investment.

To cut losses in the state sector, the government is planning sanctions this year against 76 enterprises that have failed to make a profit. The civil service, which numbers nearly 80,000, is to be reduced. The Council of Ministers recently passed a decision to dismiss 1,400 government employees who had neglected their duties over the years.

A set of measures has been worked out to make agriculture more efficient. Its share in the GNP is only 20 per cent now, though experts estimate that the country, with two million people, could potentially feed up to 40 million. Congo has over 1,300 cooperatives and state farms, but not all of them by far are profitable. Yet we have set ourselves the aim of making the country self-sufficient in food by the year 2000. For this reason, while expanding the number of cooperatives and state farms, we admit some privatisation of the agrarian sector under party and government control. We plan to set up regional centres with cultural facilities and other amenities so as to stem the migration of farmers to the cities.

Owing to financial shortages, the government has put off the drafting of the next five-year plan. But an interim investment programme for 1987 and 1988 has been adopted, with the emphasis on *agriculture, forestry, private enterprise, the mixed sector, restructuring of state-operated enterprises, and the education system*.

In the past five years we have gained some experience in planned economic management. Fulfilment of the structural transformation programme and of the interim investment programme will enable us to start working out the second five-year plan soon and, as Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Chairman of the CPL CC, President of the PRC and the head of government, has pointed out, will pave the way for resuming long-term planning.

At the end of 1986, a CPL Central Committee Plenum noted that the state of the country's economy was unsound, and that enemies of the revolution would inevitably attempt to take advantage of it. A high degree

of vigilance, good organisation, and tight discipline were essential. We are doing what we can to rectify the work at every level of the party and government apparatus, and to heighten the party's leading role.

We are aware that to overcome the economic difficulties we will have to do something about cutting social expenditures (which have already been cut 5 per cent), reducing staffs in the state sector, and privatising certain enterprises. In many other African countries, as we know, these and similar moves have affected the interests of the mass of the people. Some may, therefore, ask: does not the current economic policy prejudice the building of our new society?

As we see it, the objective realities in Congo are such that at the current stage of the national-democratic people's revolution we have to manoeuvre and, indeed, make temporary retreats and sacrifices in order to safeguard the most important thing — our progressive way of development.

The Congolese Party of Labour is the vanguard of the working class, and will never deviate from its goal of building a democratic and socialist society free from every form of man's exploitation by man. The party draws its strength from the mass of workers, peasants, army people, and revolutionary intellectuals, who are fighting for the country's full independence and for scientific socialism. It exists for the people, it serves the people, and takes guidance in the people's interests. As before, we attach tremendous importance to developing the social sphere — something that the party and government leadership has steadily pursued ever since the country took the way of progressive transformations.

There is, therefore, no question of any departure from our chosen course. Ours is the ruling party. It is in full control of the situation in the country. Overall guidance of the country's socio-economic development was, and continues to be, a prerogative of the CPL. All the sectors of the economy, communications, transport, and banking are under state control. We are able to influence all aspects of life and all the processes that are under way in the society. Still, the specificity of the situation must be taken into account at every stage, entailing diverse approaches. That, indeed, is the motivation behind our socio-economic strategy today.

¹ 'Congo. La dynamique de la volonté. Un dossier de 32 pages', *Afrique-Asie*, No. 360, 4 to 17 November, 1985, p. XVIII.

² Afrofranc — a monetary unit of the African Financial Community (CFA franc). — *Ed.*

How We View Liberalisation Of The Economy

Bénécio Costa — Deputy Secretary
for Administration and Finance, Central
Committee, African Party for the
Independence of Guinea and Cape
Verde (PAIGC)

FIRST, let me thank the journal for the opportunity to air some of my ideas about specific features of the current economic changes in our country, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Ten years ago, when charting our economic strategy, we mainly proceeded from the purely theoretical premise that farming should be the foundation of our economy and supplier of raw materials for the processing industry. But after some time we discovered that this scheme did not work. Actually, much damage had been done by setting unrealistic tasks, which totally disordered the economy. In the autumn of 1980, the situation was so exacerbated that a group of prominent political figures led by João Bernardo Vieira, now PAIGC CC Secretary-General, deposed President Luiz Cabral and took power.¹

The First Extraordinary Congress of PAIGC reviewed the strategy of socio-economic development in Guinea-Bissau. We had to persuade the peasantry that the state was interested in the results of their work and was prepared to offer fair purchasing prices for their produce. The government began to help peasants buy implements, seed, fertilizers, and so on, and paid more attention to small cooperatives organised on peasants' initiative.

The next thing to do was find the proper balance between the elements of state and private enterprise both in foreign and in domestic trade. Nowadays the state imports only such staples as rice, vegetable oil, sugar, etc. Liberalising our foreign trade, we have permitted merchants to import other commodities within the established limits. Privately imported goods are also retailed privately. But despite the existence of free competition, the government continues to control market prices.

In no way, however, does liberalisation of trade, which results in greater activity of both local and foreign merchants, mean that private capital is being given unlimited opportunities or the right to import unnecessary commodities and sell them at prices set by the importer. Entrepreneurs are allowed to import chiefly staples that are not imported by government.

Given the unfavourable international economic situation, our country's position in the region, and our domestic difficulties, we believe that, provided the state controls the economic processes, including market prices, liberalisation of the economy *cannot be regarded as a concession to private enterprise, let alone a premise for establishing a capitalist system in our republic*. Like other Portuguese-speaking African states, Guinea-Bissau is in the early

period of its transition, establishing the socio-economic foundation for the building of a new society. The extent to which private enterprise is used in the economy depends on objective circumstances, which are not simple at all. How can one speak of economic development when there is no infrastructure and certain sectors of the economy are missing? Development programmes are financed by foreign aid; export revenue covers only 25 per cent of the needed imports; and world prices are rising. Every year, it is becoming increasingly difficult to buy grain, and while African nations are short of it, EEC food producers destroy their 'surplus' grain stock.

By allowing the private sector to become a little more active, we aim at stimulating economic growth to step up our progressive changes in the socio-economic and other areas. But such a policy does not signify the creation of favourable conditions for a turn-about towards capitalism. The guidelines for the country's development are set by our party, the leading force of the society.

We clearly see the importance of restricting private capital to definite limits so as to avoid the risk of its resurgence. At the same time, PAIGC holds the view that at every stage of the struggle we must develop a concrete strategy that meets existing realities and guarantees that our progressively-oriented general line is implemented.

Before November 14, 1980, Guinea-Bissau's economy was virtually allowed to drift, and it was not until the former leadership was deposed that we managed to reanimate it. Preparations are now under way to fulfil the new tasks set in our programme of socio-economic stabilisation. The Fourth PAIGC Congress (November 1986) adopted an economic development model designed to attract large-scale local and foreign investment. In our view, there are now no insurmountable contradictions in Guinea-Bissau between the public and private sectors, and both will have to tackle their specific tasks in building the nation.

¹ On November 14, 1980. — *Ed.*

surveys, letters, and diary

Brief Survey

Press Organs Of Fraternal Parties

THE Communists have always attached paramount significance to the mass media. Communists and workers' parties throughout the world are publishing their own newspapers and theoretical journals. These run into the hundreds. Meeting reader requests, *World Marxist Review* is herewith starting a series of briefs on the central organs and other periodicals of the fraternal parties in the non-socialist world. Contributions below were prepared by the parties' representatives on *WMR*.

Hablan los Comunistas
Dominican Communist Party

The publication of this daily newspaper was started in February 1978.

The Dominican Communist Party functioned underground from the day it was founded in 1944 up to 1961 when the Trujillo regime fell. But even in that period it had its own newspaper, which on account of brutal harassment did not appear regularly. An important place in the history of the Dominican revolutionary movement is held by the newspaper *El Popular*, which inspired mass actions against the Cabral regime, that came to power as a result of a putsch orchestrated by the USA and ruled the nation from 1963 to 1965. *El Popular* did much to organise and bring together forces of resistance which overthrew the ruling junta. Until 1978 this was one of the few newspapers that exposed the imperialist policy of terror and carried detailed reports about all the actions of the workers, peasants, and intellectuals to win democratic freedoms.

Having the experience of its predecessor to draw upon, *Hablan los Comunistas* (The Communists Speak) began publication after left-wing organisations achieved a legal status. It appeared regularly until its 350th issue (April 1985) when the party decided to stop its publication to clear the way for a weekly newspaper of the Dominican progressive forces united in the Dominican Left Front. This was not an easy decision to take, for *Hablan los Comunistas* had become a prestigious and popular newspaper.

For various reasons, the experiment in publishing a single left-wing organ was not successful, and after a break of five months the Communist Party's central newspaper resumed publication under its old name.

The newspaper's leadership consists of a director and his deputy, the editor-in-chief, and the executive manager. They are assisted by a group of editors and a photographer. This permanent staff is aided by voluntary correspondents, a role that can be played by all party members.

There are permanent columns, one of which is by the party's General Secretary. The front page is devoted to current issues of domestic politics. The newspaper carries accounts of the day-to-day struggles of the working people of town and countryside, and of youth and women, and prints articles on art and literature.

Circulation is achieved by various methods. Most of this work is done by party members. Every Communist has the duty to sell a minimum of five copies of each issue. Circulation teams are formed periodically to sell the newspaper in workers' neighbourhoods and at factory gates. Moreover, *Hablan los Comunistas* is sold at newspaper stalls and sent to readers by subscription. Its circulation varies from eight to ten thousand copies.

The newspaper maintains friendly links with the publications of other communist parties and revolutionary organisations, regularly publishing articles received from them. Its representatives participate in the festivals of fraternal newspapers in other countries. Last June *Hablan los Comunistas* organised its first festival.

As well as this weekly newspaper the Dominican Communist Party publishes the theoretical journal *Impacto Socialista*, which appears once in two months.

Tekad Rakyat

Communist Party of Indonesia

The murderous counter-revolutionary coup in Indonesia (September 1965) inflicted grievous losses on the CPI: thousands of Communists died, others were imprisoned or sent to concentration camps, and the party itself was outlawed.

The Indonesian Marxist-Leninist functioning in the country and abroad were faced with the problem of restoring the party and its newspaper, which would allow showing the ruling reactionary regime in its true colours and drawing large numbers of people into the struggle against it. In view of the prevailing situation it was decided to begin the publication of the party's organ outside Indonesia.

The first issue of the CPI's monthly journal, *Tekad Rakyat* (The People's Will), appeared on November 7, 1967. Initially, it had the format of a usual journal, but then it was reduced to pocket size. The journal averages 25 pages. Recently, to make it safer to circulate and keep the journal in Indonesia it began to be published also on a single page of the size of two journal pages of very closely printed text. It is printed in the Indonesian language. In addition, some of its issues are annually printed in English, for fraternal parties and sympathisers of democracy and socialism in other countries.

In 1977 *Tekad Rakyat* began putting out an *International Bulletin*, which carries articles from *WMR* translated into the Indonesian language. The *International Bulletin* likewise appears once a month.

Tekad Rakyat is circulated chiefly among CPI members. Although it goes chiefly to workers, intellectuals, and students, it is read also by people of other social groups.

The journal is circulated in various ways in keeping with the situation in Indonesia, where communist and progressive publications are banned.

The journal carries several permanent sections. The 'Editorial' presents analyses of current problems linked to the party's life and struggles, in particular, the struggle for the unity of Indonesian Communists, and of the situation in Indonesia and the world. Under the heading 'Motherland' we print articles on economic, political, and cultural developments in Indonesia. The section 'International Events' is devoted to information from around the world, including reports about the international communist and working class movement, the national liberation movement, and the peace movement.

The journal's editorial staff works under the party's direct leadership. The articles are organised and edited by an editorial council that has contacts with a wide circle of contributors.

There are usually two main channels of links with readers: party organisations and a readers' post. Of course these links take the situation into account. We get many requests for more copies, and this is prompting us to increase the journal's circulation.

Tekad Rakyat has close comradely links with the press of fraternal parties, sending representatives to regional and international scientific conferences sponsored by party newspapers of socialist countries, festivals of fraternal newspapers, and so on.

Al-Maydan

The Sudanese Communist Party

From the moment it was founded in August 1946 the Sudanese Communist Party sought to have its own press organ in order to provide its members working among the people with political and ideological information and education. This organ is now the newspaper *Al-Maydan* (The Arena). Its first issue appeared in September 1954.

In working on the ideological, political, and organisational problems involved in setting up its central newspaper, the party succeeded in achieving unity of will and action among its members. The participation of Communists in preparing articles for *Al-Maydan* was facilitated by the extension of inner-party democracy and the enhancement and strengthening of the party's leading role among the people. Through their newspaper the Sudanese Communists are explaining their slogans and policies and mobilising the people to stand up for their rights.

At present *Al-Maydan* is a legal daily newspaper in Arabic with a circulation of 25-30 thousand copies. It is distributed by the relevant state agencies and reaches foreign readers. Its editorial offices are in Khartoum.

The editorial staff consists of Communists with journalistic training. Non-staffers — technical workers, artists, and calligraphers — voluntarily help to bring out the newspaper.

The lay-out is such as to enable readers to find what they want in the

accustomed place. The front page is devoted to domestic news. The second page, headed 'Window of the World' gives the major international news, and the third page offers information from around the various provinces of the Sudan. Every issue carries an editorial on a major issue as seen from the party's stand. One page is devoted to mass movements — trade unions and youth and women's organisations. Altogether, there are eight pages. *Al-Maydan* is one of the widely read newspapers in the Sudan.

If it is remembered that our party has functioned underground for many years and had to contend with acute shortages of funds and with technical and other difficulties, the uninterrupted publication of *Al-Maydan* must be seen as a considerable achievement of the Sudanese Communists.

In 1947 the party began the publication of the journal *Al-Kadir* (The Cadres) for internal circulation. Subsequently renamed *Al-Shuyuiy* (The Communist), it is published to this day.

In addition to providing ideological and political information, the party felt there was a need to deal publicly with organisational problems and questions related to party building. For this purpose it set up the journal *Al-Munazzim* in 1964; this journal has been issued ever since.

There also are journals published by the party's provincial committees in Khartoum and Gezira. These concentrate on regional problems and, in keeping with the party's general line and policies, explain the specific tasks confronting the Communists in these provinces.

In its media the Sudanese Communist Party accords due attention to the specific problems of the south of the Sudan. Since the 1950s the party has been printing the English language newspaper *Advance*, which is circulated chiefly among intellectuals and the non-Arabic speaking ethnic minorities inhabiting this region of the country.

Facts Indict Capitalism

TENS OF MILLIONS OF HUMAN LIVES RUINED

MORE than 30 million people are now unemployed in industrialised capitalist countries. According to international trade union associations, the number of jobless may double within the next five to six years. This means that the already unbearable burden of suffering and privations under which tens of millions of unemployed are staggering will become much heavier: a one per cent rise of unemployment increases the incidence of mental disorders by 3.4 per cent, drug abuse by 8.7 per cent and the suicide rate by 4.1 per cent. These statistics are impressive enough, but no figures can gauge the depths of misery into which 'redundant' workers are plunged.

I myself do not have to reach far to cite an example. My son could not find a job for eighteen months, and throughout that time our family knew no peace. Each day began with a timid hope that a job would be found somewhere and ended in bitter disillusionment. Sometimes we felt we

could not stand it any more. Today, when I think that more than 400,000 people in Greece are similarly affected, the figure tells me that these are all human beings who are miserable and humiliated. Nothing can justify their ordeal. A society that accommodates the interests of the rich by throwing its own citizens overboard is, by its nature, criminal and inhuman.

The ruling quarters in the West, the employers and bourgeois propaganda would like to have us believe that the plight of the unemployed is not so terrible as to sound the alarm over it. We are told that they are taken care of, that they are being helped and paid generous benefits. In the United States, the leading capitalist economy, there is a song which tells young people that unemployment is not all that bad, that it is an added and free opportunity for entertainment. But these lyrics and the eyewash about assistance to the poor from the rich are nothing but demagoguery or, to be more precise, deliberate and malicious deceit: in the final analysis, any 'largesse' bourgeois society may distribute is not explained by its kind-heartedness but comes from the pockets of the working people themselves. Moreover, against the background of growing unemployment, capitalist tycoons are obviously trying to launch a counter-offensive and deprive the working people of a large part of their social gains. The entire arsenal of techniques stockpiled by the exploiter society for this purpose is brought into play. Trade unions are subjected to persecution and economic blackmail. Anti-labour legislation is introduced. Deliberate cultivation of individualism, brutality and a dog-eat-dog mentality is assuming scandalous proportions. Tens of millions of people fall victim to this criminal policy.

Zenon Zorzovilis

Central Committee member of the
Communist Party of Greece,
CPG representative on *WMR*

'SOCIAL PATHOLOGY'

THE high level of unemployment in the United States which never goes below six per cent even during periods of recovery in the labour market has long become a factor of 'social pathology' which is destroying American society, the *People's Daily World* notes. This is what has turned the United States into a nation of suicides — more than 27,000 a year. Significantly, the two biggest cases of mass murder in the US history both occurred with the present administration in office and both were committed by people who had lost their jobs. In San Isidro, California, James Huberty, whom unemployment had driven to breaking point, fired an automatic rifle at the customers of a cafeteria, killing 21 and wounding 20. Fear of becoming unemployed was the reason for a similar act of desperation. Patric Sherrill, a post office employee in Edmond, Oklahoma, was threatened with dismissal. He shot 20 of his colleagues, killing 14 of them, and then put a bullet through his head. In both cases the murders were committed by

people to whom, according to President Reagan, the nation should be particularly grateful to their signal services. Huberty had fought in Vietnam and Sherrill is an ex-Marine.

Official Lies

According to official statistics, the number of the unemployed has almost tripled in Great Britain under the conservative government and now exceeds 3,143,000. However, the trade unions believe that the actual total is almost twice as great. They accuse the government of fiddling with figures and cite at least 19 cases in which the authorities tried to give a distorted view of spiralling unemployment.

This is what jobless Britons who have called at the London TUC Centre for the Unemployed think about what is really happening.

John Davis: "I am a building worker unemployed for eight months now. The benefits I draw are not unemployment but supplementary benefits because I sometime land odd jobs. The DHSS* pays me £163 twice a month. But I am not a home-owner, and so I spend almost £140 to pay for a tiny room in a hotel. That leaves me with £23 a fortnight for food, clothes, transport and other basic needs. Since I lost my job I have never had more than two meals a day, and the food has been the cheapest available."

Michael Stanger: "When I was discharged from the army, it turned out no one wanted me. Frankly, that was a shock, especially after years of hearing that we were defenders of a society which had more justice than any other. At first I was ashamed to turn to the DHSS, but now I know that the people who come here are no idlers."

* Department of Health and Social Security. — *Ed.*

JUST LIKE IN VICTOR HUGO'S TIMES?

THIS spring unemployment set a new record, affecting 2,675,000 people in France — 11.1 per cent of the nation's workforce. A paper released by the General Confederation of Labour points out that more than one million people are no longer entitled to draw benefits and often have no means of livelihood at all. Acting in accordance with the logic of capitalism, the government is using this situation to step up exploitation. The French National Assembly has approved a bill that cancels several basic provisions of the labour code. While millions of people are vainly looking for work, the government has secured an increase of the workweek and the repeal of the ban on night-shift work for women introduced more than 100 years ago. Speaking to oppose this move on behalf of his party, Communist Senator Charles Lederman said, "One more step will take us back to child labour in the mines, just like in Victor Hugo's times."

The Unemployed In The FRG: What They Live On And How They Live

Jochen Mandel — GCP Board expert
on unemployment issues, interviewed by
WMR

How is the unemployment benefits fund formed and what is it like?

The budget of the Federal Labour Office is made up of membership dues paid by the employers and the workers themselves. Officially, they are distributed equally — each side contributes 4.3 per cent of its income. But while this money is deducted from the worker's wages and salaries, the employers can compensate for the loss by resorting to various tricks, specifically with the help of their pricing policy.

Could you cite examples to illustrate how the money from the fund is distributed?

Let me begin by noting that the system of unemployment benefits is quite limited. Although the budget of the Federal Labour Office shows a surplus of several billion marks, one-third of the officially registered unemployed — some 800,000 people — do not receive a single pfennig of it. Two types of benefits are stipulated — unemployment benefits and 'assistance to the unemployed'.

Unemployment benefits can reach a maximum of 68 per cent of the latest 'net' income. These payments depend on length of service and age considerations and are granted for no more than 32 months, but most of the unemployed receive these benefits for no more than a year.

In recent years unemployment benefits have on average been 950 marks a month — 24 marks less than in 1982. Forty-three per cent of the unemployed are paid less than 800 marks. The average for women and youth under 20 is particularly low — 718 and 498 marks respectively.

Unemployment benefits are legally guaranteed, but 'assistance to the unemployed' (7 to 10 per cent less than the former) is paid only to the needy. This means that in checking how needy an applicant is, the income of the rest of the family is taken into account. Many people with no jobs, primarily women and grown-up children living with their parents, receive a tiny part of such payments, if at all.

This is why the number of those on 'social relief' has increased considerably in recent years. 'Social relief' is supposed to ensure subsistence, and it is based on the 'necessary consumption level' which the authorities determine and which is obviously too low. The head of the family in the Federal Republic is paid an average sum of 400 marks a month, plus compensation for rent and heating bills. 'Social relief', as people say, is enough to survive but too little to live on.

Unemployment and poverty are linked indelibly. But loss of one's job entails other consequences too, doesn't it?

Of course. Experts agree that unemployment adversely affects physical and mental health. Tens of billions of marks are spent on the treatment of diseases induced by unemployment. The suicide rate among the unemployed is 30 times higher than among those who have jobs. Massive unemployment has produced a steep rise in the level of crime and in drug addiction, among young people in the first place, and it destroys families. Unemployment and its consequences are spreading throughout the social fabric and eroding it from within.

All this sounds hopeless. I fear people are losing all hope that things may change for the better.

Unemployment threatens everyone in a society based on exploitation. Over the past 12 years, 15 million people — that is, 37 per cent of all wage and salary earners — lost their jobs at least once. Our party estimates that in the near future, one-third of the industrial workforce will be permanently unemployed.

Those who have been dismissed often feel dejected, but ever more people are refusing to meekly accept the situation. The Communists are vigorously supporting the mounting movement against unemployment. We believe that acting jointly today, both unemployed and employed working people can and must effectively curb and stem its growth.

Scientists Warn

'Nuclear Winter': No Illusions

GLOBAL problems that have no national boundaries must be tackled jointly in our interdependent world. This is particularly true of the struggle to eliminate nuclear weapons and prevent militarisation of outer space.

Scientists have a clear picture of the tragic aftermath of a nuclear conflict. Aside from the direct destructive effect, an exchange of nuclear strikes will cause large-scale firestorms, releasing huge amounts of soot, poisonous gases and other combustion products into the atmosphere. Tiny particles of soot will form clouds which, absorbing and blocking sunlight, will cause a 'nuclear nightfall', the harbinger of 'nuclear winter'. As a result, the radiation balance on the Earth will be upset, and temperatures on its surface will drop by 15° to 20°C. The effects will be particularly severe in summer, with temperatures across vast areas of the hemisphere involved in the hostilities falling below freezing point. These radical upheavals in atmospheric circulation will mean that an unprecedented environmental disaster will spread throughout the world within weeks,

causing massive destruction of flora and fauna. Facing agony and slow death, survivors of nuclear strikes will wish they had died in the blasts: the immediate and long-term medical and biological consequences of the catastrophe and the degradation of the environment will be lethal.

The considered and competent conclusions and explanations offered by scientists play an essential — perhaps even decisive — role in the shaping of public opinion. A mere 10 or 15 years ago the common view was that nuclear war would, at most, entail 'only' the death of hundreds of millions of people and unheard-of destruction. Today, few doubt that nuclear explosions will be followed by a global environmental disaster and the destruction of civilisation itself.

Nonetheless, reason and common sense have not yet triumphed everywhere. The military strategy of the NATO countries, including the United States, stipulates 'preemptive' limited nuclear strikes and local nuclear conflicts. Advocates of this doctrine assert that these are not really dangerous to the human race and that they cannot produce any catastrophic effects.

With striking placidity, US Defense Department spokesmen are saying that 'nuclear winter' may produce an insignificant effect. The Office of Emergency Preparedness is also optimistic: its experts have made a 'major' adjustment in the estimated US death toll in a nuclear war. Instead of the 1957 estimate of 156 million, the new figure is 'only' 112 million. The public is told reassuringly that survivors will outnumber casualties.

At the Moscow forum 'For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Humanity' *WMR* asked some of its participants — from Great Britain, Japan, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, Sweden and the United States — to discuss the environmental consequences of a nuclear conflict. Here is a summary of their views.

Bernard Lown, professor of cardiology at the Harvard Graduate School of Public Health (US), co-chairman of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War: People must be made to realise that mankind will not survive a new Ice Age — that is what 'nuclear winter' actually is — which will inevitably come should a conflict break out. Limited nuclear war is idiocy. There is no such thing as limited nuclear war. There is absolutely no way of limiting or localising it. When two people sit down to a game of chess, they follow certain rules. It is naive to think that anyone can control the chain of unpredictable events, events that will follow the first nuclear strike.

Professor Yoyichi Fukushima of the Research Centre for the Environment (Japan), co-chairman of the international movement Ecoforum for Peace: When the concept of 'limited nuclear war' began to gain currency (it was advertised by the mass media close to the military-industrial complex), many people — ill-informed people, I mean — were lulled by the hope that there would be no global conflagration. But we scientists saw from the very beginning that this was an untenable and irrational concept. Fortunately, this awareness has now spread far and wide and is no longer shared by experts only. People across the world realise that in today's world, the notion of a limited nuclear conflict is unrealistic and pernicious: any nuclear strike is bound to invite retaliation and the advent of 'nuclear

winter', the end of all life.

Johannes Opschoor, director of the Environmental Research Institute, Free University (Netherlands), co-chairman of Ecoforum for Peace: I, too, am convinced that a 'limited' nuclear strike is impossible. Nuclear conflict cannot be *limited* or contained. It will rapidly escalate and transcend the boundaries of this or that region. It will have devastating consequences in terms of loss of life and destruction, and its effects on the environment, on human culture will be mind-boggling.

The disaster will hardly be confined to the industrialised world, although the first nuclear strikes will indeed hit targets in developed countries.

Nikita Moiseyev, member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, deputy director of its Computer Centre: The strikes will, of course, be directed against large cities in Europe, America and Asia. Let me add here that no one can hope to sit it out, no matter how far from ground zero. That is the crux of the issue. 'Nuclear winter' may vary in duration in different areas, and the drop in temperature may also vary, but eventually everything will be frozen into oblivion. Earth will continue to emit infra-red radiation, but the influx of solar thermal energy will be blocked by soot and dust. The planet will begin to lose heat.

In an effort to placate the anti-nuclear movement, dealers in illusions assure the public that strikes will be aimed only at missile silos and other purely military targets.

. . . But the military thinks that it does not pay to target only silos. First, they are well protected and second, many of them are dummy silos. The tactic of knocking out missiles in silos does not rule out retaliation at all. Hence the principal objective of weakening the adversary as much as possible by destroying the main resources of the country which is attacked — its people. Therefore, strikes will be 'naturally' targeted at civilians in cities. I would like to stress that this is common knowledge, but the concept of a limited nuclear conflict is still current.

But you cannot limit a nuclear conflict. The very first strike will bring the world's entire stockpile of these deadly weapons into play and plunge the world into a nuclear nightmare. One cannot be sure that only the nations of the 'nuclear club' possess these weapons. There are indications that several other countries have them too.

Professor Kinhide Mushakoji (Japan), Vice-Rector of the Tokyo-Based United Nations University: What worries me is that people often look at nuclear war only in terms of its scope. The number of people killed in Hiroshima was horrible enough, even though this figure is incomparable with the losses a global disaster will lead to. If we follow this logic, we may end up regarding limited nuclear war as acceptable and 'nuclear winter' as survivable. This is particularly disturbing to us in Japan.

Professor Ulrich Loening, director of the Edinburgh University Centre for Human Ecology (Great Britain), co-chairman of Ecoforum for Peace: I do not think that we should emphasise only atmospheric change when assessing the consequences of nuclear war. We need an integrated approach. Unlike the scientists who model 'night' or 'winter' scenarios for the period following a first nuclear strike, researchers at our centre concentrate on the main global changes in the peacetime environment. But

their findings are directly projected onto the situation commonly referred to as 'nuclear winter'. Convinced that science should be socially active, we are mobilising public opinion so that mankind would never feel the deadly cold of 'nuclear winter'.

Could you cite a few examples?

We publicise our findings by holding conferences, workshops and public lectures. We are doing our utmost to promote a clear understanding of possible — and inevitable if we remain passive — consequences of environmental degradation. An informed public aware of present and future realities is a force capable of influencing the policy-makers. Obviously, we can no longer live in the old way.

Change is needed everywhere, in the East and in the West. The Soviet Union is already moving in this direction. All nations should realise that they need a new way of thinking, and not only in what concerns war and peace. We need profound conceptual changes in our entire philosophy and attitudes so as to gear them to the realities of today's world.

Gunhild Backman, *president of the national organisation Physicians for Social Responsibility (Sweden)*: I am convinced that a great deal depends on us, that professionals can make a valuable contribution to the prevention of nuclear war. Our organisation is dealing with the medical aspects of the problem. Great hopes will be pinned on medical assistance if 'nuclear winter' sets in, with so many people wounded, disabled, poisoned and suffering from burns. But few will get the necessary treatment. The imbalance between the available medical personnel and the vast masses of people in need of assistance will be catastrophic. Millions upon millions of survivors will die, some quickly, others slowly. Besides, 'nuclear winter' will produce social and psychological effects. The social structure will break down, social ties will be severed, and mental agony will compound physical suffering. Children will lose their parents, parents will not know what happened to their children, people will helplessly watch their loved ones suffer from disease or injuries, panic and fear will become endemic . . .

Bernard Lown: Physicians are professionally analysing the consequences of nuclear war and disseminating accurate and well-founded information about its effects from the viewpoint of human health, of human survival. Professionals can and must help others get rid of the obsolete view of war as an acceptable way of solving problems.

Nikita Moiseyev: If mankind wants to have a future, it will have to change its moral principles as radically as it did when man was becoming socially organised, when rules of conduct changed in hominid tribes, and when 'thou shalt not kill' emerged as a principle. We are entering a new era, and it places new demands on us: to protect life and ensure survival is now an imperative. Awareness of this imperative is growing among the scientists, and the line we must not cross, the 'point of no return' is becoming increasingly discernible. But the emergence of new moral precepts is impossible if all passengers of our Spaceship Earth fail to grasp that this change is essential. Awareness of the dangers that threaten all of us will

give rise to a feeling of global, planetary community. We all must learn to regard ourselves as members of a single family whose future depends on each and every one of us. To bring this about, we need a broad international programme of education, of *enlightenment*.

All this shows that scientists hold identical views on the matter in question, and these views can easily be summed up in one or two phrases: the use of nuclear weapons on any scale is a crime against humanity. The final catastrophe can be prevented, but this calls for joint efforts not only by scientists but also by all mankind.

The Reader Wants To Know

Has Khaled Mohieddin Become A Member Of Parliament Or Not?

Please help me get the facts straight about the latest general elections in Egypt. At first the press reported that Khaled Mohieddin, General Secretary of the National Progressive Unionist Party, was elected to parliament. Then news came that this party failed to win any seats. I also read about alleged rigging and cases of violence. What did really happen? And what is the actual alignment of political forces in Egypt?

Ruth Cullen, Ireland

WMR has asked Rifaat el-Said, Central Committee secretary of the National Progressive Unionist Party of Egypt, to answer these questions.

LET me begin with the second question. There are now six political parties legally operating in Egypt, including the ruling *National Democratic Party*, The *Wafd Party* (the current official name is *New Wafd*: the party was dissolved and then reconstituted) dates back to the revolution of 1919. During the anticolonial struggle the Wafdists pursued a national, patriotic course but have now shifted to the right of the political spectrum, as have the bourgeois strata they represent. The *Socialist Labour Party* is a successor of 'Young Egypt', a fascist-type organisation established in the 1930s. Today this party subscribes to the views expounded by the extreme right wing of the Socialist International. Two other small parties — the *Liberal Socialist Party* and the *Ummah Party* — carry virtually no weight.

Finally, there is our *National Progressive Unionist Party* which unites Marxists, Nasserites, Arab nationalists, Baathists, adherents of enlightened religious currents, both Moslem and Christian, and other progressive, patriotic and liberal elements. Despite this heterogeneous composition, the NPUP is a party, not a loose alliance.

The organisations that operate clandestinely or semi-clandestinely include more than 70 Moslem groups. Some of them preach extremist, fanatical views and denounce as godless unbelievers all those who do not share their beliefs. Others are more moderate. The *Moslem Brothers* are the best-known Moslem organisation with well-established traditions. Founded in 1928, it was the model and forerunner of all Islamic political currents that followed.

Working in semi-clandestine conditions are the Nasserites united in the *Arab Socialist Nasserite Party* and the so-called *Union of the Working People*. The *Egyptian Communist Party* is among the organisations that are banned. At the latest elections, however, it nominated its own candidates as independents, although it was common knowledge that they were Communists. The editor-in-chief of *Al-Ahram*, a pro-government newspaper, even asked in an editorial why the Communist Party could not be officially legalised if it actually existed and enjoyed recognition as a political force.

The bulk of the population is weakly politicised, and this has a strong impact on Egypt's domestic politics. Out of the 50 million Egyptians, 30 million are in the age bracket by which they might be politically active. Regrettably, no more than a million people — that is, one out of every 30 — are involved in politics, and many only to a very small degree. In general, the masses refuse to accept the present situation. But people do not fully understand who is responsible for their plight or what should be done to change things.

There are several reasons for that. The deterioration of the living standard caused by the economic crisis is forcing many to toil from dawn to dusk in an attempt to make ends meet. It is common for a worker of a state-run enterprise to turn into a self-employed craftsman in the evenings, or for a teacher to double as a taxi driver or to take up small-scale currency transactions as a sideline. These people have no time for politics. Besides, one should not lose sight of the corrupting influence of the parasitic elements bred by the 'infittah' (open-door policy) in various sections, including the poor and the petty and middle bourgeoisie. Nor does large-scale emigration encourage political activity. Some four million Egyptians are working abroad now. At the Second Congress of our party in 1985 it turned out that 20 per cent of the delegates present at the previous congress had left the country.

Such was the background against which the elections to the People's Assembly (parliament) took place. Among other things, parliament endorses the candidacy of the country's President. If the nomination is approved by a two-thirds majority, the candidacy is considered the only one and is submitted to a nationwide referendum. We oppose this practice, but that is what the current Constitution calls for.

This time the decree 'from on high' was that the candidacy of the President was to be supported not by a two-thirds majority but by *all* members of the People's Assembly as a sign of national consensus. For the first time, the regime began to openly negotiate with the opposition before the elections.

We were asked whether our candidates would vote in support of the

current head of state should they win seats in parliament. We replied that the candidate contending for presidency should set forth his programme, and if it proved patriotic and anti-imperialist and was consonant with the interests of the people, our party would not refuse to discuss the matter of supporting the nominee. However, firm promises and guarantees were demanded from us. We could not accept these terms because that would have been unprincipled. A similar stand was taken by other opposition forces, first and foremost the Moslem Brothers and the Wafdists.

Several days before the elections rumours began to circulate and mount to the effect that the Brothers were getting ready for violent action. Some 1,200 members of this organisation were arrested. Then the governing bureau of the Moslem Brothers submitted a petition to the authorities accepting their demands. Wafd held out longer, but eventually surrendered too. We were left alone.

Subsequently the ruling party actually allied itself with the Moslem Brothers. First, they are regarded as a particularly effective obstacle to 'communist infiltration'. Second, the option of joining forces with the moderate Islamic elements against the extremists was chosen. Third, from the viewpoint of security, it is better for a clandestine organisation to come out into the open. Finally, the regime benefits from the fact that many champions of democracy in Egypt — those among the left and liberal quarters, the Coptic minority and the secularised sections — fear a fundamentalist Moslem government so much that they are ready to give up both elections and democracy as such.

The blow proved to be spearheaded against our party. The meanest and dirtiest methods were used — arbitrary action by the police, arrests and physical attacks on NPUP candidates. We were, in fact, barred from scoring successfully in the elections which were blatantly rigged. More than 14 million voters were registered notwithstanding the fact that four million of them were émigrés. Besides, the lists featured about two million people no longer living. Actually, no more than one-third of the electorate really voted. Millions of blank ballots were added to the votes cast in favour of the ruling party. Representatives of the opposition were forcibly removed from the polls to keep them from preventing abuses.

Ballots cast for the NPUP were deliberately rendered invalid. Every voter was to make a mark against the name of the organisation for whose candidate he was voting. A second mark added to it annulled the ballot. Ballots with two marks totalled nearly 500,000, most of them cast for our party.

Even in these conditions Khaled Mohieddin, NPUP General Secretary, won 53,000 votes — enough to elect five, not one candidate to the People's Assembly. He was *officially* announced winner because his victory in his electoral district was beyond dispute. Displeasure was expressed 'from on high', and the results of the voting were ordered to be revised. The procedure was as follows: a ballot box was emptied and the votes were counted — 150 for Khaled Mohieddin and 50 for his rival — but two for the former and 198 for the latter were placed on the official record. Any objections were cut short by a tirade about how inadmissible it was to question the honesty and impartiality of officials in whom such great

powers were vested. Machinations of this sort deprived our party leader of his seat in parliament.

There is no doubt that the elections were rigged. But we should not ignore our own shortcomings either. Not everything went the way we wanted during the election campaign, although many difficulties were due to circumstances beyond our control. Take the shortage of financial resources. In this field, the NPUP cannot compete with the ruling party which can dip freely into the nation's treasury or with the Moslem groups which are lavishly funded from abroad.

Our opposition to these groups' slogans which had great appeal to the masses also took its toll. Many regarded the NPUP motto — Religion is for God, the Homeland is for All — as blasphemous. In a surprising development, we also lost the Christian vote: the Coptic Church took an unprecedented step by threatening with excommunication those of its members who would support us. In several electoral districts we even had to withdraw the candidacies of Christians from the NPUP ticket to protect them from ostracism on the part of their relatives and friends.

We are also concerned over the longer-term consequences of the elections. The strong-arm tactics of the authorities and the shameless rigging are provoking among large sections of the people a feeling of disillusionment with the electoral, parliamentary system. If one succumbs to this attitude and rejects the entire system as useless, one needs an alternative that is responsible and not foolhardy.

We see our foremost task at the present stage in organising the masses and enhancing their consciousness and political activity. This is what the NPUP policy of alliances is aimed at. The network of such alliances which is emerging in Egypt is ramified but volatile. We disagree with those who claim that there are four 'aces' in the political game now being played — the ruling regime, the right-wing bourgeois Wafd Party, the Islamic groups and the army — and that in order not to lose one should bet on one of them even though all of them are controlled by the United States.

Our approach is different. We hold that we should neither choose one of these forces nor reject them all out of hand, ruling out the possibility of temporary and relative alliances over this or that issue so as to retain and build up our own influence. For example, we are aligning ourselves with the Wafdists on the issue of democracy and political liberties; together with Islamic currents, we uphold human rights because both their supporters and our supporters are jailed and tortured. Joint action can take different forms and be pursued on the basis of cooperation within different mass organisations — committees for peace, committees to defend the Palestinian Revolution, committees of support for the state sector, peasant, women's, student associations and the like. Invariably, our goal remains to enhance the masses' level of organisation, rally them together and prepare the ground for radical change.

The Pope In Poland

The Austrian press gave broad coverage to Pope John Paul II's third visit to Poland. What do the Polish Communists think about that visit?

Peter Weiss, Austria

IN answering this question, it is important to give at least a brief outline of the PUWP's approach to relations between the socialist state and the Catholic Church and the mass of believers, who constitute a majority of Polish society. In this context, one can see that the Pope's visit is fully in line with the party's policy.

The PUWP's strategic goal is to help shape up conditions for the believers' tangible contribution to building socialism so that they should not have to make the moral choice between socialism and religion. This goal is an essential aspect of the policy of national concord formulated by the Ninth (Extraordinary) PUWP Congress in 1981 and concretised in the resolutions of the 10th PUWP Congress in 1986 and it rests on three premises.

In ideology, a discussion is planned on the basic aspects of world outlook between the party with its Marxist-Leninist platform and the church with its idealistic doctrine. What is at issue in the *political sphere* is strict respect for the principle of the separation of church and secular state, real freedom of religious beliefs with due respect, on the part of the church, for the institutional and legal foundations of the republic, and renunciation of the use of religious sentiments and church institutions against the socialist state. Finally, the PUWP's efforts in the *social sphere* are directed at having the church contribute constructively and on a regular basis to the solution of humanitarian problems, such as the saving of humanity from nuclear catastrophe, and also to establishing a healthy moral climate in society, fostering in people respect for the citizen's rights and duties, and fighting negative phenomena, like drunkenness.

The Pope paid his visit from June 8 to 14 at the joint invitation of the state authorities of the republic and the Episcopate of the Polish Catholic Church. The Pontiff's visit became fresh proof of the normalisation of the socio-political situation and of the practical exercise of one of the basic human rights, freedom of conscience, in Poland. The isolated attempts to organise anti-socialist actions in the course of the visit could not disprove this fact. They were marginal anyway, although anti-Communist centres in the West sought to inflate them out of all proportion.

The aspects of the visit which reflected the interest of the Vatican and personally the Pope in safeguarding European and world peace and his anti-war position had special significance. They were highlighted when he went out to the site of the former Nazi concentration camp Maidanek and to the Westerplatte area, where the first shots of World War II had been fired. The Pope's statements on the importance of work as the chief source of the people's well-being and on the role of man as the principal subject of social progress were in concert with the ideas embraced by our state.

Pope John Paul's visit and his talks with Wojciech Jaruzelski, Chairman of Poland's Council of State, can be viewed as reaffirming the possibility of and need for dialogue between diverse political forces in pursuance of the supreme human and patriotic values. That dialogue was conducted, of course, without obscuring the differences between the ideological foundations and class-based approaches of the Polish socialist state and those of the Vatican.

Wojciech Jaruzelski said in his statement upon the end of the Pope's visit, inter alia: "Religion and faith coexist in the hearts of many millions of Poles with a commitment to the social values of socialism. All the goodwill intentions without exception can be and must be reconciled on the common ground of the supreme interests of the homeland." This, essentially, is our view of Pope John Paul's third visit to Poland.

Jerzy Waszczuk
PUWP representative on *WMR*

***WMR* Ties**

A *WMR* delegation attended the Ninth Congress of the Tunisian Communist Party.

★ ★ ★

While in Prague, Rigoberto Padilla Rush, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Honduras, called at the *WMR* offices and discussed with the staff ways of further promoting the ties between the Communist Party of Honduras and the journal.

★ ★ ★

Muhammed Ibrahim Nugud, CC General Secretary, the Sudanese Communist Party, called at the *WMR* offices. Addressing the Editorial Council, he outlined the situation in his country, the alignment of political forces and the Communists' work for the consistent democratisation of the social life and the solution of difficult problems facing the people. Issues of further cooperation between the Sudanese Communist Party and *WMR* were discussed.

★ ★ ★

WMR delegations attended annual festivals of the following newspapers: *Neues Deutschland*, organ of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, in Berlin; *Trybuna Ludu*, newspaper of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, in Warsaw; *Mundo Obrero*, organ of the Communist Party of Spain, in Madrid; and *Avant*, newspaper of the Party of Communists of Catalonia, in Barcelona.

the book scene

Voice of Reason, Voice of Decency

Europe on the Threshold of the Third Millennium. For Peace, Nature and Man, Issue I, The Peace Book, Khudozhestvennaya Literatura Publishers (Moscow) and Brückenverlag (Düsseldorf), 1986, 392 pp.*

IF it isn't yet a rarity, it is bound to become one, for it is extraordinary in both content and design. Soviet and West German authors worked on it for two years at the request of the Soviet Committee for European Security and Cooperation and the Rhine-Westphalia Foreign Society (Dortmund, FRG) in pursuance of the recommendations of the Helsinki Final Act.

The book is not the first of its kind: its forerunners were the five-volume *European Poetry* and the anthology *Europe: Twentieth Century*, put out in the USSR in 1977 and in 1980, respectively; they were acknowledged by readers as early birds of the post-Helsinki European publications project.

Now lovers of beauty have another book; I say it is a thing of beauty because it is generously illustrated with old engravings and etchings. The book offers lofty ideas and heartfelt reflections, fine aspirations and great ideals by a constellation of notable writers, scholars, politicians, journalists and religious leaders past and present, addressing themselves to the fate of mankind and its age-old aspirations.

Out of the remote past, we hear condemnations of war, impassioned pleas for peace, and the voices of humanists, who had striven in vain to halt bloodshed.

Erasmus of Rotterdam argued in his famous treatise, *The Complaints of Peace*, that there was nothing glorious about war. In his view, the greatest honours should be bestowed upon those who avert war, those who restore peace with wise counsel and those who are doing their utmost to make large armies and stockpiles of arms redundant.

English philosopher Thomas Hobbes said in his day that the paramount law of Nature was for people to seek and pursue peace.

"Lay down arms and don the garb of peace," urged Jan Amos Komensky (Comenius), Czech philosopher and educationalist. His words, "We must tirelessly look for ways of supplanting humanity for inhumanity," cited in this book (p. 43), are wholly relevant today.

English natural scientist Joseph Priestley held that the succeeding generations would revise the traditional view of war; when people learn to think a little more, he wrote, they will resort to means other than the sword

*The book was put out in Russian and German simultaneously: *Europa an der Schwelle des 3. Jahrtausends. Gedanken zum Frieden und zur Erhaltung der Umwelt des Menschen. Erhaltung des Friedens*, Moskau, Chudoshestwennaja literatura, Brückenverlag, Düsseldorf, 1986.

to settle their differences. His compatriot Jeremy Bentham urged people to banish the fear that breeds mistrust (which, incidentally, NATO strategists are now trying to perpetuate through the 'nuclear deterrence' doctrine). The fear that other nations will deceive us, and the conviction that other brains are shrewder and other hearts less noble, are signs of our weakness, he said.

Immanuel Kant called for eternal peace and conjectured as to the objective law-governed phenomena bringing about human understanding and an inevitable peaceful alliance of all peoples in the future.

Europe's principal interest is peace, said a French sixteenth-seventeenth century statesman, Maximilien de Bethune (Duc de Sully). "It is amazing that Europe with its highly civilised nations still lives by barbarian and irrational principles," he wrote. "What is the substance of its wise policy if not eternal squabbles? Wars keep breaking out, now here now there. It seems . . . that we make peace only in order to start new wars!" A truly wise policy, said Victor Hugo, should bring nearer the day when "markets open to trade and minds open to ideas will be the only battlefields".

That was how the idea of world peace — an anti-militarist humanitarian idea — came into the world. The classics of Marxism-Leninism embraced and expounded it, turning a utopia into scientific theory and an elusive ideal into a realistic goal. They forcefully demonstrated the direct relationship between the struggle against war of conquest and the struggle for socialism, for the vital goals of the working class. " . . . The alliance of the working classes of all countries will ultimately kill war,"¹ we read in an address of the First International. Since that time the working class and communist movement has always been involved in actions for peace.

After the 1917 Great October Socialist Revolution, which Lenin characterised as the first victory in the struggle to abolish war,² he pointed to the need to draw up a foreign policy programme specially for *Europe*.³ The CPSU and the Soviet government have always put the emphasis on European affairs in their foreign policy. The new edition of the CPSU Programme notes, inter alia, that the Party attaches much importance to promoting peaceful good-neighbourliness and cooperation among European states. This point was also made in Mikhail Gorbachov's Statement of January 15, 1986, and in the Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress.

The chain of time is unbreakable. The cause of reason and humanism was carried on by Mikhail Sholokov, Alexander Fadeyev, Konstantin Simonov, Leonid Leonov, Chinghis Aitmatov, Yuri Bondarev, Victor Astafiev, Alexander Tvardovsky, Andrei Voznesensky, Rasul Gamzatov, Yevgeny Velikhov, Yevgeny Chazov and other Soviet writers and scientists; the FRG is represented in the book by Günter Grass, Albert Schweitzer, Karl Jaspers, Heinrich Böll, Martin Niemöller, Willy Brandt, Dieter Lattmann, Herbert Wehner, Gert Bastian, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Erich Kästner and Helmut Schmidt. The book also cites scholars and cultural figures from other European countries, the USA and Canada. Though some of the authors are represented by abstracts from their works or brief quotations (the book is very compact), the reader is given a good idea of the artistic, literary and political thought directed to

finding the way to world peace, international security and to upholding the paramount human right to life without wars and weapons.

The book is a blend of past and present intellectual experience. The cover shows Rodin's Thinker, the artistic emblem of the publication, as it were. The reader perceives him as Europe pondering its past, present and future, the lessons of history, the bitter experiences, the chances it had, its hopes and its role in deciding the fate of the world. Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell said in their famed Manifesto, cited in the book: "We have to learn to think in a new way. We have to learn to ask ourselves, not what steps can be taken to give military victory to whatever group we prefer, for there no longer are such steps; the question we have to ask ourselves is: What steps can be taken to prevent a military contest of which the issue must be disastrous to all parties?" (p. 353).

The authors consider war an imperfect and criminal means of settling differences between states in the nuclear age, and offer various ways of ensuring dependably the peaceful coexistence of nations. Searching for these ways, they themselves learn to think in a new way and set an example for others. They also give the reader rich food for thought. One thought generates another, and this is another merit of the book.

The title of the first part of the book is *Before It Is Too Late*. The overriding idea is that Man should promptly wake up to the dangers and problems of today's world and find ways to survival. Remember the words of one of Dostoyevsky's characters: "Just five minutes! I was just five minutes late!" Humanity cannot afford being even one minute late in the effort to avert world catastrophe. The new political thinking has to hew its way forward through a logjam of prejudice, suspicion and hostility, across barriers of hidebound pre-nuclear concepts of war and peace, of 'thinking the unthinkable'. Chinghiz Aitmatov, whose pertinent and impassioned article opens the book, believes that nuclear weapons have laid siege to reason. "Has insanity prevailed over reason?" the writer asks, and replies "I think that the creative resources of reason can be compared only to the energy resources of the Sun. The old adage that beauty will save the world rings sublime, but I would like to add that reason will nevertheless have the last say. Just look: now that humanity as a whole is on the move and that the peoples are fighting for peace and against the nuclear bomb and the arms race, the collective reason of our age is being converted in the 'reactor' of struggle and in the 'accelerator' of the mass media into a public consciousness without precedent. The years of struggle for peace and against thermonuclear catastrophe are eroding the old patterns of military thinking which evolved over the ages, and are teaching people a philosophy of global survival . . ." (pp. 16-17).

Many ideas and projects voiced in the book epitomise the new nuclear-age political thinking. Social Democratic politician Egon Bahr, for instance, expounds provocative ideas of East-West partnership in security. The authors offer mature and well-argued criticism of the faults of militarist thinking, the pre-nuclear concepts of strength and nuclear deterrence, the plans to militarise space, etc.

Marxist-Leninists have always rejected the metaphysical predictions of the split of human civilisation into two absolutely isolated and

irreconcilable currents of history. Socialism and capitalism are poles apart but this does not mean that they have no common interests or cannot work out common approaches to various problems, primarily when it comes to safeguarding peace and protecting the environment. The nuclear age lends special force and urgency to Lenin's view that common human values have priority over the objectives of this or that class. This view, indeed, runs right through the book.

It is often said Europe should speak for itself. It is learning to do just that, to take a common approach to what is paramount, to war and peace. And it is doing so, bridging the political, military, economic, ideological and humanitarian divides. This is reflected in the present book. Although it contains a good deal of polemics and debate, that is nothing to worry about because the new political thinking does not rule out dissent and competition of ideas. It allows for differences and an honest championing of one's convictions, and offers scope for a search for common ground, approximation of views and sensible compromise. That spokesmen for nations which were locked in battle in the most gory military conflict, unleashed by Nazism, found quite a few points of contact is proof that the opportunities for understanding are boundless if there is goodwill.

The authors forcefully demonstrate that understanding and concord have a great future. The reader is bound to agree with the editors that the prose, verse and humanitarian élan of the German and Soviet authors have torn down stereotypes and prejudices, and dampened mutual recriminations. True, it is far harder to find a common language in politics — but nothing is impossible in the quest for such a lofty goal as world peace.

Many of the ideas set forth in the book help people realise their interdependence, put aside trifling and transient differences, and come to view themselves as a close-knit human family, which alone can evade disaster.

In February 1987, when the forum For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Humanity was taking place in Moscow, the editors presented a copy of the book to Mikhail Gorbachov. Thanking them for the gift, he said: "I do not think that differences and contradictions should be ignored or thorny issues smoothed over. But I think that one should put priorities and the hierarchy of values in the right perspective and direct one's thoughts primarily at what unites the peoples and nations, who make up the human race, in their desire for a nuclear-free and non-violent world. This is what makes your joint work so valuable."⁴ The reader will most probably agree with this view. The book is the first of a planned trilogy, with the next two volumes being devoted to Nature and Man. The useful work will be continued, helping Europeans who want to be good neighbours and crave for accord, to a better understanding of one another and to closer relations.

Vladlen Kuznetsov
Soviet writer on international
affairs

¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 193.

² V.I Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 56.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 42, pp. 397-398

⁴ *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, February 25, 1987.

Like A Malignant Tumour

A Survey of Books on Southern African Problems Published in Great Britain, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States*

FOR all the different approaches to the tight knot of Southern African problems, most researchers agree on one important thing: they blame the apartheid regime for one of the most protracted and acute conflicts in today's world, a conflict that has long transcended the boundaries of the region. It affects at least ten countries with a combined population of more than 90 million.

The marked increase in the aggressiveness of Pretoria is connected with the upsurge of the liberation struggle, with the deteriorating structural crisis of the apartheid system, accompanied by the change in the regional balance of forces, and with the growing international isolation of the racists. Two major events of the mid-1970s left a particularly strong imprint on the situation in Southern Africa — the collapse of Portuguese colonial rule which came as a complete surprise for Pretoria, and the student unrest in South Africa in the summer of 1976. The June 16 uprising in Soweto triggered a world-wide wave of protest against the crimes of the racists.

Finding it impossible to continue the apartheid policy as it had been pursued since the rise of the National Party to power in 1948, the Afrikaner ruling élite devised a new doctrine of 'survival' for the white minority. Gavin Cawthra, a South African researcher, says in his book that "the resurgence of mass political struggle in South Africa and the fundamental shift in the regional balance of power were catalysts that led the apartheid regime to adopt a 'National Security Doctrine'. At the time, this doctrine was articulated as a 'total strategy' to deal with what was perceived to be a 'total onslaught' against the white regime." (I, 23).

This doctrine is aimed at preserving the dominant position of South

*I. Gavin Cawthra, *Brutal Force. The Apartheid War Machine*, International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, London, 1986, 319 pp.

II. William J. Pomeroy, *Apartheid, Imperialism and African Freedom*, International Publishers, New York, 1986, 259 pp.

III. *Destructive Engagement. Southern Africa at War*. Ed. by Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1986, 378 pp.

IV. *Mission to South Africa. The Commonwealth Report*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1986, 176 pp.

V. Joseph Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours. Apartheid Power in Southern Africa*, London, Catholic Institute for International Relations, James Currey Ltd., Indiana University Press, 1986, 368 pp.

All references in the text include the Roman numeral to indicate the source listed above, followed by the number of the page. — Ed.

Africa in the region. Domestically, the objective is to expand the social and racial support base of the regime through the encouragement of bourgeois and pro-bourgeois elements among the African population. The 'reforms' instituted within this framework are designed to create a semblance of a 'normal' capitalist country where racial divisions would not coincide so blatantly with the partition into different classes.

As Gavin Cawthra demonstrates in his monograph which is extremely rich in facts, the architects of 'total strategy' believed that the more military strikes were delivered against neighbouring countries, the stronger South Africa would appear and the more difficult it would be for the liberation movements to wage their struggle.

As this policy got under-way, the society of the white minority became increasingly militarised. "Communities, industries, farms and schools came under a 'total strategy' of defense, affecting the lives of all whites," writes William Pomeroy, the London correspondent of the US communist newspaper *People's Daily World* (II, 137). "The spectacle of white wives and daughters attending target practice sessions and classes on care and use of the side-arm and shotgun, instead of afternoon teas, had become Common" (ibid.).

In fiscal 1985/1986 Pretoria's military spending reached 4,274 million rands¹ — almost 100 times the 1960 level. These figures are cited in *Destructive Engagement* (see III, 176). The book was written by well-known fighters against apartheid, journalists, scholars and civic activists from South Africa, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Kenya, the United States and Great Britain. Facts quoted in the book show how the racists have launched a large-scale effort to modernise their armed forces in preparation for a protracted war. Emphasis is placed on the creation of strike forces for surprise attacks on neighbouring countries, for sabotage and terrorism deep in the 'enemy' rear. The book notes that the scope of aggressive acts has broadened considerably and now includes aerial bombing, helicopter raids, infiltration of saboteurs into key economic projects, the setting up of a chain of camps for the training of terrorists along South Africa's northern borders, etc.

One important merit of this collective monograph is that it provides documentary evidence that the counter-revolutionary gangs which now operate in Angola and Mozambique were initially formed by the Portuguese and Rhodesian security services and were later picked up by Pretoria and put on the South African payroll. But the strings used to manipulate these puppets can be traced further. William Pomeroy quotes Samora Machel, Mozambique's President who died tragically in an air crash which it is alleged was engineered by South African intelligence. Shortly before his death he said: "The real architects of the conspiracy against Mozambique are based in certain West European capitals" (II, 51). On the same page, the author recalls the words of Marcelino dos Santos, now President of Frelimo: "Our enemy is called imperialism and in this part of the world its spearhead is South Africa."

In analysing the situation in South Africa and its prospects, one can hardly ignore the fact that the military holds key positions in the government apparatus, including the State Security Council which shapes

the country's domestic and foreign policies. This is underlined by Professor Robert Rotberg of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in *South Africa and Its Neighbors*.² It is noted in the book that "since the early 1980s . . . military thinking and military methods have become more central than ever before to the thinking of the upper echelons of South Africa's bureaucracy."

Some bourgeois researchers allege that certain elements of South Africa's ruling élite, particularly the military, act 'contrary' to the policy of the government. But if one recalls the authoritarian structure of government in the country of apartheid, these allegations sound as patent disinformation. They would have us believe that there are 'doves' and 'hawks' in a system wholly oriented on preserving white supremacy at any cost. For example, the well-known South African political scientist Deon Geldenhuys tried to show in one of his articles that the existence of two approaches to foreign policy planning often led to clashes of interest and that this was reflected in various practical steps taken by the government.³ True, he later admitted that this division was not really substantive because "most important in the foreign policy field are the foreign ministry and the military".⁴

As the principal counter-revolutionary force of today's South Africa, the military now itself shapes government policy, and even if some of its moves appear unusual, they reflect the tactics of the regime at the moment.

But obviously, for all its power (by the mid-1980s South Africa joined the world's top ten arms manufacturers, and its army is superior in strength and equipment to the combined defence capabilities of all its neighbours),⁵ this force would have been unable to go it alone, to conduct an openly terrorist course in the region without outside support. South Africa is above all an agent of international imperialism.

Acting on a Commonwealth Conference decision, a fact-finding mission consisting of prominent civic activists and political leaders from Australia, Nigeria, Great Britain, India, Tanzania, Canada and Barbados went to the region in 1986. In the report they published in the autumn (*Mission to South Africa*) they have concluded unanimously that the apartheid regime's deliberate policy of destabilisation features not only subversion but also economic blackmail of the neighbouring countries. Despite its protestations of outrage at the sanctions against it and claims that they have never produced the desired result, Pretoria "not only believes in the principle of sanctions but has consistently applied them to its neighbours" (IV, 127)

"Having failed to maintain a colonial fortress in southern Africa," William Pomeroy writes, "western powers hoped that South Africa could extend itself as the dominant power in the region and accomplish economically what could not be done militarily" (II, 43). The racists strive to get a hold on the neighbouring countries by advancing the ideas of a "Southern African economic community", "constellation of Southern African states" and the like — and not so much because they regard themselves as "the natural inheritors of the British Empire" (I, 138) as because the regime feels the unlimited support of the imperialist powers.

After delivering a series of brutal military strikes and staging acts of

economic sabotage, the racists usually put the sword aside and hold forth an olive branch in an effort to attain the 'total strategy' goals. This was the trick Pretoria used to conclude, in the mid-1980s, agreements with some of its neighbours.

One wonders if it is at all possible to reach any agreement with the terrorist regime of apartheid — something into which the Frontline States are being prodded by the Western powers, above all the United States. The authors of the report conclude that South Africa's neighbours have every reason to doubt Pretoria's promises — not only because, from the very outset, it violated the accords it has signed, giving the region further proof "that it could not be trusted to honour even solemn Treaty obligations", but also because its 'total strategy' has taken a toll of many thousands of innocent lives and left about one million Africans homeless (see V, 127, 129).

In his book *Beggar Your Neighbours* which has been published simultaneously in the United States and Great Britain, the British journalist Joseph Hanlon presents a detailed list of the crimes committed by the Pretoria regime in the region. Since 1980 South Africa has:

- invaded three capitals (Lesotho, Botswana and Mozambique) and four other countries (Angola, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zambia);
- tried to assassinate two prime ministers (Lesotho and Zimbabwe);
- disrupted the oil supplies to six countries (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe); and
- attacked the railways providing the normal import and export routes of seven countries (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe). (See V, I).

As a result, more than 100,000 people were killed, most of them starved to death in Mozambique where South African-financed rebel activity prevented drought relief. "Famine was used as a weapon of war," Hanlon stressed (*ibid.*).

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) which unites the Frontline States has said in a memorandum that from 1980 to 1984 South African aggression cost them ten billion dollars. But the authors of the paper hold that even this huge sum does not reflect the true scope of the losses: "SADCC has only costed bricks and mortar, steel and machinery. There is no price for blood, no cost that can be assigned to the thousands who have died as a result of actions instigated and supported by apartheid." (Quoted in V, 270).

Those following Ronald Reagan's scheme claim that 'confidence-building' between South Africa and the United States is to encourage an evolutionary demise of the apartheid system and South Africa's smooth switch to the 'normal' capitalist track. As the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies said in one of its publications, "Washington's policy of 'constructive engagement' with South Africa was regional position, deriving from the nation's relative economic and military self-sufficiency, limits the effectiveness of such pressures as economic sanctions or arms embargoes".⁶

One might note that Washington's strategists made similar blunders in their assessment of the situation in the past, too. Suffice it to recall the 1969

Kissinger Memorandum which linked US policy goals to the belief that the white regimes in South Africa, Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique were absolutely stable and that nothing would threaten them in the foreseeable future. "The blacks have no chance of winning the political rights they want by force," the memo said. In conclusion, Kissinger "ruled out a black victory at any stage." (Quoted in II, 32, 33).

The assumption was that the new course of the Reagan administration would yield results as early as late 1982, above all on the question of Namibia in which the United States advocated 'linking' Namibian independence to the presence of Cuban troops in Angola.

William Minter, the author of 'US/SA in the Reagan Era', an article in the *Destructive Engagement* collection, says that the question of 'linkage' was raised by those who considered it necessary to incorporate Southern Africa into the neoglobalist scheme of US policy. These people included not only right-wing American conservatives such as Senator Jesse Helms but also 'moderates' such as Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (see III, 292).

Pretoria is perfectly satisfied with this White House policy which enables it, first, to drag its feet indefinitely in the settlement of the Namibian crisis and, second, to receive the latest weapons the United States sends to the UNITA bandits and in this way to evade the arms embargo.

The political declaration adopted at the September 1986 non-aligned summit in Harare stresses that the US moves against Angola and assistance to racist South Africa are not only "in contravention of established principles of international law" but also constitute "an act of aggression against the Organisation of African Unity and the entire Movement of Non-Aligned Countries".

US South African policy is anything but 'constructive'. Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, authors and editors of *Destructive Engagement*, hold that this policy has introduced the danger of a global nuclear conflict into a region which craves nothing more than peace and development. "Its sole success has been in allying [the United States] with Pretoria against the region" (III, xix). Joseph Hanlon also points to contradictions in US policy: "Sanctions are right for Nicaragua or Poland, but not South Africa. The MPLA should be pressed to include UNITA in the government, but no pressure should be put on white South Africa to include the ANC in the government" (V, 24).

But Washington has no intention of changing its Southern African policy — witness the resumption of US military assistance to UNITA; the opening of Angolan and Mozambiquan counter-revolutionary missions in Washington, Paris and Lisbon; the access these groups have received to the bourgeois mass media; and the visits of counter-revolutionary chieftains to Western capitals, including their reception at the top level and speeches in parliaments.

Numerous facts indicate that NATO countries are helping the racist regime in the development of nuclear weapons. "Why do they do this when they know of the instability and desperation of the apartheid regime?" asks Abdul Samad Minty, leader of the World Campaign Against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa. He continues: "Is it to enable

South Africa to intimidate and blackmail African states in the region to submit to the will of the apartheid regime? In the context of overall Western security is it intended that South Africa should provide a nuclear 'umbrella' in the southern hemisphere? Moreover, can the threat of an apartheid bomb be used to persuade the world, at a future date, not to impose effective sanctions or support the African liberation struggle, for fear that it may provoke a deadly form of retaliation by an increasingly desperate regime?" (III, 219-220).

The history of independent Africa has revealed what may be described as a natural law: the more radical the economic and political course of an independent country, the more virulent the attacks against it on the part of old and new colonial predators. Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania and dean of African politics, emphasises that "the real offence of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe — and any other countries within reach of South African power — is their existence as proudly independent African states. As such they have the temerity to back up the demand of the Organisation of African Unity for an end to apartheid. They dare to demand world action against the cancer of apartheid and to succour, those who flee from its persecutions" (III, xi).

Most of the authors mentioned in this survey agree that despite its acts of aggression against the neighbouring countries, the racist regime has failed — and, objectively, will fail — to secure a single one of its goals. What Pretoria presents as the success of its 'total strategy' threatens to become a Pyrrhic victory in the long run or even sooner.

The value of the books covered in this survey lies not only in their analysis of the causes underlying the crisis in Southern Africa. Viewed from a broader angle, the conclusions made by the authors reflect an understanding that is growing among various sections of international public opinion, including the academic community — that it is necessary to strengthen the common democratic front in the struggle against the criminal alliance of South African racism and world imperialism.

Boris Asoyan

¹ One rand equals \$0.46. — Ed.

² Robert J. Rotberg, Henry S. Bienen, Robert Legvold, Gavin G. Maasdorp, *South Africa and Its Neighbours. Regional Security and Self-Interest*, World Peace Foundation, Lexington, Mass., Toronto, 1985, p. 4.

³ See Deon Geldenhuys, 'The Destabilisation Controversy: An Analysis of a High Risk Foreign Policy Option for South Africa' in *The South African Journal of Political Science*, December 1982, Vol. 9, No. 2.

⁴ Deon Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African Foreign Policy Making*, Macmillan South Africa, Johannesburg, 1984, p. 236.

⁵ Roger Omond, *The Apartheid Handbook*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1985, p. 133. For a review of the book, see *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.

⁶ H. Kitchen and M. Clough, *The United States and South Africa: Realities and Red Herrings*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, 1984, p. 3.

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