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November 1989
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THE REKINDLING OF OCTOBER

Volodia TEITELBOIM

General Secretary, Communist Party of Chile (PCCh)

In the light of new world realities—the need to solve dangerous global problems and to assure a stable future for humanity—how do Communists assess the importance of the Great October Socialist Revolution, its experience and its lessons? What are the essence and dynamics of social changes today? The leader of the Chilean Communists replied to these and other questions relating to the 72nd anniversary of October.

TOWARDS UNIVERSAL DEMOCRACY

For me, and obviously for the many Communists who are as old as the revolution, time changes its image. The perceptions of our youth, which coincided with the second decade of Soviet power, and today's, when its 72nd anniversary is being marked (and we are now also over 70), differ a lot. And this is natural—everything changes.

In our youthful years we saw October as an epoch-making event of world history, because it was not simply the storming of the Winter Palace—yet another political coup—but a projection—and I still adhere to this position—in time and space. The echoes of the October Revolution spread across the world, most communist parties emerged under its impact, and politics and social life underwent profound change. To us, enchanted by this event, it seemed that the *pre-history of mankind was ending, that a cardinal step had been made towards the beginning of its true history*. We realised and intuitively sensed that the new tendency was irreversible and that the only path for all peoples to take was to repeat October literally, independently of time or the specifics of the various countries and continents.

An attempt to establish Soviets in Chile was made in 1932. I was then 16. Today, of course, it is simpler to discern a mechanical imitation in it, a transplantation of schemes far removed from our national reality. But it corresponded to the spirit of the times, the atmosphere in which the idea lived: revolution would embrace the entire world, it was a continuing process. Even Lenin thought in 1917 that the world revolution would not be too long in coming. And although the situation in 1932 proved different, the success of October was captivating and irresistible. For it had brought about direct democracy and government by the millions. Nothing of the sort had ever happened in social life before.

But later Stalinism checked the democratic impulses of October for many years and this turned into a tragedy for the peoples of the USSR and all communist parties. They fell under the shadow of fatal opponents of

democracy acting on their own behalf against freedom. Hence the dramatic situation which many communist parties are still living through. I hope, though, that the day will come when our movement will be able to rid itself completely of the damage caused by Stalin's "procrustean" dictates, absolute ignoring of the national specifics of revolutions and betrayal of the ideals of freedom and construction. We must return to the democratic origins of October and to the humanistic content of Marxism.

Yes, it was a leap in the spiritual evolution of mankind and at the same time a sequel to the tradition associated not only with the ideals propagated by the enlighteners or utopists, but also with the deeper roots of the humanistic aspirations of man embodied in the world's religions. Is not the appeal of Christianity its message of nonviolence, peace, and mutual respect? In its early stages did it not bring a liberatory spirit in the form of primitive communism? Is October not imbued with these aspirations? Yet it is important to recognise that democracy on the eve of the 21st century cannot be bourgeois or proletarian, *but must be universal and unrestricted*. Freedom is precious to all.

October is sometimes described as an historical aberration or, on the contrary, that it was brought about by the need for a structural renovation of the world. I am convinced that the great revolution was no accident: had it not taken place in 1917, it would somehow have occurred later, though under different conditions and in other forms, because social development, the evolutionary march of society, periodically needs profound changes. Of course, they are unlikely to recur in the form of October any longer—it was engendered by a totality of certain circumstances. But the time of qualitative transformations of the world is not yet over, although the place and methods of their accomplishment are non-static, mobile.

Once Europe was an area in ferment. Today, as exemplified by Venezuelan developments or the critical situation in Argentina or Peru, the focus has shifted to Latin America, where millions of people have lost any hope of

acquiring the basics for a normal human life: food, shelter, health, leisure. But here, as everywhere, the revolution, whatever its specific national garb, must go *hand in hand with the broadest democracy*. This is perhaps the common trait of all present-day revolutionary practice. I do not share the opinion of those who place the emphasis on a minority, no matter how great its resolve.

It is also clear that the "right" of a natural maker of the destinies of revolution is neither a monopoly nor a privilege of one party. It is time to reject the habit of claiming that nobody but the Communists can lead the struggle for radical change. Now we see forces marching in the vanguard of the popular masses that want to achieve this not in words but *through daily practical action*. Witness the two victorious revolutions in Latin America—in Cuba and Nicaragua. Moreover, in Nicaragua the organisation styling itself communist opposed the actions of the FSLN.

In the course of social development, the perceptions of the revolutionary process, of its aims and forces change. But it should never be identified with dictatorship, with a curtailment of the previous freedoms and gains, with Pol Pot-style excesses, but only with the measures that favour the interests of real human beings, their needs and hopes. We must also be aware that reactionaries and conservatives will not accept even peaceful, nonviolent forms of social progress. Remember Chile, where after the electoral victory of the popular majority, who expressed their wish to restrict the minority's privileges, there came a period of fascist obscurantism, of a total onslaught on democracy. The Communists took the lead in its defence. These lessons of history cannot be forgotten. The experience of struggle by our party shows that its destinies are *inseparable from democracy, which in turn is inseparable from the renewal of society*.

Both are interlinked: a full democracy is unachievable without major social changes which, in turn, are impossible without greater freedom. But in order to safeguard against deformations of the revolution, its tragic deviations or the crimes committed in the name of lofty ideals and aims, strict democratic control over power and the removal of the bureaucracy from it are necessary. For it is the bureaucracy who place social interests at the service of their own, corporatist interests, thus giving rise to critical situations. Collective control, people's government, and a diversity of approaches and viewpoints are what we really need.

I regard this as the essence of new thinking. Its assimilation by the masses is a guarantee of the extension of real democracy, of its conversion into a universal fact. True, it is the product of Western culture, a contradictory product which grew on slavery and which for a long time failed to penetrate the Eastern tyrannies where ideas on the purpose of human life, its values and the substance of politics differed sharply from those in the West.

Today, the tendency towards the universalisation of democracy, although not yet clearly visible everywhere, is assuring global and irreversible significance. This is now also characteristic of the socialist states, but it should have existed from the very beginning: the ultimate aim of socialism is the withering away of the state, the management not of people, but of things, and the transition to communist self-government. And such a transition presupposes a high degree of political culture and a profound social knowledge because people will be drawn to an active role in the discussion, adoption and implementation of decisions on which their fate and the fate of society depend.

Perestroika in the Soviet Union is a school for mastering the culture of communication, a big step forward in world democratic development. The people seem to be actively involving themselves as never before in determining social practice. But the unresolved problem of the cadres—state and party, brought up in the spirit of old thinking—still remains. What adds to the difficulties is that problems have been accumulating for too long and that the possibilities of a democratic search for ways to overcome them, which requires a certain time and art, have only recently appeared.

CULTURE AND POLITICS

Along with democratisation, culture (its revolutionising influence) is another, increasingly important factor for the renewal of the modern world. Some might wonder if there are enough substantial shifts in the spiritual field today to assure social progress without waiting for major political changes. In my opinion, the point is not primarily what should be done. We need a dynamic relationship between culture and politics. But in practice, as the post-October experience has shown, this is not always realisable, which leads to great social deformations. In the USSR, for example, an arrhythmia of spiritual development has been observed. Its relative backwardness has caused a number of difficulties and social asymmetries, due to Stalin's premature winding-down of the cultural revolution, the first results of which (a growing intellectual potential and spirit of criticism in society, etc.) he saw as a threat to his personal power and its bulwark—the administrative command system.

For a long time the Communists shied at the word *intellectuality*. It seemed offensive and even counter-revolutionary, because the "great leader" treated it with contempt, and it was not customary to express one's own opinion. This term was avoided as heretical, as though it could debase a party which revered the infallibility of Stalin as much as the Roman Catholic Church did the sanctity of the Pope. Theoretical thought and party building were detached from the realities of scientific and spiritual progress in the world. The Communists increasingly ignored them as the scientific and tech-

nological revolution developed and proved incapable of using its achievements. As a result, the Communists came to be seen as an anachronism.

Of course, there were exceptions: for example, Pablo Picasso, while remaining a member of the French Communist Party, never considered it necessary to work in the style of so-called socialist realism or to follow directives. However, in most other cases opportunism, blindness and ignorance triumphed over reason and creativity. A mechanical study of certain quotations, the poverty of terminology, and the unviability of slogans and adopted documents—such was a far from complete picture of the serious *intellectual lag of the communist parties*. Yet culture and politics can draw strength from each other (naturally, I mean not an elitist, but a general human and democratic culture).

The *contraposition (sometimes even hostile) of the proletariat to the intellectual* is another flaw in our movement still to be eliminated. I think that the worker of the 21st century, of the beginning of the third millennium, will have to rely mainly on mental skills. In an era of cybernetics, computerisation and robotisation he cannot be otherwise. Hence the need for the renewal of our parties, especially of the cadres. Before, they were selected on the basis of loyalty, unquestioning obedience and uniformity. It is essential to change this attitude to the role of party workers, and in practice to return to the principle of the party as an organic intellect, a collective wisdom. Its application is like a revolution. Only in this case will the party have firm contacts with the generations to come.

Links between the masses and the party were disrupted in the USSR under Stalin, and perestroika is now striving to correct this. The party did not represent popular aspirations, resembling instead a kind of buffer between the people and the state machine, a part of the bureaucratic pyramid dealing hierarchically with problems. But the vanguard force must not allow itself to act as a danger; on the contrary, its role lies in encouraging the progressive, democratic initiatives and impulses of citizens and their various organisations, and in giving support to constructive alternative schemes.

There is no escape from these unsolved tasks because they are one of the causes of stagnation, the precrisis condition of socialism, and the worsening of the party's links with the working class, which has finally led to strikes. These are not directed against the foundations of socialism, i.e., the power of the working people, but against its bureaucratisation, against the formalisation of the trade unions and other public organisations, against the old thinking among many middle-level party apparatchiks and against those who do not believe in the creative independence of the masses and fear a loss of control over it.

However, restructuring in the Soviet Union and other socialist nations will carry the image of October into the

21st century as the starting point of modern history. And I do not doubt that its first and then second centenary (one involuntarily recalls this year's bicentennial of the French Revolution) will be received as a *triumph of the ideas of social justice and self-fulfilment*.

This will become a challenge to capitalism in even its most developed zones. But today a lot still needs to be clarified. Why did Stalin succeed in so distorting Lenin's concept of the party and the Soviet state and perverting the Marxist approach to the problem of the individual? What means has socialism developed to ensure that the tragedy of the personality cult will never occur again? How is an equilibrium between general and national values to be established and how are we to prevent a worsening of relations between socialist states?

Undoubtedly socialism has found the answers to most of the questions which have arisen over the past few years. I believe that new thinking correctly orients the Communists towards a disavowal of the copying of any models, a practice that more than one revolution inevitably, at times even unwittingly, carried with it and that adversely affected the course of others. In a mutually dependent, increasingly internationalised world it is important to place the emphasis on a sovereign right of choice.

Our party has some experience of the nonviolent path of revolution. This experience is unique and still very important for us. We cannot simply repeat it, but must, remembering the tragic lessons (the irreconcilability of US imperialism and internal reaction towards revolutionary, even nonviolent, shifts), take advantage of them in the new conditions and find our road to socialism. This was the focus of a sharp debate at the 15th Congress of the PCCh.¹ It centred on the previous superficial assessment of our opponents—both external and internal—who prepared the army coup in league with transnational corporations. We also discussed the fact that the world has changed greatly—not only since 1917, or 1922, when the PCCh emerged, but also in the 20 years since its previous congress—and the truth that it is unbecoming for a forward-looking party (most Chileans are under 30) to see the world through the lenses of old spectacles.

As we see, it was a pointed debate. True, Marxism was the first to scientifically substantiate the laws governing social development, and to provide the key to understanding the dialectics of the renovation of the world. But now we find ourselves at the tail-end of the scientific and technological revolution, lagging behind in the cognition of the shifts occurring in labour and the social structure of society. There is a dearth of ideas about the changing mentality of working people brought on by the programming, intellectualisation and robotisation of production, and we have not been ready to accept the new methods of its organisation and improvement. The congress concluded that we could not limit ourselves to political formulations without making a leap

forward in the theoretical field, for which we require various experts and specialists. *We need to intellectualise the party.* The complex nature of social development means that its political influence and prestige are not only determined by the size of its working-class membership.

New demands on political activity have been made by the progress in informatics (memory banks, etc.), which will undoubtedly continue to develop, giving greater and more precise knowledge about the concerns and expectations of people, about the shifts in public opinion and the economy and about different solutions to particular problems. In order to use this knowledge correctly, it is also important to raise qualitatively the level of the party's intellectual work. It is not a question of turning it into a kind of computerised entity, but into a *party of the age of the STR*, which has brought a radical change in virtually all spheres of society. We must have a clear idea of the current processes and emerging trends in order to work out a realistic policy. The basis for this is informatics, which opens up an opportunity for scientific experimenting, the preliminary testing of the various political and democratic initiatives designed to ensure success for socialism.

SOCIAL PROGRESS AND THE STR

You hear constantly in the West that socialism is in decline and that what is called a "revolution within the revolution"—the renewal of October, perestroika and so on—is actually a crisis, almost an agony of socialism. Such are the new propaganda attacks. For us, the Communists, perestroika in the USSR is the reaching of frontiers associated with survival and the assuring of the future of mankind. To achieve this, and to make humanistic values a common norm, means to affirm reason in public life, not least in capitalist countries.

True, class boundaries will not disappear even then; exploitation, Third World backwardness, over a billion starving people and the vast numbers of those deprived of elementary rights will remain. Some of them have not seen hospitals, others ballot-boxes. Of course, the new technological revolution has set the world in motion, but so far only capitalism is reaping its benefits. New problems are thus added to traditional ones. Take, for example, the capital of Chile, Santiago, whose 5,000,000 residents are forced to live and breathe under clouds of foul smog.

This fact alone bespeaks the importance of our *political reorientation*: a shift from the traditional to national goals, a "return" from the remote future to the present. The previous approach looks one-sided and obsolete because it is tied to the immutability of initial doctrinal assumptions.

Thus, common problems have appeared and they can be solved by placing the achievements of the scien-

tific and technological revolution at the service of man. This presupposes its merging with social progress. It seems to me that we, the Communists, have not attached proper significance to this connection, *have not regarded the STR as a partner, the most important ally in the social revolution.* Capitalism has done this, but in its own interests, in order to survive and prevent radical changes.

New technology thus creates both good and evil, helping, for example, the plunder of the developing countries by the industrial capitalist states on the one hand, and easing the work of people and making our leisure more interesting on the other. The answer is not to reject the STR because of its negative consequences, but to accelerate its development under socialism, in the course of its renewal.

There is a lot of discussion now about what we mean by true socialism. It is not a copy of the existing models, although it does imply a priority of the majority's interests over the minority. For us it is *in the dialectics of social and technological gains.* In this context the October Revolution meant an important practical step forward. Lenin did not conceive the building of socialism otherwise. Let us recall his remarks on the efficiency of the American organisation of production, and on the growth of labour productivity as one of the key conditions for a victory of the new system. It bears repeating that, by prematurely winding up the cultural revolution, Stalin effectively ensured the scientific and technological lag of socialism behind capitalism.

Meanwhile, capitalism has shown greater flexibility in the spiritual domain, communications and the methods of influencing public opinion. Peoples' free time is filled with the help of a mass media and a contemporary entertainment industry which deal with the emotional aspect of the individual's life and the diversity of personal interests, motivations and requirements more attractively than in the socialist states. The age of rapid mass transport has also become the age of tourism. It is essential for socialism to display a new mode of thinking in all these fields as well: to do away with inertia, the wooden language of propaganda, the monotony of entertainment programmes, to drop censorship in the arts and to participate more actively in the worldwide cultural process and exchanges of information. In a commonwealth which humankind is becoming with each passing day one cannot develop under an iron case.

A CONTRADICTIONARY INTERDEPENDENCE

The present-day world is more interdependent, but despite the tendency towards the internationalisation and universalisation of the world community, it will always be diverse. Identical countries, like people, do not exist. However strong the ties between peoples may

become under the influence of the STR, national customs and traditions remain. They cannot easily be discarded and laws won't make them go away. Speaking of the contradictoriness of our ever more integral world, one cannot help but note the rebirth in the last quarter of the 20th century of the power of religious movements, which in individual cases (for example, Islamic fundamentalism) can pose a threat to international security.

The Communists are going to *unravel the intricate tangle of new realities at the end of the century*. If it is to survive, the world must be united, but there can be no ignoring the sharp social contrasts or the fact that 40 million people annually die of hunger in the developing countries; half of them are children, provision for whom is the most acute question. It cannot be forgotten that millions of people in Africa, Asia and Latin America still live by archaic methods of production. Yes, we need a nonviolent world; yes, it is important to solve global problems; but we must also recognise the mass of social defects and the immense human suffering caused by the backwardness and poverty of the Third World and the growth of its indebtedness. There is no evolutionary solution to these problems, and in some cases revolutionary transformations should be accelerated in order to provide people the conditions of survival.

Nevertheless, the importance of raising global issues in our programmes is obvious. In Chile, for example, we face a diminishing soil fertility, desertification, the extinction of various plant and animal species, and the growing incidence of diseases linked to a polluted environment and toxified air. The dominance and irresponsibility of transnational corporations are to blame for this. The communist party should have pre-empted the Greens by launching an ecological campaign and by *spearheading the fight to save the natural world*.

The traditional tasks remain, but we cannot focus exclusively on them while turning a blind eye to new social issues. In order to resolve some of them, independent parties are being specially created and alternative public movements formed. *The Communists must tackle each and every problem that arises*: personal and family issues; drugs; and new diseases, including AIDS. We consider it the Communists' duty not only to be informed about everything, but also to have a competent point of view on the most diverse questions. Otherwise political contact with people cannot be established.

Ugly urbanisation typifies many Latin American countries today. In Chile over a third of the population lives in the capital, the outskirts of which are belts of poverty, squalor, crime and drug addiction. The Communists have not yet found an answer to these problems, but such answers could provide the basis for working out a demographic strategy in the face of increasing Third World overpopulation. We must give up once correct but now apparently primitive assumptions and raise truly vital issues corresponding to present-day

realities. This requires a *well-thought-out concept of democracy*, the aim of which would be to enlist the broad sections in a conscious participation in the management of the affairs of society and its renewal. Of course, there is no question of relying upon state resources since the state—in socialist countries as well—needs popular control.

I do not think that the 20th century has discarded socialism as a total failure; on the contrary, socialism has become its motive force, opening the door to the next century for the new system. However, it is equally clear that the revolution, having won, is encountering still greater difficulties, since it now has to deal with the full load of the problems that have accumulated in society. They are not always amenable to resolution, often simply growing in complexity. New problems continue to appear: the decline in labour discipline, the growth of apathy, the appearance of privileges, the discrepancy between words and deeds, etc. This gradually restricts social development and lowers the significance of what has been achieved. We, the Communists, ought not to allow the difficulties of socialism to pass on into the next century.

THE IMPERATIVE OF RENEWAL

Perestroika in the USSR is not to be taken as an abandonment of the October Revolution, but as its *purification from deformations*. This requirement developed in latent form over a long period because people saw through official propaganda to the real state of affairs. Time demanded radical changes and, although many lost all hope, a social leap has occurred. In this sense perestroika is a revolutionary change.

The acuteness of what is happening in the Soviet Union largely depends on the depth of earlier social distortions and the scale of deformations. This applies both to the system of public ownership and to the power institutions, to all spheres of life. In short, it involves a far from painless process. Renewal encounters the resistance of conservatism, which refuses to give up its positions, and the hurdles of old thinking—to surmount them is not that easy. The Communists also suffer from this disease. In any party, some people tend to look back, regarding loyalty to the old as the only method of preserving unity.

One can say of perestroika that it is a *socialism attempting to keep abreast of our turbulent times*. But so much has been neglected, and the speed of traffic, as we all know, depends on the state of the roads and the transport system. The "revolution within the revolution" puts them in order and prepares them for the upcoming epoch. Some people are asking: if this process bears a permanent character, then how justified are the well-known views of Trotsky? In my opinion, the revolution is essentially permanent, though not in the sense of its

export, but in *long-term constructive terms*. The world does not mark time, it is in constant flux. In order not to lag behind, one must be ready for changes, for transforming activities. This is why a constancy of thorough renewal must be intrinsic to our approaches.

Only in this way can we keep our perspective. Hence the need for a creative mastery and application of Marxism. But many people are now accustomed to viewing it as something essentially complete and invariable, and those who have tried to change anything as its opponents. On the contrary, our teaching is aimed at social renewal, it is called upon to match the new realities and to give a broader and more informative panorama of the world. We must also recognise that there are many other forces desirous of change and prepared to readjust for this purpose. I believe that an ideological and political consensus is possible with them. But the most important thing is not to abandon the dialectical spirit of the Marxist doctrine, which inevitably presupposes a renewal of our way of thinking.

History has thrown us a challenge: the communist movement must renew itself, or become extinct. The danger that the Communists might lose their influence is very great. Some would say that this is inevitable given the weakening of the impulses of October which started our movement, but the case is somewhat different.

The history of the communist movement, and of the development of the forces which constitute it are more complicated than that. For example, I think that the Chilean Communists will continue to regard the starting point of their party's chronicle not as January 2, 1922—the day of our application for admission to the Comintern—but a time ten years earlier when the Socialist Labour Party was formed. Its renaming as communist was approved unanimously. This was not, as in some other cases, the result of a split or an ideological demarcation. That is why I think that 1912 will some day be called the year of birth, and Iquique, not Rancagua, the place of birth of the PCCh. Of course, the main thing is not the date: it is necessary to take stock of everything that has been done and has not been done by the party during the period of its existence. To sum up everything and identify the unfavourable balance: what is it, of what is it made up, what are the difficulties, and can they be overcome in the long run?

I believe that they can. But on one condition—*renewal. Without it we cannot become a contemporary, influential mass party capable of transforming society in a democratic way.* In order to be a party of the 21st century, we need to have our own face and style of thinking, to be able to dialectically apply Marxism to the national realities. I envision the communist movement

as a sequel to October, but critical and not blind to its own historical experience, mistakes and errors. It must be open to innovative ideas, and it must preserve its links with the working class, recognising the fact that the latter has become different

The entire world is changing, including the land of October. There are also certain changes taking place in capitalism: *imperialism has not turned out to be its last stage*. This system has demonstrated a greater capacity than socialism for mastering scientific and technological achievements, especially in the interests of self-preservation. To the same end it has also adapted individual forms of democracy. Despite the difficulties, there is gathering momentum towards the demilitarisation of international relations, the unification of efforts for the solution of global problems and the prevention of a nuclear or ecological catastrophe. It is important for the Communists to act in full regard of these new circumstances. The task of emancipating labour, of ending the various forms of individual alienation is still with us and it cannot be solved by philanthropic measures. The struggle for fundamental material well-being, rights and freedoms continues. This is the *chief moral reason why we are Communists*.

Yes, we are motivated by conscience and morality. We act according to our ethical imperatives. Being a Communist means devoting oneself utterly to humanistic aims, living in the name of others. In our country this means constantly risking violent death, imprisonment, exile or loss of work. People who have accepted and continue to accept this risk do not act for the sake of self-interest. Nevertheless, I think that the moral aspect ought to be expressed still more forcefully and show itself in our motives and behaviour, because attempts are being made to depict us as advocates of violence and opponents of freedom, not as continuers of the early Christians' dreams of human happiness. But they turned their eyes to Heaven while we look to earthly concerns.

Life will always be full of problems and new difficulties. This is evidenced by the development of mankind since October. The Communists aim to *give each person a worthy life*. And for this it is necessary to possess a capacity for change in our complex world, for advance and for the revival of the revolutionary ideas of October with regard to present-day conditions.

¹ See Osiel Nuñez, "We Have Never Had Such a Congress", *WMR*, No. 9, 1989.—Ed.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

THE CONSCIENCE OF SOCIETY

Heljä-Marjā TAMMISOLA

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Communists have always based their political practice on the teachings of Marxist classics. The analysis made by these latter looked decades ahead, and the conclusions they had originally drawn often sufficed to understand later processes of social development. By and large, many of the forecasts made by Marxism have come true.

But why has our theoretical thought fallen behind today? One reason is, clearly, that the *period when the old explanations were enough is over*. The increasingly complex dialectics of the productive forces and relations of production in industrialised society, the changing class structures and the shift of emphasis to the problems involved in the proliferation of weapons of mass annihilation and other global problems have been all clamouring for new, more comprehensive theoretical explanation.

The class-based approach alone does not offer the clue to contemporary social problems or solutions to new problems. It no longer provides Communists with the means or possibilities of rallying together on the old platform political forces in favour of change, which would be strong enough to tear down the obstacles in the way of such transformations.

Specifically, the growing diversification of society and the fragmentation of the once monolithic classes have subverted the traditional social base of the communist parties, while diverging interests within individual classes have weakened workers' solidarity. The objective conditions for work amongst the people on the basis of class principles have become more complex. These and other factors explain the shrinking support for Communists in the capitalist world.

It would be wrong to think that Marxist theory has not produced anything new. The bulk of theoretical research, however, is concentrated in the European

socialist countries, and the preponderance of political power over science there used to put serious constraints on an open quest for new answers. Critical analysis of the prevalent concepts was dismissed.

In the Western world, meanwhile, Marxist studies are few and far between, and cooperation among Marxist scholars is poorly organised. With few exceptions, Marxists have refrained from debating real issues with other ideologists, but, turning a blind eye to unpleasant phenomena and processes, operated as a tool of political propaganda.

Let us analyse some of the existing problems in the Finnish context.

ALIGNMENT OF POLITICAL FORCES

In spite of certain shifts, the basic class structure of Finnish society remains; it is made up of workers, administrators of production processes (technostructure), and proprietors. However, significant changes are afoot within each of the above groups. Social stratification is gathering momentum, and some of the new characteristics brought about by it look like class differences. As a result, social contradictions have grown even more complex.

Middle-level groups, especially salaried employees and workers in the service industries, are becoming more mobile politically: their share of the workforce is growing faster than that of any other group, and they have the largest influence on the overall occupational pattern in society. The implications of these processes include support (in varying degrees) for the established political parties and the rapid rise of new parties and social protest movements.

With all that, the alignment of forces in Finland between five or six major parties, or the main political movements, has remained virtually unchanged for many years. It bears a striking resemblance to the situation in the wake of the first parliamentary elections in 1906.

The support enjoyed then by a united workers' party has since been shared out by the Social Democrats (SDP) and their temporary fellow-travellers, the Communists (SKP) and the Finnish People's Democratic League (SKDL)¹. The Centre Party (formerly the

The WMR Commission on the International Communist Movement and Exchanges of Party Experience continues to publish contributions from individual parties about their responses to the rapidly changing national and world realities [see articles by Saifuddin Ahmed Manik (Bangladesh), Rene Urbany (Luxembourg), Ken Douglas (New Zealand), Kaare Nilsen (Norway), George Hawi (Lebanon), George Hewison (Canada) in WMR, Nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 1989].

Agrarian Union) has been left in control of virtually all the political room in the centre as a result of the decline of the Liberals (originally the Young Finns) and their eventual departure from the social scene. Neither the Rural Party (SMP) nor the Christian Union (SKL) have been able to dent the Centrists' positions. The conservative National Coalition Party (KOK) has also cashed in on the Liberal's demise: its liberal image has won the sympathies of the rapidly growing strata of intellectuals and office workers.

Generally speaking, domestic political shifts have had little effect on the structure of power in Finland. After the suppression of the 1918 Finnish Revolution, the powers of the Grand Prince were vested in the President, and the Finnish-Soviet armistice agreement in September 1944 was followed by the broadening of civil liberties. The 1948 Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance consolidated Finland's international status of a neutral independent country, and her achievement of the development level of a "welfare state" is a reflection of the strength of the labour movement relying on an integrated trade union structure.

In the present situation we define our strategic goal as the *broadening of societal development through reforms in a way that would change social structures qualitatively*. This is one of the differences between the Communists and the Social Democrats. Another, even more pronounced one is our resolve to democratise, among other things, economic decision-making.

If social inequality is to be reduced, a better rapport should be achieved with the SKDL and the SDP and closer ties with other progressive movements, such as the Greens, independents, progressives, and those elements in other parties willing to cooperate. Priority is shifting to activities at the parliamentary and governmental level, on the one hand, and to extra-parliamentary pressure with special emphasis on cooperation among the trade unions and the political organisations of the working-class movement, on the other.

The Communists' task, we think, still is to be the *conscience of society*, and to stand up for the poor and those suffering discrimination. We recognise, however, that the well-to-do strata, including skilled workers, retain a greater political clout.

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

A broad critical discussion has unfolded in the communist movement on this principle, especially on its practical application. From the point of view of theory, one can hardly think of a better way of reconciling extensive democracy and open decision-making with personal responsibility and supervision in party work. Small wonder that the principle of democratic

centralism has been adopted by all the Finnish political parties with the exception of the Greens, who have been plagued by difficulties precisely because results are hard to achieve without unity of action.

In reality, however, only substantive discussions can produce a common approach and then decisions which would be binding for all Communists. But ought unity of action to be sought in every case? Today it seems more reasonable to strive for unity only on major issues, and leave broad room for personal choice on secondary matters. In practice decisions are usually followed through only by those who think them correct, while others do nothing. There seems to be reason for a critical analysis of the potential and limitations of centralism.

The forms and style of work of party organisations are very important, with emphasis shifting to openness and readiness to revise opinions and stands. *The public airing of issues, constructive criticism and the ability to listen to and respect views differing from one's own are essential to civilised communication today.* Far from clashing with the principles of democratic centralism, these requirements fit them perfectly.

The structure of every organisation is attuned to the tasks before it. But every established organisation also has a relatively independent logic of development of its own, which sometimes prevents that organisation from flexibly responding to changing requirements. At the same time drastic structural overhauls break the natural mechanisms of any activities. That is why organisational changes do not always suffice, and are sometimes even counterproductive. I think that both Nikita Khrushchev and Mikhail Gorbachov realised this when they took on the Soviet Union's agricultural problems.

In other words, structural renovations are necessary to match changing circumstances, but they are not the end, while overemphasis on organisational issues may obscure the ultimate objective and divert attention to trivia.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL AND THE NATIONAL

The balance between these two elements in the policies of parties, states and nations is taking on new characteristics and becoming unprecedentedly controversial and dialectically multifaceted.

The growth of the productive forces and the broadening of trade, economic cooperation and the international division of labour have generated additional pressures towards *integration across national boundaries*. These processes are common to capitalism and socialism. Moreover, the world market

projects these processes across the divide between the economies of the two social systems, as the development of cooperation between the EEC and the CMEA shows. Communists welcome the fact that Finland can play a positive role here.

At the same time national identity needs to be emphasised, because integration will work efficiently only if the lawful interests of all the parties concerned are respected. Benefits should be reciprocal, otherwise there will be exploitation and oppression, which exacerbate differences and detract from the efficiency of cooperation.

To Finns the most important goal is to preserve the basis of the welfare society and to build in their specific national environment a system embodying the *principles of social justice*. Also, rigorous environmental protection measures must be enforced.

I don't think that relations between communist and workers' parties are fundamentally different from those between nations and states. Common goals unite, while wrong judgements and dictat may gravely impair unity. In their relationships communist parties should follow *commonly recognised democratic methods*, or other left forces will be wary of their bid for cooperation and turn away.

Perhaps Marxists really do offer the best way to peace and progress, but one can advance towards it by different means, faster or slower, depending on the condition of mass consciousness, "transport" and material supply.

As for social morality, there are two options. Some people want prosperity as soon as possible, and are ready to cut corners and push people aside. Others prefer to go forward together, helping and supporting the weaker ones. In this sense, the problems of the developing countries are increasingly becoming the common concern of humanity as a whole.

A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

The Communist Party of Finland was founded in Moscow in 1918, operating underground until 1944. After the war it was legalised and, under the flag of the newly-established People's Democratic League, Communists began to contest elections. International support for the SKDL is support for the Communist Party, first, because most of the former's deputies to parliament have been Communists and, second, from the "Right-Left" perspective the SKDL, in the opinion of many, is further to the left than, say, even the Italian Communist Party.

All the SKP and SKDL members are referred to as Communists in Finland, while their rivals argue that the League is an umbrella for the Communist Party. This is understandable because politically the two organisations are the same thing. But the SKDL has

failed—by a small margin—to become as broad an alliance as was originally conceived. Today this organisation unites forces to the left of the Social Democrats, and its hallmark is cooperation with Communists.

The SKP-SKDL still enjoys considerable support in the country. They won 9.4% of the votes in the 1987 parliamentary elections and 10.4% in the 1988 municipal elections, and public opinion polls show that support is growing. I think the reason is that, as a political party, the SKP has always had very definite goals. Throughout its history it has been unswervingly committed to the genuine social needs of the mass of people.

Our party has a clear-cut strategy on relations with the state, on cooperation within the working-class movement, and on the nature of the party itself.

What I mean is that, firstly, we have had a longer experience of *participation in national government* than any other communist party of a capitalist country. We participated in ten cabinets for a total of 14 years, or one-third of the postwar period. We gained our largest support—23.5% of the electorate—right after the war. An analysis of our declining electoral support shows that the blame lies least on our participation in government. Incidentally, rarely have the activities of any ministry added to the political prestige of the relevant party.

Secondly, the Finnish Communists have *considerable influence in the trade union movement*. For example, they are in the majority in the builders' and food workers' unions. Together with the Social Democrats, they united the bulk of the working people in the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, thus setting the stage for the rapid growth of labour influence. The SKP has also contributed to the rise of a strong movement of workers' sports associations.

Thirdly, the SKP has pursued its policy through and on behalf of the SKDL. In the postwar period it never once contested the national elections with its own list of candidates. At the same time Communists have always prevailed overwhelmingly in the SKDL parliamentary faction: with the total number of SKDL deputies varying from 50 to 16 today, there have only been between 4 and 6 non-Communists.

These examples show that the Finnish Communists have an articulate *national strategy*, and that they have built relations of *cooperation with their allies* in ingenious political forms without precedent in the communist movement.

Our consistent pursuance of this strategy, however, brought the party to an impasse, although its course had been plotted through consensus. In the late 1960s, an organised opposition with its own structure and a newspaper emerged, publicly accusing the SKP leadership of right-wing revisionism, claiming that it

was "hanging onto the coat-tails of Social Democracy", etc. It proved impossible to clarify our strategic goals and practical political tasks through open discussion at the time, and the situation was further compounded by considerable international support for the opposition forces.

Further developments in the Finnish communist movement are unrelated to the present breakthrough in the life of a number of socialist countries. In the 1960s similar processes occurred in most of the West European communist parties, including all the parties in the Nordic countries. When Communists there shed much of their orthodoxy and shifted emphasis to the productivity of politics and to the need for theoretical reappraisals, many of the parties split. Only the Italian Communists emerged from the turmoil, perhaps, in a better shape than others.

The Communist Party of Finland managed to avoid a split for a long time, until 1984, the very eve of Soviet perestroika. The main motivation for the final decision to split was fear that the party would wither away in the mire of internal squabbling. The opposition themselves sealed the issue by refusing to participate in the party's governing bodies and breaking off to operate independently.

HISTORICAL INITIATIVE

Last March the leaders of the SKDL and SKP came up with the idea of establishing a new party, the Left Union, which would be to the left of the Social Democrats. According to their plan, the two organisations will merge, inviting all those with an interest in radical left policies to join. The experience of the 1988 presidential elections, for example, shows that there are such forces in the country. At that time Movement-88 was set up to muster support for our candidate, former SKDL Chairman Kalevi Kivistö, and it included not just SKDL and SKP members, but also many nonpartisan members. Some of those who left the SKP over the split are also showing a real interest in joint work.

I expect unification to run into many difficulties. It is not at all easy for a Communist to disown the party's name, associated with a long and glorious history. We were harassed, imprisoned and blacklisted. Even today one has to have courage in Finland to call oneself a Communist: there still is the threat of losing one's job or being otherwise discriminated against.

So, moral factors complicate the theoretical and political analysis of what is the essence of the Communist Party today. Also, some members are not sure

if the planned Left Union meets the demands made by Communists on their organisation.

A poll of party members shows that the overwhelming majority approve the idea suggested by the leadership. Such initiatives had already been voiced earlier: in the 1950s, for example, such discussions resulted in the merger of the newspapers of the SKDL and the SKP into the central press organ *Kansan Uutiset* (People's News).

The 22nd SKP congress (February 1990) will decide the future of the Communist Party of Finland. Some ideas were already put forward at the September Plenary Meeting of the SKP Central Committee, which deliberated preparations for the congress in the context of support for the idea of a Left Union.

The CC stated that the SKP and the SKDL had long become a single political movement with a homogeneous ideology. The participants in the Plenary Meeting called for uniting all the forces and activities of the two organisations in a new party.

Unification as a political process is already under way, and it will continue after all the formalities have been completed. Since the programme documents of the SKDL and the new SKP programme, approved in 1987, are essentially identical, stressing as they do a commitment to creative Marxism and social transformations, Communists will most likely embrace the ideological underpinnings of the new party.

The Manifesto on the establishment of the Left Union stresses the relevance of socialist ideals and values, and lays emphasis on peace, the equality and total emancipation of the individual, and responsibility for the future of the whole of humanity. Human survival is a problem of higher magnitude than that of contradictions between labour and capital.

Communists believe that in today's Finland the communist movement can renovate itself only together with the SKDL. This is the only chance to create a new party of the working people that will match the realities and rise to the challenges of the 1990s.

¹ Formed in 1944 by the so-called peace opposition, who split off from the Social Democrats and the Communists as an organisation committed to the principles of cooperation. The alliance practises both individual and collective membership; its collective members include the Communist Party, the Democratic Women's Union, the Democratic Youth Union and the Socialist Students' Union.—Ed.

REFORMS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

HOW TO OPEN THE DOOR

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Since Marx and Engels, in *The Communist Manifesto*, called for a revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system and the creation of a new society which by emancipating the proletariat would emancipate all humanity, history shows that Marxist reformism has not attained this objective in any country. On the contrary, the parties captivated by reformism have been converted into elements of the capitalist system vital to its smooth operation. In this way, they have effectively helped to prolong the life of capitalism.

The revolutionary struggle, by contrast, has led to the conquest of power by the working class and its allies and the liquidation of capitalism, first in Russia and later in a number of other countries, most of which were economically, socially, politically and culturally backward, which largely explains the negative phenomena in the process of socialist transformations.

True, social democratic reformism has led the trade union and political struggle of the working people to important economic, political and social conquests which have greatly improved the living conditions of the labouring masses and contributed vigorously to economic, technological and social progress.

On the other hand, since 1917 communist parties have been changing their revolutionary strategy. After the end of World War II, in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe people's democracies were established. Governments of broad social and political coalitions emerged, led by the communist parties and formed of socialists, republicans, Catholics, and political organisations of the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie. Georgi Dimitrov, whose ideas inspired the coalitions, defined these governments as advanced democracies, "neither capitalist nor socialist", whose objective was the socialist transformation of society through the extension of democracy. This was an aim which Marx and Lenin assigned to the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, it was to be realised in a form different to that in the USSR, that is, with a democratic

and multi-party system.

As a form of socialist development this held great interest and promise. If it had been conducted intelligently, without sectarianism or haste, and had given democracy and political freedoms all their revolutionary potential, this process could have been of immense value to the entire revolutionary movement. Unfortunately, it did not receive a continuation. The US anticommunist and anti-Soviet crusade, starting the Cold War and an onslaught on West European Communists provoked Stalin into halting the specific movement of the people's democracies towards socialism. The consequences were grim and we are still paying the price.

When in the USSR under Khrushchev the revolutionary winds of renewal started blowing against the dogmatism and political ignorance of the Stalin bureaucracy, the 20th Congress of the CPSU concluded that, in the new historical situation, the working class and its allies in the West European countries could, without the necessity of violent revolution, gain power via the parliamentary route and through the struggle of the masses. This proposition had a great effect on the international communist movement.

THE POLICY MANIFESTO

The PCE, by virtue of the singularity of its history, has an innovative revolutionary tradition. In reality, the people's democracies had their precursor in the policy conducted by the PCE during the Civil War, one which was developed further after the 20th CPSU Congress and has been maintained ever since. In spite of the difficulties and the mistakes, the basic correctness of this policy has been convincingly proved, most clearly by perestroika in the Soviet Union.

This is confirmed by the PCE's relationship with the Spanish Catholics and its policy of national reconciliation and unity of all democratic forces in the struggle against the dictatorship of Franco, for liberty and democratic change, a policy initiated long before Pope John XXIII's Vatican Council.

In the Policy Manifesto of 1975, the PCE seriously attempted to give a theoretical and political analysis of the situation in Spain, Europe and the world. Perhaps

We continue our series of articles on the role and place of reforms in the policy of the communist parties and other democratic forces in the struggle for social progress (see *WMR*, No. 11, 1988, pp. 80-87; No. 12, pp. 33-39; No. 2, 1989, pp. 79-83; No. 6, pp. 62-64).

the most notable element of this document was the elaboration of "social and political democracy" as the first stage in re-establishing political freedoms after the overthrow of Franco's dictatorship and as a prelude to the construction of socialism. This was a consequence of our experiences of the Civil War, the people's democracies and the theses formulated by the 20th CPSU Congress.

"Social and political, or antimonopoly and antilatfundist, democracy is not yet socialism. However, it is the immediate phase of social development on the road to it," said the Policy Manifesto. The subject of revolutionary action here are the forces of labour and culture, with the working class playing the central role; the possible allies are all the antimonopoly and antilatfundist strata. The struggle is to be legal and peaceful, involving the masses and the work of the democratic institutions, aimed at profound economic and political transformations even though they are not yet socialist.

The PCE was to be not a ruling, but a guiding force. There would be an alliance of diverse parties committed to socialism, a Socialist Union, which would include the PCE. Naturally, all other political parties would have the right to exist.

I believe that this Policy Manifesto corresponded to the situation of the time in Spain and the world. Now it is very different. Substantial changes have occurred in both our country and throughout the world. Consequently, it would be wrong to remain at previous positions.

BASIC CHANGES

What do I see as the principal changes of the past 15 years? The following is a simple schematic list:

- As a system the imperialist capitalism is completing profound transformation which has been maturing over the last few decades. State monopoly capitalism has developed into *transnational capitalism*. It is a new imperialism which is using new methods to plunder and dominate not only Third World countries but also many advanced capitalist states, Spain among them. Its further advance is only possible through exploitation and permanent crisis in all these countries. This places it in opposition to almost everyone, wherein lies the possibility of victory over it.
- US imperialism is ever more rapidly entering a *period of decline*, in spite of its military, economic, technological and political power. The USA is the world's most indebted country, its budget and trade deficits having reached unsustainable proportions. Economically, the USA is finding it increasingly difficult to withstand the competition from other states, the main reason for this being its colossal military budget.
- The *scientific and technological revolution* continues to gain momentum. I will mention just one aspect: the consequences for manual workers. Under capitalism a reserve army of labour has always existed, the size of it determined by the economic conditions. But, today, technological advance permits economic activeness, production and the number of unemployed to grow simultaneously. What will happen in times of crisis? People are now talking as of something quite normal about a two-thirds society with the marginals, or contemporary pariahs, being excluded from the category of socially useful citizens and becoming redundant people. In the future (and it is already starting to become the present) their number will begin to grow steadily if the laws of transnational capital remain in force. Of course, we cannot oppose technological advance. On the contrary, we are for it, because it opens up the possibilities of a truly humane society—provided, however, that the fabulous means of production and research, now principally in the hands of the multinationals, are placed at the service of all society.
- The *Third World* is becoming an increasingly important factor of the struggle for social transformation. As a result of imperialist exploitation and nonequivalent trade exchanges, the developing countries are experiencing great economic difficulties. They are caught in the vice of a huge external debt. This makes their peoples and the European forces of progress allies in the struggle for peace, disarmament, and democratic and socialist change against a common enemy: imperialist transnational capital and its national subsidiaries.
- The construction of a unified Europe requires the *unity in action* of all democratic and progressive forces on the continent and a rapprochement between these forces in the West and the socialist countries.
- The danger of a "heart attack" for the Earth's *ecological systems* and the whole biosphere and the depletion of natural resources, primarily as a result of their rapacious exploitation everywhere, place in sharp relief the need for a new international economic order capable of leading to a rational utilisation of natural resources to benefit all peoples of the world, on a basis of equality.
- Profound changes are occurring in *traditional social practices and customs* hitherto presented by the dominant classes as being inherent in human nature; this applies to both family and sexual relations. We are seeing an "insurgency" of the numerous marginal sections, above all women (more than half of all humankind) and young people. These changes are shaking the oppressive

class society to its foundations, creating a new social mentality and establishing new moral principles.

- Finally, and most importantly, because it affects all countries of the world, the *possibility that the human race may be wiped out* through nuclear weapons.

We can draw several conclusions from this situation. I believe that the first and most important one is that capitalism and "real socialism" are incapable of resolving humankind's current problems. Capitalism by its very nature only exacerbates them. As regards the latter, it is a socialism that is still backward, bureaucratic and unjust. This consideration helps us to grasp the enormous historic significance of perestroika and the reforms in the socialist states. They aim to fully unfold the potential of socialism and its ability to face up to the challenge of our time.

Another conclusion to be drawn is that the top priority of humankind is to avert its own demise. This can only be achieved permanently in a world where there is no oppression, exploitation, marginalisation and injustice. In other words, in a socialist world.

Yet socialism is far from within our grasp—and the problems of today, such as human survival and the eradication of unemployment, poverty, social marginalisation, national oppression and exploitation, need to be solved now.

WHAT IS THE AIM?

Social changes are urgent, yet will take a lot of time. And in developed countries like Spain they will only be brought by a large series of reforms because violent revolution is unviable and unnecessary here. But if this is the sole path, then there is a risk that we may slip into a new type of reformism which essentially changes nothing.

Avoiding this involves various factors. Firstly, there must be a clear project: What is our aim? What are we going to transform, into what, how is it to be done, and who will do it?

Our party has such a project: We want to *transform this society into a socialist one by means of a legal, democratic, peaceful, mass and institutional struggle*, within the Constitution, and through a series of reforms of an economic, social, political and cultural character. Those forces interested more in solving immediate problems than in pursuing a complete social transformation will carry out this job.

But how is this to be done? How to succeed without slipping into reformism? The answers seem to me to depend on the following:

Firstly, the nature, content and scope of reforms. They must be intimately linked to, and meet, at least partially or temporarily, the aspirations of the masses

because only socialism offers a definitive solution. The content of reform depends on the scale of popular demands and, without going into detail, it is clear that the process involves reforms of a profound structural character.

Secondly, the unity, political consciousness and militancy of the masses, the democratic parties, trade unions and ecological, women's, youth and other movements are becoming very important. Unity, of course, has to be achieved between kindred forces whose aims coincide, that is, progressives and left forces. Actions are already being undertaken in this direction. For Spain the achievement of unity between Communists and Socialists (members of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and nonmembers who belong to Socialist Action) is decisive. Social changes are unthinkable without the participation of the millions who have voted for the PSOE. Of course, the way to mutual understanding with the PSOE is not through unconditional support for its current policy. This would only lead to a disintegration of the United Left. We see the way to unity in the promotion of our own political alternative, the struggle for its implementation and in a search for mutual understanding with the Socialists in order to carry out a policy of transformation.

Thirdly, an ability to organise the masses in a common struggle for their ideals is required, by which I mean the *self-organisation* of citizens since the creation of a leading superstructure tends to lead to bureaucratisation, lethargy and paralysis. Such a superstructure must at the very least accept the replacement of members, be effective and have a broad support base.

In Spain, with its real political freedom, it is a question of the possibility of a transition to a fundamentally *new form of conducting politics*—profoundly democratic and genuinely representative. In the developed capitalist states (and until recently in the socialist states) politics and the management of public affairs have been the prerogative, the professional occupation, of a tiny minority which represents a sort of political class. The majority tend to be active only during elections, remaining politically lethargic between times despite the efforts of democratic parties and trade unions. Consequently, new forms of active involvement in the political life of a country are needed.

A PROGRESSIVE BLOC

The political process which ought to produce the progressive social bloc needed to achieve fundamental changes after electoral success contains components linked by an inner dialectic. It is not easy to achieve a quick electoral victory. Victory can only be won as a result of the completion of a definite *stage of evolution* and the creation of a new situation that

enables transition to the next phase—the beginning of the construction of socialist society.

Naturally, this historical enterprise may provoke resistance from the opponents of major social changes. But the progressive bloc's success would decisively alter the alignment of forces in its favour, and the initial conditions for radical transformations would fundamentally differ from those which existed in the socialist countries when they started creating the new society. This would discourage a repetition of past blunders, errors and crimes in socialist construction.

A victory for the bloc will come out of free elections in which everyone has participated voluntarily. Not as a result of exceptional circumstances provoked by an extreme crisis, but as the culmination of the above-mentioned long process of struggle.

The forces of change will not have to tear down all forms of capitalist property at once. Even before their coming to power, the state and public sectors of the economy will have developed to a considerable extent, and it will not be hard to nationalise or, more correctly, socialise the large enterprises that have not yet been nationalised. Small and medium-size businesses will probably also continue in existence for quite a long time.

Lastly, the most important thing. If electoral victory is the work of the majority of citizens, then the consolidation of previous conquests and the creation of a new society—with maximum political freedoms and human rights, and full participation in solving economic and social problems—will gradually lead to a *general interest in the construction of socialism*, and this will be its best defence.

In Spain, the Communist Party believes that it has an important role to play in the creation of a strong political movement based on the United Left coalition and in the formation of a progressive bloc. Without our party's participation the achievement of these aims is impossible. I would stress that this means reasonable and adequate participation. In my opinion, the primary condition for the PCE's correct actions on the road to transforming the current Spanish society is an ability, while retaining its independence, to act only as a component part of the coalition and the future bloc.

THE BALLAST OF DOGMATISM

The Communists' influence depends on their actions, on their ability to put forward correct ideas in working out alternative solutions and choosing forms

of struggle, and on their enthusiasm and militancy. To do this, we must jettison the dogmatism of ideological formulas, which not only resolve nothing, but also separate us from many people, including those who are ready to join the party. We must give up the speciously theoretical and overly-formal discussions of the working class as the subject of revolution, of the PCE's leadership role as a special privilege, and of the Communists' hegemony in a future progressive bloc.

Ideological dogmatism and pseudotheoretical postulates usually serve to *mask the ineffectiveness of our own policy*. They only lead to alienation, the creation of a false reality and the satisfaction of a thirst for "ideological firmness". Moreover, these doctrinaire slogans are false. They do not reflect the thoughts of Marx and Lenin, but the interpretation lent to them by Stalin in order to provide "theoretical" justification for his political practices and for his essentially anti-Marxist presentation of Marxism-Leninism as an incontrovertible truth of universal value.

The working class is no longer the sole exclusive subject of the revolutionary movement, although it does remain the most important social force within it. The general strike in Spain on December 14, 1988, demonstrated the central role of the working class in the struggle against the authorities' economic policy. At the same time it also showed that broad public support did much to ensure the strikers' success.

We do not think we have the right to present the PCE as only the party of the working class. Spain has other workers' parties, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, for instance, whose influence among the workers exceeds ours. The PCE is also a party holding intellectuals, the unemployed, women and young people, all those prepared to fight for social transformations in the interests of the Spanish people. The prestige and role of the PCE depend on its ability to join with other political forces in leading the masses; above all, on its ability to achieve the *unity of the people* and to increase the ranks of those who support social change and are prepared to take part in the common cause on the basis of their own convictions.

We are on the threshold of socialism. But no one will open the door for us, we have to rely on our capacity to combine the enthusiasm and militancy of the Spanish working-class and democratic movements with the theoretical sharpness and profoundly democratic spirit of respect for all, which is so necessary to our society today.



WHERE IS POLAND GOING?

Janusz REYKOWSKI
Political Bureau member, CC, PUWP

Communist and workers' parties, and people generally, are concerned about political events in Poland as they develop against the background of a tense economic situation and shifts in the alignment of the social forces. They are sympathetic towards the efforts being made by Poland to resolve its crisis, but worried at the same time lest this means a betrayal of socialism. The international public is undoubtedly sensitive to the claims of the Right, within the country and in the West, that "Poland's transition from socialism to capitalism" is simply a question of time. So where is Poland moving?

Clearly, we are now living through a critical period. The PUWP has been trying for several years now to shed the vestiges of Stalinism and to assert democratic structures in Polish socialist society. But the process of creation is far more complex in social life than it is, say, in engineering, where the designer conceives some structure in his head and then has only to build it. Social design—that is, the creation of new social forms—involves struggle, clashes between differing interests. The outcome is never a certainty. The situation in Poland today hinges on which forces we can mobilise to defend the socialist system and promote democracy under socialism. That is why, instead of prognosticating, I intend to discuss what should be done in the present situation to uphold socialist principles in Poland. Despite the dangers ahead, I think we have a good chance of success.

THE REASONS BEHIND THE CRISIS

After the PUWP was defeated in the June 1989 general elections, the Central Committee thoroughly analysed the reasons for the defeat, one of which—our failure to establish an economy that can sustain further sociopolitical and spiritual progress—is the key to understanding the entire crisis. For over a decade the country has been in the grip of a crisis which has affected all spheres of life and brought down living standards. Ultimately, it was our inability to meet the people's needs that caused many workers to turn away from the party.

You may well ask why we failed to build a healthy and

efficient economy. The answer lies not in any underestimation of the seriousness of situation, nor in the lack of a concept. It takes far-reaching transformations to make an economy work efficiently and dynamically. But such transformations involve social costs and the people are not prepared to make the enormous sacrifices required. Because of our failure to reform the economy we have not met the growing needs of the population, nor managed to secure their trust and support.

Naturally, the sociopolitical crisis is rooted in profound contradictions, two of which are especially important, I think. Take politics, for example. Along with the progress of socialism in Poland, the overall standards of knowledge and culture kept growing, the number of well-educated workers increased, and the potential of intellectuals was expanding. People were seeking a greater political role in the life of the country and more say in state and public affairs. But their aspirations were stymied by the bureaucratic centralised system, which operated on the principle that everyone and everything could be governed at will from a single centre, from on-high. The striving of the people to be a subject of development thus came into conflict with the bureaucratic centralist organisation of the state.

The other important contradiction is that our outdated economic structure became ossified. But there emerged strong social groups with an interest in its preservation which held back the structural changes essential to progress. The working people in any state have to pay a price for the replacement of economic management methods, for the creation and expansion of new industries and the closure of outmoded ones. We did not feel able to pay such a price for modernisation, especially since the contradiction between the need for economic improvements and the interests of the individual sectors of society would still remain fundamentally unresolved. In other words, the existing conflicts were both political and socioeconomic.

But the party's electoral setback does not mean that the Poles have turned their backs on socialism. Opinion polls conducted over a long period of time indicated that despite their opposition to some phenomena seen as socialist, the public did not reject the system as a whole. No objective person would accept the superficial verdict

The article is based on an interview granted to a WMR correspondent in Poland.

that 45 years of socialist construction in our country have been merely a waste of time. A host of achievements go against such a nihilistic attitude. At the same time we should think again and decide what should be discarded and what steps should be taken to renew socialism.

I think that Poland's future lies in greater labour productivity and higher all-round efficiency. Our society has been laying emphasis on distribution and on protecting social interests. These are important, of course, but too little effort has been put into well-organised productive work. Unfortunately, our system did not encourage quality. The reforms, therefore, are designed primarily to upgrade the standards of work both in production and in management.

The conditions for access to power, for the exercise of civil rights, also need to be clarified. Technically, everyone is equal in developed capitalist countries. However, we all know that these societies are differentiated according to the hierarchy of property ownership. The rich always have the upper hand. I believe that the democracy inherent in the socialist system precludes this kind of inequality, making the sociopolitical status of the citizen independent of wealth. On the other hand, under democracy the rights of the individual should not be determined by one's position on the bureaucratic ladder, as happened here until recently.

One attribute of socialist democracy should be genuine equality. In Poland, democracy is often identified with the right to express personal hopes, interests and needs. But democracy cannot exist unless there is a mechanism for reconciling conflicting interests, and resolving incipient contradictions.

People in Poland are free to express their views and demands by making themselves heard on radio and television or by organising demonstrations; in short, you can say all you want. But how can all these words be transformed into joint action? Democracy means accommodating differing views and interests, not simply to avoid mutual destruction, but to yield constructive results.

It is believed that there are irreconcilable contradictions. I don't believe, however, that antagonisms are really quite so numerous, at least in our society. A great deal depends on the approach. If there is goodwill, a decision to everyone's satisfaction is usually possible.

THE ROLE AND PLACE OF THE PUWP

What is the position now of the PUWP, once considered the leading force in Poland?

Unfortunately, as a result of the reasons given above, many people no longer view it as a political institution capable of accomplishing renewal.

Over the past few months the PUWP has turned from the dominant and decisive party into just one among various political forces, albeit a major one with several strong points.

It should be noted here that the party must not think itself chosen by history to govern. The PUWP has to win

this honour again and again by formulating programmes that appeal to the people, to society. There is no other way.

The party cannot consolidate its dominance constitutionally, blocking any alternative with the help of the police and army. In other words, the party has to win influence by political methods rather than by violence and coercion.

The PUWP has now revised its approach. We have realised that coercion as a means of achieving political dominance has a limited effect, and that sooner or later it backfires. There are different reactions to setbacks and defeats, some party members clinging tenaciously to the past and refusing to change anything, others retrenching, seeking to restore Stalinist practices, the reintroduction of which is inconceivable now in Poland.

However, there are people in the party who have had the courage to look ahead and to blaze new trails. In the face of the crisis, we are not retreating, but pursuing our course of reform and renewal.

Early this year the PUWP gave the green light to pluralism. I am often asked if, in view of the practical results of our decision, we regret having done so. First of all, it is too early to draw conclusions; and secondly, pluralism was not invented by the party leadership, but grew out of Polish society. Frankly, the idea of moral and political unity in Poland, proclaimed in the 1970s, had no basis in reality. It was simply an attempt to paper over real differences and contradictions. Our attitude to pluralism does however coincide with the existing situation. At present, this means adapting the political system to the actual alignment of forces and actual circumstances.

PLURALISM AND CONCORD?

In order to find out whether this policy line, made public during the 10th CC PUWP Plenary Meeting,¹ has disappointed us, we should try to visualise what would have confronted us if there had been no pluralism. I am certain that the crisis would have worsened dramatically to the point where an explosive confrontation was inevitable. For the most part, the numerous strikes after the 10th Plenary Meeting were in support of economic demands and contained few political slogans. The main forces—our party and Solidarity—were trying to bring an end to those strikes. Without pluralism, the strikes would probably have been accompanied by political demands and could have created new complications, with riot police confronting stone-throwing strikers. The ensuing violence could have plunged Poland into civil war.

The principle of pluralism was the basis of the general elections held in June 1989. The majority of voters either stayed at home (38%) or voted for someone other than the PUWP or Solidarity candidates, obviously not finding any of the options sufficiently attractive. Thus, none of the participants in the political game have anything to shout about. We have been urging our colleagues in Solidarity to drop their claims to being the only spokesman for the people's interests since the "silent majority" have not fol-

lowed either us or them. Competition has now begun for that section of the electorate, a "no-man's-land" which can be conquered only with correct policies. These undecided voters, who also serve to deflate the political vanity of some in Solidarity, will swing the balance in favour of the force which wins their support by its actions.

We realised that a policy of national concord would be difficult to pursue because the years of confrontation make it hard for the opposing sides to come to terms. Compromises are not easy with the leaders of yesterday's opposition, people who had been imprisoned and harassed. Needless to say formulas for agreement are very hard to work out. All the same, in the recent period we have resolved many crisis situations. The course of pluralism was in jeopardy on more than one occasion, but we always produced solutions which made it possible to take another step in the right direction. I think that the policy of accord is working.

All the factors contributing to radical reforms in Poland and all the obstacles in their way have to be evaluated carefully. The grim economic plight, fuelling social tensions, is a heavy drag on the reforms. If the situation is not improved, social and political life as a whole may be destabilised. Extremism and a thirst for revenge among Solidarity members are also exacerbating the rivalry. In the party, too, quite a few people have a superficial view of the historical circumstances in which we find ourselves. All these seeds may sprout into confrontation.

International factors, such as Soviet perestroika, are very important to the stabilisation of the situation in Poland. The success of perestroika will have a direct impact on developments in our country. On the other hand, what is happening in Poland, especially certain excesses, could have a negative effect on Soviet perestroika.

Like many others, I think that Poland's external debt is not just her own business, but that of the entire world financial system. Generally speaking, that mechanism does not favour less developed countries. Poland's debt cannot be repaid solely in the context of her relations with other countries. There is a need for a global approach. As for the current situation, a moratorium on debt servicing by Poland should be negotiated urgently so that our ailing economy can recover over the next few years and start advancing.

The international climate is generally favourable when there is cooperation and a readiness for mutual understanding. But the world situation could turn out to have a negative effect if there are complications, if tensions arise anew, and if someone decides to exploit the difficulties in Eastern Europe.

Man tends to concentrate on dangers and difficulties. Psychologists even talk about negative-positive asymmetry: individuals and large groups of people taking more interest in negative than in positive developments. It is worth noting that there is one fact favouring Poland's reforms: generally, the main political trends have come to believe that renewal in the country is only possible through

concord and compromise. This approach on the part of their leaders, who have a say in decision-making, inspires optimism.

Of course, pressured by the crisis and other problems, political and trade union leaders may let developments get out of hand. Over the past few months a series of steps have been taken to prevent this, but the danger persists.

The gravest menace today is the further disruption of the market, and also the spiralling demands for pay rises. Higher wages would increase the mass of money in circulation and send prices soaring.

Mazowiecki's government² has a good chance of breaking this vicious circle. The idea of forming such a government should have been backed, if only because today a Solidarity-led government is better positioned than any other to hold off the demands for pay rises. Its success is not assured, but there is a chance. I personally don't think that the formation of such a government bodes ill for the Poles or for the cause of socialism in Poland.

Changes in Poland will take some time. Our state mechanisms cannot be drastically restructured overnight. Today, I think, it is especially important to strengthen the political system to withstand the pressures generated by transformations. We have a gap between social consciousness and the need for reforms. The new parliamentarism which we are now trying to foster allows me to hope that we can consolidate the political institutions. Our failure to introduce the reform can be attributed in part to the serious weakness of those institutions caused by major social forces being outside a political system which did not encompass the whole of society. A sizeable part of the intelligentsia and the working class did not feel masters in their state, and there were complications and destabilisation as a result. Thus our priority is to strengthen the political system so as to take the fullest possible account of the multitude of positions, views and interests. And social renewal can be carried on more efficiently with a strong political system.

Naturally, our party is shouldering a lot of responsibility in this matter. The task is not simply to strengthen the system by expanding it, but to prevent the restructuring drive from veering towards capitalism and to keep transformations within the context of socialism, while conducting them on a far broader base than before.

Nor is the party shirking its responsibility to preserve the social guarantees of working people during the crisis and the far-reaching structural changes. Poles today tend to think that the reform is an imperative, and someone has to pay for it. There seems to be a willingness to accept mass pauperisation as a side effect of changes. This philosophy is wrong. The only acceptable course of transformations is one which will shield the people from misery even at the cost of slower reform. There will be a price to pay all the same, but we cannot choose to support only the enterprising, the strong and the smart while leaving the mass of people to fend for themselves. This is not the socialist approach.

It is vital for the party to regain the people's trust. Party members are looking for ways to restructure that will attract public support. This is a complex process. Incidentally, the new government will face the task of the real exercise of power, which will mean a social experience hitherto unknown in Poland. Up to now the Poles have held the PUWP responsible for everything and blamed every misfortune on party members' incompetence or lack of thought. Now everyone will be able to see how the new government tackles these problems and what factors it has to reckon with. This will help shape a more rational view of our party's policy as well.

Of course, in order to rebuild the party's authority and win back public support, it is very important to formulate a programme for the renewal of socialism and to make it clear whose interests the party will work for, and how. An equally crucial task is to decide on correct methods. In the past the PUWP became an administrator, a tool of government. But in the new situation the party should become a political force capable of making contact with people, winning them over to its side and influencing their minds. In short, the party has to learn the art of persuasion.

Good ideas are not enough: you should know how to put them across to the people. In the past the organisation of the party was adapted to administration. The machinery directed from on high was meant to pass down commands so that they should be followed in accordance with bureaucratic procedures. The entire old structure should therefore be overhauled, and the party's activities reorganised on the basis of initiative, criticism, independent thinking, efficiency and enterprise. I would suggest these as our prospects for renewal.

Our membership is being transformed, and the forthcoming PUWP Congress will immediately concern itself with the further development of the party.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Our present-day vision of the prospects for Poland's traditional allied relations, both political (the Warsaw Treaty Organisation) and economic (the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), is an important problem. The need to shape a new, better model of mutual cooperation is a much-discussed subject in the socialist countries. Whatever model is eventually worked out, it is impossible to imagine Poland without efficient cooperation with the entire socialist community. Poland is located in a particular place on the globe, and our interests are closely intertwined. Any attempt to pursue a policy that ignores the fact that our basic vital aspirations are concentrated here would be absurdly suicidal for Poland and damaging to her neighbours. Undoubtedly, cooperation must be im-

proved. While the European Economic Community has achieved remarkable progress in cooperation and integration, we in the CMEA have failed. A great deal should be changed, but only on the principle of retaining cooperation and relations between our countries on an improved basis.

It is important to know how constructive the concept of Poland's other political forces is on this score. I would say that most Solidarity leaders are aware of the need for such relations. In the government's programme statement Prime Minister Mazowiecki confirmed a realistic view of these problems. At the same time our party and its leaders could help the Solidarity people, (newcomers to politics, after all) to sort things out. The PUWP is using many channels to explain, substantiate and illustrate the advantages of such a position to Poland's interests. We often hear rational talk from our partners, but this is a process, and its results are commensurate with the efforts we are constantly making.

In the main, what is taking place in Poland is contributing towards the realisation of the idea formulated by Mikhail Gorbachov as the building of a common European home. Travelling abroad, I have always keenly felt the frontier, the great East-West barrier where everything stopped, that is, the Elbe River. In the past Europe was sharply divided. Now we are trying to pull down those barriers. There are real opportunities for progress towards unity of a higher order on the continent. The changes in our countries are a precondition for overall developments. But of course, both we and our Western partners should change. The success of the reforms in a number of socialist countries, including Poland, would be an effective contribution to the drastic restructuring of international relations.

The Poles have launched a great experiment, and we cannot foresee its outcome. I don't think we have yet passed the point beyond which the country's history must begin steadily changing for the better. There still are many dangers ahead, and we should take off the rose-tinted glasses.

But there are grounds for optimism—the interest of all the major political forces in Poland in carrying on the transformations with a full sense of responsibility. Another source of our strength is that we are ready to learn from practice, that we are not groping in the dark, but can see the dangers and try to avert them.

¹ Held in December 1988-January 1989.—*Ed.*

² Mazowiecki's cabinet consists of 13 ministers from the Civic Parliamentary Club (Solidarity), 4 from the PUWP, 4 from the United Farmers' Party, and 3 from the Democratic Party.—*Ed.*

THE MORAL MISSION OF CULTURE

Budyn SUM'YAA

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The state of Mongolia's culture—and of any other part of its social fabric—should no doubt be viewed against the background of the major changes currently under way in the nation. The fresh wind of renewal has ruffled the somnolent sea of serenity and awakened the people from decades of slumber. On the whole, the masses are questioning and revising many things in a critical spirit, and vigorously protesting against everything that hampers our progress.

The 5th plenary meeting of the MPRP Central Committee (1988) oriented the party and the people on a restructuring of our society. Firm rejection of the old habit of looking at everything through rose-tinted glasses and deliberately evading acute and topical problems makes it possible to portray contemporary Mongolian culture truthfully. I think it is important to examine issues of spiritual progress in two dimensions—firstly, with regard to the great distance separating the present from the past and, secondly, checking our current level of culture against that of other countries. The purpose is obvious: we should critically assess our shortcomings and map out ways of correcting them.

For millennia, the Mongolian people have been creating a unique culture: witness the numerous surviving rock paintings, archaeological finds, priceless relics of the past and manuscripts. Mongolia developed an official national alphabet in the early 13th century. The *Secret History of the Mongols*¹ is now world famous, as well as some of our other literary and historical works. The remarkable oral tradition, extensively represented in legends, folktales and a heroic epic, accumulated the rich diversity of the people's spiritual and intellectual life and reflected their history, day-to-day concerns, dreams, aspirations and attitude to the world around them. Songs, music, arts and crafts were handed down from generation to generation. The Mongols created an original architecture well geared to their distinctive living conditions, developed and applied folk medicine and veterinary methods little explored by science to this day, and devised an unusual but highly reliable technology for processing and preserving food.

However, under feudal/colonial rule, the people did not have broad access to their great cultural and material wealth and age-old traditions. The bulk of the population was oppressed, deprived of its rights, poor and illiterate, and this impeded the development of Mongolian culture.

The Revolution of 1921 opened clear vistas of national

revival before the Mongols. The cultural and social liberation of the nation was a prime task. As stated in the first programme adopted at the MPRP founding congress in March 1921, "by asserting the rights and freedoms of the Mongolian working people, by abolishing exploitation and oppression, and by ending the bitter suffering of the popular masses, the party wants them to live in peace, gain strength, promote their culture and attain prosperity and universal happiness on an equal footing with other nations".

The years of socialist development have *changed our lifestyles radically*. Among the major accomplishments of our cultural revolution are the complete eradication of illiteracy, the creation of a modern system of education, a network of cultural agencies, the strides made by science, health care, literature and the arts, and the emergence of a national intelligentsia.

In a nation of 2 million, there are more than 20 theatre companies and many song and dance ensembles. National works are produced in all genres and art forms. Our film industry and circus enjoy great prestige. Attendance at drama and other performances has doubled compared to the 1970 level. It is typical of Mongolia's fine arts to build on the finest traditions of the past, improve professional skills and draw on the experience gained worldwide.

Our writers have produced many outstanding works tracing the nation's struggle for freedom and independence and dealing with today's acute problems. Their books have been translated and published in more than 80 countries. Annually, we produce some 800 book titles in up to 7.5 million copies. Particularly prominent are translations of Marxist-Leninist classics and masterpieces of world literature. There are now 37 newspapers and 39 periodicals in Mongolia. The scale on which folk art is developing also testifies to the enrichment of our cultural heritage. Almost one out of every six people takes part in amateur art activities on a regular basis.

The network of cultural and educational institutions is expanding steadily. We have more than 30 museums and hundreds of clubs, public libraries and local lore displays.

The country's growing economic potential provides the material basis on which culture is rapidly developing. During the current five-year period, allocations for this purpose from the national budget are 150% greater than in the previous five years. It is also important that more attention is now being paid to rural areas too. At the 4th plenary meeting of the MPRP Central Committee in 1987 and at the summer 1988 session of the People's Great Hural, the country's legislature, topical issues of rural development were considered and cardinal measures adopted. A programme for improving the cultural and living conditions of the rural population, specifically livestock breeders, has been drawn up and launched. In the coming years, capital investment into the construction of rural clubs alone will be five times the amount spent on all culture and arts projects during the previous five-year period.

We are now soberly analysing and reviewing all of the nation's culture-related problems. Increased public attention to these issues favours an intellectual and spiritual renewal.

A whole generation of our people grew accustomed to not noticing the contradictory nature of many phenomena and to closing their eyes to the complexities of socialism's dialectical development. The illusion was created that no major difficulties would be encountered along this road. The fact that Mongolia was the only country to have bypassed an entire era within a historically short time and taken a giant leap forward in the economy and culture was assessed one-sidedly. The path we had traversed was presented as smooth and simple, which lulled not only us but also our friends abroad who were interested in Mongolia's experience.

As we now realise, the biggest mistake lay in our high-handedly leftist attitude to our heritage and in a distortion of Lenin's idea about the *right combination of national and international factors* in cultural policy and its implementation.

Foreign guests and tourists admire traditional Mongolian songs, the rich folklore, the ancient books made of "nine jewels" and the famous treatises written in gold on silver. They may admire these unique surviving relics, but they do not know how many have been destroyed. The ultra-revolutionary extremist policy which was dominant within the leadership of the party and of the government during the 1930s and which, "in the name of the revolution", was aimed against the allegedly obsolete and harmful influence of Lamaism, resulted in a ruthless destruction of unique riches. Heinrich Heine once remarked that it was horrifying to think of the moment grim iconoclasts rose to power: with their callused hands they would mercilessly break the beautiful marble statues so dear to him. Today, reading what the great poet wrote, we wonder bitterly whether he was addressing us.

More than 700 temples and monasteries were razed. The abandonment of national traditions is felt to this day. The sorry state of our historical and cultural relics and a heartless attitude to our heritage are the tragic effects of the excesses we allowed. This is a stern warning to future generations and to those who are involved in cultural work today.

The material and moral damage has been so great that these losses are hard to recoup. Conservation of the surviving monuments and restoration of the destroyed historic sites, as well as the search for lost treasures require a great deal of money and effort. But without it we cannot overcome the indifferent attitude to national and cultural traditions. And overcome it we must if we want our people to become truly loving custodians of their history and culture and assume a deeply patriotic and active stand.

The nation's transition from feudalism to socialism bypassing capitalism was a social experiment unique in content and tremendous in scope. It called for a profound-

ly scientific approach, a theoretical assessment of facts, extreme flexibility in policy and practical action, and innovation. Unfortunately, we were not prepared properly when we embarked on this complex experiment. As an ancient sage once said, it is not too difficult to conquer the world while riding a horse, but it is much more difficult to dismount and govern a nation. Indeed, with Soviet Russia's internationalist assistance it was relatively easy to carry out an anti-imperialist and antifeudal revolution in Mongolia. But it proved much more difficult to tackle the practical tasks of economic, sociopolitical and cultural change based on public ownership of the means of production and on equality for all citizens. This is also true of intellectual and cultural renewal, particularly its ways and means.

Sometimes an absolutely valid theory or principle is applied inadequately, and the results are the opposite of what is expected. That is what happened in Mongolia with regard to the promotion of culture.

Decades of authoritarian administration crudely distorted the Leninist principle of a party spirit in literature and the arts. Incompetent and rude interference in the creative process and unwarranted prohibitions under the pretext of combating ideas alien to socialism upset the normal development of culture. Administrative methods dampened the artist's creative activity and bred intellectual laziness and a desire to please the higher-ups—at the expense of art itself. All this adversely affected the artistic level of the works that were produced. Genuine values were often replaced with primitive propaganda.

It became absolutely imperative to raise radically the level of our culture. A new course, based on a serious reappraisal of our record, was set forth in the decisions adopted at the 19th Congress of the MPRP in 1986 and at subsequent plenary meetings of the Central Committee. Our policy of cultural renewal means essentially a *consistent democratisation of our society's intellectual and cultural aspects, socialist pluralism* and a rejection of administrative methods and of excessively centralised management. This implies that artists and cultural institutions should enjoy greater rights and more independence and that favourable conditions should be created for mobilising the intellectual and creative potential and for asserting people's abilities and talents. Culture needs more democracy and freedom for the creative quest. We see it as our duty to work hard and adopt a Leninist attitude to culture and to the intelligentsia.

One can say that certain new trends are already surfacing in this sphere. More attention is being paid to historical subjects. Artists are working enthusiastically to fill in the blank spots in literature and the arts and to open previously closed areas. This is borne out by the production of *Duchess Mandukhai the Wise*, a feature film in four parts, of T. Natsagdorzh's opera *Ulen zayaa* (A Lost Life) and of D. Luvsansharav's ballet *Legend of the Sun*, as well as by the fact that work has begun on a feature film about

Genghis Khan² in several installments. Talented directors have produced dramatic and screen works on subjects concerning morals, aesthetics, youth problems and environmental issues. This is natural because Mongolia is a country of children and young people and of unspoiled nature.

Still, it is not so much the subjects themselves as *new interpretations of reality* that matter. Many works raise acute problems and display a critical approach to reality. Their authors are resolved to restore historical truth and get rid of everything that impedes our progress. Our artistic intelligentsia no longer resembles an obedient schoolboy writing what the teacher is dictating (the way it was not too long ago); rather, it is like a gifted student who is independently tackling a subject of his choice. With the party's policy of restructuring in their hearts and minds, our writers and artists are working to implement it and to overcome indifferent and passive attitudes.

A major objective of the drive to democratise culture as we go ahead with our renewal is to have the popular masses not simply remain consumers of cultural values but also *contribute directly to the elaboration and application of a truly moral and humanistic policy*. Restructuring enables the masses, particularly artists and writers, to take a more active part in managing the country's intellectual development. We are already involving them in efforts to assess the artistic level of various plays and films, to select winners at competitions and to nominate candidates for awards and honorary titles.

A Foundation for Culture was established in Mongolia last year, sponsored by a group of artists and scholars. This self-governing civic organisation has drawn up a number of programmes to preserve and restore historic sites. Legislation on protecting cultural relics was adopted in 1973, but there was no effective follow-up. The restructuring drive and the activities of the foundation have awakened the initiative of the working people, including intellectuals. Public opinion has forced the government to take specific steps towards implementing this law and to allocate additional funds for the purpose.

The restructuring of our intellectual and cultural fabric is a complex and contradictory undertaking. It raises many new questions never before encountered and to which we have no ready-made answers. For example, how do we shape sound aesthetic tastes in conditions of pluralism? Frankly, the public is tired of standard works on officially approved subjects. Our people have long been known for their inquisitive bent. You cannot find many other countries where "What's new?" is the traditional greeting. New things are of paramount importance to us. Therefore I believe that we should be more principled in assessing substandard and empty works, refrain from abusing our people's natural inquisitiveness, and judge the ideological and artistic merit of a particular work not only by the number of its viewers or readers. This means that the social and

educational functions of criticism are gaining considerably in importance.

One cannot overlook a complex, comparatively recent and alarming process. If you ask a young man or woman about the stars of the world's popular music scene, the answer will be exhaustive. But it is becoming more and more difficult to find people who can sing folk songs of 30 to 100 quatrains or recite folk epics thousands of lines long. Such performers used to be numerous, but now you can count them on the fingers of one hand. If this process is not checked, our distinctive national culture is sure to perish. This is why we are organising nationwide festivals of folk art. As a result, many excellent types and genres of national folk art which were about to be forgotten have been given a new lease on life.

Can creative pursuits be managed? Previously, orders and assignments were issued from on high, and failure to comply with them invited coercion. Today, completely different methods and a profoundly democratic approach are required. Renewal of our culture will only be successful if proper conditions are created for the *free self-realisation of talents and abilities* and if there is no administrative management of art and no suppression of dissent. We hold that it is all the more important to enhance the role of artistic associations and societies and to transfer to them many functions of the Ministry of Culture, a government agency.

In the resolution of such complex tasks as the formation of a new kind of personality the most important role inevitably belongs to what we broadly refer to as culture. It goes without saying that for all the innovations that are introduced, the profoundly humanistic tradition of the great struggle waged by the finest minds of all nations and all eras for the lofty ideals of ennobling man and his inner world remains valid and is not subject to any overhaul. Commitment to these ideals is the highest criterion by which literature and art are judged.

Intensive interaction with other national cultures is typical of our development today. Mongolia maintains cultural ties with 46 countries. Cooperation with the socialist nations is, of course, central to these relations. In recent years, however, the distinctive and unique character of our national culture has generated heightened attention in the nonsocialist world too. Mongolian choirs, dance companies and folk ensembles have toured the United States, Britain, France, Switzerland, Denmark, the FRG, Japan and several other countries on a commercial basis or within the cultural exchanges framework, and various exhibitions have been organised abroad.

We are also seeking to restore our traditional contacts in this sphere with other Oriental nations who possess the vast and rich traditions of philosophy and medicine, Buddhist culture, diverse types of art and masterpieces of literature.

Rejection of a one-sided approach and of an exces-

sively politicised attitude to international relations and efforts to extend and enhance our cultural ties with Oriental countries without weakening other, already existing contacts are, in our opinion, a topical task for us.

In our ever richer and more demanding age, the growing intellectual and spiritual requirements and the emergence of new cultural needs are a sign of the times. In order to advance more successfully along the socialist path, we in Mongolia have to complete what was left unfinished, correct our mistakes, master our national cultural heritage, protect it from the onslaught of poor taste and

"mass culture", and keep up with the space-age rate at which civilization is developing.

¹ At its 131st session, the UNESCO Executive Council decided that the 750th anniversary of the *Secret History of the Mongols* would be celebrated internationally in 1990. Specifically, the UNESCO resolution notes that this unique book is not only an important historical document of Mongolia and of the Central Asian nations but also a valuable contribution to world literature.—Ed.

² The founder of the Mongolian state in the early 13th century.—Ed.

* * *

TO CURB INFLATION

Emil NIUL

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Inflation means the reduced purchasing power of money when there is too much of it in circulation, prices grow and population's income exceeds the available supply of goods. Regrettably, until recently we have shamefacedly kept silent about this phenomenon, describing it as a characteristic and exclusive ailment of the capitalist economy. It has been held that a socialist economy can balance the amount of money in circulation against the requirements of expanded reproduction, excluding a circulation glut. However, practice has shown the incorrectness of such assumptions.

In fact, inflation surrounds us everywhere. We see it not only in the growth of prices, the huge mass of "uncommoditised" money, but also in a state budget deficit, destabilised market, the subsidies to unprofitable industries and plants, free benefits for the public, and many other things. I would say that the roots of inflation go deep into the real processes of production (its structure, machinery and technology, the productivity of labour, etc.), and into the sphere of the distribution of social product. Moreover, they grow on the basis of economic policy and the system of economic activities, planning and management.

So inflation is a reflection of the many-faceted processes occurring in any economy. The phenomenon itself is as old as the hills. It was born with the arrival of bank notes and has manifested itself widely since the rise of capitalism.

■ **Profound research on this process does not yet exist in the socialist world, whose first international**

The interview was given to a WMR staff member in Budapest before the October congress.

scientific conference on the subject of "The Problems of Balance in the Conditions of Implementing Economic Reforms" took place as late as 1987...

The long period of suppressing or ignoring inflation under socialism now seems to be over and the first steps are being made in its study. However, specialists are far from unanimous in formulating the main concepts and theses of this problem, or the ways to resolve it.

Life has convincingly shown that commodity-money relations are also necessary under socialism and that the products of work should act in a commodity form. According to Marx's labour theory of value, decreases in the value and price of a commodity stand in reverse proportion to the growth of labour productivity in the various fields of social production. Perhaps we too simplistically applied the analysis made during the time of the rise of capitalism to the socialist system. The policy of the fraternal parties in the countries that embarked on building a new society was based precisely on this. But it gradually turned out that the processes occurring in the economy actually did not fit the theoretical reading of the question, like the assertions that the lowering of prices under socialism is an objective law.

Inflation can be judged through the prism of prices: the indicator of their movement indirectly reflects its level, too. Depending on which prices we take as a basis—wholesale or retail—we receive differing "mirrors". Obviously we should prefer "shop" prices as sooner or later they will reflect the changes occurring in production. I say this because a change of labour costs in the production processes can be delayed for a long time and, consequently, they will not immediately affect retail.

Two aspects of the phenomenon stand out. *Hidden inflation*: on the surface of the "sea" of retail prices there is no agitation, but underneath there are processes leading to increases in the cost of goods, wholesale prices, state budget retail stabilisation expenditure and to an upsetting of the equilibrium between the volume of money in circulation and available goods. And *open inflation*, charac-

terised by a marked increase in the general level of retail prices. In my opinion, the latter, when a normal provision of the market with goods is ensured and each can realise his money, is better. Otherwise, people have lots of money, but their requirements are not satisfied.

- **You have mentioned the belief that the lowering of prices is an inherent feature of socialism. However, in Hungary, the Soviet Union and some other countries they really have decreased in the past.**

Politics artificially decided such retail price reductions. They became possible thanks to the fact that the state, through budget funds, intervened in the process of pricing. Only thus did it succeed in demonstratively realising such measures. In production, as far as I know, the level of wholesale prices never decreased. But in the stage of retail prices the state budget could reverse inflation.

- **The economic processes in Hungary and other socialist states reveal that the theory of value you have mentioned was not realised to a sufficient degree. The question arises: is this assumption altogether wrong?**

I think that it is basically right. The fact is that when Marx discovered these laws, commodity-money relations functioned in a world where money had an inner (its own) value and was as much a commodity as any other product. In addition, free competition existed. Under such conditions, it is natural to expect that a change in labour productivity should cause a trend towards a lowering of the value of commodities. But as the world economy grew, paper bank notes issued by the state entered into circulation and money lost its value. A concentration of production increased and monopolies rose on its basis. The situation changed radically. A voluntary element crept into the economic process.

- **Once the state has assumed the regulation of the quantity of money in circulation without backing its inner value, does this mean that much of the inflationary process depends on the expediency of its actions?**

Hungarian experience shows that with an efficient economic policy the state can, if necessary, abruptly change the structures and proportions of production. Let's say, the country's development calls for a redistribution of the national income between accumulation and consumption. In order to change the existing proportions between the various sectors of the economy, to regroup resources and especially the growth in national income, the state, since it issues money, has a "natural" means—inflation.

But inflation does not account for every rise in commodity prices. If a commodity has better new qualities, this alters its content. The price really can be higher than pre-

viously. So I do not regard all its performance-linked changes as inflationary. In practice, however, we often encounter cases when, say, a new machine has become only 20% more efficient while the price, fixed by a monopoly firm, has risen by several times.

- **Can there be inflation if there are stable prices?**

At first glance, the answer here too is negative. However, as labour productivity rises, the value of a commodity inevitably changes; as a rule it decreases. It would be natural to expect a lowering of prices, but if they remain unchanged, with a continued level of the purchasing power of the population—this is inflation.

In most socialist countries, price ratios adapt to changed values in a punctuated way. A general, mainly upward review of wholesale prices occurs once in 5 or 6 years. Two or three such increases help to maintain the invariability of retail prices. This leads to higher budgetary expenditure and more state subsidies. When Hungary began to review its system of pricing, it found that its state budget was already straining under the burden of a large sum of retail price subsidies, because a change in retail prices does not immediately follow the jumps in wholesale prices.

It appears to me that there is no way to completely eliminate the budget retail-price subsidies. The state must intervene in the structure of consumption for social reasons. For example, when it concerns the products for public health, subsidies are indispensable. But with our long-established practice, it is only rarely that we can narrow the range and volume of subsidies. The trouble is that we have set up our mechanism of pricing by declaring invariable retail prices as something good. As a result, this often harms our normal economic growth.

I think that the creation of such a system was a mistake, but it has operated for decades now and problems have gradually accumulated which are now difficult to solve. A number of countries face the question of price reform in their bid to overhaul the economic mechanism. In this case ending the large subsidies for many goods is unavoidable. Of course, economic laws will be observed: prices will obviously reflect the new value rates emerging in production. But how to explain this to the public? If a kilogram of meat suddenly costs twice or three times more, economic and political complications may follow.

For example, in Hungary in the 1950s, when people learned that there was to be a sudden rise in retail prices they began to hoard goods, buying everything they could find, even useless children's toys just to spend their money.

This obviously suggests that for healthy economic development we need to accept inflation, but that prices should at once change appropriately if at a certain stage of production substantial shifts in costs have occurred.

Hungary has, therefore, abandoned general reviews and given the price-negotiating right directly to production

units—industrial plants, trade and transport establishments, etc. Now a huge mass of real transactions underpins the general movement of prices. To some extent this means transferring the state's function of pricing to the population itself. For demand generates supply. If people do not buy a certain commodity, trade becomes the regulator, acting upon the producer.

We have introduced a mechanism for the formation of millions of prices which is new to the socialist countries. Naturally, phenomena arise which were not inherent in previous methods. The economy is always elastic and dynamic, its condition affecting the movement of prices. Soaring inflation is usually evidence of malfunctions in the economic system itself.

■ Can you give us any examples?

Let us talk about the Hungarian experience. After World War II money became worthless. Under the reform of 1946, exchange was conducted at the rate of 400,000 quadrillion pengo (the former monetary unit) for 1 new forint. It seemed that the arrival of what was considered a new "hard" currency had ended inflation. However, I think that inflationary hotspots, with a lasting effect, were then built into the economy.

First of all, the reform was conducted without attracting foreign credits. This alone dictated to economic policy the minimisation of a consumed national income. Furthermore, a course was taken for a sharp increase in the share of accumulation.

■ Did this decision affect wages?

Certainly, as it was necessary to prevent a new wave of inflation and the creation of unduly high (against available goods) purchasing power of the population. And the government took the well-known path: real wages fell to half the 1938 level. The pay-rate scale for skilled and unskilled workers narrowed sharply. Low purchasing prices for agricultural products were established, considerably reducing the farmers' income. Salary earners also fell behind.

Deteriorating living conditions for large population groups served as a disincentive to work. The excessive restriction of accumulation sources in the countryside led to a disbalance between agricultural production and the requirements of society that was hard to remove. This resulted in food prices growing faster than those for industrial goods. Even basic-goods rationing had to be introduced from January 1951.

However, a concentration of energy and resources was so important for the buildup of the country's production potential that there could be no question of relieving the strain. On the contrary, inflation helped increase the share of accumulation in the national economy through a lowering of the material well-being of the people.

■ But in 1949 Hungary's national income already exceeded the prewar level. A land reform was implemented, and a considerable part of the means of production was nationalised. The foundation for planning was laid. Did the character of the processes occurring in the Hungarian economy change then?

The base for national economic growth was created. Our first five-year plan (1950-1954) set a growth target for national income of 63% ("corrected" to 130% in 1952). It still largely went towards accumulation.

How to solve such tasks? The simplest way is to rely on inflation, which the government did in December 1951 through a reform that changed the principles and mechanism of pricing. So the prices of food and industrial goods went up by about 50%. Without exaggeration, inflation shook society. However this led to a 25% rise in the national income in 1952 (as against 1949), although real wages fell to 82.3% of the previous level.

The big new wave of open inflation in the second half of the 1970s is still rolling on. It began when the established main proportions of production and distribution had to be abruptly changed. Another serious reason was the strong deviations of foreign trade prices (in particular, during the world oil crisis) which led to a growth of Hungary's foreign indebtedness and reduced our national income by about 10%. Therefore, the inflation "machinery" was again actuated, bringing a certain improvement in the relationship between the growth of generated and consumed national income.

Yet I think that the problem has become considerably worse over the past few years. In 1988, for example, the state budget deficit almost doubled as against the planned level. Our debts grew and necessary interest payments "ate up" the whole increment in national income. We are in no position to repay them by increasing the efficiency of social production. This means that the government has to dip into the consumers' pockets, to "take away" from the population a part of its hard won living standards.

■ In 1988 the growth of prices in Hungary exceeded 15%. They are expected to increase on average by as much again this year. Food prices rose by 16% to 17%, medicines 82%, cars almost 25%, local transport tariffs by 62%, etc. Has such a situation led to heavy social consequences?

Here it is important to remember that retail price growth is also accompanied by some growth in the incomes of the population, not least through moonlighting. There are many opportunities to earn extra income in our country, such as a "labour partnership" in an enterprise or a contract team working overtime, a cooperative and a private workshop. As a result, 1988's consumption dropped by only 4%. We hope that now this figure will be even less.

The state is trying to ease the position of low-income

people. In particular, the funds allocated for social needs make it possible to recompense pensioners and other categories for two-thirds of their expenses due to price growth. And yet I agree that the situation is causing tension. The brief warning strikes that took place at the beginning and in the middle of the year in some plants, when the prices of meat shot up once again, are evidence of this.

Is it expedient to further increase the share of accumulation in the national income? Unfortunately, the situation is such that, whether we like it or not, we shall have to proceed in just this way. True, this does not mean a cardinal solution of the problem. It is possible to relieve the strain or prevent its further intensification only in the field of production. We want to encourage enterprises to use modern technology to produce high-quality goods in order to raise our export capabilities.

■ **Will this also involve the liquidation of unprofitable plants?**

Yes. The state has been annually setting aside up to 160 billion forints, or almost a fifth of the national income, for subsidies to inefficient, insolvent factories and plants. You will agree that such a load is burdensome not only for the national economy, but also for each working man. It is extremely necessary, therefore, to liquidate or transform uneconomical and loss-making companies, especially those in metallurgy. The base of this industry is obsolete compared to general world development. If we were to invest 200 billion forints and modernise it, it would become profitable. But, of course, we lack the funds to do so on such a scale.

The liquidation of loss-making units and the rapid progress of others can do a lot. Goods affected by low labour productivity are taken out of production. Simultaneously, the economy's overall efficiency grows, and the national income also increases. If the increment proves sufficiently large, there will be no need to regulate consumption with the help of inflation. We shall be able to solve necessary tasks without this, and to allocate considerable funds for the satisfaction of the requirements of the working people.

For a while the two processes go together—remaking the structure of production and the growth of prices. It will take many years to reap the dividends on structural changes, while problems, especially in the foreign economic field (like our debt), continue to "press". However, if the liquidation of unprofitable and the growth of promising units (any production, agricultural or trade organisation) proceeds well, we can halt the inflationary wave more quickly. Otherwise, I am sure that the process will become protracted.

The obstacles, mainly ideological (some also call them social), are strong. Even though we accept that some of our values have become outdated, it is almost impossible to liquidate any economic unit. This so affects the people

working in it that the state itself, fearing conflicts, will inevitably take up their defence. National economic interests clash with those of individual groups.

The inflationary process, in turn, helps invigorate the structure of production. Weaker links sooner or later fail to endure the "overloads" and suffer a financial bankruptcy. In this way we can identify obsolete units in our economy. But, I repeat, inflation by itself cannot solve the problem. If certain forces do not allow the unprofitable plants to be liquidated, it certainly will not work.

■ **Are the recommendations of scientists being applied here?**

Science calls for vigorous, principled action. But the scientists propose, while the politicians take decisions which may cause negative social effects. So not all is simple in life.

Generally speaking, Hungarian scientists produce many ideas, although some of them, in my opinion, are unrealisable. For example, the proposal to use the monetary system on a wider scale, to consider, in particular, labour productive only in the industries whose exports more than recoup investment. But in practice we would again encounter a growth of inflation and the appearance of unemployment, and we cannot allow the army of jobless to grow. This is where the art of balancing comes into play: where to stop and what to do so the least possible social damage is caused by the transfer of manpower from the plants liquidated through economy-wide selection.

However paradoxical this may sound, I think that even a normally balanced economy needs inflation. Labour productivity does not grow equally in different spheres. Extra resources must at once be redistributed rapidly from where efficiency is higher to other units. The requisite "tool" is inflation. There are areas of activities where scientific thought has not shown itself for decades and the technologies that boost productivity are not being introduced. They should also get their share from other sources. So inflation remains here.

Its specific level depends on the differentiation in the growth of labour productivity in the national economy. If in some industries it changes very fast in comparison with others, this yields a high tempo. The more balanced is the growth of labour productivity in millions of points of the economy, the less inflation it will witness.

What is its optimal level? There is no simple answer. Take the service industry. Manual work also determines a corresponding productivity of labour. But this does not change: a barber expends as much effort and work on his clients as he did 25 years ago. Meanwhile the effectiveness of social development has doubled. Yet try to leave this worker's pay at the previous level! A vicious circle forms: in order to give him more money from social accumulations, more inflation is needed.

- **You have noted that inflation is inherent in any economy. But what accounts for its high rate in a number of socialist states**

In the West, commodity-money relations have been polished for decades. So when inflation arises, the West can react positively. Too much time passes before our countries start to correct the situation. Is there any developed capitalist country in which the government has voluntarily decided to change radically the proportions between accumulation and consumption? I think not. Until recently the ability to act in such a way was held to be our advantage, but in reality this is not so because control over the fulfilment of major decisions, some of which are wrong, is absent.

It is high time to fully reveal the nature of commodity-money relations under socialism, because heretofore we have followed the wrong path. The rate of inflation depends on a concrete politico-economic situation, on factors which influence the development of the country. If they demand an abrupt change of the established struc-

ture in both production and consumption, the rate of inflation will be higher. But there is a limit. I believe that it is the state leadership who must perceive these bounds.

- **Thus, inflation is an inevitability, regulation an art, and the politicians must deal with this?**

Regulatory means, as I have already said, lie in the economy. It is the politicians' job to look after the use of the regulators so that inflation does not exceed a certain, almost imperceptible level. The components that influence it are constantly in conflict. A compromise between them offers the level at which it ought to be held. If I were asked how society and the leadership in Hungary cope with inflation, I would say that there has been no "explosion", but that the danger exists. And it will remain until we undertake to rectify the economy through structural reform and by liquidating unprofitable units. Of course, other steps should also follow aimed at improving the financial position of the country.





THE WORLD INDUSTRIAL ECONOMY AT THE CROSSROADS: UNCERTAINTIES AND OPPORTUNITIES



Domingo L. SIAZON

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We continue with our series of articles on the UN family of organisations, begun in our October issue with a contribution by Mostafa Tolba, head of UNEP. Today, the subject is the present stage in industrial development and the prospects for ensuring stable industrial growth and economic security for individual countries and for the world at large.

The creation of a single European market scheduled for 1992 opens up a broader perspective for international cooperation and competition. It will doubtless engender new forces of growth beneficial to the world's industrial economy. At the same time, however, it might well give rise to some negative interactions between the European Community and the world at large. There is every possibility of a "fortress Europe" being built and overly introspective policies being adopted. As a result, some developing countries may remain in industrial isolation. A new trajectory of economic growth is therefore needed. It seems fitting, therefore, to assess the current status of the world economy and the various regional and structural elements.

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At present, the world economy is impeded by *twin imbalances*: one financial, the other techno-structural, the

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latter compounding the former. If we can understand the linkage, we can move towards correcting the imbalances it causes.

Initially, economists thought that the financial imbalance and growing debt could be easily cured. You merely devalued the exchange rate in the debtor countries, while the creditor countries grew faster and imported more from the debtor nations. However, the experience of the past few years has defied this remedy. The external debt of Latin America and Tropical Africa shows little sign of improvement, while the trade surpluses of Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and the newly industrialising economies of Asia continue to swell apace.

Of late, policy-makers have come to realise that this reflects, to a significant degree, differences in technologies and in the rates at which innovations are introduced. Some are now toying with the idea that a form of regionalism could help increase industrial competitiveness and bargaining power. They see this approach as a brake on the growing financial imbalances, at least in particular regions.

This view is being promoted quite vigorously: Western Europe has been working on establishing a single market, while North America is acting on the US Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act and the United States-Canada

Free Trade Agreement. Japan has been pressing for an Asia-Pacific economic alliance. All this will shape the future of the world industrial economy.

For my part, I am concerned that this regional approach incurs the risk of degenerating into born-again protectionism with new barriers being thrown up as trade blocs come into being. The trade imbalances between the United States and Japan are a case in point. I suspect that they are mainly due to structural and technological imbalances which are less amenable to more conventional policy tools such as exchange rates.

Questions inevitably arise about the source of this Japanese competitiveness. In essence, it is a *combination of a high level of investment and continuous technological innovation in industry* that has enabled Japan to manufacture and export a multitude of goods. Since 1970, for instance, the Japanese have, on average, invested more than twice as much as the United States per worker, and the average age of equipment in the United States is 17 years as against 10 years in Japan. Furthermore, the high level of Japanese investment has been supported by a high level of domestic savings.¹

The main point is that the two major trading partners are experiencing different speeds of technological innovation. The expansion of their productive capacity and structural change in terms of output and trade composition are markedly different too. Consequently, efforts to reverse trade imbalances by resorting to a cheaper dollar alone can only have a limited effect.

In addition, when the yen was so revalued as to make labour-intensive segments of Japanese industry unprofitable, the Japanese swiftly moved their plants overseas to places such as South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore—even as far afield as Mexico and the Caribbean. The products and parts produced there were shipped back to Japan and to the United States. The speed at which this relocation took place can be gauged by Japanese direct foreign investment overseas. In 1986, for example, Japanese direct foreign investment in Asia grew by 63%; a year later it increased by 109%.

This ability to restructure, move upmarket through immediate innovation and relocate production sites has enabled many Japanese industries to lower their break-even points continuously in terms of yen to the dollar. A cheaper dollar also means that raw material imports can be purchased at bargain prices, denominated in yen. This yields Japanese manufacturers the enormous benefit of low production costs. Little wonder then that among the OECD countries, Japanese growth rates have been the highest and their inflation rates the lowest.

This development of Japanese industry has been to the detriment of those unable to face up to competition squarely and who must bear the cost of closing inefficient plants. In the United States, the response has thus been to introduce voluntary export restraints, the Multi-Fibre-Agreement, orderly trade agreements and antidumping

procedures, as well as the US-Canada Free Trade Agreement and the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act.

The response in Western Europe has been to introduce local content schemes, voluntary export restraints, antidumping procedures and the Single Europe Act that will enter into force in three years.² This upsurge of domestic and international investment activity represents an added force which boosted growth rates last year in major industrial countries. Even the Federal Republic of Germany, whose rates traditionally trail behind the others, achieved 3.4% growth in 1988 compared to 1.8% the year before.

However, while the investment boom in 1988 contributed to a high rate of growth, there seems to have been some duplication of investment. This has led to global overcapacity in sectors such as motor cars, video-tape recorders, colour television sets, specialised steels and aluminium. This over-investment could lead to cut-throat competition and dumping activities. In short, we might be entering a dangerous and vicious circle. The high level of protectionist sentiment, overcapacity and trade imbalances, if combined with a short-sighted policy based on fear of inflation, could spark off trade wars and a world recession.

An alternative does present itself: one of constructive cooperation. The three greater regions—the European Community in 1992, the United States and Canada, and Japan and the Asia-Pacific alliance—could work together to correct these structural and technological imbalances. An essential ingredient in this scenario would be *sharing technology* with trading partners. This new attitude should replace the traditional stance of technological nationalism. Furthermore, if this process were to be combined with more open trade, a positive-sum-game could result. The world's industrial economy thus faces a major choice.

Fortunately, there are growing signs that sharing technologies is both important and beneficial. This is also reflected in the countries of Eastern Europe, whose economies are seeking re-invigoration through an infusion of Western technology and capital. New ways are being found to benefit both those giving and those receiving technology. For instance, steel producers in the United States and Japan, once traditional rivals, are now partners in joint ventures designed to manufacture better steel at lower costs. Technology-sharing through joint ventures and other means are fast becoming one of the pillars of Asian dynamism.³ As a result, trade is booming, and there is a high level of growth led by the industrial sector.

Conscious of this new momentum, the Japanese are propagating the concept of an Asia-Pacific economic alliance. They have every reason to promote such an idea.

In 1988, for instance, the Southeast Asian region grew at an estimated rate of 8%, with South Korea, Singapore and Thailand leading with double-digit growth. The region's manufacturing sector is estimated to have grown by 12.6%. This impressive performance is the outcome to two decades of uninterrupted growth based on a continuous upgrading of industry's structural base and supported by continuous imports of technology. It underscores the viability of Asia-Pacific economic cooperation that the Japanese are promoting.

In the past, some observers were worried about the world market being limited, if all Third World countries were to try and export the same things. The experience of the Southeast-Asian region has disproved that assumption. The changing industrial structure in each country and trading partner has created new complementarities and opportunities enough to offset the limitations of a static market. Indeed, there are literally thousands of industrial products in which these newly industrialising economies can learn new technologies, invest and trade among themselves. This whole dynamic process has been recently invigorated by the emergence of China. By opening up its economy, it has lent strength to the process of cooperation in technology transfer, investment, production and trade.

* * *

The Asian scene, however, does offer us a glimpse of how the problems of Latin America might be overcome. In essence, the solution to the Latin American debt problem requires a widespread recovery of productive investment in industry and technological innovation. The region's growth needs a stronger base than primary goods whose terms of trade cannot be expected to improve. Financial measures alone, be it devaluation or debt rescheduling, cannot even begin to solve the structural weakness of the region's industry. This is not to say that financial measures are not needed. On the contrary, they are a prerequisite for restructuring the industrial sector and increasing its competitiveness. A strong industry can expect to earn foreign exchange which can be used to service the debt. That, however, is distinctly a long-term proposition.

What concerns me today is that the region looked just as helpless even when the world economy was providing a favourable growth environment in 1988. Conventional wisdom had it that high growth performance in industrialised countries would increase the demand for Latin American exports, thus helping the debtors to earn foreign exchange and service their debts. However, recent records show that indebtedness increased further, while production capacity continued to decline as a result of limited investments in the past.⁴

In short, the region seems to be trapped in a vicious circle: it has to borrow more to pay past debts amid declining production capacity and standards of living. If and when a government introduces austerity measures in order to obtain a trade surplus and so service its debt, it

faces the danger of social and political unrest. The recent riots in Venezuela are a case in point.

Another worrisome factor is the current tendency towards rising interest rates. The Inter-American Development Bank estimated that the two-percentage-point rise in interest rates between early 1987 and the end of 1988 would cost the region dear—about \$7 billion annually. Any basic solution to the debt problem requires that export earnings grow at a faster rate than interest, while the GDP growth rate at least keeps pace with the population growth rate. Under those conditions the debt can be serviced without lowering the standard of living. Such conditions, however, have never been achieved since the beginning of the debt crisis in 1982, and it is unlikely that they will be achieved in the foreseeable future.

A bold new way of thinking is needed. Financial assistance to debtor countries should be combined with an injection of technology. In other words, recycling technological resources is just as important as recycling financial resources. The aim is to restructure industry towards greater productivity and competitiveness for export. The past practice of making the manufacturing sector bear the brunt of any austerity programme has to be redressed. The region needs a coherent policy for technology inducement and industrial restructuring, as well as a debt-related financial relief policy.

As its contribution, the Programme and Budget Committee of UNIDO has proposed a special regional cooperation programme for the industrial recovery of Latin America. The priority areas it suggests include the production of capital goods, human resource development, agro-industries and the application of biotechnology, electronics and new materials technology. *The main thrust of the new programme is to increase economic and technical cooperation among developing countries, including enterprise-to-enterprise cooperation, to consolidate the industrial activities in the region, and to broaden local technological capabilities.* In its totality, a painful, long-term task and yet essential to resolving the chronic debt-ridden situation.

* * *

If the Latin American debt problem appears intractable, that of Tropical Africa appears even more so, although the total external debt of Africa (\$138 billion in 1988) is less than that of Latin America (\$418 billion). Yet the poorer nations of Tropical Africa with an average per capita GDP of \$447 will experience far greater difficulties than their counterparts in Latin America with a per capita GDP of \$1,920 (these are 1987 figures in current dollars).

The ability to make payments on principal as well as accrued interest appears far bleaker for Tropical Africa than for Latin America. Since the onset of the last recession, export earnings in Tropical Africa have plummeted, from \$54 billion in 1980 to \$25 billion in 1986. This, in turn, has depressed growth in domestic sectors throughout

Tropical Africa, inflicting severe damage on the fledgling manufacturing sector. Although the manufacturing sector comprises only 7% to 8% of the region's GDP, it was a growth leader during the 1970s, with an annual growth of 4.5%. However, over the past eight years, the industrial growth rate has slowed down to 2.5%.

Akin to the manufacturing sector in Latin America, industry in Tropical Africa was initially designed for the purposes of import substitution. The majority of enterprises assembled imported inputs, using imported machines and imported spare parts. Export earnings from the sale of primary commodities financed the assembly of these products ranging from motor cars to radios. Input-output linkages with domestic sectors, however, have not developed sufficiently to withstand a drop in essential imports when export earnings fall. Little wonder that industrial capacity utilisation is abysmally low in many countries of the region. In the mid-1980s, for example, the average rate in major industries was 33% in Sudan, 36% in Liberia, 25% in Tanzania, and between 30% and 50% in Zambia.

Import cuts, however, are not the sole reason for low capacity utilisation. Domestic causes also play their part—a lack of managerial skills, frequent cuts in power supplies, inadequate technical service facilities, absence of information and marketing shortcomings.

Fortunately, a keener awareness of these basic problems has led policy-makers to rethink and revise industrial development strategies in the region over recent years. The strategy now being advocated emphasises a shift to agro-based small- and medium-scale enterprises which constitute an important element in the industrial sector. The strategy also includes a selective rehabilitation of ailing industries, retraining employees and their trainers, and repairing deficiencies in the institutional infrastructure so as to provide what people term an "enabling environment" in which the rehabilitated enterprises can flourish.

Industrial rehabilitation is a major feature in UNIDO's programme of technical assistance to all developing regions. It extends from the development of programmes for preventive maintenance through assistance in the procurement and domestic production of critical spare parts to the development of management information systems and the analysis of the financial viability of required new investments. It is estimated that close to half of UNIDO's technical assistance delivery in any one year, which currently stands at \$120 million, is related in one way or another to industrial rehabilitation.

Given the current twin imbalances, financial and technological, in the world's industrial economy, Western Europe is catching up with the United States and Japan, enhancing industrial competitiveness and high technology development. The reinvigoration of industry in Western Europe would offer greater opportunities for trading, leaving low-medium technology areas to the South. The

seriousness with which policy-makers are taking the Single Europe Act, the most comprehensive restructuring measure in history, augurs well for this approach. If successful, the threat of deindustrialisation in Western Europe, be it real or imagined, would fade away.

Nonetheless, Western Europe will have to watch developments carefully and collaborate actively, rather than defensively, with their non-European competitors. If the world economy no longer depends on the benevolence of one single hegemonic power, the responsibility for global economic management must be shared more fully among all the major actors.

On average, wage rates in manufacturing in Latin America and South-East Asia in 1985 were only a quarter of those in Western Europe. When inexpensive labour of this order swiftly learns the skills to manufacture products acceptable to world markets, a powerful new source of growth is created. Once unleashed, this new force will provide opportunities for trade, investment and other forms of cooperation that should not be let slip by. It is equally important that the European Community strengthen its industrial links with Africa which, despite the fact that efforts under the Lome Convention⁵, have been declining in recent years.

This situation makes it all the more important that international organisations such as UNIDO lend strength to the process of cooperation and constructive competition that is not limited to any one particular economic grouping. In its endeavours to fashion a coordinated approach to industrial development and cooperation in the broadest sense of the term, UNIDO has entered into a series of cooperative endeavours with companies and organisations in Eastern Europe to the benefit of the developing countries.

Close cooperation between the countries of Eastern Europe and UNIDO is also ensured by the Joint Programmes that UNIDO has established with individual countries. With Bulgaria, the emphasis is on the ship-building and engineering industries, as well as industrial and technological information; with Czechoslovakia, on the metallic and non-metallic industries; with Hungary on the metallurgical, building materials and construction, electronics and telecommunications as well as pharmaceutical industries; with Romania, on chemical and engineering industries; with Poland, on a whole range of industries; and with the Soviet Union, on such crucial aspects as human resource development, industrial planning and industrial and technological information.

At present, UNIDO maintains nine Investment Promotion Services in Cologne, Milan, Paris, Seoul, Tokyo, Vienna, Warsaw, Washington D.C. and Zurich; another will soon be opened in Moscow. Their principal function is to identify foreign partners interested in sponsoring investment projects in developing countries. They provide developing countries with direct access to technological managerial and financial resources in industrialised countries. The staff at the various offices are in close touch

with the business community and development agencies in their host countries.

East and West alike could thus make greater use of their technological mastery to help developing countries in many industrial fields, and provide many more instances

of effective industrial cooperation, and possibly in a more systematic matter.

The world has still one real frontier to cross—effective industrial cooperation between North and South. UNIDO stands as ready as ever to play the role of catalyst.

¹ In 1981-1985, Japan saved 10.6% and invested 9.1% of its Gross National Product, while the United States saved only 3.2% and invested 4.5% of its GNP.

² Its main objectives are said to include free movement of all goods, services, capital and people between the 12 member countries, reaping benefits from enhanced competitiveness, economies of scale, lower prices, higher growth and more employment.

³ Not only Japan, but also South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong are transferring their technology and capital to Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia to form joint ventures.

⁴ Indeed, investment per worker in Latin America slumped some 36% between 1980 and 1987. Part of this is due to the net resource outflows from the region which since 1982 have averaged \$23 billion per year. This drain on resources also contributed to the meagre GDP growth in the region which last year was only 1.2%.

⁵ The Lome Convention determines the forms of assistance and trade between the 12 EEC nations and their former colonies—66 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.—Ed.

UNIDO: BASIC FACTS

- The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation is the youngest of the specialised agencies in the United Nations system; its current status was granted to it in 1986. With 154 member states, it is devoted to the promotion and acceleration of industrial development in African, Asian and Latin American countries. It also seeks to promote North-South, South-South and East-West industrial cooperation.

- UNIDO has about 1,300 staff members at its headquarters in Vienna and some 700 to 1,000 experts working on various technical cooperation projects in different parts of the world. In 1986 UNIDO delivered more than 1,800 technical cooperation projects to the

value of \$99.6 million. Two years later, this had increased to nearly \$120 million. The number of investment projects and the amount of investment have doubled. Over the past four years, UNIDO has promoted more than 320 industrial investment projects valued at over \$1.4 billion, and in the coming decade this aspect of UNIDO's work is expected to increase appreciably.

- UNIDO prepares studies and surveys of individual industries, countries and groups of countries; encourages the exchange and transfer of technology; organises working meetings of experts and regional advisory conferences; and maintains an industrial and technological infor-

mation bank. It acts as an intermediary between financial, industrial and government agencies in the industrially developed countries and their Third World partners. Cooperation involves the public, the mixed/cooperative and the private sectors. Priority in technical assistance is accorded to the chemical and construction industries, the agrarian complex and steel production.

- Under its projects, UNIDO provides expert services, advises companies on investment, offers scholarships, trains managerial personnel for developing countries and assists them with equipment.

EUROPE: MILITARY INTEGRATION OR COOPERATION IN DISARMAMENT?

Yves CHOLIERE

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The ruling quarters of Western Europe would like the Single Act to come into force in 1993 in the belief that this will accelerate the economic, financial, political and social development of the European Community. In France and in other countries, the implications and the consequences of the new stage in the integration of the 12-nation "little Europe" are being debated widely.

Military and defence problems have not been overlooked in this debate. There are those who want the Community to take them into consideration without delay (there is a provision for that in the Single Act). Others believe that such issues should be tackled by the Western European Union (WEU), thus favouring the status quo. Yet another group wants complete independence from the North Atlantic Alliance—that is, from the United States. Finally, still others expect that NATO's European component will have its way, redivide the responsibilities between it and America and ensure a degree of autonomy for its armies with regard to the United States. The common denominator of all these options is that *they lead to a reinforcement of the West European military capability.*

However, after the Helsinki Conference and the Vienna Meeting, whose results are generally regarded as an important step towards detente and wider cooperation, it appears that a *different option* is possible too. The way has been cleared for cuts in conventional armaments and forces in Europe and for new and broader confidence- and security-building measures, and for furthering the process of nuclear disarmament begun by the Soviet-American INF Treaty, as well as for advancing towards an agreement on halving the US and Soviet strategic nuclear arsenals and signing a convention to ban chemical weapons—a recommendation adopted unanimously by the states participating in the Paris conference on the subject in January 1989.

Naturally, all this will be translated into reality if it proves possible to remove all the barriers erected by the WEU governments—who have a hard time accepting new realities. True, pressure from public opinion is forcing them to invoke the concept of disarmament in their analyses and declarations. At the same time, however, they are continuing to build up military capabilities in order to achieve security on the basis of military superiority ("don't lower your guard"), and they are cautious with regard to the

changes that have begun in the Soviet Union and of the military and diplomatic initiatives it has advanced. Such an attitude can serve only to slow down the disarmament process, and one cannot rule out the possibility that some circles even hope to block it.

The WEU is seeking to bolster West European military potential. Since the United States is having considerable difficulties in honouring its commitments in Europe, it is being demanded that the WEU members take on a bigger share of the common burden.¹ As a basis for this policy, a "Platform of European (or rather, the WEU's.—Y.Ch.) Security Interests" was adopted in The Hague in October 1988. Its provisions are aimed at extending integration to cover security and defence so that West European countries would rally closer together and work more effectively to discharge their solidarity obligations under the treaties that established the WEU and NATO. The paper reiterates the indivisible nature of the North Atlantic Alliance, the need for continued close ties to the United States, and the member countries' commitment to strengthen the European element of NATO.

It follows from the platform that, contrary to the hopes expressed in some circles, a European defence independent of the United States has no future and that the WEU's autonomy within NATO is quite limited—all the more so because America's sizable conventional and nuclear presence is considered as essential to European defence.

Since nuclear deterrence remains the doctrine of the WEU and NATO, the platform approved in The Hague in fact justifies the moves to "modernise" the US land-, sea- and air-based nuclear weapons stationed or being deployed in or near Europe.

Inspired by the spirit of the platform, a drive is on to galvanise the hitherto lethargic WEU. The first phase has been completed, and proposals are being made on further steps to be taken. For example, the seven original members have agreed to let Spain and Portugal join the WEU. There are other applicants too. The qualifications for admission fully reveal the true motives of the effort: you have to be a member of both NATO and the European Community and accept a mandatory provision incorporated into the document on the establishment of the WEU. Should one of the High Contracting Parties become the object of armed aggression in Europe, the other parties shall aid and assist it with all the military and other means at their disposal.

Some countries are behind as it is in honouring their commitments to NATO as far as maintaining and augmenting the common military power is concerned. Besides, given the changes occurring in international relations, it has become ever more difficult to impose rearmament and increased military spending on the public. But, by contrast, other nations are impatient: witness the *intensification of military cooperation and integration* between France and the Federal Republic of Germany. The meetings and reciprocal visits of the two armies' general staff officers and the activities of the Paris-based Institute for Advanced Na-

tional Security Studies are playing an important role in this process. Large-scale joint military exercises codenamed "Courageous Sparrow" and involving the Rapid Action Force have become a regular feature. An army brigade in Böblingen, FRG, and a defence council are being set up jointly—the nucleus of a "common European defence" around which those willing to accept the West European military integration gamble are supposed gradually to rally.

Simultaneously, the *joint manufacture of munitions* is developing too: the integration of forces is being accompanied by a standardisation of materiel. The initial attempts did not always produce the desired results: witness the failure of the project to produce a European combat plane. The dissimilar interests of arms manufacturers in different countries clash at times, and this is why the production of standardised military hardware has so far made little headway. A search is on for ways of overcoming the difficulties and reconciling the contradictions between the industrialists as soon as possible. High technology and space programme techniques are suggested as a solution; this would call for new design offices, new industrial alliances and new factories which, in this case, are likely to be built on a supranational basis.

From this perspective and with a view to settling the issue without delay, three proposals have been made recently: (a) a defence research project commissioned by the European Independent Programming Group, (b) a European Institute for Advanced Security Studies which, within the WEU framework, would also tackle arms production problems, and (c) a military version of the EUREKA project which, although civilian, has branched out into certain military fields but is no longer sufficient to meet the demands that have been formulated.

The military integration of the WEU's 9 member countries is therefore *well under way*. It is supposed to consolidate NATO's European nucleus while preserving complete solidarity with the United States. But it is still difficult for public opinion to grasp the scope and gravity of this undertaking. A clear understanding of the matter would surely help dispel the illusions some people entertain about the idea of a "little common Europe".

In light of the easing military tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union and of the outlook for the negotiations in Europe, the Soviet-American talks on strategic offensive armaments and the international dialogue on banning chemical weapons, it is paradoxical to claim that the military buildup in the WEU countries and the integration of their forces into a bigger military structure would further the cause of US-Soviet and NATO-Warsaw Treaty disarmament.

The renewed attempts to create an "integrated European army" are accompanied by an *extension of the powers of the WEU bodies*. Until recently, their strategy was limited to the European theatre, but the idea of using WEU member countries' armed forces outside Europe has since been revived. The WEU was directly involved in the Gulf War: France, Britain, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium sent their naval forces there; the FRG, whose Constitution

forbids participation in such operations, "covered" NATO's Mediterranean flank by providing warships to replace those naval task forces of its partners which headed for the Persian Gulf; the government of Luxembourg partly financed the Belgian and Dutch naval presence there. These efforts were coordinated under the aegis of the President of the WEU Assembly in a way which is emerging as a permanent function of this organisation.

The Western European Union is dragging its feet in the disarmament process begun between the United States and the Soviet Union, fearing that the popular movement might force it to effect greater arms reductions. This is why the limited but positive proposals set forth by President Bush at the NATO summit in May, while approved as a policy platform by all the participating states, provoked dissatisfaction and in some cases hostility. This, for example, was the French response to the prospects for negotiating partial cuts in short-range nuclear weapons.

It is true that earlier the WEU Assembly (and France in particular) had fully supported the idea of "modernising" such European-based systems without delay. During the June session of the WEU Assembly, France sought to update its arguments to convince everyone that a "Soviet threat" still existed—although this notion has been rendered untenable by the dynamic proposals and unilateral disarmament moves of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. The need to preserve the strategy of nuclear and conventional deterrence and a sizable US military presence in Europe was reaffirmed vigorously.

The fundamental precepts based on the famous "don't lower your guard" attitude which are still upheld by the WEU are aimed at guaranteeing European security through military superiority.

It is worth recalling that France was the first to advocate a revival of the WEU. France was also the nation that proposed a draft "Charter of West European Security", subsequently transformed into the "Platform of European Security Interests". France has begun military cooperation with the FRG and is promoting the development of a European arms industry. She has also sponsored the idea of a European Institute for Advanced Security Studies and of a second EUREKA programme to ensure cooperation in arms manufacture.

Finally, special emphasis should be placed on the current plans to impart a *European dimension* to the French nuclear capability. France is working hard in this direction and cementing its cooperation with the British nuclear forces. Under the 1987 Military Programme Law, approved in the National Assembly by all parties except the PCF, France is to considerably augment its nuclear forces—to build new-generation submarines carrying high-yield missiles with a range of more than 5,000 kilometers, and to deploy new surface-to-surface and air-to-surface missiles, as well as Hades tactical missiles, whose range has been stretched to the limit prohibited under the US-Soviet INF Treaty. All this makes it possible to triple the present destructive capacity of the French nuclear forces.

It is incontestable that France, which cannot compete

with the FRG economically or financially, is striving to play a preponderant role in West European military integration and to upgrade its nuclear capability.

An analysis of French defence policy makes it hard to believe that François Mitterrand's recent statements in favour of disarmament will be matched by a real resolve to achieve it. For these statements to be credible, France should take more specific and numerous steps in all fields—for example, as it was with the suggestion to convene a conference on chemical weapons (which Paris hosted in January 1989).

Everyone agrees that the progress achieved and the prospects opening up in the sphere of disarmament have been made possible by the many proposals and concessions forwarded by the USSR and other Warsaw Pact countries. However, to one of the Soviet initiatives—that on scrapping all short-range nuclear weapons—the United States and NATO have so far given only a partial response. The postponement of the decision to modernise the US Lance missiles deployed in the FRG and the agreement in principle to a phased reduction of short-range missiles no doubt represent a positive development. But the important thing is to secure the *complete elimination of this type of nuclear weapons*: there are more than enough of them in Europe, and they are as dangerous as any other as far as the outbreak of a nuclear conflict is concerned. Short-range missiles pose a direct threat to the Germans, both in the FRG and in the GDR, and to Czechoslovakia.

By organising numerous actions, European public opinion and peace activists contributed effectively to the implementation of the INF Treaty. However, its signing is generally credited mostly to the powerful campaign which swept the continent during the early 1980s in protest against the deployment of the Pershing-2, cruise and SS-20 missiles.

Today, as yesterday, *vigorous intervention by public opinion remains the central element in the advancement of the disarmament process*. The events staged in the FRG, France, Belgium, Britain and other countries in spring reflect the growing popular demand that all types of nuclear arms be destroyed and chemical weapons be banned as soon as possible—that is, by the year 2000—and that conventional forces and armaments be cut drastically.

In France, the peace movement is developing precisely on this basis. The demonstration held in Strasbourg jointly with West German pacifists, the action of protest on the Albion Plateau, where strategic nuclear missiles are sited, and the large-scale demonstration "For the Human Right to Peace", organised in Paris by the Appeal of the 100 group, highlight these growing popular demands. Men and women in France are more and more active in urging an end to nuclear tests on Mururoa Atoll and a halt to the development of new types of nuclear and other weapons stipulated under the legislation I mentioned. They are also calling for reductions in arms spending.

Opinion polls indicate an increasingly favourable attitude to the idea of a *national policy for disarmament*. As it

pursues its rearmament policy, the government has to take these sentiments into account.

The struggle for European disarmament launched by the peace activists in France is at the heart of the following alternative—either a "little Europe" which would, through integration, go on to strengthen the European nucleus of the North Atlantic Alliance, or a geographically entire Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, shaped thanks to cooperation in all spheres irrespective of the socioeconomic systems existing in individual countries. This is the option of building *Europe through disarmament*.

The ideas and proposals advanced by the French Communist Party in the programme adopted at its 26th Congress in December 1987 remain quite topical. Outlined in this programme are objectives capable of rallying the French people together so that, acting with determination, they could secure for France a vigorous policy oriented on disarmament and based on national independence and peaceful cooperation among European nations.

The PCF fully supports the Helsinki process and holds that we should work unflinchingly to enhance its three main components—confidence-building and disarmament measures; economic, scientific, cultural and environmental cooperation; and cooperation in the free movement of people and ideas, as well as steps to uphold and extend human rights.

Our party is opposed to the creation of NATO's European nucleus and to the integration of the French armed forces into its structure (including the establishment of a Franco-West German brigade, of a Joint Defence Council, or of any joint command). We are against France's covert or open re-entry into NATO's integrated military organisation and against any kind of European effort to manufacture the arms the nation needs for purposes of defence. I repeat that Communist deputies were the only ones to vote in the National Assembly against the military programme bill. The PCF maintains that France should *join vigorously the drive to eliminate all types of nuclear weapons*, including its own strike forces. We demand an end to nuclear tests and termination of the programmes for the development of new armaments. We demand that our defence spending be reduced by 40 billion francs. This is what our party's deputies will advocate in the forthcoming parliamentary debate on updating the military programme legislation now in force.

The Communist Party believes that, on the basis of respect for the principle of equal security for all, France should support all possible disarmament moves and the negotiations now in progress, and take part in those that directly concern our national security. The PCF favours the conclusion of a treaty on collective security in Europe.

¹ NATO has confirmed that each member is to increase its military budget by 3% a year in real terms.

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

PROGRESS THROUGH NONVIOLENCE

Alfonso ARGOLAS

President, Humanist International

The constituent congress of the Humanist International was held in the famous Renaissance city of Florence at the beginning of this year, bringing together humanist parties from almost 40 countries around the world. It marked the end of yet another stage in the consolidation of an alternative movement which emerged on the basis of youth organisations in Latin America and Western Europe in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the period when the "counterculture revolt" of the "new left" began to wane. In its wake another international was created whose ideological platform contains these planks: first, man is at the top of the hierarchy of social values; second, social renewal must be nonviolent, but different from nonviolent resistance to evil; third, cooperation is the prototype of the future society, for it will truly bring out the creative potential of free men and women; fourth, the inalienable right of each to freedom of choice and self-expression.

The principles have been formulated and the objectives set, but they do not seem all that original. In various forms they have already been propounded by the left forces. Why then set up a Humanist International?

WMR asked the president of the new organisation to answer these and other questions.

The reasons we have decided to unite are the same ones which produced so many humanistic parties in the 1980s. One may well ask: why help fragment the left forces if it is possible to reach accord on a common basis? Our view is, however, that none of the significant left parties is guided by the whole set of nonviolence principles we have worked out. Such attempts have been made by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, for instance. But we feel that their experience is now inadequate both in theoretical and practical terms.

This was the main consideration in setting up a left organisation, the salient feature of which is a commitment to active nonviolence. Let me add that we stress the word *active*, and no other. Nonviolence must be a means of offence and not of defence, by which we mean consistent

civil disobedience in the face of any oppression. This may look like anarchism, but it is not. Rather, I would say that it is a constructive social alternative urge for self-government.

The need to organise and coordinate the actions of those who are powerless in the face of the institutions of power and whose interests are neither reflected nor taken into account by the policies of the parliamentary majority is another reason for the establishment of the International. These are mainly young people seeking to find meaning and purpose in life. We seek to help them by promoting the spiritual development of society as a whole.

The mass media are now a key instrument of policy, a tool for influencing public opinion, but there is no substitute for direct contact with people, which is now more important than ever before. Other parties have different criteria: while playing the political game, they do not always make direct contact with people and prefer to act with circumspection. This kind of attitude would put our young movement in jeopardy and, in effect, dissolve it among the existing parties. But it is our view that many of these parties have no prospects: some are at the crossroads, others are in a state of crisis. We believe that this is the result of indifference to traditional politics on the part of ordinary people, our main ally. People have new aspirations, and when these are not met, forces more sensitive to them will be found. These are reflected in the emergence of our international, which is a *part of the new political situation* on which we are trying to exert an active influence.

We do not, of course, deny the importance of cooperation with political forces of different ideological persuasions seeking to answer human problems. Thus, fruitful relations have been established between the Communists and neohumanists in Chile. Troubles have occasionally arisen, but these relations are on the whole productive, as their joint activities within the "No to Pinochet" front has shown. At the same time, in many countries humanistic parties have had no contacts with major left-wing organisations, and in some our relations with the Communists have recently cooled. In Italy, our presence is being ignored. In some cases, we have even been ranked with the Right or branded as their servitors.

■ Is this the result of the mystical nature of the principles adopted by some of the parties within the International, like the ideas of "Siloist humanism",¹ or is it that you are not yet well known? Perhaps your organisations are not regarded as authoritative and responsible partners?

All the humanistic parties are secular, although their members are free to profess any religion they like. That is one of our main principles. We do not "differentiate" people by nationality, gender or religious creed. But man is not only a rational being: he is also moved by subconscious impulses, motivations, irrational responses, etc. If

this approach is regarded as mysticism, I do not think there is anything bad in it.

Let me stress that we are always open to dialogue and will make contact wherever we find a readiness to do so. If there is no such readiness, we hold ourselves to be morally uncommitted. In short, we go our own way, while seeking points of contact with other forces. For instance, bilateral ties have been established between the International and the government of Zambia. The Statutes of our organisation allow membership for humanist and other organisations committed to the humanist world outlook. Without contrasting ourselves to various international forces and movements, we believe that we are taking a definite step forward as compared with their humanist ideas and heritage. We are grateful for their experience, including that of the Social Democrats and the Communists, but this is a changing world and time is fleeting.

We are not hermits, and if modern Marxism can propose anything new, it is welcome to do so. For all that, we do not reject the value of the humanist ideas which spring from the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl² or from existentialism.³ We accept these ideas, which is why we rank ourselves with the *non-Marxist left spectrum*.

■ **Your main purpose is to end violence. But is that not also the objective of the new political thinking, and of the concepts of "full" and "universal" democracy, which several communist parties are advocating?**

For us, Soviet perestroika and the USSR's efforts to build a nonviolent world are, for the time being, the only qualitatively new political event and positive factor of modern history. They are evidence of a viable policy, but the phenomenon is still so new that it is not yet possible to assert that the worldwide situation has changed irrevocably for the better. Nevertheless, world development has been stimulated by an important trend barely conceivable five or so years ago. These beginnings, which are beneficial for the destiny of humanity, need to be fortified and advanced.

The main thing is that numerous problems have been accumulating in the social sphere. We have begun small, with what is within our reach, because our movement is not yet strong enough and cannot cope with the formulation of major practical tasks. But wherever we can, we try to help people in their daily lives in the hope of persuading them to join our ranks. This happened in Iceland, where the work of humanists in the community has won electoral support.

Direct contacts—methods of work which differ from those of many other parties—bring success. We collected only \$70,000 for the "No to Pinochet" campaign—the Pinochet clique had millions at its disposal and lost. Our activists joined the Communists in going from street to street, and from door to door to talk with people. Our cause was also promoted by the humorous nature of

some of our measures. To some this may seem naive, but there are forces already imitating us.

I am sure that the future belongs to us. The time will come when the principle will be: "What I do for others returns to me". That, in a sense, is self-government.

■ **This would seem to signify a negation of political principles, yet you have begun the construction of a party and formalised yourself as an international organisation. How does this accord with the principles proclaimed by the International?**

In my view, political parties, having become various human tools, must gradually fade away as institutions. There is still a long way to go as far as practice is concerned. There is a need to elaborate unprobed tactical methods, and we are searching for these by studying the available experience, notably the practice of self-government in Yugoslavia and other countries.

One of the tasks of the Humanist International—since it has no executive functions but merely coordinates the activities of its member parties (it is not a superparty)—is to engage in dialogue, polemics and a quest for the new. We believe in what we are doing, but, I repeat, we are prepared to alter our stand.

■ **Are you satisfied with every aspect of the concept adopted at the congress? How is it to develop?**

It is important to deepen our understanding of the essence of the present turning-point in history. It clearly shows that humanism tends to "disappear" and then to "reappear" on a higher qualitative level. It is now on the upsurge once again. We seek to comprehend the causes and peculiarities of this phenomenon through a wider exchange of views. Hence the visits to the USSR, Hungary, Yugoslavia, India and the countries of South America.

Let me say quite frankly that one of our weak points is an inadequate understanding of the trends in the evolution of the world economy, and the ways of eliminating the mechanisms and structures which hamper its development. Our concept of self-government is still far from perfect, but we are engaged in research and experiments. In India, for instance, where millions of people huddle in urban slums, our supporters have been trying to set up small self-governing cooperatives in the countryside to get some of these outcasts away from the slums and to give them hope for the future. We also need to lend our creativity to predicting future trends and establishing a clearer picture of what is in store for mankind.

Furthermore, there is the problem of access to the mass media. The humanist parties are poor and have virtually no access to the mass media: we are parties of the poor. We have no famous people who could promote our ideas, nor are there any professional politicians among us either.

■ **Your humanist movement originated in Latin**

America, in contrast to liberation theology, which has European origins. Is this due to the ideological ageing of the industrialised North, to the further cultural decline of Western civilization?

I have already said that it is due to the worldwide historical situation: the fact that people are weary of violence and that there is a *general yearning for involvement*. The idea of reviving humanism existed, initially materialising where violence was breeding yet more violence, where there was an atmosphere of fear and terror. But the urge for nonviolence turned out to be acceptable even to those who were outwardly well off. An understanding grew that bureaucracy was impotent, that it was indifferent to the lot of citizens, and that this and other social defects had to be eradicated, not through destruction, but through the creation of alternative cultures which would make official institutions superfluous. Whatever the reason, there was significant general acceptance of and return to humanistic principles. Hence the need for our special International.

■ **How do you view the prospects? After all, the alternative culture ideas have come and gone, "Icarian communism",⁴ for instance. What happens if your projects prove to be unrealistic, if your supporters are disappointed when hopes for a new life founder and are seen to be illusory?**

Every social movement passes through different phases of development: origination, culmination, decline and disappearance. Our movement is now in a better position compared with others: our road has just begun and we are taking over from the old ones. The time may well come (and I hope it is some way away) when our International no longer meets human demands, but life is dynamic and someone else will take over. We expect this to happen. I believe that, if our doctrine is not divorced from our actions and daily political practice, the International is unlikely to become obsolete as a movement. Experience shows that there have been declines in the humanist movement in the past, but new forces always came to the fore and gave it new strength. The Polestar is always up there, whether it rains or shines. We are deeply committed to our seminal ideals.

■ **The ideals of nonviolence have in the past led Christianity, among others, to the very opposite.**

Indeed, while preaching "Thou shalt not kill", the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages persecuted dissidents for their beliefs and this produced disbelief. But man has continued to feel the need for spirituality. A common human faith may emerge in the future which will give man the *measure of his humanistic essence*.

Because the State refuses to wither away, and because the distance between the powers that be and ordinary citizens has not narrowed, while mutual enmity remains in society, people tend increasingly to look to the truly

humanist values. Whenever humanity is uplifted it is important that the human essence is recognised; when this height is reached humankind can go far. What I am saying may sound like mysticism, but we believe that God exists within every human being on our unfortunate planet as the vision of a great future.

■ **Do you not think that the spread of the ideas of the Humanist International and their conflict with other ideas could be regarded as a form of spiritual violence, limiting the very freedom of human choice you are working for?**

We are not trying to force anything on anyone, but merely to offer an alternative, we don't claim to be infallible, we just want to give people a greater choice of ways to change life. It is up to them to make the choice. In this way we can reduce the monopoly in the spiritual sphere.

But our International is concerned with the loss of the sense of the future among people. There is now a prevalence of nihilism, which has affected various parties and ideological trends. Through this screen humanity is finding it hard to make out the future. Many cannot see its image or contours, are even afraid of it, believing that it is some kind of imminent tragedy. Hence, the disbelief and apathy. Our duty is to remove the screen, but we cannot do that alone. We could be said to be trying to solve problems larger than ourselves.

Figuratively speaking, the *Renaissance revival has begun*. But if this process is to be accelerated, there is a need not only for new internationals, but for broader internationals. Perhaps, an International of Internationals, a Movement of Movements, a sort of super- or ultra-international. After all, we are working to solve problems bigger than us, that is, *global* problems, and this requires cooperation and solidarity among people. That is the objective of our International.

¹ A concept propounded by the modern Argentinian thinker Mario Luis Rodriguez Cobos, also known as Silo. His works expound the nonconformist spirit of Buddhism.—Ed.

² A humanist attempt to overcome the mentality of scepticism which had gripped Europe at the beginning of this century. In particular, Husserl turned to intellectual intuition, which he regarded as a way of understanding and transforming the world.—Ed.

³ The philosophy of existentialism emerged under the strong influence of Husserl's phenomenology. It concentrates on man, his destiny in the modern world, belief and disbelief, loss and discovery of the meaning of life, etc.—Ed.

⁴ See Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, pp. 392-408.—Ed.

GOALS OF THE PEACE FORCES

Andre De SMET

Vice President, World Peace Council; President, Vrede Research and Information Centre on Peace and Development (Belgium)

The new far-reaching processes in the world community are having an increasingly marked effect on the activity of the peace forces. The interview below, granted to WMR by a veteran of the peace movement, deals with their consequences for the peace movement.

■ **What do you think are the reasons behind the current changes in the West European peace movement?**

Naturally, the more important among them are the improvements in East-West relations, the new warmth in international relations and the evolution of the public mood. After the Soviet Union and the US signed their agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles, struggle against which had been a major goal for our movement over the years, it might have seemed that the movement was on the wane. Some people thought that there was less need for mass action: why should "the man in the street" intervene in state politics when governments were talking to each other and when real prospects for stronger peace were being opened?

Indeed, you would be hard pressed today to find a head of state who would publicly spurn peace and declare for war. You cannot ignore the desire of sensible politicians, including those governing West European countries, to remove the threat of a nuclear conflict.

But it would be absolutely wrong to argue that there is no need for a mass peace movement because statesmen will do everything there is to be done. There still are forces which have an interest, if not in war itself, then in perpetual preparations for war. Arms production is still a lucrative business. The military-industrial complex continues to derive huge profits from the arms race, and is pressuring the ruling quarters, thus blocking disarmament. Apart from that, the Cold War is dear to certain individuals and groups because they have put their political stakes on it; to them isolationism, hostility and the destabilisation of socialist countries are the only possible attributes of East-West relations. Even many of those who do not want the Cold War still believe that security continues to depend on military strength. The improvement, modernisation and stockpiling of weapons continues to be viewed as a way of averting war. "Strong defences" are being held up as the principal condition for stronger peace, hence the calls

"not to slacken vigilance", to carry on rearmament, to retain nuclear weapons, to modernise arms arsenals, and to look for technological "trumps" in rivalry with the probable enemy. These views are fuelling the arms race, encouraging higher spending for military purposes, and increasing the burden on the civilian economy.

The policy line of the peace forces is thus opposed to very real and extremely dangerous concepts. While the need to counter them and to assert a genuine policy of peace and international cooperation remains, broad public actions for the purpose are also necessary. The point is to help in the formulation of such a policy and to give the man in the street, the masses, an opportunity to express their views on problems, the solution of which is essential to their existence and well-being.

Although the international climate has improved, the war threat has not been removed altogether and a great deal is yet to be done to eliminate every risk of war. At the same time the prevention of war is not the only goal of the movement: *it is important to know what peace will be like, what its content will be.* The tasks of socioeconomic development and of improving general living standards are closely linked to the prospects for stronger peace. The lessening of confrontation between states, broader fruitful international cooperation and the release of the huge resources currently spent for military purposes and their conversion to peaceful uses could substantially influence the pace and direction of social progress. As the war danger lessens and the international climate improves, our movement is shifting its priorities to social goals. This is one of its hallmarks today.

■ **What specific priorities do you mean?**

Take the links between socioeconomic development and disarmament. They are perceived more and more clearly by large sections of public opinion, and are attracting the attention of more people in industrialised countries, both capitalist and socialist, and in the Third World. One example is the evolution of social consciousness in Belgium, where we see the growing activity and influence of those organisations and movements which are advocating both effective antiwar measures and greater support for the peoples of the developing countries. As a result, the sum total of donations raised for them every year grows along with public aid (in Belgium public aid increases in proportion to voluntary donations). One can say that today our people are far more sensitive to processes in the developing countries and on the international scene in general.

The noticeably increased involvement of religious leaders and organisations in peace efforts is quite remarkable in this context. Many Belgian clergymen long served in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Quite a few of them have embraced the liberation theology and, on their return home, have begun actively to promote the ideas of solidarity with the developing nations and liberation movements, and also to work for disarmament and

stronger peace. They see a reduction of military spending as a means of relieving poverty and misery in the Third World. It is not by chance that two of the more important antiwar coordinating committees—the Flemish Committee of Action Against Atomic Weapons (VAKA) and the Peace Discussion Centre (OCV)—are headed by Christian leaders.

In Flanders, where Catholicism is very influential, peace efforts have been invigorated as a result. While in the 1950s and 1960s Walloons made up roughly two-thirds of the antiwar movement and Flemings one-third, the proportion has now been reversed: the upsurge of the peace movement predominantly among the Christians has changed the situation and contributed to the overall rise of antiwar sentiments in Flanders.

The relationship between disarmament and aid to development for the former colonial and dependent nations is quite concrete. In Belgium, 0.5% of GDP is set aside for such aid. We are insisting on the figure being raised to at least 0.7% in accordance with the principle approved by successive Belgian governments at the UN-CTAD sessions. But where is the money for this to be found? The country's budget is saddled with huge external and internal debts, largely the result of defence spending, which claims billions of francs a year. NATO leaders are now demanding that member countries raise their military budgets by another 3% a year. Even many conservative politicians are saying that it is an unbearable burden.

Apart from that, large sections of the population are stepping up social pressure. This year workers in the public sector, including railwaymen, communal and health workers, etc., have taken part in major strikes across the country. Large funds are necessary to meet their demands and resolve other social problems. Seeing a warplane overhead, many Belgians say, "There is our money flying away!" They demand that priority be given to the interests of the people rather than to those of the arms manufacturers.

If we add to these concerns the acute need to appropriate huge material and financial resources for protecting and improving the environment, averting an ecological catastrophe and resolving other global problems, it becomes clear that the conversion of military spending to civilian purposes, which means a *transition to the economy of peace*, is the key question of our time and, accordingly, a central element in the programmes of the peace movement. We organise broad public discussions on this problem, involving in them people of differing politics and ideologies from East and West.

■ What is the Belgians' response to such activities?

We are feeling a change in the public mood and the warming up of the atmosphere in which we operate. Not long ago those who were urging arms cuts and less military spending were portrayed in the media as enemies of security, almost as saboteurs. Peace campaigners were branded as "Moscow puppets" and "traitors". All sorts of

tales were used to discredit us in the eyes of the public. In 1981 and 1983, the *Gazet van Antwerpen* conducted a daily campaign of slander against the coordination committees of the peace movement, especially against our Vrede. I personally was treated as a "foreign agent", a "KGB man", etc. Since it was on my initiative that the coordinating committees (OCV and VAKA) were established, they alleged that I was manipulating the peace forces on orders from Moscow. We took the slanderers to court and won our case, but the chamber of appeal vindicated them.

Today the situation is notably different. The peace forces have more authority and a greater public prestige. Their appeals for a transition to "an economy of peace" are no longer considered subversive, but are listened to as the voice of reason. Two circumstances have played an important role here. Firstly, appreciation of Soviet foreign policy has been growing. Mikhail Gorbachov's proposals for building a "common European home", broadening international cooperation and taking steps towards disarmament are winning more and more support. The "enemy image" is waning and references to a "Soviet menace" as justification of appeals for "vigilance" and the arms race are losing credibility. That is why it is far more difficult to present those who want peace and oppose arms buildup as "subversive elements".

Secondly, many social, economic and ecological needs have become so acute and urgent that demands for a transition to an economy of peace, the conversion of military industries and the use of defence spending for civilian purposes are enjoying ever greater understanding and support not just among the people, but also in official circles.

The activities of the peace forces are therefore being recognised as socially useful. For example, our centre receives a small official subsidy from the government through the culture ministry. Furthermore, in Belgium conscientious objectors can choose between three years service in the system of aid to developing countries, a one-year stint in hospitals and various rescue services, or 18 months in culture organisations or institutions. Our centre is considered one of the latter: the time young people work for us is counted as civilian service.

The fact that the authorities and political organisations and movements now give more attention to the peace movement also testifies to its increased authority. Several times a year we meet with the leaders of the country's major political parties and with government officials to present our stand on foreign policy, the prospects for disarmament and the conversion of the military industries. People from an increasingly broader political and ideological spectrum are taking part in our initiatives, such as an international seminar on banning chemical weapons and a one-day meeting to explore ways towards conventional disarmament in Europe, in which NATO and Warsaw Pact representatives participated.

The authority of the Belgian peace organisations has

also been growing because they have begun to coordinate their activities better. There are several large associations of peace forces in Belgium: in addition to those mentioned above there are Pax Christi, Resistance Fighters Against War, the European Initiative, and Physicians for Peace. Coordination committees have been set up in Flanders and Wallonia with the aim of concerting the activities of these and other associations, and this ensures impressive successes on a national scale. For example, 400,000 people took part in a demonstration in 1983, and 70,000 in another last spring.

As for the evolution of the peace movement, it is as well to recognise its drawbacks and weaknesses. The impact of our activities on public views and mood and on political decision-making is not yet as great as we would like it to be.

■ **Can the peace forces influence political life, during election campaigns, for instance?**

Our movement is pluralistic, and we do not campaign for any party. We are trying to take the maximum possible account of the opinions of most diverse political forces, to support useful peace initiatives wherever they come from.

But we cannot support those forces and figures who are advancing militaristic and bellicose ideas and advocating the interests of the military-industrial complex. Sometimes they enjoy the support of a section of the electorate and their arguments and slogans draw a certain response. For example, in the recent elections to the European Parliament and to the national parliaments of a number of countries, the advocates of such views have won an appreciable number of votes.

Elections are, of course, a complex process, many factors impact on their results, and it is difficult to evaluate by these latter the influence of foreign policy programmes. The socioeconomic situation, the voters' views of domestic politics, traditions, habits and other circumstances often have the decisive effect on electoral success or failure. Unfortunately, few voters are aware that the national standard of living depends on the international situation, on the prospects for disarmament and stronger peace. Many people believe the allegations that any curtailment of military production would worsen the economic situation and eliminate jobs.

Lately, along with the acceleration of West European economic integration, the ideas of creating a West European "defence community", forming a "single

market", launching a military Eureka¹ project, etc. have resurfaced and begun to spread. A section of the population on the continent still supports such concepts and slogans, which would eventually lead to the intensification of war preparations, the escalation of military expenditures and the ever deeper division of Europe.

"Wars begin in the minds of men," says the UNESCO Charter. Peace likewise begins and grows in the minds and depends on the views and perceptions of the masses. We think it our mission to contribute towards the formulation and propagation of ideas and proposals, the implementation of which would not just exclude war from the life of society, but also help establish peace in the interests of progress.

■ **What new problems have arisen before the West European peace movement in the present context?**

It is difficult to list them all in a short conversation. I will say only that the next session of the World Peace Council will be held in Greece later this year. It will examine the new challenges facing us and possible changes in the structure and forms of the movement. Specifically, it is necessary to consider in detail regional and local peculiarities and the concrete conditions and problems of our activities. In this context more importance attaches to the coordination of the actions of peace forces in different European countries as West European integration proceeds apace towards the planned creation of a "single internal market" in 1992. Today, joint efforts for truly all-European cooperation, the removal of the remaining barriers of hostility and mistrust, and the building of a common peaceful Europe are heeded more than ever before.

I have given 40 years of my life to the peace movement, and counting the years of World War II, when I fought in the resistance movement, I can say that I have been fighting against the war threat for half a century. And I can say from personal experience that *today we have a really great chance to begin building a world without wars or weapons*. We should not indulge in illusions or overestimate the new opportunities: there is a long and arduous road ahead. But the recent trends in the development of the international situation inspire optimism and hope. Whether they come true or not depends on all of us, and on the joint efforts of all peoples.

¹ Eureka is a joint West European research programme.—Ed.





COMMUNIST CONGRESSES

OUR CONCEPT OF POPULAR POWER

Rafael TAVAREZ

member, CC, Dominican Communist Party (PCD)

The recent Fourth Congress of the PCD was eagerly awaited by the public, for it was to be held during the worst national crisis for years, and a surging popular struggle. The party had given the masses the hope that, with its new approach, it would do much to help solve the burning problems facing the people.

The chronic flaws of our economic system, of which dependent capitalism is the characteristic feature, are now being compounded by even graver problems.

The country's sugar industry has been in dire straits over the past few years: only last year, five sugar refineries were closed down, and 25,000 hectares of farmland was left fallow. Agriculture is also in a poor state, with the structure of property and land tenure continuing to reproduce the exploitation and misery of most of the inhabitants—almost 500,000 peasants have no land at all, and one-half live below the official poverty line. There is a massive flight of people from the countryside to the urban centres, with the consequent spread of "poverty belts" around them. In 1988, farm output per head was down 4.2% from the previous year (7.1% for rice), and 3.4% in manufacturing (which yields 17% of the gross domestic product).

The growing and unpayable external debt—now over \$4 billion—is one of the main factors of economic destabilisation and deepening crisis. In contrast to most of the other Latin American governments, which have confined themselves to paying the interest on their debt, the Dominican government has also been repaying the principal, although the borrowed money has done nothing to promote the country's development.

The ever greater hardships and the plummeting living standards have made the masses more militant, and there are wider protests as the crisis worsens and the regime is seen to be incapable of coping with it.

The pattern of social forces in the country is as follows: on the one side, there is the numerically small but dominant bloc consisting of the imperialist and comprador bourgeoisie, the landowners and the military elite; on the other, the majority of the people: workers, rural semi-proletarians, middle and poor peasants, the unemployed, petty traders, and marginals; in between are the middle strata, the petty and middle industrialists, the wealthy peasants, etc.

There are two large traditional parties within the political system: the ruling Reformist Christian Social Party (PRSC), and the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD). The PRSC is now on the verge of a break-up because of the intention of its blind octogenarian leader Dr Joaquín Balaguer to retain the presidency for another term (1990-1994). The PRD has already split: Dr José Francisco Peña Gómez and Jacobo Majluta, the leaders of the two social democratic factions, have agreed to campaign in the forthcoming elections at the head of the newly formed parties, with the name of PRD going to the one which wins most votes.

The Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) is not a traditional party, but it is intent on securing support from the powers that be and is not combating the regime, instead taking an attitude midway between complacency and timid opposition. The PLD has a fair chance of success in the 1990 elections because it has been out of power for a long time and is therefore not blamed for the disastrous state of the economy, the spread of corruption under earlier PRD governments, or for the present government with its policy of murdering its people by starvation.

The five most important parties of the left are: the Dominican Popular Movement (MPD), the Anti-Imperialist Patriotic Union (UPA), the Movement of the United Left

(MIU), the Party of the Dominican Working People—Ivan Faction (PTD-I) and the Dominican Communist Party (PCD); they constitute the so-called *axis of the Left*, a project for revolutionary unity. The Socialist Bloc (BS) and the Party of the Dominican Working People—Maria Faction (PTD-M) are looking to an alliance either with Peña Gómez, Magluta or the PLD in an effort to win seats in the Chamber of Deputies. While neither wing of the Social Democrats has rejected such an alliance (this would enable them to improve their image), the PLD has simply ignored them, thereby seeking, firstly, to weaken them in futile political flirtation, and secondly, to present itself to the masters of the country as "untainted" by ties with the Left.

There are also a fairly large number of independent intellectuals taking a left-wing stand, and a powerful movement of revolutionary Christians supporting the liberation theology has been acting with great consistency and coherence.

The debates in the run-up to the Congress—with the broad involvement of progressive organisations and leaders, social scientists and representatives of various trends of Christian thinking—and the Congress itself confirmed the party's thesis: *the crisis has gripped not only the economic and social structures, but also the regime's political institutions.*

The bicameral Dominican Congress is ponderous and incapable of legislating to ease the problems. Many members of the congress are either complacent about drugs trafficking or directly involved in it.

The judiciary is corrupt and is doing the government's will. Thus, President Balaguer has negotiated a sort of pardon for Salvador Jorge Blanco, a former president of the republic who has been allowed to leave the country while still on trial, in defiance of the constitution and legal procedures.

Nor have the armed forces escaped corruption and involvement in drugs trafficking. Internal regulations are being violated, and promotion is entirely at the whim of the ruling clique. The tiny army elite has damaged the reputation of army men and has trampled on the interests of officers and men already suffering from the rigours of a rising cost of living.

In our model of representative democracy, the executive has not remained clean either. Virtually all the presidents and governments (with the exception of the government of Professor Bosch and of Colonel Caamaño, who held office after the overthrow of the tyrant Trujillo in 1961) can be accused of abuses of power and corruption. The latest PRD government presents the most scandalous example: almost all its members are involved in various schemes and intrigues.

Consequently, for twenty-five years our representative democracy has failed to serve the people or to solve its problems, something it does not even seem to want to do: rather it has aggravated these problems. Naturally, we want to replace it with a system of genuine democracy

which would give the people freedom, dignity, and the right to eat, to health care and to education.

The 4th Congress of the PCD, held in Santo Domingo from March 16 to 19 this year, considered the problems of *renewing and consolidating the party, strengthening the unity of the left revolutionary forces, and eventually setting up a broad front* or movement for a popular national alternative, for the defeat of the oligarchy and imperialism, and for the establishment of popular power.

In the light of these tasks, the delegates rectified the erroneous propositions in the programmatic documents held by some of our leaders, among them the character and motive forces of the revolutionary process, the party's role and its unity. They approved a strategy and tactics which most party members are already following in practice.

Earlier editions of the PCD Programme defined the Dominican revolution as socialist in content and national in form, and it also contained many other similar categorical statements. The Congress came out as much against maximalistic attitudes as against the other extreme. While an excessive emphasis on the here-and-now tends to narrow the prospects for struggle, maximalism tends to deter many potential participants, blurring the view of objectives which, while closer than socialism, are still capable of generating equally powerful processes of renewal.

The 1984 Programme declared the working class to be the main motive forces "in the struggle for a new national independence, for the abolition of wage slavery, and for our people's social emancipation and national liberation". The Communist Party was declared to have what amounted to a monopoly right to the leadership of the revolutionary process in the country. A corresponding view was taken of the policy of alliances.

What are the Congress decisions on the basic issues?

It approved a line which gives them a more precise content with an eye to the connection between ultimate and intermediate goals. Our supreme goal is to *build socialism and proceed to a classless communist society, but on the way to this grand long-term project there is a need to achieve democratic and anti-imperialist transformations*, to fulfil a number of short-term programmes, and to win popular power.

The delegates took the view that the party should not remain in passive opposition to a flagging representative democracy. It is possible to work for a power alternative to the one which dooms the masses to starvation, whilst allowing the major parties integrated into the system to change the leader of the crisis every four years. The crisis is so deep that a newly elected government instantly begins to look like its predecessors and to lose its influence catastrophically. The first explosion of discontent with the present government erupted in April 1984, just over a year after it took office.¹ In other words, the voting results do not always reflect the mood of the masses and their readiness for social and political struggle.

Accordingly, the Congress concluded that the *line of*

popular power must be pursued regardless of the arrangement of forces on the eve of the forthcoming elections. Depending on the situation, the Communists are to decide at their next party conference whether or not they are to take part in the elections. The decision may influence the development of PCD strategy, but it does not determine it.

By popular power we mean the rule of those social forces which will play the chief role in establishing self-government by the working people and the middle strata as a form of state of the organised people. The bicameral congress is to be replaced with a Popular Assembly elected at provincial assemblies, and also by delegates from trade unions, professional organisations, sports and cultural clubs, associations of housewives, neighbourhood committees, peasant organisations, etc. They will be vested with control of the activities of their representatives and have the right to recall them. The executive will act collectively and, like the supreme court, will be directly elected by the people. The economy will be based on the coexistence of various forms of property: state, collective, mixed, private, and cooperative.

The concept of popular power, it was said at the Congress, must be worked out with the participation and consensus of *all the left-wing forces and the maximum number of mass organisations*. A contribution could also be made by social scientists and intellectuals. We believe that the first thing to do is to set up alternative organs, then to develop them, and finally to win political power for them. These three stages are in close dialectical interconnection with each other. Their formation and development are already under way. There are dozens of examples showing how the solution to local problems has been found as a result of mass action and struggles in united trade unions, peasant associations, and youth, Christian and other associations. Evidence of the militancy and potential of organised people came from the strike which paralysed the entire country on June 19 and 20, the largest strike in the past 20 years. It was staged despite the efforts of the authorities and moves by the PLD, which ordered the trade union centre it controls not to support the strike.

The Congress further concluded that it is not right to speak of the hegemony of the working class in the Dominican Republic, where it has not yet reached maturity, and where many other strata have a stake in eradicating the problems produced by the system. The working class should seek to play the leading role together and on an equal footing with the poor peasantry, the semiproletarians of town and country, the unemployed and the marginalised, students, intellectuals, petty proprietors, etc. In other words, *the people is the social subject of transformations, and the working class is a part of the people*. As Communists, we are aware that the working class is the protagonist in our efforts to attain our ultimate goals.

The delegates discussed how the organisational structure will be designed to ensure political guidance of the process, and recognised that the vanguard must be

unitary and collectivist, thus reflecting the diversity of interests. A number of amendments have accordingly been written into the PCD Statutes. Article 1 states: "The Dominican Communist Party is a political organisation aiming to help in the formation of a revolutionary vanguard of the working class, of all the wage workers, peasants, women, oppressed and marginalised, of all the poor of town and countryside, of the revolutionary intellectuals and of the middle strata suffering from the system of dependent capitalism... The main task of the vanguard ... is to direct the struggle of the popular bloc and other strata affected by the domination of big capital towards the formation, development and establishment of the power of the people."²

The Congress also considered a number of other questions of national interest (women, young people, culture and the arts, religion, the armed forces, ecology, etc.) and adopted the relevant resolutions.

The greater precision of the PCD's fundamental and intermediate objectives formulated by the 4th Congress enabled the party for the first time in its history to formulate *general party tactics*. This was done with regard for the specifics of the vanguard and the forms of mass organisation. Also, various ways and means of struggle, depending on the circumstances, were envisaged, and immediate political guidelines established.

The following tactical bases were adopted: the leading edge of our efforts is directed against US imperialism and the interventionist course of the United States and its subordinates; in the economic and social spheres, more vigorous efforts are to be directed against the international and local financial bourgeoisie, the transnational corporations, the plans to privatise state property, and against the adjustment programmes of the IMF and the World Bank.

In internal politics, the main blow will be aimed at those basic forces of the regime which are following the imperialist line, at powerful local groups, at the leadership structures of the PRSC and the PRD, and at the corrupt and criminal elite of the army and the police. While trying to win over the middle strata, which are suffering from the crisis, and supporting their demands, we shall work to coordinate action by all these forces with the organisations of workers, peasants and the unemployed. The accent on cooperation of left parties and groups with revolutionary Christians could help fit it into the common line of unity and struggle, and to extend the basic alliance as the popular and national alternative to the crisis develops. By steadily weakening the existing antidemocratic electoral system, we intend to use the atmosphere of mounting protest to explain our project for a new form of power and for deep political reform.

The delegates voiced solidarity with the fighting peoples of Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, South Africa and Southeast Asia.

On the final day the Congress met in closed session (all the other sessions were open and the numerous guests were free to take part in the discussions) to elect a

Central Committee. Following long and stormy debates, a vote was taken and many members of the old CC failed to win election to the new one. Some preferred not to stand, saying that they did not accept the adopted decisions as they believed them to be wrong. Unfortunately, those comrades did not argue their cases either before or during the Congress. Indeed, most of them preferred gradually to abandon their party responsibilities.

The newly elected CC then held a plenary meeting and elected Narciso Isa Conde as General Secretary for the 1989-1994 period.

The 4th Congress of the Dominican Communist Party is an important milestone in the history of our people's struggle for national liberation and social emancipation.

¹ This is not peculiar to the Dominican Republic. Recently, there were protest demonstrations in Venezuela against the newly elected government.

² *Estatutos del Partido Comunista Dominicano.*

GRASSROOTS EXPERIENCE

DEMOCRACY IS ACTION

Fernando BLANQUI TEIXEIRA
member, Secretariat, Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)

How does the primary organisation participate in elaborating and executing the political line of the party? How, under democratic centralism, can those who do not support the decisions taken expound and defend their opinion? How is specialisation within a large grassroots cell effected?

These questions were put to one of the PCP leaders by the WMR Commission on the International Communist Movement and Exchanges of Party Experience. Below are his replies together with information supplied by the secretaries of three party organisations.

The participation of cells in executing the general political line of the party and their contribution to its elaboration are inseparable. As they apply it in enterprises or in the community, primary organisations inevitably adapt it to specific conditions. They thus creatively enrich the general line of the party.

The correctness or incorrectness of a given orientation is always tested by practice. By realising it, the cell ultimately helps to define it better, verify its justice and value or, conversely, adjust and modify it.

Each enterprise or neighbourhood has its own specifics. Not always do ordinary Communists have the experience or knowledge to determine situations. Based

on certain general principles, party cells in some cases have to take an unbeaten or, at least, unknown path. Their experience helps the party as a whole in gauging new issues, and may be useful for other primary organisations.

The PCP is devoting special attention to newly-created cells. We strive to assist them as they emerge and reach their goals. In other words, we want *initiative*-filled cells with a greater sense of *responsibility* as the vanguard of a factory workforce or community group. Naturally, this process requires a special relationship between higher bodies and cells.

Communists in the localities contribute to a better definition of the party line not only through the day-to-day activities of their cells, but also in other forms. They regularly discuss the common political policy and analyse the experience amassed by freely exchanging opinions on different aspects of party activity, or on the orientation of the PCP, at meetings whose agenda includes both specific and general party issues.

The political circumstances in which a party operates may force it to limit the freedom of discussions and the collectivity of decision-making. However, we believe that, when conditions permit, democratic centralism provides an ample room for discussion and the basis for a rich and full inner-party life. This has found reflection in the decisions of the 12th PCP Congress (1988), which made a number of changes to its statute. Article 16 now states that it is not only the organisational structure, but also the *activities* of the party that are based on democratic centralism, the principles of which, enriched by experience (a new definition), are aimed simultaneously at *ensuring a profound inner democracy, a single general line and a single central leadership*. A right to *replace any elected official* by the collective that elected him has also been introduced. The importance of a *regular accountability* of higher bodies has been stressed.

Freedom of discussion allows each Communist to express his point of view in a form which he considers the most acceptable. In summing up the results of the discussion we *strive for consensus*, but if this cannot be achieved the *opinion of the majority* acquires force. Later, views may draw closer together, which will ensure not only unity in

practical work, but also accord in ideological terms. However, this does not always occur: decisions are implemented while opinions continue to differ.

On the other hand, the principles of democratic centralism do not permit comrades who for some reason share an opinion which has a minority backing to set up groupings within the party. Before the debate ends and a decision is adopted they may remain in a given "minority", but upon completion of the discussion the "minority" and the "majority" must disappear.

Can a party member subsequently raise again what he considers an undersolved issue and defend his opinion? Certainly. Generally, however, this could be upon the appearance of new data or the emergence of new considerations justifying further discussion; for example, when the results of the work done are summed up at assemblies (general meetings) of a primary organisation. Any of its participants has the right to characterise the activities of the cell, the decisions taken and, in connection with this, to express an opinion even if it was not previously considered right.

It must be remembered that a decision taken on the basis of a consensus or a majority of opinions may sometimes rapidly lead to doubts, provoke inconvenient situations and prove unjustified as it is being put into practice. For it is practice—I repeat once again—that is the main criterion of its correctness.

When we speak of the "division of labour" in a primary organisation, we mean that it has already accumulated some experience and that its size and its range of activities really need specialisation. Therefore, this primarily concerns large cells.

The internal organisation of such a cell must facilitate its members' contact with the working people of an enterprise or local residents. Specialised groups take into account the structure of the enterprise and its units, the distinctions existing among the workers and employees, population distribution in the given area and other specifics.

In large and medium-sized enterprises there normally exists a trade union commission, made up of trade union delegates, and, in many cases, also a workers' commission elected by all the employees and concerning itself with issues affecting all of them irrespective of their professions or trade union affiliation. If in the cell there are comrades who are members of these commissions, they usually form a separate party group to better know the problems discussed in the commissions to which they belong. A certain direction in the work of the Communists also depends on other existing structures: job safety and hygiene, youth and women's commissions, sport groups, etc.

Sometimes the respective cell shows an initiative to create public committees or movements for the coordination of actions for peace and disarmament and for other objectives of a political, social and cultural nature. There

arise party groups consisting of Communists who act in the leadership of these unitary structures.

A large factory cell also strives to efficiently assign its forces in purely party work. For example, it might create a special group for propaganda and agitation in order to deal with the distribution of books, newspapers and PCP documents, and other propaganda material. Another group might be responsible for collecting membership dues and for raising money from other sources. Not infrequently Communists unite to conduct political courses for the members of the cell.

Other questions crop up when we consider primary organisations in the community. Often, members of such a cell form part of autonomous local elected bodies and various commissions for issues affecting women pensioners, the disabled, peace groups, etc. Separate groups deal with culture, sport and recreational matters. If the organisation is large, then, as in an enterprise, it has an interest in forming party groups for propaganda and agitation, fund-raising and so on.

Thus, the experience of the Portuguese Communist Party shows that, irrespective of the size of a cell, its sphere of activities, whether at an enterprise or in the community, is wide enough and capable enough of mobilising the energies of its members and establishing groups to tackle the most diverse problems. On the other hand, the richness of this sphere is also a product of the initiative and activity of the party organisation.

LUTA MEANS STRUGGLE

Vicente Merendas, secretary of the party organisation of the Lisnave ship yard in Almada; 40, a fitter.

Our enterprise is often called in Portugal the smithery of party cadres. A number of leaders of PCP organisations at various levels and of trade unions have been nurtured in the collective. Many now work in other provinces, towns and cities pursuing the policy of the party aimed at the defence of the people's interests. From the gate of Lisnave they go out and carry for life the workers' watchword: *Luta—Struggle*.

Our situation, as in other shipyards, is extremely difficult. Essentially, the authorities want to scuttle both our yard and the whole of the industry. In 1975 the yard employed 10,000 people—now the figure is about 4,000. By laying off workers management is also seeking to liquidate the party organisation, which numbers almost 550 Communists (previously more than a thousand). Staff reductions are forcing shipbuilders to leave the yard. We are losing cadres, including the best of them. We're sustaining great losses among our activists, trade union leaders and workers' commissions. We are losing contacts and are no longer in touch with about half the dismissed members of the cell.

Yet the party organisation is not giving up its positions: it has stepped up the activities of its shop groups and is trying to retrieve the social gains lost over the past few years. In December 1988 we persuaded the Lisnave

management to agree to recompense the workers for wage losses incurred since 1982.

Repulsing the onslaught of reaction, we are doing everything possible to prevent the closure of the yard or its transfer to local or foreign private capital; and we are trying to build a movement for the establishment of workers' self-management. The Communists are marching in the vanguard of the working people's struggle. They are conducting a permanent dialogue with the people, winning their trust.

José Antonio Antunes, secretary of the party organisation of the Lisbon branch of the Banco Espírito Santo e Comercial; 44, a bank employee.

Our bank, one of Portugal's largest, has 150 branches employing 6,500 people.

The wave of redundancies has not bypassed the banking sector. The attack on employees' rights and gains is expressed here in the government's hectic drive to privatise nationalised banks. An expanding network of private financial institutions, which we believe to be totally unnecessary, is designed to sharpen competition in the industry. This is causing serious concern among the 3,300 employees of the bank's Lisbon branch and the 200 members of its party organisation.

Recently, management has increased the pressure on bank employees, trade union activists and members of the workers' commission. An attempt is being made to disunite working people, and to pit highly qualified personnel against technical staff by granting benefits and privileges to certain categories of employees.

The party cell is not only countering this, but also garnering employees' opinions in order to bring forward

its own constructive proposals for strengthening the position of the nationalised bank. We are explaining that the quality of service needs to be improved, that there must be active intervention in the national economy, the creation of favourable conditions for the development of the productive sphere and resistance to all manner of stock exchange speculations. Through the press and personal contacts in the workplace, the Communists are seeking to influence both the state of affairs within the bank and its financial policy.

Manuel Cosme, secretary of the party organisation of the public transport enterprise in Porto; 38, a driver.

The city's public transport managers are seeking to hand over its most profitable units to the private sector, an attempt bitterly opposed by our 212-strong party organisation in spite of all the difficulties. Shift work, irregular traffic schedules and frequent workplace transfers are hindering the Communists from establishing firm contact with the working people and holding general cell meetings. As to the latter, it is very difficult to gather all party members together at one time. Moreover, management is encouraging all kinds of divisionist sentiment: some Communists have been offered overtime, and wages at the enterprise are so low that without an extra income many are simply unable to support their families.

Taking all this into account, we are attempting through the trade union and the workers' commissions to bring to the notice of personnel our alternative proposals on improving living standards and the conditions of work, to achieve greater investments in public transport, to rally the collective and to strengthen ties with the workers of other enterprises in the industry.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARTY JOURNALIST

Miel DULLAERT

member, General Council, Union of Communists of Belgium; political director, *Rode Vaan* weekly

We live in a society dominated by mass media which directly influence millions of individuals. I am not referring only to the "big press", radio and television in Belgium proper. We are at a busy streetcorner in Europe: Belgium also feels the impact of the West German, French, Dutch, British and Luxembourgian mass media.

You may well ask about *Rode Vaan*'s reason for being, given its small circulation and limited resources. We reply

that the very fact of a communist weekly's existence is politically important in a society where dozens of newspapers and periodicals rehash, with certain modifications, the ideas of those on the right, centre, left of centre, etc. We are, of course, weak, and we cannot reach everyone. So we have to set ourselves *limited but realistic tasks*. We publish our weekly above all for party and trade union activists, members of environmentalist movements, neighbourhood committees, and so on.

Within the present radio and television boom, an interesting trend has emerged: generally, the circulation of daily newspapers is declining or levelling off, while the weeklies seem to be doing all right for themselves. Usually, when the reader reaches for a newspaper, he is already familiar with the major news stories from radio or television. Therefore, he is looking not so much for the events as for the details behind the headlines, for the meaning and possible consequences. The weekly is there to furnish this information.

We not only try to provide information but also to com-

ment on it, and to offer the reader our *files* on topical domestic and international issues. In this way our functions differ from those of daily newspapers—such as the Communists' French-language *Drapeau Rouge*. Our main concern is to analyse and discuss events which have already been reported by other media, and to do this in a *Marxist*, communist spirit.

By stressing the importance of the fact that such a weekly exists in the sea of information around us, I do not want to create the impression that we are content with this fact alone. Naturally, we must seek to acquaint as many people as possible with our comments and assessments. We plan to increase our circulation significantly within the next few years. This quest for new readers has always been a part of a day-to-day struggle for survival, one waged with the support of our readers, both Communists and sympathisers. The most important lesson we have learned is that you have to be *on the offensive* in order to preserve, let alone increase, circulation.

Naturally, our weekly must also have audience appeal and keep improving its presentation techniques. This is why *Rode Vaan* changed its format this year. Prior to that—at the communist press festival in Alost in October 1988—we circulated a trial issue to learn what potential readers thought about it. The response was positive.

Although the colour presentation and the makeup have changed, our political thrust has been preserved. We continue to tell our readers frankly that *Rode Vaan* is a communist weekly published by the Communist Party. But this does not make it any the less open to other progressive forces. We will continue our policy of assigning space to non-Communists on a regular basis. We want our readers to find, in every issue, a dialogue between a Communist and an activist of some other current of the working-class and democratic movement. Besides, questions such as "what is Marxism?" or "who can be regarded as a Marxist?" are now being debated, and we do not keep aloof from these controversies.

Rode Vaan does not try to fit into the rigid framework an official organ of the Communist Party could be expected to have. You may ask what point of view our articles express and on whose behalf this or that journalist writes. First of all, we should remember that our social environment is now so rich in developments and new phenomena that you obviously cannot expect the party leadership to express an official position with regard to each specific event. This means that a communist journalist should be able to interpret facts in the right way, guided by Marxist convictions and by the overall principles of communist policy laid down by the party. Naturally, he should also have a sense of personal responsibility and remember that he is writing for a communist weekly and that consequently his readers can glimpse the overall stand of the party from what he writes. And so, when we plan an article on a complex issue, we on the editorial staff exchange views and try to base our coverage on the results of discussion among co-workers.

As to the relationship existing between our newspaper and the party leadership, the record shows that great importance attaches to the *personal position* of the weekly's political director, his organic ties with party bodies and regular consultations with his comrades on the Central Committee Bureau when various articles are being prepared. It is equally important for me to discuss matters not only with the leadership but also with the rank-and-file at the grassroots level. I must know what they are thinking and debating. *This is the only way for our weekly—which is not an official organ of the Central Committee—to fully reflect the ideas by which the party lives.*

Rode Vaan's experience convinces us that today the ability of a communist newspaper to play a constructive role depends a great deal on the way it conducts a dynamic dialogue between Communists and representatives of other progressive forces, on how open it is to them. This means that it is also worth giving readers a chance to find out about internal party problems relating to political and organisational subjects and political education work. It is particularly important to demonstrate boldly that the communist party can respond to all issues of public concern. But we have no intention of marching to the drumbeat of the bourgeois press. For example, the major newspapers relished their chance to write about our weekly's change of leadership in 1988. We refused to be drawn into this show.

We rejected the idea of transforming *Rode Vaan* into some sort of autonomous Left weekly financed by the Communist Party. Some people charge that this has deprived the party of an opportunity to have a free press organ independent of the apparatus, and it is even said that the party opposes openness and self-criticism. How should we respond to that? Realising that the voice of the Communists cannot reach the entire audience of the "big press," we want to respond not so much in words as in actions. We want to prove that there is no contradiction between the status of a party press organ and the ability to conduct an open dialogue with other progressive forces.

In our *relations with the party apparatus* there is no question of any approval being needed from high-level comrades for articles. A communist journalist works independently, but it is natural for him to be in contact with the party leadership. Naturally, it is both inevitable and normal that there should be a certain amount of tension between the editorial board and the apparatus. When there is too much peace and quiet, either all connection with the Central Committee has been lost or the newspaper has become an official mouthpiece of the leadership. This is why I regard such tensions as a sign of the weekly's *health*.

If the ties with the governing bodies of the party are too close there is a real risk of the editors trying to curry favour with the higher-ups. As a result, the paper may grow sterile and divorced from the actual concerns of the masses and of the rank-and-file Communists. But I am sure that this

danger can be avoided: firstly, by broadening the scope of the subjects covered, *by raising issues on which the party has not yet formulated a definitive position and in this way influencing the decision-making process*; secondly, by constantly stimulating debate, sometimes even deliberately provoking it and making it more acute, naturally, not to an irrational degree; thirdly, by proceeding from facts in the discussion of any question.

The most terrible fate that can befall a party paper is

when it begins to resemble medieval theologians quoting sacred texts. But it is equally dangerous for it to lose its ideological and political identity. The question of *combining a sense of communist responsibility with creative freedom* is therefore an eternal problem to which there are no universal solutions. We have to search jointly for the best way of resolving each specific situation. However difficult my work and that of my comrades, it is also fascinating and rewarding.

THE LEFT FORCES' EXPERIENCE

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ITALIAN SOCIALISTS

Guiseppe TAMBURRANO

member of the Leadership, Italian Socialist Party (PSI); Chairman, Pietro Nenni Foundation

■ *You represent the country's third political party in terms of size and influence.¹ Could you tell us about the main stages in the PSI's development, the basis of its membership, and its organisational structure.*

Our party held its constituent congress in Genoa in 1892. It was then the only party expressing the interests of the working class and the working people of Italy. Since then its development has followed a tortuous path. In 1919, the PSI, which had by then become the country's major parliamentary force, announced its decision to work for the establishment of a republic of Soviets in Italy. Later on, when the PSI refused to expel reformists from its ranks, it was expelled from the Comintern. It suffered a split in 1921, and that was the origin of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), which looked to the possibility of carrying out a Leninist-type revolution in our country.

That was a fatal illusion, and it led to divisions in the ranks of the working class, in consequence of which fascism took power in Italy. Pietro Nenni, the leader of the Socialists, was forced into exile. He remained a sincere friend of the Soviet Union, which he regarded as the only bulwark of struggle against the looming reaction in Europe. He was a wholehearted supporter of antifascist unity with the Communists, who at the time regarded the Socialists as their worst enemies—"social-fascists", as Stalin had branded them. Still, out of necessity, in 1934 the PSI and the PCI concluded an agreement, which accorded with the Comintern's new policy of encouraging the establishment of people's fronts.

That was many years ago. But when the fascist regime

in Italy was overthrown, the PSI continued to stand for a policy of unity with the Communists, the price of this political choice being a painful split provoked by the Social Democrats. Let us recall that even after the 20th Congress of the CPSU, which exposed Stalin's crimes, Nenni tried to safeguard cooperation with Togliatti's Communist Party. But the two parties finally parted ways when Soviet troops were sent into Budapest in 1956. They also differed on various other issues, including their views on Stalinism. We held that it was wrong to reduce Stalinism to Stalin's personality cult and his individual failings. In his writings, Nenni insisted that Stalinism was a cause and an effect of the bureaucratic degeneration of the power of the Soviets and that, if the crisis were to be resolved, the entire system had to be democratised. Much of what he wrote then, I think, is akin to the CPSU's positions today.

I am not saying that we were the heralds of perestroika. I am merely expressing the hope that, each in our different ways, we are emerging from the long decades of contradictions and are, perhaps, moving towards each other. Nor is this mere propaganda. The new thinking is being translated into action, into actual processes of change, however difficult and dangerous they may be. Citizens are becoming more active and democracy is beginning to flourish.

An end to fear, and the re-emergence of peace and dialogue have provided a solid basis for resuming discussion on a common European home and on the ideal that unites us, socialism, an ideal which has remained alive under the ashes of so many splits, mistakes and illusions.

We have had to take some fairly painful decisions on organisational matters in the course of the PSI's long history. Following a series of splits, the PSI firmly joined the Communists in 1947, and was structured on their model, i.e., on the principles of so-called democratic centralism. Following the 1956 break of which I have already spoken, there were bitter clashes between various trends. As a result the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity emerged in 1964, which was later absorbed by the PCI.

For us, 1976 was the watershed year. The Socialists suffered a crushing defeat in the elections (only 9.6% of votes) and began to think seriously about their future. They had a strong urge to put an end to the fragmentation and to make a strong comeback, an urge which found its leader in Bettino Craxi, now PSI political secretary.

Since then the party's structure has been changing. Various trends and the broadest pluralism of opinion continue to exist in the party, but they are all rallied round the leader. Organisational forms inherited from the past—sections, federations and regional committees—also continue to function. Like the PCI, we have cells at enterprises, which are, however, in a state of crisis because of the changes in working conditions and factory life as a whole. But numerous parallel structures—culture clubs, interest groups, social associations, etc.—have appeared.

■ *You spoke of a revival of socialist ideals. But it must be said that in various public circles and among the Socialists doubt is being cast on many of these ideals.*

Let me remind those who doubt of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, the revolution in China, the winning of independence by the colonial peoples—events that have transformed the world and markedly reduced the sphere of capitalist domination. In Western countries, the socialist movement, inspired by powerful Marxist thought, has organised the workers and is leading them in the struggle for emancipation.

On the whole, working people in the developed capitalist countries now receive decent wages, with guaranteed social security in the event of unemployment, disability, accident and old age. They have access to education and a right to rest and leisure, many have their own homes and cars, and some have shares and play the stock market. It goes without saying that they have the right to vote and to be elected at every level of the political system.

The plebs have become a class enjoying many and equal rights, all thanks to the class struggle, thanks to the left-wing parties, thanks to the ideas of Karl Marx. Whereas in the past, exploited, impoverished and dispossessed workers fought mainly for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a classless society, today, free from privation and with social and political protection, they want better living conditions and a higher quality of life, and do not, with rare exceptions, demand changes in the existing system, either in a revolutionary or in a democratic way.

Does that imply that the urge for socialism disappeared as soon as it ceased to be fed by unsatisfied wants? Why then is the trade union struggle still on, while political struggle has largely halted? Is it perhaps, as bourgeois propaganda claims, that the ideals of the French Revolution (liberty, equality and fraternity) have become a reality for every citizen? Not at all: wars, exploitation, religious fanaticism, terrorism, racism, environmental pollution, poverty (old and new), privileges for the elite—all these remain; dictatorships and violations of human rights can still be called the demons of our world.

Could it be that under the impact of major changes Marx's theory of the class struggle has become irrelevant, while no new inspiring idea has yet appeared? Hardly. According to Marx's immortal doctrine, revolutionary thought is the conscience of the epoch, reflecting and

shedding light on the existing social forces capable of bringing about change. Could we have been wrong when we, like those before us, assumed that the working class, freed from poverty, would be able to tear off the chains that bound both itself and society? No, the socialist ideal has not waned, but the left forces are faced with a great many new problems requiring study, analysis and response. But after we have left behind the ground explored by Marx, we have proved unable to analyse today's realities comprehensively.

The left forces in the West have largely become a component part of the very system they want to reform, and in the East they are burdened with their own mistakes, hampered by the resistance of the bureaucracy, and faced with the problems of democratising society, and harmonising ethnic relations. Also, for too long the Social Democrats and the Communists have been divided by the Cold War, Stalinism and anticommunism.

Their positions are now drawing closer to each other. Thanks to Gorbachov, a great thaw has begun in the communist world, and if it does not cause a devastating torrent, it will give a mighty impetus to economic development and pluralistic democracy, and the individual, the collective, the nation and the nationality will regain their respect. We are pinning our hopes on this, although we are aware of the tremendous difficulties faced by perestroika. As the latest elections to the European Parliament show, the left and the socialist forces in the West also have good prospects before them.

■ *You speak of the prospects for strengthening and consolidating the left forces. What are the prospects for this today in Italy itself? What promotes and what hampers closer cooperation between Communists and Socialists?*

The situation in our country is, unfortunately, much more complicated than it is, say, in Britain or the FRG. Up to now, the PSI has been forced to take part in government together with the Christian Democrats because of the insuperable obstacles to a left alternative. If we find the right forms of dialogue and unity with the Communists, we can hope to turn the left alternative from a dream into a political reality. But tough problems still have to be solved.

Following the split, the distance between the Communists and the Socialists has shortened or lengthened depending on various factors, including the ups and downs of parliamentary struggle. In terms of votes, we have always been way behind the PCI. But a marked imbalance tends to hamper cooperation: in the past few years, the Socialists have been winning more votes, and the Communists, regrettably, fewer votes. We hope that Achille Occhetto's new political line will help to stem the Communist Party's slide, while the PSI will continue its rise. When we begin to win votes away from the Christian Democrats, instead of vying with each other, and when together we go well beyond 40% of the votes, there will be a true change in politics, alliances with other forces, both

secular and Catholic, will become possible, and the Left will then be able to govern the country.

For all the new elements in the PCI's policy, our differences remain substantial. We believe that the centre-left governments, especially those between 1983 and 1987 headed by Craxi, did much to preserve and strengthen the democratic regime, to carry out progressive economic and social reforms, and to assert Italy's independence of the US. But the Communists, from whom we have always expected support, have always sharply criticised us. It could, of course, be said that the programme of those governments did not on the whole meet the interests of the working people. But I have my own explanation. I think that the Communists, especially under Enrico Berlinguer, had a strong "Mitterrand complex", i.e., the fear of losing their own image by taking their cue from the Socialist Party.

Dialogue now seems possible. For example, there was the offer to help arrange the PSI's centenary celebrations in 1992. However, difficulties also exist, mainly in the elections. The electoral law is such that it induces divisions and in-fighting on the "every-man-for-himself" principle. But this rivalry, I think, tends to be short-lived. The unity of our two parties is inevitable. After all, we have similar views on what is most essential, namely, that it is time to put an end to the Christian Democrats' half-century of political domination in Italy. At our 45th Congress, we reasserted our commitment to transformations capable of creating the conditions for a gradual alignment of the two main trends that from the outset have belonged to the socialist and progressive movement.

There are many concrete spheres of cooperation even today. The Nenni Foundation and the Gramsci Institute, and other research establishments sponsored by the

Communists and the Socialists, often take joint initiatives. Together with the Ingrao communist centre we held an interesting seminar on the problems of the state in the post-industrial society. We joined in discussing the problems of European security, the lessons of the Prague Spring, and so on. We also have Communists on the board of our foundation. We argue and polemicise, but the tone is on the whole friendly; if it were not for the world's past associations, they could even be said to be fraternal.

There is much room for cooperation in the trade union movement. Socialists have mainly been working in the Italian Labour Union. However, a Socialist is deputy secretary-general of the General Italian Confederation of Labour, which is close to the PCI.

The spectrum of political forces in Italy is very varied and fluid. The once strong pacifist movement, in which both Communists and Socialists worked, has now retreated, but then groups of ecologists, who reject any colour except green, have been gaining ground. In the past—during the nuclear energy referendum, for example—they were closer to us than to the Communists. But Ochetto has now started an active ecological campaign and the situation may be changing. Although in principle they refuse to recognise anyone but themselves, I rank them among the left forces.

For all the difficulties and convoluted entanglements of Italian political life, there is evidence of a general trend towards greater unity on the left: in politics, in culture and in the trade unions. This is encouraging.

¹ At its latest, 45th Congress in May 1989, the PSI had a membership of over 626,000, and in the June elections to the European Parliament it won 14.7% of the votes.—Ed.

PERESTROIKA AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION

The September 1989 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee ruled that the 28th Congress of the party would be convened in October 1990, several months ahead of the schedule laid down in the Party Rules. The agenda of the congress includes: (1) a report from the CPSU Central Committee on the progress of perestroika and the party's tasks, (2) a report from the CPSU Central Auditing Commission, (3) discussion of the CPSU Rules, and (4) elections of the party's governing bodies.

As noted at the plenary meeting, the convocation of the congress ahead of schedule is dictated by the need to effect

the party's far-reaching renewal with due regard for its new role as society's political vanguard in perestroika: only a renewed and profoundly democratic party can continue leading the masses.

The congress is to formally authorise the steps towards the party's comprehensive democratisation which were outlined at the 19th National Conference of the CPSU in June and July 1988, to give the seal of approval to much of what has already become accepted in party organisations, and to amend the provisions of the Party Rules dealing with the composition of the party membership, the rights and duties of Communists, the

status of various party structures, the principles of their interaction among themselves and with government agencies and civic organisations, and greater rights for the communist parties of the constituent republics. Essentially, new CPSU Rules are to be adopted.

The CPSU Central Committee is expected to draw up its political platform and publish it in the spring of 1990. It is now obvious that partial changes in the Party Programme now in force are not enough. But the drafting of a new programme, a document of tremendous scope and significance, will require the accumulation of a greater store of theoretical knowledge and practical experience. This is why it has been proposed that the congress approve a programme of action for Soviet Communists for the immediate future.

DOCUMENTS

UNITY FOR PEACE IN GUATEMALA

The Guatemalan Party of Labour (PGT) is urging Communists to carry aloft the banner of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, honestly to follow the behests of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and creatively to apply proletarian theory in analysing national realities with a view to their revolutionary transformation, states a document issued on the occasion of the party's 40th anniversary.

Over the past decades the party has been fighting underground in very difficult circumstances, and has been exposed to persecution and counterrevolutionary terror. The best sons and daughters of the people—workers, Indian peasants, democratic intellectuals and men and

women from other strata of Guatemalan society—have fallen victim to repression.

The document goes on to say that the PGT believes their heroic example will continue to inspire the Guatemalan patriots, help them even better to learn their revolutionary duty and to understand the forms and methods of the organisation and guidance of political power, and also their obligations to the international communist and working-class movement and the embattled fraternal nations.

The party thinks that everything that is to be done in the organisational, political, ideological, propaganda, military, theoretical and practical fields should be done on the basis of the accumulated experience within the frame of the Guatemalan National

Revolutionary Unity (GNRU) bloc—which the Communists have joined recently—a bloc carrying on an armed struggle.

The current policy line of the bloc, its General Command stressed in a communique released when the Guatemalan Party of Labour joined, consists in a search for ways to end the domestic war and the repression, which have claimed tens of thousands of Guatemalan lives, through political talks.

But if the undemocratic regime forces the patriots into trying to solve the country's problems by military and punitive methods, the revolutionary unity forces will carry on their armed struggle in order to defend the people from violations of their civil rights and to counter exploitation and militarist oppression. That struggle will be continued, the document states, until a political solution is found that would allow the insurgents to cease their armed resistance to despotism.

IN BRIEF

NEWSPAPER FESTIVALS

AUSTRIA Thousands of Austrians from Vienna and other cities took part in the festival of *Volksstimme*, the Austrian Communists' newspaper. It was held under the slogan upholding the people's social and democratic gains and fighting for the right to work, international solidarity and peace.

CANADA The annual festival of *Canadian Tribune*, a working people's newspaper, took place in Palermo, Ontario province. It was attended by Communist Party of Canada activists and veterans, CT readers and supporters, and representatives of progressive mass organisations. George Hewison, CPC General Secretary, told the participants that such festivals were major events in the life of the party. Apart from adding to its treasury, they enabled the Communists to exchange opinions and share their experience of work among the masses.

COLOMBIA The traditional festival of *Voz*, the Colombian Communists' newspaper, was held in Bogota. Speaking at the rally, Gilberto Vieira, CC General Secretary of the Colombian Communist Party, noted that without the popular support it enjoys, *Voz* could not play its role in defending the working people's interests in conditions of growing press monopolisation, and called for establishing a united front of all Colombian political and mass organisations to defeat reaction and get the country out of the crisis.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA National Press, Radio and Television Days ended with a two-day festival of *Rudé právo*, the newspaper of the CC CPCz, in Prague's Julius Fucik Park. Over 150,000 Prague residents and visitors took part. They met with journalists, attended the concerts of local and foreign artists, and participated in a rally at which Zdenek Horeni, editor-in-chief of *Rudé právo*, stressed that the newspaper—currently in its 70th year—had never confined itself to being simply a neutral observer. Today, with restructuring under way, it remains true to internationalist positions, siding with the forces of peace, social progress and socialism.

FRANCE The festival of *l'Humanite*, the newspaper of the French Communist Party, held in La Courneuve, a suburb of Paris, confirmed its reputation as one of France's largest political gatherings. As always, it played an important role in the drive to raise party press funds, with respectively 9,900 and 7,700 people joining the PCF and the Communist Youth Movement of France. increase *l'Humanite*'s circulation. The festival became a large-scale action by the French working people for higher minimum wages, cuts in military expenditure and a redirection of the money, especially that spent on nuclear weapons tests, into the development of schools and vocational training. Delegates from 80 newspapers of communist and workers' parties and national liberation movements took part.

ITALY Genoa was the setting for the annual festival of *l'Unita*, the Italian Communists' newspaper. A forum for discussing the vital development problems of Italy and urgent international issues, it also marked a significant event in the cultural life of the country. The festival, according to PCI General Secretary Achille Occhetto, has once again shown that the PCI not only remains Italy's second largest political party, but is also, whilst overcoming difficulties, saving its strength for new class battles.

LUXEMBOURG A festival of *Zeitung vom Letzeburger Volk*, the Luxembourg Communists' newspaper, was held in the centre of the nation's steel industry—Chiffange. PCL activists, party members, and workers and employees from the country's plants expressed support for their newspaper. Addressing the festival, René Urbany, Chairman of the Communist Party of Luxembourg, noted that the festival had given its participants, especially young people, an opportunity to establish contacts and acquaint themselves with the programme and day-to-day activities of the party.

PORTUGAL A nationally popular festival of the Portuguese Communist Party's newspaper *Avante!* took place in Lisbon. Tens of thousands of people from the capital and its working-class outskirts viewed the exhibitions presented by party organisations from various regions of the country. Other features included seminars and colloquiums on different aspects of internal and international life, as well as artists' performances. Thirty-three delegations from communist and workers' parties and national liberation movements participated in the festival.



MODERN CAPITALISM: THE PHENOMENON AND THE ESSENCE

Discussion at an International Round Table

The WMR Commission on General Theoretical and Global Problems sponsored a round table on "Contemporary Capitalism: New Assessments and Attitudes" held in Prague. Taking part in the discussion were Professor Jacques NAGELS of the Free University of Brussels, General Council member of the Union of Communists of Belgium; Professor Ferenc KOSMA, prorector of the Higher Political School of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party; Dr Kurt STEINHAUS, member of the Board, German Communist Party; François RIGAUX, President of the Lello Basso International Foundation for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples; Professor Bronislaw MINC (Poland); and Professor Stanislav MENSNIKOV (USSR), a WMR staff member. John Kenneth GALBRAITH, Professor Emeritus of Harvard University, contributed a paper. Several representatives of sister parties at WMR spoke on some aspects of the subject under discussion.

We present an abridged version of two of the contributions. Others will be published in the next issue.

WHY IS CAPITALISM VIALE?

Stanislav MENSNIKOV

It is a basic proposition of Marxism that at some point in time the capitalist form of appropriation will become inconsistent with the socialisation of production and will therefore have to be replaced with a socialist form geared to the current level of the productive forces and to the exigencies of their further development. This led to numerous predictions of capitalism's impending doom. But, although it has lost much ground on a global scale, the rumours of its untimely demise are, to use Mark Twain's familiar phrase, somewhat exaggerated.

I would say that the idea about the *main contradiction of capitalism* needs to be specified in light of our historical experience and today's realities. To begin with, the form of appropriation does not remain unchanged within any

socioeconomic system. Confronted with a qualitative change in the productive forces, society will try and find a different form which will enable it not only to survive but also to advance. In other words, the main contradiction of a given system is partially resolved. A society capable of undergoing a change without destroying its foundations remains viable—up to a certain point in time.

This conclusion applies to socialism too: witness the effort to dismantle the bureaucratic administrative system. But, to return to the subject of capitalism, what substantive modifications have been essential to its viability? I believe these include the development of the forms of ownership of the means of production, the changes within the entrepreneurial class, the changes in hired labour, and the use of the mistakes and contradictions of socialism as the rival social system.

CONTINUOUS CHANGE OF FORM

One often hears that capitalism has succeeded in harnessing the ongoing revolution in science and technology. But it is not the first time capitalism has done so. For example, there was no contradiction in the fact that the

factories born of the 18th-century industrial revolution were owned and run by private individuals. However, several decades later this type of capitalist organisation began to clash with the need to interlink individual industries and integrate the entire system of social reproduction. Periodic crises hit the economy, and businesses went bankrupt increasingly often. The answer was to concentrate capital and merge individual businesses into joint stock companies. Such corporations were also needed to make production large-scale, to build railroads and to develop marine shipping. The individually owned form of private capitalist property proved inadequate to the pursuit of these objectives. It was replaced by *collective* property which, while not negating the basis of private property, made possible a tremendous leap into what was then new technology. Production grew rapidly.

Several decades later the protracted crisis of the 1870s-1890s again pointed to the inadequacy of the dominant forms of capitalist organisation. The first, unsuccessful attempt at a socialist revolution was made in France (the Paris Commune). The labour movement gained strength, political parties of the working class were formed, and Marxism spread increasingly. That was when capitalism invented another means of ensuring its survival—the *monopoly*. The trusts and the cartels were able to coordinate capitalist production within whole industries, first emerging in oil and steel which were new fields at the time.

Economic growth again picked up, but it also became more uneven. The contradiction between the rapidly changing interimperialist correlation of forces and the old division of the world into spheres of influence led to World War I and to a profound political crisis which resulted in the birth of existing socialism. But monopoly developed the conveyor belt system and mass production which, in turn, needed stable mass consumption, at that time still absent. This was borne out by the great crisis of the 1930s. A way out was again found—*state intervention*, nationalisation of certain industries, and social security systems.

This adjustment of capitalism was perhaps the most far-reaching. It was inevitable because socialism was already extant and competing with capitalism. State property and intervention had long been regarded as incompatible with private ownership. But now capitalism had to borrow some socialistic features and recognise the working class and its organisations as a legitimate component of itself. Politically, the bourgeoisie had to retreat. But it managed to give a new impetus to the economy, survive in the centres and later, through neocolonialism, keep its hold on the periphery.

A protracted structural crisis set in during the 1970s and the 1980s. Yet again, capitalism looked for new forms of adjustment. This time, transnationalisation of production and capital, privatisation of previously nationalised industries, and a neoconservative onslaught against the "welfare state" appear as a solution to economic difficul-

ties and a means of developing new technologies, doing away with the "sunset industries" and reducing financial and monetary instability.

How long can this periodic modernisation of forms of capitalist property go on? Will the productive forces ever reach a level which will be totally incompatible with capitalism in any conceivable organisational form? A good question, one with no ready-made answer.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL CLASS

No matter how forms of private property change, the preservation of its individually owned form is vital to the survival of the system as the only means of ensuring an adequate rate of surplus value and the freedom to invest and disinvest, set up new businesses, pass them on to one's heirs or close them if necessary, as well as of controlling the means of production that have been handed over to the public sector. Most stockholders are only fictitious proprietors of the means of production. The title they have is to their shares and to the distributed part of the profit, i.e., to the dividends. Most of them are in fact rentier capitalists. The *de facto* proprietors of a corporation's real capital are a minority; they own controlling blocks of shares and are represented on the board of directors. There is a significant difference between them and the rentier capitalists, but both represent forms in which the contemporary bourgeoisie exists and private property controls social production.

The same is true of the interdependence between the small shopkeeper and the owner of a big enterprise who controls scores and even hundreds of shops and factories. Both immediately recognise each other as belonging to the same class, much in the same way as a Great Dane recognises a small mongrel as a dog. As Lenin noted in his time, small businesses will always exist side by side with big ones. Each needs the other for many reasons. Today, the small entrepreneur is often willing to risk his capital in order to explore radically new technology. He blazes the trail for the big corporations which organise the large-scale use of those innovations that promise returns.

The manager is another type or category of the contemporary bourgeoisie. Not necessarily the owner of many shares, he has a role to play in running the corporation, and his income reaches a level consistent with the lifestyle of a capitalist. The entrepreneurial class has proven its capacity not only to bribe but also to incorporate the elite groups of various occupations—managers, civil servants, the military, ideologists, scientists, artists, etc. There is a readiness to share power and wealth with the elitist minority which rises from the lower social strata. This upward mobility also serves as a means of preventing the physical deterioration and senility of the leisurely and parasitic Very Rich. Meritocracy marries with plutocracy, ability with family fortunes.

The flexible and diverse intertwining of entrepreneurial

forms helps *preserve the capitalist system*. Will this ever change? Will the bourgeoisie ever exhaust its potential? One possibility is that a new technology incompatible with private appropriation will appear. The other is that socialism will demonstrate its advantages in utilising new technology for the benefit of a majority of society. This has not happened yet, but happen it may. There is both upward and downward movements in the development of capitalism. These phases interchange, occurring with some regularity. In the downward phase, which usually takes about two decades, the rate of profit declines, unemployment becomes large-scale, new technology does not yield proper results yet, and new organisational forms of social production have yet to take root.

CHANGES IN THE WORKING CLASS

Noticeable changes have occurred within the working class too, and although they have failed to remove the basic conflict within bourgeois society, they have modified its forms and character. In the 19th century and perhaps until the late 1930s the major part of the working class did not receive full compensation of the value of its labour input. This is still true of the Third World, but it no longer applies to most workers in the industrially developed nations.

The change is due to a number of factors. Firstly, superprofits are used to make concessions to the working class (these superprofits are gained through neocolonial exploitation, derived from the application of basic innovations while they are not yet widespread, etc.). Secondly, the working class itself and its organisations have become a stronger and more influential force which, during phases of long economic upturn, managed to secure real wage increases commensurate with higher labour productivity. Thirdly, if capitalism is to expand production, it has not only to increase its foreign markets, modernise and change plant and equipment, invest more, secure military contracts, etc. but also to ensure mass consumer demand and personal consumption. If real wage increases are within the limits of increases in labour productivity, the growth of labour income helps expand markets. In the final analysis, this is the principal condition of sustained economic growth under capitalism.

The net result of all these factors was to substantially change the operation of the tendency towards the absolute and relative impoverishment of workers. Absolute declines in real wages occur only during periods of structural crises. Relative declines in the share of labour in the national income are a more common phenomenon, but they are not felt so strongly. Poverty exists, but does not affect the majority of the employed labour force.

The other great change is that the traditional industrial working class has ceased to increase and is, in many cases, decreasing numerically. Other kinds of hired labour—such as office workers and the service sector—are playing a growing role in the composition of the ag-

gregate labour force. These changes do not eliminate the basic division of capitalist society into classes. Selling one's labour remains the crucial feature of the majority class of hired workers. The appropriation of surplus value remains the main source of income for the capitalist minority. The relatively high wage levels and the "middle class" material conditions of the employed do not change this basic difference.

What is changing is the understanding by the working class of its objective interests. There is a spontaneous development of what Lenin called "trade union consciousness" which often means that people do not feel directly oppressed by the capitalist system. The worker is prepared to fight for higher wages, better working conditions, bigger pensions and other social benefits, but does not feel that the only way out is to change the system radically. At least, such is the mentality of a large part of the working class in the industrially developed countries. One would expect issues like the threat of nuclear war or the environmental crisis to make capitalism unacceptable to the majority of the population. But these problems are not necessarily seen as dangers created precisely by the capitalist mode of production. In another example, it is believed that the traditional working class is in danger of being largely eliminated. But this does not necessarily lead to a feeling of class unity with the unemployed or with workers in similar occupations and industries in other countries or even in the same country. Some of those who lose their jobs find new ones elsewhere. Some even start their own small businesses.

It follows that the *struggle for a socialist consciousness among the working class* is the central issue. The record shows that the slogans under which the masses rally together and are ready to fight for radical social change may be strictly "generally democratic". In the October Revolution, these were "Land to the Peasants", "Peace to the Peoples" and "Power to the Soviets".

Today, calls for a non-nuclear and nonviolent world, a clean environment, freedom from hunger and disease, etc. have particular appeal for most people. The conclusion is that there is no other practical way of introducing socialist consciousness into the masses unless the immediate slogans can motivate them to take action.

SOCIALISM AND THE STRUGGLE OF IDEAS

I believe that the ability of the bourgeoisie to maintain its influence over the working class is still largely underrated. Firstly, although there are signs that both social democratic and bourgeois liberal reformism is in a kind of crisis, its social base in the working-class movement and beyond remains sufficiently broad. Both in difficult times and during periods of greater capitalist stability, reformism mastered the art of responding promptly to popular demands and partially meeting them within the capitalist framework.

Secondly, there is a considerable ideological effort to discredit socialism and this has been partly successful for a number of reasons. The comparison of living standards and labour productivity is unfavourable to us. There will have to be a long period of success in the operation of the socialist economy before we can counteract this trend and overcome the failures and mistakes that have occurred in the development of existing socialism. Stalinism, over-centralisation, bureaucracy and human rights violations are only the more important of them. The restructuring and renewal effort under way in several socialist countries is also exploited for these purposes. Decentralisation, wider use of the market mechanism as well as of the cooperative sector and individual enterprise are all cited as proof of a crisis of socialism and a rebirth of capitalism.

Progress in democratisation may even become more important than future socioeconomic success (saturation of the market with consumer goods, expansion of social services, etc.). Political democracy and personal rights and freedoms in the developed capitalist countries are a factor not to be dismissed lightly: it is a sign of a civilised society, a condition which socialism, unfortunately, has yet to match.

The negative aspects in the operation of state-run enterprises in the capitalist world have also been used to discredit socialist ideas. Nationalisation has been denounced as inefficient and bureaucratic. Even on the left, very few tears are now shed over reprivatisation: frequently, nationalised industries break the record in mass layoffs set by the private sector. Besides, the ruling class pursues a conscious policy of integrating workers into the capitalist system by making them co-owners of corporate shares, real estate, pension funds and the like. The mass media exert a powerful influence on public opinion. There was a time when people were largely left alone after work and could think for themselves, and the vacuum of bourgeois indoctrination was filled by left ideology. This is no longer the case.

All these factors show *how difficult it is to fight for socialism* in the developed capitalist countries. The subjective mistakes that occur may become overwhelmingly important. They cannot be avoided if we underestimate the objective changes under way in bourgeois society and its potential for adjustment. But we should also see the weak points of capitalism:

- * Capitalism regularly encounters long periods of structural crises which have an extremely painful impact on the masses.
- * Often, capitalism does not have ready solutions to most of the burning issues of the day, nor is it willing to sacrifice its basic interests in favour of left-wing or even reformist solutions.
- * Capitalism has no clear or workable long-term alternatives to the solution of global problems.
- * If perestroika succeeds, the socialist model may again become extremely popular in the West.

THE PROS AND CONS OF CAPITALISM

John Kenneth GALBRAITH

In his paper on the factors behind the viability of capitalism, Stanislav Menshikov has failed to cover many changes that have occurred over the past century. It is obvious that Marx did not foresee either the "welfare revolution" or the "Keynesian revolution".¹ But the paper does not give a clear picture of these large-scale, and painful changes: the impression is that the whole Bismarck-Lloyd George-Roosevelt revolution came rather slowly. Socialism could learn from capitalism how to adapt and change promptly and flexibly. You Communists cannot go on and dream the same dream all over again. We should be talking not so much about the productive forces as about social adaptation. The great changes in capitalism that allowed it to survive in a form Marx did not foresee were not technological.

But if one translates the paper from "Marxist-speak" into normal language, its provisions are mainly valid—for example, the point about steps to discredit socialism. Another convincing conclusion is that there is no other practical way of introducing socialist consciousness into the masses except by advancing slogans which are close to people's immediate interests.

There are a lot of substantive problems of capitalism which need specific mention. One is the continuing and moralistic justification of inequality, manifested by Mrs Thatcher and by the people close to the US administration who have been talking about the "functional role of inequality": they claim that reduced taxes on the rich enable the economy to work better. But in fact we had the greatest success of capitalism when marginal tax rates were far higher and inequality far less than they are now.

I would also stress the industries where capitalism has never been competent. It has never been competent in the construction of housing for the lowest-income groups and in tackling the terrible problem of the homeless. Some countries are trying to remedy this by socializing the industry in question. But we in the United States have not done this in a determined way and never really made this a central function of the state—the way the French have done, for example.

Capitalism has never come to fully accept the special role of agriculture which operates only when its otherwise fluctuating incomes are strongly guaranteed by the state. This is true in Japan, in the United States, in Canada and in the EEC. The reason is that agriculture is an industry where there are many producers with no product identification, no product differentiation, to use Chamberlin's terms.² These producers have no control over their own

prices, and many of them suffer from tough market competition. Besides, efficiency requires some predictability in prices, so that farmers can invest in machinery, fertilizer and all the high technology of modern agriculture with some assurance that in the end they will get their return. As a result, productivity gains in US agriculture have been far in excess of such gains in industry. I am not speaking on behalf or in defense of the small farmer. I am simply emphasizing the absolute necessity in agriculture of structural income support by the state, both for social reasons and for reasons of efficiency.

These are some of the things capitalism tackles by making strong concessions to socialism, i.e., by resorting to social action by the state.

I would also stress another aspect of the matter. The capitalist modicum gives a very different standard of living in the public services from what it gives in the private services. Nobody complains about the supply of TV sets or clothing, but there is constant talk about the squalor in our public services, about dirty and unsafe streets, and about poor schools, police forces and public recreation facilities. These are the things which need to be emphasized, in my judgment, as the faults of capitalism. These features of capitalism are not serviceable. They are not an example for anybody to emulate.

But why is capitalism viable in spite of its failures? In the first place, capitalism has managed to identify *economic success* and happiness with the *proliferation of private consumer goods*—to create what we call the consumer society. It has managed to make the production of these goods and services the highest goal of society. These activities dominate leisure, intellectual performance and, to some extent, even the arts.

The Soviet Union has been able to secure a normal standard of living for the population of what used to be czarist Russia. This alone could have made your people happy if there had not been other examples. The genius of capitalism has been to go beyond the traditional framework and to multiply the styles and designs of consumer goods. I read in *The New York Times* the other day that there was a substantial influx of Soviet visitors to the United States. They are not interested in the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art or the theater. They get off the plane and head at an uncontrollable speed towards Macy's. The success of capitalism neither Marx nor Lenin foresaw is not only in the proliferation of consumer goods or in the purchasing power to buy them, but also in creating a society of mass demand in which this is the aim of people's existence. Capitalism has succeeded in this because it has converted the people it exploited into its main buyers and consumers.

But how does one convince the people that this is a false ideal of the consumer society, that leisure, free time and intellectual achievement are the real thing? I have no easy solution whatever. I was motivated by this when I wrote in *The Affluent Society* some 30 years ago that the

private goods produced became increasingly unimportant in relation to life's necessities. There are also serious environmental effects.

A valid point is made in the paper about the ability of the capitalist class to incorporate into itself newcomers from other strata of society—not just members of the managerial class, but also artists and actors. Movie stars have long become multimillionaires. Even painters have become rich. We have a neighbor in Vermont, a very good post-impressionist painter, but somewhat of a social realist too. He is always painting. At the end of every few days he gets his \$40,000 and immediately starts on another painting.

The working class has also changed drastically. In all of the industrially developed countries we now have two working-class groups. The old, "arrived" working class is secure in its position—at least in the stable industries not subject to foreign competition. The other group is the sub-proletariat—mostly migrant workers (the "new invasion of the Moors" in France, Turks and Yugoslavs in the FRG, Mexicans and West Indians in the United States, people from the old colonies—India, Pakistan, etc.—in Britain and so on). They largely do the work the old working class no longer will do.

In Marxist terms, capitalism needs an "industrial reserve army". Switzerland, which I know better than other European countries, has minimal unemployment, a few hundred a year only, because it keeps its unemployment in Italy and Spain. Italian and Spanish workers are permitted to come only to the extent that there are jobs available; if they are not employed, they are sent back home. The American situation is that we do not hold our industrial reserve army in other countries, we keep it in the US. I wonder what Marx would have said about a situation in which the industrial reserve army of the capitalist FRG comes, among other things, from communist Yugoslavia.

The working class is bifurcating into those who have stable and relatively high-paid jobs and those who do disagreeable and low-paid work which is still a highly agreeable alternative to the life they live in Mexico or Haiti or Nicaragua.

The fact that the sub-proletariat is not receptive to socialist ideas should cause no problem whatever for a Marxist. In the first place, these people are newly rescued from what Marx and Engels called in the *Manifesto* the "idiocy of rural life". They have not yet experienced the "socialising influence of capitalism". The great explosion of union activity that occurred in the United States in the past was explained by the fact that the descendants of first-generation immigrants ceased to feel the welcome change from the horrors of ill-paid, semi-starving farm work. Secondly (and this is something Marx could not have mentioned), these people who come to the United States from Mexico or to the FRG from Turkey gain a level of existence so much superior to what they had at home that they feel no impulse towards improving their condition by joining a trade union.

Is there a realistic *socialist* alternative? To me, it is quite evident that in the capitalist world, the revolutionary dynamic is gone. The radical perspective has to be written off. What remains is the drive for what may be called real social democracy—one in which the intellectuals and the government apparatus work for the benefit of all the people, including the newcomers. We must escape the fashionable doctrine according to which the rich need more money to make them work, and the poor need less money to make them work. It is important to escape a policy strongly oriented on the affluent.

What to do with the consumer society? I am a Fabianist in these matters,³ and so I do not think there is any sudden solution. My hope is to see an equitable tax system involving income tax at what were once accepted levels which had some substantial effect on equality: we know that from experience. On the other hand, what most liberals reject but what I urge is a very substantial sales tax on all consumer goods. This is necessary to have the money to

spend for education, to improve the standard of living of the poor and to tackle social problems—to have more libraries, schools and playgrounds, to have better streets and better transportation. There is a much larger role for the state to perform in a capitalist society—in all areas in which capitalism has found itself unsuccessful. Naturally, military expenditure must be reduced.

¹ The transition to state regulation of the economy is linked with the name of the prominent British economist John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) who maintained that capitalist economic stability could be ensured only through intervention by the state.—*Ed.*

² The US economist Edward Chamberlin (1899-1967), author of the theory of monopoly competition.—*Ed.*

³ Fabianists advocate gradual, non-revolutionary improvement of society. Fabianist socialism was initially developed in Britain in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.—*Ed.*

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FROM HYPOTHESIS TO SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS

THE CRISIS OF WHAT CIVILIZATION?

Semou Pathe GUEYE

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Unlike poetic inspiration as described by the French writer Paul Valéry, truth in theory is never heavensent. It is usually the result of painstaking thought, advancing towards truth through successive approximations, through trial and error, and through confrontations with opposing arguments.

In this sense the contributions of the Soviet scholars A. Volkov and B. Kapustin to the discussion around the notion of the "crisis of civilization" seem very interesting.

WMR continues the discussion on the "crisis of civilization", initiated by the mail-in round table reviewed in *WMR*, No. 9, 1989.

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They have not recoiled from the most audacious and even hazardous hypotheses, thus exposing themselves to possible criticism.

I would like to begin by stating my agreement with the two scholars in that today's situation can be characterised as a "crisis of civilization". But my reading of the problem is somewhat different. I have no taste for debates over terminology, but it is my conviction that no theoretical discussion attempting even the minimum of rigour and clarity can do without an advance critical analysis of the *concepts and terms* it is going to use. From this point of view, the presentations of Volkov and Kapustin seem to have a few obvious lacunas.

CIVILIZATION DIVIDES, CIVILIZATIONS UNITE

Turning first to the term "civilization", I would say that the present tendency of some Marxist thinkers to use and even abuse it prompts one to ask some quite legitimate questions. Indeed, one gets the impression that the classical criteria of Marxist political and sociological analysis

have lost much of their significance and that social life is no longer considered in the light of contradictions between different classes or between different sociopolitical systems. But "humanity" has not become a homogeneous, harmonious and problem-free totality solely through the miracle of perestroika initiated by the Soviet Union. There still coexist, and sometimes confront one another, different social classes with their own interests and aspirations. There still exist antagonistic sociopolitical systems, whose fundamental values are essentially very different. Peoples are still divided by differences in their histories, geographic environments, and specific national cultures.

All these factors, which require a highly differentiated approach, cause me to think that Volkov has somehow lost touch with reality when he says that "despite the distinctive nature of different national cultures, we all obviously share an integral universal culture" (my emphasis.—S. P. G.).

Whether one should use the term "civilization" in the singular or in the plural is not the idle caprice of a philosopher lacking arguments in polemics. The problem has considerable epistemological significance in view of the fact, for example, that many scholars have shed their ideological, ethnocentric and racist prejudices as they have come to understand the concept of a *plurality of civilizations* equal in their historical dignity.

Summing up my view of this point, I would say, paradoxical as it may seem, that *civilization* divides, while *civilizations* unite. In other words, an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual understanding, indispensable to genuine dialogue, detente and peace on Earth, can rest only on recognition of the plurality and equality of all human civilizations. The practices of Nazism—a constant reminder of the evils of narrow-mindedness and the recent resurgence of racist tendencies (no longer a monopoly of capitalist countries) should put us on our guard: unless the differences between civilizations are accepted, there can be no lasting peace on Earth.

In the first approximation, this is what troubles me about the contributions by Volkov and Kapustin. They have not put their concept of "civilization" to a minute critical analysis which could both integrate all its diverse aspects and remove every possible cause of confusion and misinterpretation. I think that the concepts "industrial" and "post-industrial civilization" used by Kapustin are open to the same sort of criticism. They seem to have been transferred mechanically from their original conceptual context, that of contemporary bourgeois psychology (Burnhaim, Bell, Aron, Galbraith, etc.), where they had the precise ideological and theoretical function of buttressing the idea of the convergence of socialism and capitalism. I do not mean to reproach Kapustin for such a borrowing. My point is that before using such concepts, one should first evaluate them critically in order to avoid dragging in the undesirable a priori judgements and ideological prejudices that often accompany them.

MAKING UP LOST GROUND

There is at least one extenuating circumstance concerning these real or presumed lacunas in the contributions by the two Soviet scholars, and that is a certain tardiness with regard to our Marxist analysis of civilization. This cannot but affect our approach to the notion of its "crisis". I could not agree more with Volkov on this point: our interpretation of these processes is yet to be formulated.

Hence there are conceptual borrowings from and parallels with some modern sociological theories in which this theme figures prominently: from Simmel to Heidegger and the Frankfurt school theorists, virtually every major philosopher and sociologist has addressed the "crisis of civilization" in one form or another. Some of their works even bear a clear imprint of Marxism, namely, the critical humanism of the philosophical manuscripts of "early" Marx. Such is the case with Simmel, Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and others. These authors have already said what Volkov says, and I think with good reason, about the "disintegration" and "disappearance" of the personality in connection with mass culture. At the same time he notes that "the individual's dedication to moral improvement and a sense of personal responsibility for the future of humanity are clashing increasingly with the danger of the moral dimension in human thinking and behaviour being eroded". This contradiction has already been formulated as a major problem by religious existentialism, notably by Karl Jaspers in West Germany and Gabriel Marcel in France. Lastly, Teilhard de Chardin advanced the concept of a humanity evolving through overcoming its differences towards the point of ultimate convergence, which he calls Point Omega, or "Civilization of the Universal".

The above is not simply an illustration of the advances made by bourgeois thought in analysing the "civilizational" aspects of world contradictions, but an example showing that some of the approaches to global problems which we consider Marxist are little more than a disguised replica of the analysis attempted long ago by bourgeois philosophers and sociologists. Hence the need for a *truly Marxist* approach to global problems, and in our case to the problems of civilization. Naturally, such an approach could not avoid, in case of absolute necessity, using some of the concepts and notions proposed by bourgeois thought, on the condition of their preliminary critical evaluation.

This modest contribution is by no means a claim to ultimate truth regarding a genuinely Marxist approach. I would like only to make two points which may be useful to our discussion. Firstly, Marxist thought has been slow to analyse the problem of civilization because we have failed to give proper attention to the single idea running through all the theoretical and political works of Marx himself. For him, communism, as a real movement to abolish the existing order of things, did not envisage solely the establishment of a new system of relations among people. He visualised also the emergence of a new, truly humane

civilization, which would reconcile man with himself by creating the conditions for his comprehensive development as a social, biological, psychological and spiritual entity. That is why Marxism is the *fullest possible humanism*—fullest in the sense that it implies the objective definition of the means of its own realisation. Placed into this humanistic perspective, the concept "civilization" is integral: in addition to simple material progress (the progress of technology and of material values produced on its basis), it embraces the entire intellectual, ethical and aesthetic sphere of human existence.

It is thus entirely under the sign of triple harmony: the "existential" harmony of man who has surmounted every kind of alienation, which under oppressive and exploitative regimes has prevented him from fully realising his human essence; the ethical and aesthetic harmony of his social environment, organised no longer as a function of the pursuit of selfish and limited ends, but as a function of the need to promote to the maximum human greatness and dignity, freedom and responsibility, morale and the beauty of human actions and creations; and, finally, *ecological harmony*, based on the restoration of a better balanced and more rational process of exchange between man and his natural environment. In elaborating such an integral concept of civilization in the light of historical experience, notably that of existing socialism with its achievements and drawbacks, Marxist thought will acquire an adequate analytical instrument for the critical examination of certain tendencies and contradictions in contemporary development. However, this goal is yet to be achieved.

The above is paralleled by another idea which may seem paradoxical at first sight. At the risk of drawing criticism from those who argue that all the failings of our theory should be imputed not to its founding fathers, but to incompetent and irreverent epigones, I will say that Marx and Engels share a great deal of responsibility for the backwardness of Marxist thought on the problem of civilization.

They in fact put off the development of their own concept of civilization, instead using that inherited from Morgan and pre-Marxist social anthropology, the latter breaking down world history into successive phases of "savagery", "barbarity" and "civilization", which are defined essentially in terms of the technical progress of society from the inferior to the superior. Spiritual criteria take a back seat in this concept, another drawback being that it leaves little room for the critical evaluation of the concept of "progress" on which it rests. I think that such a reading of "progress" was a reflection of ascendant capitalism, and was then uncritically transposed onto socialism in the process of construction.

This specific concept of "progress", endorsed in some measure by Marx and Engels (which places them within the tradition of the 18th-century philosophy of Enlightenment), presupposes that man gains more and more liberty and happiness as, judiciously using his reason, he unravels the mysteries of the Universe and acquires new

means of adapting Nature to his needs. I think that this idea gave a considerable stimulus to the industrial revolution and sustained the entire productivist and consumerist ideology of ascendant capitalism. It is easy to demonstrate that the contemporary strategies of building and perfecting socialism have not escaped its influence either. However, it seems necessary to explore the value and purpose of this concept of "progress" in view of some of the present contradictions of industrialisation and certain "mishaps" of modern technology. Marxists must concern themselves with this question anyway because it is already at the heart of those philosophical and political problems which are used by the Greens to formulate an alternative both to the communist programme and to the present forms of development practised in the industrialised capitalist countries.

And this exploration leads to the question of a *new way for the development of civilization, which no longer relates human freedom and happiness to new industrial advances or technological acquisitions*. I think that Kapustin correctly pinpointed that dimension of the problem, even though his answer, as I will demonstrate, does not seem quite satisfactory.

THE CRISIS OF WHICH CIVILIZATION?

All the above observations were meant to demonstrate the need for a concrete approach, one rigorously taking into account both the objective historical trend towards the mutual *interdependence* of the values of civilization and their *specific features*. To my mind, only this kind of approach makes it possible to ask the real questions: Which civilization is really in crisis? Through what process has that particular crisis acquired a universal dimension? What links can one identify between the "crisis of civilization" and the "general crisis of capitalism", that fundamental concept in the light of which Marxists continue to examine the contradictions of our epoch?

I will not attempt to answer all the above questions in detail—hopefully, there will be another occasion for that—but will examine only one of them and propose a few hypotheses.

Man is the only being in the living world capable of conscious activities in order to pursue his goals and aspirations, to satisfy his material and spiritual needs through the creation of more and more sophisticated technologies and the elaboration of spiritual values (philosophical, religious, aesthetic, ethical, etc.), and also modes of conduct depending on the historical and natural conditions of his existence.

But this *general process* of the entire human race is proceeding within the frame of concrete national situations determined by the historical and geographical circumstances of each people. Hence a variety of *forms*, each of them implying a special approach to any understanding of the relationship between the individual and his environment

(both social and natural), and also to an understanding of man's role and place in the Universe.

Before spreading its influence to the rest of the world, the civilization which had taken root in Europe sought above all to develop more powerful and sophisticated scientific and technical means and techniques in order to become, as Descartes put it, the "master and owner of Nature". The subsequent evolution of that civilization followed the logic of the development of material power and the resultant quantitative accumulation of commodities. It relegated to the background the question of the truly humanistic end of the results of human activity, as well as that of the ethical and even aesthetic value of the means to this purpose.

By the end of the 16th century, it was that model of civilization which had asserted itself in Europe and then in North America. Eventually, it spread its values worldwide through colonial violence or through the impression, sustained by the massive export of its products throughout the globe, that it was far more efficient. Before being overwhelmed or blocked in their autonomous evolution by the "Euroamerican" model of civilization, the Amerindian and Afro-Asian civilizations pursued different perspectives and put wisdom over the acquisition of purely "instrumental" knowledge, and ethics over technology, all in the frame of the general concept of the Universe in which Nature was not a simple object serving Man, but primarily a value to be "respected" and even revered religiously.

To my mind, speaking about the "crisis of civilization" today, we mean first of all the crisis of the "Euroamerican model" of civilization. This crisis perforce has a global dimension because it is the crisis of the dominant model.

What should be understood concretely by the crisis of the Euroamerican model of development? What I mean is that *having achieved formidable progress in terms of scientific knowledge, technology, and material and spiritual acquisitions, that model has pushed humanity into a situation whereby the present logic of development urgently requires change in order to avoid a universal catastrophe.* As soon as we go beyond the habitual stereotypes, it becomes clear that the arms race, along with the aggravated risk of a nuclear apocalypse, the increased menace of an ecological catastrophe, the present problems involved in the underdevelopment of the Third World (which pose a threat to the sociodemographic equilibrium of the entire world), are not just accidental side effects of the general historical process. They are rooted in a logic of evolution determined by quantitative rather than qualitative considerations, by the problem of the means rather than the ends. That is why the increasingly efficient mechanisms for managing Nature are being transformed into increasingly subtle mechanisms of man's self-alienation and the increasing perversion of his will towards destruction and self-destruction.

That is why I do not see, as Kapustin does, a solution to this crisis in "post-industrial civilization" for the simple reason that if it remains purely "scientific and technologi-

cal", as he defines it, it will be no different from today's civilization. But Kapustin's other idea seems quite interesting and worth developing. He sees the possibility of socialism accomplishing the emancipation of humanity as depending on its ability to break with "industrial forms". I think the whole question is this: are people in both socialist and capitalist countries, who are aware of all the boons offered by industrialisation and further technological progress, ready both physically and psychologically to explore another direction?

But we should not delude ourselves: as this question is explored and developed further, many of our present "dogmas" are going to be toppled.

HUMANITY AT A CROSSROADS

Professor Ivan HARSANYI
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There must be something behind all this talk about the "crisis of civilization", but it is not by chance that these words are in quotation marks. I think it would be better to say that "humanity is at a crossroads" because it is confronted by new problems which cannot be resolved singlehandedly by any of the existing social formations or groups of states, nor within any of the existing systems, nor through the elimination of the other system. Solutions can only be produced together, through compromise: that is the imperative of human survival which underlies "new political thinking".

Although the term "new thinking" is widely used, this does not absolve us of the need to explore its content in depth. It is of course wrong to see it as a Trojan horse distracting the world's oppressed from the struggle for independence and social security. Even global problems must not be allowed to obscure the glaring social, interstate, ethnic, religious and national conflicts of our age.

What makes our situation even more difficult is that the unavoidable need to resolve the global "enigmas" facing the whole of humanity has arisen at a time when the above (and other) traditional conflicts have come to a head. By ignoring these conflicts we can perhaps mitigate the dangers, but not avert them altogether. And world developments can be influenced only to a modest degree by national means.

The danger has also been growing because the military, ecological or economic aspects of global problems can no longer be controlled by the methods of the 19th or even the mid-20th century. Volkov pinpointed this paradox in his article: qualitatively new problems have arisen when humanity is not yet ready politically or

ideologically to cope with them, nor are there "dependable mechanisms" to pool the resources of different countries in order to attack these problems. A large part of the world's people are preoccupied (often hopelessly) with self-preservation, and have closed their eyes to the dangers looming over the human race. Their own "burning" problems block their vision of the common prospects of humanity.

Moreover, however important foreign policy is in safeguarding peace, achieving fair economic relations and improving the environment, this is too much of a job even for a few hundred diplomats: it will take the creative efforts of millions. And these millions cannot learn new thinking from propaganda, nor can they be "persuaded" to embrace a new mode of thinking. The problem turns on the personal realisation that international detente will make the world a more just, healthy and hospitable place to live in for one and all.

Communists have thought for years that, compared with the class struggle, participation in the actions of the peace movements is a "lower" form of political activities. To all appearances, the situation today is different: people are learning new thinking for the whole of humanity from

the concrete experience they gain in democratic and peace movements.

History has not validated the hope that victorious socialist revolutions would quickly put an end to expansionism in international relations, to the indiscriminate depletion of natural resources, and to national, ethnic and religious conflicts. This has not come true even in socialist countries. Of course, the embryonic condition of socialist society is as much to blame here as the existence of opposing social systems. But the new foreign and military policies of the great powers cannot remove tensions in state-to-state relations or social contradictions overnight.

In order to preserve life on Earth, we must realise that *world peace and security are impossible if instead of dealing with socioeconomic, national, ethnic and religious conflicts, they are allowed to pile up*; if starvation consumes large parts of the globe while the rich nations continue in part to finance their own economic growth by draining the resources of the poor (or less rich) countries. Traditional conflicts, which can so easily spill over onto the international scene, are a constant threat to the emergent and still fragile new mode of thinking and action, and therefore to human life as the greatest value.





PALESTINE: THE WAY TO PEACE

Mahmoud SHUKEIR
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Very important developments have unfolded since the 19th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC) proclaimed, in November 1988, an independent Palestinian state and adopted a declaration central to the national plan for peace.¹ These events confirm the validity of the realistic course mapped out by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The popular uprising is a continuous challenge to the Israeli occupation forces. The intifada is a qualitatively new stage in the national struggle of the Palestinian people, with representatives of all social groups participating in it on a broader scale, with diverse forms of resistance to the army of occupation and to the Israeli settlers, and with new and more flexible methods. It has been possible to avoid certain mistakes. For example, the insurgents have rejected the traditional pattern of civil disobedience which may have proven useful in a different situation. The emergence of popular committees as governing bodies since the very first days of the intifada, the effective response to the slogans advanced by the United National Command, and the commitment to greater unity were prime factors essential to the continued uprising and a source of its strength.

Now that a year has elapsed since the 19th session of the PNC (which has gone down in history as the "intifada session"), there is an evident dialectical interconnection between the uprising and the Palestinian plan for peace. While the uprising helped raise the political consciousness of the people, who grasped the actual potential of the intifada in the face of superior military power, this consciousness also defines the prospects and slogans of the uprising and, in turn, helps it continue and develop.

The organic combination of two new elements—the intifada and the Palestinian peace plan—in the position of the PLO explains many political shifts that have recently occurred. I am referring, on the one hand, to progress in securing the Palestinians' national rights and, on the other, to the efforts of certain quarters seeking to fragment these

elements. This would end the uprising and neutralise the Palestinian peace plan.

After this plan was proclaimed, the US administration was forced to agree to a dialogue with the PLO. In an effort to break out of the deadlock created by its openly hostile attitude to the Palestinian resistance movement, Washington, manoeuvring in various ways, is trying to achieve its old objectives of burying the national rights of the Palestinian people and creating an alternative to their organisation. The series of meetings between PLO and US representatives has so far failed to reconcile both sides' views. Obviously, the United States is using these talks to convince world public opinion that a solution to the crisis is around the corner. Washington is playing for time: the hope is that the rulers of Israel will succeed in suppressing the intifada, and then it will be possible to restore the status quo. Besides, the United States is again following Henry Kissinger's "step-by-step" tactics, trying to emphasise insignificant details and thus divert the PLO's attention from the principal problems of the settlement.

The refusal to recognise the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and their own state, and the nebulous rhetoric about the "political rights" of the Palestinians do not mean, however, that there has been no progress as far as the stance of the US administration is concerned. It has accepted the idea of convening an international conference. It supports the demand for an end to the occupation, and rejects the idea of a "Greater Israel", asserting that UN Resolution 242 means "land in exchange for peace". But this is not enough for a comprehensive settlement: Washington's desire to terminate the uprising and its identification with the Israeli plan for elections in the occupied territories clash with the legitimate national aspirations of the Palestinian people.

Still, the PLO is continuing its dialogue with the United States, guided by the clear-cut directives of the Palestine National Council's 19th session and by the conviction that

in our interdependent world it is increasingly difficult to uphold a policy hampering the attainment of a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East.

The plan proposed by the PLO has made a noticeable impact on Israeli society. There, the number of organisations and movements advocating peace has increased. Numerous opinion polls show that support for the idea of negotiations is growing. Some leaders of both Israel's ruling parties are already condemning the continued occupation of Arab territories, and the views of many army officers have changed. Aside from maintaining firm ties with the CPI, the PLO has broadened its contacts with some other realistic organisations in Israel. It is true that these changes so far remain limited: the forces of peace and realism in the nation are fragmented, lack a clearly articulated political programme (except the Communists), and do not present a united front.

The plan of Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir for elections in the occupied territories is a reaction of sorts to the PLO peace initiatives which have won widespread support in the international community. The Israeli ruling circles expect the idea of elections to be welcomed by world public opinion. However, hard facts lay bare the true nature of the plan and the political manoeuvring behind it. In actual fact, the following salient features of the situation should be mentioned:

- although the Palestine Liberation Organisation has accepted the idea of elections if they are combined with a definitive and comprehensive settlement of the conflict and conducted under UN supervision after Israeli troops evacuate the occupied territories, the Israeli leaders so far reject this approach;
- the occupation authorities are threatening to arrest any candidate canvassing for the PLO;
- all those dedicated to common sense and conscience are convinced that democratic practices cannot be separated from freedom and that one cannot speak of democracy for some individuals while denying it to a whole nation and depriving it of its right to self-determination;
- the four provisions added to the Israeli plan by the Likud bloc under pressure from the three extremists (Sharon, Modai and Levi) have aggravated its anti-peace thrust. They concern an end to the intifada as a precondition for elections, the disenfranchisement of the population of Arab (Eastern) Jerusalem, rejection of the idea of a Palestinian state, and the refusal to freeze the construction of kibbutzim in the occupied territories.

The Palestinian peace plan has added depth to the PLO's relations with the forces of freedom, peace, democracy and socialism. A Palestinian-Soviet commission has been formed to study the opportunities for con-

vening an international conference on a Mideast settlement. The identity of these sides' views is encouraging. They are consulting each other on the political developments under way so as to help achieve a comprehensive settlement.

The Arab summit in Casablanca in May 1989 accepted the Palestinian peace plan in its entirety. In June, the EEC summit in Madrid approved a resolution in support of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and of the convocation of an international conference on the Middle East with PLO participation. At this summit, Shamir's proposals were criticised. Finally, one should note the positive decisions adopted at the 9th Non-Aligned Summit. International public opinion increasingly supports our cause. All this confirms the fact that the PLO peace plan is the only viable way of settling the Mideast crisis comprehensively and definitively. In spite of the difficulties resulting from moves made by the United States, Israel and some Arab regimes, the Palestinian plan remains central to our struggle which is currently aimed at the following objectives:

- the continuation of the intifada, the development of appropriate political and economic structures in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the achievement of what might be described as autarky in order to reduce the people's dependence on the occupation authorities;
- the stepping up of the PLO's political activity at all levels and the mobilisation of broad international public support for the Palestinian peace plan in order to bring pressure to bear on the governments of the United States and Israel in favour of convening an international conference on a Mideast settlement;
- improved coordination between the PLO and the national liberation forces in the region so as to force the Arab regimes to implement the decisions of the Algiers and Casablanca Arab summits and secure greater support of the uprising by the popular masses;
- broader contacts between the PLO and those realistic quarters in Israel which, irrespective of their political platforms, oppose the occupation, the objective being to expose Israel's aggressive policy and submit alternative proposals based on the recognition of the "two nations, two states" principle on Palestinian soil.

¹ See: Naim Ashhab, "A Palestinian State Proclaimed", *WMR*, No 2, 1989.—Ed.

CLOUDS OVER THE OIL PARADISE

WMR has been giving broad coverage to the Iran-Iraq conflict, the longest war this century and one which has had serious implications for the antagonists' neighbours.¹

Now that hostilities in the Gulf have ended, we have asked leaders of the national liberation movement of the region to discuss the problems faced by Bahrain and Oman.

THE GOALS OF OUR FRONT

Abdalla AL-RASHED

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We welcome the end of the senseless and devastating Iran-Iraq war. The cessation of hostilities has had a beneficial effect on Bahrain and on the situation in the Gulf and in the Arab Peninsula as a whole. Tensions in the region lessened, denying the imperialists, primarily the US, an excuse for military presence in the Gulf. Our states are able both to defend themselves and to ensure stability in the region, whereas US troops are a tool in the undemocratic policies of repression and terror pursued by the local regimes against the national liberation movement. The removal of the threat posed by the US will undoubtedly meet the interests of the Gulf peoples fighting for full sovereignty and independence, for democracy and freedom. The withdrawal of US forces would also mean an end to the plunder of our natural resources, which our peoples will then be able to use in the interests of development.

I see a close link between the ending of the Iran-Iraq war and the signing of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan. The violation of the latter by the US and Pakistan, however, is doing harm to our region as well. Imperialism and reaction continue to exploit the situation in the Gulf and in Afghanistan. The US is pouring in massive aid to the Afghan counterrevolutionary gangs based in Pakistan. Saudi Arabia's recognition of their "Islamic government" in exile has done nothing to help stabilise the situation either. The constructive principles of ensuring security in the Asia-Pacific region, including the Gulf, proclaimed by Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachov, deserve special mention in this context.

During the Iran-Iraq conflict there came into being the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, which in fact is a military and political alliance in the service of imperialism. During the war the local regimes dealt a series

of blows to the liberation movements under the pretext of "ensuring security and stability". Today we see an onslaught of the forces of reaction on democracy in the countries of our region. The general public, primarily the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, is opposed to this policy. In Bahrain resistance to it is also backed by a section of the national big bourgeoisie, who do not want the perpetuation of tribal laws in our and neighbouring countries, and are seeking modernisation along the lines of today's capitalism.

Substantial socioeconomic structural shifts have occurred in Bahrain in the past few decades, especially during the oil boom. But now that oil prices have dropped, the oil-producing countries of the Gulf have entered a crisis. Workers' earnings have been declining, more and more companies and banks have been going bankrupt, and foreign banks are pulling out of Bahrain and neighbouring countries.

Now that the Gulf countries are facing a crisis over the drop in oil prices, their governments have adopted policies of "rationalising spending" at the expense of the working people. In Bahrain social programmes have been cut and new taxes, in particular on passports and on hospital care, introduced. Indirect taxes have been raised: the withdrawal of subsidies from a number of consumer goods has pushed up prices, thus hitting the pockets primarily of the poorer people.

Our government, which is pursuing reactionary domestic and foreign policies, is closely linked to the neighbouring reactionary regimes and to world imperialism, especially to the US, which is allowed to build military bases on our territory. The authorities are fiercely hostile to the international movement of national liberation.

The country's economy is sustained predominantly by oil and aluminium revenue and by trade. The ruling clan dispenses the state budget, spending heavily on the repressive machine and the army. Transnationals and banks (Bahrain is a major banking centre) are active in plundering the wealth of the peoples of the region.

The Bahrain working class has a history of struggle for their rights. Although banned, quite a few trade unions operate under the umbrella of the Bahrain Workers' Union. The national workforce is concentrated mostly at the

enterprises of the BAPCO oil company, at aluminium plants, in the repair dry dock, at small factories and in the construction industry. Other major employers are retail trade, government offices and banks. The authorities would like to dilute the class structure by importing labour (although local unemployment, even according to official statistics, stands at 20,000) and counting local workers as employees and bourgeois. The government sells them stocks and land and takes other measures to make them appreciate bourgeois values.

The authorities are trying to suppress the trade union movement and have set up the official Workers' Committee of Bahrain for the purpose, but the people are resolved to fight for their constitutional right to associate in trade unions. The government has permitted tradesmen to unite in a Chamber of Commerce, which protects their rights, but denies such a right to workers' occupational associations. Meanwhile, the standard of living of the working people is declining; real wages have dropped almost by half.

The Bahrain regime, isolated from the people, is confronted by a political and economic crisis. We believe the only way to overcome it is to restore the Constitution, most of the provisions of which were suspended by the authorities way back in 1975, and to guarantee at least minimum democratic freedoms.

Struggle for democracy is a priority for our party in the present situation. All the national patriotic movements in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula share this goal. We are exposing human rights violations and the repression and terror being used against the national patriotic forces. We protest against unlawful arrests and the physical and psychological torture of prisoners. Since early 1988, more than 200 BNLF members alone have been arrested and tortured, and 24 of them have been sentenced to prison

terms of 3 to 5 years. Fictitious charges, like attempts to overthrow the regime and establish socialism, are made against our comrades. The tool of repression is the Bahrain secret service, coached and advised by US and British officers.

We have made an alliance with the People's Front of Bahrain (PFB) on a common political platform in our struggle for democracy, the abolition of US military presence and the establishment of a peace zone in the Gulf. We are conducting a dialogue with the Islamic Liberation Front of Bahrain (ILFB) with a view to achieving at least a minimum accord on a common programme of action in defence of the interests of the working people. We are also seeking a stronger alliance with the sections of the bourgeoisie which have an interest in democracy and in the development of a national economy out of the shadow of foreign monopoly rule. Representatives of the three fronts addressed a message to the latest meeting of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, outlining their position and suggesting measures which would make it possible to normalise and improve the situation for the good of people.

Our party and the national patriotic forces of Bahrain and the other countries in the region are fighting for the same goals as the international revolutionary movement, namely full independence, democracy and peace. Even a partial victory in this struggle would be a great achievement and a fresh impetus to social progress.

¹ See, e.g., AROUND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS. Muhsin Abdallah, "Using the War as a Pretext"; Salah Djaber, "To Save the Nation From Disaster"; Saif Ben Ali, Youssef al-Hassan, "Under the Pretext of Defending Sovereignty", *WMR*, No. 3, 1988.—Ed.

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DEMOCRACY AND THE SULTANATE

Suhail Ali SAID

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There have been noticeable advances in the solution of regional conflicts. The Iran-Iraq war has been ended, there is movement towards settling the Cambodian problem, the Geneva accords on Afghanistan have been signed (although they are still being violated by imperialist and reactionary circles), and steps have been taken to improve the situation in Southwest Africa.

The improvement in international relations is having a beneficial effect on the situation in the Persian Gulf, in the Arabian Peninsula as a whole, and in our country as well. Recognising the changing international situation and the

opinion of the popular masses, the Sultanate of Oman¹ announced a *new foreign policy* and established diplomatic relations with the USSR.² The current trend gives hope that other socialist states may soon open embassies in the capital.

The changes in Oman's foreign policy are largely the result of popular mass struggle. For years the national patriotic movement, which includes the PFLO, insisted on normalising relations with all countries. There are great opportunities now for making further contacts with the socialist world and with progressive regimes.

The protracted war between Iran and Iraq did much to retard the economic and social development not only of the belligerents, which suffered huge human and material losses, but also of other states in the Persian Gulf. It also had an effect on the national patriotic movement in the region. The conflict led to a sharp increase in the US-NATO military presence in the Gulf. The end of the war has deprived the imperialists of their justification for building up their armed forces in the area ("a threat to vital US inter-

ests"). We demand the immediate withdrawal of foreign warships from the Gulf.

Now that fighting along the Iran-Iraq front has stopped, other consequences of the war have been making themselves felt: the imperialist powers used it as a pretext for expanding their domination of the region, and now they are trying to use the end of the war for the same purposes. Major companies are vying with each other for fat contracts to rehabilitate the war-ravaged economies of Iran and Iraq, and we believe that this rivalry threatens to strengthen imperialism and increase tensions in the region.

During the war Oman, unlike other members of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (CCASG),³ maintained good relations with Iran. These were further strengthened when the war ended, especially in the political, economic and commercial spheres. Oman-Iran relations began to worry CCASG members, and this is also having an effect on the overall situation.

An analysis of the internal situation in Oman shows that its socioeconomic structure has changed in the past few years. A blow has been dealt at precapitalist economic, social and communal institutions, and this is, without doubt, a positive fact. However, the development of capitalist relations has produced some negative phenomena. There has even been a slowdown in economic growth because of the dependent and parasitic character of local capitalism.

Oman's development has followed its own path, determined by the country's specific features and by the particular processes of interaction and interpenetration of classes. The social reforms implemented since 1970 have brought about noticeable changes in the *class composition of society*: new strata have emerged; a social group closely linked to the world capitalist economy—a big bourgeoisie, including compradors and industrialists—has taken shape; and the ranks of the petty and middle bourgeoisie are swelling.

The young working class has been slow in growing numerically. Here one should note a distinctive feature of the situation, namely the presence in Oman of a large number of foreign workers (almost 500,000) from various Asian countries. This is having a negative effect on the development of Oman's native proletariat, although the economic and social changes have objectively opened up real prospects for its quantitative and qualitative growth. The influence of the national patriotic forces on the working people is causing them to play a more active role in society.

The reforms and the sizable investments have increased *class differentiation* and widened the property gap between the big bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the workers and peasants on the other. (It is only fair to say that the gap is not so wide as in countries outside the oil-bearing region.) Not all the social classes and strata have enjoyed the fruits of the changes. The greatest benefits have gone to the ruling clan and to those who

were rich long before 1970. The reforms have affected only some parts of the country, mainly benefitting the capital and the southern region of Dhofar. The other areas continue to suffer from a lack of social services.

Oman extracts less oil than Saudi Arabia, Kuwait or the United Arab Emirates. It is not a member either of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) or of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), and so it does not have to abide by their fixed prices or production quotas. This year it has been producing about 610,000 barrels a day.⁴ That is, of course, a respectable level, but the problem is that most of the proceeds from oil sales, and the funds coming in from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, do not go into improving the public health and education systems or into a development fund. Almost 40% of the budget is spent on "security and defence", although Oman is faced with neither an external nor an internal threat. The regime seems to believe that its task is to buy up and stockpile the weapons which US arms corporations cannot sell to other countries.

Oil revenue must go towards creating prosperity for the peoples and ensuring the stability of states. But for the national patriotic movement in the region oil has become a negative factor; it has ultimately impeded society's harmonious economic and social development, while the misuse of petrodollars by antipeople regimes has stifled the sprouting shoots of democracy.

Now, as in the past, the struggle for democratic renewal continues to be the most important task of the national patriotic forces. As elsewhere on the globe, the problem of democracy in the region is linked to the issue of peace. If the ruling circles are truly committed to the ideas of non-alignment, peace and detente they must also put their trust in democracy and allow the people to freely express their will.

While Oman society has been developing along capitalist lines, the regime is still an absolute monarchy ruling the country in accordance with the medieval laws of feudalism. The Sultanate has no constitution, and no political freedom or civil liberties—a situation which impedes economic and social development. But this cannot go on much longer. A class struggle is clearly under way between the national patriotic and progressive forces on the one hand, and the opponents of progress and democracy on the other.

The oil boom has turned Oman into one of the richest countries in the world, and bourgeois ideologists have used this fact to claim that the socialist system and socialist ideas are irrelevant in such "flourishing" societies. We deny these assertions and argue that socialism benefits one and all, in contrast to capitalism, which debases human values, distorts the economic and social development of young states, and confines them to the fringes of a backward periphery.

Perestroika in the USSR and new political thinking,

which are revealing the true advantages of socialism and the potential for sustained renewal in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, fortify our faith in the viability and historical correctness of the new system, which rejects exploitation of man by man, desiring only happiness and prosperity for people and peace for the world.

¹ An absolute monarchy in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula with a population of about 1.3 million. Sultan Qaboos bin Said ascended the throne in 1970. Since 1981, the country has had a Consultative Council.—Ed.

² On September 26, 1985.—Ed.

Opportunities for national-democratic development have been opening up in our region, and we are sure that the day will come when Oman's revolutionary forces will fulfil their historic mission.

³ Among its members are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar.—Ed.

⁴ In comparison, the official OPEC quotas for Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates are, respectively, 1.093 and 1.041 million barrels a day.—Ed.

* * *

"RESPECTABLE" NEO-NAZISM TODAY

Jupp ANGENFORT

member of the Board, German Communist Party (DKP)

Fifty years after the unleashing by Hitlerite fascism of World War II, neo-Nazi forces are stepping up their activity in the Federal Republic of Germany. One cannot but be concerned by such facts as the election of a deputy from the German People's Union—List D to the Landtag of Bremen and the "Republicans" success in the elections in West Berlin (7.5% of the vote or 11 seats) and to the European Parliament (7.1% of the national vote). In all, there are now about 50 neo-Nazi groups in the FRG, the most noteworthy among them being the above two: they enjoy considerable popularity and other profascist forces increasingly take their cue from them.

The German People's Union (DVU) was founded in 1971 by Gerhard Frey, the publisher of *Deutsche Nationalzeitung*. Initially it had no electoral plans, aiming solely to put constant pressure on the CDU and CSU to "adhere to the policy of protecting Germans' rights". A year later Frey created and became head of the so-called Freedom Council, through which direct contacts are maintained with other neo-Nazi organisations. Of course, firm links have also been preserved with the old Nazis. Thus, Frey's publication awarded its 1980 "European Freedom Prize" to a former high-ranking official of Hitler's party, Kernmayer.

In 1987 the DVU was reconstituted as the German People's Union—List D, which has begun to cooperate closely with the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party (NPD). The latter's successes belong to 1966-1968, when it won seats in the Landtags of nearly all West German Lands. After a relative economic recovery and the CDU/CSU's relegation to opposition in the Bundestag, the

number of NPD voters started to diminish rapidly. With the conservative parties' return to leading positions in the government, it again began gathering votes.

What are the main policy planks of the DVU? Here are some of them: "Germany to the Germans. The foreign population must ... be limited to a reasonable percentage point." The DVU wants the German Reich back, more arms for "defence against Bolshevism" and does not recognise war or Nazi crimes. It has declared the Moscow and the Warsaw treaties of 1970 null and void. DVU chairman Frey himself explained what this means back in the 1970s: "Our population is unable to live within the space of the Federal Republic, and we simply can't see why the vast Soviet Union needs a territory 100 times larger than ours when it has a population only 3 or 4 times larger". This echoes the very same theory of a "people without living space" that helped the Nazis to prepare the German people for World War II.

The neo-Nazi party *Republicans* was founded in 1983 by two former CSU Bundestag deputies and publicist Franz Schoenhuber. During the Nazi period he volunteered for service in the SS and was a non-commissioned officer in the Adolf Hitler Division. In his book *Ich war dabei* (I Was There), he proudly recalls his time in the SS, calling them an "elite formation".

Leading "Republicans" pose as German nationalists. They try to avoid openly Nazi statements, maintaining that they stand on constitutional ground. But if one scratches the surface and discloses the substance of their pronouncements, their attitudes are clearly revealed as incompatible with the democratic principles of the Basic Law. Let me give a few examples. One of last year's issues of the party's central newspaper *Republikaner* (No. 7, 1988) contains the following passage: "The main reason for environmental destruction is ... the overpopulation of our living space, to a considerable extent produced by the expulsion of Germans from their Eastern regions...". Again we meet with the theory of a "people without living space"! At the same time it is being suggested that the damage to the environment was programmed and imposed by the anti-

Hitler coalition. Or take this idea contained in the organisation's programme adopted in 1987, "As a German party the Republicans stand for the right to life and for human rights for all Germans in the spirit of the Basic Law...". Their disregard for the rights of persons of other nationalities living in our country amounts to xenophobia and flings open the doors to racism. Dr Willms, an ex-federal judge (incidentally a member of the panel of judges who sentenced me to five years' imprisonment in 1955 for being the leader of Free German Youth), explained this part of the programme. In his opinion, the constitutional requirement that the state pay special attention to the protection of marriage and the family does not apply to foreigners. In the above-mentioned *Republikaner* he writes: "In legal terms the stipulation that family members should live together applies only to the country, of which the person is a citizen." In other words, let foreigners wishing to live together with their families go back to their homeland. So they have no right to invite their families to the FRG. The "Republicans" go even further. Their programme goes on: "Foreigners are guests. As in Switzerland, this rules out the conclusion of permanent labour contracts, a long stay, the reunion of families, or claims to social services." Thus, foreigners living in our country must effectively be deprived of all social rights.

Statements by the "Republicans" chairman Schoenhuber illustrate the racist origin of such ideas. In an article in *Republikaner* (No. 4, 1988) headlined "People in the Crisis" he wrote: "The dominance of foreign elements will have other consequences too. Our people's sense of communality, resting on the spiritual and blood ties that have developed over millennia of shared history, will be undercut; their feeling of inner unity, a source of strength and reliance in times of trouble, will be lost, and so will their ability for joint action." Such revelations could have been penned by Hitler's "expert" Rosenberg.

Of the many "Republican" figures with a neo-Nazi past, Harald Neubauer, general secretary and spokesman, is particularly conspicuous. He was once the DVU chairman for Hamburg. From 1975 to 1984 he edited the union's publications *Deutsche Nationalzeitung* and *Deutscher Anzeiger*. The following is an example of his views: "Each Communist is a moral criminal and a potential murderer. Communism must be given as little scope for action as there is between a hanged man's neck and the rope".¹ A statement worthy of Goebbels.

Electoral slogans used by the neo-Nazi parties DVU, NPD and the "Republicans" make it clear that they focus on identical points. Based on racist theses about the natural "inequality" of people by birth and origin, they preach xenophobia and blame foreign workers for social and economic ills. All neo-Nazi parties demand a "strong state" of a kind that would discriminate strongly against SPD, the Greens, DKP, trade unions and democratic movements and initiatives. Hostility to the working-class movement is closely linked with aggressive anticommunism. Moreover, the "enemy image" is applied to all

those considered politically undesirable. The Nazi state's criminal character is questioned or played down, and the evidence of mass Hitlerite crimes denied or passed off as "relative". Invective is heaped on the anti-fascist Resistance, its participants labeled as "traitors to Germany". At the same time service in the Wehrmacht is presented as a "model of military valour". The neo-Nazi parties are against the existence of two German states, for a restored "great German Reich" and Germany in its "historical boundaries". They question the frontiers resulting from World War II, and scorn the principles of peaceful coexistence between states with differing social systems. All this is served up with a dressing of nationalistic and social demagoguery, in a form "corresponding to the Constitution and the Law".

Neo-Nazism in the Federal Republic, a DKP Board meeting noted in June 1989, is not a bolt from the blue. Unlike the German Democratic Republic, fascism here has never been completely eliminated. The forces that brought it to the helm of the state—the reactionary circles of big capital—remain intact and their economic (hence, political) power has been restored. People guilty of horrible mass killings remain unpunished; and anticommunism is again a state doctrine. Kohl's government, and representatives of the Steel Helmet group in the CDU/CSU bear considerable responsibility for the neo-Nazis' increased role. Their attempts to further reduce the unsatisfactory status of foreign co-citizens, their desire to limit the right of asylum, and the slogans hostile to foreigners from the conservatives' leaders are a wind in the sails of the neo-Nazis. They have gained access to TV and radio to broadcast their views. The federal postal service, where not a single employee is allowed to be a Communist, distributes their printed matter. At mass meetings the police have orders to cut short the actions not of neo-Nazis, but of protesting antifascist demonstrators. After the elections to the European Parliament, the "Republicans" were given DM16 million as a "compensation for electoral-campaign expenses". This is nothing less than an encouragement to the neo-Nazis. The blame for social dismantling, housing shortages and mass unemployment lies with the Kohl government. Social problems cause widespread despair, especially among young people, thus enabling the neo-Nazis' demagoguery to produce an effect.

Under international law and domestic legislation, ruling circles in the FRG should from the outset have checked neo-Nazi activities, as required, for example, by Article 139 of the Constitution. But this has not happened. So what induces the federal government to tolerate them, and moreover, in many cases even to help? How can neo-Nazism be useful to the FRG ruling circles at the present time? *The neo-Nazi parties serve as a reservoir for catching the votes of electors disaffected with government policy.* They contribute to a further rightward swing in the public mood by disseminating the ideas which other right-wing forces, including those represented in the government, so far cannot or do not want to publicly express in

such a form. The use or threat of force, to which the neo-Nazis often resort, makes it possible to intimidate the masses and to spread fear, warning against pro-democracy action. Finally, the neo-Nazis might become the CDU/CSU's coalition partner if it proves impossible to form other alliances for continuing the "rightward shift".

This last question has become the subject of heated discussion in the country and the CDU/CSU. Many members and supporters of these parties are angered by the plans for cooperation and especially a coalition with the "Republicans". However, the former Senator of the Interior in West Berlin, Lummer (CDU), has declared the need to adjust for such a course. Figures like the chairman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group, Alfred Dregger, and the ex-Interior Minister of Lower Saxony, Wilfried Hasselmann, although they are somewhat distrustful of the "Republicans", refuse to declare an alliance with them inadmissible. So far the presidium of the CDU (but not of the CSU) has prohibited any coalitions or agreements with the "Republicans". This, however, does not apply to non-formal cooperation with them. Nor has there been any mention of sanctions to be taken against those violating the ban. There are signs that the most reactionary circles in the CDU, and especially in the CSU, will insist on not obstructing cooperation and perhaps coalitions with the "Republicans" at the *communal level* and on keeping the door open for this. After a period of feigned shyness and the conditioning of public opinion, prerequisites could arise for a deal with the "Republicans" at a higher level. This does not mean that developments will follow precisely this path—they may be influenced by pressure from the popular masses. It is necessary to create a political climate

in the Federal Republic that would prevent the CDU/CSU leaders from taking such a dangerous path.

It would be wrong to speak only of the neo-Nazi threat in the FRG. There is a powerful antifascist movement in our country, with many people expressing concern over the neo-Nazis' consolidation. Resolve to fight against them is growing among the unionists, Social Democrats, Greens, Christians and other democratic forces. There is growing interest in the activity of the *Union of Persons Persecuted Under Nazism—League of Antifascists of the FRG*, and a readiness to cooperate with it. A *Working Committee Against Neo-Nazism and Racism* has emerged out of interaction across a wide political and ideological spectrum, based on numerous organisations and antifascist initiative groups. It provides the impulses for joint action.

The German Communist Party is loyal to the traditions of those who fought against Hitlerite fascism. We, the Communists, appeal in this situation to the people of all social classes and groups, of the most diverse political and ideological trends and propose joint action to ensure that fascism and war will never originate from German soil again, that the Federal Republic will be free of the perilous spirit and designs of neo-Nazism. We propose to combine efforts for peace and detente against any relapses of fascism or ideas of xenophobia and racism, and thus to facilitate the rise of a broad-based political movement in our country which would forestall the rise of old and new Nazis.

¹ *Frankfurter Rundschau*, November 14, 1980.

THE DRUG TRAFFICKERS' BID FOR POWER

Juan TUTUY

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UN experts estimate that the illegal drug traffic annually yields a return of more than \$300 billion worldwide. This business is now more profitable than the sale of oil on the international market and second only to the arms trade. A considerable share of this poison, primarily cocaine, comes from Latin America—from Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. The production and marketing of this hard drug has been monopolised by an underground cartel with head-

quarters in Medellin, Colombia. The leaders of the cartel feature prominently on the list of the world's richest people.

Most international organisations—the UN, the EEC, the OAS, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Andean Pact and the World Health Organisation—regard the spread of narcotic drugs as a most acute problem of today's world. Drug trafficking no longer makes a splash in newspaper reports on crime. It has become a factor destabilising the political and social fabric in Latin American and Caribbean countries. A kind of division of labour has emerged: the raw material—coca leaves—is cultivated in some areas of South America. In others, the leaves are processed to produce cocaine hydrochloride and paste. Central American and Caribbean nations serve as way stations on the route along which cocaine reaches the vast US market. The drug runners have developed a ramified infrastructure in the region, including, among other things, 10,000 landing and takeoff strips of which only an insignificant part is known to the authorities.

Regarded as mystical and sacred, coca leaves have

been used by the indigenous Indian population as a substitute for food and as a stimulant with curative properties and a capacity for restoring man's physical strength. In ancient times, the Andean Indians treated the coca leaf as a magical cure-all. Cultivated for more than three millennia, this plant first became part of this sordid business a mere two decades ago.

The hardy coca shrub requires no fertiliser and grows on practically any soil, including land exhausted by other crops. It can be harvested from two to six times a year. Coca plantations now occupy an area of over 300,000 hectares, 90% of it in Peru and Bolivia. Today, the leaves are not only a staple of the Andean Indians' daily diet and an element of their traditional culture, but also an indispensable source of livelihood for thousands of peasant families.

Yielding an average of 1 ton of leaves per hectare, coca is the most profitable crop for the farmer.¹ A kilo of crude cocaine sells in Peru for \$800 to \$1,200, while the same amount of cocoa will bring no more than \$2. Retail sales of cocaine hydrochloride on the streets of US and West European cities netted \$40 billion in profits in 1988; in Peru, transactions to the tune of up to \$2 billion were conducted, \$600 million to \$800 million remaining within the country.²

Coca cultivation is now the most developed sector of Andean agriculture. President Alan Garcia of Peru has sarcastically called it "our single successful transnational corporation".

Involved in the drug traffic are not only underworld figures but also about one million poor peasants, as well as "get-rich-quick" retailers, intermediaries and other dealers. Colombian coffee, Bolivian tin and Peruvian oil have taken a backseat to cocaine as the prime export commodity earning foreign exchange. One expert has described this as an "economic revolution".³

The fabulous profits are invested in the construction industry, factories, real estate, radio stations, shopping centres, newspapers, soccer clubs and so on. In the agrarian sector, the drug business is ousting the barter economy, transforming the traditional peasant into a producer of goods, stimulating trade and the service sector and helping keep more people in rural areas. In the final analysis, it is giving an impetus to the development of capitalism.

The drug barons have created their own security service comprising private armies which are independent of the government and armed with sophisticated weapons. These gangs even "compete" with the official repressive agencies in combating the "communist threat".⁴

The drug traffickers destroy all obstacles in their path with bribes and violence. In Latin America, they have infiltrated government offices, parliaments, armies, police forces, the judiciary, private companies, political parties, financial agencies, the diplomatic corps, etc. The drug business has given thousands of local entrepreneurs access to the international market and shaped them as a special section of the bourgeoisie.

These nouveaux riches fully accept the dominant social system (which made it possible for them to build whole empires) and are ready to defend it. As the French journalist and sociologist Alain Labrousse said, "these people see themselves as ordinary businessmen, not as criminals. Pablo Escobar (the head of the infamous Medellin cartel.—J.T.) has even been elected Deputy Congressman in Colombia".⁵ It is no longer surprising that those arrested for their drug traffic connections often include "solid citizens". In late April 1989, on the eve of the turbulent presidential elections in Panama, the world's major news agencies reported that drug enforcement agents had arrested Carlos Elea, the owner of many factories and a rabid anticommunist, for attempting to export 600 kilos of cocaine to the United States. When, in Costa Rica, the influential businessman Ricardo Alem was detained for a similar offence, he said indignantly that he "contributed to the election campaign of Oscar Arias", the current President of Costa Rica and a Nobel Prize winner.⁶

The process has gone farthest in Colombia, where the traditional social structure has changed drastically. The contemporary Latin American philosopher Abel Naranjo describes the Colombian economic system as "narco-capitalism", noting that "becoming part of the capitalist system is the ultimate objective of the drug traffickers".⁷ During the "Panama encounters" in 1984 and later, the drug barons talked to former President Alfonso Lopez Michelsen and the Colombian Attorney General, offering to terminate their "business activity" completely, surrender their equipment to the authorities, repatriate their capital, pay the country's foreign debt and honour the nation's laws in exchange for a general amnesty. In Bolivia, the local drug kings promised to pay off the country's entire foreign debt on the same terms.

The drug dealers made these offers in a bid to achieve their ultimate objective—that of emerging from the underground and being able to participate in economic affairs openly and on an equal footing with the traditional sections of the bourgeoisie. The reason is that the illegally gained financial clout and international ties cannot guarantee the drug barons a stable social status, long-term ownership of property, or an opportunity to enlarge it and pass it on to their heirs. True, the state upholds the interests of the classes that dominate the economy. But this fact sheds no light on the internal structure and the position of their constituent strata, on their attitude to each other, or on the degree of their political influence. The part of the exploiter class that owns a fortune which equals or even exceeds the national budget will inevitably fight for control of, or access to, political power.

The offers of the cocaine kings were turned down by Colombia's ruling bourgeoisie, and not only for ethical considerations. It saw the drug mafia as a serious and dangerous rival capable of eventually dominating the nation's economy and politics.

In mid-1989, Colombia riveted the attention of the entire world. The failure of the attempt to come to an amicable

settlement and the steps international public opinion forced the authorities to take in order to restrict the drug traffic convinced the mafia chieftains that the "intractable" establishment should be "dealt with". In less than 48 hours in August, a National Police commander, a member of the Supreme Court, and Carlos Galan, leader of the Liberal Party, who was almost sure to be elected President of Colombia, were assassinated.

These crimes prompted the ruling quarters to take resolute countermeasures. In the course of sweeping military operations comparable to a real civil war, two parallel structures of power clashed—the constitutional state and the Medellin cartel.

The very first raids enabled the government forces to detain more than 12,000 people, to seize hundreds of firearms, whole squadrons of planes and helicopters, armoured naval launches and luxury yachts, and to confiscate landed estates, posh apartments and mansions, and tons of cocaine. The success of the operation indicates that the authorities knew about the drug traffickers' places of residence, hideouts, property and real estate. This can also be viewed as proof that there was a tacit nonaggression and mutual tolerance pact—a pact which was abrogated after Galan and other prominent figures were assassinated. As long as the mafia killed hundreds of popular leaders, members of the Patriotic Union, Communists, and other leftists, the authorities did not object all that much. But when members of the elite were selected as targets, war broke out.

Despite the unprecedented scale on which the operations were mounted, it proved impossible to capture a single illegal business tycoon or to erode their financial power. The response of the mafia proves that the drug traffic is a social, economic and political, not just a purely criminal phenomenon. The drug barons whom the United States wants extradited made a "statement" after the clashes began. In it they said, among other things, that "we were subjected to all sorts of judicial atrocities... We have been and will always be ready for a dialogue, but we will never lower our flag or end our struggle... We declare total and absolute war on the government and on the industrial and political oligarchy."

President Barco appealed to the international community for assistance. That was when it became clear that Washington had no consistent global policy on these issues.

For all its local roots, the drug traffic emerged as a prosperous industry in our region due to external factors. In the United States and, to a lesser degree, in Western Europe, there are more than 30 million drug addicts; and there are banks that launder and safely deposit the illegal profits. There, chemical compounds are produced which are used in cocaine processing. The biggest drug tycoons are all active in the United States. Only a very small part of their enormous returns remains in the producer countries. A lion's share is kept by the international mafia.

Only labour and the raw material are national in the

drug traffic chain. Latin American peasants are not directly involved in criminal activities. They have no access to political and economic power, let alone to the multimillion-dollar profits. Nevertheless, they always fall victim to the repressive policy of eradicating coca as a crop.

The boom in the drug traffic began above all because of greater demand—in the developed countries, primarily the United States—and not because of greater supply. US citizens consume 60% of the world's narcotic drugs,⁸ and the United States has come to be known as "cocaine country". The people there spend \$175 billion a year on drugs, providing the drug runners with profits exceeding those of any transnational company or even the gross domestic product of a country at the average level of development.⁹

The United States is not only the biggest importer of drugs but also a major producer. Marijuana is even cultivated in gardens and at home.

The United States is also where the drug money is laundered. Instead of setting up their own banking system, the narcotics traffickers prudently preferred to use the already existing financial agencies. These help them legalise their fortunes, invest into legitimate businesses and add to their wealth and influence. It is now an open secret that the strength of the drug ring comes from a ramified Miami-based network of international banks, the most powerful in the Americas. According to some sources, the pushers have deposited \$80 billion there. The local port is also the gateway through which up to 75% of narcotic drugs enters the United States.¹⁰

Miami is by no means the only financial centre of the drug mafia. In September 1988 it was reported that the Bank of Credit and Commerce International Group, with its headquarters in Luxembourg and branches in 73 countries, had laundered about \$32 million.

The US administration ascribes the success of such operations to the fact that financial transactions are now conducted with the help of computers: just tap a key, and millions of dollars are transferred from country to country—an explanation worthy of Pontius Pilate.

Shady deals in the top echelons of transnational high finance have prompted the European Parliament to adopt a resolution urging an all-out effort to prevent the laundering of drug money. To quote Alain Labrousse again, "it is essential to learn what role US banks are playing in the circulation of this money. The available figures are quite eloquent: on average, \$120 billion to \$150 billion passes through these banks annually. In 1985, 41 banks in the United States were censured for attempts to keep such transactions secret. Among them was the First National Bank of Boston, which transferred \$1.2 billion abroad. It was fined only \$500,000, but gained \$38 million from the deal. Banks are not mentioned in the campaign against cocaine because financial transactions are supposed to be confidential. The state of Florida practically lives on the drug money deposited there. Bankers claim that if it is withdrawn, a grave economic crisis will break out."¹¹ The

drug traffic is a source of income for large banks. By laundering the drug money, they ensure extended accumulation of their own capital.

Despite these facts and the results of US studies in which drug addiction is defined as the nation's most serious problem, the US administration stubbornly refuses to openly acknowledge the domestic nature of the issue. President Bush insists on the use of force and of "every means available" and on "isolating the governments of the participating countries" (participating in the drug traffic.—J.T.); he is considering the "option of sending the Green Berets to confront narco-traffickers in the Andean countries".

Under this pretext, the United States intervened militarily in Bolivia, mounted a campaign to persecute peasants in order to eliminate the cultivation of coca, and sprayed vast areas with "Spike", a highly toxic herbicide. Worldwide protests, primarily from environmentalists, put an end to these operations. The direct results of the campaign include higher cocaine prices and firm ties which the drug lords have established with the armed groups claiming to uphold peasants' rights, specifically with the Shining Path guerrillas in Peru.

An unbiased observer is sure to wonder how consistent and serious Washington is about combating the drug traffic. One can see that Washington is using the drug issue to bring political pressure to bear on many countries. It would seem that the United States is alarmed not so much by drug addiction as by the tremendous financial clout of the criminal cartels. Here is an example. The so-called Golden Crescent (the adjacent border areas of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan) is controlled by armed groups hostile to the Kabul government. These groups traffic in opium. Half the heroin coming into the United States originates there. In spite of all this, the masters of the Crescent remain Washington's political allies.

The "drugs-for-arms" deal was another example proving that the drug barons, the Nicaraguan contras and the CIA plotted together against the Sandinista government. Secret airfields in Costa Rica were used to deliver weapons and other materiel from the United States and Israel to the contras. On their way back to the United States, the planes carried cocaine. The airlift was run by Southern Air Transport, an airline controlled by the CIA. Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, a staff member of the National Security Council under President Reagan and the man in charge of the operation, has not been imprisoned despite incontrovertible proof of his illegal actions.

The Pentagon also takes part in similar operations. Its Homestead, Florida, base was used to receive narcotics shipped from Honduras. Also, the close ties linking the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) with General Noriega are now common knowledge. The general was at first decorated for services rendered and then accused of trafficking in drugs. Bolivian public opinion blames the DEA for the delay in raiding a cocaine factory in

Huanchaca. Thanks to the US military, the chiefs of Bolivia's drug trade managed to escape.

Alain Labrousse, who has spent 10 years researching the drug traffic, describes as "sufficiently acceptable" the "hypothesis that, in actual fact, the government in Washington wants to control the cocaine trade which yields millions of dollars a year in profits. It wants to have economic control of this traffic rather than to destroy it. Such is the opinion of the French Narcotics Control Service."¹²

The traffic in drugs is undoubtedly a serious problem for all political forces. In-depth analysis of its mechanics and a consistent and public struggle against this evil are an urgent task for democratic and progressive quarters. The claims of some "ultraleftists" to the effect that the drug trade makes it possible to "finance the revolution and combat US imperialism by poisoning it" (cited to justify the dirty deal between the drug mafia, the Shining Path group and other Colombian guerrilla movements) are completely alien to socialist ideals and incompatible with universal human ethics. The end cannot justify the means. Dirty means discredit and undermine even the noblest of ends.

Drug trafficking is a crime against humanity, and a clear-cut and principled stand should be taken against it. This was what the revolutionary government of Cuba did by dealing harshly with those who were discovered to have international drug trade connections.

It appears that the proliferation of narcotics cannot be checked if the United States fails to revise its current two-faced and unprincipled policy and to admit its share of the blame for the present situation. One cannot remain captive to obsolete thought patterns and the dogma of the conservative Right, which sees the root of all domestic problems in the plots "diabolical forces" are hatching somewhere outside the United States.

True, numerous arrests have been recently made there, and drug runners' property has been confiscated (to the tune of \$1 billion in 1987). The National Security Council has advised the President to increase assistance to Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. Radio, television, the film industry and schools are waging a "say no to drugs" campaign which reflects the determination of the people of the United States to extirpate this evil. Unfortunately, this commitment is not matched by the actions of some high-level government officials. It is entirely possible that somewhere in the Third World, CIA or Pentagon agents are still dealing in drugs to finance and arm their client "freedom fighters".

The UN convention against the illegal traffic in narcotic drugs, signed in Vienna in December 1988, has put the struggle against the drug trade on a sound legal basis. The participating countries pledged to seize illegal drug profits, exchange the necessary data and all banking, financial and commercial documents related to laundering operations, and strictly control the sales of chemicals used in the production of narcotic drugs.

As the next millennium draws near, the human race intends to launch an unrelenting struggle against the traffic

in drugs. The Vienna Convention offers the distinct possibility of success. What we need is strict compliance with its provisions.

¹ It takes 275 kilos of coca leaves to produce 2.5 kilos of crude cocaine or 1 kilo of cocaine hydrochloride which contains 60% of the pure drug.

² *Quehacer*, Lima, No. 59, June/July 1989, p. 42.

³ *Debate*, Lima, No. 54, December 1988/January 1989, p. 8.

⁴ An ex-chief of the Israeli general staff was directly involved in the planning and conduct of operations to "purge" the Magdalena Medio area (launched by the Colombian drug runners to assassinate trade union leaders and members of the Patriotic Union). Other high-ranking officers of the Israeli army also trained terrorist "death squads".

⁵ *Cuestion*, No. 41, 1987, p. 20.

⁶ *Adelante*, San Jose, August 21-27, 1988.

⁷ *El Espectador*, Bogota, February 26, 1989.

⁸ *OCLAE*, La Habana, Nos. 1-2, 1987, p. 26.

⁹ *Granma*, April 13, 1987.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, August 5, 1988.

¹¹ *Cuestion*, No. 41, 1987, p. 30.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

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AFRICA: WHICH WAY TO GO?

Victoria BRITAIN

Africa desk, *The Guardian* (Great Britain)

After more than two decades of political independence for most of the continent many people in African countries now see more clearly than ever before how prophetic were Kwame Nkrumah's words on the need for economic independence as the true base of the continent's political independence. Faced with a confident assault by imperialism—using both diplomatic and economic levers—over the last few years, governments across the continent have reversed their original socialist policy options. And a mood of deep bitterness now characterises all sectors of society—from thoughtful leaders and intellectuals to the peasant farmers who still make up the overwhelming majority of the continent.

The economic plight of Africa as the only continent slipping backwards in development has the well-known interlinked causes which lie in the *world economic system*: catastrophic falls in the terms of trade of about 33% since

1980, an unpayable debt burden of \$220 billion, which means a haemorrhage of capital out of the continent on debt service payments, including a net financial transfer of almost \$1 billion a year from Africa to the IMF in 1986 and 1987, and a failure of any transfer of technology from the West. Western capital inflows to Africa have stagnated. From Britain, for instance, gross bilateral aid to Sub-Saharan Africa was £283,720,000 in 1987, while the comparative figure for 1979 expressed in 1987 prices was £384,034,000. Export credits are declining and other commercial flows have been negligible since 1983. Prices for Africa's main export crops were lower last year than at any time for the previous 12 years.

Drought in the early 1980s and the estimated \$60 billion cost since 1980 of South African destabilisation of the Frontline States plus Lesotho and Swaziland, compounded an already serious situation. Continent-wide per capita income has fallen by 4.2% in the last two years, continuing a trend which has reduced it to three-quarters of its level in the 1970s. The purchasing power of African exports was cut by more than half between 1980 and 1987. Infant and child mortality is, in consequence, once again increasing in Africa, where it decreased in the early years after independence, as it is still decreasing on all other continents.

Africa itself lacks the diplomatic muscle to impose recognition of its unprecedented economic, social and political crisis on the outside world. Even the international bodies which represent the continent, such as the Organisation of African Unity or the Non-Aligned Movement, have not been able to create an international profile, or even a moral stature, which could, for more than a fleeting moment of pity for famine victims seen on television, dent the consciousness of the powerful Western public opinion. As Graça Machel, formerly Minister of Education in Mozambique, once graphically put it, "our death and our sacrifice is not really only of people, but of humanity. I would say that some time ago, during the Second World War specifically, the whole world was able to stand up and say no to fascism in Europe. This is the case now in Africa,

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WMR continues a discussion on ways of overcoming underdevelopment (See Amath Dansokho, "The Destiny of Capitalism and the Prospect Before the Developing World", WMR, No. 1, 1987; "Africa: The Socialist Alternative". Vital Balla, "Life Versus Dogma", Benecio Costa, "How We View Liberalisation of the Economy", WMR, No. 8, 1987; Georgi Kim, "The Socialist Orientation: Theory and Practice", WMR, No. 11, 1987; "Lessons of Socialist Orientation", WMR, No. 6, 1988; Samir Amin, "Socialism and the Demands of Development", WMR, No. 5, 1989; Christian Mahrdeh, "Reform and Revolution in the Third World", WMR, No. 7, 1989; Kadhim Habib, "The Global Character of Third World Problems", WMR, No. 8, 1989).

and what we have to complain of is that we haven't been able to feel that the whole international community feels our problem as that of the whole international community."¹ Although she was talking of the Southern African region and the effects of apartheid on their societies, the same international indifference surrounds the continent's worsening economic crisis and the unpicking of the social fabric in health, education and culture which is its consequence.

And with the death of the hopes and dreams of development shared by all Africans in the early days of independence has come a bitter rejection by many of the new generation of the socialist allies and the ideology which sustained independence struggles and liberation wars in many countries, but which often became a cover for elitism, bureaucracy, lack of democracy.

In the early years of independence an invisible battle of ideology raged over Africa's development. The neocolonial model of, for instance, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Morocco was challenged by alternative models such as Nyerere's socialism in Tanzania, or, later, countries such as Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique and others, which defined themselves as Marxist-Leninist.

The neocolonial myth of development along Western capitalist lines has collapsed for most Africans who have lived close to growing rural poverty, the armies of landless unemployed people encamped in shanty towns, and the sharp contrast with the businessmen and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie whose suburban homes are guarded against their own poor with dogs, bars and watchmen. Although Western leaders, the IMF, the World Bank and some African officials still choose to say that Structural Adjustment Programmes "restructuring" African economies in line with the now classic IMF prescriptions (devaluation, raising producer prices, privatisation, large-scale layoffs in the bureaucracy) can restore the great downward slide. It is hard to imagine that even they can really believe it any more. The official figures for growth, money supply, inflation etc. used by the IMF and the World Bank to buttress claims of success simply do not relate to the community's experience of increasing daily hardship, comparison of their own and their family's memories of a physically different landscape before the depredations of the environmental crisis bit so deep, or the desperate flight abroad in search of work which has ruptured family patterns across the continent.

Even the bourgeoisie in neocolonial Africa have not been exempt from the crumbling of clinics, hospitals, schools, roads and factories. Hospitals without mattresses or medicines, universities without books or paper have become the new norm. One result of this infrastructural decline is a dramatic brain drain of the children of that bourgeoisie, often their country's most highly trained professionals—engineers, academics, pilots and doctors. Within the last three years, for instance, it is estimated that 260 of Nigeria's specialist doctors have left the country for the Gulf or Europe. This includes half the country's or-

thopedic surgeons who, typically, can earn at least six times their Nigerian salary abroad. But, as a Nigerian writer in *West Africa* magazine put it, their exit is not caused only by the salary gap but because "highly trained Nigerians have not been able to adapt their skills to the infrastructural and technological conditions of pre-industrialised societies". For years in fact African students sent to the West have been a remarkably poor investment for the national budget as their rate of return has been so low, but Western scholarships are still there for the future elite. The educational and societal ties engendered in these formative years were an important part of colonialism, and are still of neocolonialism.

But, despite the evident failures of neocolonialism, there is *no alternative successful model*, and those who have tried for one have paid a heavy price. Both Tanzania, after a six-year struggle against accepting IMF conditions, and Rawlings' Ghana, after a much shorter one, are now among the 25 or so African countries implementing IMF conditionality. Mozambique too, in the throes of its desperate war with South African-backed Mozambique National Resistance, and with a health crisis best summed up by its one doctor per 44,000 people, is introducing health charges as part of its IMF and World Bank restructuring. And Angola, which only in early 1989 overcame US blocking votes and was able to join the Washington-based international financial institutions, has already put in place the "SEP" which is essentially a classic IMF model programme which gives priority to private capital ventures and prepares the ground for the kind of health and education privatisation which the Thatcher government in Britain pioneered to change the country's political parameters.

In all these countries it is still possible to find officials who describe the new relationship with the IMF as the product of despair. "We were like a drowning man, in those circumstances you don't decide whether this is the actual branch you want to save you, you grab it to save yourself and then afterwards you can criticise the particular place it has landed you," said one Ghanaian official. But few are those prepared for the open admission that *some of the side effects of SAP are a certain loss of control over political options to the foreign consultant technocrats*, and a political price which is likely to include repression of trade unionists as the inevitable layoffs and price rises hit workers.

The overwhelming dominance of the World Bank and IMF analyses in current thinking about the continent's economic crisis was partly challenged in the mid-1980s by UNICEF and the team of economists led by Dr Richard Jolley, formerly Director of the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University. Under their influence the concept of "Adjustment with a Human Face" became accepted in a remarkable turnaround by the Bank and the Fund to begin to pay attention to the human costs of adjustment. Behind this change lay a slow acceptance in Washington of the link between adjustment and instability

underlined by the "IMF riots" which shook such African countries as Egypt, Morocco, Liberia and Zambia.

But even if the concept of looking at human costs was now accepted by the Bank's theoreticians and in Ghana a pioneering programme to mitigate those costs became an integral part of the discussion on Structural Adjustment, the realities were far from being addressed in Washington. In the spring of 1989 a World Bank study, "Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s", which painted a strikingly optimistic picture of the improvements attainable by African countries with "strong" Bank and Fund programmes, received considerable acclaim in the Western media, but was rejected by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and by African finance ministers as a deeply misleading document based upon questionable data and contradicting all other authoritative analyses. The ECA produced their own report on the continent's negative experience of Structural Adjustment within weeks. Reflecting the chronic inequalities in access to media between the Western institutions and the Addis Ababa-based ECA, and the political importance to the West of the Bank's report, the ECA's contradictory report received virtually no coverage. At stake in this exchange of reports was nothing less than the next round of the ideological battle over Africa's economic future and whether it is to be dictated by Western experts from the international institutions in Washington, or *whether Africa has the collective strength and confidence to demand the reforms in the world economic system—particularly on commodity prices and debt—which alone can stem the decline in Africa's living standards.*

The continent's fundamental economic difficulties over recent years have reflected both Africa's declining influence in the international forums, dominated by the West, and the failure of any socialist alternative model to the neocolonial, one of mono-culture agriculture orientated towards export. In addition, the most prevalent trend within all African countries, no matter what political system they have aimed or claimed to be following, has been the stifling of democracy. The effect of this political trend has been dramatic in the dwarfing of the productive capacity throughout the continent, as the Economic Commission for Africa recognised in its major report of mid-1989, endorsed by the Organisation of African Unity.

Tragically, the recognition of the need to place democracy at the base of all development has been missing, in practice, as much from those African countries originally committed to a Marxist-Leninist model, such as Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia, as from the venal dictatorships supported by the West, in Zaire or Kenya, for example. Throughout Africa the talk of "people's power" has usually been an empty charade, the lipservice to socialism has made a mockery of the socialist ideal, the small elites in power have become increasingly distanced from the masses and prone to accept the rewards of corruption so lavishly offered by Western business and other interests. The socialist countries have not helped to

stem this process even in the countries they have traditionally been closest to, and have too often supported nominal socialism and thus helped to render even more difficult a real transformation of the continent on non-capitalist lines.

It was a watershed when at Frelimo's fifth Congress in Maputo in July 1989 the vanguard party decided to drop its Marxist-Leninist orientation as part of a drive for greater national unity. The change signalled, Mozambican leaders said, no change in the party's commitment to socialism, but a recognition that the model chosen at independence 13 years before, had failed. The Congress in fact made official a fundamental change which had begun several years earlier as the South African erosion (by its Renamo proxies) of Mozambique's chances of building an independent society bit relentlessly into the country's social fabric. In Angola, too, the effects of US- and South African-sponsored terrorism by UNITA had placed a strain on the country, which the MPLA was politically too weak to withstand. Imperialism had successfully undermined Angola so that 10 years of war after independence placed the country, by the time of the 1985 congress, further from the goals of socialism and of a united strong party than it had been in 1975 when, with Cuban aid, the MPLA prevented Western proxies from taking power in Luanda.

Former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, guest of honour at the Frelimo congress, lectured delegates on the need for the ruling party not to become isolated from the people, and warned that if the party was not "living and working with the people in all their struggles, then the people will lose their confidence in Frelimo". While discussing how Frelimo militants were the first target of MNR attacks and needed protection from local people, Mr Nyerere said: "But who will willingly guard or hide a person who acts as if he had a right to give orders, to act disrespectfully, to take privileges?"² Such frank talk has been out of fashion in most African ruling circles for years. Tanzania itself is an exception, with the tradition of a party, Chama Cha Mapindusi, where internal democracy is practised as well as spoken of, and where the party leadership is likely to be found in the rural areas and not just in the capital.

One African leader who sought a new political and economic pattern for his country, based on an attempt to open real dialogue with the people, to make both the country and every community in it self-sufficient, and to curb the extent of urban privilege at the expense of the rural poor, was President Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso. Sankara's failure to establish a party or institutions which could have carried through the fundamental changes he saw so clearly, finally contributed to his own murder under the orders of his closest friend and now Head of State, Blaise Compaore. But the spark he struck, not only in Burkina, one of the poorest countries in the world, but with Africa's dispossessed masses, remains alive because of his success in convincing ordinary people across the continent that he spoke, and lived, for them.

Similarly, the Ugandan government of President Yoweri Museveni, which was the first to come to power after a guerrilla war fought inside an independent African country, has retained its character as a Front with no ideological base, in order to maintain the broad support which brought it to power. Immense energy has gone into the creation of nation-wide democratic structures which, despite the intermittent security threats from those associated with the corrupt previous regimes of Idi Amin and Milton Obote, appear to function well. The vitality of this level of internal democracy has been essential in reviving the country's economy and rebuilding smashed national identity. The Ugandan leadership has chosen to take World Bank programmes, and to maintain excellent relations with Britain and France, as well as with Cuba and other socialist countries. It is too soon to say that this modest, deliberately non-ideological, nationalist,

democratic model may be the way forward for those African countries bled dry by the price exacted by the West for choosing socialism.

For those African countries still in the grip of dictatorships supported by the West, however, the long road to building popular organisations which will be able to challenge such regimes needs maximum support from the socialist community in educational initiatives which alone can produce leadership of the calibre which has now emerged in the South African trade union movement, and which represents the best of the future of the continent.

¹ "Chain of Tears", UK TV Channel 4, January 4, 1989.

² *Guardian*, July 25, 1989.





50 YEARS SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF WORLD WAR II

THE WAY IT WAS

Veteran Communists Remember

This installment closes our series of memoirs by veterans of the communist movement who recall their experiences in different countries as World War II broke out.¹ The contributions are from Britain, Bulgaria and India.

John PECK

member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain. During the war he served in the Royal Air Force

My feelings in early September 1939 were of great foreboding that the war which had been threatening more and more was at last here. As far as I could judge, it was expected at some time as the outcome of the policies of appeasing fascism pursued by the British government. The Communists, warning of the impending threat and calling for wider support for Republican Spain, advanced the slogan: "Bombs on Madrid today, bombs in London tomorrow." Labour people as I can recall were not so prepared; they believed war would be averted.

On June 22, 1941, the date of the Nazi invasion of the USSR, I was at sea en route to the USA. Overwhelming opinion aboard was that the war would be over in weeks. I was probably the only person aboard who argued that the Soviet Union would defeat fascism.

Communists strove to unite all the forces to repel the fascists, and together with others in Britain campaigned long and hard for the opening of a second front.

The latter stage of the war saw a tremendous upsurge of interest in our party. This was in the workplace especially, but also in the Forces. In 1939 Com-

munist Party membership was 17,700, in 1945—45,400. Copies of the party newspaper *Daily Worker* were available not only in the messes of the rank and file, the non-commissioned officers, but also in the officers' recreation quarters. Several thousand Communists were in the Armed Forces, the numbers of those who died or were wounded not known. The majority of the remaining party members were in occupations producing goods and materials vital to the war effort.

The upsurge of democratic forces produced a majority Labour government for the first time. In the general election of 1945, the Communist Party received over 102,000 votes, and had two members of parliament and over 200 local councillors. Those experiences can benefit us today.

Gancho GANEV

CC member, Bulgarian Communist Party, antifascist Resistance participant, a former minister of education of Bulgaria and rector of the Academy of Social Sciences of the CC BCP

Nazi Germany's invasion of Poland in September 1939 did not come as a surprise to the BCP or to me personally. It was a logical consequence of the fascist European offensive that had started in Spain. We had been certain that the ruling Nazi circles of Germany would never put up with the USSR's existence. Therefore

we saw the Polish events as the Nazis' preparation of a bridgehead for aggression against the Soviet Union. The question that worried us most was: what if Britain and France, which had been pushing the Nazis towards a war in the East, come to terms with Hitler and openly participate in it on Germany's side?

However, Soviet diplomatic steps, in particular the signing of a nonaggression pact with Germany, blocked this very real (considering the policy of Chamberlain and Daladier) possibility. We realised that the signing of the pact was a tactical move by the Soviet leadership which was anxious to put off the start of the war and to gain time for preparing the Red Army and re-equipping it with new types of weaponry and materiel.

The Bulgarian Communist Party, having led Europe's first antifascist uprising in 1923, already had some experience of mass struggle. By the outbreak of the war, the Communists had established firm links with the industrial and rural proletariat, and possessed a ramified system of underground organisations. The Bulgarian Workers' Party, concurrently founded on a legal basis, had rapidly built up its influence among the masses. It is significant that in 1932, only nine years after the suppression of the September uprising, it won the elections to the city council of Sofia. The government annulled their results, but the fact remains.

From spring 1941 Bulgaria was actually occupied by Hitlerite forces. The BCP saw this as the creation of yet another bridgehead for aggression

against the USSR. On June 14, 1941, a TASS statement published in the Soviet press denied the threat of a German attack on the USSR, saying that the massing of German troops near the Soviet border had nothing to do with German-Soviet relations. Meetings were held throughout the BCP cells to explain that the statement reflected the Soviet government's desire not to respond to Nazi provocations, but that in reality the war was imminent and that the Bulgarian Communists had to prepare for a tough armed struggle.

With so many events of that period, it is not easy to say which of them produced the greatest impression upon me. It was probably June 22, 1941—the start of aggression against the USSR. I, my comrades and our entire party received this news with mixed feelings. On the one hand, it was distressing because we knew that Nazi Germany had mobilised the full economic potential of enslaved Europe for destroying the first socialist state. On the other, hope grew that the hour of deliverance from the fascist plague was coming nearer. And with a full sense of responsibility I say: hope and confidence never left us, even in the most critical days for the Soviet people. The victories scored by the Red Army near Moscow, in Stalingrad and on the Kursk salient inspired us with fresh strength.

In 1944 the Red Army launched an offensive along the entire Soviet-German front, and battles drew near to Bulgarian territory. This brought a great upsurge of the antifascist struggle, making it an all-in campaign. Thousands of Bulgarians joined the people's liberation army of insurgents and underground combat groups. Within the Fatherland Front,² bourgeois-democratic and liberal parties intensified their work. In the new situation the BCP leadership was able to place such major tasks on the agenda as overthrowing the fascist regime through an armed popular uprising, capturing power and establishing a Fatherland Front government. On September 9, 1944 these aims were achieved. Together with the Soviet armed forces the Bulgarian army entered the war against the Nazis, and our people got down to rehabilitating the country and building up the foundations for socialism.

The struggle against fascism took many sacrifices. Between 1923 and 1944, tens of thousands of Communists were killed, and hundreds of thousands flung by the Nazis into prisons and concentra-

tion camps. For this reason on the eve of the armed uprising the party was relatively small. But the Communists who remained alive and free were all steeled fighters, utterly devoted to the socialist cause. They enjoyed respect and prestige among the popular masses. Immediately after the victory of the September 1944 uprising almost all underground YCL members and nonparty antifascists, including most progressive intellectuals, joined the ranks of the party. Its influence grew steadily.

In the November 1945 elections to the National Assembly (parliament) the BCP, together with the parties which constituted the Fatherland Front, won most of the vote. The wartime democratic forces' traditions of joint action within the Fatherland Front are now being developed at the present stage of socialist construction in Bulgaria.

Srinivas Ganesh SARDESAI
an active participant in the national liberation movement of India who spent six years in colonial jails, a former secretary of the National Council and chairman of the Central Control Commission of the CPI and member of Indian Parliament

In prewar years the situation in India was complex. British colonial authorities ruled the country. The progressive public, including the Communist Party (then illegal) and the freedom movement led by the Indian National Congress (INC), fought for national independence, against the British conspiracy of partitioning the country by instigating a civil war between Hindus and Muslims. National opinion was definitely against the Axis Powers but people also knew that the British and French governments had sabotaged the efforts of the Soviet Union and other antiwar forces to build an antifascist front, and actually encouraged Nazi and Japanese aggression in the preceding years.

Within weeks of the outbreak of World War II the textile workers of Bombay, led by the Communist Party, came out in a massive protest strike against the imperialist war. The Communist Party issued an appeal calling on the people to prepare for a final assault on British rule. The Congress led by Gandhi organised a

symbolic peaceful Satyagraha (civil disobedience). Severe repression followed. A very large number of people (including me) were imprisoned.

Hitler Germany's perfidious attack on the Soviet Union shocked our country. Popular unrest intensified. Even Churchill, the British Prime Minister, had to release the INC leaders from jail. Jawaharlal Nehru came out with a clear statement that the character of the war had changed and a new approach towards national defence was necessary. Meanwhile, Japan had overrun the whole of Southeast Asia and was advancing towards India by subjugating Burma. Before long, the Japanese army occupied Kohima, within Indian territory, and also attempted to bomb Calcutta.

An atmosphere of alarm spread all over the country. The precipitate retreat of British armed forces from Malaysia and Burma had proved that the foreign government was incapable of defending the country, and yet it refused to part with necessary power to popular representatives so that effective defence could be organised.

In sheer desperation the Congress leadership issued the slogans of "Quit India" and "Do or Die" calling on the people to revolt against British rule. That was in August, 1942. Immediately Congressmen were arrested on a massive scale. Those who went underground organised the derailment of railway trains and the cutting of telegraph wires for sabotaging war efforts.

The Communist Party was naturally opposed to this dangerous, adventurist action. We insisted that the defeat of the fascist powers was an indispensable requisite for India's advance to national freedom. This position was basically correct. But the country was also faced with lawless repression let loose by the British government in which hundreds were killed. So, while opposing the sabotage of military defence we should have organised symbolic protest actions against police repression and in support of our demand for a national government. We did not do it and that led to a great alienation of the party from the people.

All the same, the party also grew in what we called the People's War period. Numberless young men, fired by the ideal of defeating fascism for achieving national independence, joined the party. Our first open party congress took place in 1943 when the party membership was around 16,000. By the end of the war our mem-

bership was more than doubled, and in 1948 it was already almost 90,000. Membership of trade unions and peasant organisations led by the party shot up rapidly all over the country.

As soon as the war ended, there was an upsurge of massive discontent suppressed during the war. Strikes of industrial workers and middle class employees broke out almost spontaneously. A nationwide strike of postal workers took place. The peasants surged forward against feudal-landlord exploitation and there were armed uprisings in some Princely states, above all in Hyderabad (present-day Andhra Pradesh) and Travancore (Kerala) then ruled by Princes, stooges of the British government.

The Indian army and the police forces had always been the loyal steel frame of

British rule. But an epidemic of strikes spread among policemen, and the Indian personnel of the Air Force. This was climaxed by the revolt of Indian ratings of the Indian navy who raised the flags of the Congress, the Muslim League and the Communist Party as the symbols of the united national revolt against British rule. Everywhere the demand was for complete national independence. The Communist Party came out in full support of this nationwide upsurge and regained its popularity which had suffered during the People's War period.

The most critical and decisive turning points of history are extraordinarily difficult to handle. At such moments, Marxism demands not only dauntless courage but the highest political maturity for taking quick and correct decisions and implementing them. It is easy to become

wise after the event, but it is hardly possible to gain such maturity without making mistakes, often costly mistakes. The price has to be paid. If, in the totality, one emerges with the substance of success, one need not be disheartened. In this sense, I think India and our party proved equal to the tasks of that ordeal of fire. Lenin said that a wise man is not one who makes no mistakes, but one who makes few mistakes and corrects them in time. That is a lesson for all of us to learn because once again the nuclear space age confronts us with another turning point in history.

¹ See *WMR*, Nos. 8, 9, 10, 1989.

² The Fatherland Front—an association of Bulgarian antifascist forces created in 1942.—Ed.

THE IKLE REPORT: A CASE OF OBSOLETE THINKING

Jaime BARRIOS

member, CC, Communist Party of El Salvador; PCES representative at *WMR*

Shortly before last year's presidential elections in the United States, the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy submitted a report entitled *Discriminate Deterrence*¹ to the Secretary of Defense and to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Its authors outlined major aspects of US foreign policy for the rest of the 20th century. Like previous papers of this kind—the Santa Fe Doctrine and the Kissinger Report—*Discriminate Deterrence*, commonly referred to as the Ikle Report, appeared in an election year. The coincidence is not accidental. Washington politicians, including many well-known and influential ones,² obviously tried to make their conclusions and recommendations at a time when the attention of the new administration could be drawn to the

more important aspects of US foreign policy.

Our interest in this report is understandable: the Republicans have won their third victory in a row in presidential elections. Will George Bush follow the course charted by the Reagan Administration, or will there be substantive changes in US foreign policy and, consequently, in military strategy? Will the new President act on the recommendations submitted by the authors of the report? Only time will tell. Nevertheless, it is useful to scan these recommendations. Let us examine those parts of the paper where the commission formulates the main elements of US strategy as the century draws to a close, and let us see how Third World and, specifically, Latin American problems are interpreted.

In its opening pages the report says that "defense planning in the United States has centered for many years on a grand strategy of extraordinary global sweep. The strategy can be stated quite simply: forward deployment of American forces, assigned to oppose invading armies and backed by strong reserves and a capability to use nuclear weapons if necessary. Resting on alliances with other democratic countries, the strategy aims to draw a line that no aggressor will dare to cross."³

The suggestion is that this strategy be preserved with due regard for "contemporary realities", long-term planning and "some setbacks". The Ikle Report is devoted to these modifications, and its authors warn solicitously that "the Pentagon must choose today among armaments that will be in service well into the next century".⁴

But what is meant by "some setbacks"? The first is that "Soviet power has bypassed the lines we drew and has pushed into Southern Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, and Central America". The second is that NATO "has not succeeded in matching Soviet conventional forces" in Europe. The third is that it has become "progressively less credible" for the United States to threaten the use of nuclear weapons

against Soviet troops "in light of the growth in Soviet nuclear forces".⁵

The authors of the report regard the world as it develops, but they see all the changes from the angle of imperialist ideology and assess them only in reference to US "national interests" and "national security" considerations. This results in a biased, "ideologised" and pragmatic approach to current realities—an attitude that can be traced to the Monroe Doctrine and the concept of the United States' messianic role. We know that pragmatism in world politics places a premium only on results and completely ignores ethics and morals.

In an effort to exonerate US militarism, those who drafted the report are openly critical of the first signs of new political thinking both in the United States and in Western Europe. Moreover, they warn the US government against active involvement in this process. They argue that "many people prefer to think of arms control as somehow taking place on a different plane from that of defence planning. A great deal of political rhetoric encourages them to believe that the ultimate point of arms control is not so much military as political. For many Americans and Europeans, the lure of the agreements is that they enable us to engage Soviet leaders in a 'process', expected to develop a 'momentum' of its own, that will lead to understanding about other contentious matters and serve broadly to reduce international tensions." In the next paragraph it is emphasised that "this perspective could be a recipe for disaster".⁶

Why "disaster"? The answer is that "when arms control agreements are valued mainly for the international good will they are expected to generate, and only secondarily for their effects on arms, then our political leaders will always be under pressure to reach agreements by making concessions on arms. Moreover, if an existing agreement is valued primarily as an expression of good will toward the Soviet Union, then it is much more difficult for American leaders to express concern about cheating by the Soviets, since these expressions will inevitably be translated ... as a lack of interest in furthering the new relationship."⁷

Note how the old bugbear of "Moscow's perfidy" is still used for propaganda purposes: they claim that, since the Soviet regime remains totalitarian, it will cheat readily. But the authors of the report "forget" that US

ruling circles have themselves lied many times in order to cheat their own people and the world, during the wars in Korea and Vietnam, for instance.

In the former case, Washington thought mistakenly that victory in an armed conflict with a socialist country would be a pushover. Finding that this was not so, the imperialists and their lackeys did everything they could to blame the DPRK, the PRC and the USSR for the devastating war.

In the latter case, documents were published in early 1971 proving that in August 1964 the Pentagon fabricated a lie about the US destroyer *Maddox* having been attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin by naval launches of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Johnson Administration used this lie as a pretext for aggression against the heroic Vietnamese people. It is particularly significant that the "incident" was not even reported to Robert McNamara (the then US Defense Secretary).

According to the paper under review, US defence planning "has long been dominated by two extreme contingencies. The first is a massive conventional attack against NATO by the Warsaw Pact, directed primarily at taking over Western Europe. The second, even more apocalyptic, is an unrestrained Soviet nuclear attack on US strategic forces and other military targets in the West, many of which are located in or near cities."⁸

This leads to the conclusion that "in the last analysis, then, the deterrent against the massive conventional attack is the same as the deterrent against the all-out nuclear attack".⁹ In other words, the prospect of a nuclear exchange is contemplated, a conflict which will destroy both the Soviet Union and the United States. Nevertheless, the authors maintain that "apocalyptic showdowns between the United States and the Soviet Union are certainly conceivable in the nuclear age",¹⁰ although they admit that there will be no winners in a nuclear disaster.

How, then, can such situations be averted? The authors maintain that "the issue is about how effectively to deter a non-nuclear or a nuclear attack" and go on to say that "we and our allies would rather deter than defeat an aggression, but a bluff is less effective and more dangerous in a crisis than the ability and will to use conventional and, if necessary, nuclear weapons with at least a rough

discrimination that preserves the values we are defending".¹¹

The "discriminate deterrence" concept set forth in the Ikle Report provides for the launching of debilitating strikes against Soviet defences, primarily with "smart" long-range weapons of high accuracy because "one or a few shots" will make it unnecessary to use nuclear warheads. Heavily defended military targets can be attacked in this way. "Airfields well inside the Soviet Union could be put out of commission with warheads designed to attack infrastructure (fuel and maintenance facilities, say) and command-and-control facilities. Bridges, surface-to-air missile sites, intelligence facilities, rail lines, electric generating plants, petroleum refineries—all are suddenly much more vulnerable in the emerging age of smart munitions."¹² This and many other passages in the Ikle Report are holdovers of the aggressive policy the United States pursued for many years vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

Such reflections on "effective ways" of preserving the "values" upheld by imperialism expose its much-vaunted "humanism": a war fought with modern conventional weapons will be almost as destructive as a nuclear exchange. But US strategists have not ruled out the use of nuclear weapons or the possibility of a "limited nuclear conflict".

The second part of the report is entitled "Third World Conflicts and US Interests". It opens with the statement that "nearly all the armed conflicts of the past forty years have occurred in what is vaguely referred to as the Third World: the diverse countries of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Eastern Caribbean. In the same period, all the wars in which the United States was involved—either directly with its combat forces or indirectly with military assistance—occurred in the Third World. Given future trends in the diffusion of technology and military power, the United States needs a clear understanding of its interests and military role in these regions."¹³

The concept of US "military power" permeates the entire paper and, as we can see, the developing countries are covered too. Moreover, particular stress is laid on this "military role", not on the countless urgent problems that must be resolved without delay through peaceful international cooperation. The authors even cite financial estimates of the costs of "low-in-

tensity" warfare: it will require \$12 billion a year (about 4% of the defence budget), a sum which will not impair the Pentagon's ability to prosecute "higher-intensity wars".¹⁴

Although it is noted in the report that "conflicts in the Third World are obviously less threatening than any Soviet-American war would be", their "adverse cumulative effect on US access to critical regions" is acknowledged. "If this cumulative effect cannot be checked," the authors maintain, "it will gradually undermine America's ability to defend its interests in the most vital regions, such as the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean and the Western Pacific".¹⁵ Therefore, "in the coming decades the United States will need to be better prepared to deal with conflicts in the Third World". This will require "new kinds of planning" and call for "force structures and equipment not now available in the US inventory".

The problem of "low-intensity wars" is outlined in the report in such a way as to blame them on the forces fighting for national liberation and social emancipation; Washington is allegedly forced to oppose them and support the "freedom fighters". In actual fact, the reverse is true: US imperialism drew up and adopted the doctrine of low-intensity conflicts or wars after the debacle in Vietnam essentially as an integrated counterinsurgency strategy. One of its salient features is the desire to avoid any direct involvement of US troops, provide considerable military and economic assistance, conduct psychological warfare, and effect certain political and social reforms aimed at helping "constitutional" centrist governments rise to power. In the final analysis, it is a model for blocking revolutionary processes and aggravating the neocolonial bondage of the countries receiving such "assistance".

In the words of the report, "many of our problems in the Third World are centered on what is now called low-intensity conflict. The term refers to insurgencies, organized terrorism, paramilitary crime, sabotage, and other forms of violence in a shadow area between peace and open warfare involving large units. To defend its interests in the Third World, the United States will have to take low-intensity conflict much more seriously."¹⁶

The authors of the report seek to make the new administration adopt the views held by the Reagan team. Specifically, they maintain that the US strategy for the Third World over the next 20 years

should proceed from the following six principles:

1. *As a rule, US troops should be directly committed only in exceptional situations.* The 1983 aggression against Grenada and the bombing raids on Libya are cited as examples. The argument is that "it would be self-defeating for the United States to declare a 'no use' (of force.—J.B.) doctrine."¹⁷ The principal role US forces should play is that of *augmenting security assistance programmes*, which include military training, technical training and intelligence and logistical support. Washington also intends to use diplomats and information specialists, agricultural chemists, bankers and economists, hydrologists, criminologists, meteorologists, and scores of other professionals.

2. *The United States should support anticommunist insurgencies* by providing them with tactical and strategic assistance (communications, intelligence and field operations). It is not important whether these activities are kept secret or the public is aware that the CIA is playing a part: "If the US support for these insurgents is a large and continuing effort, it is bound to be referred to in the press. Nevertheless, neighboring countries that provide access to or bases for the freedom fighters often prefer that the US Government role not be officially acknowledged."¹⁸ The examples include Honduras and Pakistan.

3. *Security assistance requires new legislation and more resources.* This means that the President should have broader powers in order not to have to rely on congressional authorisation in each specific case.

4. *The United States needs to work with its Third World allies at developing "cooperative forces".* These allies can be represented by governments, ruling cliques or politicians acting in a neoglobalist spirit. The objective is to bolster proimperialist regimes, support "open societies" and contain or reverse "Soviet gains in the Third World".¹⁹

5. *Both in the Third World and in developed countries, US strategy should use technological advantages:* "In some cases, technologies developed for fighting the Soviets will be enormously useful. Here too we will want to use smart missiles that can apply force in a discriminate fashion and avoid collateral damage to civilians. Advanced technologies for training will also offer us more effective ways

to help friends cope with terrorism and insurgency."²⁰

Since tactical intelligence is crucial in Third World conflicts, the advice is to use the latest information-processing systems, which make it possible to "collate enormous amounts of data about the insurgent or terrorist organisations and individual saboteurs and terrorists". Also recommended is the use of long-endurance aircraft, robot reconnaissance vehicles for monitoring large areas day and night, networks of sensors to keep track of the movements of enemy forces, and vivid digital graphics of dangerous areas for the conduct of specific operations.

6. *The United States must develop alternatives to overseas bases* because it will be increasingly difficult and costly to maintain them in areas far from US shores. This means that, yet again, high technology should be used—satellites, long-endurance aircraft (manned and unmanned) and powerful naval forces.

Those sections of the Ikle Report which deal with Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean have serious implications. Among other things, it is stated that "the absence of significant security threats close to home has helped free the United States to play a global military role in the years since 1945. This situation might change if more pro-Communist regimes come to power in the hemisphere. If the Sandinista regime consolidates its power in Nicaragua and continues to receive Soviet support, hostile Communist regimes might gradually become established elsewhere in Central America, for example, in El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. Any such trend could be expected to endanger control of the Panama Canal and threaten the political stability of Mexico. These developments would force the United States to divert far more of its foreign policy resources and defense assets to the Caribbean region, leading to a reduced American role in NATO."²¹

One should underscore the completely groundless nature of the assertion that the exercise by Latin American and Caribbean nations of their right to self-determination and independence from imperialism threatens US national security. This was the pretext used to commit an act of aggression against the tiny island of Grenada. Today, the same line of reasoning is invoked to combat the Sandinista Revolution and the insurgent people of El Salvador.

Neither Cuba nor Nicaragua, nor the revolutionary processes in El Salvador, Guatemala and elsewhere pose any threat to the most powerful capitalist country or any other nation of the subcontinent. At the same time, one should note the universal significance of the Central American nations' struggle for national liberation and social emancipation and of their patriotic resistance to US imperialism—as in the case of Panama. As long as Washington's diktat encountered no resolute and militant rebuff in our sub-

continent, the United States was able to act as a world policeman without worrying about what was happening south of its border. But times have changed. The Cuban Revolution triumphed, and 20 years later a revolution occurred in Nicaragua. A revolutionary process began in El Salvador. However, the authors of the Ikle Report still regard popular struggle for freedom and independence as an obstacle to the neoglobalist aims of the United States. This attitude threatens to bring escalating

violence to the millions of people in the developing world who seek justice, peace and progress.

Despite the noticeable advances in nuclear disarmament and other changes for the better initiated by the Soviet Union, the aggressive nature of imperialism is still there for all to see. This is borne out by the Ikle Report which has been presented by the spokesmen of the Washington establishment to the new US administration as a political cue card.

¹ *Discriminate Deterrence*. Report of The Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, Washington, 1988.

² The authors of *Discriminate Deterrence* include Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger and William Clark. The commission was co-chaired by Albert Wohlstetter and Fred Ikle (hence "the Ikle Report"). Many congressmen, top army officers, members of the National Security Council and officials of the Defense Department and the CIA helped draft the paper.

³ *Discriminate Deterrence*, p. 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ *Ibidem.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁰ *Ibidem.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

EDITORIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS ANSWER READERS' QUESTIONS

THE HELWAN STRIKE

Could you supply details of the recent industrial action in Helwan and the subsequent suppression of Egyptian democrats?

Renos Piperides,
Nicosia, Cyprus

On July 31, 1989 the more than 30,000 workers of the Helwan Steel Plant occupied the production premises for two days. The strike was triggered by the failure of the workers' negotiations with the management, which had refused to meet their just demands for better pay and working conditions and for appropriate changes in the regulations on remuneration, health services and social security. It was a peaceful protest: people

even exceeded their production quotas and looked after the equipment.

Finally, the management promised to meet the workers' demands. But the industry minister and the management took an unlawful step and expelled from the plant's Administrative Council two worker members, Abdel Rahim and Mohammed Mustafa, elected by the personnel.

The workers called a protest strike

and demanded that their two comrades be reinstated on the Council.

Early in the morning of August 2, the interior minister Zaki Badr ordered security troops to storm the workshops. Some 40 police trucks and 6 armoured personnel carriers were sent to the plant. Police used firearms to brutally suppress the 10,000 striking workers; one person was killed and 17 seriously injured. The fatal casualty, Abdelkhai Muhammed Sayed, was standing at his machinetool when he was shot in the back.

Under the Emergency Act,¹ the interior minister ordered the arrest of the protesters. Altogether 160 people were handed over to the prosecutors, who released most of the workers. However, under Badr's orders those workers, including 2 members of the Administrative Council, were re-arrested and tortured, a fact recorded in the investigation files.²

The suppression of workers caused outrage in Egypt and outside it. Many industrial unions participating in the official Egyptian Federation of Labour have protested against the government's action and demanded the release of the detainees, and the lawyers' union and the

Human Rights Committee have also lodged complaints. The opposition parties have expressed solidarity with the metalworkers, and a committee of solidarity with the Helwan workers and detainees has been established. Many international organisations have sent telegrams of protest to Cairo.

In a bid to counter public wrath, the interior minister made the baseless allegation that the workers' actions were "Communist-inspired". On August 24 the security forces rounded up 58 people and charged them with "having created a communist organisation". The detainees include unionists from the Helwan Steel Plant and other industries, three *Al Akhali* and *Al Akhram* journalists, the well-known lawyer Amir Salem, Dr Fahri Lyabib, editor of the AAPSO journal *Afro-Asian Solidarity* and a member of the CC of the National Progressive (Left)

Party, and the literary critic Ibrahim Fathi, whose interview with the Nobel Prize-winning writer Naguib Mahfouz appeared in *WMR*, No. 8, 1989. The pretext for their arrest was that they had publicly voiced support for the steel workers. For example, Dr Lyabib presided over a solidarity rally called by the National Progressive Party in Cairo.

Sophisticated means are used to torture prisoners in political police detention centres and in gaol. The chairman of the Council of the Journalists' Union, himself a member of the ruling party, saw evidence of this when he visited the arrested mediamen and reported his findings to the Procurator's office.

"Gaol, arrest and torture cannot quench the flames of the people's wrath," Mohi Al-Din, General Secretary of the National Progressive Party, told the newspaper *Al Akhali*. "The rulers of

Egypt ... are pursuing a policy which is impoverishing most of the people and pushing up prices for goods and services. Simultaneously, the ruling circles are lavishing privileges on Big Capital, enabling it to amass more and more wealth."³

Egypt has now improved its international posture thanks to its return to the Arab fold, the election of President Mubarak to chair the Organisation of African Unity, and progress in its relations with socialist countries. But the Cairo leaders should not think that stronger international positions give them a free hand to suppress patriots and democrats fighting for the workers' rights to freedom and a decent life.

Mohamed Kamel MAGDI,
Political Bureau member, CC,
Egyptian Communist Party

¹ When the Act came into effect in 1981, the government promised that it would be used only against terrorists. The Act empowers the interior minister to order arrests

without a warrant. Now this legislation is being used against workers, Communists and other progressive and national-democratic forces.

² *Al Akhali*, August 16 and 23, 1989.

³ *Al Akhali*, September 6.

WHAT IS LA CASA DE LAS AMERICAS?

Several times in *WMR* I have encountered reviews on books awarded the La Casa de las Americas prize in Cuba. Could you tell me what sort of organisation this is? Do they publish their own books and magazines?

Mohammed bin MOHAMMED ALI,
school teacher, Aden, PDRY

Replies to these questions have been provided by Roberto Fernandez RETAMAR, director of *La Casa de las Americas* and a leading Cuban poet and literary critic.

The creation of *La Casa de las Americas* in Havana less than four months after the victory of the Cuban Revolution in January 1959 is a reflection of its genuine Latin American and Caribbean character. This new regional cultural centre emerged under the guidance of a heroine of the liberation battles, Haydee Santamaria. Naturally, it was impossible at that time to foresee in detail what the specific activities of this centre would be, but its continental dimension and international significance were already clear.

The decision to create *La Casa de las Americas* was prompted by the historical need for integration between the countries of the region which we often call

Our America, that is, the America of the peoples in the sense imparted to it by Simon Bolivar, Jose Marti, and Augusto Sandino. Ernesto Che Guevara was a lifelong advocate of the idea of continental integration. Born in Argentina, he was one of the leaders of the Cuban Revolution and died leading guerrilla forces in Bolivia. The new centre was to promote the realisation of this idea in art and literature, the chief aim being to strengthen contacts between cultural personalities in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to popularise their works.

Soon after the organisation's foundation all Latin American governments, except for Mexico, under pressure from

Washington, broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba, which was then expelled from the Organisation of American States. In these conditions the existence of this cultural centre in Havana became one of the factors that prevented the total isolation of revolutionary Cuba from Latin America. Most of the credit for this goes to the writers and artists of many countries who, despite everything, retained their links with *La Casa de las Americas* and with the Cuban Revolution. We remember their names with gratitude and admiration: the Salvadorean Roque Dalton, the Peruvian Jose Maria Arguedas, the Ecuadoran Benjamin Carrion, the Uruguayan Manuel Rojas, the Chilean Victor Jara, the Argentine Julio Cortazar, the Venezuelan Miguel Otero Silva, the Colombian Jorge Zalamea, the Cubans Alejo Carpentier and Juan Marinello and many others who worked in our *Casa*.

At the 1st Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (1975) Fidel Castro said: "Through its various activities, such as publications, contests, prizes, festivals, exhibitions and literary, theatrical, art and music forums, *La Casa de las Americas* has linked the Cuban Revolution with the most progressive circles of the Latin

American intelligentsia and the Latin American scholars of the socialist countries, maintaining on the continent the spirit of the Cuban Revolution."

The concrete areas of our work include literature, theatre, painting, sculpture, music and publishing. There is also a centre for Caribbean studies, a specialised library on the region's problems and other departments.

The best known of the activities of *La Casa* is its literary prize. Among its laureates are not only many famous masters, but also new writers. During its 30 years, representatives of various Latin and North American, European and African countries have been among the judges in this contest. Initially, we only awarded the prize to Spanish-language works in the five traditional genres: novel, short story, poetry, play and essay. Later this framework was expanded to include new genres and other languages. A prize for children's literature also appeared. We also award special prizes, the most recent of which commemorated the 30th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. The next will mark the centenary of the publication of Jose Marti's essay *Our America*. Along with the literary prize, we award others in the fine arts and music.

We attach great importance to publishing. Our magazine *La Casa de las*

Americas, as well as the periodicals *Conjunto* (devoted to the theatre), *Musica* and *Anales del Caribe* are very popular with readers. In conjunction with the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba, we also publish *Criterios*, a magazine covering literary theory, aesthetics and culture. However, we concentrate on book publishing. We have already issued hundreds of titles, collected works and anthologies and we are now widely distributing books by our laureates and leading contemporary writers, as well as classics and essays on today's reality. In addition, we produce catalogues, posters, records.

La Casa operates two art galleries: the Latin American Gallery, where various exhibitions are held, and the Haydee Santamaria Gallery, which houses a permanent collection donated to the centre.

According to its specialisation, each department organises conferences, lectures, round tables, concerts, theatrical presentations or video shows. International meetings of writers, actors and directors, artists, musicians and popular educators are held regularly. The aim is always to work together, avoiding divisive trifles and concentrating on those things that unite us and the diversity that enriches us. Two meetings of intellectuals, in 1981 and 1985, were devoted to the prob-

lem of upholding the sovereignty of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean.

A constant feature of *La Casa's* work is the quest for truth and quality (not only artistic) and a contemporary spirit of renewal. This last may appear strange to those who know how our centre has been fighting to preserve the best traditions. But tradition is not the dead past but a living force that informs and animates the present. In appreciable measure, we owe this defence of our genuine values and the affirmation of contemporaneity to the vigorous support we receive from most intellectuals.

By its very nature, *La Casa de las Americas* does not seek to lay down the right track for art and literature. The rich variety and permanent questing of culture is self-perpetuating. We have never sought an ideological uniformity which would deny the variegated nature of Latin American reality. And yet, like Latin American culture as a whole, our centre cannot remain neutral in the face of the dramatic events connected with the intrigues of US imperialism and the plight of many of our countries. When it concerns the peoples' future, a neutral stand is impossible.

THE READER JOINS THE DISCUSSION WHAT KIND OF HUMANISM DO WE NEED?

World Marxist Review published "A New Humanism", an article by Hector Mujica, Central Committee member of the Communist Party of Venezuela, in its April 1989 issue. The subject is extremely important. The article appealed to me because it dealt with topical problems in a new and lively spirit free from dogmatism and clichés. The author traces the development of humanism in different eras and concludes that genuine humanism is integral and indivisible—from its Christian to its Marxist dimension. Although Mujica notes that with the emergence of Marxism a new stage in the progress of humanism began, one connected with the struggle to free workers

from exploitation, my impression is that the emphasis is precisely on the integral and indivisible nature of humanism. But in this case, humanism in slave-owning, feudal and capitalist societies is identical to the humanism of communist society, and the slave, the slave-owner, the feudal lord, the hired worker and the capitalist all adhere to the same values. That is clearly impossible.

While, throughout history, the humanism of the ruling classes did not go beyond the small range of their corporate interests, the attitude of the working class to humanism is broader than, and substantially different from, all its previous concepts. By emancipating itself and

others, the working class taps many more humanistic values than any other class in history. It upholds full democratic rights, the most radical political, social and economic transformations, and a maximum of personal and group liberties so that man can become the prime maker of history.

The fact that distorted use of these principles has adversely affected socialism and the entire international communist movement does nothing to detract from the validity of this point. The antidemocratic and inhuman manifestations of totalitarianism that occurred in the Soviet Union under Stalin and during the stagnation years have nothing in common with the humanistic essence of socialism.

The world's first socialist country has publicly acknowledged its mistakes and shortcomings, subjected them to devastating criticism, and advanced a series of bold initiatives known today as new political thinking and perestroika and aimed at putting socialism on the right track and

delivering humanity from nuclear extinction.

Now that the world is confronting the threat of destruction, Mujica says in his article, humanism is essentially emerging as the highest criterion of social progress. Now more than ever, the important thing is to look for a balance of classes in society, both nationally and internationally, if we want to preserve life on Earth. According to the author, humanism and a balance of class interests are the yardstick of social progress and the path towards saving civilization. The question is how this balance can be ensured.

Indeed, many global problems have transcended the limits of the class struggle per se, and all the strata comprising modern society do have a stake in their solution. The more acute among them are linked with the need to avert a nuclear catastrophe and a global environmental disaster. But there are also other problems which, while global, can hardly be resolved on a common humanistic basis—for example, the terrible gap separating the developing countries from the industrially developed nations, the periphery from the centre. Even if this gap persists, the result may well be explosive. Given all this, is it advisable to contrast the desire for peace to the struggle of nations for liberation from neocolonialism? Or universal human values to class-based

ones? Is it enough to appeal to high moral considerations in order to close the yawning gap between the periphery and the centre? Or is this perhaps an exercise in wishful thinking?

The national liberation struggle and the class battles in fact curb imperialism, forcing it to retreat and to check its more aggressive moves. How can you preach the need for a balance of classes to those who have taken up arms to defend their nations' future in El Salvador and Nicaragua, who are opposing the dictatorship in Chile, or fighting for national liberation and their right to live in peace in Lebanon, Palestine or the Golan Heights? How are the unemployed in the capitalist countries to interpret this balance? I agree that the contemporary world is complex and interdependent and that a nuclear conflict will destroy civilization. It is obvious that the drive to preserve and consolidate peace is a task to be pursued by all nations. However, placing the defence of peace above the class struggle or vice versa means doing harm to the cause of humanity's liberation. It would be more correct to stress the dialectical interconnection between the two.

I hold that in the final analysis, the struggle of the Arab peoples and of Latin American nations against imperialism, Zionism, dictatorship and monopoly furthers the interests of all of the world's

peace-loving forces. The weakening of any link in the imperialist chain helps dissuade the imperialists from enslaving and robbing others. The reactionaries have not and will not give up their aggressive nature of their own free will (witness what is happening in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Nicaragua and elsewhere).

Let me stress that my letter is by no means a call for a return to the Cold War and confrontation. I do not deny the need for the involvement in a common cause of Communists, Social Democrats, believers and all progressives whatever their ideological convictions. Let me just emphasise that we must fight to avert nuclear war without abandoning our class-based positions or lapsing into euphoria. Socialism should cleanse itself of past accretions. It does not need a political "Peace of Brest-Litovsk". It is inherently capable of self-improvement and self-perfection.

Mujica closes his article by saying that his ideas cannot be regarded as the final words of truth. They are submitted for reflection and debate. I welcome the fact that *World Marxist Review* has made such a discussion possible. Truth can only be arrived at through dialogue.

Talal IMAM
Damascus, Syria

THE MILITARY AND DEMOCRACY

In the March 1989 issue of *World Marxist Review*, Jorge Bergstein and Elfidio Cano reflected on the issues raised in Ornel Urriola's article.¹ Since the question is of considerable importance, may I submit a few remarks.

I do not agree that Urriola "glosses over" the role played by the military in Latin America. I agree with him that it is now imperative to seek agreement and to try and bring different positions closer together. Even if we cannot resolve every major problem at one go, we will explore new paths of struggle—paths that are not fraught with the enormous loss of life and with the suffering to which the masses are

doomed by imperialism and by the oligarchies. We must indeed search for new alternatives, and if an opportunity for negotiations arises, it must be used. This is the path followed by the Soviet Union, which has put forward the concepts of new thinking and of a common European home, by Cuba with regard to the Angolan question, by Nicaragua vis-à-vis the contras and imperialism, and by the Afghan government in its contacts with the mujaheddin and their backers. Similar steps are being taken by the Palestine Liberation Organisation. This is the policy we need today.

Besides, has the "enemy image"

remained unchanged? Was the army of the Russian czar more "humane" than Somoza's or Videla's cutthroats? Were the Nazis in Germany less brutal than Batista's henchmen or the putschists who staged a fascist coup in Brazil? One can go on with these comparisons, but it is clear that we should differentiate our attitude: murderers and butchers must be tried and punished severely, while with others, negotiations are in order. Let us ask ourselves who profits from the absence of a dialogue with the military and from the refusal to involve it in the struggle against imperialism, for national liberation and for other, major and minor popular demands. Obviously, this plays into the hands of our class adversary, the reactionaries.

I agree with Urriola that Latin America's armed forces are not an assemblage of automatons or "trained

gorillas", contrary to what is claimed by those who are committed not to the revolution itself but to some kind of speculative and barren concept. The important thing is to find ways of coming into contact with the military. I share Urriola's view that mutual understanding is not enough: "Someone must show initiative. It must come from us, the Communists,

and from the left, democratic forces in each country."

It is essential now to create broad anti-imperialist fronts. Due attention to the main social contradictions is a principle which is not "obsolete" but extremely topical and meaningful. Adherence to it is what the practical application of Marxist methodology is all about. This is very im-

portant with regard to the armed forces too.

Jullo BERTAMAR
Buenos Aires, Argentina

¹ Ornel Urriola, "A Dialogue With the Army?", *WMR*, No. 12, 1988.

SOCIALISM HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN

I read with interest "Socialism and the Demands of Development", an article by Dr Samir Amin, Director of the UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, in the May 1989 issue of *World Marxist Review*. I believe that in reflecting on the problem of Third World liberation and development alternatives, the author clearly underrates the influence exerted on this process by the countries of existing socialism. This, I think, is no accident. As far as I can judge from Samir Amin's other papers, he prefers a different definition—"non-capitalist societies"—to the term "existing socialism".

If one accepts this view and agrees that socialism as such does not exist, this will inevitably distort the picture of the contemporary world which is now going

through a protracted, arduous and interesting transition to a qualitatively new socioeconomic and political structure.

The economic changes effected in the countries that have opted for a socialist path were an experiment undertaken for the first time by the revolutionary forces. Even if all the dreams of "romantic socialism" have not come true, the new social system has created a global alignment of forces which favours the process of change under way in different regions. True, the development of socialism as an international system has followed a difficult course along which major mistakes have been made: there is much in its history which we must now repudiate. But this does not mean that socialism generally is a failure. Simply, it has yet to assert itself fully.

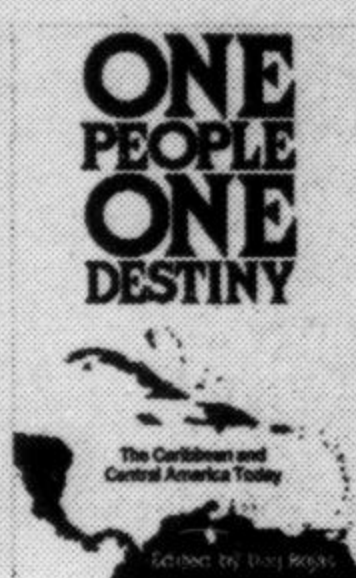
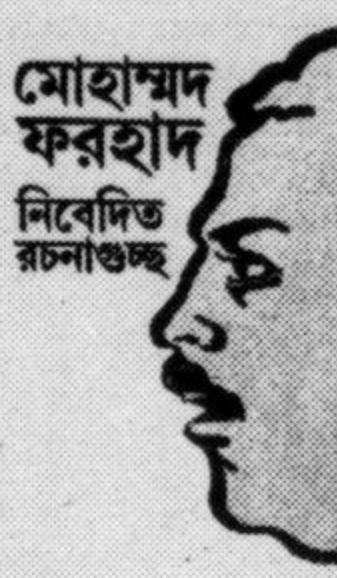
Of course, renewal of the social fabric calls for a balanced critique of the past, although it is hard to remain dispassionate when one refers to millions of human lives. But we social scientists should strive for objective coverage of the history and the development trends of socialism. We are facing a task of tremendous magnitude: the 1990s may well become a period of turbulent change and of global upheavals threatening life on Earth. The forces capable of carrying out the necessary social change are strongly affected by stratification, division and fragmentation. It is therefore very important to try and have them merge and create an integral international alliance based on common interests. The countries that have already embarked on the path of socialist development can demonstrate that humanity's social development has a promising future. The renewal drive launched in the Soviet Union and several other socialist countries bears this out.

Xavier Jimenez HERNANDEZ
an economist, Mexico City,
Mexico





THE BOOK SCENE



ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO SOVIET HISTORY

A Survey of Soviet and Foreign Literature on the Influence of the October Revolution

It seems that almost everything—from the minutest detail of its course to the broadest international repercussions—is known about the Great October Socialist Revolution, but interest among students of this outstanding event is still being aroused as its effects on subsequent history are investigated. The October Revolution gave fresh impetus to history and determined the lines and objectives of development for decades ahead.

However, the profound meaning of the October Revolution, which appeared to be transparently clear to many generations of historians and politicians, is occasionally obscured, as photographic clarity gives way to a more impressionistic image.

How is one to gain a true insight into the past when it is usually expressed in the form of contradictions and a clash of opposites—in this case a contradiction between opposite positions, assessments, conceptions; a comparison of the view of Marxist and non-Marxist historians. Along with in-depth research, polemical dialogue helps to put history into a sharper perspective and to find the answers to new questions.

This dialogue has recently become considerably more active, with historians in various countries who study the October Revolution meeting at international congresses, conferences and forums, and with more and more foreign historians visiting Soviet research centres, libraries and archives.

Until recently, criticism of bourgeois historiography provided the scientific public in our country with the sole opportunity of finding out what foreign historians were writing about the Revolution. Perestroika has produced a new phenomenon: the publication in the USSR of some works by Sovietologists, among the publications in 1988 and 1989 being the works of Cohen on Bukharin, Rabinowitch on the 1917 Revolution in Petrograd, and Slasser on Stalin in 1917. Soviet historians have responded to books and articles published abroad, and in the West, notably the United States, numerous reviews of our works on history have appeared.

The dialogue is under way, but it is not entirely straightforward. The alignment of social forces in the world is reflected in the science of history. I want to consider here some of the trends

in foreign writings on the October Revolution, notably those which, in contrast to out-and-out falsifications, truly reflect the contradictions in the cognition of the truth.

Opposing concepts present us with some acute questions on the history of the October Revolution. When compared with Marxist thinking, these questions could well provide reference points for further research, stimulate the search for responses to the challenges of the time, deepen our understanding of past and present, and outline the future. These hopes spring from an examination of foreign writings about the October Revolution over the past few decades, especially the most recent decades, because for half a century after the great revolution there were political debates abroad leading to mutual accusations and justifications by those who lost, with various alternatives constructed with the benefit of hindsight. What is most valuable about the books of that period is, perhaps, the evidence of those who took part in the revolution and who found themselves outside the country. The leaders of virtually all the political parties existing in Russia on the eve of and during the 1917 Revolution have left a great deal of material, combining reminiscences with attempts at analysis,¹ which has yet to be comprehended.

A major step towards overcoming the utilitarian political approach was finally made when foreign historical thinking came to recognise that there had been good grounds for the October Revolution, when some researchers ceased to regard it as an accident and came to believe that there had been no easy and open alternatives at the time. This occurred in the 1960s, when a number of symposiums were held and many books were published on the 50th anniversary of the Revolution.² Since then these problems have been studied by foreign historians along several lines: the peculiar nature of imperialism of Russia (for instance, by Geyer in the FRG³); the industrialisation of Russia and other development problems (Shanin in Britain and Scherer in the FRG⁴); and the make-up and activity of classes, social strata and groups, parties and individuals (Remington and Abraham in the United States⁵).

A consensus is possible in assessing prerevolutionary Russia because similar problems are being studied in depth and from different angles in the USSR. There is a greater understanding of the content and forms of the 1917 turning-point, the general trends, the possible alternatives and the circumstances which rendered them infeasible. We believe there is a good chance that both sides can review their ideas about the place and significance of the February bourgeois democratic revolution. Historical thinking in the USSR has come close to recognising it as an important and independent preliminary to the October Revolution. Many Western historians⁶ now regard the 1917 revolutions as links in a single process.

Western writings about the October Revolution then began to analyse the role of the masses, which had earlier been regarded as irrelevant because of an inclination to view the October Revolution as a conspiracy at the top. The soldiers, sailors, peasants and workers are now being considered by foreign historians.⁷

Because of their specific methods, Western scientists tend to concentrate on particular problems: the political and social interests of classes, groups and movements; the level of consciousness and organisation, social psychology and action; the possibility of "governing" the lower orders, etc. In this context, there is symptomatic criticism of those who claim that the Bolsheviks "manipulated" the masses. It is shown with a degree of

clarity in some works that the workers and soldiers of Russia made their choice quite consciously, and that they understood the goals of the struggle and the slogans of the parties.

There is a sizable literature about the Bolsheviks, their political rivals in the struggle for the masses (Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Anarchists) and about their adversaries (monarchists, reactionary militarists, Kadets, etc.). A question now being discussed, by Soviet scientists and Western Sovietologists, is why the Bolsheviks and not some other party won? Many Western historians are shaking off the influence of certain of their senior colleagues and beginning to realise that the answer may lie partially in the fact that the Bolsheviks had the advantage of being in closer touch with the masses, that their slogans were more effective, and that their organisational efforts were more telling. There are also some other polemical issues: the role of revolutionary theory, the importance of political leadership on the part of the Bolshevik cadres, and the area of national relations. Soviet writings in recent years have shown very well the importance of the party's cohesion, unity and discipline in the October victory.⁸

We hope that further elaboration of this subject-matter will help to demystify the Bolshevik party's qualities which assured it of success (Stalin and contemporary historians were adept at mystification). The Bolsheviks had to muster all their resources at the historical summit to which they rose in October 1917, and it is most vital to recreate a real image of the party, the leader in the October Revolution.

The best histories present a panorama of the revolution with its many protagonists. Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Raskolnikov, among others, are names which are no longer taboo for Soviet scientists, and this has opened a new page in the study of the October Revolution. Lenin can no longer be seen as the sole leader of the popular masses. His comrades in the struggle were intelligent and resourceful, and their combined actions, which ensured the success of the party's strategic and tactical manoeuvres, have yet to be given their due. Lenin's true revolutionary genius is harder to understand when he is considered in isolation. More than ever before, the whole party now appears as an intellectual and organisational centre which knew how to act in the most complicated conditions.

Among the portraits in the gallery of the revolution are also those of the adversaries of the Bolsheviks, their rivals and opponents. In this area, foreign historians are somewhat ahead, having portrayed not only Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Bukharin and others, but also the leaders of the Provisional Government, the leaders of political parties, the members of the czar's entourage, and the commanders of the old army. This line of research will, of course, continue to retain its importance, for the personal qualities of the politicians of the past—both the victors and the vanquished—are of much interest to later generations, some because they wish to imitate, others because they wish to learn the experience and lessons of history.

Students of the "Russian revolution" (a term often used by non-Marxist researchers, although it would be more precise to speak of the "revolution in Russia") are well aware of the intricate tangle of the political forces and movements which led to the October Revolution. But Marxists and non-Marxists have different approaches to this phenomenon. Foreign students often write about a series of separate revolutions (at the 1917 stage, at any rate): the workers', peasants' and the national revolutions. The new edition of the CPSU Programme, adopted by the 27th Congress, describes the October Revolu-

tion as a confluence of four revolutionary streams which merge where the Bolsheviks play the crucial role: the proletarian struggle for socialism, the peasant struggle for land, the national liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples of Russia, and the popular movement against the imperialist war and for peace.⁹

Lenin himself drew attention to the complex nature of the revolution, but since then this problem has often been glossed over, with the accent heavily on the unity of the four "streams". We believe this to be one of the central questions of the history of the October Revolution and its impact. In any case, it is clear from the writings on the Civil War and intervention, the New Economic Policy, and the distortions of the workers and peasants' alliance in Stalin's day that in most cases students in the post-Lenin period have failed to consider the dialectics of interclass relations.

Take the role of the national liberation movements in 1917. Political and historical thinkers abroad often regard the whole of the 20th century as the "age of nationalism".¹⁰ The social is contrasted with the national, the latter being depicted as a dominant and altogether separate sphere of social relations. Some Western historians of the October Revolution have based themselves on these ideas (the theory of autonomous national "revolutions"), but reputable scientists do not accept them. For their part, Soviet students will have to get rid of their oversimplified view of the interaction between the national and the social in revolutionary events. An authentic picture of the reality will help to assess the significance of national factors in the revolution, and to recreate what current events suggest in a much more intricate interpenetration of the impulses of the social revolution.

Historians have always regarded the October armed uprising as a separate act in the 1917 revolutionary events,¹¹ and this needs to be accentuated because the workers and peasants did manage to take power as the dictatorship of the proletariat. Many Western writers are wrong in claiming that the October Revolution was a "coup d'etat", but then the political significance of October 25, 1917 is not conveyed by smoothly and logically fitting the uprising and the preceding struggle into an objective framework of mounting social movements.

Historians of the October Revolution also argue about its time frame. Their discussions are a mixture of theoretical, methodological and even political bias (fortunately, with fewer political prejudices in recent years). Everyone now seems to agree that the Revolution did not end on October 25. The problem is that one's view of the revolution inevitably and to a great extent determines any interpretation of subsequent events, including the prospects for perestroika.

The post-October conflicts and the convulsions of bitter class struggle are an important issue. The turning-point in revolutionary development, many Soviet and foreign historians believe, was one of the preludes to the tragedy of the Stalin period. The October Revolution, which was relatively peaceful and bloodless, and was impelled by the ideas of peace, freedom and the brotherhood of working people, developed into a long and bloody civil war. How did that happen? Bourgeois historians are inclined to assume that if it was not the October Revolution (the takeover of power by a minority), then surely it was the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly that predetermined the outbreak of the Civil War. This is not the only view, but it is the dominant one. Soviet historians and

publicists have also discussed the origins of the Civil War, the latter sometimes showing a lack of respect.

Any revolution, especially an armed uprising, contains within itself the seeds of civil war. This was the assumption on the part of the Bolsheviks, who believed not only that the Civil War was caused by the events of July 4, 1917, when armed force was used against the people, but also that General Kornilov's conspiracy and mutiny marked the start of it. Adequate study still needs to be made of the period when, in the spring and summer of 1918 the threat of famine forced Soviet power to send detachments to exchange scarce goods for food, by force if necessary, and to set up poor peasants' committees. This amounted to a real crisis in relations between the working class, the Soviet power, and the peasantry, but events here also have their own logic.

It is worth recalling that, when introducing the New Economic Policy, Lenin often compared it with the policy in the spring of 1918, before the food detachments went in. It would be wrong to disregard the "NEP of the spring of 1918", of which both Soviet authors (Medvedev¹²) and foreign authors have written, as a possible alternative way out of the crisis.

Not very long ago, non-Marxist writers abroad used to emphasise the internal prerequisites of the Civil War at the expense of the external prerequisites. The imperialist intervention was virtually ignored, but it was this act which so utterly embittered the sides. This bitterness necessarily had a prolonged effect on the subsequent social development of the Soviet Union.

Could it have been otherwise? Foreign historians tend to update their answer to this question when arguing about the motives behind the capitalist governments' attitude to Soviet Russia at the time. Such an approach is obviously erroneous. The policy and ideology of the bourgeois leaders of the time should be assessed as they were: a combination of imperial ambitions, common sense, national aspirations, the influence of the colonial epoch, reformism, liberalism, extremist trends, monarchism, and so on. And the same thing should be done with respect to Bolshevism. This is a major problem of world history, and its analysis is important in clarifying the reasons for which the imperialist governments took part in the fight against Soviet power. It also shows the deep influence of the ideas of the October Revolution not only on the development of movements for democracy, the rights of nations, and the dignity of the working people, but also on the mentality in the top ranks of bourgeois society.

In the light of new political thinking, it is important to study the relations which took shape between the "new" and the "old" world. It is our view that the brutal Civil War was a result of the painful amputation of the Soviet system from the body of the old world, which refused to recognise the right of the workers and peasants' republic to exist. The Bolsheviks rejected war.¹³ The first act of the Soviet power was its Decree on Peace. At the height of the Civil War, the Communist Party in Russia adopted a programme for advancing towards socialism, and then the plan for the electrification of Russia, which Lenin called our second programme. The war was still on, but the leader of the Bolsheviks called on young people to assimilate the wealth of human civilization and taught them to connect revolutionary and general human morality.

Those who supported Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat differed in their views. Historians have been discussing the problem of the social, ideological, personal and other roots of Stalinism, and their approaches and conclusions

are not the same. In our view, there is no reason to derive Stalinism from Bolshevism, Leninism and Marxism. Western authors have been actively exchanging views (and blows) in their debates on the doctrine of totalitarianism,¹⁴ which provides the theoretical base for the idea of a link between Stalinism and Marxism. Marxists and non-Marxists are still unable to discuss this problem; indeed, many non-Marxists have found the definitions of the doctrine of totalitarianism lacking in any rational basis.

Soviet historians have been elaborating in depth Lenin's concept of the advance to socialism.¹⁵ Foreign scientists, who have fewer sources on this issue than they do on the October Revolution, have turned to the many problems in the history of the Stalin period (a subject that needs to be discussed at length in its own right). But let us note at this point that foreign scientists, Tucker for one,¹⁶ have shown convincingly the crucial role played by Stalin's personal qualities in the subsequent tragic events, and the possibility that existed of alternative development for the USSR, notably improved agriculture without forced collectivisation. They also see the deep contradiction between Stalinism and the ideas and impulses of the October Revolution. On this point, Soviet historians, with their increasing access to archive documents, are sure to present some cogent views on many other aspects of this period.

Western students are actively involved in efforts to understand the sources and prospects of the changes started in Soviet society in 1985. Perestroika is heir to the cause of the October Revolution; at the same time, it is giving an historically authentic assessment of the distortions of the Stalin and post-Stalin period. The methodology used in putting through profound social transformations has also drawn attention to the continuity between the 1917 Revolution and perestroika. On the

one hand, it is being studied by those who are aware that the need for such transformations is faced in many regions of the modern world; on the other, by those who are resisting change and refusing to abandon their confrontational thinking.

It is useful to regard perestroika as being at once both a reformist and a revolutionary project. The new political thinking which is being applied in practice, is consonant with the urge to find methods of transformation that suit the present day. Revolutionary change, profound democracy and a state based on the rule of law—these comprise a formula which, although it is a dialectical contradiction, may contain the seeds of a new quality in Soviet socialist society which will enrich revolutionary practice with the experience of profound transformations.

Mankind is advancing not only towards a new century and a new millennium, but perhaps also to a new epoch in history. Only a clear vision of the past and an understanding of the present will show what kind of epoch it is likely to be. The world community needs to be humanised, and the methods of social development need to be improved. Despite the subsequent tragedies, the October Socialist Revolution was an outstanding stride in this direction and provided a mighty stimulus for human progress. This seems to me reason enough to continue open and honest discussion between those who support the cause of the Great October Revolution and non-Marxists.

Professor Nikolai ROMANOVSKY,
Dr Sc. (Hist.)

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3 D. Geyer, *Der russische Imperialismus. Studien über den Zusammenhang innerer und auswärtiger Politik 1860-1914*, Göttingen, 1977; C. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization*, New York, 1966; R. Portal, *La Russie industrielle de 1881 à 1927*, Paris, 1976.

4 Th. Shanin, *Russia as a "Developing" Society. The Roots of Otherness*, Basingstoke-London, 1985; H. Scherer, *Der Ausbruch aus der Mangelgesellschaft*, Giessen, 1985.

5 T. Remington, *Building Socialism in Bolshevik Russia. Ideology and Industrial Organisation 1917-1921*, Pittsburgh, 1984; R. Abraham, *Alexander Kerensky: The First Love of the Revolution*, New York, 1987.

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10 H. Seton-Watson, *Nations and States. An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism*, Boulder, 1977.

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12 R. A. Medvedev, *The October Revolution*, New York, 1979.

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14 L. Poliakov, *Les totalitarismes du XXe siècle: Un phénomène historique dépassé?* Paris, 1987; K. D. Bracher, *Die totalitäre Erfahrung*, München, 1987; C. Polin, *Le totalitarisme*, Paris, 1987.

15 See, for instance, Ye. G. Plimak, *Lenin's Political Testament. Sources. Substance. Fulfilment*, Moscow, 1989; "Concerning the Present-day Concept of Socialism", *Pravda*, July 14, 1989; G. L. Smirnov, "About One Excursion into History", *Pravda*, July 19, 1989.

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THE BOOKS THAT RALLY US TO THE STRUGGLE

Publishing Lenin's Works in Argentina

Books written by Lenin can hardly be classed as rare. According to UNESCO, they are now among the most widely read. In countries where it is no longer a crime to publish, read and own Lenin's books they are printed in great numbers; book-sellers and public libraries stock them openly. Millions of people in all corners of the world draw on Lenin's works for ideas and inspiration which mobilise them to fight for a new and just society, for living conditions worthy of the working man.

For many years, publication of Lenin's works was virtually banned in Argentina, and our party, which had to operate clandestinely or semiclandestinely, put a great deal of energy and imagination into the effort to bring Lenin's words to the working people. Although this was a difficult undertaking, the party never stopped publishing and distributing Lenin's books and pamphlets. Moreover, from 1966 to 1973, when the nation was in the grip of a brutal military dictatorship led by a succession of generals, the PCA published Lenin's *Complete Works* in 50 volumes. It remains the biggest edition to this day. *The events that accompanied this project constitute a remarkable page in the history of our party and highlight the selfless ideological and political work performed by Argentina's Communists.*

How was it possible to publish these volumes? Who translated Lenin's works into Spanish? How were army and police controls evaded? Who distributed these books? How many copies were printed? What channels were used to send Lenin's *Complete Works* to almost all Latin American countries?

Since I was involved in this bold project, I could, of course, reply to these questions myself, but I think it would be more interesting for our readers to hear the story from those comrades whom the party put directly in charge of the effort. They are *Antonio Blanco* and *Juan Tejerina*. I talked to them during my recent trip to Buenos Aires. Excerpts from what they told me follow.

Antonio BLANCO. We did not start from scratch. The first book by Lenin was published in Argentina during the author's lifetime: it was *"Left-Wing" Communism—an-Infantile Disorder*. Later, other works appeared on a regular basis, although in small numbers. Unfortunately, we do not know how these editions have been published and distributed during the 1920s. Still, according to sources which can be regarded as reliable, 275 titles of Lenin's works have been published and reprinted in Argentina in 2.2 million copies over the past 30 years.

The editions that appeared before the *Complete Works* included three volumes of selected works published during the 1930s, six volumes put out in the early 1950s, and a set of 24 volumes which took from 1957 to 1968 to complete. It was still being published when the party decided to launch a multi-volume project based on the Soviet *Complete Works* by V. I. Lenin (5th edition).

It was an enormous amount of work. To begin with, we had to have more than 27,000 pages of Lenin's originals translated competently into Spanish. Working painstakingly under great pressure in the difficult conditions of the underground, highly skilled translators accomplished this task within a mere three years.

Juan TEJERINA. New problems arose when it was time to send the translations to the printers. A project of this size is difficult and costly even with adequate printing capacities, but our resources were very limited. What can you expect from small clandestine printing shops—usually in cramped, dark and stuffy basements?

Aside from the organisational and technical difficulties of finding enough paper, typesetting and manufacturing zincography plates for illustrations, we had to keep our work secret. If the authorities had learned about the project, all our efforts would have been frustrated. We therefore drew on our many years of experience in organising clandestine publishing activities. Our ties with the owners of small printing shops who had helped us previously came in very useful.

This time though, the task was much more difficult. It was to involve dozens of printing shops which would form an unbroken technological chain: some set the type, then thousands of kilos of lead were transported to where the printing presses were installed, then the printed pages were sent to be bound and finally, to warehouses—and all without attracting the attention of the police.

It goes without saying that we had to conduct vigorous political organisation work among the hundreds of people cooperating on the project. It was important to win their confidence, help them overcome their fears and convince them that the effort was very important. We realised that it took personal courage, political consciousness and selfless dedication to agree to help us at a time when the party and all its sympathisers were being persecuted. I must say that among these helpers we found many loyal friends who shared our ideas and joined the party.

A.B. Particularly great risks were involved in the transportation of the printed volumes. The police had the roads under tight control. Special patrols often inspected almost every vehicle. As a rule, we sent out a scout car to see what the situation was along the route, and only then did we ship the books themselves. Even these precautions were sometimes not enough. Our comrades were very ingenious and did all that was humanly possible to lull the vigilance of the police, but there were cases of people arrested, printing shops raided and the consignments confiscated.

I recall an incident which ended well but began in nerve-racking fashion. One of our trucks transporting a batch of Lenin's volumes was stopped by an army patrol. Asked what they were carrying, our comrades replied that it was books. "What sort of books?" "Fairy tales". An appropriate bill of lading was produced, indicating the nature of the cargo and the destination. But the officer in charge of the patrol demanded to see what was inside the parcels.

One after another, five parcels were unwrapped: we had placed them there on purpose. The patrolmen saw Little Red Riding Hood smiling at them from the cover. It was really a lucky break that the inspection ended there and the truck was free to proceed. If a sixth parcel had been opened—and the truck was chock full of them—then it would have been clear what the cargo really was. That time Little Red Riding Hood did us a good turn. But let me repeat that we were not always so lucky in our encounters with army and police patrols. Sometimes the comrades who accompanied Lenin's works were arrested and imprisoned for many years.

J.T. Hundreds of people devoted a lot of time and effort to ensuring that Spanish translations of Lenin's works found their way to readers in Argentina and other Latin American

countries. But I will mention only two—Marquitos Bardach who died tragically in a printing shop accident and the comrade known in the party as Pedro. He is now paralysed: the severe trials he underwent during these years have exacted their price. I would appreciate it if we could convey our heartfelt greetings to him through *World Marxist Review* and thank him for his personal contribution to the publication of Lenin's works.

Let me also say a few words about the more than 200 party members who distributed Lenin's volumes throughout the nation. They spent time watching selected individuals before making contact, discussing political issues and then trying to evoke an interest in Lenin's personality and works. Of course, in order to do that, our comrades had to study these works thoroughly themselves.

The commercial side of the project presented difficulties

too. A set of 50 volumes was quite expensive, and usually we sold them on an installment plan. Our travelling salesmen sold 2,000 sets of Lenin's *Complete Works* in Argentina alone, and another 1,000 sets went to neighbouring countries.

A. B. To give you an idea of how difficult it was to carry out such "export operations", bear in mind that each set weighed 27 kilos. It was not easy to take such "luggage" across borders.

Naturally, we are proud that we have contributed to the noble cause of publicising Lenin's creative heritage, a body of work that remains an inexhaustible source of progressive ideas at one with the needs and aspirations of the world's peoples.

Jorge BERGSTEIN

member, CC, Communist Party of Argentina

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COMING OFF THE PRESSES

A LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE

JAN ŠVERMA OČIMA PAMÉTNÍKU, Svoboda Publishers, Prague, 1990.

The book *Jan Šverma Through the Eyes of His Contemporaries*, due to appear early next year, is likely to become an event in our historiography and to attract readers' attention outside the country as well. Being closely involved in its production, I can say that the numerous memoirs collected and prepared for publication by Věra Holá make up a true-to-life portrait of Šverma as a loyal son to his people, a leader of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and a notable figure of the international communist movement.

As a university student, Jan welcomed the October 1917 Revolution and wholeheartedly embraced its ideas. As a result, he joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and the book draws a vivid picture of the period when the world outlook of the young patriot was being shaped.

Šverma's struggle against fascism and the threat of Nazi aggression against Czechoslovakia is described in detail. The closest associate of Klement Gottwald, Šverma made a substantial contribution to the creative Marxist analysis of the strategy of a united antifascist popular front. He was a brilliant speaker and regularly addressed rallies and meetings. As a leader of the Communist Party and the Editor-in-Chief of *Rudé právo*, Šverma did a great deal to strengthen the party as the leading political force in society.

Rudé právo veterans offer keen insights into the style of work of their Editor-in-Chief: he gave journalists ideological advice and guidance, but encouraged everyone to show initiative so that the party's leading newspaper should really be a collective propagandist and agitator and a combative organiser of people.

After the 1938 Munich deal, when the Sudetenland was annexed from Czechoslovakia as a first step to the seizure of the

whole of the country by Nazi Germany in 1939, the leadership of the Communist Party decided to send several comrades abroad in order to preserve cadres and to mount struggle in exile for the liberation of the home country. In late autumn 1938 Šverma left for Moscow, but a few months later he moved on to Paris in order to give guidance to the work of Czechoslovak Communists living in exile there. He began to publish a magazine, *Svetové rozhledy* (World Survey), and became the chief negotiator in the talks with bourgeois representatives of Czechoslovak Resistance, including President Edvard Beneš. When Jan was in danger of arrest and imprisonment in a concentration camp, French friends helped him to flee to Yugoslavia, where he went into hiding with local Communists. They eventually contacted Bulgarian Communists and smuggled Šverma into Sofia. The fact that the communist parties of both countries were banned and exposed to harsh repression further demonstrates the courage of internationalists from our sister parties and their willingness to take risks for the safety of a leader of the Czechoslovak Communists. Their memoirs complement the portrait of Jan: in spite of a grave threat to his freedom and life, he kept a cool head and went about party business.

Šverma's work in the Soviet Union in the wartime years is covered in great detail. He was given many important missions. During the Battle of Moscow, he was the only leading Czechoslovak Communist to have remained in the Soviet capital. Georgy Dimitrov then made him responsible for the Comintern's publishing business. Šverma managed to do an amazing amount of work: in addition to time-consuming organisational chores, he wrote radio commentaries to popularise the policies of the CPCz, and articles for the Soviet press and emigre Czechoslovak magazines in the US. He worked in his unheated hotel room late into the night, and his articles reached the hearts of Czechoslovak patriots back home and on the frontline in the fight against Nazism.

Šverma did a great deal to train party and guerrilla cadres for work in Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia to help the party mobilise the people for liberation struggle. He went to training centres in the Soviet Union to meet Czechoslovak patriots preparing to go behind enemy lines, explained the party's policy,

strategy and tactics to them, and inspired them with confidence in the victory over fascism. Most of those guerrillas were killed in action or executed by the Nazis, and that is why the memoirs of the few survivors included in the book are especially precious. They say that meetings with Jan helped them find their bearings in the political situation and fulfil party assignments.

There are also the memoirs of veterans of the First Czechoslovak Army Corps in the USSR, including its commander Ludvík Svoboda and party leader Jaroslav Procházka. They recall Šverma's energy in raising Czechoslovak troops and coping with the difficult problems of organisation and supply.

In 1944, as the Red Army battled its way to the eastern border of Czechoslovakia, the guerrilla war in Slovakia erupted into a Slovak national uprising. Šverma flew out to Banská Bystrica, to the heart of the uprising, where the last, heroic chapter of his life was to unfold. Once again he showed himself a popular speaker at mass rallies as he helped the party leadership in the region and the Slovak National Council to cope with the

tasks of the people's democratic revolution. Arguing with the Czechoslovak government in exile in London, he insisted that the new republic should be a state of two equal peoples, the Czechs and the Slovaks. Šverma worked in the headquarters of the guerrilla movement and after the defeat of the uprising retreated into the mountains together with the fighters, sharing their suffering and privation.

Jan Šverma died tragically in the Slovak mountains, and the book shows what a grave loss his death was to the party and the people. But the memory of this remarkable Communist, an embodiment of the best party traditions, lives on.

I found the manuscript particularly fascinating because I knew Jan Šverma personally during the war. It is a truthful and very useful book, one of those living links between past and present so vital to the continuity of generations.

Jaromír MACHAČ

* * *

UNITED BY A NOBLE CAUSE

One People, One Destiny. The Caribbean and Central America Today, Edited by Don Rojas, Pathfinder, New York, 1988, 115 pp.

The fall of the Grenada revolution and the United States' invasion of the island raised many tough questions to which progressive forces in the region were called upon to find quick answers. This crucial juncture became a challenge for these forces to prove their viability as an alternative to reaction and imperialist domination. The ensuing confusion among the Left and uncertainty about the future created fertile grounds for the emergence of what is termed geographic fatalism—an admission that it is futile to fight and defeat US imperialism in what it considers its "backyard". But history has shown that the progressive forces in the region stood the test of time and revolutionary optimism won the day.

In 1984, less than a year after the Grenada crisis, more than two dozen political parties and liberation movements met in Cuba and launched the Anti-Imperialist Organisations of the Caribbean and Central America. In an area where the influence of the mightiest imperialist power is felt daily in all spheres of life, this was an achievement of singular importance. It was a significant contribution to the process of ending the divisions imposed by colonial powers between the Caribbean and Central America and among the countries of the entire region.

The story behind this organisation, how it works, what are the forces in it, its programmatic platform, is told in *One People, One Destiny*. Although a bit late, given the seriousness of the struggles under way in one of the world's "hot spots", the book is nevertheless necessary to popularise the organisation's message, win grassroot support in the region and solicit active solidarity from outside.

The book is a collection of speeches and documents of the organisation over the last five years. These are well penned, void

of rhetoric and sloganeering, and delve deep into the processes evolving in the region. The materials are authentic revolutionary manifestoes covering much of the complexity of the area: the Nicaraguan revolution and victories scored against US destabilisation and the contras; the concept of "low intensity" conflicts and the heightening struggles in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras; the situation in the Caribbean, including the independence struggles in the French and Dutch colonies; the fight to maintain Panamanian sovereignty; Puerto Rico's march towards independence; the failure of imperialist strategies to upset the Cuban Revolution; the foreign debt; US military, economic, political and cultural designs in the area.

The current President of the organisation is Cheddi Jagan, General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party. Officers are elected every two years and plenary sessions are held regularly in different countries. These meetings are important forums for exchange of experiences and the elaboration of joint actions to combat imperialist and neocolonial domination.

The body has attracted 38 organisations from most of the nations of the region. They include forces of divergent outlooks—Communists, workers' parties, Social Democrats and revolutionary democrats. Some simply call themselves anti-imperialist organisations. Most are opposition parties, a few waging armed struggles and others are in power.

Bringing together these diverse forces has not been easy given the barriers in this multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-lingual area. Many of these are so-called mini-states with no sizeable population and few resources. The level of political and economic development varies. In this rich diversity and a proliferation of philosophies, all the organisations are agreed that unity is essential and the absence of it benefits those who profit from divisions and domination. They are all agreed that concerted action is a must to tackle the pressing economic and social problems and there is a shared opposition to aggressive interventionist practices of the United States.

The book vividly captures the unique experience of each participating country. It shows that the organisation is no "centre" nor is it a substitute for the creative application of policies of each member in its respective land. Revolutionary

practice is the antithesis of stereotypes. Says Lumberto Campbell of the FSLN: "Nicaragua respects other experiences. It is not trying, and has never tried, to impose its own view, its own manner of facing problems of underdevelopment, dependence, and injustice. There is no 'Sandinista model' to export, because revolutions are the most authentic product of the historical experience of each people" (p. 24).

One Destiny delves into the bankrupt policies in the region of the United States, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These dictates have been willingly accepted by those in power, having failed to put together alternative popular programmes of development. The large doses of foreign aid, with the usual strings, have led to growing indebtedness (US\$50 billion), widespread unemployment, poverty, crime, illiteracy, drug addiction and emigration (see p. 2). Past and present policies by ruling circles have led to multinationals, their local capitalist partners and the nouveaux riches exacting enormous sums through exploitation. US military intervention aimed at stifling liberation has aggravated the already explosive situation. *One Destiny* stresses the need for a political solution to the Central American conflict.

While most of the nations have attained formal independence, some 150 years ago, the area still has pockets of colonialist rule. This is discussed in the book by Michel Bangou

of the Guadeloupe Communist Party. The colonial situation in Puerto Rico is dealt with by Doris Pizarro of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

The book contains an analysis of US practices, policies and postures. According to Ornar Cordova, the head of a sector of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, the main trends are: the revival of the Monroe Doctrine; reviving hemispheric security systems to combat "internal" and "external" threats, crushing popular armed uprisings, crushing the Nicaraguan and Cuban revolutions, revoking the Carter-Torrijos Treaty on the Panama Canal. The US has redefined the area as a strategic commercial artery which automatically makes popular and progressive governments a threat to its [US] vital interests. In economic terms the US is promoting reprivatisation of the region's public sector and open door policies for direct foreign investment.

The book points out that the people of the region are determined to struggle for their full liberation, against the schemes of US imperialism.

Kellawan LALL

member of the CC Executive Committee, People's Progressive Party of Guyana

NEW BOOKS

MOHAMMED FARHAD. A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES AND LITERARY WORKS ON MOHAMMED FARHAD, Gan Prokashoni, Dhaka, 1988, 127 pp. (in Bengali)

Mohammed Farhad's outstanding organisational talent, integrity and erudition illuminated his many years of work as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh. As his friends and comrades-in-arms recall, Farhad's activity helped to make the CPB an important element in the social and political life of the country. The tremendous mass support shown for the party, as well as the endurance and organisation of its members, notes the article by Nuril Islam, a secretary of the CC CPB, prove convincingly that it has now become a national force able to take the right decisions at the right time. This collection

also includes biographical data about Farhad (1938-1987), his personal letters and a number of poems dedicated to his memory.

RAPPORT DE LA COMMISSION NATIONALE CHARGÉE D'ETUDIER LA QUESTION DE L'UNITE NATIONALE (Report of the National Commission Charged with Studying the Question of National Unity), Régie des Productions Pédagogiques, Bujumbura, 1989, 219 pp.

Sharp conflicts on a tribal, religious and regional basis have lately posed a threat to the development of the Republic of Burundi. This work analyses the reasons behind the disintegration of society and the role of political institutions attempting to consolidate that society, and offers the

government specific recommendations on solving the problems and eliminating parochialism, tribalism and social disunity. The importance of the ruling Party for Unity and National Progress (UPRONA) and mass public organisations in strengthening national unity is also stressed.

Hamid Khurasani, ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLES OF AFGHANS. Concise history of the years 1747-1928, Peace Publishing House, Kabul, 1989, 62 pp.

This book examines key periods in Afghan history (in particular, the first and second Anglo-Afghan wars), and describes the political views of outstanding national leaders and their role in organising mass popular struggle against colonial enslavement and for an independent path of development.

NEW BOOKS

NEW BOOKS

NEW BOOKS

ERRATUM

In WMR, No. 9, 1989, footnote 2 on page 65 reads: "The Communist Party of Britain...". It should read: "The Communist Party of Great Britain...".

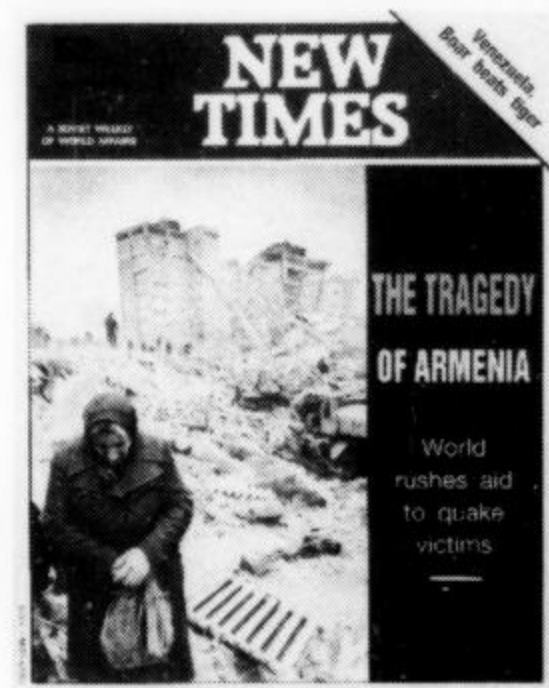




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