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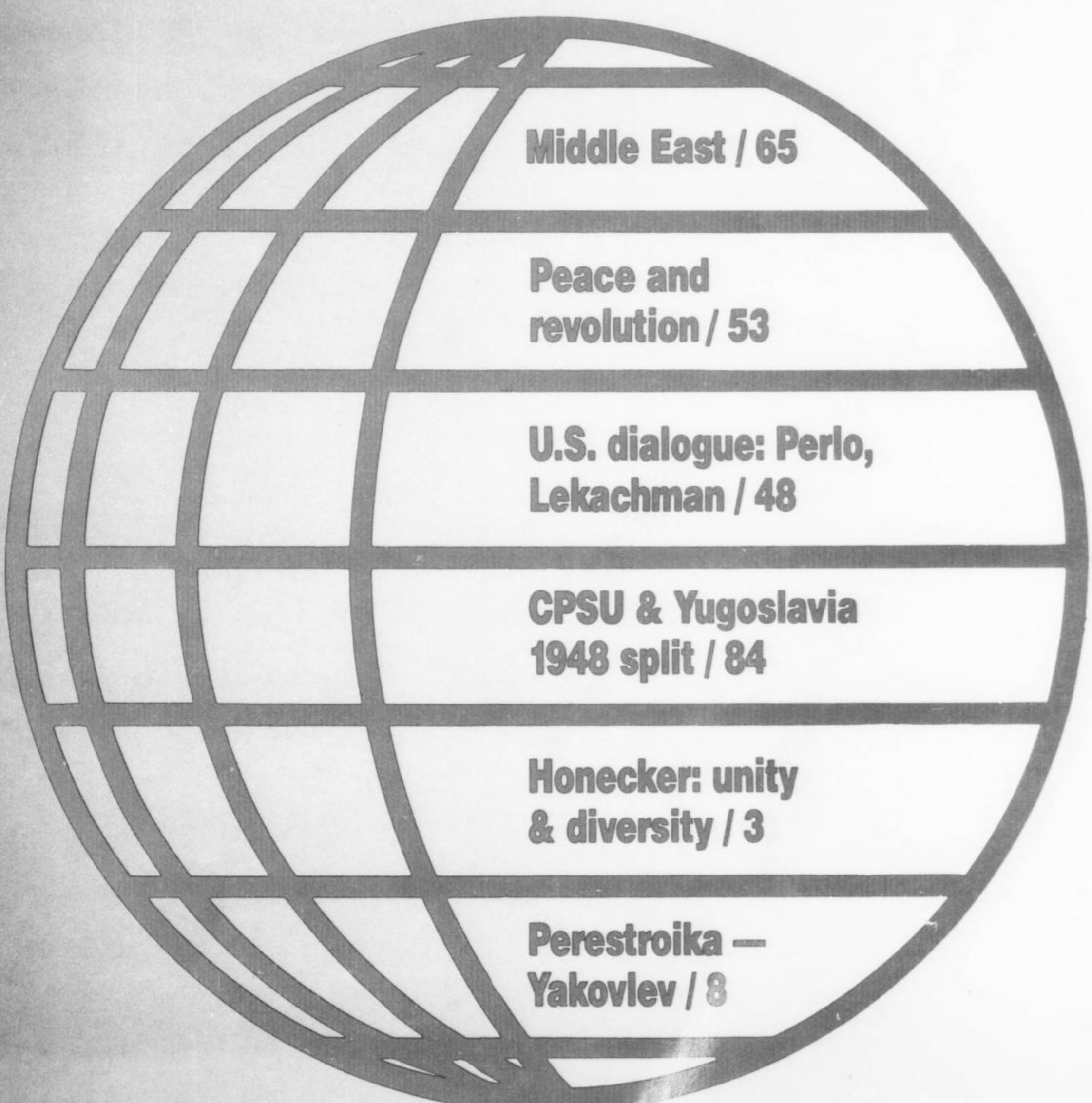
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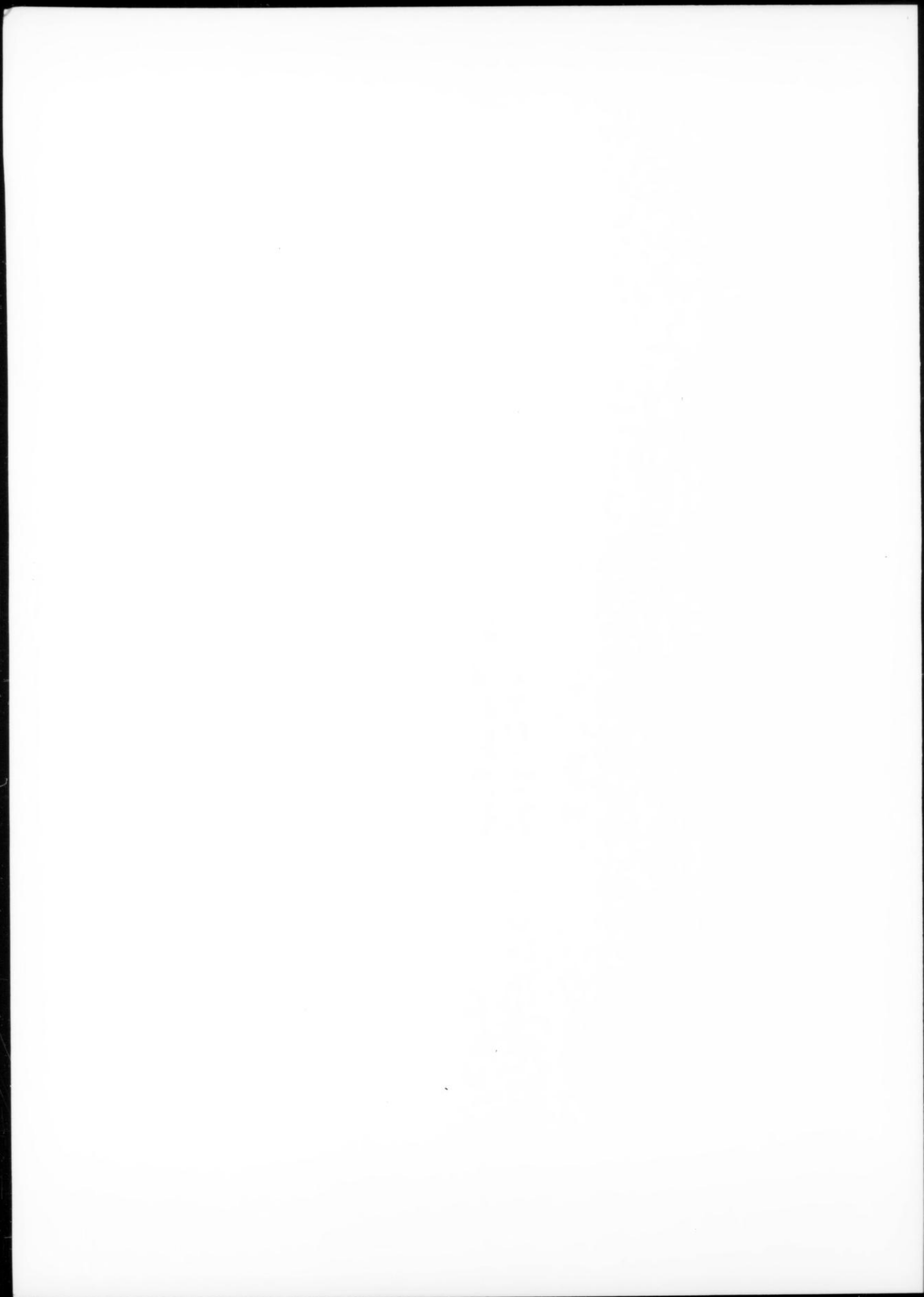
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THE SOCIALIST WAY

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

Erich HONECKER

*General Secretary, SED CC;
Chairman, GDR Council of State*

AT THE PRESENT PHASE of the multifaceted progress of the socialist countries and the further development of their joint peace initiative at the crucial stage in the life of mankind, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union agreed, at a working meeting of their CC General Secretaries in Moscow at the end of September 1988, on a course to strengthen peace and consolidate the positions of socialism.

Our conversations are a reflection of the solid friendship and firm solidarity of our two parties and states. They reassert our common views on the basic questions of foreign policy and socialist construction. We gave a high appreciation of what has been jointly achieved in the relations between our parties, states and peoples, and agreed on further raising the level of our varied and highly intense fraternal relations.

Our party and people support the course of the CPSU as it is written into the decisions of the 27th Congress. For their part, the CPSU and the Soviet people support the course of the SED adopted at its 11th Congress to strengthen the German socialist state for the good of its people. This is our response to all those who have illusions about driving a wedge between the CPSU and the SED. Let everyone know that the process of restructuring in the Soviet Union is of great moment in strengthening world socialism and securing peace.

In assessing this matter, let no one allow himself to be misled by the chatter of the raving Philistines who are out to rewrite the history of the CPSU and the Soviet Union along bourgeois lines. They will not be able to do so, because in its development since the October Revolution, the Soviet Union has emerged even mightier from each of its trials. As Mikhail Gorbachov said in his report on the 70th anniversary of the Red October, that is how it was during the socialist industrialisation, the collectivisation of agriculture, and the cultural revolution, which were of historic significance for the strengthening of Soviet government. That is what created the prerequisites for the Soviet people's victory over the barbarous

Hitler fascism in the Great Patriotic War, and for the gigantic achievements in construction: the efforts to overcome the aftermath of the war and to build up the socialist state, which, on its socialist and peace-furthering way, did not allow itself to be confused by the US atomic bomb.

Such an approach to history, which accords with our common experience, is most useful for the cause of socialism generally. The two fraternal parties, it was stressed in the joint communique on my meeting with Mikhail Gorbachov, are united in solid friendship and internationalist solidarity based on our common views on the principal questions of foreign policy and socialist construction, and in further raising the level of German-Soviet relations, which are unprecedented in intensity and diversity and whose core is the close-knit militant alliance of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.

Our multifaceted contacts with the fraternal parties bear out our conclusion that with a basic identity of goals and tasks *the diverse forms and ways of building up the socialist social system continue to grow*. That is why comradely exchanges of opinion and experience are of ever greater importance, and our party has been actively promoting them.

All-round cooperation between the socialist countries under the leadership of the fraternal parties on the basis of the principles of equality, independence, and responsibility to one's own people and mutual benefit is among the gains of socialism. Our point of departure is the conception of scientific socialism worked out by Marx and Engels, according to which the new society is built with an eye to the conditions of each country. There is nothing new for us in the idea, for instance, that there is no single model that holds good for all the socialist countries, as that would run counter to the existing realities and the available experience.

All the parties have the objective of attaining the most dynamic economic and social development of their countries and the highest living standards for the people, thereby making socialism more attractive in the worldwide competition with capitalism. This also tends to produce problems for which the most effective solutions are not always immediately found.

We have never regarded imitation as a substitute for our own highly necessary theoretical thinking and practical action, and this will be our approach in the future as well. Each of the socialist countries is enriched by the experience of the others.

Developments in the socialist world are much more diverse than some had assumed. Oversimplified notions are now even less relevant than they were in the past. But there is no problem in the relations between the socialist countries that cannot be solved on an internationalist basis.

Just when the main task in the GDR is to keep our ship of state firmly on the course of the 11th Congress and the Party Programme, advice is being given to us by influential people in the Western world, from those in Springer's publishing concern to those at *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, who have always claimed that our policy is "too Russian", and who have kept stressing that we are Germans and have to take account of our specifics, advising us to alter this course and to plunge into anarchy instead. These new "friends" of the Soviet Union, one GDR citizen wrote to the SED CC, are absolutely dissatisfied with the fact that we tie in the generally valid objective laws of socialism with our own actions, something that our party has always done. The SED has never allowed the possibility of a personality cult and mass repression appearing in our country. The letter ends with this request: Carry on this correct policy!

At its December plenary meeting, the SED CC took a decision to convene the party's 12th Congress in Berlin from May 15 to 19, 1990.

The extensive preparations for the congress and the holding of it will enable us to respond, with even greater uplift, foresight and sense of responsibility to the demands of our time, and to formulate the tasks of the 1991-1995 five-year period with an eye to the year 2000, even before its beginning.

We live at a time when the development of the productive forces is increasingly the yardstick of social progress. This applies to every sphere of our society: politics, as well as economics, and social policy to the same extent as cultural and spiritual life, that is, everything that we regard, on the basis of our party programme, as the further building of a developed socialist society, which is a historical process of profound political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual transformations.

Our party has set itself the task of developing, at a high level and in a balanced manner, all the advantages and motive forces of socialism, all the aspects and spheres of social life, the productive forces and the relations of production, social and political relations, science and education, culture and the whole set of working and living conditions, and also of ensuring the country's defences. In so doing, we retain everything that has merit, throw overboard everything that impedes our advance, and take a new approach to many things. This accords with the demands of the time, the experience gained in other

socialist countries, and the character of our party. We are a party of innovators with a 140-year tradition behind it, and this enables the party to look to the past, to Marx and Engels, its founders, the founders of scientific socialism.

While we have every right to assume that our concept of developed socialist society has justified itself, we must be clearly aware that it is not consummate. In accordance with the dialectics of continuity and renewal, it needs to be steadily and creatively enriched and developed in order to discern in due time and successfully to solve the new problems that arise. This sets the scale for the social sciences, which must make an in-depth analysis of the republic's 40-year progress, theoretically to sum up the multifaceted experience in the light of our future tasks and to keep giving greater precision to the results of their own research in the light of the propositions requiring further theoretical elaboration.

The SED programme has been and continues to be the main reference point for the social sciences. It contains this basic conclusion: *the further construction of a developed socialist society must be consciously and methodically directed as a process of profound change*. This requires that the social sciences must give greater attention to the dialectical correlation of the objective and the subjective, to objective laws, to dialectical contradictions and the motive forces of practice, and the consequent conclusions which follow for leadership in every sphere and area of our socialist society.

We expect social scientists to have their work profoundly permeated with the dialectical view of unity and a complex comprehension of aggregate social processes in the development of socialist society. There must be deeper research into the dialectical interconnection between the economic, political, ideological, cultural and social conditions of our society, and between social, collective and individual interests. Hence the need for interdisciplinary research among scientists in sociology, and the natural and technical sciences. The point is not only to seek suitable forms of such cooperation; there must be bolder and higher-quality initial and original contributions, above all on the problems bearing on various aspects in mastering the scientific and technological revolution under socialism.

There must be even greater precision in elaborating the dialectics of the internal and external conditions in the development of socialist society, and of the demands and consequences of the class confrontation and the competition between the opposite social systems. More than ever before, the Marxist-Leninist cadres of social scientists are required to give scientifically-grounded, forward-looking and mobilising answers to the great questions of our time on the future of humankind.

We always take the *socialist, class standpoint*, which fully accords with the interests of mankind in preserving peace and solving other global problems, and springs from a sober analysis of the real world. We

do not reduce international relations to oversimplified "class struggle schemes", but we know for a fact which is daily brought home to us that the class struggle, the struggle between class interests, continues to be the main driving force of world development.

Our social scientists also have to develop the GDR's own constructive contribution to the international exchange of experience and achievements in research in the socialist countries for the further dynamic development of socialism. These and other theoretical tasks have been agreed by our party and the CPSU under a long-term programme for cooperation in the social sciences between scientists and research groups in the GDR and the USSR. We have agreed, therefore, to deepen the cooperation of social scientists in elaborating a concept of contemporary socialism and to solve the basic problems of socialist economic integration. Our scientists can find an answer to the question as to how socialism is to develop at the turn of the millennium through concerted research and frank comradely discussions to enable socialism to unfold all its advantages and driving forces, and not only to maintain but also to consolidate its positions in the world.

National-economic dynamism, stability, efficiency, and quality are central to our social policy. The growth of our economic strength is a solid foundation for higher living standards, social protection, full employment, high-quality education and free public health care. Through their outstanding achievements and the matching of word and deed, the working people of the GDR have accepted our party's policy as their very own.

Since 1971, our national income has grown annually at more than 4%, so giving an ever greater dimension to each percentage point from year to year. We have used this increment to increase accumulations and consumption. In 1970, one percentage point of national-income growth was equal to 1.2 billion marks, and in 1987—to 2.6 billion marks; in 1970, our industrial commodity product was valued at over 240 billion, and in 1987, at 551 billion marks.

Let us note that the national-income increment increasingly comes from the growing productivity of labour: reckoned per worker, it has more than doubled in the producer industries from 17,884 marks in 1970 to 36,749 marks in 1987.

However, we must take a realistic view of what has been achieved. The ever greater dynamism of the productive forces in all the industrialised countries has produced totally new potentialities for boosting labour productivity, an international process that has run without a break. The point is not merely to keep abreast of it, but also to move even faster. Substantially increasing labour productivity means maintaining living standards and being able to raise them now and in the future. This, therefore, is the only clear message: we must intensify our material and spiritual efforts to lay the foundation in the national economy for raising labour productivity.

It is equally significant that since 1980 production in the GDR has developed with the same—and even falling—level of material inputs. Energy inputs per product unit are down to 69% from 1980, raw and other material inputs, to 74%, and rolled steel in metal-working, to 58%. In the early part of the 1980s, 40% of national-income growth came from the lowering of inputs per product unit. Far from going up, the consumption of important national economic types of raw and other materials has not increased, but has, in fact, gone down for some important items, and as a whole.

Since 1982, the GDR has had an export surplus every year, and this is most important for the country's economic stability, for freedom of action in the external economic sphere, and for the further implementation of the unity of economic and social policy.

The economy cannot be a one-way street. We have practiced this principle with our partners over the past six years, and intend to go on doing so.

These three results show that the party and its policy and economic strategy are whole-heartedly supported by the citizens of our socialist homeland.

That is so because our people's well-being and happiness in peace is the SED's supreme principle, for it is aware of its responsibility for everything that happens in the country: for over four decades now and especially since the Communist Party of Germany and the Social-Democratic Party of Germany merged in the SED, we have made the slogan: "Everything with the People, Everything Through the People, Everything for the People" the leitmotif of our activity.

Communal elections are to be a high point on the 40th anniversary of the GDR in implementing the decisions of the 11th Congress. These elections to the local organs of state power will mark a new step in improving our socialist democracy. The electorate is to determine the composition of 7,800 local people's representations which are to be responsible for the welfare of the towns and communities over the following five years. Those who are to fill the 203,000 seats will be candidates representing, in their activity for the people's good, the interests of all the strata of the population, people who are known and recognised by the voters. In accordance with our long-standing tradition, and under the Electoral Law, the number of candidates will be one-third higher than the number of seats. Among the public organisations and associations which are to nominate their activists as candidates are also the Union of Amateur Gardeners and Livestock Breeders; the Athletic and Gymnastic Union of the GDR; Urania, the society for the dissemination of scientific knowledge; volunteer fire-fighting teams, and others. More and more citizens working for the interests of their town and district will, therefore, be able to act as deputies in representing the requirements of the population.

The constituencies are to be established in such a way that no more than 8 to 10 candidates will run

in each. This gives citizens a better opportunity to get to know the candidates and make their choice. Together with the vetting of candidates by the work collectives, neighbourhood and community committees of the National Front will also appraise the candidates. Meetings in the electoral districts scrutinise the National Front candidates and take the relevant decisions.

Real participation by an ever larger number of citizens in administration, management and planning in the state and the economy, and their conscious labour effort for the all-round fulfilment of plans at their enterprises and in their regions are a reflection of the viability of our socialist democracy. Direct links between clear-cut central guidance and diverse local initiatives in the spirit of democratic centralism are a key source of our republic's successful development. There is no point in questioning what has demonstrated its viability: we seek to improve these elements all the time in the light of past experience.

The deepening of socialist democracy is closely bound up with the methodical formation of the *socialist state based on the rule of law*. This is also expressed in the fact that since the Eighth Congress of the SED, 82 major laws and decrees have been framed or amended with broad public participation and on the principles of joint responsibility by the state and its citizens. We have consistently followed this well-tested way in accordance with enacted legislation.

Our party has always advocated and practiced the principle that the basic constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens must be guaranteed and extended in close connection with their duties. Socialist democracy cannot be improved without strengthening law and order and, conversely, the extension of rights and duties promotes our citizens' democratic participation in their common affairs.

In this context, we are now working on proposals for judicial scrutiny of some administrative decisions, a project that will be put before the People's Chamber as a means of further enhancing legal protection in the GDR. In this way we seek to fulfil the requirement of the party programme that the socialist law system is to be developed in accordance with the degree of our society's maturity.

Our socialist democracy is based on the solid alliance built up over the decades between the working class, the cooperative peasantry class, the intelligentsia and all the other working people. Since we began our anti-fascist, democratic transformations, the SED has given utmost attention to cooperation between these forces in solving the problems of social development for the good of the people.

Our party keeps alive the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin, who said that the working class also expresses the basic interests of all the other labouring classes and strata, and can triumph only in alliance with them. The eradication of the imperialist roots of fascism and war and the building of the new life has been in accord with our bitter experience and

with the will of all the antifascist, democratic forces of our people. At last, human beings, whatever their social origin, whatever their ideology or religion, are to have the conditions to become truly human, free from exploitation and humiliation, free from war and poverty. That has been our party's goal and the rationale behind its policy of alliances from the very outset.

The new life in the socialist GDR is the fruit of efforts by all the classes and strata of our society. Socialism has room for all, and it needs the ideas and deeds of all those who want to work for its prosperity, and so also for themselves. That is the spirit in which we have now advanced for over forty years, as fellow-farers and fellow-fighters with the Democratic Farmers' Party of Germany, the Christian Democratic Union of Germany, the Liberal Democratic Party of Germany and the National Democratic Party of Germany. They have brought to this alliance valuable political and social experience, traditions of the revolutionary struggle by the German peasants, liberal, national and democratic ideals and Christian ethics translated into social life. Our friends have done much for the full manifestation of these humanistic values of the best representatives of the people in the republic for the first time in German history.

Forms of cooperation like the Democratic Bloc and the National Front have given a good account of themselves in the concrete and specific conditions of socialist construction in the GDR. This equally applies to their joint activity in the People's Chamber and other organs of popular representation, in the Council of State and the Council of Ministers. Since their foundation, all the members of the friendly parties and mass organisations have been doing work for the good of our common socialist homeland, which deserves the highest appreciation.

Forty years after the foundation of the GDR, we are able to state, with joy and not without inner trepidation, that the SED's policy has borne rich fruit. We have built a modern socialist state on German soil and have learned to run it together with the people. Under the party's leadership, the GDR has become a flourishing socialist country thanks to the industriousness, creativity and spirit of initiative of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia. We have fulfilled the behests of the great sons of the German people, the founders of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, of the revolutionary Social Democrats, those who created the Communist Party of Germany in the flames of the November Revolution 70 years ago, and those who have stood for social progress throughout the long and turbulent German history. Scientific socialism has stood the test of practice. It has long since ceased to be a utopia, and has become a reality. The working out of this doctrine by Marx and Engels and its enrichment by Lenin have been a stroke of luck for mankind, a stroke of luck for our people.

Even under the Weimar Republic,¹ i. e., in the period of struggle for power, we exposed the slanderous bourgeois inventions that the Communists wanted levelling, and that under socialism the good worker would earn no more than the bad worker. In his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx showed that under socialism each will be paid according to his ability and the results of his or her labour, and that only the higher phase of the communist society will practice the principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." This conclusion has enabled our party to define our further steps together with our allies at every stage of development.

Boosting labour productivity has been and continues to be of crucial importance, for it is ultimately most important for the victory of the new social system, says Lenin. Those are also the principles that determine the course of *blending economic and social policy* which we have followed since the Eighth Congress of the SED in 1971. In order to enhance the social aspects of building the new life, we reoriented at that congress and then restructured the national economy towards intensification for the immediate and long-term raising of living standards. Could anyone have imagined only a few years ago that we should soon have solved the housing problem as a social issue, that we should have by now mastered the technology of making one-megabyte integrated-circuit memory, and that the principle of "Equal education for all" should have become just as natural as full employment, social protection, stable prices for consumer staples, rents, transport fares and everyday service charges?

Our constant assumption is that the face of socialism, which could now be said to have the colours of the GDR, is becoming ever more attractive to the extent to which scientific and technological progress is linked to social progress. We believe that with full employment and the people's well-being, it is quite possible to master the scientific and technological revolution without mass unemployment or a new poverty. One can learn as little about the harmony of material and social advance, as about humanity and justice, from the profit-based capitalist economy.

We are aware of our responsibility to our people and for their well-being, and serve their interests. This ever more clearly brings out the meaning of socialism, which is to ensure the people's good by doing away with man's exploitation of man, developing human talents and capabilities, and enabling people to participate actively in every sphere of social development. The ideas of socialism have been deeply ingrained in the minds of the people of the GDR by the clarity of the goals in our struggle, the knowledge and comprehension of the conception of social progress, the working people's activity in building the new life, and their sense of

its realities, the experience of our broad policy of alliances, and concern for our spiritual and cultural heritage.

We know exactly what we are saying when we speak of socialism, and of the ways and requirements in further bettering it in accordance with the decisions of the 11th party congress. Socialism as theory and practice sprang from the vital stake of the working class and all the other working people in their release from exploitation, oppression and war. This social system is an association of free citizens, which Marx and Engels described in their *Manifesto of the Communist Party* as a society in which man can be human.

Our party's policy has always assumed that general laws underlie the construction and development of socialism. These are assurance of the power of the working class, and consolidation of its alliance with all the labouring classes and strata, sustained qualitative development of socialist ownership relations, and steady enhancement of the political leading role of the working-class party. These are all just as necessary for the existence and perfection of socialism as the constant consolidation of the community of socialist countries, their solidarity and effective and equitable cooperation in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

That is the basis on which our party has worked out its concept of social development. We have been consistently enriching it through theoretical and practical solutions of emergent problems. We have always done so in the light of the characteristic features and values of socialism, our country's concrete conditions and requirements, our history, and the traditions and militant experience of the German working class and the German people, and also of the fact that there are two German states with different social systems coexisting independently of each other and belonging to different alliances.

The building of socialism is a revolutionary process. Within its framework we have carried out many transformations and reforms. We must see to it that we do not lose our flexibility in the future. We shall never lose sight of our goal: the further building and betterment of the developed socialist society. We shall always look to what is new, will maintain our course, whatever the conditions, and consistently advance along our chosen way. This always means *blending continuity and renewal*.

The German Democratic Republic is not an island of the blessed, and there is no need at all to give it an aura of infallibility. But this does not prevent all our citizens from gaining a deeper comprehension of the fact that our successes in building a developed socialist society are the result of the creative endeavour of millions, and that socialism alone provides an alternative to capitalist society. By our every step in implementing our social strategy we provide proof of the historical superiority of the world of socialism, whose diversity simultaneously demonstrates its unity.

¹ 1919-1933.—Ed.

THE HUMANISTIC CHOICE OF PERESTROIKA

Alexander YAKOVLEV

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Communist Party of the Soviet Union*

SOVIET SOCIETY has undertaken the most difficult of revolutions—a revolution in people's minds. The whole gamut of attitudes to perestroika can be discerned in the Soviet Union—from ardent and impatient advocates and people fully committed to this cause to skeptics and antagonists.

We know that in other countries, too, including our socialist sister nations, perestroika is viewed differently. Naturally, we respect and welcome this right to a critical stand, and we seek to put constructive criticism to the fullest possible use.

Today, debate in the CPSU and in Soviet society centres mostly on the basic principles of socialism—social choice, ownership, democracy, glasnost, popular rule, and the political role of the party. Under debate are the actual meaning of these principles and the ways in which we should observe them without wishful thinking and without trying to force reality into the Procrustean bed of unrealised ambitions. By the same token, we have taken up the issue of morals not only in day-to-day life but also in politics. The words "moral" and "humanistic" are now synonymous with "socialist". Consideration of the moral factor is essential to an understanding of perestroika's sources, objectives and progress.

There is no debate over whether the Soviet Union needs socialism. The socialist choice was made for a reason. It was a conscious and purposeful choice, and we have made great sacrifices for its sake. Socialist ideals and values have become our moral principles, they are part of our day-to-day life and of our psychological makeup. Today, the perestroika debate is over what socialist society should be like and how we should continue building it.

Perestroika is not motivated by a desire to show off innovations that necessarily differ from what we used to have. *Perestroika has been made imperative by the course of events, by the requirements of our society and by the very real need to effectively overcome man's alienation from the processes of production, distribution, government and creative work.* The essence of renewing socialism is in destroying the artificial barriers created by unlawful or mistaken practices, in grasping the in-depth essence of phenomena and in shaping policies accordingly, in encouraging and promoting man's inner commitment

to and capacity for vigorous and intellectually rewarding activity.

The theoretical arsenal of perestroika and the ideas that shaped it took a long time to germinate and mature in our society—whole decades in some cases. That is why they are bursting into our politics and day-to-day life so forcefully now.

A New Quality of Thinking

Perestroika began with a desire to lead the nation out of a stagnant period and accelerate its socioeconomic development. These objectives are still valid. But a profound and comprehensive analysis has produced a new and broader understanding of the prime causes of perestroika. We have realised that *in terms of its significance and place in history, perestroika far transcends the bounds of pragmatic tasks.* It is the beginning of a new and objectively inevitable stage in the development of socialism, an introduction to its new quality.

We describe our time as an age in which common sense and realism have triumphed, as a period for examining, appraising and understanding ourselves, our place in the world, our potential and our tasks.

For the first time, the record of socialist transformations has made it possible to see the deeper mechanisms that preserve and develop the social fabric, as well as to separate the genuine foundations and laws of social reality from imaginary ones. The experience accumulated by the world socialist system has made it possible to see unity and dialectical interconnection in things that were previously regarded as absolutely incompatible and essentially antagonistic.

First, the largely naive and extravagant earlier view of the capacity of socialism for automatic and exclusively upward development simply because it is a socially advanced system is, quite naturally, fading away. It is now obvious that under socialism, too, society may stagnate or backslide under certain circumstances.

Second, the earlier forms used to organise work, day-to-day life, management and the entire social fabric are no longer tenable in contemporary Soviet society. This is true not only of the obviously distorted forms but also of many perfectly normal ones. But they were normal and legitimate in an industrially backward, poor and ill-educated society. Our recognition of this fact does not imply any doubt of socialism or its potential; it is a sign of our aware-

ness that as a society of creative self-development, socialism cannot exist in ossified forms.

Third, we can and must note a crisis of the technocratic and mechanistic attitude to the transformation of the social fabric—an attitude which changes the development of the basis from a means into an end in itself and which breeds the dominant and quite resilient anti-Marxist conviction that the social fabric and its forms can be cut and shaped to one's liking.

Fourth, we have realised the absurdity of the view that the durability of what you are building depends above all on how much you destroy. Socialism enables man and civilisation to flourish and thrive on all material and intellectual accomplishments of previous generations. It does not create life from scratch on a heap of debris in a wasteland.

For centuries, prominent humanists called for man's self-improvement. Today, as we tackle perestroika on a strictly practical basis, we are pondering our objective—that of making all social institutions, the economy, social policy, science, education and everything else further man's and society's self-improvement and reward hard work, creative attitudes and talent as much as possible.

The turning point to which our experience and our understanding of it has brought us in our effort to fully grasp the scope and the complexity of the job we are facing and the need to do this job properly are very important for a healthy moral atmosphere and for the promotion of genuine humanism. *In essence, socialism is growing up and maturing intellectually and morally.*

It is indeed very difficult to cope with the sudden avalanche of new ideas, emotions, revelations and discoveries, with harsh and demanding reality. The realisation of how little you in fact know and understand is particularly acute. But a *beginning has been made*. The painfully crystallising ability to see ourselves as we are, understand the real meaning of facts and events and realise that worthy ideals can be translated into reality instead of remaining hopeless illusions is the more important moral and intellectual accomplishment of perestroika.

Unity, Not Uniformity

The main lesson of truth was the acknowledgment that we were on the verge of a crisis, that we could not afford to continue in the old way any more.

Our society and our party arrived at this conclusion gradually. Although back in his political report to the 27th Congress of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachov outlined the structural causes of the nation's difficulties and said that relations of production were out of tune with the objective requirements of the development of the productive forces, many instinctively resisted such an assessment.

Many still entertain the illusion that all our troubles stem from the insufficient initiative and culture of the nation's previous leadership, from a lack of modesty and of immunity to Philistine at-

titudes and an obsession with personal gain, that all it takes to assure us of rapid progress is for the party to cleanse itself and display a greater sense of discipline, militancy and organisation.

Seemingly very attractive and even starry-eyed, this trend in our criticism of the past (a trend that appealed to man's better qualities) nevertheless became an objective impediment to perestroika: if everything depends simply on personal morals and qualities, then you do not need to change anything either in the economy or in the political system.

Our society's enthusiastic moral criticism of the stagnant years and of various redistribution projects has nevertheless proved useful. It put the spotlight once again on the inner conservatism of moral rigorism and of "distributive" socialism. It has prompted us to perform a deeper analysis of the structural causes behind our difficulties and to identify the fundamental contradictions of the existing economic and political system. It has encouraged us to be bolder in our assessment of the state of the nation and to speak plainly and bluntly about the collapse of social and economic relations, the growing apathy and indifference to one's work, the deterioration of professional competence, the decline of popular culture, the dislocation of the village, the alienation of the masses from government and official politics and the unnatural conflict between the authorities and the intelligentsia.

The power and the depth of truth rose against demagoguery and against relapses into crudely egalitarian socialism, awakening people's conscience and urging them to think.

By an ironic twist of fate, the Soviet society of the early 1980s served as a graphic illustration of Marx's idea that relations of production could severely hamstring the development of the productive forces. The novel paradox was that this turned out to be possible under socialism too.

An analysis of the discrepancies we encounter shows that all of them are rooted in the blocking of initiative and of personal accountability. Many economic and sociopolitical institutions, mechanisms and processes we have inherited produce side effects: they thwart the creative spirit, personal commitment, the inner freedom of choice and, consequently, morals and culture. Instead of the expected gradual absorption of the state by the so-called civic society, by an "association of producers", the civic society was absorbed by the state and dominated by its bureaucratic structures. Hence the failure to create effective arrangements for protection against abuses of power.

The sacred socialist principle of universal equality and social justice was manipulated to produce crude egalitarianism, depersonalise the results of one's work, and sever the connection between one's contribution and the quality of life. It degenerated into a mechanism that held back creative efforts, initiative and competence. To play up to the lazy and the passive, the justified moral condemnation of self-

seeking capitalist private enterprise was demagogically transformed into a negative attitude to enterprising, vigorous, and ambitious workers.

The complexity of our society, the inevitable diversity of interests and the need to balance and harmonise them were underrated. More, there was still less understanding of the fact that they are essential to development, that society needs them to advance and overcome its own contradictions. Besides other things, only this diversity of interests makes it possible for the contradiction, that motive force of social progress, to take shape and manifest itself.

The unity of socialist society is therefore radically different from, contrary to, and incompatible with any mechanistic uniformity. Socialism not only implies in-depth transformations and revolutionary change and renewal of the entire social fabric. *Socialism is humanistic both in its objectives and in its progress towards them.*

That is another important reason why we overwhelmingly reject the practices of the 1930s and 1940s. They led to divisions in society, to increased confrontation between its different parts. Meanwhile, socialism means society's unity and a consensus of all its members on the basic issues, but with a possible, necessary and vital diversity of views on the multitude of specific questions. Socialism means society's consolidation and an ability and desire to convince those who think differently, to listen to them and to accommodate their legitimate interests. Only then will society and the specific historical organisation of its affairs be really worthy of man.

There is only one criterion of a socialist pluralism of views, and that is a *socialist basis*. On this basis, whatever is discussed is normal and natural diversity which, under socialism, can and must grow richer, broader and more vivid. Clashes of views, emotions and interests are inevitable. The art of political leadership is to manage things so that no one would disagree on the fundamental issues of principle, so that society would not repudiate anyone and no one would repudiate society.

Sometimes people wonder whether we have entered a crisis of socialism. Rather, we would be justified to refer to a crisis of development as a probable stage of society's advancement. Such crises are possible under socialism. In fact, we imply precisely a crisis of development when we describe the present juncture as a turning point in Soviet history.

A crisis of development occurs when previously established forms of social practice come into conflict with the exigencies of the time. But the *emergence of contradictions is not yet a crisis*. A crisis of development sets in when society and man are late in grasping the situation or in devising effective measures to cope with it, or both. That was precisely what happened in our society prior to perestroika. Stagnation was like a greenhouse in which a crisis was being "cultivated".

That is a major lesson the CPSU has learned from the stagnant years. The lesson is that we should

create, promote and improve such social, political and moral conditions in socialist society as would keep things from stagnating, bring pressure to bear on the lazy and the sluggish, reliably neutralise all possible self-servers, and ensure the greatest possible social return from everything healthy and positive. In this way, social processes would be stimulated and encouraged to tap inner resources in a way that would reinforce and accumulate all that is moral, humane and socialist.

When pondering the impact of the Stalin years on the nation and on socialism, one can find only one explanation (explanation, *not* justification)—insufficient knowledge and experience and the amazing moral purity of the socialist revolution and socialist thought: deep down, even in the hell of Stalin's camps, it refused to believe that such an outrage could be committed upon it so simply and easily. But now we have the experience and the knowledge, and we must also have the courage to draw relevant conclusions.

Perestroika as a Revival of Leninism

In defining the socialist system, the founders of Marxism particularly often referred to "rationality" "well-being", "the human personality" and "happiness".

Marx spoke about associated producers "rationally regulating their interchange with Nature" and "achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature".¹

Marx and Engels consistently advocated the sovereignty of the majority and self-government by the working people; they were convinced that the right of the people as sovereign masters of their fate was inviolable. Echoing Jean Jacques Rousseau, Marx maintained that people who abide by laws should also be the makers of these laws.

This called for an organic combination of economic democracy and local (municipal) self-government within a republican framework. It was a prospect Lenin saw and incorporated into his plans of socialist development. To any competent Marxist of the early 1920s it was clear that the political system shaped in the course of the Civil War was transitory. The debate was over how the transition to unlimited democracy for the working people was to be achieved.

In analysing the experience accumulated, Lenin singled out two types of factors that led the strategy of wartime communism to a dead end. On the one hand, he criticised himself and the party harshly for the clumsy, hasty and headstrong attempt to switch immediately to a pure and non-commodity communist society. But on the other hand, he spoke about an insufficiently creative attitude to Marxism, about the lack of independence and of bold, innovative decisions. This was what compounded the mistakes and blunders of the economic strategy of wartime com-

¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3, p. 800.

munism. In his late years, Lenin ridiculed those Communists who hoped that Marx had given definitive answers to all questions arising in the course of socialist construction.

In his last works he identified the possible directions along which the plan of socialist construction in Russia could be deepened and specified. The foremost objective was to close the gap between class-based and general human morals, between the commitment to lead Russia and all humanity to communism as quickly as possible and the day-to-day interests and concerns of the working people. In order to attain a communist future, Lenin explained at the 10th Congress of the party, we must have a present, that is, well-fed workers and peasants who can and are willing to work. In his last articles he emphasised the human costs of progress and said that human lives, not struggle or revolution, were the greatest value.²

These works highlighted a change in Lenin's view of socialism and a more consistent and fuller embodiment of the *humanistic essence of Marxism* in programmes for social change. As Lenin pointed out, if progress does not increase people's well-being or their commitment to their work and to a creative application of their abilities, this, essentially, is not progress at all. His new concept of socialism accorded priority to the task of shaping incentives to labour as a crucial factor of survival. "The enlistment of labour," Lenin said, "is one of the most important and difficult problems of socialism."³ In 1921-1922 he firmly opposed revolutionary "destructionism", the obsolete obsession with violence and the attempts to impose communist forms of life and work from on high with the help of an apparatus of coercion.

Making an absolute of the struggle of opposites, he argued, was the philosophical essence of the mistake built into the strategy of wartime communism and the initial plan of socialist construction. That was why the innate dialectical integrity of contradictions was ignored, paramount importance was attached to violence, and interruptedness was divorced from continuity. That was also the reason why many factors of progress were overlooked and the potential for the coexistence and effective interaction of different social qualities was underrated.

The salient feature of the socialist development strategy Lenin was working on in his last articles was that the contradictory unity of the old and the new was to be used for the nation's advancement. *What is described as the New Economic Policy (NEP) was, in its sociophilosophical essence, a concept advocating a conscious and constructive combination of opposites.* Lenin was the first among 20th-century Marxists to see that in actual fact, the mechanics of progress, of transition from the old to the new social order were much more complex than 19th-century socialists had believed.

The realisation that one should look for different, non-violent ways of asserting the new order—ways not aimed at destroying the basis of human existence or the opposites that confronted what was new—led to a completely novel domestic and foreign policy, to a novel assessment of the situation in the international working-class movement, and to novel views of socialism.

Internationally, this produced the idea of peaceful coexistence, of socialism and capitalism living side by side.

One important element of the "NEP in foreign policy" was the resolution adopted by the Third Congress of the Comintern on the establishment of a "united front" made up of workers representing two currents—the communist and the social democratic. The resolution in fact acknowledged the possibility of negotiations with the leaders of the Second International.

Domestically, the idea of the transition from the Civil War to a "civil peace" had far-reaching political implications. It stipulated a considerable expansion of Soviet power's social base, a sort of policy of national concord. The task was to do away with emergency revolutionary legislation and switch to rule of law.

The new economic policy was rooted in the idea of economic competition in which the socialist mode would oust private production with the help of economic means. Lenin concluded that in a number of cases, the cooperative mode would dominate the socialist basis.

The picture of socialism that crystallised in Lenin's last works uses a diversity of vivid colours. There is no trace of one-dimensional uniformity in it.

The new economy was perceived as a system of strategic and fundamental compromises, as a practice of interaction and combination of personal, group and nationwide interests, of planning and the market, of administrative and economic management, of public ownership and diverse forms in which groups of people or families would manage and use the nationalised means of production—for example, land.

It would, of course, be an exaggeration to say that Lenin succeeded in formulating all the principles of the new interpretation of socialism. He barely began to reassess the objectives and the historical meaning of the October Revolution. His death cut short his analysis of the first ever effort to reshape the social fabric along communist lines. Still, we have every reason to say that in his last works, particularly those we now describe as comprising his "political testament", he outlined the principal features of a breakthrough to today's interpretation of socialism. In that, he was way ahead of his time.

The structural completeness of Lenin's second plan of socialist construction is borne out by its economic and social results in terms of economic progress, public self-government and society's morale. Agriculture and industry were advancing at a rate unheard-of

² See: V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 439.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, p. 392.

in Russian history. An artistic and intellectual boom swept the country. After being eroded during the Civil War, morals and the traditional popular standards of interpersonal relations were regaining fast.

The 1929 switch from NEP and from Lenin's flexible strategy of gradually shaping the foundation of socialism to Stalin's policy of accelerated communist construction in the USSR was not prompted by any crisis. Nor was it in any way motivated by the inner trends of economic development under NEP. Furthermore, it could not be described as following the party's strategic guidelines Lenin helped draw up in the early 1920s.

The interests of millions, of the nation's development and, in the final analysis, of socialism and the international working-class movement were largely sacrificed to the vanity and political ambition of Stalin and his coterie.

Only now, as we throw off the spiritual shackles of the past amid glasnost and democracy, are we beginning to understand the depth and the scale of Stalin's effort to revise Leninism. This newfound awareness is one of the results produced by perestroika which seeks to benefit our people and socialism, which explains our keen interest in the past and is itself explained by it. This *creative role of history* emerged when we discovered our past and our present. It encourages a civic and responsible mentality and draws on the strength of Marxist-Leninist theory.

The new course Stalin suggested at the April 1929 plenary meeting of the party's Central Committee and Central Control Commission in his speech "On the Rightist Deviation in the Party" led, in fact, to a break with Lenin's strategy of socialist construction in the USSR. It was a thorough revision of the provisions and values central to Lenin's theory of socialism.

The spirit of the party, its attitude to art and culture and the thrust of its political work were changing. Instead of promoting the value of good work (something Lenin advocated), Stalin encouraged crude egalitarianism in the party and in society, thus fomenting an envious and politically distrustful attitude to competent workers.

Stalin revised the Marxist-Leninist theory of democracy. By manipulating the notion of the class and by inventing the concept of "superior" and "inferior" forms of public ownership, he furnished a "theoretical basis" to justify his policy of curtailing the political rights of peasants. Things being what they were, the need for a gradual transition to broad and direct democracy of the working people, to popular self-government and to rule of law simply disappeared.

Instead of Lenin's policy of transition to civil peace, Stalin plunged the country and the party into a chaos of violence. He revived Trotsky's idea that the class struggle was bound to grow more acute as the

foundations of socialism gained strength, and he in fact called for the physical extermination of all remnants of the old classes. Stalin rejected the idea of bringing different interests into concert and of purposefully combining opposites. The notion of their unity was completely ousted from books on dialectics. Stalin interpreted Marxism as proclaiming an irreconcilable struggle of classes with antagonistic interests.⁴

That was how, as early as 1929, Stalin devised a "philosophical basis" to justify his policy of repression and national self-destruction. The emphasis was on coercion, on a system of fear. Instead of Lenin's plan envisaging a voluntary cooperation drive from the ground up and the integration of free peasant labour with state-run socialist industry, the policy was to "implant" collective and state farms. Lenin's policy of an alliance between the working class and the masses of peasants, particularly those of average means, was replaced by that of a pitched battle of the working class and the poorer peasants against peasants working their own farmsteads, including peasants of average means.

Finally, with regard to the Comintern's policy, Stalin abandoned Lenin's notion of cautious compromise and bridge-building in relations with the Social Democrats. Instead, he suggested "stepping up the struggle against the right-wing elements in the communist parties" and called for "new class battles" without which "victory over social democracy was unthinkable".⁵

In fact, Stalin not only revised the theoretical accomplishments of Marxism but also purged it of its humanistic essence. The humanitarian thrust of social transformations took a backseat to the means used, to total socialisation as an end in itself, to the omnipotence of the central authority.

This explains why perestroika needs a revival of genuine Leninism. We need Lenin's real ideas cleansed of later unscrupulous interpretations. We must read his works anew, really in the original. We need Lenin's powerful thought in its dynamic development. We need Lenin's effective help in an analysis of our current problems.

Socialism Is Knowledge

Socialism began with a great social hypothesis. This was necessarily followed by a period of testing the hypothesis in practice. But socialism is not only practice. It is a society shaped purposefully and on a scientific basis. It is also a process of knowledge, above all of understanding the laws that govern its own functioning and development.

We are in the midst of a transition (of which we are not yet fully aware) from a normative to a functional attitude to socialism. This transition is one of the factors behind the numerous difficulties we encounter in the ideological sphere. Obviously, the image

⁴ See: Joseph Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 28-33 (in Russian).

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

of socialism as it can exist in practical terms is not as placid as that of the socialist dream which is largely free of the limitations imposed by reality. We have to overcome many problems in asserting the new interpretation of socialism. New social thinking is unwonted and variable, while many of our social scientists have grown accustomed to rigid definitions given once and for all.

It is hard for all of us, including scholars and party functionaries, to realise in practical, not theoretical, terms that *socialism is a creative effort of the masses, a cause of the masses, a process of development*. There is no other way either of coping with today's tasks or, especially, of making socialism competitive, as socially effective as possible and possessing a strong inner potential for and powerful incentives to self-development.

The change in relations between the party and the intelligentsia is a salient feature of renewed socialism. One can say that in the USSR, the alliance between the political leaders and the intellectuals was the first political victory of the April 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. To a great degree, this alliance helps provide ideological and moral support for democratic change.

It is neither accidental nor unexpected that in all socialist countries, proletarian revolutions were led by the best of these nations' intellectuals.

When and under what circumstances did the noble search for knowledge awakened by socialism degenerate into primitive vanity, a high-handed attitude to talent and the rejection of outstanding and independently thinking personalities? Who was to blame for this? We are looking for answers to these complex questions primarily to protect ourselves against relapses of anti-intellectualism. From the watershed socialism and all civilisation have now reached, we can see with particular clarity the danger of the unnatural opposition contrasting the interests of socialist development to the creative interests of the intelligentsia.

Without spiritual freedom and without respect for the intellectual quest, we cannot preserve the past or protect our cultural and historical memory. In the final analysis, any attempt at restricting the freedom of creative effort, the freedom to express different views and to engage in intellectual pursuits limits the opportunities for development, stifles initiative and breeds apathy, indifference and lies.

The tasks of renewal, perestroika and democratisation accord priority to issues of political and general culture and of society's overall intellectual level. *Full-fledged socialism will be impossible if we fail to foster and promote human dignity, an independent and responsible way of thinking, expressing one's views and acting, civic activity, conscience, integrity, tolerance, humanism, initiative, creative work and advanced moral principles.* Moreover, these qualities are now essential to further development and progress. Their absence is what holds us back and encourages conservatism.

As for the more difficult and dangerous obstacles perestroika is now facing, I would single out two factors.

First, *extremism*. History has proved repeatedly how easily different extremist positions converge in emergencies, at crucial junctures in the lives of nations. History has also proved how relatively simply and easily some extremist positions exploit others. While perestroika is, for reasons that have emerged in our society, above all a struggle against any and all manifestations of conservatism, haste, ultra-left demands and reckless "here and now" calls are equally contraindicated to it.

The second danger and difficulty we face is the *expectation of miracles*, the naive hope that someone will come, say "perestroika", wave a magic wand, kick out a few bureaucrats and thieves, and everything will fall into place just like that. It is the faith that some do-gooder in Moscow or some other high place will come and set everything right.

Work, vigorous work is the only yardstick of perestroika and of socialism. A great deal has been accomplished over the past few years. We have created a new moral and intellectual climate in our country and a new social consciousness. The scope of our social outlook has never been greater. There are tangible improvements in the construction of housing and of social and cultural projects. An economic and financial recovery has begun. There is our new political thinking and relevant moves in the field of foreign policy. The political system and the party are undergoing far-reaching change, a restructuring.

Simultaneously, we must tackle the still outstanding international problems. There is the arms race, imposed on us with a view to wearing us down economically and picturing socialism as a military "threat" to peace. There are the regional conflicts and the inertia of relations based on confrontation. To cope with all that means to move closer to universal human and, consequently, socialist ideals. This effort helps us make better use of the socialist potential for constructive purposes and therefore opens new vistas of progress.

Such are the sources, prime causes and social objectives of perestroika. *It throws the indelible interconnection of the domestic and the international into particularly bold relief.* That is precisely why perestroika is not a product to be exported; copying it mechanically will serve no useful purpose. Perestroika implies a maximum of attention paid to specific matters, tasks, conditions, objectives and priorities on the basis of our collective experience and of the responsibility of the party and the state above all to our own people.

We are convinced that we have chosen the right path. We are sure of our strength. We know that reality shapes our progress towards the ideals and values worked out by civilisation and taken up by socialism—the ideals of freedom and prosperity for the working man.

PUBLIC HEALTH - THE MAIN AIM

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"LAND, industrialisation, housing, unemployment, education and public health—these are the six problems, the six concrete points which we would spare no effort to resolve, along with the winning of social freedoms and political democracy."¹ With these words Fidel Castro Ruz, defending himself at the trial of the participants in the assault on the Moncada army barracks,² set out a progressive programme for solving Cuba's urgent problems. He attacked the bloodthirsty dictatorship, the contempt and injustice of the bourgeoisie and the latifundistas, and reviled the attitude of foreign monopolies to our people. One of the most tragic consequences of Batista's dictatorship was the deplorable state of public health.³

Bearing in mind the economic, social and political circumstances prevailing at the time, the Moncada Programme inevitably pursued limited aims, but the country has succeeded in greatly surpassing them since the triumph of the Cuban revolution when our people firmly and resolutely embarked on socialist construction.

It seems impossible to compare health care then and now. Any data that do exist are scarcely reliable considering the neocolonial regime's attitude to public health. Therefore we proceed from the concrete situation that confronted our revolution in January 1959.

Public health was in an awful state. The ludicrous budget, squandered or embezzled like all other na-

tional funds by the corrupt leaders, was totally insufficient to change anything. Malnutrition, infectious and parasitic diseases, and frequent epidemics ravaged the country. As in any underdeveloped and hungry country, the birth-rate was high, but not so high as to offset the high infant mortality (60 per 1,000), the worst in Latin America. Average life expectancy did not exceed 55 years.

An even gloomier picture emerges when you consider that the capital and provincial centres accounted for most of the already meagre health care funds. A rural health service was virtually non-existent, and hundreds of people had no hope of qualified aid.⁴ The one and only medical faculty turned out 300 doctors a year on average, and the school of nursing a mere 80 nurses. A private practice catering for the rich predominated, while in the clinics medical students often had to treat the sick.

The production and sale of medicinal drugs was a profitable business controlled by foreign, mainly US, companies. Sometimes unscrupulous doctors colluded with swindlers from pseudo-pharmaceutical laboratories to make a killing by prescribing ineffectual drugs at rigged prices.

It must, however, be pointed out that, on the whole, Cuban doctors maintained their high professional and ethical standards. Many took part in the national struggle for full freedom, and implemented radical public-health reforms under the new social policy.

A new health ministry was set up after the revolution which undertook to provide full medical care for everyone. Half-finished hospital projects were promptly completed, something that would have taken the previous regime at least 10 years. A rural crash programme to build 56 new hospitals, and 118 clinics began, while young doctors volunteered to work in remote areas.

Private practice was not abolished. Instead the government took great pains to instil a political awareness into prospective doctors, and they began to give it up themselves. Most lecturers and practitioners followed suit. Neglected first aid stations were transformed into polyclinics which advocated preventive measures against disease as well as treatment. New medical establishments were opened, in particular, maternity homes and dietetic centres. All this came as part of a drive to improve the system of public health and cut the death-rate amongst

¹ Fidel Castro, *La historia me absolvera*, La Habana, 1967, p. 29.

² In 1953, the storming of the Moncada army barracks in Santiago de Cuba, undertaken by a revolutionary organisation which Fidel Castro had created and which later became known as the 26th of July Movement, commenced the armed struggle against the military-police dictatorship of the US placeman Batista.—Ed.

³ One-tenth of the 6 million Cubans were jobless; 500,000 farm-labourers worked only 4 months, and lived in abject poverty for the remainder of the year. There were also 400,000 industrial workers and unskilled labourers who earned a pittance and "whose life was constant toil, and whose only respite was the grave" (Fidel Castro).—Ed.

⁴ In the first year of the revolution Cuba had 6,000 doctors, 65% of whom, along with 61% of hospital beds, were in Havana, which accounted for only 22% of the country's population. In 1958 there were only 10 rural hospital beds.—Ed.

mothers and children. Major accomplishments included a free health service, the creation of a wide centralised network of state medical facilities, and a sharp reduction in the price of drugs after the state took over their manufacture and distribution.

This hard work continued under conditions of persistent US harassment, in particular, the economic blockade of the early 1960s, which played havoc with our drug imports. The US also launched a despicable campaign to entice talented Cuban specialists, and the government did not obstruct those who wanted to leave, having made it clear that the revolution did not need anyone who wouldn't participate in it voluntarily. Over half the doctors, including 90% of the professors, left. But those who stayed proved their patriotism in practice, and with their selfless help we managed to train the required specialists more rapidly. The number of doctors continues to grow.

Here are a few comparative statistics: in 1958, the country had 6,286 doctors, or one per 1,000 people. Now, with a population of 10 million, we have about 30,000 doctors—one for every 350 inhabitants. Another 26,745 future doctors are currently being trained.

In the revolution's first years we adopted several programmes to end contagious and parasitic diseases. Unprecedented mass vaccination campaigns were carried out, supported by public bodies and the entire population, as a result of which poliomyelitis, which had annually crippled and killed up to 300 people, was eradicated by 1963; malaria, affecting more than 3,000 people a year, by 1968; and diphtheria by 1971.

Major public-health problems had been resolved even before the 1st Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (1975), thereby ensuring the attainment of the WHO's global strategy aims set for the year 2000.

The priority given to medicine and the successes achieved have placed Cuba on a par with leading capitalist nations. In fact, there is no substantial difference between this developing country, and our neighbour, the largest imperialist state. Over the past three decades, for example, life expectancy in Cuba has increased by 14.7 years, and in the US by 4.6. Cuba's infant mortality in 1958 was twice the US level; now it is the lowest among the Third World countries—13.3 per 1,000. The figure for the US is 10.7.

It is as well to recall here that Cuba suffered from a serious epidemic of hemorrhagic fever in the early 1980s. Evidence indicates that it was delibera-

tely introduced by the US imperialists. At one time the disease was affecting more than 11,000 people a day. Overall, 150 died, most of whom were children. But we managed to bring the epidemic under control in a matter of months, thanks to the truly heroic efforts of the Cuban people.

In 1959, the mortality rate from infectious diseases was 13%. It has since dropped to 1.5%, contributing to population growth and age pattern changes. We now have more young people than ever before and the number of citizens aged over 65 has doubled. Significant efforts are being made to raise life expectancy for the older generation: more homes for the elderly are being built where they receive health care, and engage in active work if they wish.

These figures indicate the remarkable improvement in health care brought about by Cuba's social transformations: an end to unemployment, a higher cultural level, an adequate and rational diet, and other measures designed to improve the quality of life.

Our party and the government pay a great deal of attention to the most pressing problems of public health. The 1976 Constitution lays down that "everybody shall have the right to health care and health protection". The 3rd Party Congress (1986) has approved a Party Programme which reads: "The protection of people's health and optimum life expectancy are our country's overriding social concerns. The strategy for turning our country into a medical nation, that is, one of the world's major public health centres, pursues this very aim. It also has a strong base underpinned by the achievements in public health, and relies on the revolutionary and human qualities, as well as the scientific knowledge, of the workers in this field."⁵

Unity of action is the main feature of public health organisation in Cuba. The national system comprises medical assistance, preventive health care, personnel training and research work. Provincial health centres are proliferating, making it possible to serve all Cubans equally and implement common programmes as required and without hindrance.

Mass involvement is no less important in solving health-care problems and exists only under socialism. The general attitude to giving blood, for example, is excellent, which has meant an adequate supply of blood to hospitals.

Our health service has rejected mercantile interests and put individual health care first. As a result

⁵ Programa del partido Comunista de Cuba, La Habana, 1986, p. 125.

the emphasis is now on disease prevention, with 95% of our children having been immunised against disease. If necessary, systematic vaccinations of any age group are carried out. A national programme for the accelerated development of the health service as a whole has been approved by the country's top leadership.

The humanitarian principle is the keystone of the Cuban health service. Immediately after the revolution we introduced teacher-nurses into pediatric clinics, who look after sick children with motherly care, hastening their recovery. Our children receive medical care that is in no way inferior to the kind enjoyed by the rich in developed capitalist countries. Social security laws also guarantee financial aid for any sick person, as well as benefits for the disabled and for bereaved families. The interests of working mothers are likewise catered for under the law.

To meet the country's needs, 65 medical schools and 21 faculties have been set up. And although we need to train another 50,000 doctors by the year 2000, the selection of specialists will be based on a consideration of the attitude, academic prowess, and human and intellectual qualities of each individual candidate. Students also undergo a period of internship, treating patients while under supervision.

Combining theory with practice enables our doctors to assimilate new medical achievements, especially in the field of transplants, where Cuba has scored significant successes.⁶ This highlights our increasing scientific potential, because the success of such operations depends not only on the skill of a surgeon, but also on teamwork and modern equipment.

The devotion and self-sacrifice of our medical workers is exemplified by their readiness to help fraternal peoples by cooperating in the field of public health. Thousands of Cuban doctors and nurses have worked in more than 30 developing states, translating the internationalism of our revolution into practice.

The Republic of Cuba is striving to become a leading medical nation able to share its own experience and contribute to human progress. This is not mere idealism, but a recognition of the real possibilities of our system and, above all, the human factor.

The introduction of a large-scale family doctor

scheme is particularly important in this context. This is an innovative and revolutionary form of medical assistance, whereby doctors become "custodians of health" by pledging direct service for an average of 700 citizens. They live in the same area as the patients and are always ready to come to their aid, acting in cooperation with mass organisations and local authorities. The family doctors' functions include preventive measures, treatment and health education. They carry out mass checkups in their areas, paying particular attention to high-risk patients. They are also concerned with patient rehabilitation and maintain contact with other doctors when specialist aid or hospitalisation is needed. They are able to use the entire system of public health and in this way our polyclinics are becoming "health facilities" where general integrated and specialist services are provided.

Some 4,000 family doctors are already working in outlying provinces, some of them mountainous and almost inaccessible. Their numbers will quintuple in the next few years to meet the necessary requirements.

To these 20,000 doctors, highly-trained specialists in integrated therapy, a new branch of medicine, should be added a similar number of nurses, as well as another 5,000 doctors (along with their assistants) who will serve industrial plants, educational centres, institutions and cooperatives. Such a powerful force will be able to meet any health challenges!

The quality of public health services is improving. There are already 31 emergency pediatric aid stations where the lives of a significant number of children have been saved. Facilities are being equipped for the treatment of postnatal complications, as are intensive care wards in clinics for adults and the seriously ill. Programmes for special dental care and early cancer identification are being implemented, and progressive methods for spotting prenatal congenital defects are being introduced. New technologies and new programmes allow us to keep abreast of international medical advances.

This is sustained by the 12 research institutes established soon after the revolution. High-level scientific medical institutions have emerged, such as the clinico-surgical hospital, named after the Ameijeiras brothers and several cardiological units. Genetic engineering, immunology, and biotechnology research centres have also been founded. They possess a dedicated staff of talented researchers, mostly young people moulded by the revolution. The centres have already made a substantial contribution: an interferon has been produced using the methods suggested by them, and an ultramicroanalytical computerised system that allows

⁶ Forty heart transplant operations were performed in Cuba between 1985 and mid-1988. The success rate is one of the world's highest. Ten patients have been living for over a year now, 2 for more than 2 years. To date, 1,089 organ transplant operations have been carried out. This includes 8 liver and 9 kidney and pancreas transplant operations. Cuban doctors have also performed 4 operations to transplant brain tissues to cure Parkinson's disease (Mexico and Sweden each boast one).

large groups of people to be examined with minimal use of reagents. Under the guidance of the Academy of Sciences, they are carrying out multipurpose biomedical investigations. There are plans to establish scientific complexes where resources of several bodies would be pooled in order to facilitate studies and projects.

Cuba's pharmaceutical industry manages to satisfy 85% of requirements, while annually expanding its

output by 8%. An intensive programme of construction and modernisation is underway to alleviate the consequences of the economic blockade.

The fulfilment of the objectives proclaimed by the Communist Party are made possible by this continual development, the interest shown by the state, the conscientiousness of the medical workers and by the important social changes occurring as we build a new society.

PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. FACTS AND FIGURES

BULGARIA. The fact that free, accessible and qualified medical aid is an inalienable part of the historic gains of the Bulgarian people, is stressed in the Draft Guidelines for the Further Restructuring of the Public Health Service, which were submitted for national discussion in 1988.

The family doctor should become a central figure, suggests the document. Not only must he know the health of his patients, but also their material position, the conditions of life and relations in the family, and meet no less than 70% to 80% of required aid.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA. The country now has about 57,000 doctors—or nearly 37 for every 10,000 people—and 200,000 hospital beds. All citizens are entitled to free medical treatment and medicines. This puts Czechoslovakia among the top countries in Europe for health.

There are eight WHO laboratories operating in the Republic, three of which have the status of international centres helping similar organisations all over the world.

DPRK. Average life expectancy is 74.3 years. Under the Republic's seven-year development plan (1987-1993), the number of medical and preventive care institutions is to increase by 1.2 times, the production of medicines by 2.3 times, and the number of doctors to 43 for every 10,000 people.

GDR. All citizens undergo regular and compulsory preventive health checkups. In 1970 there was 1 doctor for every 600 inhabitants; now it is 1 for every 410. There are about 105 hospital beds for every 10,000 people. Health services and medicines are free of charge.

Infant mortality (per 1,000 newborns) fell from 18.5 in 1970 to fewer than 8 in 1988. Intensive health care for expectant mothers, the upgrading of obstetric and gynecological aid, and improvements in pediatrics have all contributed to the lower rate.

HUNGARY. There are currently 33 doctors and 97.7

hospital beds for every 10,000 people here. However, the limited resources within the public health system in recent years have led to a decline in the quality of health care. Only the treatment of diseases, childbirth, and the emergency services remain free of charge.

In 1988 a social programme was launched to protect the national health. This is designed to encourage healthy living, comprehensive health screenings, and a campaign against smoking, alcoholism and lack of exercise.

MONGOLIA. Under the people's government general life expectancy has doubled, and the overall death rate is now only a third of what it was. Public health institutions employ medical personnel from more than 50 branches of medical science. In 1970 there were 18 doctors for every 10,000 people, now there are 26; at the same time the number of hospital beds rose from 94.3 to 112 per 10,000 people. A typical Mongolian visits a health centre nine times a year on average, and one in every four takes a course of treatment in a hospital.

ROMANIA. The infant death rate has been reduced by 6 times, and the general mortality by almost a half over the period of socialist construction. Life expectancy has reached 70 years, as compared with 32 in 1932. There is now 1 doctor per 475 inhabitants, whereas in 1965 1 doctor served 682 people.

USSR. Since 1917 average life expectancy has doubled, and a number of dangerous infectious diseases have been eliminated. The principles of public health, and the system for organising primary health care have been commended by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

In 1987 the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers approved the Guidelines for the Development of the Population's Health Protection and a Restructuring of the USSR Public Health Service in the Twelfth Five-Year Plan and for the Period to the year 2000.

FOR UNIVERSAL SECURITY

NEW PEACE INITIATIVES

The Soviet Union will unilaterally cut its armed forces by 500,000 men; 10,000 tanks, 8,500 artillery systems and 800 combat planes will be withdrawn from the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the European part of the USSR. As agreed with the government of Mongolia, a large part of the Soviet troops stationed there will return home.

These and other peace initiatives set forth in the many-sided address Mikhail Gorbachov delivered to the UN General Assembly in New York have attracted worldwide attention. People of different political convictions and views have welcomed another breakthrough in the new global way of thinking.

WMR has asked several public and political figures in different countries to share their thoughts on the address and the new Soviet peace initiatives.

THE ONLY CHOICE

Gyula TURMER

*assistant to the General Secretary
of the HSWP Central Committee*

WE LIVE in an integral world. Force can no longer remain an instrument of foreign policy. No state can pursue its interests to the detriment of others. Although there exist different and even opposite values, they cannot be treated as absolute. Ideological struggle must be conducted by fair means. It should not be projected onto international relations. Under such circumstances, the security of one side can only be guaranteed if the other side feels secure too. As Mikhail Gorbachov noted in New York, we are witnessing the advent of a new historical reality—a turn from superarmament to reasonable defense sufficiency. That is why the Warsaw Treaty countries have proposed a radical reduction of both alliances' military capabilities to the level of rational security guarantees. Today, more weapons means more danger.

That is the essence of new thinking in foreign policy and military matters. That is why I welcome all initiatives aimed in this direction. I regard as mistaken and even criminal any steps towards security through more force and more weapons, no matter who takes them.

At the July 1988 meeting of their Political Consultative Committee, the Warsaw Treaty countries advanced specific proposals on reducing armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe. The first stage envisages an exchange of authentic information on the armed forces and the removal of the imbalances and asymmetries which exist regionally and in the types of weapons stockpiled on either side for geographic or historical reasons. During the second stage, the armed forces of the WTO and NATO would each be cut by some 500,000 men. The third

stage would bring about radical cuts and make the remaining forces strictly defensive.

Our only objective choice is to jointly reduce the WTO and NATO armed forces in a move that cannot jeopardise anyone's security. *Retention of approximate balance becomes crucial.*

As noted back at the meeting in Warsaw, it would be useful for the USSR and other Warsaw Treaty countries to take unilateral steps demonstrating their clear political will, promoting trust and at the same time keeping the relative equilibrium between the two alliances intact.

Efforts to implement the Soviet proposals are a major stride towards lowering the level of military confrontation in Europe. The still remaining troops will be restructured in a strictly defensive deployment enabling them, together with the forces of other socialist countries, to assure the security of the WTO member states. It is also important that more favourable conditions are being created for further promotion of East-West ties.

Gorbachov's initiatives are a unilateral move, a clear signal that Soviet disarmament intentions are sincere. It is now the NATO countries' turn to confirm their readiness to foster this process.

Exchange of data and the publication of figures on the major types of weapons and troop strength of the WTO and NATO forces would also help in the confidence-building effort. I hold that this will come soon. It would be useful to draw up a *new series of proposals* on these issues. Confidence-building measures could be extended to restrict all military activity in Europe, including air force and naval activity. The world's nations would also benefit from a comparison of the WTO's and NATO's military doctrines. Openness should apply to all spheres, including military exercises and defence spending figures. I am convinced this is the path both we and our Western partners should follow.

FOR A HUMANE WORLD ORDER

Unni KRISHNAN

*member of the National Council, CPI,
and CPI's representative on WMR*

TWO INTERCONNECTED FEATURES seem to stand out in Mikhail Gorbachov's address at the UN General Assembly. First, he analyses the present-day world in all its complexities and contradictions. One discerns the intense search for, and efforts to, outline principles that will form the basis of a new, humane world order as humankind advances to the third millennium. Second, he also puts forth a concrete programme of action to tackle major global problems of disarmament, ecology, Third World underdevelopment and debt, etc. that have aggravated to a stage threatening the very human survival. These are no longer problems of individual nations, or even of regions, which they were before. On both aspects the Soviet leader's address is of outstanding significance.

And it projects a realistic path forward for the solutions of the acute problems humankind faces today. They can be tackled only as common human problems, *through global cooperation*. They cannot be approached from the narrow, selfish interests of any class or stratum.

Central to his theoretical comprehension of the future of international relations is the idea that the use or threat of force cannot be an instrument of foreign policy. As he underlines in his speech, this is the core idea in the Delhi Declaration that Gorbachov signed with Rajiv Gandhi two years ago. Hence the sustained and relentless efforts of the Soviet state to reach agreements to reduce nuclear and conventional armaments on both sides. The latest unilateral decision to reduce Soviet troops by half a million and effect substantial cuts in armaments and withdraw significant sections of armed forces stationed in Warsaw Pact countries and Mongolia will undoubtedly generate a *new momentum to the entire disarmament process*.

In our country, India, both the Government in the person of Prime Minister and the overwhelming majority of national opposition parties—one must emphasize, not only the Communists—have enthusiastically hailed the Soviet initiative. Many of them publicly urged the other side to respond with their own concrete proposals.

As a Communist from the Third World, I would attach particular significance to the assertion in Gorbachov's address that the principle of *freedom of choice* without outside interference should be obligatory for all nations. Of course, this has been a running thread in all the major pronouncements of the Soviet leader and a component part of new thinking. The fact is that the overwhelming majority of

humankind—the objects of colonial exploitation of yesteryears—have emerged in the contemporary international arena as subjects, striving to take their destiny in their own hands. The developed world cannot any longer thrive at their expense; development requires taking into account their interests as well. It is in this context that one particularly hails the call of the CPSU CC General Secretary for *democratising and humanising international relations*. Herein lies also the relevance of the enhanced role of the UN and its allied institutions in tackling all major global problems. For that is the reliable basis for working out a consensus and cooperation of all, irrespective of political-ideological differences.

Given the premise of non-violence and global cooperation for the solution of acute problems, the striving for settlement of *regional conflicts* through political means is the only rational approach. And it has also begun to yield results. Gorbachov's elaborate proposals, starting with a ceasefire to end the senseless bloodshed in Afghanistan at the earliest, has struck a very sympathetic chord widely. Indian political circles think that it is quite possible to advance towards its implementation. With the advent of a new government and the strengthening of a democratic atmosphere in Pakistan, it is hoped that sincere implementation of the Geneva accord will turn out to be an imperative for that country as well.

The Soviet President's proposals on the *Third World debt* are of particular significance. Gorbachov is adding his tremendous international authority, and that too, from such an august forum as the UN, essentially in support of the voices raised on this question by the representatives of the affected countries in several forums. His timely call for a summit meeting of debtor and creditor nations goes against the imperialist creditor institutions' tactics of dealing with and putting pressure on debtor countries separately. These proposals will strengthen the Third World countries' struggle for a new international economic order and promote a just resolution of the problem in the interests of the economic security of all countries, including the creditors.

A MANIFESTO OF REASON

Bohuslav KUČERA

*Chairman of the Czechoslovak Socialist Party
and of the Czechoslovak Committee for European Security
and Cooperation*

EXACTLY a year after the signing of the INF Treaty, which has had a marked influence on the strategic situation in Europe, we witnessed yet another important event. Mikhail Gorbachov, speaking at the UN General Assembly in New York, announced

new Soviet initiatives envisaging unilateral steps in the field of disarmament.

These initiatives are the product of a realistic assessment of the forces in Europe, and simultaneously a confirmation of the peaceful nature of socialism. The steps toward disarmament which the Soviet leadership has decided to take are of global significance, but they mainly concern the Old World.

It doesn't take a military specialist to see at once the breadth of the measures to be implemented in the next two years. Practically, this involves liquidating, by World War II standards, an army group. Apart from military aspects, there are also a number of related important political ones:

- this decision is the result of *increased realism* in relations between the USSR and the USA, and also of the conviction that military strength is not the most important factor in politics;

- this decision is a concrete expression of the recognition by the Soviet side of a *certain asymmetry* in conventional arms in Europe between the Warsaw Treaty states and NATO;

- this decision confirms that the military doctrine of the Soviet Union and its allies has an exclusively *defensive character*.

We may hope that the Vienna meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe will approve a mutually acceptable final document and agree reductions in conventional forces and arms in Europe.

The Czechoslovak people have a vital stake in these processes. Above all, our position is explained by geopolitical factors—we are on the frontier that runs between the two military systems, Soviet forces are stationed in Czechoslovakia, and a large part of them will remain here even after the implementation of the announced disarmament measures. Of course, this is in no way connected with the internal political situation in the country. The Soviet forces are a part of our common system of security. The defensive measures of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and other Warsaw Treaty member states are directly related to the potential threat from outside, and thus to the mutual trust and cooperation between the two military-political groupings. These measures must influence the lowering of the various types of arms to the minimum required level. The Czechoslovak initiative for a zone of trust and friendly relations between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO also pursues this aim.

Gorbachov's speech undoubtedly goes beyond the military aspects of Soviet policy in expressing new ideas, notably that a *new world* is emerging and that for its sake it is necessary to look for *other ways into the future*. It seems to me that this must become the central theme in our political work.

The Soviet leader has expressed himself in favour of the de-ideologisation of international relations without any abandonment by the partners of their political convictions, philosophies or national traditions. I consider this a key condition.

I am convinced that if the other side responds positively to the Soviet initiative—which represents the policy of the socialist countries—we will be able

to find mutually acceptable solutions to the question of reducing conventional forces and arms which would turn Europe into a common home.

A TURNING POINT

Ramsey CLARK

public figure, former US Attorney General

PEACELOVING PEOPLE all over the world appreciate the speech of Chairman Gorbachov at the United Nations. I was deeply impressed and encouraged by the leadership, vision, courage and compassion we heard from Mr Gorbachov at the UN.

His unilateral commitment to a vast reduction of arms, troops and tank divisions in Eastern Europe is the sort of courage the world has been waiting for. It is the *type of political leadership our age has desperately waited for*. It is too bad that the Soviet Union has to act unilaterally and that President Reagan was noncommittal in his response to Chairman Gorbachov's initiatives.

It seems to me that the world is at a turning point toward peace. This is the most hopeful period since the end of World War II and we must *foster* this positive trend.

Mr Gorbachov's comments on the denial of a US visa to Yasser Arafat were absolutely right, in law and in the hopes for peace. If the UN means anything—and that cannot be doubted—and if it is to have independence and integrity of its own, then we must act accordingly. It is not for the United States to say who may speak at the UN. Only the UN can say who speaks there. Let us hope that despite this incident, the UN will always be open to all voices, particularly those who have been deprived of their fundamental human rights to self-determination, independence and freedom, such as the Palestinian people.

As to US-Soviet relations, which are of crucial significance for universal peace, I think we are in for a good time. True, I am an optimist, and what I say should be taken with a grain of salt, but in this case I believe I am right.

To the United States, a reduction in the burden of military spending is a matter of economic necessity. Our country has so overspent on arms during so many years, particularly in the past 8 years, our economy is in such a fragile state now, our foreign debt is so vast, and our financial infrastructure is under such a strain, that we simply cannot go on with the arms race. The only way to really bring our economy into adjustment is by a significant *reduction in military spending*, something which ought to occur however rich we might have been.

I think this is a very appropriate and propitious time for the Bush Administration to respond promptly to the Soviet initiatives.

YOU CANNOT BUILD YOUR HOME ON A MINEFIELD

EUROPEAN COMMUNISTS OPPOSE US MILITARY BASES

THE MEDITERRANEAN NEEDS PEACE

GENERAL SECRETARY Mikhail Gorbachov's ideas on a common European home, imbued with a new political atmosphere of good-neighbourliness and understanding rather than confrontation, have been welcomed throughout Europe and the world with great interest and with hopes for a lasting peace. Hope, however, is not enough. Whether this unique plan can be translated into reality depends on us, on what we do, and on the vigorous and purposeful efforts of all those committed to human survival.

The obvious question is: where to begin? Naturally, any construction project begins with clearing the building site: you cannot build your home on a minefield. Viewed from this angle, it is essential that, *having eliminated a whole class of nuclear missiles, we prevent any arms buildup disguised as modernisation*, or the deployment of new nuclear missiles. We must also take effective steps toward eliminating other bastions of military and political confrontation. A start could be made by removing the foreign military bases that infest the Mediterranean.

For many years now, European and world public opinion have viewed developments there with alarm. Crises have often developed in this region of strategic military importance where Europe, Africa and Asia converge. If this continues, and if the strategy of armed conflict is not replaced with a policy of peace and good-neighbour relations, one cannot rule out the outbreak of a final, irretrievable war there. The Mediterranean, the cradle of European civilisation, may become the source of its destruction.

It's as well here to recall some recent history.

In 1963, in order to prevent a possible tragedy, the Soviet Union addressed a message to the United States, France, Britain and all Mediterranean countries suggesting that the region be designated as a zone free from nuclear missiles. In 1976 the USSR submitted to the UN a memorandum on disarmament containing a proposal on the withdrawal of Soviet and US nuclear-armed surface vessels and submarines from the Mediterranean. A new and specific programme of action and confidence-building measures in the region was advanced at the UN General Assembly session in 1983. Three years later, the Soviet Union suggested the simultaneous withdrawal of US and Soviet naval units from the Mediterranean. During his visit to Yugoslavia in March 1988 General Secretary Gorbachov reiterated the Soviet Union's readiness for the pullout of these fleets and, as a tangible step towards this objective, proposed a freeze on the strength and capability of the Soviet and US naval forces in the Mediterranean. Finally, at the Third UN General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament in June 1988, the USSR officially submitted a package of radical proposals:

- no increases in military presence or activity beyond national borders;
- a ban or restrictions on the deployment of nuclear and chemical weapons at military facilities abroad, or the use of such bases for electronic intelligence operations;
- a reduction of any military presence in conflict areas;
- no further extension of agreements on military bases and a renunciation of troop transfers or arms shipments from the bases to be eliminated to third countries.

This new integrated Soviet initiative opens the way for the demilitarisation of the Mediterranean and other regions.

However, the Western powers, primarily the United

States, not only refused to discuss these proposals constructively but also began to increase their military activity in the Mediterranean. After the conclusion of the INF Treaty, the United States began to implement a plan for enhancing the role of US military bases in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey and Italy. The press reported on the US intention to set up nuclear-capable "mobile facilities". The plan envisages broader functions for the Mediterranean-based US 6th Fleet to compensate for the

military capability curtailed, in Washington's opinion, by the INF Treaty.

Demilitarisation of the Mediterranean is clearly emerging as one of the problems that must be solved in order to build a peaceful common European home.

Georg KWIATOWSKI,
DKP representative on WMR,
chairman of the WMR Commission on Peace
and Democratic Movements

THE FACTS

● Throughout the 44 years that have elapsed since the end of World War II, Western Europe has remained a major object of the United States' global military and political strategy. As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "our first line of defense is in Europe and the Mediterranean". Harry S. Truman turned this into a frontline at the time of the Cold War. During his presidency, Ronald

Reagan often stressed that the United States should continue to keep its military contingents stationed abroad, including sizable sea-based forces. George Bush, his successor, has said he attaches priority importance to strengthening the American military presence in Europe, particularly after the conclusion of the INF Treaty.

● The United States currently maintains hundreds of bases and other military facilities and two-thirds of all its

foreign-based troops (more than 500,000 servicemen) in Europe.

The Pentagon has several dozen major naval and air force bases in the Mediterranean equipped with nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

● The US 6th Fleet, permanently assigned to the Mediterranean, comprises over 40 combat vessels, including two aircraft carriers, two or three cruisers and 20 destroyers and frigates, some of them with nuclear weapons on board.

SPAIN: STILL A HOSTAGE

THE AGREEMENT Spain and the United States reached in autumn 1988 on a new defence treaty, and the decision of the Spanish government on the withdrawal of 72 US F-16 planes from the Torrejon military base near Madrid, cover a wide range of complex problems that need to be analysed in detail. It would be difficult to offer a black-and-white assessment of the situation without considering the pros and cons.

First, the advantages: this time the Spanish-US defence talks were conducted under new circumstances. On the one hand, there was the favourable impact of the changes that occurred on the international scene thanks to the Soviet peace initiatives. On the other hand, things have obviously changed in Spain itself, indicating the more vigorous involvement of large sections of the population in the struggle to ensure national security.

As the 1986 referendum on Spain's membership in NATO showed, the people intend to make sure that the government does not toe the US or NATO line, particularly in matters concerning the deployment, stockpiling or entry into Spain of nuclear weapons and the use of the US military bases on Spanish soil. Had it not been for the support of public opinion, the government would hardly have been able to withstand US pressure and secure the evacuation of the Torrejon base.

Spain's refusal to retain the F-16s forced the United States, for the first time since the with-

drawal of France from NATO's military organisation in 1966, to cut unilaterally the strength of US troops stationed on the territory of a European ally. This stance has attracted the attention of people in other countries where the protest movement against the US military presence is also growing.

As far as the drawbacks are concerned, first, the Spanish government had to agree to refrain from checking whether nuclear weapons are aboard US warships entering our territorial waters or calling at our ports for eight years (duration of the treaty). The Political Commission of the Communist Party of Spain released a statement noting that this agreement was in fact *contrary to the will of the Spanish people*, whose desire that Spain's nuclear-free status be strictly observed was clearly demonstrated in the referendum.¹

Second, the new treaty did not follow up on the decision to remove the Torrejon air force base. The United States will continue to maintain other similar facilities along with the Rota naval base.

Third, the extension of the treaty's term from 5 to 8 years can only be regarded as a concession. By prolonging the term of the obligations undertaken, the Spanish government essentially agreed to shelve the question of the US military presence until the mid-1990s.

¹ A poll commissioned by *El Pais* newspaper and conducted by an institute for public opinion studies has shown that as regards the new Spanish-US defence treaty, 64% of the Spanish believe it will not keep nuclear weapons from entering Spain. Two-thirds of those surveyed think that the government agreed to bigger concessions during the talks than the US side.

Fourth and finally, the United States reserves the right to station nuclear-armed air force planes in an emergency, which leaves us open to a retaliatory strike. I believe it would have been more expedient to reverse the arrangement, allowing US planes to be stationed here in peacetime but not in wartime. However, theory is one thing and practice is another. Overall there has been some progress on removing

foreign military bases and strengthening national security. However, in military terms Spain's position as a hostage to US military and political strategy so far remains unchanged.

Jose Luis BUHIGAS,
Spanish journalist

THE FACTS

- There are three major US Air Force bases in Spain at Moron, Saragossa and Torrejon (the base of the 401st US Air

Force Wing which is to move to Italy by 1991) and the Rota naval base near the Strait of Gibraltar.

- There are some 12,000 servicemen at the US military bases in Spain.

- Until recently the United States provided Spain with \$415 million a year in military aid. A downward trend has now emerged.

PORTUGAL: SOVEREIGNTY IS NOT FOR SALE

THE PORTUGUESE Communist Party regards the US military base on Lajes Island in the Azores as a direct threat to national sovereignty. The US troops stationed there (under an agreement signed back in the 1950s and subsequently renewed several times) have been given powers to use Portuguese territory as they see fit. The Pentagon exercises this right blatantly. It was the Lajes air force base from which the United States airlifted its Rapid Deployment Force to the Mideast, specifically during the conflict with Libya. It is clear how dangerous such moves are to our country.

Unfortunately, Cavaco Silva's social democratic government has aligned itself with the more militaristic circles in the United States and NATO on the question of the way US military bases in Portugal are to be used.

In all fairness, however, one must say that under pressure from the public, the Portuguese government—which used to avoid any friction with Washington—has recently begun to express dissatisfaction with the bilateral military agreements and even announced its intention of having them revised. This merely turned into haggling over the size of the financial compensation paid to Portugal. Somehow, our politicians forgot that sovereignty is not for sale.

The Portuguese Communist Party takes a realistic

view of the problem of foreign military bases in our country. We are aware that the question of their removal can only be decided in the context of East-West relations. Hence, the Soviet proposals offer favourable prospects for talks on this subject. This does not mean, however, that the PCP is not looking for a purely national solution. We are in favour of a revision of our bilateral agreements with the United States and other NATO countries, and we are opposed to any expansion of the foreign military presence and to any further obligations with regard to the existing bases.

Most importantly, the party is working for a definitive decision on the *inadmissibility of the deployment of nuclear weapons in Portugal*. The inability of the present government (and of all previous ones) to take a firm stand guaranteeing the nation's nuclear-free status is the reason why a mass Movement Against Nuclear Weapons, in which the Communists are participating vigorously, has emerged in Portugal.

We are convinced that this struggle must acquire greater scope. Peace can only be lasting if Portugal, the Iberian Peninsula and all of Europe are nuclear-free. In the opinion of the PCP, it would be useful for the communist parties of Western Europe—and perhaps of all Europe—to meet and, guided by a spirit of equality and general concern, discuss the issues thrown up by the idea of a common European home.

Domingos LOPES,
Portuguese Communist Party
representative on WMR

THE FACTS

- Stationed in Portugal are mostly US Air Force units, particularly at the Lajes base in the Azores. Units under NATO command also use the airfields

of Espinho, Ota and Montijo. Submarines and surface vessels use the naval ports of Lisbon, Leixões, Setubal, Faro, Ponta Delgada (Azores) and Funchal (Madeira).

- There are about 1,500 servicemen at the US military bases in Portugal.

- Over the past three years US military aid to Portugal has been almost halved, declining from \$206 million to \$117 million.

ITALY: "A DUMPING GROUND FOR FOREIGN REFUSE"?

THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT justified its decision to accept the US F-16 planes ousted from Spain by invoking the need to maintain "NATO's southern flank", and the pledge not to do anything that could be interpreted as "unilateral disarmament". These were the arguments cited in Parliament by Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti and Defence Minister Valerio Zanone when they defended the government's position.

The Italian Communist Party is *categorically opposed to this interpretation*. As Renato Zangheri, chairman of the PCI faction in the Chamber of Deputies, said, the acceptance of the F-16s is sheer folly, particularly against the background of more intensive East-West negotiations on various aspects of arms cuts. He pointed out that "the government's stand obviously conflicts with the new climate of detente and the search for new moves towards disarmament".

In reply, a different argument was employed: "The relocation of the planes should be used for making yet another step towards disarmament." This view is upheld, among others, by Roberto Formigoni, a

prominent Christian Democratic member of parliament. He claims that the F-16s should remain in Western Europe to maintain the balance of forces, and that they should only be withdrawn if a similar unit of the Soviet Air Force is dissolved.

Criticising the government decision to accept the F-16s as a mistake fraught with unwarranted risks, PCI General Secretary Achille Occhetto said at a plenary meeting of the PCI Central Committee that "to approach negotiations from positions of armed force is a holdover of the period in East-West relations when the attitude of both sides was that of rigid confrontation. Fortunately, new constructive trends have surfaced in recent years in US-Soviet and East-West relations—trends that should be promoted and strengthened and consolidated if we want the agreements already reached to be followed by others, particularly by one on a balanced reduction of conventional armaments in Europe. The applause which greeted the Reagan-Gorbachov accords will ring false if it does not lead to practical action."

The Communists' attitude to the issue of the US F-16 fighter-bombers is generating widespread public response in Italy. People are increasingly supporting the Communist Party line that: "There is no law saying that everything Spain, Portugal, Greece or any other NATO country rejects should be stored in Italy. Italy is not a dumping ground for foreign refuse."

Antonio BOFFI,
Italian journalist

THE FACTS

● For numbers of US bases, Italy is second only to the FRG among the NATO member countries. About one-seventh of all the US nuclear charges deployed in Western Europe are stockpiled in Italy.

● The nuclear facilities in Italy are divided into two categories: the one

controlled exclusively by the United States, and the other, by NATO as a whole. The more important facilities in the first category are at the Site Pluto base at Longare, 10 kilometers from Vicenza; the Aviano base near Pordenone (headquarters of the 40th tactical group of the US Air Force, the central element of the US forces on NATO's southern flank); the naval aviation base at Sigonella (planes armed with nuclear

depth charges); and the US naval base on Maddalena Island for Los Angeles-class nuclear submarines, with 10 nuclear missiles each.

● Nuclear submarines also call at the large naval base in Augusta, Sicily. Sicily is where the best-known US base in Italy is located. It is the Comiso base, the site of the US cruise missiles which are to be scrapped by 1993 under the Soviet-American INF Treaty.

GREECE: WHO STANDS TO GAIN FROM DELAYS?

AS SOON AS US military bases were set up on Greek soil, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) launched a stubborn struggle for their removal. The Communists are explaining to people that any foreign military presence is detrimental to national independence and may cause a nuclear disaster any moment.

After the colonels' junta was overthrown and after the events in Cyprus (where US bases in effect

became centres for the preparation of military operations by Turkish chauvinists), anti-imperialist and anti-American sentiments increased dramatically in Greece. In the 1981 elections the KKE and the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), both advocating the elimination of military bases and Greece's withdrawal from NATO, won more than 60% of the vote.

The PASOK government promised to have the US bases removed from Greece and to withdraw from NATO. But then the question of a break with NATO was dropped from the agenda altogether, and the position with regard to the bases was altered substantially. In 1983, an agreement was concluded and ratified by the Greek parliament, extending the pre-

sence of the bases for another five years, after which a further 17 months was allowed for their closure. The five-year term has expired but the government, instead of keeping the promise it made to the people, has entered into negotiations with the United States for a new agreement on the bases.

Back in 1983, our party warned that PASOK was yielding to US pressure, and we urged an intensification of the anti-imperialist struggle. Today, too, the KKE is exposing the government's demagogic attempts to justify its policy of appeasement. It claims that Greece will receive substantial military aid in exchange for the new lease, that the numerous local service jobs will be lost if the bases are eliminated, and finally, that the nation will not be able to withstand the economic war the United States is sure to begin against Greece if the bases are evacuated.

The Communist Party of Greece maintains that foreign military bases weaken rather than strengthen national defence. This is borne out by what happened in Cyprus, when US bases in Greece extended assistance to Turkish troops. Besides, the bases obviously aggravate political destabilisation in the Mediterranean. They have been used repeatedly in various imperialist ventures aimed against Libya, Lebanon and other countries. For several decades, US and NATO military facilities have acted as bastions of confrontation with the socialist countries.

The claim that the evacuation of the bases will increase unemployment does not hold water either. First, the local jobs connected with these bases are not all that many; second, the record shows that resources invested in civilian industries and the service sector create many more jobs than the money spent on the maintenance of foreign military bases.

The forecasts that Greece is sure to be crushed in an economic war with the United States, a powerful adversary, are clearly far-fetched too. First of

all, such a war is highly unlikely, and even if it does happen, Greece can rely on broader economic cooperation with other countries, both socialist and capitalist; among the latter, many have long been opposed to the American tradition of imposing economic blockades motivated by political considerations.

The struggle will not be easy, of course. The United States is desperately clinging to Greek soil and our government is caught between an aggressive NATO partner on one side and, on the other, the people who demand that the government uphold the nation's higher interests. This would seem to explain the government's vacillation in the matter of military bases.

A single typical example will suffice. In the summer of 1988 the government, in an effort to meet popular demands, announced that the Hellenikon US Air Force base within the Athens city limits was to be evacuated. It looked like a promising step. But as it was soon reported from Washington, US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs Rozanne Ridgway said that this move was designed for "domestic consumption", for taking the edge off antiwar protests. The government had to issue a statement to the effect that the decision about the Hellenikon base was irrevocable. As to the agreements on other bases, the government says that their future will be decided in a referendum.

However, a question suggests itself: by voting in 1981 for the parties that opposed the US military presence, the Greek people expressed their will clearly enough. Why, then, should there be another vote? Unless it is designed to delay for as long as possible the solution to an urgent and immediate problem.

Aris PAPANTHIMOS,
KKE, WMR staff member

THE FACTS

- There are four large US bases in Greece: the Hellenikon in Athens, the Heraklion on Crete, (used by the US Air Force), and the naval bases at Nea Makri near Marathon and in Suda Bay.

There are also more than 20 smaller military facilities—depots, barracks, test ranges, training centres and the like.

- There are some 4,000 US servicemen at these bases.

- The amount of the military aid Greece receives from the United States

is linked to the amount Washington pays to Turkey for the same military purposes. There is a seven-to-ten ratio between Athens and Ankara which is universally regarded as a sign that the United States favours Turkey as a more reliable ally.

TURKEY: A DANGEROUS PARTNERSHIP

THE UNITED STATES began a large-scale effort to set up military bases in Turkey soon after World War II. In the eyes of the Pentagon, a country sharing land and sea borders with the Soviet Union was

an ideal bridgehead for putting the aggressive concept of "fighting communism along the forward line of defence" into practice. Subsequently, strategic guidelines changed, but the efforts to create an in-depth military infrastructure in Turkey continued, apart from a brief period after 1974, when the US bases were temporarily closed because of differences between the United States and Turkey over the Cyprus question. In 1978 the ban was lifted, and intensive work to transform my country into

a major foreign stronghold of the US army was resumed with increased vigor.

Under Ronald Reagan, the United States upgraded its military aid to Turkey until it reached almost \$1 billion a year. In exchange, the Pentagon was free to increase its aggressive capability up to and including the deployment of nuclear weapons on Turkish soil. Among the West European NATO countries, Turkey is fourth in the number of the US nuclear charges stockpiled on its territory (the *Günaydin* newspaper reports that there are over 500).

In accordance with the US-Turkish agreement on the use of frontline theatre bases in Turkey by the US Air Force, initialed in early 1987, the Pentagon gains control of another 16 Turkish air fields, where several tactical squadrons are to be stationed (384 nuclear-capable planes with a strike capacity of more than 380 megatons).

It is true that, in connection with the expiry in 1990 of the comprehensive US-Turkish agreement on military bases, the Turkish government has recently assumed a somewhat tougher position. First, it has to reckon with the changes occurring in European and world politics. Saber-rattling is becoming less popular: it is now seen as a sign of incompetent statesmanship, not of strength. Second, the government apparently wants to secure more respectable

material and political terms as a military satellite of the United States.

Attention has also been drawn to the fact that in the United States itself the trend towards shifting the responsibility for the security of NATO onto the junior partners is gaining ground. Neither Turkey nor other NATO countries are happy with it. Significantly, the government has threatened to revise annually the US-Turkish agreement on bases if the United States proceeds with its intention of reducing military aid. The decision to restrict the frequency of US nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed warships' calls at Turkish ports can also be construed as a warning to Washington.

However, these moves are far from the radical changes demanded of the government by Turkish public opinion. The US-Turkish military partnership poses too great a threat to our national sovereignty and security. If we all want to live in peace as good neighbours, we need a genuine readiness to act resolutely for demilitarisation and disarmament, particularly at home. As the popular Turkish saying goes, if the world is to be clean, everyone should sweep the street in front of his house.

Mahmud BATU,
Turkish journalist

THE FACTS

● Some 30 major US and NATO military bases and dozens of other military facilities are located in Turkey.

● In addition to a ramified network of military air fields and naval bases, there are 16 radar reconnaissance stations and a base for US AWACS planes in Turkey.

● More than 5,000 US servicemen are permanently assigned to the bases in Turkey.

IN LIEU OF A CONCLUSION

After learning about the West European communist parties' attitude to the presence of US military bases in Europe, our readers are likely to ask us about the position of US Communists on this issue.

As noted at the 24th national convention of the CPUSA in August 1987, US imperialism refuses to give up its overseas bases and continues to lay claim to parts of the five continents and all oceans as vital to the national interests of the United States. At the same time, new thought patterns are emerging at grassroots level,

and even in some influential political and corporate circles. There is growing concern for the future of human existence. Although the new mode of thinking has not yet reached the decision-making, inner circles of monopoly capital, the changing balance of world forces and the American people's opposition to US imperialist and interventionist policies have forced the administration to manoeuvre and retreat in some specific areas. "This is very important," CPUSA National Chairman Gus Hall stressed in his report to the convention. "The tactics of the people's struggles must be based on understanding this."

WHO IS AGAINST DISARMAMENT

Hans Petter HANSEN

*alternate member, National Board,
Communist Party of Norway*

RIGHT-WINGERS in our country tend to reason along these lines: "After the INF Treaty came into force, tensions began to decline in Central Europe and the Soviet Union has focussed on the Arctic, where it has stepped up its military activity. It has long since turned the Kola Peninsula into the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons on the globe, and is now working to compensate for the loss of the missiles under the Treaty. Moscow regards the Barents Sea as its 'kitchen door', while the Arctic Ocean has become the major Soviet staging area for submarine strikes against the West. The military threat to NATO's northern flank has increased, and Norway's 36,000-strong armed forces now have to be more efficient in standing up to the superpower on land, on sea and in the air, and Norwegians must be more vigilant."

It would seem that the INF Treaty, the Soviet-US summits, and a number of other important international events in 1988 have led to a *general* relaxation of the military-political confrontation between East and West, a fact that is widely recognised. But, contrary to common sense, the rightists keep on saying the same things, which unfortunately meet with a response among the population. Why such a paradox?

There is, first of all, the traditional view of the Soviet Union as a "super-armed monster" posing a threat to Norway. This stereotyped image was built up just after World War II, and it eventually led to Norway's entry into NATO in the late 1940s. Since then bourgeois propaganda has worked hard to drum this image of our neighbour in the East into Norwegian heads, which is why it is hard to remove it from public consciousness.

There is also the marked trend to the right in our political and social life in recent years. Public opinion polls taken last September showed a serious drop in the popularity of the ruling Norwegian Labour Party, led by Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland: it took 40.8% of the votes in the 1985 election, but now has the support of only 31%. Meanwhile, the ultraright Progress Party, led by Karl Hagen, has been rapidly expanding its support base, not least

among the workers. It has had its backing grown from 3.1% to 22.2% and now ranks second, ahead of the conservative Høyre Party, a traditionally influential political force, which has 20.8% of the vote.

It is not surprising, therefore, that there is support for rightist arguments, and that many Norwegians still take a sceptical view of the USSR's acts and its new peace initiatives. The momentum of bias, mistrust and suspicion is much too strong.

The rightists, understandably, oppose disarmament, because they are backed by Norwegian arms manufacturers and officials with a vested interest in continuing the arms race. Both right-wing parties have also made wide use of the more traditional anti-Soviet ideas. They still claim, for instance, that the USSR has a superiority in conventional weapons, which is why NATO must close the gap with nuclear arms. Hence the demand to allow nuclear weapons into Norwegian ports.

But the worst thing is that the conservative wing of Norway's social democracy tends to coalesce with the rightists. The Communists believe that on the whole the government's military policy is riddled with major flaws. It pays lip service to disarmament and detente, but these days is there anyone who will openly take a stand for more armaments? The actual state of affairs is somewhat different.

The Norwegian Labour Party has pursued an *ambiguous and inconsistent policy* which is fairly traditional for the country. It is known as a policy of "deterrence and assurances". The gist of it is that Norway makes it quite clear to the USSR that any aggression will be firmly resisted, on the one hand, and that it can rest assured that Norway has no intention of being a springboard for an attack against it, on the other. That is why Norway does not allow the siting of nuclear weapons on its territory, the staging of NATO exercises in Finnmark (its northernmost region, bordering the Soviet Union) or the basing of US F-16 nuclear-capable fighter-bombers.

In mid-1988, the Norwegian government adopted a five-year defence plan which differs noticeably from the earlier one. If it is approved by the Storting, the growth of military expenditure from 1989 to 1993 will fall from 3.5% to 2.0%, or less, a year (although the total amount will go up from 20 billion kroner in the 1984-1989 period to almost 27 billion in the subsequent 5-year period). Up to now NATO's northern member has been one of the few which have met their commitments to increase military spending by 3% a year. That is a significant change, especially for a country which, like Turkey (among the NATO members) has a common border with the USSR, i. e., which is "in the front line", as NATO calls it. One should also bear in mind the importance for NATO of Norway's size: with a population of only 4.2 million, it has a territory equal to

that of the FRG, the Netherlands, and Denmark taken together.

The present government's position certainly deserves approval, but at the same time, it has taken steps which, we feel, cut across the national interest. The government has agreed to strengthen its military and political ties with the United States and other NATO countries, especially with the FRG, which is expected to provide military aid for the defence of southern Norway.

Although the government refuses to allow the stationing of foreign troops on our territory, it has permitted, after heated debates, the storage of NATO armaments (if confining the ammunition dumps to Central Norway). It also "tolerated" fairly frequent large-scale exercises, like last September's Team Work '88 involving NATO's naval and air forces, which culminated in a night attack on Norway's northern coast, in the Troms region, by 8,500 marines from the United States, Britain and the Netherlands landing from numerous warships and launches.

Simultaneous ground exercises, code-named Barfrost, involved over 14,000 Norwegian regulars and reservists, together with tanks, artillery and aircraft. Altogether, a total of 45,000 servicemen, more than 200 warships and 350 planes took part in the war games in the north of the country (whose aim, according to NATO strategists, was to provide security for trans-Atlantic maritime communications and to practice teamwork between allied reinforcements and Norwegian units). As usual exercises involved some loss of life, and numerous incidents.

Norway's attitude to US naval strategy is a special issue. The rapid growth of naval forces has produced new problems between the great powers, so that the situation in the northern areas, where there was a low level of tension, has worsened. The US military doctrine has entered a new phase, assigning the naval forces a more offensive role. Their task now is not only to defend maritime transport communications and track Soviet submarines in the World Ocean, but also to push back the USSR's fleet into its base area and, if needs be, destroy it there. The authorities refuse to recognise that *Norway is merely a pawn* in this kind of game.

Our country needs a defence strategy, but does this really require closer integration with the new US offensive doctrine? Is it right to tolerate the government's passive attitude to the possible entry into Norway's territorial waters and ports of US ships with nuclear capability? It is common knowledge that their commanders will not provide assurances that no nuclear weapons are on board. The antinuclear mood in the country is strong, but the government continues to ignore the numerous demands from the public, from a number of grassroots organisations in its own party, and even from some of its leaders, for an end to these dangerous visits. We receive the same answer: such a policy is incom-

patible with our commitment to NATO. This attitude is particularly obvious with respect to the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe, only here another "argument" has been added: that this problem cannot be solved in isolation, but must involve a general European settlement.

It is our view that Norway can either promote detente or increase international confrontation. It can either act with initiative to reduce tension in the Nordic area, cooperating, for instance, with other countries in the region on measures to build confidence, both within the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and within NATO; or it could demand that NATO should give up its "forward-based strategy" in this area and reduce its programme of military construction in Norway. It would also be possible to use the same practice of prior notification for naval exercises as is already used for ground exercises.

But our government has acted largely against the interests of detente and disarmament, in other words against the people's interests.

What determines the policy of the ruling Labour Party? We think it is *tactical considerations in the face of the forthcoming elections to the Storting in September 1989*. Under pressure from the rightist forces and the US and NATO leadership, it has had to manoeuvre, and in the present situation the party leadership realises that any intention it may have to alter the relationship with its NATO allies, let alone actually attempting it, spells danger (although this cannot, in principle, be ruled out in the future).

In the wider context, it is quite probable that, even in the event of a victory at the polls, the Social Democrats will act in the same way. Although the old party cadres who involved the country in NATO left the political stage long ago, the new generation of Social Democrats seems content, in many ways, to continue their line.

Still, the positive changes in international affairs and the gradual introduction of the new political thinking in East-West relations should also have an influence on the position of the Norwegian Labour Party. There has already been an obvious change in public opinion in favour of the USSR, although there is still a long way to go before a real change occurs in the entrenched anti-Soviet attitudes.

The beginning of a solution to the Afghan problem and progress towards settling other regional conflicts have had a beneficial effect on Norwegian mentality.

The perestroika in the USSR and the much healthier international climate have increasingly prevented the right-wing circles and the bourgeois mass media from playing up the myth of a "Soviet military threat", so making it more difficult for them to impede the process of disarmament and detente. If the pendulum of change keeps moving in the same direction, it will become much easier to support this

process, and this should eventually encourage the Norwegian leadership to display more initiative and consistency in international affairs.

For its part, the Communist Party of Norway has been working actively for peace and disarmament, concentrating in the recent period on explaining the Soviet Union's peace initiatives to our people, with special emphasis on the mass acceptance of the *idea of a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe*. We believe that the prospects for setting up such a zone are now much more realistic than before.

These efforts have met with support among the working people and in the antiwar movement. On many issues we have acted jointly, or in parallel, with several peace organisations in our country, particularly with regard to the problem of compensation for the missiles being destroyed under the INF Treaty, something on which Margaret Thatcher has most vigorously insisted. If this happens, it could not just vitiate the historic significance of the INF Treaty but also undermine the whole long-awaited process of disarmament. All Norwegian peace forces have united under the slogan: "We Won't Allow It!".

Most of our allies are members of the broad-based and influential No to Nuclear Weapons antiwar association. Among the participants are people of differing political convictions, including, for instance, members of the Høyre Party. Indeed, no one in the association is asked about his or her political views, the main condition for unity being a desire for constructive cooperation and mutual understanding on the way to a nuclear-free world.

Our party may not be all that large, but its voice is heard in the association, whose leadership, moreover, accepts and supports many of the Communists' proposals. The party has also worked fairly successfully in the trade union movement, a part of which has now joined in the practical struggle for peace (although that is not our achievement alone).

We do not overestimate our achievements and potential, especially since new problems have been arising alongside the old ones. The INF Treaty and the relaxation of international tensions, for instance, have led to a partial decline in the activity of the antiwar movement in Norway and in some other Western countries. However, this is quite understandable and the situation should not be overdramatised, it has happened before, in the 1970s for example. People say that the goal has been reached and that everything is running along quite well without our help, so that we can relax. This decline in activity is psychologically understandable, and is a temporary one, as it was in the past. But it does make the work of the peace movement in mustering the popular masses to antiwar struggle more difficult. It now calls for redoubled efforts, mainly to explain that such attitudes are wrong and short-sighted.

We hope, however, that our present place in the antiwar movement and our sustained and persevering efforts within it will eventually bear fruit and generally strengthen the Communist Party's positions in the country.

FROM THE POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE 19TH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF NORWAY

World peace has always been a part of the historical mission of the working class. It is now its most important part, which means, apart from everything else, the need to give up the old notions and prejudices that hamper the fight for peace. World peace, which best meets the class interests of the working class, also meets the interests of mankind as a whole. Compromises for the sake of peace are now more necessary than ever before in the past, and the Communists are prepared for compromises.

In this nuclear age of ours, war no longer provides a means for solving problems or attaining political ends. War can no longer be "a continuation of po-

litical intercourse with a mixture of other means". Another world war would put an end to all politics. National and international issues and security problems can be solved only by political means, through international negotiation and relevant agreements.

No one can win either the arms race or another war. This is a truth that has been driven home not only to the working class but also to the petty-bourgeois and middle strata. It is also getting through to the big bourgeoisie, and its political representatives. All of this creates the basis for the formation of a worldwide peace front and a coalition of reason and realism.

THE PARTY

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

WE NEED CHANGES IN OUR OWN RANKS

Rodney ARISMENDI

Chairman, CC, Communist Party of Uruguay (PCU)

The world public is showing a keen interest in Soviet perestroika. We asked the Uruguayan communist leader to comment on the reactions to it of the fraternal parties. Below is an interview he gave in Montevideo to Orel Viciani, WMR Editorial Council member from the Communist Party of Chile.

Comrade Arismendi, at a CC PCU plenary meeting you reported the results of a trip by a PCU delegation to a number of socialist countries. What do you think about the changes you saw and their influence in the world?

Let me first say that I am very glad the journal is refocussing on the international significance of Soviet perestroika. Although the *World Marxist Review* contains articles of use to certain parts of our movement, I think it should substantially enrich its content. We would like to see serious and straightforward discussions. Seminars and other group debates ought not to be monologues, but creative dialogues rich in shades of opinion and explicit on controversial issues. The idea that any exploration of a country's problems is only permissible if authorised by the respective party is mistaken; science and theory do not have national frontiers. It is one thing to meddle in internal affairs, which would be incorrect and harmful, and quite another matter to discuss amicably some specific points of theory.

In answer to your original question: We have expressed our enthusiastic support for perestroika, because we see in it a process of historic transformation. We believe that it is about *remodelling socialism*, about a creative advance that reflects the very essence of the teaching of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and about how to raise the world communist movement—which, despite its glorious history, endures difficulties, at times stagnation, and obviously needs renewal—to a new and much higher level.

We continue our discussion of the problems of the international communist movement. See WMR Nos. 9, 12, 1988.

All this requires a methodologically correct approach.

It is important to see perestroika as the answer to certain Soviet problems; but it also has aspects of universal significance. For it demands something which is essential to every communist party abiding by the tenets of Marxism: *that we should think with our own heads and assure the critical independence of our political thought*. We, for example, see to it that there is not a single cell or branch in the PCU where polemics, initiative, and independence of thought would be sacrificed to "directives".

To understand what perestroika means for the entire communist movement and for the beginning of a new stage in the world revolutionary process, we should look first, as Latin Americans, at the changes occurring in this part of the world, while at the same time recognising the changes taking place on a global scale. This is the only way we can see the trends of our development within a world context. These questions require a broad debate and profound fraternal discussion, without any interference in the affairs of other parties or any undue pressure from the participants. But there are various ways of discussing things: episodically and emotionally; or with historical criteria; or, as Mikhail Gorbachov does, by affirming socialism and its values; or even in denigratory, petty-bourgeois terms. I think that it is clear what I mean.

The subjects under discussion concern all mankind. The chief thing now is to do away with nuclear weapons, save humanity from destruction, and create a powerful worldwide movement in its defence which would isolate the most aggressive circles of

imperialism and the military-industrial complex, and which, relying upon the masses (even outside the class struggle) would compel the imperialists to take definite steps towards peace. The communist movement, acknowledged as a major factor in world history, has no right to lose this role at such a crucial time of change. We must once again think things through carefully, weigh them up, and assess our involvement in shaping the destinies of the world. It is not enough to admire the criticism and self-criticism exercised by the CPSU and taken up in varying degrees by the other socialist countries. The entire movement must understand that criticism and self-criticism are a natural form of our mode of action, of Marxist-Leninist methodology.

What do you think perestroika means for Latin America? How do you see the responsibility of the fraternal parties as they face the new situation on the continent?

I believe that perestroika in Latin America signifies active involvement in a policy for peace, the drive for self-determination and a new international economic order, for the most unbiased treatment of the external debt problem, and a greater autonomy for the region's countries with regard to the USA. I am not talking about the complete overcoming of dependence, which would be an even more radical gain. In any case, a proper understanding of the present situation in Latin America helps put an end to pseudo-scientific schemes. It forces us to think in the new manner, and helps avoid haphazard decisions.

Cuba's 1959 revolution was for us a fundamental historical turning point. The 1960s saw intensified struggle from various quarters, guerrilla warfare and guerrilla adventurism, national-patriotic and military-nationalist movements, and the triumph in Chile. Imperialism's counteroffensive in the 1970s brought fascist military coups. Then came the defeat in Chile, and continued imperialist domination using fascist methods, adopted in accordance with the Santa Fé Document. The Sandinist triumph in Nicaragua in the 1980s has added to the number of victorious revolutions. The whole of Central America is in ferment. Democratic governments have been re-established in Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil, among others. The political geography of the continent is changing before our very eyes.

The Latin American realities of the 1980s differ from those of the 1960s, when Latin American governments voted with the USA in the UN, expelled Cuba from the Organisation of American States, and were partners in aggression. Now, apart from Cuba—the beacon of socialism in the Western Hemisphere—we have the revolution in Nicaragua as a portent of the new and growing reality. Many democratic countries in South America oppose the intervention of the USA. Their governments are not happy with Nicaragua's move towards socialism, but they undoubtedly oppose the intervention. Contadora, Es-

quipulas and Acapulco¹ confirm the general thrust towards Latin American autonomy, with Cuba as an integral part.

What is the rationale for all this? Some refer to the demagogy of the big national-reformist bourgeoisie, and support the old theories of dependent capitalism, which explained in an undialectical manner the relations between Latin America and the USA. We believe that there are changes in the social structure of the continent; that the development of capitalism *in dependence* (not dependent capitalism) which is unable to propel profound economic transformations, has aggravated the contradictions and the crisis and augmented the presence of the transnational corporations and the dominance of imperialism. But, at the same time, the crisis has not prevented the consolidation of the local bourgeoisie, nor its search for new ways of increasing the amount of national product appropriated by local capital.

Besides that, the experience of fascist rule, which is sometimes underestimated, teaches us a lot. If the bourgeoisie had found that fascism suited it, and that by making the Communists and the Left in general illegal it would receive scope for maneuver and the possibility of an unimpeded development, then its concrete historical experience would be different. But fascism presupposes a modification of state structures, the winding down of constitutional principles, and the promotion of a definite stereotyped ideology which contradicts the ideological traditions and the better chapters of history of the national bourgeoisie. In other words, Latin America and certain of its capitalist circles partook of an experience which, coupled with economic difficulties, foreign debt and other snags, has determined the new political and ideological positions of this class.

We also think that Latin America, as its dependence increases, is living through a crisis of this very same dependence, however paradoxical that may seem. It is a crisis of dependence which began with the Cuban revolution and worsened as a result of the overthrow of the dictatorship in Nicaragua, the continuing revolutionary flare-ups in other Latin American countries, and the growing contradictions between their governments and the United States. The foreign debt, non-equivalent trade, the protests against our underdevelopment, the overall deepening of the structural crisis, show that there is a real necessity and basis for the consolidation of forces, for the extension of democracy and, consequently, for the general advancement of Latin America along the road of progress.

Thus, in linking perestroika and the reality of modern Latin America we should bear in mind two things. The first refers to the dialectics of the revolution, of the development of the parties, popular fronts and so forth. But the second forces us to ask a number of questions: What place does Latin

¹ The names of an island and two towns where important decisions were taken on a political resolution of Central American issues.—Ed.

America have in world peace and the elimination of nuclear weapons? What part is it to play as a more independent force in international organisations, in relations with the USA, in the connection between the defence of peace and our own national interests, and, finally, in the efforts to tackle the so-called global problems of humanity?

Latin America is a vast region which, since the Cuban revolution, has become a seat of ferment and radical change or, to use a more classical expression, a continent which has embarked on its "second war of independence".² The great strategic aim of this war is complete liberation, absolute independence, an end to US imperialist dominance, and the profound socioeconomic changes which the continent needs for its development, for its economic independence and for the construction of new societies.

We are now living in the midst of all this. But I would like to stress that the new and complex reality has placed before us a number of paramount strategic tasks. First of all, to save Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan people's resistance, strengthened by international solidarity, remains a decisive factor in the political situation and an example of the failure of the USA's policy of domination in Latin America, which has been first repulsed by Cuba. These tasks also include solidarity with El Salvador and other peoples, the liquidation of the Pinochet regime, and the expansion and deepening of anti-imperialist actions. Tied in with this is another theme that has emerged in the grand strategy of the continent—the strengthening of existing democracies.

I would like you to enlarge on this question. The revolutionary and progressive forces of the region, including the Communists, regard the struggle for democracy as a key issue of the current liberation process in Latin America. Discussions on this theme give rise to various approaches, considerations and viewpoints. Briefly, what is your opinion on this problem?

We need to strengthen democracy not only because this is a matter of principle for a Marxist-Leninist, but also because, from a more pragmatic point of view, the downfall of democracy now may not bring socialism, but the return of fascism, and all that this entails. Preventing the return of fascism is directly related to Nicaragua's rescue, the defeat of Pinochet, the positive foreign policy of the new governments, and to everything that is happening in Latin America and determining its place in the world. *We have said that to consolidate democracy and advance in these conditions is our grand strategy and does not exclude specific solutions for each particular country.*

I think that, in Latin America, the correlation of forces, and their aspirations, admit of no other

strategy. The consolidation of democracy is a part of this strategy. When we say that under such conditions it is necessary to amass a revolutionary potential, we mean the creation of a social base for the revolution, the forging of all the instruments to take it forward. We want democracy for reasons of principle, but we also want it as the best framework for unfolding the forces of the revolution, modifying the correlation of forces and conducting the class struggle in a more effective way. To be sure, on a vast continent like ours, a revolutionary flare-up may occur anywhere at any time. Within the most democratic process, you cannot rule out tension and confrontation between different social forces. But, in tackling strategic objectives, we must never focus on the least probable hypotheses, although we must always look at everything with open eyes. In the last analysis, our strategy is to help isolate imperialism, attain the set goals, and create a new sociopolitical reality.

The thesis that democracy must be consolidated is the basic precept of Marxism-Leninism. We cannot but take into account the foreign-policy actions of governments, the forms of the state, and the possibilities of struggle that derive from all this. As Lenin said, even the best democracy is incapable of doing away with the exploitation of man by man, but a proletariat unschooled in the struggle for democracy will also never come to socialism. It would be simplistic not to see the difference between democratic governments and fascist dictatorships just because they both have a capitalist basis. The nature of a regime cannot be defined by the class criteria alone. To say this to the Uruguayans, who have suffered a fascist dictatorship and now live under democracy, appears redundant, but essentially this is an important theoretical subject which embraces a key strategic problem. It is not a question of tactical maneuvers, but of principles, because the struggle for democracy is inseparable from the struggle for socialism. That is why we in Latin America should not oppose one to the other. It is necessary to affirm democracy and develop within it, bringing a socialist revolution nearer.

The Communist Party of Uruguay has raised the question of a Broad Front government, of a new type of advanced democracy which could open the way to socialism for the country. But to confuse an advanced democracy with socialism would, of course, be a political stupidity. Therefore we reject the notion that the military established a fascist regime and then, unable to cope with the economic difficulties, appealed for democracy; or that, when the economic situation improves, fascism will again return to power. This is pure oversimplification and does not correspond to the analysis of the continental struggle. This premise ignores the peoples and the actions of the working class and popular forces. Finally, it was Lenin who said that the bourgeoisie does not represent a single whole. Along with fascistic elements, it also now includes those

² The "first war of independence" was the liberation struggle of the Latin American peoples against colonial rule in the first quarter of the 19th century.—Ed.

who stand for democracy, and people desirous of certain changes according to their political interests. The fact that, by possessing the means of production, they control and direct society does not mean that they are identical.

In the final count—and we know this particularly well in Uruguay—it is necessary to create an advanced alternative, as General Liber Seregni³ has said, an option of government that is left-wing, national, popular and democratic and to find a way to form a consolidated bloc of the working class and the middle strata in which our party, not in words but in deeds, could be the vanguard. For this there is no other formula than to amass forces, unite the working class, move closer to the middle strata, develop a policy towards the intellectuals, gain ordinary people's respect for the party, and gather resources; that is, to make policy and not just preach our ideology.

The world communist movement is now widely discussing the consequences of the dogmatic approach to Marxism-Leninism, and the urgent need to get rid of this infirmity and develop the creative potential of our theory in full. This has to do, naturally, with the capacity of the fraternal parties to link Marxist theory to concrete national realities. What challenges do we face here, in your opinion?

It is evident that socialism, which has certain general laws and features, concretises in the reality of each country, speaks in different idioms and blends into different historical contexts. In order to challenge dogmatism the parties must work out their own routes, and their own view of the theory of revolution. Of course, this does not mean a recognition of such aberrations as the "Maoisation" of Marxism, "Eurocommunism", "Afrocommunism", or the so-called national socialisms. The point is that the general laws express themselves in different ways in different places. In other words, socialism exists only in the form that corresponds to the reality of a people, its history, its circumstances, and its interaction with the surrounding world. Lenin spoke of this in "Our Programme" by emphasising the need to assist the independent development of Marxism in each country.⁴ This is more necessary than ever before in the world today where socialism is invoked even in countries where the people have just freed themselves from crass feudalism, as in Ethiopia, or in countries where capitalist relations interlace with tribal, as in many African states.

By 1956, we had started to insist that socialism in our country contained all that was best in our history, the independence legacy of Artigas⁵, the

grains of democratic and civil thought, the experience of the proletarian struggle with its independent class spirit, the ideas of the university reformers, as well as the sociopsychological individuality of our peoples. In this way we were defining the idea of the inseparability of Marxism from the national reality. We have repeated many times that *no revolution can occur outside the historical context of its people*. Not to see the specific conditions in which it takes place means to condemn it to defeat. For example, the drama of Afghanistan arose, apart from imperialist interference, out of an attempt to apply a revolutionary scheme without taking into account the medieval order and the influence of the Muslim religion in that country.

It is obvious that while seeking to fit Marxism into a national context, we must raise the question of the *development of the party*. It ought to be a lively and effective organism, inseparable from its people, with its own creative, intellectual, and ideological dynamics, and with the capacity for discussion. It should be a kind of melting pot where thought and experience are recast, not an ossified structure dictating to the surrounding world, which ultimately leads to dogmatism, the cult of personality and other harmful deviations. In other words, all this suggests that we must also have a concept of the party, of its leadership and of its cadre promotions.

Any process of transformation like perestroika is impossible without a constant review of what we usually consider "acquired values". We do not refer to what Lenin called the "cornerstones of Marxism" or to the hallmarks of our status as Communists; we are not encouraging a discussion about whether we are worse Communists, but about becoming better Communists. I say this because in times of renovation, there are many people inclined to hare-brained schemes and all kinds of high-sounding nonsense and who are no different from the dogmatists who treat what they have been told as gospel. It is dogmatism in reverse.

I believe, for example, that our current debates should start from the historical fact that it is socialism—the socialist revolution—that has *determined our epoch*. The October Revolution changed the course of history. All the significant events of our century are inextricably linked with the Russian Revolution and with the changes in the world perspective and in social realities that it has engendered. Apart from having exploded all the schemes and outmoded perceptions (and bearing in mind that the revolution took place in a very "difficult" country with all its peculiarities), this has demonstrated in practice, in confrontation with capitalism, the superiority and viability of socialism and its real possibility to abolish the exploitation of man by man and create a different society superior to capitalism, not only in its essence and its social

³ Liber Seregni leads the Uruguayan Broad Front, of which the PCU is a part.—Ed.

⁴ See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 210-214.

⁵ Jose Artigas (1764-1850)—Uruguayan military and political leader who took part in the War of Independence. Revered as a national hero and as the "father of the Uruguayan nation".—Ed.

reality, but also in its capacity for development and renewal.

From this point of view we think that any methodological analysis of perestroika should proceed from the fact that socialism has triumphed historically. It has proved the reality of the new society from the very moment that old Russia, and its medieval Asian regions, awakened from its age-long sleep, overcame its illiteracy and its economic backwardness, and forged ahead, becoming, as journalists usually say, one of the great world powers. And all this under difficult historical conditions. The USSR not only opened the perspective for the construction of socialism, but also saved humanity from fascist barbarity. And socialism has spread throughout Europe: in spite of all the difficulties and mistakes; in spite of the delay to the revolution process caused by the negative ideological impact of the cult of personality; in spite of the tragedies and crimes of that period and their shocking exposure at the 20th Congress of the CPSU; and in spite of the negative consequences of the events in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia, and divisions within the communist movement. Even so the revolution advanced along with the crisis of the colonial system, giving socialist inspiration, as Lenin had predicted, to many newly-free states searching for non-capitalist roads of development.

We also remember the "expulsion" of Yugoslavia, the "segregation" of China, Eurocommunism, and the weakening and marginalisation of a part of our movement. But there have been victories: Vietnam's victory against the imperialists; the Cuban revolution; and the African advance towards independence and revolution. The international communist movement has been the motor force of great events which neither the errors, tragedies, nor difficulties could prevent. That is why we see perestroika as an immense undertaking, as a *revolution in socialism*. It encompasses all the spheres of life, and challenges those who question the achievements of socialism, its historico-political significance, or the validity and potential of the communist movement. Undoubtedly this process will be assessed as a very positive factor in world history.

Perestroika shows, however, that it is wrong to try to offset the errors committed along the way by the great historical accomplishments I have mentioned. We should also bear in mind that Communists do not act seated in a library or in a circle of friends, but amidst the class struggle, against a backdrop of imperialist aggression, the crisis of the capitalist system and the furious, systematic campaign of the enemies of socialism.

There is much controversy over the extent to which complete historical truth is really necessary. In view of your references to history what is your opinion of this?

Firstly, let me say that no one can try to close the debates on the history of the CPSU and on the

poverty, which we have often criticised, of its tendentious, doctrinaire historiography. On the other hand, in order to work creatively, we must tell the truth. Communist history began on the day it was necessary to decide whether to follow the path of social democracy or the one of the Russian Revolution and communism. Naturally, those Communists were somewhat immature, sectarian and prone to general formulas. But in the great sweep of history it was they who proved to be right, and not their opponents, who retreated to the Socialist International. In the context of world history, the history of our movement is one of socialist revolutions, anti-colonialism, of Vietnam and Cuba, and the movement for peace. It includes the war against Nazism waged not only by the USSR, but by thousands of Communists in various countries who led the Resistance, the maquis and other such groups. The communist movement was also able to recognise its own mistakes. The 7th Congress of the Communist International spoke of rectifying certain dogmatic, sectarian, and anti-Leninist errors, which were later criticised as well.

We can assert, as Fidel Castro does, that the martyrdom endured by the Communists in the struggle for their ideas, and the nobility and fortitude they displayed even in the hours of error, can only be compared with the martyrdom of the early Christians.

The debate on the historical past that has got under way with perestroika is evidence of the greatness and fertility of Marxist-Leninist ideas, the sincerity of our thought, and the viability of our method. We have never, as Communists and Socialists, been more committed than in the era of perestroika. When Mikhail Gorbachov raises the image of Lenin and his lessons, he brings up the question of dialectical continuity, which has never been a straight line but a contradictory process of continuous overcoming which presupposes a constant clash between old and new. It presupposes a decisive break with the past, when triumphs went hand in hand with tragedies and errors.

Let us turn to the subject of the renovation of the communist movement, or, as you have called this process many times, of perestroika of the Communist movement.

Yes, I believe that now is the time for a thorough renovation of the fraternal parties. It is not true that removing a secretary or exalting a leader is enough to resolve party problems. We reject such methods. In 1955 the PCU raised the question of revising its theoretical, ideological, and political guidelines, renovating its methods for contact with the masses, and improving the characteristics and concept of the party, and all the aspects of its activities. Just as perestroika cannot be accomplished overnight, so it is impossible to renovate all the parties and movements at once. For this purpose we

need to get to the root of our problems and, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, regain lost ground—but with due regard for reality and perspective. It is important to explore these themes with complete candour. They require a major *discussion within the communist movement*, one that is broad, fertile and self-critical.

To effect perestroika is to understand what role each fraternal party is to play and which aspects of the situation in our movement demand cool scrutiny. This is done in the climate of renewal and of anxiety, which pervades the USSR and the socialist community—with all their problems, contradictions, and weaknesses—and which has already had positive worldwide effects in terms of the peace campaign and the renovated image of socialism. We must discuss such situations openly as Marx, Engels, Lenin, and later Rosa Luxemburg and other comrades did; that is, discuss them as both scientific themes and as specific problems, not just as separate realities which can be superficially touched upon, rather than tackled in earnest.

For example it is time we rejected the idea that criticising socialism and denigrating its history is enough to renovate the communist movement. A critical analysis of the history of the international communist movement is inseparable from the history of the societies in which it has developed and from the history of the world. For example, history has answered the basic question of which methods and which line have triumphed—the Leninist or the social democratic: *socialism as a system exists only where the Communists, with or without errors, have come to power.*

The Stalin personality cult has to be explained in historical terms. This requires a more scientific interpretation which undoubtedly will be found. The issue is not so simple. We must not reduce it to a mere statement that Stalin had some good and some bad points; cunning and willfulness, which inclined to tyranny, were indeed inherent in his character and entailed very negative historical consequences. It is equally obvious that he deliberately committed grave crimes against revolutionary cadres. But, what is this process, what were the historical conditions that led to this? Why was there a departure from Lenin's path? This is a very complex issue and we should not fear harsh criticism or condemnation. At the same time, it is necessary to give a convincing historical explanation and not limit ourselves to a simple outline of a very complex picture.

All this calls for an *effective and critical history of our movement*. Promoting democracy is the only way we can follow to overcome these things, as experience shows. We have made democracy a priority for our party. It is much easier to tighten the screws than to persuade and educate. It is much more difficult to establish and educate a party which is able to face serious ideological and theoretical problems and the headaches of increasing the party ranks, and which can train and maintain discipline among

raw recruits. And to foster in the communist parties a new mentality both among the leaders and the cadres, means, without doubt, to go as far as raising the question of the renewal of the leadership. Let us ask ourselves: Is change possible without strengthening and rejuvenating the leadership, as has been the case until now? It is clear that the parties will have to transform their leaderships, which does not, of course, mean that they would just be copying the initiatives of the 19th Conference of the CPSU.

What repercussions can the renewal of the communist parties have on the unity of the entire movement?

We shall have to lay the foundation for a new unity, one that relies not on organisational unanimity, or on the re-establishment of single- or multi-party hegemony (which many parties have been content to recognise), but on a combination of unity and diversity as well as on mutual respect for each other's positions, creative work, and open debate. I said at a recent meeting with the CPSU that instead of holding seminars where prepared texts are merely read out, it would be better to have an office secretary who assigns the roles in advance. What's the use of having monologues which neither contradict, nor assert anything. It is necessary to *debate, to confront ideas, to elaborate positions, and to forge the elements of a democracy at the international level* which does not presuppose organisational rearrangement, but which permits rendering help even to those who do not want to be helped. Interference is one thing, and fraternal relations of mutual aid, necessary to all, is quite another.

We must have a clear awareness of the situation in the movement and, facing the truth, declare an effective war on dogmatism, formalism, self-complacency, and a theoretical lag covered up with general phrases.

You once compared perestroika with the onset of dawn. How to explain this image?

When I see the great intellectual renewal associated with perestroika and its ideas, I hear the ringing of bells heralding a new stage of augmentation, success and world recognition for the communist movement. This stage is vital to our advancement along the revolutionary path, and to an improvement in the image of socialism as humanity's hope, able to withstand any slander, any propaganda attacks. This is a new dawn, and we must carry on into the day. We must get to the very root of our present shortcomings and take history into our own hands, so that after we right what has to be righted, we could move on. Unless we do that, all our discussion will be in vain. In openness, in creativity, in Marxism-Leninism, and in our scientific method and our theory of revolution lies the guarantee of the emancipation of mankind.

CAN WE SURMOUNT OUR CRISIS?

Louis Van GEYT

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IS THE COMMUNIST movement in Western Europe in a state of crisis? It would, I think, be pointless to deny or minimise what is evident in very different forms in the various countries of the region, although it appears less acute in some of the less industrialised countries.

Sweeping social changes have occurred in the developed capitalist countries in the 1980s, but the left-wing forces as a whole, including the Communists, have been caught unawares.

The early symptoms had already been diagnosed, as in Waldeck Rochet's famous report at the PCF CC Plenary Meeting in June 1968. He did not foresee exactly the phenomena we now face, but the protest movement which arose then, mainly involving students and the intelligentsia, came as a surprise to the working-class movement and its leading organisations, and to some extent "upset" their notions of the goals of the struggle and their approaches to the pattern of forces within developed capitalist society. Rochet showed, with clarity and courage, the surprise and unpreparedness of the Western Left: their participation in the events of that period mostly consisted in pressing for the "classical" type of worker demands, without considering that these events heralded a new period of evolution for industrialised societies.

Under the direct impact of the boom in science and technology, the development of the productive forces began to work a radical change in the old relation between "manual" work and "intellectual" work, which were interwoven with each other in multiple and diverse forms. Both have increasingly taken part in the creation of value, not only in the

shape of "products", but also in the shape of "services". Together with other social shifts, this "infrastructural transformation"—perhaps the most important since the first industrial revolution—brought about a profound change in the world of labour, enlarging and diversifying it, and involving new social strata. But the communist movement was slow to react to the depth, scale and import of these changes. Since the majority in our movement in the developed capitalist countries continued to identify themselves as parties of the working class in the *classical sense of the term*, it was natural that our base among the "contemporary working class", and consequently in the world of labour as a whole, began to shrink.

In contrast to many communist parties, including the PCB, most of the socialist and social-democratic parties managed to adapt themselves to the changes in our society: they maintained and even enlarged their social and electoral base (particularly at the expense of their communist "rivals") and re-affirmed their role as ruling parties or parties capable of government on their own or within centre-left coalitions.

But at the same time these parties clearly—and deliberately—relaxed their "traditional" ties with the socially organised forces of the world of labour. In a parallel process these parties gradually moved closer to—and even identified themselves with—those political circles whose job is to ensure the good functioning to the capitalist system and to "moderate the excesses" of the most aggressive (and insatiable) groups of financial capital and their political representatives. However, they took care to cast doubt on the hegemony of this same financial capital.

This evolution of political organisations, constituting a majority in the "traditional" Left, was added to the crisis of the communist movement, which undoubtedly also had a part to play in this evolution. The result was the *fading and weakening* of the concrete political and cultural prerequisites, in most of

We continue the exchange of opinion on the state of the communist movement in Western Europe; for earlier contributions, see the articles by Gianni Cervetti (Italy), Grigorios Faracos (Greece), Salvador Jove and Santiago Alvarez (Spain), in WMR, Nos. 10 and 12, 1988.

the West European countries and in Western Europe as a whole, for a *credible and rousing left-wing alternative* to the growing domination of financial capital.

Unsurprisingly, a not insignificant part of the new strata of the world of labour succumbed to the temptation of neoliberalism which looked to be "the most consistent vehicle of economic and technological and spiritual growth, representing the very spirit of modernity". Some of the disadvantaged, with origins in the classical working class or sectors close to it, showed themselves susceptible to the siren songs of hard-line currents on the right or even far-right of the political spectrum. Why should one be surprised that many among these new strata, understandably worried by the negative effects of the revolution in science and technology on society and the environment, turned to the ecological movement? In most West European countries, including Belgium, these movements have acquired a political dimension, attracting many young people, including skilled workers and intellectuals. Indeed, the ecological parties appeared precisely because the "classical" left-wing organisations, including the Communists, failed to respond in time to the demands of the new strata.

The causes of the lag, I think, are rooted in the *dogmatic pressure* that stifled Marxist thought, especially in the postwar period. It had long-term consequences, despite some attempts at shaking it off like the break announced by the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Unfortunately, it was short-lived and failed to involve all Communists, including those in the developed capitalist countries, and even within the parties which actively backed it. The impetus of the 20th Congress seemed to peter out, with many of those who sincerely tried to "wind the clock up" to the 1950s, the 1960s or even the 1970s, stopping half-way or even back-tracking, at the risk of being marginalised in the area of real politics. Others, disenchanted with the movement's ability to properly renew itself put off till a very remote future any prospect of fundamental transformations in developed capitalist societies, while still claiming that the Communists were "the most resolute contingent" of the left-wing forces, and had on advantage over the others in their "comprehension of the ultimate general goals of the movement", an advantage which was wearing thin.

No wonder, as a result the attempts made in the 1960s and later to analyse the changes in the capitalist world were uncoordinated, with each party confining itself to the national framework and having in mind its own needs. Hence inter-party exchanges of views on these matters were poor, with a limited contribution, until recently, from existing socialism. Meanwhile, modernised capitalism not only turned out to have much greater reserves than had seemed the case, but also in a sense managed to

give a lead in implementing the unprecedented technological achievements of the 20th century.

In view of all this, it was no longer enough to state that the strategy and objectives of the working-class movement and its allies in the West European countries ought to be understood differently than as a mere repetition of the October Revolution or the changes in Eastern Europe since World War II. Nor can we be satisfied any longer with an "updated" version of certain political projects advanced in the 1960s and 1970s. These were programmes for deep democratic and antimonopoly reforms, for winning over the majority of nations "for popular struggles and for votes" through alliances and coalition of left-wing and "centre-Left" parties. These projects were viewed by Communists here as the first steps on "a peaceful and democratic way to socialism", but they either failed or were defeated by the "neoliberal" offensive in the late 1970s.

A closer look shows that today, at the end of the 1980s, a sufficiently broad and diverse spectrum of social forces capable of questioning the hegemony of financial capital in the West European countries can hardly be mobilised by appealing to a socialist-type perspective, since a majority of the population still regards finance capital as the "vehicle of scientific and technological progress and of modernity".

Today it's rather a matter of isolating, as far as possible, *those social groups and strata*, in capitalist society, including Western Europe, which are an obstacle to re-orienting the scientific and technological revolution for the benefit of the working class and the popular majority, and which hamper development in the spirit of peaceful cooperation.

In the light of this perspective, concepts which only take into account the "global contradiction between labour and capital" will be even less satisfactory than they were when our movement led the historical fight against fascism. But the main difficulty here is that the social forces the Communists used to rely on have themselves proved to be unprepared for the new approaches, and are sometimes allergic to them. This is only natural since the proletariat used to draw its strength from its concentration at the large enterprises in heavy industry and transport, a fact which largely facilitated the growth of class consciousness. Besides, up until the end of the 1970s, the working-class movement in some countries, including Belgium, was still able to produce some results with the *classical methods of struggle*, although we subsequently came to see that they were less and less effective.

That is why the inheritors of the "classical" working class find it so hard to accept the fact that a social counter-weight to the dominant transnationals can only be gradually restored by building up *more diversified fronts*. This implies a systematic search for converging objectives and methods of achieving them among the various strata of the working peo-

ple: employees, specialists, engineers, consumer societies, feminist and youth movements, and the marginalised social strata.

One of the main conditions for the future movement, therefore, is to get rid of the peculiar cultural and social allergy that affects many heirs to our "traditions" whenever they have to enter into a dialogue and go beyond the classical left-wing forces in search of cooperation with the new strata of working people, who feel part of the non-traditional movements (i.e., ecology parties and groups). With this perspective, it is important to seek contacts even with those sections of labour, and the population generally, which have been influenced by neo-liberal theory and policy.

If we are to advance in this direction, we should explain to the "classical" and new members of the world of labour and to the entire spectrum of the popular forces just *how* scientific and technological progress under the *exclusive control of TNC financial groups* (whose main concern is to increase their strength and profit) contradicts the legitimate interests of all these strata and forces and society as a whole. We shall also have to show *how* it is possible to impose another choice which actually takes account of their requirements and interests. In other words, the laws of the modern capitalist market and the interests of the powerful financial groups, which increasingly dominate it, must be superseded by other priorities: peaceful growth hinging on utmost satisfaction of the people's needs; concern for human beings and their environment; growth without the waste of resources, whether of labour or of intellectual potential; growth which promotes international cooperation; and an end to super-armament and the super-exploitation of the Third World.

This requires a *very broad spectrum of forces to combine their efforts so as to compel the political powers*—from local communes to the supranational agencies of the EEC—to *reckon with this alternative* despite the demands and resistance of the dominant financial groups. This is a formidable task, for these groups have managed to use advances in science and technology and the social shifts to bolster their domination of state and supranational agencies, and to tighten their control over public opinion. Nevertheless, I believe there is no other way if we want to reverse the trend of the past 10-15 years, which saw the balance of forces clearly changing in favour of financial capital and its supporters while the influence of the West European communist parties (with one or two exceptions) was waning. If we are to start this reverse movement, large-scale theoretical and practical efforts must be made along *three lines*.

First, a wide spectrum of forces uniting around an alternative policy for a particular country (or more likely for a group of developed capitalist coun-

tries in Europe) is inconceivable without its being based on a set of initiatives and concrete acts originating at work in the service sector, in various social spheres and in social or public opinion movements all of which *must still fit into the given perspective*. These initiatives and acts must link their immediate objectives with the "criteria of management" and "social choice" which are inspired by the interests of all social sectors suffering from the policy of international financial capital. This concerns purchasing power, employment, public services, culture, the rights of various categories of workers, women, young people, the entire population, and solidarity with the dispossessed or with people fighting for their rights.

But we must use *political instruments* to influence the elements of government coalitions most sensitive to popular pressure. These should be used to attain the immediate objectives, and to shake the "consensus" or "cohabitation" arrangements by which the "centre-Left" parties and movements (directly or indirectly) help in implementing the choices dictated by the ruling classes.

Second, interdependence has been growing in Europe and the world, which is why it is important to take account of the situation in the socialist countries, and their foreign policy, when deciding on the objectives and strategy of the progressive forces.

This does not mean that the profound changes taking place in the Soviet Union, for instance, can in any way provide reference points for determining a socialist perspective conforming to conditions of Western Europe today. What is more, a sharply critical re-evaluation of the history of existing socialism, as well as the scale of the obstacles it will have to surmount to pull out of the stagnation and to catch up on its missed opportunities make it more pressing than ever before for the "forces of change" in the capitalist world to determine how to change society while keeping an eye on the actual movement *in their own countries*. It is up to them to decide what, when and how best to fit into an entirely new type of socialist perspective.

However, this latter question can only be a long-term one for the West European countries. But there are at least three important aspects of the new foreign policy of the USSR and the other socialist countries that have an immediate and signal impact on development in Western Europe:

the initiatives and steps for consolidating peace and for mutual reductions of nuclear and conventional armaments in the "European theatre";

the proposals and concrete acts for peaceful economic and cultural cooperation;

the accent on the common problems of humanity: the environment, raw materials and energy, world security (against the nuclear threat and others), drugs, disease, terrorism, and reduction of the dra-

matic North-South inequality (debt, the unequal terms of trade), human and national rights...

These offer Western Europe a choice that differs from the "hard line" of international financial capital and its political servitors, a choice that will enable the progressive forces to pave the way for *political change* that goes beyond the programmes proposed by the more "reasonable" groups of the bourgeoisie and most of the centre-Left, which hesitate, or do not dare to question its hegemony.

Third, in the context of Western Europe, and the EEC in particular, it is becoming increasingly unacceptable that communist parties, while seeking to extend contacts and cooperation with the progressive forces in their countries, are clearly late in comparing notes and coordinating moves *with each other*. Meanwhile, an increasing range of economic, political and military matters is being transferred by the states to the various EEC departments and this will inevitably affect social and cultural life. It would be impossible to remove at once all the existing differences of approach among the communist parties (often directly cooperating with other components of the Left in their countries) to the pace of "European integration". Nor will any magic wand help to eliminate the serious differences in assessing the legacy of the 20th Congress of the CPSU and the policy of existing socialism during the period of stagnation. But it is increasingly important now to see a "European community dimension" in these problems, as all the political forces on the continent and in the world have already been trying to do. Is it not high time for the communist parties concerned to break with the past and try to *concert their efforts* without further delay?

This, at any rate, is what the Belgian Communists want, and in the recent period they have taken some modest steps which have, on the whole, met with a positive response from most parties. But the ground to be recovered and the efforts needed to advance remain formidable.

Belgian Communists believe that the world of labour, the progressive forces and the EEC nations should be offered a *political project* (or, initially, an outline) which fits into the *Left perspective*, or, to be more precise, an alternative approach to the "European community".

This project should firmly oppose the "pure and simple" neoliberal course of the hard-line Right. Taking a leaf out of Margaret Thatcher's book, they intend to use the "single market" (planned for 1992) to accelerate the general *dismantling of the social gains* won by working people in the 25 to 30 years after World War II, and to disassemble the *political instruments* which have for a long time forced the dominant capitalist groups in each country at least

to take account of the interests of the main groups of the population. It is not surprising that the last thing the "pure and simple" Right want is to break with the policy of the arms race, the bloc confrontation, and the close alliance with the expansionist elements of transnational financial capital, notably with those of the United States and Japan.

We believe that this project should fully reflect the accelerated integration of the Twelve, which is already amply manifested in the economic and financial sphere. It is also important to realise that the most "reasonable" circles of big capital, and of the European Right and centre-Left forces, envisage "political and social support" for the single market that would preclude leaps and excessive disbalances between individual economic and social sectors, between countries, and between regions. They have displayed a greater readiness than the hard-line Right to take some steps towards a Europe that is less divided, less overarmed, and more open to East-West and North-South cooperation.

This is not enough. We also think that the project should help to form, on the level of the Europe of the Twelve, a sufficiently broad and diverse agglomeration of progressive forces totally independent of the ruling classes and capable of exerting a positive influence on the centre-Left, and influencing the "reasonable" circles of European capital.

The purpose is to *shift the political axis of the integrating community to the left*, to satisfy the rights and interests of the working people and of the entire population of the countries concerned, and to have a consistent policy of scaling down the blocs, and peaceful pan-European and world cooperation thereby making a conscious contribution to solving mankind's vital problems.

The tasks outlined here are, of course, formidable ones, but Belgian Communists believe that in the existing conditions this is the *only way* for the progressive forces of Western Europe to recover a fitting role and influence. We also feel that the communist movement in our region will find a way out of the crisis to the extent to which it succeeds in acting in this direction.

We think that the problems considered here are of primary concern to the Communists and left-wing forces in the European capitalist countries, but they are not a matter of indifference to the progressive forces of other regions, including the European socialist countries. They merit bilateral and multi-lateral discussion, and formal and informal contacts, which have been growing in number since the meeting held in Moscow in November 1987.

We believe that *World Marxist Review* can make a useful contribution to developing such exchanges.

WAYS OF OVERCOMING SPLITS

The subject of splits within communist parties needs discussing, but until recently any mention of it was frowned upon. Now, at a time of openness, more and more publications, including WMR, are turning their attention to it, exploring the origin and nature of rifts and suggesting methods for healing them.¹

Can any differences, however deep-seated, justify the emergence of two or more sometimes rival communist organisations in one country? What are the objective and subjective causes of splits and can they be prevented? How can they be overcome once they occur?

WMR put those and other relevant questions to a number of fraternal parties. Below are summaries of the answers we have received from Jordan and India.

RESTORING LENIN'S PRINCIPLES

Amal NAFFA'A

CC Political Bureau member,
Jordanian Communist Party (JCP)

TO US THESE questions are not just an abstraction. In late 1985, the Jordanian Communists restored unity in their ranks after the differences and divisions of 1971 and 1983. Today the party again faces difficulties, but we believe that our past experience, and that of other parties, will help us to overcome them.

Differences of opinion within an organisation are natural and objective. Lenin believed that "the elaboration of a common programme for the Party should not, of course, put an end to all polemics; it will firmly establish those basic views on the character, the aims, and the tasks of our movement which must serve as the banner of a fighting party, a party that remains consolidated and united despite partial differences of opinion among its members on partial questions".²

The circumstances in which Communists are working today demand the restoration of Lenin's principles not just in general politics but also in party-building, including the issue of unity. Though opposed to factions within the party, Lenin could always find ways of working with them. So it is important for us today not just to support the new thinking generated by the CPSU but to *restructure the activities of our own parties along genuine Leninist lines*.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the JCP has already made a definitive analysis of the causes of the first split, but we have drawn some conclusions, and are willing to share them, all the more so since most of us believe that had we had more experience at the time of the split, we could have avoided the worst. *The split is in fact the easiest way out of a difficult situation*. Preserving unity is tougher—but more worthwhile.

The JCP has a strong base amidst the mass of peo-

ple, including blue- and white-collar workers, students and other young people, and women. In 1956, it contributed to an overall political thaw in the country and two of its members were elected to Parliament.

After the 1957 reactionary coup, thousands of party members along with other patriots and progressives fell victim to harsh repression. But unlike the many religious and nationalist parties which left the political scene at that time, the Communists remained a strong and cohesive force and made progress in creating trade unions and some other mass organisations. At present we are fighting for the establishment of national democratic power in the country and supporting the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine.

As in other Third World countries, the objective cause of the serious differences in our party is the *broad social spectrum of its membership*. It is common knowledge that the intelligentsia is the first to embrace Marxist-Leninist ideology, and then conveys it to the working class. When divergent views are put forward, e. g., on new political developments, party leaders, most of them intellectuals from bourgeois or petty bourgeois backgrounds, tend to take an inflexible stand and overreact.

It takes patience to smooth out differences, especially ideological ones. We know from our own experience that the main impediment here is the *dogmatism* of those who will not or cannot understand new circumstances. For instance, a number of our comrades were blind to the fact that the gap between the original positions of the factions had narrowed sufficiently to allow for the restoration of unity. It transpired from lengthy discussions that they had a perverted idea of the purity of Marxism-Leninism and tended to view its proponents as prophets rather than ordinary people who were apt to have doubts, make mistakes and rectify them.

The subjective reasons for splits in Third World communist parties include backward traditions and prejudices. Feuds among the rural bourgeoisie in Jordan are sometimes so intense that people destroy each other's crops or property. Regrettably, such mores influence also party life. That is why it is especially important in countries with low educational and cultural standards *constantly to educate and*

¹ See, WMR, No. 2, 1988, pp. 43-47, WMR, No. 12, 1988, p. 86.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 231.

enlighten cadres, especially leaders, in particular to encourage a culture of discussion and exchanges of opinion.

Understanding democratic centralism, in our view, is a major issue. Some people tend to consider democratic centralism to be a kind of strait-jacket on dissent. Of course, it is the easiest way for the majority in the leadership to use it against dissenters rather than engage them in discussion. But that leads directly to a split.

There is another tendency: to interpret democratic centralism in terms of petty bourgeois liberalism. Such an interpretation fosters the emergence of groupings and factional activity within a party. In that case dialogue becomes formal and divorced from the ideological principles of unity in a Marxist-Leninist organisation and from the paramount objective of effectively translating party policy into practice.

Our experience has equipped us to oppose both factionalism and the vulgar understanding and application of the principles of democratic centralism. To my mind, one or the other of the above misconceptions is at the root of splits in a number of parties in developing countries. It is tremendously important to balance centralism and democracy, and the majority and a minority, correctly. When differences arise in a party, a *safety valve should be provided to let off the steam* so as to avoid a split.

It is important to bear in mind here that the class enemy has a stake in splitting up the communist ranks and is trying hard to provoke rifts. Having restored unity in the JCP, the reunited forces soon discovered the perfidious role hostile forces had played in spreading misinformation and fomenting differences.

Outside intervention, even well-intentioned, is hardly likely to help overcome a split. It is in such cases that some Communists begin to look for allies outside the party, and that fraternal parties give preference to one grouping or another. As a result divisions are deepened rather than smoothed out. We went through all that and paid dearly for the experience.

The alignment of forces inside the country, in the Arab world and on the international scene keeps shifting, influencing the Communists' policy of alliances. The role of the party and its tactic of building relations with other social and political forces are always in the focus of discussions; a flexible dialectical approach is a must here. The important factor, I think, is whether or not our real or potential allies take part in the struggle against imperialism and reaction, and also whether there are changes in their ranks. Jordanian Communists realise that they cannot succeed singlehanded, and are always on the lookout for partners. At the same time, the *need to make alliances with other class forces and at the same time preserve the party's identity is a major cause of differences*.

We are arguing, for instance, about the role of

the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party (BAATH). The BAATH in Syria occasionally cooperates with Communists, whereas in Iraq it kills them. Can we consider BAATH an ally? Or another question: Is it correct to say that the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation always takes a stand that is acceptable to Communists? At one time, as everyone knows, it came to terms with King Hussein and made concessions to the United States. On the other hand, the PLO has rejected Washington-imposed "blueprints" for a Mideast settlement, is leading the courageous struggle of the Arab people in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, and in November 1988 has proclaimed an independent Palestinian state. The complex and volatile political situation is very important to the party's unity.

Now the last point: practice shows that differences usually arise in the upper echelons of party leadership, that is, that *splits begin "at the top"*. Contacts between the leadership and the rank-and-file are broken, occasionally because of persecution and repression, and especially when some of the leaders are in prison, while others work underground or have emigrated. They do not always see eye to eye, which is natural, but a common stand is very difficult to work out under clandestine conditions. That's the sort of situation we used to have in our party, but now it is past history.

Hundreds of Communists dropped out of the party because of splits. But since reunification in 1985, we have been operating efficiently. Genuine unity on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary principles brings new members to the party and strengthens it in other ways. Communists' constantly increasing activity is eloquent proof that we have entered a new stage and are on the threshold of a revolutionary resurgence.

In view of the situation, in August 1988 the JCP leadership again addressed the Communists who for various reasons remained outside the party and asked them to reunite with us on the basis of a true Leninist understanding of democratic centralism. Many young people have rejoined the party. But our goal is the unity of *all* the country's Communists, and we continue perseveringly to work for it.

FORGING LINKS IN JOINT STRUGGLE

Avtar Singh MALHOTRA

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National Council Secretary,
Communist Party of India (CPI)*

THE SPLIT¹ in the Communist Party of India occurred some 25 years ago. The bitter experience after the split has convinced our party that it has done tremendous damage to the communist movement and to the anti-imperialist, democratic forces in the coun-

¹ The CPI split up in November 1964 and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)], emerged.—Ed.

try and helped to strengthen the rightist reactionary forces there. I would completely agree with what is written here that the worst splits usually develop along with mutual recrimination, rivalry, personal offence, and attempts at undercutting each other, all of which weakens the parties, lessens their prestige and influence among the masses and leads to a considerable loss of party credibility in the eyes of their actual and potential allies. Our bitter experience in India generally confirms what is stated here. The split in the movement in India has greatly tarnished the image of the Communists and negatively affected the mass democratic forces. It has resulted in a situation where many of our potential allies have also been pleading with the Communists to find a way to unite.

At its 11th Congress at Bhatinda, the Communist Party of India put the unification of the communist movement in India as one of the party's main tasks. And it stated that the political perspective of building the Left and democratic alliance cannot be achieved without simultaneously carrying on the struggle for *left unity and communist unity*. The democratic forces in the country and the people, would not repose their faith in such an alternative, such an alliance, unless they see the Communists united.

Recently the position has greatly improved. We have decided to *work for this unity by trying to achieve it through action, that is, through mass struggles on urgent political and economic issues*. For quite some time now both the Communist Party of India and the Communist Party of India (M) have been finding the way to wage struggle unitedly, both as individual parties and also by taking the initiative together to mobilise other like-minded forces on particular issues. Simultaneously, united action is un-

folding through the democratic mass organisations getting together on urgent mass issues. This process of united struggle has helped to bring both the parties closer and for some time now a regular Coordinating Committee of the two parties has functioned at the central level. Usually it meets to exchange views, discuss the political situation and any urgent issue that has come up and tries to discover areas of agreement, and what campaigns or what initiative can be taken jointly. In fact, we made a proposal to have such coordinating committees at state levels and in the districts, so that we can intervene and move the masses faster. But that was not agreed to at first. Now it is agreed that if the states concerned find it useful and necessary they can have such coordinating committees at the state level also. Recently both of our parties took the initiative to mobilise other Left parties as well, with the result that four Left parties and some progressive intellectuals were able jointly to organise a national-level Convention against communalism and other divisive forces in Delhi. That Convention was a big success and had a big impact. It was able to mobilise many other democratic sections who came to address the Convention and spoke in favour of communal amity, secularism, national integration and stressed the urgency of combatting politically divisive forces.

Recently the democratic mass organisations, in which the four main Left parties in the country—the CPI, the CPI (M), the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc—are associated, together drew up plans for a nationwide mass campaign, a campaign which ultimately led to a massive Left-led rally and march in the capital on December 19, 1987. Even the bourgeois press had to accept that over one million people took part, and admit that it was

IN BRIEF

CAPE VERDE

The 3rd Congress of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) was held under the motto "In a Changing World—a Party Oriented to the Future". The delegates discussed key issues of the country's development, worked out its economic strategy for the next few years, and adopted decisions for improving party work, the country's political system, and for furthering democracy and consolidating independence. The congress focussed attention on enhancing the PAICV leading role in building up the nation and the relations between the party and the state.

The pre-congress period was marked by lively discussion of the guidelines for the progress report, with 38,000 people, or more than a quarter of the country's adult population, taking part.

CHILE

The country's progressive political figures have announced the formation of a Broad Party of the Socialist Left (PAIS), whose main aim, according to them, is to represent the popular masses at the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. The United Left, which includes the Communist Party and independent representatives of the left forces have come out in support of the new party.

PRC

A delegation from *Rabotnichesko Delo*, the organ of the BCP CC, visited China at the invitation of *Renmin ribao*, the organ of the CPC CC. It was noted at the talks that the development of relations between China and Bulgaria in diverse fields meets the interests of the two parties and peoples.

FINLAND

A plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Finland (SKP) decided to convene the 12th SKP Congress in Helsinki on March 9-11, 1990. It adopted guidelines for its preparatory work.

FRANCE

A two-day National Conference of the PCF in Nanterre was attended by 993 delegates from almost all the party's departmental federations. The agenda included two items: the role of grassroots party units and of every Communist in ensuring greater unity of the popular masses in the effort to bring about changes in society, and the party's attitude to an alliance of the Left forces in the run-up to the municipal elections set for next March. The PCF stressed in its appeal to the Socialist Party that it seeks unity of

all Left forces in the struggle against the right-wing camp. It is hoping for an alliance of the Left forces and intends to have a joint list of candidates drawn up before the first round of the municipal elections. A further growth in the PCF influence was noted; this was borne out, in particular, by the results of the last parliamentary and cantonal elections. Since the beginning of 1988, some 60,000 joined the party, a record figure since 1981.

Julio Anguita, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain (PCE) who led his party's delegation to Paris, met Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the PCF. The two leaders favoured stronger cooperation between their parties in defending workers' rights, freedom and democracy, and in working for economic and social progress. Both sides reaffirmed their parties' resolve to promote the

unprecedented in recent years. That campaign did not end with the march but carried on, leading up to a big nationwide strike for changes in the policies of the Government, for certain urgent popular demands and for a mid-term election. In the course of the campaign, the CPI and the CPI (M) also organised coordination committees to carry on the campaign at state levels, at district levels, and at lower levels. These joint committees have brought the two parties closer. Although all four Left parties were formal constituents of these committees, in most areas of the country only the two main Left parties, the CPI and the CPI (M), functioned. Thus, besides organising these campaigns, we have been holding discussions and mutual exchanges of points of view and this has brought the two parties closer.

Our party has been laying stress on some points which would help to develop this process. Firstly, as far as possible, *open polemics between the two parties should be avoided*. There should be exchanges of views between the two parties to find areas of agreement, and then to chalk out practical plans, mass campaigns and other tasks. If, in any case, sharp differences and polemics become unavoidable, they should be conducted in a fraternal manner, not in a manner which creates tension between the two parties. Unfortunately, sometimes such polemics did take place. This is now far less frequent than it was. Recently, the issue of alliances came under discussion and our party put forth the viewpoint that we should never in any case be a party to a joint platform or a joint political campaign in which such rabidly communal and divisive forces as the Bharatiya Janata Party (the Hindu communal organisation), the Sikh extremist organisations and the Muslim chauvinist and communal organisations are par-

ticipants. We have both stuck to this agreement. We have also been trying to work jointly with the other parties, with our potential allies, trying to convince them that they should also come to a similar position. Some of them have stated that they will go along with the Left parties on urgent political issues and mass issues but not with the communal parties. But at the same time we find that many of these centrist parties—the bourgeois opposition parties, which are heterogeneous in composition, and even include people among those holding reactionary views—adopt vacillating positions on these issues.

As regards the prospects for unification of the two parties, we consider that the practical steps should be: *firstly*, to carry forward coordination of our mass activities and political actions, and to organise party coordination committees at state levels and lower down; *secondly*, and more realistically, to unify the democratic mass organisations which both of us lead (trade unions, organisations of peasants, agricultural workers, young people, students, and women). Though there have been united activities, and sometimes united mass actions, by these mass organisations, so far no steps have been possible for their *organisational unity*. There is also conflict sometimes, particularly in the trade unions.

On the subject of Left-led state governments: at present there are two, West Bengal and Kerala. In West Bengal the CPI (M) dominates the Left Front, which includes the other three Left parties: the CPI, the Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist Party. They are now cooperating in government. They are also faced with the common problem of discrimination by the central government, and also by the activities of the state unit of the ruling party at the centre, which is unhappy with its position in

antiwar movements and stressed the significance of the peace campaign today. They highlighted the need to enhance cooperation and solidarity among European communist parties to make their joint initiatives and actions more effective and to increase the exchange of experience and information on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

FRG

A two-day visit by a delegation of the PCF, led by its General Secretary Georges Marchais, which was in the FRG at the invitation of the DKP, culminated in a solidarity meeting in the town of Wülfrath under the motto "For Peace, Work and Democracy". The delegations of the two parties held an in-depth exchange of opinion and agreed on practical steps to cement the relations of friendship, solidarity and cooperation between them.

GDR

A plenary meeting of the SED Central Committee held in Berlin decided to call the next, 12th Party Congress on May 15-19, 1990, in the GDR capital. It was also decided to renew party membership and candidates' cards from September 1 till December 31 of this year.

GREECE

Deputies of the ruling PASOK Party have rejected a bill tabled by the Communist MPs on the introduction of a direct proportional electoral system. Deputies of the Left opposition parties sharply criticised the ruling majority's stand since, in their opinion, the present electoral system places the numerically small parties in an unequal position. With the parliamentary elections set for the summer of 1989, debate around the project for a new electoral system is becoming keener.

ITALY

The General Secretary of the ICP Achille Occhetto had his first official meeting with the Political Secretary of the ISP Bettino Craxi. Held in the ISP headquarters in Rome, it was devoted to a discussion of the Palestinian problem. The two leaders agreed that there is a broad mutual understanding between the two parties on many international issues, though there exist important differences on certain, mainly domestic political issues.

LATIN AMERICA

Representatives of the Left forces of Latin America and the Caribbean have called for unity of action of all democratic forces in the struggle for independent political, economic and social development of the states in the region. Their first meeting, in the capital of Ecuador, was held under the slogan "For Solidar-

ity and Sovereignty of our Peoples". Over 100 representatives of political parties, trade unions, civic organisations, and members of parliament from 13 countries adopted a final document, the Quito Declaration, which denounces US neocolonialist schemes against the Latin American states and the Pentagon strategy of "low intensity conflicts". The participants in the forum voiced their solidarity with the peoples of Nicaragua, Panama, and El Salvador in their struggle against US interference in their domestic affairs and demanded the immediate restoration of democracy in Chile. It was decided to organise a series of manifestations by the Left forces in the region to uphold the right of their peoples to self-determination, independent development and democracy. The next such meeting is to be held in Colombia.

Bengal and Kerala, where it is out of power. Alongside this there are also some differences and problems in relations between the parties within the Front. We hope that they will be suitably sorted out. We hope that the Left-led governments will give more attention to making constructive use of their limited power, and make better use of the opportunities open to them as ruling force in these states. These achievements would help in winning people in other states over to the Communist movement and to the Left forces, and create an impact on the democratic forces all over the country. To some extent this is being done, but we feel that much more can and should be done.

In Kerala, besides the CPI (M) and the PCI, some other parties are also constituents of the government coalition: the Revolutionary Socialist Party, a section of the Congress Socialist Party, the local units of the Janata Party, and the Lok Dal. It was this Left Democratic Government which won in the recent elections. Earlier it was the front led by the Congress (I), which administered that state. But in the recent elections some months back both the Communist Parties decided not to have any truck with the divisive forces, the communalist and the casteist parties in the state. The Congress (I) there is in alliance with such parties. So, the struggle between the two Fronts became a very important and significant struggle in fact for the whole country. The Left Democratic Front won, though with a small margin, and is now the administration in Kerala. People all over the country are looking hopefully to the positive achievements of the Left Democratic Front, and waiting to see to what extent they will succeed in weakening the mass base of the communalist and casteist forces in that state. These latter have been gaining in strength because of the opportunist policies followed by the Congress (I) of allying with them in order to keep the Left out of power. And this is in a state very well known for its high level of education and political consciousness, the state where in 1957, in the second general election in the country, a Communist-led government came to power. So, the struggle that is going on in Kerala is very important in determining whether the Left Democratic Front government will be able to help the people, implement the policies outlined in their election manifesto and, along with that, to strengthen secularism there and weaken the divisive forces.

The third state led by the Left forces was Tripura. But in the recent elections an alliance led by the Congress (I) has won with a small margin. There were serious complaints about the conduct of the elections and other matters, but I am not going into that here.

The joint activities in these governments are a necessary part of the common activity and united struggles of the two communist parties. Nevertheless I would attach greater importance to the united mass struggles and mass campaigns, conducted mainly at

the grassroots level, but also by the trade unions, the working class and other employees among the rural peasant and agricultural worker masses and other democratic sections. In fact, recently we have been successful in developing mass campaigns at the grassroots level and mobilising the masses instead of only thinking of electoral combinations and contests.

International issues used to be very decisive, and that was one of the factors causing the split. For some years now differences on international affairs have been narrowing, though some still remain. The CPI (M) is also desirous of closer relations with the communist parties of other socialist countries. Its stand on Afghanistan, Vietnam and Kampuchea is more or less similar to our party's. On these points the CPI (M) took divergent position from that of the Communist Party of China, with which they were in agreement several years ago. With the recent changes in the orientation of the Communist Party of China, our party and the CPC have normalised relations. Our party delegation visited China in 1988 at their invitation, and I think there is general improvement in the international communist movement. *The trend of communist parties moving closer together is getting stronger*, something which has helped in India as well.

Moreover, the CPI (M) used not to work in the organised peace movement, the All-India Peace and Solidarity Organisation, although now, after discussions, they have joined. They are still not part of the ISCUS (the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society), but now and then they attend the odd functions organised by ISCUS and things are improving to some extent. Besides this, our two parties have occasionally got together with other parties to rally on issues of peace, disarmament, and solidarity with the liberation struggles of different peoples, and to organise big mass rallies and marches.

Though the differences are still there on some international questions, and on the world communist movement itself, particularly on certain approaches and evaluations, they have narrowed considerably and the *area of agreement has generally expanded*.

The "new thinking" and the process of restructuring, of strengthening socialist democracy, the emphasis on the human factor, and the results which naturally will follow as the process goes forward, will definitely have a very big positive impact in India. Firstly, it will increase the appeal of socialism and strengthen the trend of the working masses to the left and towards the Communists. Secondly, it will strengthen the ideological positions of the Communists. It should also strengthen the move towards cooperation between the forces of the Left, and between the forces of the Left and other democratic and anti-imperialist forces. The positive impact of this "new thinking" in international affairs should also help to strengthen the unity of communist forces in India.

RESTORING SEVERED TIES

Zhu DACHENG

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Communist Party of China (CPC)

Reports about meetings of CPC representatives with delegates of various fraternal parties feature increasingly often in the WMR-published diary of interparty ties. After many years of self-imposed isolation, the CPC is in fact rediscovering the West European communist movement. What is your current assessment of it?

THE HISTORY of the CPC's relations with other communist parties is a complicated problem. There came a time when we decided not to focus on the past. Today, we prefer to be more oriented on the future. In our view, such relations should be based on fundamental principles—Independence, non-interference into the affairs of others and mutual respect. Communists should cooperate more on the key problems of today's world such as peace, disarmament, development and environmental protection.

We note that large-scale changes have occurred in the international communist movement over the past two decades. All parties now see that they should devise their policies independently and that there is no single model to be followed in socialist construction. Everyone is now aware that relations between parties should be shaped along the lines of equality, not of "fathers" and "sons". Each party defines its policies guided by its national realities.

The CPC began to restore its ties with European communist parties back in 1977, when we resumed our contacts with the League of Communists of

Yugoslavia. In 1980 the same thing occurred in our relations with the communist parties of Italy and Spain, and in 1985, with the overwhelming majority of West European communist parties. Over the past two years we have received, for the first time after a long interval, communist delegations from Greece, the FRG and Luxembourg. To sum up, we now maintain relations with all parties of that region.

The existence of two or even more communist parties in the same country is a reality of the contemporary West European communist movement. How does the CPC deal with such cases?

We do not have any uniform approach. It all depends on the specific situation. For example, we maintain relations with both communist parties in Greece.

A great deal is being said today about a crisis in the West European communist movement. How do you see the difficulties these communist parties are encountering?

China is a long way from Western Europe, and we cannot discern all problems of West European Communists equally well. It seems to us that under the impact of the revolution in science and technology and of economic shifts, far-reaching structural change is occurring in West European countries and in the composition of their societies. This raises new problems before Communists. Besides, one must admit that until recently, the image of all socialist countries, including the USSR and the People's Republic of China, was not all that attractive. They did not demonstrate the advantages of socialism convincingly. Two major difficulties arose in this connection—those of economic development and internal democratisation. These, too, have made it harder for the West European Communists to work.

Still, I would not refer to a "crisis" in this respect. Rather, our age has delivered a challenge to the Communists. We are convinced that the communist parties of the region have every opportunity to meet the challenge.

NEWSPAPER FESTIVALS

● A traditional festival of *The Guardian*, the newspaper of the Socialist Party of Australia, was held in one of Sidney's parks. Visitors were able to buy political literature and get to know more about the party and its aims.

● A festival of *Nuevo Rumbo*, the organ of the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain, has been held in the city of Valencia. Its motto was "For the Unity of Spain's Communists". The programme included discussions of the country's home and foreign policies and seminars on such topical issues as turn-

ing the Mediterranean into a zone of peace and cooperation.

● Thousands of people from Geneva and other parts of the country took part in the festival of *VO Réalité*, the organ of the Swiss Party of Labour. They made a tour of the exhibitions and pavilions set up by the press from communist and workers' parties and national liberation movements. On the last day of the festival there was a meeting devoted to topical domestic and international issues and the party's stand on them.

● The city of Osaka was the venue of the festival of *Akahata*, the organ of

Japan's Communists. *Akahata*, whose readership exceeds 3 million, advocates peace, the scrapping of nuclear weapons and disarmament, and exposes the course steered by the ruling circles aimed at strengthening the military alliance with the US and building up Japan's army. It lays bare the antipopular character of monopoly policies, upholds democracy and opposes reactionary onslaughts. In their speeches at the two-day festival, leaders of the Japanese Communist Party called for efforts to have the parliament dissolved so that the voters should be given a chance to voice their opinion on the major problems facing the country.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION: WHAT LIES AHEAD?

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A US COMMUNIST AND A US SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

How does the US Left assess the present state of US-Soviet relations and their future prospects? How are these relations connected with the domestic political situation in the United States and with the revolutionary and liberation struggle throughout the world? This subject was discussed in New York by Victor PERLO, National Committee member of the Communist Party—USA, and Robert LEKACHMAN of the Democratic Socialists of America, Professor Emeritus, City University of New York.

Relations Are Improving, But...

Victor PERLO. I believe it is premature to say that this is a turning point in US-Soviet relations. It represents an improvement, but not yet a turning point. Everything will depend on the course of future events, of which the most important is the outcome of the struggle over foreign policy in the United States itself: in this country, we still face extremely powerful forces that favor continued confrontation with the socialist world. This is confirmed, among other things, by the Vance-Kissinger article in *Foreign Affairs* which sticks to the most extreme positions. The views of the authors cannot be dismissed because they represent major financial groups—the Morgans and the Rockefellers. On the other hand, the peace movement in the United States is acquiring unprecedented scope and a broader social composition, including the labor movement which has to be the force that will ultimately cause a dramatic change for the better in US-Soviet relations.

Robert LEKACHMAN. I am a little bit more cheerful than Victor on this point, and I will tell you why. President Reagan drew the fangs of the more aggressive anticommunist forces in this country. This made it possible for liberals and social democrats to pursue a detente-oriented policy without massive political penalty. During last year's election campaign, even George Bush did not run on the classic hard-line anti-communist ticket. I agree that we do have an enormous vested interest that favors continued hostility. But at the same time we have another group of American businessmen who are yearning to sell their products in the Soviet Union. So I think it is not only the peace movement but also a section of our corporate structure that has a stake in a new relationship with the Soviet Union.

V. P. That is true, but it is not sections of big business that play the crucial role. The viewpoint of our Communist Party is that only the position of the relative power of different classes can bring about a transition to a real policy of peaceful co-

existence. This requires a multiplication of peace efforts, especially a broadening of participation by labor and the American people in general. In your recent book you mentioned the role of parliament measures in restricting the influence of the arms manufacturers. I would give a different order of priorities. The opposition of the capitalist class to the working class continues. It takes its most acute form in the desire of the US ruling quarters to roll back socialism and isolate those countries where the working class has won power. One can certainly say that US imperialism has moderated its stance somewhat vis-à-vis some of these nations. That is a very important point. But the overall thrust of US policy has remained the same, and that is why it must be defeated. The defeat in Vietnam made possible Nixon's detente, and perhaps the defeat in Nicaragua is contributing to a certain degree to changes in policy, but it does not finalize them yet.

R. L. I think it is true that big business is hostile to any country where the workers have strong influence or even, actually, power. In the United States, unfortunately, corporate interests have very largely won the battle against their own workers. The unions are weak, wages have not kept pace with inflation, and living standards are declining. So far, there has been no visible political reaction on the part of the workers against the corporate interests—a fact in which the latter rejoice. This, in turn, may temper their zeal to destroy socialist regimes in the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, I think there has been a shift in US policy toward the Soviet Union, and another important factor played its part in this. Both sides have realized that the role of the superpowers is now weaker than it used to be, that the burdens of defense both here and in the Soviet Union are so heavy that they damage other priorities.

V. P. The interest of both countries in broadly improved relations is evident to all who are willing to face the world as it really is, including the coexistence of the two social systems in it. Most people realize the necessity of coexistence and are aware of the common need to remove the threat of nuclear war. But a great deal still remains to be done, and that includes the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, a radical reduction in military expenditures, the removal of all foreign military bases, and broad trade between the United States and the socialist countries.

Still, despite the persisting desire to undermine socialism and prevent its spread in the Third World, changes in US policies and in public opinion in the United States are obvious. Even within the Reagan Administration, there was the ousting of Defense Secretary Weinberger and some of the other far-right forces. However, Reagan did not abandon psychological warfare and kept making very strong anti-Soviet speeches under the pretext of human rights.

Human Rights

R. L. My view is that Americans have no God-given right to define human rights as a universal generalization. Our own record on human rights is a deeply spotted one, so we had better avoid lecturing other countries on this subject. This said, like any other decent person I oppose torture, unjust imprisonment and violations of the normal liberties to talk, meet and demonstrate, wherever such violations occur. But our use of this issue against the Soviet Union has been essentially ideological. It betrays the deeply ingrained anti-Soviet animosity of our politicians rather than a desire to promote democratic freedoms in other countries. After all, the administration does not complain about the countless human rights violations by the various authoritarian regimes of the right.

V. P. The specific complaints about human rights in the Soviet Union relate principally to two current questions—their emigration policy and the extent to which non-Communists or people who oppose the regime to one degree or another have access to the mass media. But first, the restrictions in both cases arise out of the situation in a country that has been long under siege and under Cold War pressure. Second, their restrictions are trivial in comparison with what we face in this country. Take the UN Covenant on Social and Economic Rights, which we do not officially recognize. With many millions unemployed, we have no mention in our legislation of the right to a job. There is no racial equality. The number of the homeless, comparable to their number during the 1930s, highlights the refusal of our society to provide decent housing for all. The attack against the working class has resulted in a 15% cut in real wages since 1972. There is the restriction of the right to strike and the large-scale use of scabs. Plus the fact that the US government supports the criminal torture regimes in El Salvador, Guatemala and South Africa. I could easily go on with this litany. Let us face it: the issue of human rights has been used by the administration and our media as part of the psychological warfare against socialism as a system and against the process of disarmament and detente. I certainly agree that like all other systems, socialism has its sore spots and its blemishes. There is no perfect or ideal society in the world.

R. L. I applaud Victor's extended definition of human rights. It is important for Americans, most of whom fail to understand that human rights are not just free speech, but also the right to housing, jobs, free education, medical care and the whole array of social services which the Soviet Union guarantees to its citizens. Much of the rest of the world defines human rights far more broadly than Americans do.

But I think the primary concern of the administration is with the welfare of American business interests, not with human rights. In Washington, perestroika is perceived as something connected with

commercial opportunities. The line of reasoning is that if the Soviet Union allows cooperatives and small individual enterprises to form, this will increase private production, the market, profit and the like. This, I think, is the major reason why part of the American corporate leadership approves of perestroika. Besides, I suspect there is also the belief that if the Soviet Union concentrates more on its own internal economy, it will pay less attention to foreign affairs, and this would be good for the United States.

The Attitude to Perestroika

V. P. I think the main aspect of perestroika appealing to our business and administration leaders is their hope that it can be a weapon to promote the restoration of capitalism, if not immediately in the Soviet Union, then at least in some other socialist countries such as Poland or China. The CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency have recently published reports, respectively, on China and the Soviet Union. What is interesting is the massive development of trade between the United States and China; 35% of our exports to China are high-tech goods—goods that are not sold to the Soviet Union. Obviously, this represents the desire to foment divisions among the socialist countries and the hopes for the restoration of capitalism in China. I doubt very much that these plans will succeed, and I observe improvements in Soviet-Chinese relations. But the plans and the hopes are there.

R. L. Perestroika has begun to split the American corporate community: the business interest of our corporate leadership may overcome ideological convictions. The contest here is between different currents, and the Kissinger-Vance current with its idea that "you cannot trust the Communists: if they are mild today, they will be fierce tomorrow" apparently represents a diminishing influence. You can see this in the more intelligent business periodicals such as *Business Week*. Besides, there is the feeling in part of the business community that this country is now weaker in a variety of ways than it was in the 1950s or the 1960s, that we are yielding to our competitors. Conflicts are already growing between the increasingly intertwined Japanese and American economies. It is also unclear what the relationship will be like between the United States and the West European Common Market from 1992 on, whether this will mean more extra barriers or fewer. This uncertainty makes the possibility of increased economic relationships with the Soviet Union part of the general picture of American capitalism reaching out in various directions simply to maintain its position.

V. P. I would add that more important than the question of splits in the business community is the changed attitude among the masses of the American people. More than 150 US cities have established "twinning" relations with cities in the Soviet Union,

and that is highly significant. Along with more glasnost in the Soviet Union, there is a beginning of more glasnost in the United States. I am referring to the more tolerant attitude of the media to public appearances of Communists. Gus Hall and myself have recently been on a TV program and had a chance to speak to 30 million people.

R. L. One should not lose sight of the influence the military corporations exert on people's minds. We spend a larger portion of our GNP on the military than any of our allies—between 6% and 7%. If we maintain relatively high employment, conversion will be a profitable opportunity for many of our industrialists. A reduction in military expenditures could help improve the political climate in this country. But on the larger question of disarmament, residual fears are still enormous. Even those politicians who are skeptical of new, particularly nuclear weapon systems are often advocates of maintaining or even building up conventional war systems, tanks, fighter planes and the like, and this preserves what I would call a lurking paranoia about weapons among Americans. A settlement of the conventional weapons issue strikes me as in some ways even more difficult than negotiating a nuclear disarmament treaty.

V. P. I disagree. Nuclear disarmament is obviously the most urgent and important question because we are talking about preserving human civilization. When that issue is resolved—and I hope to live that long—the question of conventional armaments will appear less significant. For example, in relation to the European theater the issue of conventional armaments was raised only in the following connection: if we did not launch a first strike, the Soviets would immediately strike across Western Europe and go to the English Channel. But now it is increasingly recognized that the Soviet Union has no such intention. This abolishes the need to have nuclear weapons and when there are no nuclear weapons, there will be no need to keep large-scale stockpiles of conventional armaments there either.

Competition in the Third World

V. P. The issue is different in the Third World where weapons are needed to combat imperialism. However, I think that victories in the fight against nuclear weapons will weaken the ability of the United States to maintain its much hated military bases in South Korea, the Philippines or Honduras. It will be easier for these nations to develop as they will, and they will develop in various ways. By no means will all go to socialism, at least not in the short run. But they will feel less neocolonial pressure which has persisted ever since outright colonial rule was abolished.

R. L. I think these matters are extraordinarily complex. There is no question in my mind that the Soviet Union will support various liberation movements while

our own imperialists will support whatever right-wing forces are available and try and create such regimes if need be. Although the competition will continue, both superpowers are aware of the heavy costs involved. So I believe this competition in the Third World will be somewhat more limited, at least militarily. There is a possibility that the people who run American foreign policy will become somewhat more sophisticated and realize that if a Third World country calls itself socialist or even if it is close to the typically socialist economic and political structures, this may pose no threat to America's vital interest. I am looking at this from a cheerful standpoint.

V. P. I would like to recall a very remarkable document—the UN Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. It is now part of international law because it has been ratified by many countries—but not by the United States. It outlines the only possible relationship which will permit Third World countries to really develop, to close the gap gradually between them and the more developed countries and to raise their living standards—and do it on a basis of independence rather than as subsidiaries of US corporations. Washington officialdom is sharply opposed to this course, and that is what US Third World policies are all about.

Yes, US-Soviet cooperation can be important in resolving critical regional issues. But diplomacy is not enough. Only widespread popular support for Nicaragua made possible the defeat in the US Congress of additional military aid to the contras. It is very important to educate the American people on international issues and in this way help them influence our foreign policy because our government is not likely to move decisively on the logic or justice of the situation. That will require much greater popular pressures. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union clearly follows a positive policy on these issues in terms of the criteria I mentioned.

R. L. Let me return to the issue of a new international economic order. At the moment most Third World countries are burdened with a foreign debt so tremendous that nobody in his right mind expects it to be repaid. Now, before new relationships can possibly be attained between the Third World and the First World, something is going to have to be done about this debt.

Here, there are signs that suggest a realistic approach. President Mitterand has proposed forgiving African countries some of their debts. Senator Bradley of New Jersey has come forward with a very complicated scheme for writing off part of the debt, reducing interest rates and the like. None of these are altruistic suggestions. They represent instead a realization that the Third World is an enormous potential market. I am not confusing this with a new economic order of equality because the capitalist model is still one of Third World dependence on our technology, on the shaping of their own domestic markets to suit our interest.

Nevertheless it opens possibilities because if the debt burden is alleviated, if growth in the Third World resumes, this will give some political leeway to progressive forces there. The way these things will develop is an open issue. It all comes down to an intelligent interpretation of capitalist self-interest—whether it is better to have the debt repaid or to secure growing markets.

V. P. The only question is whether that reasonable view can prevail over the powerful attraction of profits from foreign investments which have been five times as great as profits from foreign trade—and, consequently, would be at risk if a new international economic order is established.

The Crucial Issue of Nuclear Disarmament

V. P. As far as broader prospects are concerned, I hope there will develop a situation where our ruling class sooner or later accepts the inevitability of more and more countries gradually going the socialist way. They will have to accept the inevitability of cooperation with the Soviet Union in economic, cultural, scientific and technological fields. In this connection I support the view that we should combat anticommunist and anti-Soviet ideology whether it is expressed in our writing, or in our teaching, or in our day-to-day life. If we can jointly overcome that tendency, there will be the potential for the formation of a very broad united political movement in this country, involving not only such organizations as yours and mine but also the unions, the farmers and certain sections of business—a very broad people's movement without precedent in the history of the United States. I do not consider this just a dream. I consider this a realistic possibility.

R. L. I am less cheerful about the prospects for a broad-based popular movement in this country. On the question raised about the future of US-Soviet cooperation, I am cheerful for one additional reason. Nuclear disarmament is the crucial issue, and I do expect progress in this field. But there is also something else happening which is that both socialism and capitalism are in a process of redefinition and reassessment. It may prove easier for the American ruling classes to accept those forms of socialism that are developing in the world: obviously, cooperatives and the market are not classical Stalinism. It is less clear to me how capitalism will reassess its own problems.

Despite my skepticism about the development of a broad and progressive popular movement in this country, I do feel that the prospects are good for a decline of anti-Soviet and anticommunist attitudes and for the acceptance by part of the capitalist class of Third World developments which up to now it has been unwilling to tolerate and has done much to sabotage. All this creates a more favorable basis for progress in US-Soviet relations.

CMEA - EEC: NEW PROSPECTS

The 1988 Declaration on the establishment of official relations between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community opened a new stage in the evolution of ties between the two major interstate organisations of the socialist and capitalist countries.

WMR asked two leading officials, one from the CMEA and the other from the EEC, to comment on the significance of this event, the relationship between the communities, and its prospects. Below are the replies from two signatories of the Declaration: Rudolf Rohlíček, Chairman of the CMEA Executive Committee in 1987 and 1988, and Willy de Clercq from the Commission of the European Communities in charge of EEC external relations and trade.

What role can cooperation among the European countries united in the EEC and the CMEA play in their economic growth, in strengthening the foundations of the "European home", in promoting peace and in finding solutions to global problems?

Rudolf Rohlíček: The future of the integration processes under way in Europe largely depends on the kind of relations that will take shape between the CMEA and the EEC. These are matters of exceptional importance, because the normalisation of international relations is inconceivable without the broad internationalisation of economic life. Each group has, of course, its own interests, but the extension of economic relations between all states is an objective necessity.

The mutual interest of the parties in developing cooperation is based on a number of long-term factors. There is the worldwide internationalisation of economic activity and the deepening international division of labour, the requirements of the economy in both parts of Europe, the global scope of the revolution in science and technology, and the environmental problems. Bearing in mind these factors while developing cooperation will benefit both sides.

In his speech at the signing of the joint declaration, the FRG Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, then President of the EEC Council of Ministers¹, urged that barriers in Europe be removed and new forms of cooperation developed. This coincides with the interests of the CMEA countries, which re-

cognise the importance of cooperation between the two communities for economic growth and social progress. Up to now, their role in trade with each other and its structure did not accord with the logic of the geographical, economic and historical realities.

It is also important that the normalisation of relations, which implies a further strengthening of confidence in Europe, will itself simultaneously promote this process. The peoples of the continent now have a greater stake than ever before in establishing mutual understanding between states with different economic and social systems. From this standpoint, attempts to go on using external economic relations for political pressure would be an anachronism. We must not forget that Europe is our common home, and that it is our common task to strengthen its security.

Willy de Clercq. The absence of contacts between the European community on the one hand, and the CMEA and its member countries on the other was entirely paradoxical. The community had diplomatic relations with most countries in the world, but it did not have any with East European countries, its next-door neighbours. These will be beneficial for both parties. We have now established a normal situation.

It is beneficial, first, from the political point of view. We both belong to Europe, we have a common history, and a common culture. The establishment of diplomatic relations will allow us to have more regular contacts and more knowledge of what is happening on each side. It will contribute to more stable and peaceful relations. It will also be beneficial from an economic point of view. We have already negotiated a commercial and cooperation agreement with Hungary. We are having negotiations mandates for Czechoslovakia² and Romania. The other East European countries have expressed an interest in an agreement, and we are looking into the matter.

What do you think was holding back contacts between the two communities in the past? Proposals for the establishment of such contacts are known to have been made as far back as the early 1970s.

Willy de Clercq. If you are thinking of the relations before the mutual recognition, they were either incomplete or non-existent. You should really ask the East European countries what the reason for this was. The Community proposed the negotiation of a bilateral agreement to each of them back in 1974. At the time, they were not in a position to answer positively, because they regarded the EC as a sort of economic arm of NATO, and deliberately ignored the EC. Fortunately—and I think that the evolution which has recently occurred in the USSR has con-

Willy de Clercq's replies were received courtesy of "Drapeau Rouge".

¹ 1987-1988.—Ed.

² See "CMEA-EEC Cooperation in 1988" box next page.—Ed.

tributed to it—they have changed their minds. They are the ones who resumed contacts in 1985.

Rudolf Rohlíček. Official relations are now being established between some members of the CMEA and the EEC, and negotiations on trade agreements are in train. In contrast to the EEC, these matters are within the competence of CMEA member countries, and it would hardly be fitting for me to comment on the problems of the actual meetings and conversations.

But let me note the following. There are, certainly, a number of obstacles to economic and trade relations between the West European and the socialist countries. One could take a long time listing the past impediments to an agreement between the CMEA and the EEC. There were, for instance, the attempts to question the powers of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and to create a problem over West Berlin (it was solved due to a statement by the CMEA countries concerned, which re-affirmed the inviolability of the four-power agreement on West Berlin of September 3, 1971).

Trade between them is, of course, at a very low level, and this does not accord with their economic potential. There is the COCOM, an instrument of NATO, which is a brake on the development of technological exchanges, which are, after all, the most promising areas of cooperation. There are also the existing non-tariff barriers, such as limited product quotas, anti-dumping procedures, differing standards, etc. Besides, the question arises of financing exports and imports, and the terms on which commercial credits are to be made available.

That is why the efforts to remove the barriers hampering East-West trade are so important. The Declaration will not, of course, solve all these problems at one go, but it does create a platform for more intensive contacts, and the principles on which it is based suggest ways of solving these problems.

I can say with satisfaction that the establishment of official relations between the CMEA and the EEC is already a historical fact. The point now is how to move forward.

What do you think of the importance of the EEC-CMEA agreement? What can be done in the immediate future?

Willy de Clercq. The Declaration between the EEC and the CMEA is of political significance. The two organisations, which had ignored each other for a long period of time, have now normalised their relations and are laying the ground for mutual cooperation. We must now have further discussions, in the first place, to get to know each other better in order to examine in which field we can cooperate, obviously in accordance with our respective competence and on the basis of reciprocal benefit. In the past, subjects like the exchange of data, and the environment were discussed, and they remain possible areas for discussion.

Rudolf Rohlíček. Let us decide, first of all, where cooperation should begin. This would evidently be in areas that could yield the greatest effect in the shortest time. This includes, I think, general European problems, such as the environment, transport, the search for new and pure sources of energy, nuclear power and its safety. We cannot divide up the rivers flowing across our borders and the seas washing our shores, nor the air we all breathe. Or take the health of forests in Western and Eastern Europe. The pollution of the Baltic and the Mediterranean is a source of concern not only for coastal countries; it also has an impact on the ecological balance of the continent. The list could go on and on.

The working out of common standards for industrial and agricultural production on a European scale is an important field of cooperation, for it would help to develop economic and commercial relations and to remove the superfluous barriers.

We think that considerable mutual benefits could also be derived from long-term economic prognoses which would give the partners a clearer view of each other's potential and requirements, in the light of the long-term prospects of cooperation. There are also the ties in science and technology, exchanges of diverse information, statistical data, and so on.

CMEA-EEC COOPERATION IN 1988

July. Delegations from the EEC, the CMEA and their member countries met in Athens on the initiative of a group of Socialists in European Parliament. A clear trend is evident in Europe, it was said during the discussions, towards greater mutual confidence, entailing the need for greater international division of labour on a European scale. Proposals were put forward on the priority areas of cooperation, such as informatics, statistics, standardisation, energy, transport, the environment, etc.

September. An agreement was signed in Brussels be-

tween Hungary and the EEC on trade, and on commercial and economic cooperation, which confirms Hungary's rights under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. It provides for an end to EEC quota discriminations on Hungarian exports. Apart from trade, it is also aimed to extend cooperation in industry, agriculture, energy, freight haulage, research, tourist travel and environmental protection.

October. A treaty on trade in manufactures was initialled in Brussels between Czechoslovakia and the EEC. Up to then, they had had only agreements regulating the export of Czechoslovak rolled stock, textiles and mutton. The four-year agreement provides for

I think I have answered part of the question about the Declaration, which essentially has a broader significance, especially its political repercussions. This is an assessment that was accepted in a number of statements from both parties.

What is also important is that in the course of the negotiations we gained a better understanding of each other, succeeded in recognising each other's interests in complicated matters, and reached new political decisions, while maintaining our principled stands. One could say that we have managed to apply in international affairs the principles of the new thinking for the benefit of Europe-wide cooperation, and greater confidence and security. This is a contribution to the worldwide efforts to improve international relations.

What are the remaining obstacles to broader cooperation, and what should be done to remove the barriers to growing contacts across Europe?

Willy de Clercq. The political barriers have now been removed. The economic barriers remain, since our economic systems diverge importantly. But in talking to each other, I am convinced that we can make progress, in particular in the field of trade. Trade between the EEC and Eastern Europe is very small for an area of such importance. It represented in 1987 about 7% of the EEC external trade by comparison with 25% for the EEC-EFTA trade. Furthermore, it tends to diminish due to internal difficulties of the CMEA countries.

We have followed closely the economic reforms which are taking place in most of Eastern Europe, and which, we hope, will facilitate trade transactions and direct contacts between East and West. With the creation of the EEC internal market in 1992, the CMEA countries will benefit from an expanding market. For us, East European countries represent a potential market of 400 million consumers.

Rudolf Rohlíček. For all the positive aspects of the Declaration, it would not be realistic of me to say that barriers to cooperation no longer exist.

The backlog of mutual mistrust and suspicion accumulated in the initial period of relations between

the two communities has affected the course of the negotiations. Over the past few years we have, for our part, taken concrete steps to remove the obstacles to better CMEA-EEC relations. We are pleased to note that these steps have been acknowledged by our partners. But occasionally the West still lapses into a particular form of discrimination against the socialist countries, and attempts to cause or sustain "erosion" within them, etc. It is most important, therefore, for the new political thinking to prevail there as well. We are not starting from scratch, definite steps have already been made, but we have to go forward.

To what extent can the experience of the EEC and the CMEA member countries and their organisations be shared and used in practice?

Rudolf Rohlíček. The differences in the substance, principles and purposes of the two systems of integration are not, and cannot be, an obstacle to cooperation. That has been clear for a long time, and the Helsinki process opens up fresh prospects.

Despite the differences, I think, there is a great deal of similarity in the key problems facing both communities and their members, such as economic development amid a revolution in science and technology. Both sides are interested in exploiting the possibilities and in adopting a comprehensive approach to the internationalisation of economic processes and to the use of efficient mechanisms of state influence on international technical and technological projects. I do not think that either of the communities would dismiss out of hand the achievements of the other. The matters involved are much too important, and that is why the CMEA and the EEC should not be allowed to miss the opportunity of using the experience of their partners.

Willy de Clercq. I believe in the necessity of establishing a long-term policy between the EEC and the CMEA countries, a policy based on pragmatism and reciprocal advantages. The possibilities of cooperation are wide. We must identify, step by step, which ones are the most beneficial for both of us, bearing in mind our own characteristics.

an end to discrimination in accordance with their mutual GATT obligations.

The EEC undertakes to provide the highest degree of liberalisation for the export of Czechoslovak manufactures to the countries of the community, including raw materials and semi-finished products, which make up over 70% of Czechoslovakia's deliveries to these countries. For its part, Czechoslovakia is to create favourable conditions for the activity of EEC enterprises and firms in its market. The treaty contains a provision that cooperation could be extended to other areas, such as trade, industry, and science and technology.

November. Representatives of the CMEA and the EEC

held consultations in Brussels. The delegations examined the possible areas, forms and methods of cooperation between the two economic organisations. The exchange of views helped to clarify the parties' approaches to the prospects for developing ties after the signing of the joint Declaration.

The Romania-EEC mixed commission held its 8th session in Bucharest. It noted the possibilities for the further growth of economic relations, and agreed on new measures to extend bilateral trade, and to deepen cooperation in various areas of common interest.

December. A Czechoslovak-EEC agreement on trade in manufactured goods was signed in Brussels.

PEACE AND REVOLUTION IN THE NUCLEAR AGE

REVIEW OF AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN PRAGUE

The participants in the international symposium organised in Prague by the WMR Commission on General Theoretical and Global Problems discussed the dialectics of the struggle for peace and social progress in the late 20th century. Papers were presented by Abdel RAZZAK AL-SAFI, Political Bureau member of the CC of the Iraqi Communist Party; Eoin Mairtin O'MURCHU, deputy National Chairman of the Communist Party of Ireland; Mauricio ZUNIGA, head of the political education department of the Sandinist National Liberation Front of Nicaragua; Prof. Grigory VODOLAZOV, Doctor of Philosophy (CPSU); and TRAN THANH, sector head of the Ho Chi Minh Institute of the CC of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Contributors to the discussion included Ali MALKI (Party of the Socialist Vanguard of Algeria), Jorge BERGSTEIN (Communist Party of Argentina), Antonio RIBEIRU GRANJA (Brazilian Communist Party), Gancho GANEV (Bulgarian Communist Party), Gerry van HOUTEN (Communist Party of Canada), Orel VICIANI (Communist Party of Chile), Jose ARIZALA (Colombian Communist Party), Francisco GAMBOA (People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica), Antonio DIAZ RUIZ (Communist Party of Cuba), Christoforos IOANNIDES (Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus—AKEL), František HAVLIČEK (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), Sully SANEAX (Dominican Communist Party), Mohamed Magdi CAMAL (Egyptian Communist Party), Georg KWIATOWSKI (German Communist Party), Zenon ZORZOVILIS (Communist Party of Greece), Randolfo BANEGAS (Communist Party of Honduras), Unni KRISHNAN (Communist Party of India), Satiajaya SUDIMAN (Communist Party of Indonesia), Ali ASHUR (Communist Party of Israel), Rafic SAMHOUN (Lebanese Communist Party), Sam MOETI (Communist Party of Lesotho), Mostafa AZZAUI (Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco), Jose LAVA (Philippine Communist Party), Jaime BARRIOS (Communist Party of El Salvador), Nksumalo MZALA (South African Communist Party), Ali Ahmed EL TAYEB (Sudanese Communist Party), Ali ILERI (Communist Party of Turkey), and DUONG NGOC KY (Communist Party of Vietnam).

Below is a summary of the reports and remarks made at the symposium.

THE RELATIONSHIP between the struggle for peace and the class struggle for social progress, between the universal human and the class values, is something of an enigma, *Grigory Vodolazov* said in his opening report. At first glance, it does not look like a theoretical puzzle: are there any Marxists or Communists opposed to the struggle for peace, to the struggle for social progress and for a society without exploitation of man by man, or to a combination of the two? It would seem that there is nothing to discuss here. But in vain successive round

table meetings and symposiums throw wave upon wave of theoretical analysis against the problem. Discussions leave one somewhat discontented, and with the vague feeling that it is still unclear which aspects of the old strategic concepts are obsolete and what the priorities are in reconciling the struggle for universal human objectives with class interests. There is a puzzle, a "mystery" here. Perhaps, the problem in question is merely the tip of a theoretical iceberg, a compressed reflection of a whole system of new problems related to the tremendous

changes in the world during the past few decades.

Presumably, the purpose of our discussion is not merely to outline ways of resolving the question formulated in our agenda, but also to define a series of problems, the discussion of which will provide Marxists with a comprehensive theoretical reply to new social realities, a reply that will give a deeper insight into the concept of "new political thinking".

Old Formulas and Today's Realities

Why is the question of the correlation of the struggle for peace and the class struggle difficult to resolve today?

Georg Kwiatowski attempted to explain the reasons in his report.

A fundamentally new social situation has emerged in the world over the past few decades, necessitating change in the old theoretical formulas. What were they? Marx and Engels noted in the documents of the Communist League and the First International that the causes of war were intrinsic to the very foundations of the capitalist system, to the conditions of class oppression and exploitation. Hence the conclusion that the threat and the very possibility of war can be removed only by eliminating the capitalist relations that breed them, which means that the road to peace goes through the revolutionary, class struggle. In the early 20th century, the working class movement led by Lenin formulated its strategy in the spirit of that tradition. The principal means of saving humanity from the scourge of war seemed to consist in turning an imperialist war into a civil war. The idea thus remained that the road to peace lay in revolution. In the decades that followed, the Communists' position remained basically unchanged. But we can no longer act along the old lines now that there are weapons of such power that a global armed conflict can only end in the destruction of our civilisation. If a world war breaks out, there will be no one to turn it into a revolutionary civil war. We therefore need a strategy for revolutionary struggle that will effectively avoid any possibility of a global conflict.

It was at that point that polemics flared up and new, unexpected questions were posed. How can this task, formulated in general outline, be accomplished, and what new formulas are needed? Perhaps, the old slogan, "Through revolution to peace", should be replaced with its direct opposite, "Through peace to revolution"? Some present-day Marxist authors argue that "in the first place" all the progressive forces in the world should be mobilised to ensure human survival and a lasting peace (because "there will be nothing without peace"), and only "afterwards" should emphasis be shifted to the class struggle against exploitation and oppression.

Or perhaps the correct tactic is one of a *simultaneous* struggle in two directions, for peace and for social emancipation? That idea, too, often crops up in Marxist discussions, usually with variants: some suggest emphasis on the former task (calling it the "priority" of peace), others on the latter (because "how can peace be given priority in the face of hunger, poverty, backwardness and exploitation?"), still others stand for a balance of the two ("both are equally important"), etc.

These theoretical problems and their possible solutions provided the background for discussion at the symposium.

As distinct from speakers in other similar discussions, no one at the symposium argued that peace and survival should *precede* the class struggle like a sort of essential "precondition". The revolutionary forces, *Tran Thanh* said, cannot confine themselves to the peace effort and "must not sacrifice themselves and their class goals" for its sake. *Eoin O'Murchu* strongly objected to any "cessation of the activities of the advanced revolutionary detachments in favour of peace". *Unni Krishnan* stated that the class and national liberation struggles should not be "frozen". As *Jorge Bergstein* and *Jaime Barrios* noted in their remarks, the point is that the class struggle is an objective result of the actual social antagonisms; a revolutionary situation takes shape regardless of the will of political parties and organisations, and it would be naive to attempt to halt the contest of classes. In other words, the *class struggle must not be "put on ice"*.

All the participants agreed on those points. Differences of approach and shades of opinion appeared later, when they passed on to the next stage of their analysis.

The Class Struggle Cannot Be Put On Ice, But...

Of course, the class struggle is an objective phenomenon and cannot be "frozen" at will. But the battle for survival is the objective consequence of today's world situation and cannot be halted either. These considerations gave rise to another, more complex question: What is the relationship between those two equally objective processes, neither of which can be "frozen", and what strategy should Communists and their allies pursue with regard to them? The answers to it varied.

Camal Magdi drew attention to this lack of unanimity. He observed that, in spite of their reservations, some speakers had emphasised the interdependent character of the world and universal human interests, while others had emphasised the class and national struggles. He was clearly right.

If one reads some papers on the relationship of "peace" and "revolution", *Satijaya Sudiman* said,

they seem to suggest that the practical application of new thinking amounted to a curtailment of revolutionary action because they did not stress the *primacy of class struggle*. Other speakers concurred.

Jorge Bergstein criticised the point made in the discussion that "the revolutionary forces should lead the struggles in their countries in a way that would prevent them from setting off a world nuclear conflict". In his view, such an approach results in an unjustifiable narrowing of the class struggle, with revolutionaries yielding to the nuclear blackmail of imperialism and restricting their activities.

Tran Thanh criticised some modern political writers for saying that social conflicts within individual countries could cause tension in international relations and, in the nuclear age, even a global catastrophe. He argued that recent, if short, historical experience disproved that view. More than 40 years have passed since the US dropped the A-bomb on Hiroshima, and the nuclear nightmare is weighing more and more heavily on human conscience and reason. But the political map of the world has nevertheless been changing: socialism, which formerly existed in just one country, has become a world system; more than 100 colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America have won independence; and the peace movement is growing stronger. It is the revolutionary liberation struggle that compels the forces of reaction and imperialism to retreat. Some authors, however, tend to consider it an unwelcome process which aggravates international tension and has an adverse effect on the world political situation.

Generally speaking, Tran Thanh concluded, the main contradiction of our time—between war and peace—and the principal class antagonisms in every country, though interlinked, *belong to different spheres* and have to be tackled in different ways. It is dangerous to apply the methods for resolving class antagonisms in individual countries to international affairs; it is likewise wrong to consider the peaceful means for settling contradictions in international relations as the only practicable methods in domestic politics.

The revolutions on Cuba and in Nicaragua and their firm defence against imperialist aggression coupled with flexible international policies posed no threat to peace on Earth, Antonio Diaz Ruiz said. On the contrary, they prevented the US from outright military intervention and averted a conflict with unpredictable consequences in the region. Angola and Cuba's staunch stand in the confrontation with South Africa and the defeats sustained by the troops of the Pretoria racists compelled the latter to sit down to the negotiating table.

At the same time it was suggested that in some situations the revolutionary forces had had to modify

their methods of struggle in view of the real threat of a nuclear conflict.

But the interpretation of some specific situation is not the point. Grigory Vodolazov said that, generally speaking, it is hardly justifiable today to isolate the "external" (universal) and the "internal" (national) in independent spheres. The "universal" is not a remote factor which only slightly modifies "local" problems, nor is it the "external background", but an internal and all-pervading reality. Individual states and regions are becoming inextricably linked in an interdependent world, and can only be understood as elements of a nascent global entity. The universal, which used to be a special and independent sphere, is now at the very root of national conflicts and contradictions, and moves and evolves along with them. That is why such important new elements of universal interdependence as the threat of nuclear annihilation or an ecological catastrophe are increasingly influencing the strategies of social struggles in every country.

All that helps to clarify the concept of the priority of universal human values. Whereas, in the past, the main aim was domestic transformations, with international politics being simply their logical consequence (although in a different form), today these two sides of a dialectical unity have changed places. The progressive forces ought constantly to relate the class struggle they are waging in their own country to the world political situation. The point is not bringing a "halt" to the struggle, but imparting to it forms that would correspond to new national and world realities. Revolutionary actions should be conducted by new methods, at a new pace and for new immediate and intermediate goals, and the revolutionary forces should evolve new means of mutual assistance on the international scene which would further every people's social renewal without threatening to push the world to the brink of the nuclear abyss.

Georg Kwiatowski remarked that revolutionaries should be very careful and realise their responsibilities when deciding on forms of armed struggle in their own countries or armed support for radical change in other states. In the nuclear age the class struggle should be such as not to provoke armed conflicts between states, especially between states with different social systems. A local conflict can quite easily escalate to a regional and even into a global conflict.

Camal Magdi stated that the old strategies of the class and national liberation struggles had to be corrected, not only in order to avoid the danger of a nuclear conflict, but primarily because international peace encouraged every people's social renewal. That is why it is important to maintain social progress in forms which will also strengthen peace. This new element in our policy has been prompted by today's developments. Regrettably, not all the

freedom fighters agree. Today's Nasserites in Egypt, for example, consider war the only way of liberating the Israeli-occupied Arab lands. They reject peaceful means, such as an international conference on the Middle East. Their strategy seems revolutionary, but is in fact blinkered, and wedded to the old political thinking.

Ali Ilert also discussed the problem of assimilating universal human tasks into the framework of the national struggles. The global question of human survival is not a specific international issue to be decided simply within the world peace movement. Every revolutionary detachment in every country should make it the cornerstone of its strategy for the class struggle. The forces of progress will hardly achieve revolution if they ignore the decisive importance of the factors which are turning Earth into a thermonuclear arsenal. Do not, in fact, global problems, particularly the threat of world war, determine the circumstances in which the revolutionary process develops in specific countries and regions? Today's class struggles are as inseparably connected with global human interests (which transcend the boundaries between classes), as national tasks are with international ones.

The logic of the discussion led the participants to the next stage of their analysis. Following the methodological concept of a correlation between the universal and the national, between the "external" and the "internal", they attempted to determine what *concrete* modifications the new realities necessitated in revolutionary strategy.

Strategy Needs to Be Revised

As they analysed current revolutionary tasks and ways of tackling them, the advocates of the "two separate spheres" concept concentrated on changes in class confrontation. *Antonio Ribeiro Granja* argued that concern for the survival of the human race should in no way obscure the contest between capitalism and socialism. His view was supported by *Mostafa Azzaoui*, *Satijaya Sudiman* and *Eoin O'Murchu*. The latter stressed, in particular, that the attainment of a just world order involves the eradication of imperialist exploitation and the eventual abolition of imperialism, and that the working class remains the key to achieving that goal.

The present system of contradictions demands a more concrete approach from those who advocate a dialectical relationship between the peace efforts and the struggle for social emancipation and national liberation. *Orel Viciani* suggested that Communists should view the bourgeoisie in the context of its intrinsic contradictions, which have grown sharper, rather than as something homogeneous. Part of the bourgeoisie are directly feeling the implications of militarism and its policies. That is why

the peace efforts should be directed primarily against the more reactionary and aggressive sectors, namely, the military-industrial complexes. One can say that the antagonism between labour and capital now manifests itself in a more global contradiction, one between the forces of peace and reason and those of war and militarism. The very subject of social progress has grown larger. There are international conditions for forging an alliance of new democratic antiwar movements, the working class of the developed capitalist states, the forces of national liberation, and the peoples of the socialist countries.

Many speakers supported the idea of creating a far broader bloc of progressive forces than had ever existed before. *Unni Krishnan* suggested that such an alliance could involve the more rational circles within the bourgeoisie—even within the monopolistic bourgeoisie—which advocate disarmament and the conversion of military production to civilian.

Jose-Lava went even further by saying that deterring aggression is so important that Communists cannot turn away anyone willing to join the struggle for human survival, no matter how anti-Soviet or anticommunist. Of course, the international communist movement has an allergy to anticommunism and anti-Sovietism, but it has to be forgotten for the sake of peace. The time of sectarian slogans, like "he who is not with us is against us", is past. Even the broader slogan "anyone who is not against us is with us" does not work today. It is important to ally ourselves with those who are against us on some points (even on essential matters like sociopolitical ideals), if they are vigorously opposed to the nuclear threat.

Mauricio Zuniga described the flexible policy of alliances in the Sandinist revolution. In Nicaragua great store is set by solidarity from a broad spectrum of Latin American forces, including communist and reformist parties, ecologists, the clergy, Christian Democrats, ethnic minorities, and women's movements.

Rafic Samhoun gave theoretical expression to those ideas when he said that *we must unite all those whose interests are at odds with the interests of the military-industrial complex, including those who hope to preserve the capitalist system.*

A New Idea: "Democracy of Peace"

A great deal of interest was shown in the idea, put forward by several speakers, that a comprehensive alliance of antimilitarist forces is needed not for some specific antiwar effort that exists alongside revolutionary class confrontation, but for a struggle that embraces human survival and revolutionary social change. In this light many communist parties are seen to be concentrating on the search

for new aims and methods that would bring demands for peace and for political and economic renewal together in an harmonious whole. Such unity is most obvious in the struggle against militarism, which is responsible for the growing threat of world war, worsening working and living conditions, and restrictions on the political freedoms of the working people. The search for new aims and methods has led Belgian Communists to the concept of a "peace economy", Austrian Communists to the programme of "a bloc for change", West German Communists to the idea of a "coalition of peace and reason" and a "security partnership", and Spanish Communists to the task of "uniting the Left forces on the basis of peace and social progress".

In discussions Communists are constantly reiterating the need for a comprehensive concept of a special stage in the struggle for social renewal, the stage of "peace democracy", or "antimilitarist (anti-war) democracy", where democratic transformations and the change from military to civilian production go hand in hand. That is both a *general democratic* goal (which cannot fail to win support from a broad spectrum of political forces, including reformists and bourgeois liberals) and a *revolutionary* goal, because it is aimed at isolating the more conservative and war-minded sections of the bourgeoisie from the centres of political and economic power. The accomplishment of that two-pronged (general democratic and revolutionary) task will pave the way for the next step towards making social structures more democratic and, eventually, for progress towards a society without exploitation of man by man.

Such a progress is not utopia, as the experience of the Communist Party of Greece to some extent shows, *Zenon Zorzos* said. The Greek Communists' efforts for peace, far from holding back the struggle for social change, are creating favourable prerequisites for it. As for safeguarding peace, the task is not merely to put forward slogans and organise pacifist rallies and demonstrations, but to fight for drastic changes in the substance, orientation and priorities of national economic and social policies.

František Havlíček joined in the discussion by suggesting that this process is present in the idea that the *struggle for peace and against militarism resolves certain class problems*. As they wage the struggle, the progressive forces can take a nation's fate into their own hands, and then other tasks of social progress will be easier to accomplish at the next stage of the class struggle. The Bolsheviks' experience is relevant here. At the time of the First Russian Revolution they said: we have to remove two cart-loads of manure, but we have only one cart. What is to be done? First, we will take away the tsarist bureaucratic system and then, under the new republic, the other pile of manure, the bour-

geoisie. Such an approach is methodologically valid also in the struggles for peace and progress at the end of the 20th century.

While concurring that new, specific "stages" in the development of the revolutionary process are bound to emerge, *Grigory Vodolazov* did not quite agree with the analogy to the 1905 Russian Revolution. In his view, new thinking does not consider even temporary allies as "manure", to be used today and dumped tomorrow. As they work together for social transformations, changing circumstances and themselves, even distant partners will draw closer together rather than diverge. Contradictions between partners will be resolved through the use of the instruments of democracy and pluralism rather than the political guillotine.

Summing up the discussion on that range of issues, *Georg Kwiatowski* said that such a strategy illustrates an *important aspect of today's communist parties: being parties of peace, they have remained (though in a changed form) parties of revolution and of the class struggle*.

Through Disarmament to Development

Rafic Samhoun distilled that general formula. The pursuit of a broad democratic alternative (with emphasis on antimilitarist goals) is the most general formulation of the tasks facing the world forces of social progress today, he said. But the general idea should be interpreted more specifically for individual countries and regions. Some specific policies and slogans of Communists in industrialised capitalist countries have already been mentioned here. But in the developing world we see clearly how the system of superexploitation is maintained by the huge military budgets of the imperialist powers and by their growing needs for "strategic raw materials". Transnational military-industrial complexes have a stake in the perpetuation and further toughening of that system. That is why the struggle of the emergent nations for peace and against militarism is *simultaneously* the struggle against today's system of imperialist superexploitation and for a new, just world economic order.

For that struggle to succeed, *Abdel Razzak Al-Safi* noted, efforts should be made at the national level, both in industrialised and in developing countries, to bring to power governments which would be able to lead it. The goal in industrialised countries should be to install democratic authorities capable of energetically intervening in the economy, restricting multinationals, removing protectionist barriers, adjusting prices to encourage imports, etc. Newly-free countries, meanwhile, should have governments which can mobilise the popular forces (including the national bourgeoisie) for struggle, and put pressure

on imperialist powers and international organisations for the establishment of a new world economic order. Peace cannot be considered secure until such internal shifts are achieved in most developing countries. If Iraq had had a democratic regime, for example, the ruling elite would have been unable to launch a war of aggression against Iran. While consistently and emphatically demanding an end to that war, we have simultaneously pressed for a democratic alternative which would enable the Iraqi people freely to express their will and promote social progress at home while contributing towards stronger international peace.

Camal Magdi upheld the idea that "domestic" and "international" tasks (the "universal human" and the "class" values) coexisted within one sphere rather than belonged to different spheres, and that they overlapped in the frame of the proposed strategy. He noted that *in developing countries peace efforts were taking the form of a struggle against dependence, the militarisation of the economy, the deployment of imperialist military and nuclear bases on their territory, etc.* The uprising of the Arab people of Palestine in the Israeli-occupied territories is a graphic example of a liberation struggle that is promoting peace and contributing towards the solution of the protracted conflict in the region.

The policy of combining "peace" and "revolution" in the developing world has given rise to new aspects in the strategy of the social and class struggles in Latin America, as Jose Arizala, Orel Viciani and Antonio Diaz Ruiz noted. They see humanity under threat not just from nuclear weapons: neo-colonial exploitation may lead to a social explosion every bit as powerful as a thermonuclear blast. That is why in that region it is, perhaps, even more important than in the zone of developed capitalism to tie the need to survive in with social and class struggle and efforts to overcome the backwardness of the Third World countries. *Development through disarmament and a new international economic order constitute the core of the present strategy of the revolutionary forces in that region.*

The Revolutionary Potential of Socialism

Jose Arizala drew attention to the role of socialist countries in solving the global problem of the interdependence of the universal human and the class values, of peace, democracy and revolution. For a long time now the peace forces, including socialist countries, have followed formulas from the pre-nuclear age, and could not have much success in strengthening peace. Humanity has been steadily sliding towards war. However, the past few years and the early successes of nuclear disarmament show that new thinking has offered a way to overcome hitherto insuperable difficulties.

Rafic Samhoun explained past failures by the fact that the nature of the world as an integral and interdependent whole had not been given adequate consideration in Marxist theory. This is not to say, of course, that interdependence means the end of any contest: under the dialectical law of the unity and struggle of the opposites, struggle is in the ascendant. Grigory Vodolazov agreed that today the logic behind social formations, and their prospects could be understood only by studying the *laws of their interaction* in the world as a *multiform whole*. The emergence of integral universality has given rise to new problems that are common to both opposite systems, among them human survival, the environment, the exploration and development of outer space and the world's oceans, etc. These problems can be resolved only by concerted collective efforts. Naturally, all that does not invalidate contest. But the point is not which is to prevail, unity or struggle. The question is: Unity with whom and struggle against whom? The answer to that question cannot be derived from the general law of dialectics, only from a concrete sociological analysis.

It is important to bear in mind that the concept of contest in an interdependent world differs substantially from that in a divided world. Take the war danger: Familiar and tenacious dogma has it that militarism can be eradicated and a lasting peace assured only by abolishing capitalism. But today's priority is not to concentrate every effort on eliminating capitalism. It is to come to terms with capitalism in order to help each other back away from the brink of the nuclear abyss. Everyone—under capitalism or under socialism, in the developed or in the developing world—must work together for that.

But won't the new approaches detract from the revolutionary potential of socialist countries? Satlajaya Sudiman asked.

The Soviet scholar replied that new thinking, as socialist strategy, did not rule out the goal of revolution but directly envisioned it, though in a specific form. The principles of new thinking provide the basis for restructuring both the international and the domestic sociopolitical relations of many socialist countries. Perestroika is an attempt to harmonise the efforts for human survival with those for revolutionary social change in order to create a socialism that would appeal to all people in the world. It is no exaggeration to say that the line of sharp political confrontation has now been drawn not just between social systems but also within them: it passes between the advocates of militarism, conservatism and stagnation on the one hand, and between the peaceloving, democratic and revolutionary forces on the other, i. e., between the world forces of alienation and the champions of human emancipation.

It's Too Early for a Summing Up...

Gerry van Houten said in his concluding remarks. Positions have been defined and shades of opinion have been made clear, but the various aspects of the problem under discussion, which is, after all, the key issue in the contemporary theory of social progress, should be thought out more thoroughly.

It is natural and even inevitable that the views voiced here should be different, Francisco Gamboa continued. New political thinking is the battlefield on which novel, unconventional ideas clash. As the discussion proved, even Marxists conduct heated debates among themselves because many ideas are still being developed. The two views were presented in such a sharp polemical form because each side is afraid that the position of the other may become the methodological basis for mistaken practical recommendations. Some people calling themselves Communists say that stone-throwing in street demonstrations could trigger a world catastrophe, and so they sit on their hands. Others believe that, since the reasons for nuclear war have nothing to do with them, they can wage on struggle and ignore the threat of war and the new realities of the nuclear age. As a result, the theory of revolution becomes dogmatically ossified and impotent in the face of problems thrown up by the realities of the nuclear age. The search for the right answers seems to be proceeding between those two extremes. It is to be hoped that the mutual criticism of positions at the symposium and the arguments put forward by participants in their defence will help clarify the strengths and weaknesses of these views, and thus speed up our common progress towards accurate answers and a more comprehensive understanding of the substance of today's revolutionary strategy.

It was on that note of hope for the future that the symposium ended. Participants then identified problems still awaiting analysis. Several speakers noted that new political thinking should not be understood as a complex of ideas stressing the priority of universal human values and survival, which has simply been added to the old theory of social development. New political thinking is the starting point for restructuring the *entire* theory of social development in the reality of the late 20th century, and

when adequately developed, should become the result of that restructuring.

Participants identified the emergence of an interdependent and in many ways integral (although controversial) world as a major "new reality". That process is behind all the other changes, and faces Marxists with important theoretical problems. For example, it is essential to *study the laws of interaction between social systems* and their functioning and development in an integral world.

The new historical situation is causing a certain transformation of the laws governing the development of all social formations: pre-capitalist formations use the social experience and technological knowhow of capitalism and socialism to shape a new, vastly different type of development; capitalism cannot help learning some of the historical lessons taught by socialism; socialism cannot help, in one way or another, reflecting the various influences exerted by the capitalist system. In other words, the various formations in today's world can hardly be understood if viewed in isolation.

The development trends of the world as an integral whole cannot be considered as a sum total of laws; the point is to understand the world as a *multiform whole*, to understand *civilisation* as a category and to clarify the relationship between the "civilisation-related" and "formation-related" aspects in modern development. Those concepts are as yet absent from the classic postulates of historical materialism, but it has to introduce them (along with some other related categories) in order to remain a science and meet the present needs of the struggle for social renewal.

All that poses questions of immense theoretical and practical significance, questions which call for a bold, balanced and responsible approach. Hasty innovation, the thoughtless revision of every concept and cowardly dogmatism that is afraid of venturing out of the known territory are not the answer.

The WMR Commission on General Theoretical and Global Problems intends to continue the discussion of the problems raised at the symposium.

Review by Gregory GREEN

THE "CRISIS OF MARXISM": MYTH AND REALITY

Semou Pathe GUEYE, Ph. D.

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This article follows others in the series devoted to overcoming stagnation in Marxist theory.¹ The author's resolute and uncompromising stand provoked differences of opinion within the WMR Commission on General Theoretical and Global Problems which discussed the article, ranging from enthusiastic support to categorical rejection. By publishing it as a contribution to our debate, we hope that comrades from other fraternal parties will submit their views on the matter to WMR.

IT WOULD be no exaggeration to say that, as in October 1917, the world is looking to Soviet Russia and closely following the process of perestroika under way in the USSR. The importance of its objectives is clear to everyone and their attainment is sure to open new and vast opportunities in the worldwide fight for peace, democracy and social progress.

The positive impact of this process is already in evidence, first and foremost because the vigorous efforts to implement the principles of new thinking are channelling international developments into a more rational course, and beginning to yield results in our countries too. Although anticommunism and anti-Sovietism are still with us—used skillfully by our adversaries until recently to divide the progressive forces—they are losing ground. Another aspect, of importance to small parties such as the SPIL (i.e., those parties that do not always have the means to rebuff their class adversary effectively), is the easing of ideological pressure, which has created better conditions and improved our chances of success. Furthermore, the image of the socialist countries is changing for the better and the socialist

ideal is regaining its appeal in the eyes of the oppressed masses.

Perestroika inspires hope, but at the same time it highlights the greater responsibility that has devolved on us because, almost unanimously, we realise that we can no longer apply certain previously accepted dogmatic or simplistic recipes.

Consequently, the essential requirement now is to *understand and define precisely the current state of Marxism* as a theoretical and political whole. With the bourgeois mass media harping on about a "crisis of Marxism", we must find out whether this is simply a non-sensical invention, a myth thought up by our class adversary, or whether there are indeed serious difficulties in the development of our theory—difficulties that require thorough and objective analysis.

When bourgeois ideologues hold forth on the "crisis of Marxism", they sound as though they are delivering a funeral oration. The subject can, however, be tackled in a different way; optimistically, as a hymn to renewal like Beethoven's Ninth. That is the tone I have chosen for my article. Before defining our interpretation of the "crisis of Marxism", it is interesting to explore the strong doubts and even resistance the idea of a crisis of Marxism arouses among us. The reasons for this are theoretical, political, psychological and semantic.

The Reasons Behind the Doubts

The doubts generated by the very notion of a "crisis of Marxism" seem to me to be primarily of a theoretical nature, connected with the fact that contemporary Marxist thought is *slow to update its understanding* of this crisis and its role in social development.

This is illustrated with particular clarity, I believe, by the fact that almost three-quarters of a century after Lenin published his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, we still expect it to match our analysis of recent development in contemporary imperialism. The idea, propounded early this century, that capitalism was in a state of "disintegration" and "agony" and therefore on the verge of "imminent" extinction now sounds outdated.

Revolutionary optimism is inherent in our worldview, allowing us to hope that imperialism will collapse under the weight of its own contradictions, and as a result of the class struggle. But predictions of its "imminent" collapse are obviously premature. Even if we agree that the main contradictions of capitalism still persist and that new and increasingly dramatic ones continue to emerge before our very eyes, we must acknowledge that we have underestimated this system's stunning capacity for adaptation. Moreover, if we look at the development and

¹ See: Martin Jacques, Sam Aaronovith, Lawrence Harris, "Marxism in Britain: Past and Present", WMR, No. 10, 1987; Narciso Isa Conde, "More Marxism, More Creative Effort", WMR, No. 9, 1988; Hector Mujica, "The Anatomy of Dogmatism", WMR, No. 12, 1988; and Damian Pretel, "Marx's Philosophy: From a Dogmatic Interpretation to Creative Development", WMR, No. 1, 1989.—Ed.

modernisation of its productive forces, the increase in labour productivity, the creation of material and intellectual values, or even the distribution of earned incomes in society, imperialism is the direct opposite of a "moribund" system. In that case we should reappraise our traditional notion of the "general crisis of capitalism" in order to bring it into line with today's realities. Such a reappraisal would undoubtedly enrich the meaning of the concept of "crisis" itself.

The lag in the theoretical understanding of this concept also derives from the fact that in tackling this issue, Marx and Lenin invariably researched a *specific subject—capitalism*. In this sense, and with the reservation about its "general crisis", one can say that the fundamental concepts they developed—such as "structural crisis" or "cyclical crisis"—have become firmly established in economics.

I think we must now go further. In particular, I would say it is extremely important to study the causes, content and forms of crises under the socialist system. These are new problems and could not therefore have been tackled by the founders of our theory.

Recent developments have shown that socialist countries sometimes experience situations strikingly similar to crises. Therefore, neither from the standpoint of strict scientific objectivity nor in a political sense can we keep acting as though the concept of "crisis" is still applicable only to capitalism while socialism merely encounters some vaguely defined "difficulties".

This is why I think Mikhail Gorbachov took a step of fundamental significance for further progress in Marxist theoretical research when he used the concept of a "precrisis situation" to describe the state of affairs in the Soviet Union in which perestroika became an objective necessity.

Despite the caution with which, for obvious political reasons, this definition was formulated, it has already posed a series of new questions before Marxist theoretical thought. For example, what are the essential features of a "precrisis situation", if we go beyond a simple empirical enumeration of the "negative phenomena" in which it manifests itself? Does the term "precrisis situation" refer to a distinct type of contradictions which differ in essence and severity from those characteristic of a crisis proper? Can one regard a "precrisis situation" as a crisis whose denouement has simply been delayed or blocked?

Combined with a more sophisticated and objective analysis of the socialist system's contradictions, their essence and the laws governing their development, research into the questions raised by the notion of a "precrisis situation" can add considerably to the concept of "crisis", and extend it to a sphere in which it was previously not applied, namely, to the realities of socialism. This would also give us a

clearer insight into the nature of the real difficulties social construction encounters in this or that country.

The Communists' unenthusiastic attitude to the notion of a "crisis of Marxism" is, in my view, explained not only by a lag in our theoretical thought but also by *political reasons*.

If I am not mistaken, a "crisis of Marxism" was first mentioned by the Czech philosopher Tomáš Masaryk in 1898. Taken up by Eduard Bernstein a year later, it sparked off an extensive international debate in the early 1900s, involving such prominent theoreticians of the working-class movement as Jaures and Sorel in France, Labriola, Croce and Gramsci in Italy, certain representatives of the "Left" opposition (Karl Korsch in Germany), and, of course, Lenin.

Without going into detail one can say that in the course of this debate, the idea of a "crisis of Marxism" was seized upon by the enemies of Marxism and then by the opponents of the philosophical, organisational, tactical and strategic concepts of Leninism. The same course was pursued by those who returned to the issue in several West European countries during the 1970s.

The reason for the Communists' guarded attitude to the problem of the "crisis of Marxism" is also rooted, I think, in the fact that hitherto our adversaries have been the only ones discussing it (not, of course, with our interests at heart), and so we often avoided discussing the subject lest we "bring grist to the mill of the enemy". Just because our adversaries talked about some of our difficulties (and tried to use them against us) does not mean that there are no such difficulties. An ostrichlike attitude will serve no useful purpose.

Some people maintain that even if there is a "crisis of Marxism", one should keep quiet about it so as not to "confuse" communist party activists. But is it not the difficulties themselves (particularly those that are hushed up) that may give rise to painful doubts and shake one's faith in Marxism? The longer we refuse to face them, the longer these difficulties will last.

The third reason why we tend to oppose the notion of a "crisis of Marxism" is *psychological*.

The French epistemologist Gaston Bachelard has used the concept of "epistemological obstacles" to describe certain beliefs (those ideological, religious or scientific concepts current at any given time) which take root in the minds of people (including scholars) and become obstacles to any acceptance of new scientific facts. A similar phenomenon seems to underlie the resistance to the notion of a "crisis of Marxism". It runs into a psychological barrier, as fetishistic in its own way as traditional African cultures that contain words with a benign or malign magic. I believe this describes the attitude of those Marxists who seem to think that if you simply place

the word "crisis" next to the word "Marxism", the latter is doomed.

Finally, the notion of a "crisis of Marxism" is resisted for *terminological* reasons.

The word "crisis", which has come down to us from the Greek tragedy, is often associated with some fatal disaster man is powerless to oppose. Of course, the interpretation of "crisis" as doom can be deduced from Marx's research into the "structural crisis of capitalism" or Lenin's studies of the "general crisis of capitalism". One should, however, remember that these two thinkers offered a less dramatic interpretation of the term. According to Marx, "cyclical crises" of capitalism are a "natural" part of it. Similarly, Lenin's view is that "revolutionary crises" produce new qualities even though their birth may be painful. Dialectical thought also regards crises as crucial moments of *development*, as a "nodal point" in the settling of contradictions when objective conditions arise for a transition from the inferior to the superior. Therefore, a crisis becomes a sign of vitality.

I have used this obviously valid materialistic and dialectical concept in analysing the current crisis in the *development* of Marxism, and the ways in which it may be overcome.

A Crisis of Development

The historical development of Marxism as both theory and policy has brought it to a decisive turning point, a crucial juncture. We Marxists are facing a dilemma. Either we use the creative boldness that was always typical of Marx, Engels and Lenin, find the right answers to the questions that the revolution in science and technology posed before our theoretical thought and political activities, and so forge ahead—or we remain hostages to dogmatism and to certain outdated theoretical precepts and political assessments, thereby not only impeding any further progress but also finding it increasingly difficult to preserve what we have gained.

This is obviously the alternative that defines the present critical juncture in the development of our theory, that is, its crisis. Essentially, we are dealing with a crisis of development. Interpreted in this way, the crisis does not call into question either the fundamentals of Marxism or the wealth of its theoretical tradition, for the simple reason that the search for solutions to issues posed by the crisis can draw on the latent theoretical and methodological potential of Marxism itself.

So far, those who are in a hurry to bury Marxism alive have not offered anything in exchange that could help adequately explain the present reality in order to change it. It is not that our opponents are not gifted or intelligent enough. Rather, the search for a substitute is hopeless because *if Marxism*

could be replaced, that would have already been done. Furthermore, when someone talks about a "crisis of Marxism" (meaning that it is sure to disappear), the arguments cited are often based on certain setbacks suffered by Marxists in the political sphere—for example, the election results of some communist parties. The problems of the Communists' electoral struggle is a subject for a separate discussion in its own right. Here, I would merely like to note that the political strength of Marxism cannot be reduced to the number of votes won in elections: it is a much broader and more meaningful concept.

One can, for example, note that Marxism still projects a strong influence, even though sometimes in contradictory forms: in the West, many social scientists who never vote Communist nevertheless make wide use of Marxist theoretical techniques. Similarly, the political appeal of Marxism is indirectly manifested in the fact that more and more parties, even right-wing ones, seek to incorporate a "social plank" in their platforms, mostly to cut the ground from under the feet of the Communists in their own countries. Senegal offers a relevant example. If one were to judge the influence of Marxism in my country solely on election results, one would have every reason to conclude that it is absolutely inconsequential. But one would be unable to explain why, even under Leopold Senghor, the regime was forced to admit—as far as we know, for the first time since the bourgeois Constitution was adopted—that Marxism was definitively established in Senegal. It would be equally impossible to understand why the ruling party boasts of having experts on Marxism ready to challenge the Communists on their own terms if the need arises.

All this illustrates the point that the present position of Marxism little resembles the state of collapse or disappearance which our ideological and political opponents delight in describing.

However, we have no reason to be overly complacent. In the field of theory, we are still paying for concepts and research which, clashing blatantly with today's realities, severely curtail the opportunities for the future progress of Marxism. Such concepts sometimes even prevent us from fully utilising Marxism itself, both to explain these realities and to wage the class struggle successfully. That is what I would call a *theoretical crisis* of contemporary Marxism. In view of this we must, on the one hand, boldly *criticise* dogmatic or sectarian views and, on the other, creatively *reappraise* our traditional approach to the distinctive features of the present stage in the scientific and technological revolution.

Take Marx's well-known idea about the historical mission of the proletariat and its vanguard role in the struggle against capitalist exploitation. Our opponents never refuted it convincingly enough. The arguments marshalled to prove that the working class

is disappearing often reflect an ideologically biased interpretation of the social changes which are occurring with this class and imparting a new quality and a new shape to it. However, this does not absolve us of the need to gain a deeper insight into the new meaning of the "leading role of the proletariat" in order that this notion cease to be a mere slogan.

The social composition of the working class (which differs from that of the traditional industrial proletariat), the conditions and quality of its work, the essence of its social, political and cultural aspirations and, consequently, the salient features of its class consciousness, have all been altered significantly by the revolution in science and technology, which has naturally influenced the political and trade union activities of the working people. This trend has been reinforced by the "information revolution" which provided the bourgeoisie with powerful tools for the ideological corruption of the working class.

As one can see from the position of the communist and workers' movement in the more advanced and industrialised Western countries, these developments are accompanied by a weakening of the revolutionary trade unions, an erosion of the communist parties' working-class base and a certain decline in their political influence. I maintain that this is largely due to the Marxists' lag in their theoretical understanding of the changes the revolution in science and technology has undoubtedly made to the content and conditions of the class struggle. This was what kept us from promptly developing relevant political, economic and social platforms that could effectively back the struggle of the working class against the dictatorship of capital. The working class was therefore unable to discharge its historical mission fully. Until we overcome this theoretical lag, the assertion about the "leading role of the proletariat" will remain simply a tribute to the founders of Marxism.

While on the subject of the "leading role of the proletariat", I would like to draw on our party's experience in Senegal and cite another case proving that dogmatically repeated concepts bear no relation to today's objective reality. In a predominantly agrarian and petty-bourgeois country, one cannot stick to the idea about the "leading role of the proletariat" as though it were gospel truth. This would mean ignoring the specific sociopolitical realities of Senegal—the fact that the advanced sections of the middle strata provide the struggle with political and ideological leadership. This was why, as we conducted a self-critical analysis of our party's record at the latest SPIL congress, we concluded that *ouvrierism* was one of the factors behind its failure to understand the actual alignment of political forces in Senegal and the role each of them played in the class struggle. This dogmatic attitude was one of the major obstacles to the party's winning substantial influence with the masses.

One could go on and on with the list of cases of a lag in the development of new theoretical responses or the mechanical use of theoretical formulas valid under different circumstances greatly harming the advancement of our movement.

The same applies to our practical policies. We often mark time, and lose ground, because we have to pay the price of having a crisis of theory on our hands and because our practice is stuck with forms and methods of political activities that rule out any tangible progress. This situation, described here as a *crisis of Marxist policies*, is not uniformly present everywhere, nor does it display a uniform degree of severity.

This crisis takes different shapes depending on whether the party in question is fighting for political power or has won it and is tackling complex problems of socialist development. The steps being taken in most socialist countries to correct the economic and even the political situation, the reasons cited to prove that these steps are necessary (judging by the official documents adopted) and, finally, the use of terms such as "signs of crisis" or "precrisis situation", highlight the meaning of the crisis in Marxist policies. It is a crisis because the previously used methods of managing the economy and society as a whole are no longer viable, and radical change is needed to preserve past gains and ensure new successes. In some cases the need for change is made more urgent by the revolution in science and technology and, in others, by the various mistakes made in the sphere of political or economic leadership or in defining the strategic concept of socialist construction. But in all cases the objective is, in Gorbachov's words, *more, not less, socialism*.

To many parties fighting for political power the crisis in the political sphere means that they encounter difficulties in their effort to become accepted in their countries as offering strong and credible political alternatives and to influence decisively the revolutionary outcome of the political battles fought at the national level. This is true of many West European countries, but it is particularly relevant in Africa where the communist and workers' movement is, one must admit, in embryo.

Similar problems apparently exist in Latin America—at least judging by what Hector Mujica, a Venezuelan Communist, says in an article published by *World Marxist Review*—specifically, that "persisting weaknesses in the work of the communist parties themselves, too, contribute to their electoral setbacks. A number of parties in Latin America are known to be still afflicted with sectarianism and dogmatism, which narrows the Communists' room for maneuver and makes their election campaigns sound feeble and dull."²

² Hector Mujica, "After a Long Decline of the Popular Movement", *WMR*, No. 5, 1988, p. 52.

The crisis of policies that affects the parties working to win political power sometimes results in two diametrically opposed consequences—either a postponement of the revolutionary prospects and a strategic retreat to reformist positions, or reckless ultra-revolutionary gambles and a hardening of sectarian and dogmatic attitudes. In either case, the result is the same—isolation from the masses, a decline in the effectiveness of communist activities and, inevitably, an aggravation of the crisis. Increasingly acute internal clashes over strategic issues against the background of a succession of setbacks generate and exacerbate centrifugal trends (splits, resignations and the like). The sections of society previously committed to Marxism either abandon it, become politically passive and accept the realities which they no longer believe they can change, or are won over by rival ideologies and political organisations—social democratic, religious and even fascist and crypto-fascist.

Only the Truth Is Revolutionary

The “crisis of Marxism”, interpreted here as a crisis of development, opens new prospects before our theory, rather than sentences it to death. However, this is only so if we agree to face facts and do all that is necessary to renew and update our own theoretical concepts and political actions.

Let me emphasise yet again that the real threat, even the mortal threat is not in our *recognition of*

the crisis of development, a crisis which really exists. Future progress and the winning back of the positions lost in this or that sphere will wholly depend on our ability to assess objectively our difficulties, our limitations and our weak points so as to arrive at relevant decisions.

To help us in this undertaking, we have Marxism, an *indispensable theory which will enable the Communists to discharge their mission* of saving humanity from a nuclear catastrophe, overthrowing the dictatorship of capital and paving the way to a new civilisation of beauty, harmony, peace, concord and brotherhood in which everyone will fulfil his or her human potential and attain full dignity.

We will succeed above all thanks to our ability to look for and recognise the truth however bitter it may be, because, in Lenin's words, *only the truth is revolutionary*. This is also the principal lesson we can draw from what is now happening in the Soviet Union.

Perestroika in the USSR has only just begun and many of its theoretical and political precepts, however encouraging, are still hypothetical. However, one thing is clear. Having placed the search for the truth at the service of a radical transformation of a system which has already scored many noble accomplishments, perestroika highlights the demanding attitude without which progress is impossible. It is very important for all of us to be as demanding in analysing the situation in our own countries and in studying problems common to us all.

COUNTRIES, EVENTS, ANALYSIS

THE PLANET'S FLASHPOINTS

MIDEAST PEACE IS IN THE HANDS OF PEOPLES

For more than 40 years now the Middle East has been a hotbed of military-political tension and the origin of several bloody wars that endangered universal peace. The failure to resolve this most protracted of all regional conflicts has poisoned the international atmosphere, retarded the move from confrontation to detente, and swallowed Arab and Israeli resources best used for socioeconomic development.

For all the importance of international factors, including the UN promotion of a Mideast settlement, peace in this region depends primarily on the people themselves. Recent events, described in the articles below, bear witness to this fact.

A DANGEROUS CROSSROADS

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TIMES are hard for the Lebanese Republic. Since September 23, 1988, it has been without a President. Two governments are contesting power: the lawful cabinet of Selim Hoss, whom the Constitution requires to act as head of state so long as this post remains vacant, and the fascist-supported military transitional government, which proclaimed itself "lawful" ten minutes before the expiry of President Amine Gemayel's term of office.

The long civil war may have blurred the nature of the events and the aims of the opposing forces. Now they are crystal clear. The Phalangists, relying

on support within the army, tried to usurp power by a military coup. Having failed to get the newly-formed cabinet recognised across the state, they have entrenched themselves in "their" zone, and are now conducting separatist work from there. At the same time, the lawful government controls 80% of national territory.

Lebanon's political crisis has not simply deteriorated. It has reached a qualitatively new phase in which the bourgeois regime is losing its state institutions.

Apart from the Christian enclave, a project has been revived to make the country a theocratic racist state, both alien to and threatening the Arab milieu. Reaction has been seeking these aims since the civil war broke out in 1975. Should the project fail on a national scale, they would cut off a chunk of territory, create their own state, and then expand at other areas' expense. The architects of this scheme are obviously imitating Israeli expansionists who are trying to enlarge their state by annexing Arab lands.

The military Christian government in our country is intrinsically racist because of the demographic and religious pattern of Lebanese society, and due to the Phalangists' rejection of Lebanon Arab identity and

their claim to belong to a special, unique and privileged nationality. At present the separatists are engaged in consolidating absolute power over their "mini-state", destroying every distinctive trait of independent Lebanon, including any political, cultural and religious pluralism or democratic freedoms, and suppressing dissidence by force. Muslims are being deported from the enclave and a regime is being set up akin to the fascist order that once existed in Germany, Italy and Spain.

While talking about protecting Christianity in Lebanon and throughout the Arab East, the separatists have more in mind than simply imposing their project on numbers of Lebanese. They have engineered a "Christian question" in order to foment religious strife in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, the Sudan and on the soil of the Arab people of Palestine, where millions of Christian Arabs live in harmony with Muslim Arabs as members of the same civic entity.

Origins of Crisis

To understand the latest developments in Lebanon, it is necessary to review the period before the civil war, in particular the impact of regional and international factors.

Lebanon developed rapidly along capitalist lines in the 1960s and early 1970s. Local financial capital increased and made Lebanon a large banking centre. This led to rapid growth in various economic sectors, including industry. Capitalist production relations took root in the countryside. Traditional branches (trade, transport, including transit, services, tourism etc.) were modernised, and the financiers proceeded to amass and centralise capital in their hands.

The structure of society has fundamentally changed in the last 20 years, as the middle and petty bourgeoisie have diminished in numbers and role, population migration has intensified, and villagers have drifted en masse to the industrial centres.

But capitalism's rapid development and the major shifts in the social and class mix of society have not been accompanied by appropriate changes in the country's political system. Although some reforms were effected in the early 1960s, under President Fuad Chehab, they were limited. The establishment was still functioning on the same confessional basis as during the French mandate, which regulated the composition of Parliament and the allocation of government posts among the 17 largest religious communities. The Christians held obvious privileges under this system.

Thus, society progressed while archaic state structures remained unchanged. This created a striking contradiction between dynamic growth and the obsolete constitutional, political, and legal institutions that held it back. Moreover, the conflict intensified between big capital, fully involved as it was in the world capitalist economy and all its antagonisms,

and the rest of the population—urban and rural wage and salary earners. Precipitated by the world capitalist crisis and regional events, it not only deteriorated further, but also developed into an acute national crisis affecting every sphere—political, economic, social and cultural.

At its 2nd Congress (1968), our party had put forward the idea of *democratic reform as the only possible alternative* for pulling the country out of the crisis in the interests of the majority. It formulated a programme to establish a national democratic regime, noting that it did not call for a socialist revolution—the ultimate aim of the party—but precisely for democratic reform. This communist programme was well received among urban and rural workers and influential groups of the bourgeoisie, and adopted by many respected political forces which during the civil war became a part of the Lebanese patriotic movement.

The prewar period was marked by an unprecedented growth in the struggle for a better life. As the trade unions became involved, so they began to reunite after a long split. The people won considerable social gains, and political and civil liberties became firmly established. Lebanon was now an important information and cultural centre and an oasis for thousands of political emigres representing most liberation movements in the region.

War, Ruination and a Putsch...

The financial oligarchy knew that it could not stop the movement which had united under the banner of democratic reform. It also sensed another danger as the masses streaming into the army of hired labour shed the influence of their communal leaders, who had defended the oligarchy's interests. A class awareness began to replace the one nurtured by communal and confessional ties. The masses had joined in the political struggle.

In this situation the bourgeoisie unsuccessfully attempted to repress them. They then resorted to the feudal reaction to peasant revolts—a civil war. This course was favoured by the circumstances in Lebanon, and in the region as a whole. The ruling clique deliberately used religious and communal strife to kindle a bloody internecine war and to drive out the "aliens". This added to the intensity of the war, distorted its true class nature in the eyes of the world and obscured the actual role of the financial oligarchy and fascist forces who bear responsibility for this slaughter.

The war deprived the working people of their hard-won gains. Even though the still-united trade unions organised major action in defence of labour's interests, the financial oligarchy, which controlled the state and the bureaucratic apparatus, were able to raise inflation to monstrous proportions by using the war as an excuse. The Lebanese pound's rate of

exchange fell by over 100 points,¹ and working people's purchasing power in 4 years shrunk to almost a tenth of what it had been; at present the minimum wage is \$30-33 per month². The social insurance funds have been embezzled, and a marked drop in securities' value through inflation has ruined the holders of treasury bonds.

At the same time Lebanese exports have increased and, despite the ravages of war, industrial and agricultural production has reached the prewar level. The central bank has succeeded in raising hard currency reserves to \$1.5 billion, while retaining its part of the national gold reserve of 9 million ounces of gold. Runaway inflation is thus due primarily to the will of the financial oligarchy, bent on taking back all the concessions wrested from it through years of struggle by the working class, all the labouring masses and the democratic forces.

Tens of thousands of skilled workers, engineers, doctors, teachers and other specialists have left Lebanon. The outflow has been particularly strong from Phalangist-controlled areas: the trampling of civil and personal freedoms there is yet another cause of emigration. The municipal economy, infrastructure, health service, and education have been neglected and fallen into decay.

The oligarchy has employed every means at its disposal, including the demographic structure of Lebanese society, to foment inter-communal strife and religious hatred, fanaticism. It aided and abetted the Israeli invasion and the landing of US-NATO forces in 1982 in order to save its regime. The Zionist occupation, and the military presence of the USA and NATO, helped to install a President defending the oligarchy's interests and armed with its programme. However, the struggle by patriotic and democratic forces, especially the Lebanese Patriotic Resistance Front (founded and fielded by the Communists) forced the invaders to withdraw, retaining only a narrow strip of land along the border. The US-NATO forces were also made to leave.

The last two years of Amine Gemayel's presidency, which expired at midnight on September 22, 1988, were marked by resolute actions of the masses demanding an end to the civil war and the implementation of democratic reform. In the zone controlled by fascist militias, moderate liberals and democrats were increasingly vocal in supporting Lebanese unity and the primacy of law, and condemning the diktat of the reactionary paramilitaries. The influence of secular democratic parties, above all the PCL, and of the trade unions grew. Strikes and demonstrations swept the country.

An obvious change occurred in the power balance—by no means in favour of the financial oligarchy and other bourgeois sections. It became clear that, due

to popular pressure, the Chamber of Deputies, although not reflecting the real political spectrum of contemporary Lebanese society³, would have to reckon with the new situation and elect a President who could end the period marked by Israeli occupation and the military-political diktat of the USA and NATO.

Faced by these conditions, top bourgeois leaders sought Washington's help in agreeing with Syria on an acceptable candidate for the presidential post, having assumed that it would manage to impose on the Syrians—and through them on the Lebanese patriotic and democratic forces—a candidate who would guarantee a continuity of the political line. Having failed, the reactionaries paralysed the work of the Chamber of Deputies, preventing parliamentarians from meeting or leaving the Christian zone. With no hope of a president being elected who would defend their interests, they launched a coup by taking advantage of the fact that the army commander and some of his officers were keen to take power at all costs. *This amounted to an act of high treason.*

New Situation, New Tasks

These events were not unexpected for our party. Its 5th Congress (1987), after precisely and realistically analysing the national and regional situation, had forecast that, after President Gemayel's term of office had expired, the Lebanese bourgeoisie would fail to reach agreement on a successor and a *qualitatively new phase in the civil war would follow.*

The armed coup and the establishment of a military cabinet⁴ testify to the breakdown of the confessional system and the dismal failure of the policy of the Lebanese bourgeoisie.

The agony of the regime, we believe, eliminates a whole stage in the campaign for the aims of the national democratic revolution and a national democratic system (these tasks have been raised by our party programme and congress decisions). The present complex situation demands precise and well-considered actions: the previous regime is falling to pieces, while a new one has not yet emerged. The downfall of the old system does not mean that it will automatically be replaced with another, progressive one—it is only an indispensable condition for this. Relying upon fascist forces and the continuing Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon, and hindering in every way a return to normalcy in the liberated areas, the bourgeoisie may interfere with the birth of an alternative system, and prolong the state of anarchy and regression. Such an outcome would mean a dual perspective: 1) a victory for the separat-

¹ In 1982 \$1 was equivalent to about 3.5 pounds; from the end of 1984 the exchange rate began to plummet. Now the going rate for \$1 is approximately 500 Lebanese pounds.—Ed.

² At the present time the prices for goods in Lebanon are determined in terms of their value in US dollars.—Ed.

³ Sixteen years have passed since the last elections to the Chamber of Deputies. Because of the civil war and the impossibility of holding fresh elections, the parliamentarians' powers have been extended four times.—Ed.

⁴ Three of the cabinet's six members have since resigned.—Ed.

ists and the introduction of military-fascist rule in the country; and 2) the anticipation of such events in the region or the world, which would help modify the power balance in favour of the bourgeoisie, thus enabling them to try and restore their collapsed regime.

It should be emphasised that *the Lebanese conflict is closely linked with the crisis being experienced by the region as a whole*. Since the outbreak of the civil war our country has been an arena of intense struggle between regional forces, and this struggle exerts a considerable influence on Mideast developments.

The imperialists have always allotted Lebanon the major role in their plans to impose on the Arabs a capitulationist solution to the Middle Eastern problem, and the situation in Lebanon is a clear reflection of the controversy between the advocates and opponents of a Camp David-style settlement. It is the aim of the imperialist schemes to convert our country into a second (after Egypt) element of the US-Israeli plan of regional control and to guarantee "secure frontiers" for Israel by a ring of friendly, communal-type "mini-states".

Imperialism and the Zionist circles have been labouring to split Lebanon and to extend the same disunity to other neighbouring states. They are trying to use this slaughter-house to bleed white the forces opposed to capitulationist solutions—the Lebanese patriotic forces, Syria, our republic's principal ally and window into the Arab world, and the Palestinian revolution. In parallel, they aim to strike at the heroic uprising of the Arab people of Palestine and the resistance it engenders to the Zionist occupation and an American-style solution to the crisis.

All this places extremely important tasks before the Lebanese democratic forces, especially the Communists. Above all, it is necessary to ensure that military-fascist rule is opposed *throughout the nation* and that the Lebanese factor plays the main part in this, thereby giving the patriots an opportunity to derive maximum benefit from the support of their friends and allies, rebuff any hostile intervention by Israel or Arab reaction, and prevent Lebanon from becoming an arena for various Arab states to settle their accounts. Reaching these goals is tied in with the strengthening of the Lebanese patriotic resistance, and the consolidation of its positions on each inch of our native soil.

The second task is to end the discord and conflicts between the forces which are resisting the reactionary groups and trying to restore national unity. It is also essential to do away with the confessional-communalist fragmentation in liberated areas, so that rather than their affiliation to a specific commune or religion, people's patriotic and democratic convictions become paramount. Through effective administration and the interaction of the various forces these areas will convincingly demonstrate how a united and democratic Lebanon could be.

On September 23, 1988, immediately after the military-fascist coup, the PCL called for a *front for unity and liberation* within which the popular masses and patriotic and democratic forces could fight to restore Lebanon's integrity, Arab identity and the democratic advance of the country.

The recent Extraordinary Plenum of the CC PCL has declared that the situation requires all-out opposition to the military coup, that *without any compromise or half-measures*. Nothing less than the complete defeat of the separatists—this is how the question stands. At the same time this appears impossible without abolishing the confessional system and affirming Lebanon as part of the Arab world, just as it is impossible to overcome the social and economic crisis without abandoning the "free economy" policy.

Resistance to separatism, noted the Plenum, should be comprehensive, and founded on a national democratic programme that rejects confessionalism. The state of affairs in liberated areas will be the best criterion of its viability. This programme looks to all, including those in the Christian zone. It concerns, first and foremost, the satisfaction of the working people's vital needs. To meet the requirements of the struggle itself, all the patriotic and democratic forces should be mobilised, and combat readiness declared in the face of probable attempts by the military government's supporters to "explode" the situation with weapons, backed by Israel, Iraq, and imperialist and reactionary circles.

The Plenum has stressed the great importance of forming an alliance of national progressive parties and organisations united around a programme for radical democratic reform. Simultaneously it drew attention to the political activity of those who support the lawful government of Selim Hoss and express the positions of influential groups of the national bourgeoisie, who have reasons of their own for opposing the division of Lebanon, its subjection to Zionist influence, and the military-fascist regime.

Patriotic resistance should bear a *mass character*. It is essential to set up popular committees in the villages, at industrial and agricultural enterprises, and in educational institutions, and cultural and public organisations.

The CC PCL has again appealed for a Lebanese Movement for Unity and Liberation, emphasising that a repudiation of the fascist confessional project is an inalienable part of the struggle to free Lebanon completely from the Israeli occupation, and the most important of the party's tasks.

Lebanese patriots are confident that our friends, and all those who have helped defend the country against the Israeli invasion and the conspiracies of imperialism, Zionism and reaction, and who cherish freedom, democracy and human rights, will continue to support the patriotic and democratic forces of Lebanon as they work to restore unity and guarantee its sovereignty and its progressive road of development.

A PALESTINIAN STATE PROCLAIMED

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THE ALGIERS SESSION of the Palestine National Council held in November 1988 was the 19th in the history of the PLO¹. Four of its sessions are of particular importance, each having marked a qualitatively new stage in the development of the Liberation Organisation.

At the 5th session (February 1969) new detachments of the Palestinian Resistance joined the PLO, turning it from the semi-official entity created by the 1st conference of Arab leaders in Alexandria into a broad patriotic front.

The 12th session of the PNC (June 1974), raising the question of national Palestinian sovereignty over the territories freed from Israeli occupation, initiated a realistic course for the PLO that ensured all its subsequent political victories.

The 18th session (April 1987)², which has become known as the forum of the restoration of national unity, made PLO policy more realistic and worked out the formula for an international Mideast conference.

Finally, the "session of the intifada"³, which crowned all the previous moments of positive value in the movement, for the first time in the Palestinian Resistance's history brought the PLO's stand into line with international law, something that had earlier been present only in the PCP's views. International law and legality became a weapon of our people in their struggle for liberation and national independence. This session itself was an *intifada* in the political thinking of the Palestinians.

The forum took place against a backdrop of significant events, the most important of which was the almost year-old popular uprising in the occupied territories. The international climate had also had its impact, characterised as it was by reduced tensions in the world, the onward march of detente, and the first practical steps toward nuclear disarmament and

a peaceful resolution of regional conflicts. The Jordanian leadership's decision to sever administrative links with the occupied Palestinian territories has left its own special mark on the situation⁴.

The popular uprising, which flared up in December 1987, is the result of over 20 years of struggle by our people against the Israeli occupation. As an enduring revolt that encompasses broad social sections, is democratic and varies in mass-organisational forms, it has aroused the world sympathy and a powerful wave of solidarity with the Palestinians.

It is essential that this solidarity and sympathy should evolve into concrete, effective political demands for a full-fledged international conference on an all-embracing solution to the Middle East crisis, which centres on the Palestinian issue. As never before, the PLO has been required to clearly define its aims in line with the norms of international law and the well-known UN resolutions.

Our problem appears linked, perhaps more than any other regional conflict, to the global situation, the impetus of which is to strive for a peaceful settlement of local conflicts through a balancing of interests. Most of the world's disputes seem to be moving in this direction. The Palestinian question cannot strike a discordant note or be an exception to this general trend.

On the other hand, the Jordanian decisions, arguably a concession to pressure from the population of the occupied territories demanding independence, should be regarded as a new challenge to the Palestinian people and their leadership. It was now not just Jordan's administrative or financial commitments that were involved. The idea was to show the PLO's inability to assume full responsibility based on international law, and to question its powers. In other words, the Jordanian leadership did not abandon the hope of regaining its role as the Palestinians' representative in negotiations on a settlement.

Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are the basis for a Mideast conference. However, some important aspects are absent from the UN recommendations although they are by no means directed against our national interests. In particular, these documents fail to mention the right of the Palestinian people to national self-determination. That was why PNC sessions (especially since the 12th in 1974) had not recognised these resolutions: the Palestinians figured in them only as refugees.

These decisions were left hanging until the appropriate changes took place in the regional balance of forces and pressure increased from international public opinion. The preceding period offered only two opportunities for their implementation—the first

¹ Founded in 1964.—Ed.

² See Mahmoud Shukeir, "Palestinians Serrying Ranks", WMR, No. 10, 1987.—Ed.

³ *Intifada* means "uprising". See Naim Ashhab, "Uprising in the Occupied Territories", and "Stones Versus Bullets"; Yasser Arafat, "Victory Will Be Ours", WMR, Nos. 2, 7 and 10, 1988.—Ed.

⁴ The decision was announced on June 31, 1988. See Salem Said, "What Is Behind the Royal Decision?", WMR, No. 11, 1988.—Ed.

was in 1969 when Egypt started a "war of attrition" and the Israelis together with the Americans felt its burden and possible consequences. But the initiative of William Rogers, the then US Secretary of State, neutralised the situation. The *second* came after the October war of 1973, yet its potential results were also nullified by the conclusion of the two agreements on troop disengagement in Sinai, whose architects were US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, which ultimately led to Camp David.

Today, with the *intifada* and its international repercussions, the advance of detente and other factors, which I have mentioned above, new circumstances have developed which permit the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338 by means of an international conference. The conditions for it now exist. The PLO faced the need to recognise these resolutions provided there was a guaranteed right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the liberation of their lands—the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Arab part of Jerusalem—and the creation of an independent Palestinian state. The "intifada session" defined this position.

The PNC political statement declared: "The Palestine National Council, responsible for our people and their rights, proceeding from its desire for peace, and the striving of mankind to further decrease international tension, to promote nuclear disarmament, and to solve regional conflicts by peaceful means, by having proclaimed an independent state on November 15, 1988, reaffirms its adherence to an all-embracing political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the heart of which is the Palestinian problem, within the framework of the United Nations Charter, and on the basis of the Security Council's latest Resolutions 605, 607 and 608 and the decisions of Arab summit conferences, which envisage the right of the Palestinian people to their return, self-determination, the creation of an independent national state on their soil, and the safeguarding of security and peace for all states in the region."

The Palestine National Council regards the convocation of a special international Middle East conference under UN auspices as the means of achieving these aims. It could be attended by the permanent Security Council members and all the parties to the conflict, including—on equal terms—the PLO as the sole lawful representative of the Palestinian people. Such a conference, acting on the basis of the Security Council's resolutions, would guarantee the legitimate national rights of the Palestinians—above all, to self-determination—in accordance with UN principles of the inadmissibility of acquiring foreign territories by force or through military invasion.

The second point of the statement highlights the need for Israel to withdraw from all the Palestinian lands occupied in 1967: Eastern Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Although the decision of

the UN General Assembly⁵ on which the proclamation of an independent Palestinian state is based allotted it a much larger territory, the PNC has consented to the establishment of a state within the lands occupied in 1967. Thus, both the realities that have since developed and the balance of interests necessary for the settlement of regional conflicts have been taken into account. As for the problem of refugees, the PNC has declared that it should be solved with due consideration for UN resolutions, which have annually, from 1949 on, reaffirmed the Palestinians' right to return or to compensation (by choice).

To arrive at peace and security in our region, which has for over 4 decades now been living under a constant threat of war, is possible only *by way of an all-embracing political settlement based on mutual consent*. A genuine peace cannot be only for one side, at the expense of others' interests.

Israeli leaders, who have long practised a policy of state terrorism, have never tired of calling the PLO a terrorist organisation. The PNC session in its political statement has rejected and condemned terrorism. This document underscores that the PNC again declares its adherence to the UN resolutions that support peoples' right to resist foreign occupation, colonialism, racial discrimination, and to fight for independence; it reaffirms its renunciation of terror in all its manifestations, including state terrorism...

In this connection the National Council has reaffirmed the special character of relations between the fraternal peoples of Palestine and Jordan, which will be built on the principles of confederation, free choice, and the strengthening of established historical ties and vital interests.

The *proclamation of a Palestinian state* was the keynote of the "intifada session." In spite of the fact that this decision looks premature because it has been adopted before the liberation of the occupied territories, it shows that our people have but one understanding of the idea of national independence and state sovereignty. The decision becomes irrevocable in the light of the USA and Israel's attempts, aided by Arab reactionaries, to deny the Palestinians' right to self-determination or to interpret this concept in their own way.

The session has emphasised that, despite the oppression of the Palestinian people, the occupation of their land, and the usurpation of their right to self-determination, the UN General Assembly's resolution on the division of Palestine into two states (Arab and Jewish) remains a juridical instrument for ensuring the Palestinians' sovereignty and national independence.

For the first time in our liberation movement's history, this UN decision has been unanimously approved by all members of the National Council (for

⁵ Resolution 181 of November 29, 1947.

40 years, only the Palestinian Communists had adhered to this stand). In other words, as a result of the session's work international law has been adopted by our people, and its leadership, represented by the PLO, and has reinforced the national liberation struggle. It is only natural that the world community has welcomed the proclamation of a Palestinian state, as evidenced by its wide international recognition.

The historic declaration of independence announces that the new state belongs to *all the Palestinians*, wherever they may be. It is a bulwark of their national and cultural identity, guaranteeing equal rights for all sons and daughters of the Palestinian people; freedom of opinions and convictions, of religion and of political views; the human dignity of everyone in a parliamentary democracy; the freedom to establish parties; and social justice. Any discrimination based on social origin, religion, race or sex is rejected on a constitutional basis, which recognises the sovereignty of law and judicial procedure, the national cultural heritage, and the peaceful coexistence of different religions.

We regard the creation of such a state as a weighty contribution to the advancement of the civilisation of the region's peoples. Unlike despotic regimes and unlike neighbouring Israel, where discrimination prevails, this state gives all Palestinians an opportunity to acquire a home and a national identity.

The decisions of the 19th session of the PNC are based on the following principles:

- no repetition of the national tragedy of 1948;
- sensitive treatment of the uprising in the occupied territories;
- respect for the advice of friends.

In the course of serious discussions on these principles, the enemies' hopes of splitting the national unity achieved in April 1987, and provoking new conflicts within the ranks of the Palestinian Resistance had been dashed. It should be noted that during the

session Jordan's royal press and the press of some other Arab regimes took up nihilistic, extremist positions, claiming that our forum would pass in an atmosphere of "passivity and capitulationism". But the development of democratisation in the ranks of the PLO had made it possible to refute these negative forecasts and adopt historic decisions. The parties and organisations represented in the PLO, and those that were independent, acted with responsibility, guided by the conviction that the internal differences needed to be overcome within the framework of preserving national unity.

The session has strengthened and developed the sovereign character of the Palestinian solution. Its results, prompted by the requirements of this stage of the liberation struggle, are distinguished by a spirit of responsibility for the fate of the nation, and help to strengthen the unity of all the Palestinians and to harmonise relations between the people and the PLO.

The forum of the Palestine National Council has marked a qualitative shift in Palestinian political thinking, and raised it to a higher level commensurate with the intensity of the mass uprising in the occupied territories. It has placed before the people realistic aims, helped to develop mass enthusiasm and to mobilise the people, and given our friends new stimuli and arguments for the support of the national cause and the establishment of a fair and lasting peace in the region. At the same time it has disarmed the enemies of the Palestinian people.

The PNC's decisions have been adopted during an unprecedented peace offensive and a warming of the international climate, which have alarmed the ruling circles of Israel and its Washington sponsors. Proof of this is the refusal by the State Department to issue an entry visa to Yasser Arafat so that he could speak at the UN General Assembly and acquaint the world community with the decisions of the "intifada session", which, as never before, bring our just cause nearer to victory.

A CHALLENGE TO THE WORKING- CLASS MOVEMENT

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THE TECHNOLOGICAL and information revolution carries with it considerable potential for human progress and for meeting social needs, but this potential is greatly restricted by capital's use of it against the people in its drive for profit. But this new and complex process in the development of the productive forces in French society, and in other industrialised capitalist countries, constitutes a momentous and multifaceted revolution.

Monopoly capital has used new technology to increase productivity by reducing employment, turning it into an instrument for the intensified exploitation of the working people. This limits the production of wealth, leads to a waste of labour resources, prolongs high unemployment, and encourages financial accumulation to the detriment of the development of the productive forces.

Over the past seven years, profits in France have been growing at the expense of wages. From 1980 to 1987, gross revenues from operations by all categories of non-financial enterprises went up from 37% to 42% of value added, while wages as a part of the national wealth fell from 56.9% to 53%. There is a direct connection between these two trends. The "profit explosion" is reflected in the accounts of enterprises. For example, in 1987, the earnings of the 15 most successful industrial groups increased by 37 billion francs.

Much of the increase in profits was achieved through a policy of keeping wages down. Since 1984-1985, admittedly, this policy has led to a certain increase in material investment, but only in *rationalisation*, which helps to reduce wage costs while failing

to expand production capacity, and which, given the orientation towards external markets imposed on the French economy by big business and the government, leads to expensive imports, notably of equipment, and tends to upset the foreign trade balance and to enlarge foreign domination. Increased profits are not used for material investment nor for training.

A growing amount of the resources at the disposal of the enterprises is being withdrawn from the production of goods and services, resulting in what is known as "financial growth" to the detriment of the "real economy": a large proportion of the capital is switched to financial investments, which yield higher profits. Official statistics reveal that in 1980 non-financial enterprises held 16 billion francs in bonds, shares and other securities; rising to 83 billion in 1984; and to 169 billion by 1987; while the credit value traded on the money market went up from zero in 1984 to 105 billion in 1987.

This accelerated financial growth in the capitalist world led to the crash of 1987, the effects of which are still being felt. Financial growth has largely been stimulated by government policy. It is common knowledge that the French state paid out 100 billion francs to the holders of the Giscard loan, while receiving only 6.5 billion in return. Through a combination of investment in rationalisation and in the financial sphere, the major industrial and financial groups manage to boost their profits, which are once again feeding financial growth outside the real economy.

In these conditions, material investment leads simply to a superficial and lop-sided modernisation of industry, which suffers from a shortage of marketing outlets because of the super-exploitation of the wage-earners. The potential effectiveness of such modernisation is cancelled out by wage cuts, inadequate skill training, and anachronistic labour relations which act as a disincentive to workers. Management has failed to overcome these obstacles either by using psychological incentives or by determining wages and work norms on a strictly individual basis.

These negative phenomena have been shown in numerous studies. A report prepared in France for the French government by the president of the BSN transnational distances itself from the technocratic myth of an "unmanned factory", and has to admit that "mastering technology without causing social upheavals is neither a luxury, nor a social nicety, nor a dream of harmony, but a precondition for the survival of enterprises". If the existing contradiction of exploitation is not denied, this fails to bring into question the urge for maximum profits, and the same report foresees increasing exploitation of engineers and technicians. French employers oppose any serious negotiations on the introduction of new technologies. They merely want to use them to support a policy which is based on the criteria of

maximum profit and the super-exploitation of labour.

Capital seeks to introduce *flexibility* for the sake of modernisation, which means a still greater subordination of labour costs and working conditions (hours, contractual stability, social insurance, etc.) to the requirements of profit-making.

According to the General Confederation of Labour (CGT), the number of people out of work in September 1988 rose to 3.4 million. The available official statistics show that in 1988, 3.25 million people (over 15% of the active population) were casually employed, i. e., those working part-time or on a temporary basis, those on short-term contracts, those on training schemes or doing community work and those having various menial and low-paid jobs without any real social security.

Casual employment mainly affects women, who make up 84% of part-time workers, and young people, who suffer directly from unemployment: 23.4% of the unemployed are under 25, and a significant number of the young have to take casual jobs.

The policy of the employers is leading to immense social regression at a time when the technological revolution requires all-round intellectualisation of every sphere of social life, greater initiative among workers, and the promotion of skills and abilities.

The employers and their political allies have no hesitation in accusing the trade unions of sticking to archaic and corporative views. The actual material and human results of the application of new technologies are *part of the class struggle*, which finds its expression in the attack by capital on the trade unions.

For several years now an ideological campaign has been under way in France to weaken and discredit the unions, with announcements about the "demise of the working class movement", and the disappearance of the traditional functions of the unions, which, it is claimed, are losing their character as a social force. The idea is being put about that social classes and, consequently, their antagonisms and the class struggle are on the way out.

An effort is being made to back up these ideas with references to the technological revolution and the resultant social shifts. It is claimed that the new technologies are leading to a "post-industrial" society in which class conflicts disappear and the working-class movement disintegrates, while the unions are being integrated with the state. A recent study in France has even defended the prospect of unions without members which would become social agencies representing the interests of wage-earners, elected by the working people. This is merely the latest and most extreme example of an ideological campaign based on the idea of "a crisis in the trade union movement".

Those who hold such views now question the very

essence of trade unionism: defence of working people's interests, organisation of the class struggle, and resistance to capitalist exploitation in order to transform society are being replaced by the function of representation, with a denial of antagonistic class interests in favour of a policy of consensus and social arbitration. This is *class collaboration in a modernised and almost institutionalised form*. The re-appearance on the social scene of the old idea of a "social peace", which François Mitterrand put forward during the presidential elections, clearly shows the gist of the political changes planned in France, and the role assigned to the trade union movement.

By resisting the offensive from capital, and proposing alternative solutions to the crisis, the trade unions themselves have become the target of class attacks.

With the French trade union movement split, the attack is mainly directed against the largest and most influential trade union association, the CGT, whose activity is based on the principle of class struggle. Pressure is also being put on other trade unions with a view to encouraging the reformist unions to adapt, and their leadership to support flexible working and encroachments on the purchasing power and social security of working people. This is what the leaders of reformist unions have been doing, which has led to a number of social setbacks in the past few years.

The strategy of weakening the trade unions is not confined to ideological pressure. Harassment, violations of union rights, the dismissal of trade union delegates (40,000 within 4 years), and all kinds of repressions are also used. New methods of management (often copied from US and Japanese models) are being introduced in order to link social integration and incentives by means of quality circles, various projects for improving efficiency and changes in working conditions.

More than 20,000 quality circles have been set up at the enterprises, and they have recently begun to appear in the public sector as well. In 1980 the congress of the National Council of French Employers (CNPF) stressed that "the rapid appearance and spread of new technologies" demands "technical, economic and social innovations to cope with the changes" and calls on the enterprises to adapt in order "to improve social management and labour organisation, and to influence the geographical mobility". With the introduction of new technologies, the employers are now devising contractual agreements which undermine basic elements of the right to work (health and safety committees, shopfloor committees, working hours and conditions etc.). These attempts are often supported by reformist trade unions.

The idea is to surpass not only the old methods of social paternalism, but also the recent practice of organising "human relations". The common fea-

ture of such methods is an appeal for a wide consensus on the requirements of capitalist profitability for the sake of realism, individual development, greater economic efficiency and security employment, while exploiting the fear of unemployment and the greater competition between workers, and denying the solidarity and struggle of the working class and its capacity to secure positive transformations.

The militant trade union movement is by no means outdated. On the contrary, in the crisis its activity is more necessary than ever before to protect the interests of the working people and trade union rights and freedoms.

Despite frequent repetition, Marx's comment that "by cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they [the workers—Ed.] would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement"¹ still pertains.

The same applies in conditions of crisis, when the social consciousness of some workers is adversely affected and when the bourgeoisie and other forces try to reconcile workers and employers by claiming, in the name of a mystifying and abstract concept, that all classes have a common interest in France in late 1985. This action is militant, with raging in the capitalist world. Capital seeks to rally the classes for the purpose of "modernising Europe", and to justify the consequent sacrifices as a condition for meeting the aspirations of the working people, recreating economic growth and full employment, and responding better to social needs. The class-conscious trade union movement must therefore make great efforts to explain its *ideological stand*, and turn its attention to the needs of the various categories of wage-earners, the unemployed, part-time workers, and pensioners.

The fact that the CGT has consistently pursued this policy and that the masses have begun to gain mature social experience from the crisis have had a direct bearing on the strike action which began in France in late 1985. This action is militant, with new forms springing from the development of trade union and worker democracy. The experience gained under Socialist-led governments and the disillusionment caused by retreats in the social sphere in the past few years have also played a part.

This social trend is evident in the ever more massive strikes. Working people are fighting for higher pay and a guaranteed minimum wage (this demand was highlighted in the electoral campaign of the Communist Party's presidential candidate), and for consideration of the social needs after years of stagnation and retreat. Observers have noted the growing militancy of the trade unions, which is worrying the major employers' federations.

The CGT's influence has grown recently, as will be seen from the elections to the arbitration commissions (panels which look into conflicts between wage-workers and employers). Almost all the workers in the private sector voted. There has been further confirmation from the elections of trade union delegates and members of trade union committees at enterprises.

It would obviously be wrong to establish any direct link between the election of public bodies and political voting, but the votes won by the French Communist Party (PCF) in the presidential election and in elections to the National Assembly are clear evidence that working people's social mentality is beginning to change.

In the past few years, working-class organisations have not confined themselves to challenging social stagnation or seeking the fulfilment of their immediate demands. They have also acted in new spheres related to the use of high technology, looking towards a new form of full employment that would differ qualitatively from those forms characteristic of earlier cyclical recoveries.

"It is now becoming possible to make work less arduous and more interesting," says the resolution of the 26th Congress of the PCF. *"The emergence of new technologies implies a real revolution in this sphere. Human labour must cease to be an extension of the machine, and must increasingly be an activity of intellectual effort and communication. The efficiency of modern production calls for increasingly highly qualified and responsible men and women, and an end to the lapses between conception and execution, and between research, production and distribution. It also requires new forms of cooperation within and between enterprises. This implies that priority must be given to human beings—to their well-being and to the satisfaction of their initial and advanced training needs—and to the development of democracy at work and in society."*

There is an ever-increasing need to improve skill training. Some capitalist groups have accentuated "human investment", thus seeking to overcome the obstacles to greater overall productivity involved in the introduction of new technologies. The problem is such a serious one that the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development insists on the importance of training and on the role of "human capital" as a factor of growth.

Undoubtedly this approach contains an element of criticism of the present type of productivity, although it fails to reach the heart of the matter. The proposal to look at labour skills in the light of overall economic efficiency, and not just labour productivity, is limited by the desire to ensure swift and profitable returns on capital investment in new technology, and the policy of flexible working and new wage schemes, which make labour earnings

¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 148.

uncertain. This policy is connected with the modernisation of some types of production and services, but even if it implies the prospect of some genuine economic development, there is no suggestion that the vicious circle of financial growth is to be broken. This is merely a highly selective and elitist approach to the raising of skill standards, which tends to undermine the efforts necessary to attain a new type of productivity and to create markets. It also has a negative effect on job creation and prolongs mass unemployment, which official forecasts expect to increase appreciably.

The restrained use of new technology tends to narrow the avenues of development that might eventually create the conditions for pulling out of the crisis. *This cannot be done without extending the rights of working people and their trade unions.*

The CGT has put forward economic proposals not only to back up its own social demands, but also to bring about a profound change in the methods of enterprise management and in economic policy for the benefit of the working people. This new trend is all the more important because such actions have not been characteristic of French trade union theory and practice in the past. The new role of the class-conscious trade union movement is not simply the result of abstract reasoning, but has been born in action: the defence of employment; the protests against the mass redundancies which began in the mid-1960s; the support for new jobs; and the opposition to an enterprise policy, based on the drive for profit, which has led to France's industrial decline.

The struggle for a way out of the crisis is increasingly confronted by international economic and financial factors, which stem from the growing strength of transnational financial groups and the crisis in international economic relations (debt, imbalances of trade and payments, the stock market crash, etc.). The need to coordinate trade union action is reinforced by the growing influence of these transnational groups, the competition between the working people in various countries which they stimulate, and by the consequences of structural economic changes. Some progress has been made, but it is still very modest. *The working-class movement lags behind the developing internationalisation of capital.*

The present strategy of the transnationals and the industrialised capitalist states, which relies on a multiplication of "joint ventures" with socialist and developing countries, throws into relief the importance of the international coordination of trade union activity at every level. This means active support of cooperation (including new forms of joint ventures), promoting economic growth and ensuring employment. This is also dictated by the technological revolution, which requires that the trade unions are more consistent in resisting the domination of transnational capital.

The strategies of capital with respect to the European problems provide a new field of action. The creation of a single European market is portrayed by the employers and other political and trade union forces in France—with the exception of the PCF and the CGT—as a response to the crisis and as a "great miracle". In actual fact, the French leaders are overreaching themselves in an effort to ensure the interests of some financial groups, while yielding to the transnationals, including Japanese and US transnationals, which naturally seek to bolster their dominant positions in Europe. This policy leads to more closures and a problem with the mobility of labour within Europe, and gives encouragement to flexible working practices.

Much is now being said about the "European social space". The Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE) has clearly indicated that it has no intention of giving a positive content to a formula which is essentially designed to entrench the super-exploitation of labour through the alignment of national social systems at the lowest level. Many European trade unions entertain certain illusions on this score which are an obstacle to concerted action and international cooperation. Mutual understanding among working people in Europe is vital for joint action in the social sphere (especially for reducing the working day without wage cuts). This means cooperation in civilian research, in co-production by public sectors, and in the activity of individual companies, and the use of financial resources to ensure employment and economic and social development.

The diverse changes in the differing structures of the capitalist countries, and also in international economic relations, enlarge the sphere of action for the working-class movement while laying greater responsibility on it. It should take up the challenge offered by these new developments in the productive forces and provide new answers to the new problems.

VIOLENCE CONTINUES IN PERU

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PERU is facing the worst crisis in its entire history. The country is crippled with a foreign debt of about \$17 billion, its external reserves have been exhausted, and there is a balance of payments deficit, all of which have had a catastrophic effect on the economy, heavily dependent as it is on the import of capital goods and consumer goods. As a result, production is either contracting or is paralysed and inflation has turned into hyperinflation. From 114% in September 1988 it reached close to 1,000% by December. More than two-thirds of the labour force are out of work or underemployed and the government, clutching at straws, fell back on spending gold reserves.

There are a budgetary and a trade deficits. The purchasing power of wages has virtually evaporated and a nonsense has been made of traditional collective pay bargaining. The CGTP—the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers—called four successful national strikes, and the numerous and varied forms of social protest carried the seeds of a social explosion.

But the crisis has not affected everybody. Despite the serious consequences, the government has not suspended debt service payments amounting to nearly one-third of all export earnings. Besides the state, the transnationals have also been responsible for the flight of capital. Occidental Petroleum alone repatriated \$120 million in 1987. Local entrepreneurs, reaping higher profits through lower production costs and tax concessions, have not reinvested, but remitted them abroad.

This state of affairs, known as "structural violence" in Peru, does not involve a temporary predicament but a deep structural problem the result of debilitating oligarchic-imperialist exploitation. To this must be added three centuries of colonialism, which rent the social fabric of the country and consecrated class division, racial discrimination, regional imbalances and centralism. Thus we can see that it is the "maintenance of the status quo, not change, that is causing the insecurity"¹ in Peru today.

¹ See S. Lopez, *La Política, la violencia y la revolución* (ponencia presentada al II Congreso Nacional de Sociología), Arequipa, 1987.

The above introduction should help explain the origins of the violence which has engulfed Peru.

This violence takes three main forms: the violence of the repressive machinery of the state (the "dirty war"); of paramilitary right-wing bands (Rodrigo Franco Commando); and of the Sendero Luminoso or the Shining Path (SL)—"the most hermetic, cruel, fanatic and enigmatic of all the continent's guerrilla movements"².

The Centre for the Study and Promotion of Development has counted roughly 12,000 terrorist acts between April 1980 and February 1988 (Sendero themselves put the figure at more than 30,000). These include attacks on farms, mines, shops, warehouses, factories, and police stations; ambushes against army patrols; the obstruction of bridges and railways; the blowing up of power lines; assassinations, which include dozens of United Left (IU) activists; and punitive raids against agricultural cooperatives and peasant communities.

SL activities have provoked counterterrorism from the repressive forces. By June 1988, this had left more than 12,000 dead, 3,000 missing or "disappeared", and damage estimated at \$10 billion. Peru is now among the world's ten worst countries for torture and disappearances.

In Peru itself and abroad a number of attempts have been made, in the press and by scholars, to investigate SL. (By contrast, mass protests unrelated to Senderism, for all their social, political and historic significance, have not merited such attention.)

Most serious studies tried to explain the phenomenon rather than simply label it. Others contained far-fetched and extravagant interpretations which were necessarily inexact. Using these studies, and referring to SL's own documents and activities, as an objective indicator of its true aims and methods, an attempt will be made to analyse this phenomenon.

Curiously, Sendero Luminoso emerged at the same time as the IU, in 1980. Its roots, however, go back to 1964, when the Peruvian Communist Party felt the impact of the schism in the international communist movement caused by the Maoists.

"It is remarkable how many groups and activists were carried away by Maoism," the historian Alberto Flores has observed. "In no other Latin American country did the Chinese revolution exert such a pull. One of these parties chose as its motto 'On the Shining Path of Mariategui'."³

In February 1970, a Maoist faction headed by Abimael Guzman, "President Gonzalo", assumed the leadership of the party, started "reconstitution" and began preparing for an armed struggle.

The explosions at polling stations, on May 17, 1980 in the remote district of Chuschi, Ayacucho, signalled

² *Le Monde*, April 29, 1988.

³ *Violencia y crisis de valores en el Perú*, Lima, 1987, p. 221.

the start of a guerrilla war. At the same time in Lima dead dogs suspended from lampposts with abusive inscriptions against Deng Xiaoping began to appear. By that time Mao was already dead, the "cultural revolution" had ended, the Gang of Four had been incarcerated, and Pol Pot driven out of Kampuchea.

The most salient feature of SL is its sectarian, messianic and belligerently anti-socialist character. They not only despise the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Albania and Cuba, but also loathe, amongst others, Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, Enver Hoxha. SL contemptuously describes the Central American insurgents as "pawns".⁴ They refuse to recognise any group other than those which signed the Declaration of the Internationalist Revolutionary Movement in March 1984.⁵

"We believe that the revolution in the imperialist states is a necessity," says "President Gonzalo", adding that "a world war will create the best conditions for it."⁶ The Senderists believe that they "head the strategic offensive of the world revolution". No comment.

Sendero Luminoso has the classic closed and centralised structure of a clandestine organisation. There is a hierarchical arrangement, and a network of front organisations which act legally on behalf of the party. Special emphasis is laid on recruiting young people and women. Potential members are observed, and then indoctrinated in study groups ("popular schools"), where they receive a hefty dose of political dogmatism and manichaeism.⁷ After an initial period of probation they sign a pledge of total commitment which marks their formal admission.

The convert is thus not a novice, but a strongly ideologised person with a blind faith in the movement who, as a sectarian, rejects out of hand whatever falls short of Senderism.

As regards SL's social base, Henry Favre of the European Council for Social Investigations into Latin America has remarked that "for individuals who are neither peasants nor rural nor urban workers, neither Indians nor Creoles, who have little social or cultural identity, Sendero offers a set of values and beliefs. It replaces frustration with conviction and lends their otherwise empty lives a sense of purpose."⁸

⁴ "Entrevista en la clandestinidad. Presidente Gonzalo rompe el silencio", *El Diario*, Lima, July 24, 1986, pp. 42, 44.

⁵ These Maoist organisations are: Agitprop (Italy), the Communist Groups of Nottingham and Stockport (Britain), the Mao Tse Tung Regional Committee of the Colombian Communist Party (M-L), the Red Banner Group of New Zealand, the Revolutionary Communist Party of the USA, the RCP of India, the Union of Iranian Communists, the Revolutionary Communist Union of the Dominican Republic, and the Communist Party of Ceylon.

⁶ *Entrevista en la clandestinidad*... p. 39.

⁷ A syncretic religious doctrine which interprets the world in terms of a cosmic conflict between good/light and evil/darkness.—Ed.

Its leaders, moulded by radical campus politics and inspired by the experience of the Maoist "cultural revolution", are arrogant and dogmatic maximalists who claim an absolute monopoly of the truth. Their Creole, white mestizo character, their lack of kinship with the Andean people, and their petty-bourgeois backgrounds explain the authoritarianism, high-handedness and vanguardism of Sendero and mock their claim that they are heir to the ancient tradition of the Indians.

The leadership attempts to characterise the economic structure of Peruvian society by repeating almost verbatim the pronouncements made by Mao about the China of the 1940s. By the same token they adopt his thesis that the peasantry is the principal force of the revolution. They have also adopted the cult of personality and call their chief the "helmsman", the "red sun", the "sword of Marxism" and so forth.

Researchers have noted that not only do they idolise their leader, but that they also rely on violent "purification". Their work revolves around *military activity* and they seek to "resolve everything by force of arms". The slogan "flail the countryside" means: cleanse it, inflame it, rupture the links between central government and the periphery by assassinating local officials, and lay the ground for creating so-called "support bases". Initially this aroused a certain amount of political sympathy because they attacked cattle-rustlers, unscrupulous traders, corrupt authorities, etc.

In "liberated areas" SL proscribed commercial farming, instead imposing a system of "self-sufficiency" which led to "fairs and regional markets being closed down one after another".⁹ In August 1982, they destroyed the Alpachaca farm, a research centre attached to the University of Huamanga. Later the violence extended to ordinary peasants, and technicians and engineers responsible for community development. As the United Left grew in popularity, SL began to hunt down Left alcaldes, hoping to frighten people away from the coalition. This led to a reversal in the group's fortunes, and they even began losing support in their home province of Ayacucho.¹⁰

And so, in December 1982, with SL completely discredited as a political force, the government decided to finish it off and ordered the armed forces into action.

But crude government errors, then as now, only served to help SL. The first mistake was in wrongly assessing the situation, and giving a far-fetched explanation of the reasons for Senderist violence. The second, an inevitable consequence of the first, was

⁸ *Que hacer*, Lima, No. 42, 1986, pp. 45-46.

⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 31, 1984, p. 29.

¹⁰ It is highly indicative that in November 1985 a member of the Peruvian Communist Party, which is part of the IU, was elected the alcalde (mayor) of Ayacucho.

in choosing methods that were wrong, vicious and unpredictable as to their effects.

The civilian-military Right failed to realise that Sendero had its own ideology, a firm structure, fanatical members and a leadership which constantly adapted and learned from its mistakes. SL has incorporated a number of Left radical groups and exerts pressure on individual IU participants by enticing them with such slogans as "Finish with the election game and come under our banners!" It intends to shift the "centre of the popular war" from the villages to the towns, in order to take over trade unions, tenants' associations and wrest control of them from "revisionists". (Such an abrupt turn attests to the failure of its "peasant war" strategy that envisaged turning the countryside into the epicentre of the revolution.) Dogmatic in speeches, the Senderist leadership is unscrupulously pragmatic in deeds and does not shrink from deals with drug traffickers, the extermination of activists of Left parties and movements, or the use of lies as a political weapon.

Without even trying to understand the situation, the Right cursed these "terrorists" and "Communists" (1). The then President, Belaunde Terri, declared with characteristic rhetoric that for each transmission line pylon blown up by the extremists he would build 100. General Climente Noel, resigning in December 1983 as chief of the military-political command, asserted: "Now life for the people of Ayacucho, Andahuaylas and the villages of Huanavelica is returning to normal and they look to the great future of Peru".¹¹

Reactionary circles spread deliberate disinformation about SL. A navy admiral, for example, declared: "I do not want to name any countries, but communist activity always has been directed by a certain centre of power."¹² These circles, anxious to discredit the popular movement, also sought to link SL with the United Left, which they accused of being the legal arm of Senderism. Hundreds of IU activists have been imprisoned on charges of "terrorism".

The Right, by diagnosing the malaise incorrectly, proved incapable of curing it.

If the chief objective of any political struggle, including that of SL, is to win over the population, then the authorities, through their "scorched earth" tactics, actually favoured the strategy of SL, which had already been discredited politically.

The counter-insurgent strategy is an offshoot of the Doctrine of National Security, devised by the Pentagon, which places defence of the system first. Its overriding concern is the maintaining of "ideological frontiers", and "East-West" confrontation, and its main aims are an *anticommunist campaign, the political defeat of mass movements* (which have made

great strides in Peru) and the extermination of their leaders.

Under the pretext of fighting against the Sendero Luminoso, the Pentagon-educated Peruvian army command follows sinister counter-insurgency manuals to the letter. This was cynically admitted by Luis Cisneros Vizquerra, who was army chief of staff and war minister until 1982: "If the police are to succeed, they must start killing Senderists and non-Senderists, because this is the only way to ensure success. ... Since attacks take place by night, I would impose a curfew in Ayacucho and shoot any thing that moves..."¹³

The "dirty war" list of crimes is long and getting longer. There have been massacres, summary executions, punitive raids against peasant communities, disappearances, and the Dantesque scenes of secret mass graves. As if that was not enough soldiers display severed heads in order to intimidate the population. Whole villages have been abandoned as a result.

Ex-President Belaunde, by his own admission, used to throw protest messages from international human rights organisations into the bin. "In time of war there can be no human rights," says the very "Western and Christian" bourgeois press.¹⁴

Police studies also confirm the failure of the anti-Senderist strategy. Rather than discovering who the real criminals are, the police simply use physical and psychological torture to extract confessions. There is also endemic corruption within the police force. Between 1980 and 1985, three police chiefs were charged with drug trafficking. The notorious drug trafficker Reynaldo Rodriguez, the "Godfather", was no less than an adviser to the police high command. The police and judiciary figure in surveys as the most disreputable state institutions.

With Alan Garcia as the new President (1985), the situation, unfortunately, has not changed much. The "dirty war" is continuing. A few weeks after he was sworn in, the army staged a massacre in the small town of Accomarca: about 60 women, children and old men were tortured to death, and their remains dynamited and burnt. Several months later the ring-leader was promoted, and became military attache to the Peruvian Embassy in the USA. This kind of cruelty does nothing but incline terrorist suspects among the peasants towards SL.

The government of the Peruvian Aprist Party,¹⁵ on the army command's advice, has further kindled violence with such monumentally imprudent decisions as the ordering of over 2,000 policemen into the universities of Lima (February 1987) and the mas-

¹¹ *Olga*, Lima, No. 182, 1984, p. 32.

¹² *Ibid.*, No. 183, p. 29.

¹³ *Que hacer*, No. 20, 1983, pp. 50, 56.

¹⁴ *Caretas*, Lima, No. 187, 1984, pp. 19-20.

¹⁵ PAP is a party of social democratic orientation. Created on the basis of the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), founded in 1924.—Ed.

sacre in two Lima prisons of about 300 detainees charged with terrorism (June 1986).

Sendero has survived and is growing in strength thanks entirely to the "dirty war". SL owes its political, psychological and even moral dividends not to its own efforts, and not to the reactionary line, but to the anti-insurgent strategy. The historian Pablo Macera, evaluating the prison massacre, said: "...The 18th of June may be registered as the greatest political triumph for Sendero in Peru." The police, complying with government orders, perpetrated a "crime without extenuating circumstances", permitting SL to "gain significant international standing".¹⁶ Moreover, it has gained a social base in those areas worst hit by the economic crisis, where people respond to agitation and messianic preachings...

The counter-insurgency strategy aims not only to eliminate Sendero, but essentially to smash the popular movement in Peru and destroy its important political gains: the creation of the United Left; the conversion of the CGTP into a virtual trade union centre for the Peruvian working people; the National Popular Assembly; the People's Defence Fronts; the Milk Committees¹⁷; the adoption of liberation theology by Christian communities; the process of unification of the peasant movement, etc.

To sum up, reaction has lost the political and moral authority to accuse Sendero Luminoso. The reactionaries and the Senderists have, as PCP General Secretary Jorge del Prado points out correctly, resorted to the same fascist strategy in their fight against the popular movement. They can only be defeated by the concerted action of the masses.

¹⁶ See *Debate*, Lima, No. 39, 1986, p. 12.

¹⁷ They aim at providing each child with at least one glass of milk a day.—Ed.

REFORMS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEGACY IN A CHANGING WORLD

Josef HINDELS

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THERE IS NO DOUBT within the international working-class movement about the need for reforms. Under the capitalist economic and social system they meet working people's interests, and it would be suicidal for the working-class movement to cease fighting for them.

Marx welcomed it as a great success when the proletariat in Britain won the 10-hour working day, although it did not abolish capitalist exploitation. The important thing for Marx was that the reform movement was tied in with the struggle for a socialist society.

Action for reform should not be confused with the ideological trend of reformism, which had a pernicious effect on social democracy even before World War I. Reformists (like Eduard Bernstein) regarded it as the alternative to socialism, and were prepared to abandon the radical transformation of society for the sake of reforms. They were justly reproached by left-wing Social Democrats and Communists, not for wanting reforms, but for their ideological integration within the existing society and their consequent revision of Marxism.

For earlier articles on the role of reforms in the policy of the communist parties and other democratic forces in the struggle for social progress see Bert Ramelson, Jim Mortimer, "Where Do Reforms Lead?", WMR No. 11, 1988; Willi Gerns, "The Borderline", WMR No. 12, 1988.

Josef Hindels (b. 1916), professional salesman, active in workers' and socialist movements from an early age. Joined the Socialist Party. Arrested in Austria before World War II. During the war lived in exile. On his return became secretary for education of the Socialist Youth organisation. In 1951-1970 Central Secretary in the union of private sector employees. Since 1970 has been engaged in professional writing. Holds left-wing socialist views. Author of numerous researches into the history and theory of the socialist movement in Austria. Actively supports the anti-fascist and peace-doing efforts of the Austrian public.

What then is the state of the reform movement under capitalism today and what is the role of European social democracy at this stage of capitalist development?

Let us note, first of all, that *over the last few decades the international working-class movement has gained appreciable successes in the struggle for reforms, which should neither be denied nor underestimated. In the developed capitalist countries, working people's living standards have risen and they now have an unprecedented degree of social protection.* The impressive edifice of social reforms tends, of course, to be vulnerable in periods of crisis, especially from unemployment. Nevertheless, the most important gains have been preserved in the majority of these countries and a return to social deprivation has been prevented.

Is There Room for Reforms?

One should not ignore the fact that whenever economic growth rates decline, more bitter battles are fought for the distribution of the product, and scope for the social reform policy is narrowed down. It has to go on the defensive, and there is a greater tendency to eliminate working people's gains. That is the course of events we now find in all the industrialised capitalist countries. Attitudes tend to differ among various members of the bourgeoisie. Some advocate extreme measures and step up the dismantling of social gains, while trying to range various strata of the working class, workers and office employees against each other. But others, with a stake in maintaining the social partnership, want to integrate the working-class movement into the existing system. They, too, would like to deprive the working people of some of their gains and to obviate new social gains, but they prefer to do this by agreement with their major organisations, instead of in open confrontation.

The traditional reformist working-class movement in Europe is in a state of crisis, which is beginning to affect its very nature. This is true mainly of the trade unions. The furious pace of the scientific and technological advance does not allow them to confine themselves to labour issues and leave economic policy to their employers. The Austrian economist Kurt W. Rothschild says, for instance, that the industrial and class structure of society has undergone extremely important changes, becoming much more complex. Along with industrial production, there are now a great many service sectors, a wider range of trades and professions, and a more acute problem of skill standards. Employment and social security have become as important as wages, and the trade unions are now expected to take part in formulating economic policy. Indeed, they are now so deeply involved in it that they can no longer opt out.

Rothschild says: "It is, therefore, a question of the degree of influence in every sphere, and every trade union is continuously faced here with the problem of finding that elusive compromise between cooperation and conflict. If cooperation is overemphasised, the trade union will degenerate into an accomplice of the employers or the state, helping them to attain their goals, and failing to stand up for the workers' interests with sufficient effect. If the urge for conflict prevails, there is the threat of the trade union losing its strong influence among the new strata of workers and office employees with their differing requirements. For these two reasons, a well-balanced compromise needs to be struck between cooperation and conflict. But the trade unions should not lose their place as a counterweight to capital, if they want to retain their significance as a battle-worthy representative of the wage workers' interests."¹

European social democracy and affiliated trade unions seek to influence the structural changes in the capitalist economy and to prevent them from being put through solely at the expense of the wage workers. Above all there is the problem of resisting technological unemployment and the redundancies as new techniques are introduced. Ensuring full employment, once a vital goal, has been pushed into the background, and a reduction in unemployment is now regarded as a success.

The etatisation of production in the capitalist countries has produced results that are a bitter disappointment, although this is not always openly expressed. Nowhere has it been possible to demonstrate that nationalised enterprises are superior to private capitalist enterprises, and there are many reasons for this. The two most important are the heavy bureaucratisation of the state sector of the economy and the dependence of the nationalised enterprises on the general political and economic situation. Here is a typical example: the crisis in the steel industry also dealt a heavy blow to the state enterprises. Steel workers, faced with the threat of unemployment, no longer regard nationalisation as a guarantee against job losses.

The theory of socialisation and further nationalisation towards democratic self-management of state enterprises, which was propounded by the Austro-Marxists led by Otto Bauer, has not been proved in any of the capitalist countries, and that is why there is no sign of the working-class movement being closely committed to the nationalised sphere of the economy, while the policy of privatisation has met with no more than token resistance. In countries like Austria this has led to the sale of nationalised enterprises to foreign capital.

Some European social democratic parties still have

¹ *Mitbestimmung*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 9-10.

programmes with socialist planks, but there is no longer any connection between the programmes which are quoted on ceremonial occasions, and the parties' actual policy. These parties no longer seek to bring about a radical change in property relations, and often tag the label of "dogmatism" on relevant conceptions. At best, they try to bring about change in the management of production through workers' participation at the level of enterprises and higher. The bodies ensuring such participation do not, of course, encroach on the capitalist economy, which is geared to profit-making. The planned economy is regarded in these parties as a discredited concept and is hardly mentioned at all, while the market economy philosophy has been substituted for the Marxist analysis of the reality.

Most social democratic parties contain strong groups belonging to what could be called the *neo-reformist movement*, which in contrast to classical reformism, is not confined to efforts to improve the condition of the working people, but which seeks to influence the economic and social policy of the state, without jeopardising capitalism. Under the parliamentary system, the neoreformists compete with the conservative parties, whose policies they do not reject in principle, and try to prove themselves to be "better conservatives", more effectively managing the capitalist economy. While doing so, they also try to represent the interests of the working people.

The objective of social democracy is to win over the majority, which includes the middle strata, a vague concept meaning the small and middle entrepreneurs who have a petty-bourgeois mentality, although they are wage-workers. Statistics show that the core of the industrial manual workers has been shrinking, and so social democracy has largely adapted its language, message and policy to the middle strata, who take a negative attitude to "socialism". That is why the neoreformists make a point of saying as little as possible about the traditional socialist principles and values still written into their programmes—an abandonment of socialist thinking, which is paradoxically called "modern".

The Importance of Self-Criticism

This policy of the Social Democrats and their trade unions is not accepted by everyone, even within their own ranks. In various ways, all the socialist parties have left-wing forces engaging in acute self-criticism and advocating new socialist concepts. They are supported by critically-minded intellectuals who are not always leftist, but who are unhappy with the unprincipled renunciation of socialist objectives.

Such criticism from the left is exemplified by Josef Weidenholzer's *Reconstruction of Social Democracy*. He is a professor at Johannes Kepler University in Linz, and he makes a self-critical analysis

of European social democracy which echoes what has been written in other countries, the FRG in particular. That is why it is worth while looking at his analysis in greater detail.

In a chapter entitled "Social Democracy in Its Second Century", Weidenholzer says that on its centenary doubt has been cast on the principles and structure of Austrian social democracy. Authoritative sociologists have predicted the end of the social democratic age, and it is not only the number of industrial workers that has been dwindling, but also their faith in the party with which they have had strong links from the outset.

All these processes are analysed in numerous publications and at scientific conferences. Weidenholzer says: "At first sight, they all appear to run in quite different directions. The fond farewell to social democracy alternates with a repeated emphasis of its role at this very moment, the incantation of bequeathed articles of faith, with resigned retreat from political argument. The more basic the difference in the discussion of this problem, the more basic the similarity in the incapacity to apply its results in practice. The discussion is entirely detached from the real world. This means, in Marxist terms, that the theory—practice relation is out of joint. The bottom line is that there is no longer a demand for social democracy as such, but for social democracy as a topic."²

What then is the way out of this unenviable situation? Like other students of the subject, he believes that it is still a long way off, and consists in a return to the realities of life for social democracy: "It can have a second century only if the theory—practice relation is re-established. I think that the continued existence of social democracy as a phenomenon is necessary not just for its own sake, which the old and the new elite of the movement believes, even if it will not admit as much. A realistic way out of the present dangerous situation can be envisaged only as a kind of reconstruction of the basic approach to the goals of socialism, that is, when shaping political processes, the underlying logic for solving the obvious priority problems of the majority of the population must be found."³

The author insists that any renewal of the social democratic concept requires a historical analysis, and it follows from his own reasoning that *social democracy has abandoned the socialist principles and deluded itself that capitalism has changed radically and is, strictly speaking, no longer capitalism*.

Not very long ago, says Weidenholzer, experts held that economic crises were well and truly over and that full employment could be ensured in the long term. The official view was that all the state needed

² Josef Weidenholzer, *Rekonstruktion der Sozialdemokratie*, Linz, 1987, p. 1.

³ Ibid., p. 2.

to do was to take the relevant measures to correct the situation whenever there was a pause in economic growth, the income gap became too wide, or the employment equilibrium was upset. This naively optimistic notion of progress was called into question as early as the late 1960s. During the 1967-68 economic recession, social democratic parties came to power all over Europe, and the working-class movement was given the chance to make its mark on the "emerging society" and to try and ease its contradictions by demanding democracy in every sphere of life. The welfare state, which first began to develop during the postwar rehabilitation period, was improved and its gains were extended to the petty-bourgeois and peasant strata. But the political system remained intact, despite the fact that Austrian social democracy's 1926 Linz Programme proclaimed that if it won an absolute majority in parliament, it would fundamentally transform both society and state.

"The result of more than a decade of the Social Democrats' single-handed government is not a system which the old party programme would define as socialism, but a modernised and socially more benign capitalism. The protracted impairment of social democracy's positions, which first became evident in the early 1980s, was produced not so much by its social policy, as by the crumbling of the cornerstones of the working-class movement."⁴

Weidenholzer does not spare social democracy in describing the infiltration of conservative thinking. Here is another extract from his eloquent analysis: "However important (and honest) the stand in defence of the welfare state, it cannot guarantee the prospect of stable socialist transformations in the society for long.... It is unquestionable that there is no such prospect at present, and that the crisis of social democracy is also a crisis of socialist economic thinking. There is now no demand for state economic administration, for nationalisation, or rhetoric on national economic relationships. There is 'change', but it is mostly in the minds of many socialist economists recanting their old credo and often preaching the advantages of the market economy with the zeal of neophytes. I think that this is where principles are being jettisoned much too swiftly, while fashion prevails over critical examination."⁵

Other social democratic writers have also engaged in sharp self-criticism. Take Alfred Dallinger, Minister of Social Affairs, who is a contributor to the book. He says that on the occasion of its 100th anniversary Austrian social democracy has good reason to regard the future with anxiety: the onus of government responsibility, or the shift in society, seem to have caused it to lose its ability to project the future and to display courage in striving for the ideal.

"The party, which had as its main goals social justice, equality and solidarity with the dispossessed," says Dallinger, "has come to be seen by many as a lobby for protecting its own privileges and interests, blind and insensitive to the steadily worsening conditions in which increasing numbers of people in the capitalist society have to live, and largely indifferent to the scandals and degeneration within its own ranks. Will Austrian social democracy survive until the year 2000—not in name, but in line with the principles held for a hundred years?"⁶

Let us not deceive ourselves: *such self-criticism, even when voiced by a socialist minister, does not signify the beginning of a radical change in policy.* This applies equally to Austrian, as well as to general European social democracy. The parties have lost so much of their socialist substance, that a return to socialism is possible only in the course of a long and contradictory process. Disappointment is in store for those who hope for rapid change. Or to put it more starkly: *in the foreseeable future European social democracy—despite the growing self-criticism—will not overcome its neoreformist policy of shedding its socialist objectives.* It will nevertheless remain an essential factor of the international working-class movement, and this should not be underestimated.

The further development of European social democracy, I think, will depend, apart from other factors, on whether the Soviet Union and other socialist countries manage to carry out their perestroika. The discredit heaped on existing socialism in the Stalin period did much to strengthen the rightists and to push aside the leftists in the ranks of social democracy, which is why the leftists now look with sympathy and hope to the large-scale transformations in the USSR, led by Mikhail Gorbachov. They welcome especially the relentless exposure of the distortions of the Stalin period.

While the right-wing Social Democrats have always regarded these distortions as an important component part of the Soviet system (and of existing socialism generally), the left-wingers relied on the theory developed, among others, by Austro-Marxists Otto Bauer and Max Adler, which held that Soviet society would unshackle itself from its degenerate bureaucracy as it overcame its historically-rooted backwardness. This process is under way in the Soviet Union, and its first few steps give the left-wing Social Democrats courage and confidence.

Cooperation Despite Differences

In a book Otto Bauer⁷ wrote in 1936—*Between Two World Wars?*—he urged efforts to overcome the his-

⁴ Ibid., pp. 12-13.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

⁶ Ibid., p. 87.

⁷ Otto Bauer (1882-1938), a leader of Austrian social democracy, a major ideologist of Austro-Marxism, who had a strong influence on the left social-democratic movements in Europe.

torical division of the working-class movement into Social Democrats and Communists through an "integral socialism". He advocated, not just a formal healing of the split, but the correction of mistakes both by Social Democrats and by Communists. Here is a short extract from his analysis:

"An alliance of democratic workers' parties of the capitalist countries with the Soviet Union is now historically possible and necessary, and it can and must eliminate the contradiction between the democratic socialism of the West and the revolutionary socialism of the East. But the removal of this contradiction requires actions of historic magnitude not only in the capitalist countries, but also in the Soviet Union. It will be eliminated the day the Soviet dictatorship resolutely proceeds to transform itself into a socialist democracy.

"If the Soviet government, acting with the same courage with which it transformed society, eliminated the capitalist classes, and began to remove the contradiction between the workers and the peasants through collectivisation and the mechanisation of the peasant economy, starts adapting the political superstructure of Soviet society to the economic basis it has created, in order to democratise it step by step, by placing the organs administering society under the effective control of the whole people, ensuring freedom for the individual within socialist society and free competition of all opinions concerning the decisions taken by the members of that society, in order gradually to build a socialist democracy, then it will in deed convince mankind that the dictatorship of the proletariat is really no more than the inevitable and temporary means for creating the most perfect democracy, genuine and guaranteed freedom, equality and self-determination for all, not only in the state, but also in the economy and society."⁸

In the modern world we are now nearing the future envisaged by Bauer, although it has not yet been reached. That is why there would not be much sense in coming out for the alliance of Social Democrats and Communists. They can do no more than cooperate, while differing on many issues.

In some capitalist countries it has been possible, in time of economic crisis, for Social Democrats and Communists to carry on a common struggle within trade unions against the dismantling of social gains, but this would not seem to be typical of relations between the two movements.

The issues on which cooperation is now possible, necessary and already partially established are the common struggle for international detente, an end to the arms race, and the preservation of peace through East-West partnership.

It is my view that the "new thinking"—the subject

⁸ Otto Bauer, *Zwischen zwei Weltkriegen?*, Bratislava, 1936, p. 212.

of much discussion these days—is to be found in the sphere of security policy not only in the socialist countries and communist parties, but also in the most influential parties of the Socialist International. A comparison of certain statements made by Mikhail Gorbachov and Willi Brandt suggests that the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the President of the Socialist International, despite their ideological differences, agree that mankind can either destroy war, or destroy itself, as Albert Einstein put it. The development of modern military technology, particularly nuclear weapons, makes another world war—a war without victors—impossible, if mankind wants to survive.

Several important conclusions for the international working-class movement, both social democratic and communist, follow on from this. *The class struggle in the capitalist countries cannot be halted because of the continued existence of classes with diametrically opposite interests. But it should be conducted in such a way that the struggle for peace is in the forefront.* Without denying the existence of class contradictions, it is important to cooperate with the Church, with religious groups, and with a section of the bourgeoisie, when the issue is peace, mankind's supreme good.

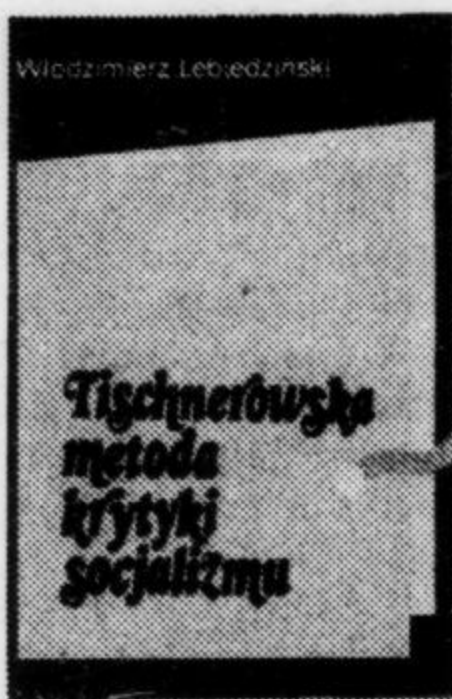
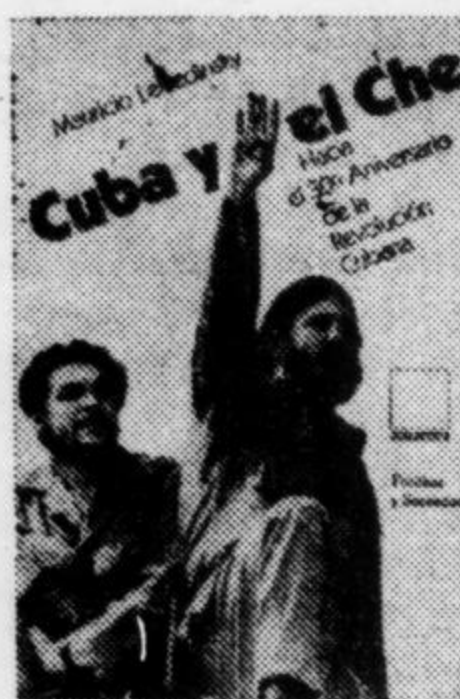
These ideas will be found in every statement and article by Mikhail Gorbachov and Willy Brandt. That is why, without creating a personality cult, one could say that both these leaders symbolise what is now common both to the Social Democrats and the Communists, without ignoring their differences.

Cooperation between the CPSU and the Socialist International's consultative commission on disarmament shows that it goes beyond theoretical statements. It is no accident, therefore, that the Social Democratic Party of Germany has concluded important agreements with the GDR Communists, notably on the banning of chemical weapons.

It is in the interest of our common struggle for peace to discuss the differences between the Social Democrats and the Communists in a businesslike atmosphere. *Changes in European social democracy involving efforts to overcome neoreformism and return to socialist principles will not occur today or tomorrow, but will require a long process. Changes in the communist parties inspired by the perestroika can also occur only in the long term. Patience is needed on both sides.*

Social Democrats and Communists will have to deal with their own mistakes and weaknesses on their own, but these transformations will become meaningless if we cannot avert a nuclear war. That is why it is paramount for Social Democrats and Communists to continue the struggle for peace in common with everyone who wants to survive, despite the mistakes and weaknesses that have yet to be overcome.

THE BOOK SCENE



FATHER TISCHNER'S VIEW OF SOCIALISM

Włodzimierz Lebedzinski, TISCHNEROWSKA METODA KRYTYKI SOCJALIZMU, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa, 1987, 276 pp.

THE WRITINGS of Jozef Tischner, a Polish theologian, have recently become very popular among Roman Catholics around the world. Various Western anti-communist circles, often remote from Catholicism, also use them actively. Tischner teaches at the Papal Theological Academy in Krakow, and is the chairman of the Venice-based International Institute of Sciences of Man, set up at the initiative of John Paul II, and a permanent member of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Believers.

In Poland three main schools of Catholic philosophy have gained a significant following over the last few decades: neo-Thomism¹, personalism², and the evolution-

ism of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin³. The Reverend Jozef does not belong to any of them, adhering to a doctrine of his own, which has much in common with the views of such representatives of phenomenology⁴ as Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and Roman Ingarden (1893-1970). Tischner regards himself as a pupil of Ingarden, who, by the way, was an exponent of a realistic world-view free of any religious accretions. Selecting what he needs from phenomenology and spicing it with elements of existentialism, the Polish priest has obtained a philosophical conception which we can only term eclectic. As to his views on society, they are now dominated by a complete negation of Marxism-Leninism and existing socialism. I stress the word "now", because there was a time when Tischner saw much of positive value in Marxism and socialism. He even maintained that social Catholic thought was inferior—theoretically and practically—to the Marxist social doctrine.

In May 1976 he wrote in the Polish Catholic monthly *Znak*: "An encounter with the Marxist doctrine of man is for the Christian philosopher an intellectual event into

¹ Neo-Thomism proceeds from the teachings of Thomas Aquinas and has gained an official recognition from the Vatican. It challenges both materialism and subjective idealism. In neo-Thomism the world appears as created by God and hierarchically arranged.—Ed.

² Personalism is a current of modern bourgeois idealist philosophy which takes personality as a primary reality and the highest spiritual value, and the world as an expression of the creativity of the supreme personality—God.—Ed.

³ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955)—Catholic philosopher who advocated a radical transformation of religion to bring it into conformity with modern science. Rejecting the biblical myth about the creation by God of the first man—stock of the human race—he held that man was the most perfect result of millennia of evolution of the organic world, which had in turn developed through the evolution of the inorganic world.—Ed.

⁴ Phenomenology (from the Greek—the science of phenomena) is based on the interpretation of a phenomenon not as a reflection of an object or a manifestation of its essence, but as the form of the object as perceived by the mind.—Ed.

which he is drawn by the surrounding reality itself, if only he is able to hear its call. For me, personally, such encounters have a particular significance. I belong to those numerous representatives of my generation for whom Marxism was, right after the war, one of the first youthful philosophic fascinations. And although many of us chose a world-view different from that offered by Marxism, nevertheless a trace of that fascination remains, just as some of its causes have not died in us. For many of us the dialogue with Marxism is not only related to what happens in the outside world, but also to what lives in ourselves."

"What are the sources of our admiration for Marxism?" Tischner asked, replying: "In our culture Marxist thought represents the theoretical expression of the painful and mostly faltering hope that changes in the inhuman conditions of human life are possible and even realistic. Marxist philosophy is, undoubtedly, a philosophy of hope for the socially oppressed. It instils a profound belief that the first prerequisite for a man to find his ethos is a radical change in the social system of labour. ...The fact that it deals on a large scale with questions that respect the hopes of the workers makes Marxist philosophy the first coherent philosophy of labour".

Today, the same Tischner writes about Marxism quite differently, assailing it fiercely and no longer finding anything of positive value in it. Perhaps the Marxist doctrine—which he was entirely objective about in the mid-1970s—has undergone a major change? No, it has retained its humanism and become even richer. It has continued to analyse the position of working people in the capitalist states, as creatively as ever, and kept a critical eye on negative phenomena in the socialist countries.

Father Tischner himself has changed perceptibly. It is no coincidence that the Catholic philosopher, who not so long ago could afford to look realistically at basic Marxist ideas, now plays a not insignificant role in international anti-communism, "enriching" it with Polish issues.

Włodzimierz Lebieżński examines this affair in his book *Tischner's Method for Criticising Socialism*, published in Warsaw in 1987. He focusses on Tischner's philosophic, political, ideological, ethical and social views after the Polish events of August 1980. The book devotes relatively little space to Tischner's earlier views (even the above-quoted fragment of his publication is not cited), from which it follows that the description of Tischner the man, and the evolution of his convictions, are incomplete. Lebieżński, though, notes a steady change in Tischner's attitudes, which creates "additional difficulties and complications in outlining his views" (p. 18).

Lebieżński concentrates on two books by Tischner: *The Ethics of Solidarity*, which appeared in Poland in 1981, and with supplements a year later in France, and *A Dialogue Polish Style*, which appeared in France in 1981. Both, says Lebieżński, betray the desire to "foster a loathing of Marxism-Leninism in general, and in Poland in particular" (p. 7). In addition, he examines, somewhat piecemeal, Tischner's other works, which came out in Poland and abroad.

After August 1980, Tischner became the spiritual pastor and leading ideologue of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity", which emerged at that time. The Reverend Józef declared the existence of "three socialisms": economic, political and moral, the first two of

which had already died in Poland, whereas the third might hold. The Church alone could inspire this kind of socialism, because "after the defeat of the processes of socialist construction in the country, Polish Christians appear to be rediscovering their own Christianity. In a certain sense they are neo-Christians, that is, those who have embraced Christianity as a result of clashes with the opponents of religion. Neo-Christianity is thus something like a return to sources, to the common sources of European thought, both religious and atheistic. It is also a bid to regain the initiative—not political, but moral—from Marxists as regards improving the world of human labour. This is a very important point: once you regain the initiative from the opponent, he can be said to be needed no longer in the world".⁵

Deciphering this statement, Lebieżński remarks that Tischner's "moral" socialism is supposed to offer a Trojan horse to Marxism and existing socialism. It seems that as soon as the Church assimilates socialist ethics, the opponent will cease to exist, and so will socialism in Poland. Tischner does not directly answer the fundamental question: What kind of political, social, and economic system shall we have when the opponent is no longer there? An advocate of private ownership of the means of production, he does not declare this publicly. One should bear in mind that Tischner's books comprise in part the sermons he delivered to workers influenced by Solidarity. They deal largely with "rectifying", not liquidating, socialism and speak of "sustained and improved" public ownership, not of a return to capitalism.

In a rather convoluted way Tischner links the problem of ownership to a negatively understood "socialisation", which, as he sees it, "was bound to end in revolt"⁶ because it is a violation of the human soul, and a threat to man's basic rights, in particular the right to freedom. For Tischner "socialisation" has two meanings. In the narrower sense of the word he sees it as the socialisation of the means of production; and in a broader sense as socialisation, plus the various forms of collective work and activity. Tischner is not clear about the causal link between socialisation and the soul of man and his rights. He gets to the point only through alternative reflections which ultimately suggest rather vaguely that he who assails private ownership does violence to the soul of man.

The logic of Tischner's speculations is as follows: "Let us consider one of the possible examples relating to the idea of public and private ownership," he writes. "Some past thinkers assumed that the institution of private ownership was the chief source of social evil. Others, conversely, thought that an abolition of private ownership might cause trouble. Arguments flared which dragged on for dozens and even hundreds of years. However, the concept of ownership plays the key role here. What does it mean: something is common, and something private? Alas, the basic ideas were never fully clarified. And this has given rise to all kinds of illusions."⁷

Ill-considered concepts are thus the source of our illusions about property. Lebieżński points out that such a position is itself an illusion because it hinders any understanding of the objective sources of the concrete forms of ownership.

⁵ J. Tischner, *Polski kształt dialogu*, Paris, 1981, pp. 194-195.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁷ J. Tischner, *Etyka Solidarności*, Paris, 1982, p. 28.

Tischner argues that we should view ownership chiefly in terms of morality. He believes that, from this point of view, property defined as public is not common at all. "The truth about common property," he assures us, "is a truth pertaining to the moral sphere."⁸ Given a certain ethical level, mankind could fairly distribute the goods as the fruit of labour. "In the labour process the idea is first and foremost that the fruit should be common," he continues. "Bread must be bread for all. The more fruit becomes fruit for all, the more common does the fruit-bearing tree become. The common fruit radiates the spirit of community to everything that has to do with its birth."⁹

Lebiedzinski asks: "What does the 'common fruit' mean? That an owner of the means of production only has the right to produce goods, not to dispose of them? In this case his interest is lost. Or does it mean that his output is for social consumption, each person acquiring it separately in exchange for a certain equivalent? These would then be typical bourgeois relations. The fruit would not be common, and the poor and rich would be as they were" (see pp. 133-134).

Taking issue further with Tischner's "primacy of morality" thesis, Lebiedzinski stresses that morality does not exist in a social void. Its fixed rules and principles operate within a political, social, and economic system. They are bound to its forms of social or private ownership. Even universal moral values are class-tinged.

A few years ago Tischner wrote that Marxism had as its imperative "the consistent struggle to free human labour from the yoke of exploitation." Now, concludes Lebiedzinski, "he, in effect, advocates the complete abolition of Marxism, and then socialism too as an economic, social, and political system" (p. 22).

Lebiedzinski makes it clear that his analysis of Tischner's views does not touch the Church as a purely confessional institution. Different forces operate in its fold, including the pro-socialist ones.

The sharp edge of his criticism is directed only at one of the Catholic ideologues whose publications in recent years have become an important weapon in the arsenal of international anti-communism.

Stanislaw MARKIEWICZ,
Polish sociologist

⁸ Ibid., p. 30.

⁹ Ibid., p. 29.

THE NOOSE TIGHTENS

Juan Vega Vega, LA DEUDA EXTERNA DELITO DE USURA INTERNACIONAL, Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, la Habana, 1987, 199 pp.

THE VERY TITLE of this book by Dr. Juan Vega Vega, a Cuban professor, enunciates the thesis he sets out to prove, that the Third World's external debt is a crime of international usury. To understand this phenomenon more clearly, which has cast a dark shadow on the economy and life in most Third World countries (and not only there), the first chapters investigate usury in classic literary works which have castigated and derided avarice. The author also digresses on the subject of Aristotle's views on the unnaturalness of making money out of money and notes that, for all the acrimonious debate over justice or otherwise of profiting through money-lending, usury was generally tolerated in pre-bourgeois societies.

Noting that the definitive judgement on the age-old controversy was pronounced by Marx, Professor Vega Vega writes: "Whatever the form of the use of money under capitalism, profits derive from the exploitation of man. Exploitation hallmarks the capitalist mode of production, and the interest the lenders draw is a manifestation, or better, a metamorphosis of exploitation" (p. 41).

He goes on to examine the highly negative attitude of Catholicism, Islam and Protestantism to usury, and quotes excerpts from the Bible and the Koran.

"Usury," says the publication, "is any operation of an economic nature or content, carried out within or from a state in relation to another, which involves the provision of money and any financial resources or the exchange of commodities and which takes advantage of the weak economic positions of the recipient, due to either his own circumstances or the mechanisms used by the creditor. Such transactions always presuppose a higher total sum repayable, yielding the creditor an excessive gain. The presence of intermediaries in such a deal, whether or not they benefit from it, does not change the essence of the transaction" (p. 23).

This definition includes three main elements: 1) the presence of a recipient-victim, 2) the use of the mechanisms of plunder, and 3) the debtor's repayment of larger sums than those lent.

Usury is always cunning, by which the author means "the deliberate use of tricks directly and especially aimed at delivering the perpetrator of the crime from any risk that might arise from the victim's defensive actions" (p. 22).

Fidel Castro was the first political leader to see more profoundly and clearly than others that there is no alter-

native to writing-off the Third World debt that does not prejudice the creditors' interests. Moreover, he has concluded that crises are bound to recur even given an agreement on full cancellation, so long as there remain inequitable trade and economic ties between the industrialised and developing capitalist states.

In his speech at the UN General Assembly on October 12, 1979, Castro, as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, suggested the cancellation not of the entire foreign debt, but only of the indebtedness of the least developed states which are experiencing the greatest economic difficulties. He proposed changing the international financial system, which is itself responsible for usury. The Third World debt then was \$397.3 billion. By 1982 it had already increased to \$626 billion.¹ In his report to the 7th Non-Aligned Summit Conference in New Delhi, the Cuban leader declared that by the end of 1983 the inability to repay the debt had become a fact.

The author shows with concrete figures that Latin America is unable to repay the debt. In 1984 it remitted over \$70 billion to the industrialised West, including \$37.3 billion in debt interest payments, \$20 billion due to non-equivalent trade, and \$10 billion through the foreign-exchange drain. About \$5 billion constituted losses stemming from the overvaluation of the dollar (see p. 136).

In the past, if a debtor country became insolvent, the creditor state could take over all its sources of revenue by threat or use of military force. Now such actions are impossible.

Having analysed the situation, Fidel Castro concluded that if the international usurers were to blockade the Third World countries, "they would actually be blockading themselves. The United States and other industrialised capitalist lands cannot afford this luxury primarily because they would face the unity of action of the Third World; it cannot exist without what this world produces".²

The book recalls Castro's talk in March 1985 with US scholar Jeffrey M. Elliot and Congressman Mervin M. Dymally. They examined four possible solutions to the problem of the Third World's external debt, each based on the supposition that it would remain invariable. The conclusion was that the debt could not be repaid but that for economic, political and moral reasons it should not be cancelled because default would bring down the international financial system. Fidel Castro said that the governments of the industrialised capitalist states should commit themselves to paying back their own banks by

obtaining the resources from a 12% cut in military expenditures.

Having said all this, how does the author substantiate in legal (and not just political and ethical) terms the thesis that the external debt is unrepayable and unrecoverable? He analyses certain principles of international law and the relevant articles of the penal codes of some countries. He refers, in particular, to the US Federal Criminal Code of January 30, 1978. This regards loansharking as a crime and Article 1804 defines five types of this crime, all of which apply to most actions of the international creditors.

From the book it is obvious that debt repayment is impossible "without enormous damage to the right of development, and further aggravation of the people's intolerable underdevelopment, fraught as it is with social explosions and chaos" (p. 154). This consideration is based on the principle *rebus sic stantibus*, which means "a fundamental change in circumstances", including those pertaining to the external debt. Consequently, it is necessary to examine this change in the light of the actual circumstances compared with those at the time the contracts were signed.

The author then adds that in international law the principle *pacta sunt servanda* ("treaties must be observed") is subordinated to the principle *rebus sic stantibus*, and illustrates them with some examples showing that the jurisprudence and legal practice of many countries invariably include the latter, although under different names: "unforeseeable risk" (Spain), "unforeseeability" (France), "unexpected damage" (Italy), "theory of the unforeseeable" (Argentina).

His legal arguments are also based on UN documents, in particular, General Assembly Resolution No. 38/197 of December 20, 1983, which declares that no state may use economic, political or other measures, or support the use of such measures, with the object of compelling another state to limit the exercise of its sovereign rights. This document reaffirms that the developed countries must abstain from threats or use of trade restrictions, blockades, embargoes and other economic sanctions, incompatible with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and infringing on the bilateral or multilateral agreements signed with the developing countries, as a form of political and economic coercion which affects the economic, political and social development of these states (pp. 148, 149).

The book also cites the provisions of other UN resolutions, for example, No. 37/199 on dependence between the real exercise of fundamental human rights and the development problems facing the Third World.

Concerning Latin America, the author refers to the regional Cartagena Agreement, concluded in June 1984, which found that "the problem of the Latin American debt

¹ In 1987 the World Bank estimated this debt at \$1.19 trillion, including \$400 billion for Latin America. *Granma*, January 20, 1988.

² Fidel Castro, Conferencia Sindical de los Trabajadores de América Latina y el Caribe sobre la deuda externa, La Habana, 1985, p. 82.

is due largely to a drastic change in the original terms of the credit agreements, which determined liquidity and interest rates, the share of the international credit agencies in the amount of debt and the prospects for economic growth. These changes, which originated in the industrialised states and are therefore completely outside the decision-making capacity of the region, make the mutual responsibility of the debtors and creditors obvious" (p. 158).

The foreign debt, Mikhail Gorbachov told the UN on December 7, 1988 in New York, has become a very acute problem. The fact that the accumulated debt can neither be repaid, nor recovered at initial terms, led the Soviet Union to offer a moratorium of up to 100 years on debt service payments from the least developed countries, and in many cases to write it off completely. With regard to the other developing states, he called for an international approach and proposed a specific programme for resolving the debt crisis.

The Soviet proposal has been welcomed in Latin America and supported by many governments and heads of state in the region. President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua has called upon the West to respond with practical actions and change the present unfair economic order.

The book by the Cuban researcher has proved very topical. By its analysis and reflections it encourages the quest for a solution to one of the most important problems of the 20th century.

Francisco MAURA,
Salvadorean journalist

A MINISTER "ABOLISHES" THE CLASS STRUGGLE

Periklis Papadopoulos, *THE CLASS STRUCTURE OF CONTEMPORARY GREEK SOCIETY*, Syn-chroni Epochi, Athens, 1988, 332 pp. (in Greek)

GREECE is experiencing an economic and political crisis, a major feature of which, as the 12th KKE Congress held in May 1987 pointed out, is the widening gap between people's vital needs and the inability of dependent state monopoly capitalism to meet them. This lends added weight to an analysis of the changing social structure, especially as the bourgeoisie are trying to confuse the issue of classes.

Written from the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, this book by Periklis Papadopoulos, a lecturer at Athens University, shows the basic distinction between the proletarian, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories of class, the peculiarities of the rise and development of the classes in

Greece, and the attitude to this problem of the various parties.

Examining the proletarian concept, the author underlines the permanent relevance of the now classic definition of classes which Lenin gave in 1919 in his pamphlet "A Great Beginning". "Classes," he wrote, "are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it."¹ Papadopoulos notes that although neither Marx, nor Engels gave such a generalised formulation, one can find all the main characteristics of classes in their works. Lenin's scientific definition answered the exigencies of the revolutionary movement in the new situation at the imperialist stage, and the requirements of working people's power in Soviet Russia. It contains precise criteria, the principal one of which is the relation of a class to the means of production.

As to the bourgeois theories, Papadopoulos subdivides them into subjective and "objective". According to the former, a person belongs to the class which he himself identifies with. This approach is not new, repeating as it does the formula of the French philosopher Edmond Goblot (1858-1935), according to which classes exist in no other way than through their own opinion of themselves, through the opinion of the other classes, and finally, through the opinion of society as a whole.

An advocate of such a view in Greece is the right-wing politician Stefanos Manos. Setting out his New Democracy party's ideas, he writes: "A lawyer or doctor with a lower income than a plumber or an electrician still feels that he belongs to a higher social class" (p. 46). He remarks of the peasants that "despite the land-plot and incomes gap, they nevertheless feel that they are part of one and the same class" (Ibid.).

Papadopoulos is right when he says that Manos uses the subjective concept not so much to place someone in a class as to show that "there are no social classes in Greece, conforming strictly to this term" and that "the traditional division into capitalists/bourgeois, artisans/petty bourgeois, and workers/proletarians no longer exists" (p. 47).

Papadopoulos regards the simple and complex models of social structures as "objective" theories. The first is based on the one criterion that class affiliation depends on one's profession. The second considers the economic and non-economic factors which affect class structures. Among these theories, in particular, he lists the concepts

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 421.

of "interest groups", "status groups", and "pressure groups", which replace the class struggle with a different kind of conflict. "Most bourgeois sociologists," he says, "systematically distort the reality, using both economic and non-economic criteria to define classes" (p. 53). They argue that bourgeois society consists of a harmonious whole with five, six, seven or more sections which differ only in education, abilities, social prestige etc., and not of antagonistic classes with specific relations to the means of production. This glosses over the notions *bourgeoisie* and *proletariat*, and removes the distinction between the exploiters and the exploited.

Some bourgeois sociologists, using the concepts of "industrial" or "postindustrial" society, interpret the social consequences of the scientific and technological revolution along pre-existing lines. They admit the existence of classes, but believe that the STR blurs the distinctions between them. It was Georgy Plekhanov who fought against such theories of class convergence at the end of the last century. And in Greece today people like Janis Marinos, who heads a large economics journal, claim that "wealth has not been amassed by the few; on the contrary, it is in the hands of the majority of the country's inhabitants" (p. 62). To defend their interests, the ruling class would pass themselves off as "the people". This is the key policy of New Democracy, which in its Political Manifesto argues: "*Property is the physical result of the labour of a worker, peasant, artisan, or indeed of any person*" (p. 63).

"Social mobility" is also touched upon. Bourgeois ideologists, in Greece too, assert that social movement under capitalism depends entirely on a person's ambition and talents; they speak of an absolute growth of upward mobility. The present leader of the right-wing Democratic Renewal party, Kostis Stephanopoulos, told Parliament: "All the classes have become bourgeois today... The workers, who were proletarians, have turned into bourgeois, and so have the petty and middle artisans and professionals."²

This purports to give the desire for self-perpetuation by the ruling class an historical validity.

Reflecting on the petty-bourgeois theories of classes, Papadopoulos stresses that such theories are not independent, but constitute either a hotch-potch as regards the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of classes, or an eclectic use of the bourgeois concepts of "middle class rule" under capitalism and "social mobility", from which they infer the continuing growth of the petty bourgeoisie in Greece and the ever greater "uncertainty" and "fluidity" of classes.

Part II of his book defines the social structure of Greece, a dependent middle-income capitalist country, and

gives a percentage breakdown of its economically active population. The working class constitutes 48.6%, rural semiproletarians 8.4%, the middle classes 38.2%, the bourgeoisie 3.1%, and persons of uncertain class identity 1.6% (p. 172).

The information in the book shows Greece as having experienced a stable rise in working class numbers. Between 1973 and 1980 its industrial proletariat grew faster (23.6%) than both the overall (11%) and urban population (21.2%) (see p. 181).

A further proletarianisation of the peasants, professionals, petty and middle artisans, and high school and college graduates is expected. At present 43% of workers are concentrated in the Attica region. Their numerical growth is matched by their increased diversity. New categories of better educated workers involved in modern technologies are appearing. A change in the reproduction of labour force is also under way.

The ruling class uses the new technologies, the unemployed-versus-employed theory of "dual society", and the theory of "human potential" to form an alliance with the middle classes and split labour.

By all these ideological tricks they want to show capitalism as evolving into a society of mutual accord where the working class is to go, thus entailing an "abolition" of the class struggle. Indeed Minister of Labour Kostas Laskaris once told Parliament: "I will abolish the class struggle" (p. 123).

In conclusion, I would like to quote the author's words that "Marxist-Leninist sociological analysis is the foundation upon which historically concrete political tactics rely to achieve a political strategic aim" (p. 247).

For Communists these words give theoretical and practical meaning to works which realistically depict the class structures at certain stages in history.

Zenon ZORZOVILIS,
CC member, Communist Party of Greece

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF MARXIST AESTHETICS

Kiraly Istvan, KULTURA ES POLITIKA, Kosuth Konyvkiado, Budapest, 1987, 359 pp.

CULTURE AND POLITICS, a thought-provoking book rich in ideas, has become something of a cultural event in socialist Hungary. The author's personality has had a lot to do with this. Istvan Kiraly is a major literary scholar and critic, a theoretician of Marxist aesthetics and cultural policy, and an indefatigable public figure.

² Verbatim Parliamentary Report, April 20, 1986, pp. 1715-1717.

The author turns first to the early postwar events, noting how much influence the ideas of the Hungarian communist philosopher Gyorgy Lucacs (Kiraly was one of the narrow circle of his pupils) had on the country's young intellectuals. He reveals the circumstances surrounding the ideological and political isolation of Lucacs after the plan for building socialism which he supported had been turned down. This plan had envisaged, contrary to the dogmatic understanding of social development, a more moderate and flexible path of changes, underpinned by an increasing role for the public. But voluntarist and bureaucratic centralist forces then prevailed over the principles of democratic centralism.¹

Kiraly frankly and self-critically admits that, like most of his comrades, he remained detached because of the "prejudices—and the resultant intolerance—then current among the young communist intellectuals, at any rate the majority of them. Revolutionary demagoguery proved more attractive to us" (p. 57).

And yet, the book stresses, Lucacs, in spite of his injured pride and the despair of being misunderstood, prized most his relationship with the party and his sense of belonging. He was a natural democrat in his behaviour, not a posturing aristocrat, and showed understanding and tolerance in regard to others. He believed in Reason and, consequently, in Man. He stuck to his principles in questions of theory and was fond of discussions, but "he never polemised with his opponents on ideological issues in order simply to smash them, but argued through persuasion and joint discussion" (p. 48).

Considerable attention is given in the book to a period that has been the subject of heated controversy in Hungary for over 30 years. It concerns the place which the "fifties" occupy in national history (although, strictly speaking, this means the period from 1948 to 1956), when dogmatism, sectarianism and the cult of personality dominated social and political life.

Naturally, Kiraly is preoccupied with how that period was reflected in literature and the arts, when many films, novels, plays and memoirs bore its nasty imprint. The chapters on it strikingly reveal what damage was inflicted on national culture by political voluntarism and intolerance, suggested as a code of socialist morality, and by an oversimplified understanding of revolutionary romanticism, with the obligatory positive hero, which became the criteria for socialist realism. The principle of a committed literature was itself distorted, as dog-

matists tried to reduce it to agitprop, to a mere stereotyped pattern.

However, there were also genuine literary values produced in that contradictory period. This applies both to the work of older writers (for example, T. Dery, Gy. Illyes, P. Veres) and to that of a number of young writers (I. Orkeny, L. Benjamin, F. Juhasz, F. Karinthy and others). As always, a true literature obeys the social laws anyway: it tended to run parallel to society, rather than politics (see p. 219). We need a real understanding of the "fifties" in order to appreciate particular authors and their work, and to be able to answer today's questions by correctly assessing the past.

Much space is given to the problems of education. They are familiar to Kiraly, as a university professor and as a deputy who was on the parliamentary cultural committee for many years. Among Hungarian education's main achievements he lists democratism, which manifests itself in efforts to achieve the socialist ideal of equal opportunities. Therefore he consistently advocates high-quality education based on three principles: a stronger emphasis on personality; a harmonious, not one-sided, development of the young generation; and, lastly, the so-called "principle of productivity", or the raising of an individual able to work successfully, benefiting himself and society.

Kiraly believes that readopting the tradition of close cooperation, and some kind of labour division, between state and community forms of upbringing could largely facilitate this. By the latter he means the work of cultural associations, workers' houses, readers' circles, the various societies, clubs, etc., which were all but eliminated in the fifties and which have now re-emerged and begun to blossom. But the aim of upbringing and education remains the same: "So that a person does not feel himself a stranger in the world, so that he feels quite at ease in society" (p. 151).

The book raises many other issues relating to cultural policy and no matter what theme Kiraly addresses, his reasonings are rooted in the real processes taking place around us. He does not claim any infallibility, reserving for himself the right to quest and error. That is why Hungarians consider his book a true reflection of their present cultural life, and of the diverse problems that engage their minds and hearts.

Professor Istvan TOT

*head of the cultural policy department
HSWP Higher Political School*

¹ For details see Rezso Nyers, "The Hungarian Lessons of Four Decades", *WMR*, No. 8, 1988.

SURVEYS, LETTERS, DIARY

THE BACKGROUND TO A SPLIT

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF YUGOSLAVIA AND THE SOVIET UNION IN 1948-1953

Marie Kocvarova (Prague) says in her letter to the editors: "In the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, as perhaps in the whole world, there has been a growing interest in history. It is a special kind of interest, almost merciless. The reason is, I think, that people are more aware of the dangers of not correcting past mistakes in time."

"As a Communist, I am particularly saddened by the many 'blank spots' in the history of the international communist movement which prevent us from objectively analysing the road we have travelled. I understand those who demand that that history should be written never to be rewritten. WMR could obviously contribute to

such an endeavour. All of us today, especially the young, should have a true picture of our past, without any omissions and in the spirit of Lenin's demand: We need the truth, however bitter."

"I would like to suggest the first subject—the crisis in relations between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It is very important to clarify the causes of the 1948 conflict."

The journal has accepted the reader's proposal and, at the request of WMR's Commission on Scientific Information and Documentation, the following material on the subject has been prepared by Soviet historian Yuri GIRENKO and Yugoslav scholar Sava ZIVANOV.

A STERN BUT INSTRUCTIVE LESSON

RIGHT UP UNTIL 1948 no one looking from the outside could have foreseen the acute crisis in relations between the communist parties of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. They were comrades-in-arms during the Second World War and continued to maintain a close relationship based on mutual assistance, trust and fraternal internationalist solidarity.

The Soviet Union followed with sincere concern the Yugoslav Communists' efforts towards social renewal in a country which had begun to build socialism. In March 1946, for example, the journal *Bolshevik* noted that in Yugoslavia, "where democratic transformations were initiated way back in the period of the national liberation movement, the cause

of democracy has made better progress than in other countries".¹

In April 1945, Josip Broz Tito paid a visit to Moscow to sign a Yugoslav-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Postwar Cooperation. The following June he again travelled to the Soviet Union to confer with Stalin; their meetings, *Pravda* wrote, passed "in an atmosphere of cordiality and full mutual understanding".²

The Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY), along with other fraternal parties, was active in organising coordination of actions and regular liaison between communist parties, primarily those of people's democracies. Its representa-

¹ *Bolshevik*, No. 6, 1946, p. 105.

² *Pravda*, June 12, 1946.

tives Edward Kardelj and Milovan Djilas attended the meeting of nine fraternal parties in Poland in September 1947, which established the Information Bureau of communist and workers' parties (Cominform), and the working organs of that body were initially based in Belgrade.

All that did not mean, of course, that the two countries and parties did not have different opinions or stands on individual issues. But the differences that surfaced were removed through constructive and business-like discussions without overdramatisation or serious friction. "Contradictions and misunderstandings in the Yugoslav-Soviet relations made themselves felt also prior to 1947, as well as during the war, but by and large, bilateral cooperation was developing successfully," remarks *A History of the League of Communists*

of Yugoslavia, published in 1985.³

But gradually, a sediment of mutual mistrust and resentment began to grow in relations between the two countries. It only needed a spark to blow it up into a full-scale crisis, which would seem to have been provided by the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, and by the idea of a federation or confederation of several countries of Central and South-East Europe. In August 1947, Stalin, citing the British government's objections, expressed his dismay to Tito over the initialling of the Yugoslav-Bulgarian treaty before the peace treaty with Bulgaria came into effect and characterised that decision as inadmissibly hasty, one

³ *Istorija Saveza komunista Jugoslavije*, Beograd, 1985, p. 355.

which could provoke imperialism into acts of aggression. In late January 1948, *Pravda* disavowed the idea of a federation or confederation and called it "problematic and far-fetched".⁴

Stalin was clearly irritated by foreign policy steps that had not been agreed with him in advance and voiced his displeasure categorically, as he knew how, at the high-level Soviet-Bulgarian-Yugoslav meeting that was held on his initiative in Moscow on February 10, 1948. He conducted the talks in a very rude and abrupt manner, accusing his counterparts of having presented the Soviet Union with a fait accompli.

Kardelj, who led the Yugoslav delegation, agreed: "Perhaps, the Bulgarian-Yugoslav treaty was indeed a hasty step." He pointed out, however, that a copy of the draft treaty had been sent to the Soviet government in good time and that the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia had no differences in foreign policy. Stalin retorted: "It seems you don't consult us at all." Commenting on the provision of the treaty regarding resistance "to any aggression wherever it may come from", he said: "It's a trite high-flown statement which only aids and abets the enemy."⁵

On March 1, 1948, the CPY Political Bureau in an expanded session heard the report from their representatives who had returned from Moscow. Kardelj conveyed the essence of Stalin's criticisms and noted his rudeness. He also reported that Moscow had decided to put off the signing of the next trade protocol till late 1948. Summing up the discussion, Tito stated that "relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union have become deadlocked", and added: "We are being subjected to economic pressure. We must stand up to this pressure. Our country's independence is at stake... We are not pawns on the

chessboard... We must rely only on our own forces."⁶

According to the Yugoslavs' account of those events, one of the participants in the meeting, Sreten Zujovic, a member of the CPY CC Political Bureau and finance minister, reported to the Soviet Ambassador to Yugoslavia the nature of the discussion on the questions raised in Moscow. The same assumption has been made by the Italian researcher Giuseppe Boffa, who believes that "Stalin was advised of the developments by Zujovic, who had attended the meeting, and took the following step: all Soviet military and civilian advisers were recalled from Yugoslavia".⁷

Explaining its decision, the Soviet government claimed that the atmosphere around the Soviet advisers was "unfriendly". Replying to Tito's request, addressed to Molotov on March 20, 1948, to clarify the true reasons for that action, Stalin and Molotov sent a letter to the CPY CC on March 27, listing what they called "the facts which are causing the displeasure of the Soviet government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) and leading to a deterioration in relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia". They mentioned, among other things, "secret, behind-the-scenes" anti-Soviet statements by "Yugoslav leaders" in the manner of Trotsky about the "degeneration of the CPSU (Bolsheviks)", about "great-power chauvinism" in Soviet policy, etc; the semilegal position of the CPY, within which one did not see inner party democracy, criticism and self-criticism, for which reason such an organisation could not be considered "Marxist-Leninist and Bolshevik"; the lack of the spirit of the class struggle in the CPY and its dilution in the Popular Front; the growth of capitalist elements in town and countryside; and the commitment to "the rotten opportunistic theory

of the peaceful integration of capitalist elements into socialism, borrowed from Bernstein, Vollmar and Bukharin". The letter further charged that the post of Yugoslavia's deputy foreign minister was held by "the British spy Velebit", which "denies the Soviet government the chance to conduct open correspondence with the Yugoslav government through the Yugoslav ministry of foreign affairs".⁸

The plenary meeting of the CC of the CPY, held on April 12-13, 1948, approved a reply to the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks). Speaking on behalf of the CC, Tito and Kardelj voiced their dismay at the tone and content of Stalin and Molotov's letter and their insulting depictions of several CPY leaders and qualified the Soviet charges as "inaccurate and tendentious". They nevertheless assured the Soviet leaders that "the Soviet Union has in the present Yugoslavia, under the present leadership, a most loyal friend and ally, which in time of trial is ready to share with the peoples of the USSR in both good things and bad". They proposed that the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) send a fact-finding delegation to Yugoslavia.

Zujovic alone objected to the letter and urged that Stalin's criticism be accepted. The minutes of the meeting show that the CPY Central Committee held Zujovic responsible for having "inaccurately and slanderously" reported the situation in the party and the country to the Soviet Ambassador to Belgrade behind the back of the CPY leadership, and also called him, along with Andrija Hebrang (expelled from the CPY CC Political Bureau in April 1946 for factional activities, conciliation to-

wards the USSR in economic matters and underestimation of Yugoslavia's interests), "the chief culprit of mistrust towards our CC".

Meanwhile, on March 27, 1948, Stalin, without waiting for reply from the CPY Central Committee, circulated a letter from the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) to the Central Committees of the other member communist parties of the Cominform. In April and May all of them sent to the CPY CC copies of resolutions supporting the position of the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks), which drew a protest from the Yugoslav leadership and further aggravated bilateral relations. Tensions escalated further when, on April 24, the Soviet Union in effect scrapped the Soviet-Yugoslav protocol on consultations, concluded on February 11, 1948.

Bent on punishing the CPY at all costs for its "disobedience", Stalin came up with new charges in his correspondence with the Yugoslav leaders. In his second letter, dated May 4, 1948, he accused the Yugoslav leadership of having "inordinate ambitions" and resorting to "childish ploys of denying facts without adducing any proof", and inveighed rudely against Tito and his closest associates. He declined the Yugoslav invitation to send representatives to Yugoslavia for talks and suggested that the "differences of principle" be discussed at the next meeting of the Cominform.⁹

The CPY CC decided, however, that the odds were stacked against it because all the other Cominform member parties had already received the March 27 letter of the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) and taken a critical stand towards Yugoslavia, and replied in a letter of May 17, 1948 that it could not agree to the proposed discussion. That refusal was taken as "a move towards splitting the single socialist front of the peo-

⁴ *Pravda*, January 28, 1948.

⁵ V. Dedijer, *Novi priloz i biografiju J. Broza Tita*, Vol. 3, Beograd, 1984, pp. 292-293.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-307.

⁷ Giuseppe Boffa, *Storia dell'Unione Sovietica*, Milano, 1979, p. 114.

⁸ S. Kržavac, D. Markovic, *Informburo: Sta je to? Jugoslavija je rekla "ne"*, Beograd, 1976, pp. 48-52; *Sukob s Informbroom*, Priredili M. Mihovilovic, M. Bosnjak, S. Saracevic, Zagreb, 1976, pp. 13-14; *Istorija CKJ*, pp. 356-357; *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, 1939-1973. A Documentary Survey*, Ed. by S. Clissold, London-New York-Toronto, 1975, pp. 170-174.

⁹ S. Kržavac, D. Markovic, *Informburo...*, pp. 90-109; B. Dedijer, *Izgubljena bitka J. V. Stalina*, Sarajevo, 1969, pp. 109, 120-121; *Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, 1939-1973*, pp. 170-174.

ple's democracies and the Soviet Union".

On June 19, the Cominform notified the CC of the CPY that if it agreed to attend its meeting, Yugoslav delegates were to arrive in Bucharest not later than June 21. The CPY CC reaffirmed its position and stated that all the earlier attacks on the FPRY, beginning with the first letter from the CC of the CPSU (Bolsheviks), were proof that it was impossible to have a discussion in Bucharest on equal terms, which was contrary to the spirit of accord and the principles of voluntary participation underlying the Cominform. The Yugoslavs suggested that contentious issues be discussed in direct contacts between the Central Committees of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) and the CPY.

The Cominform meeting took place in Romania in late June without Yugoslav representatives. The resolution On the Situation in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia,¹⁰ released on June 29, 1948, accused the Yugoslav leaders of: identifying Soviet foreign policy with that of capitalist countries; conducting behind-the-scenes criticism of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) and the USSR for their "degeneration"; rejecting the Marxist theory of the classes and the class struggle during the transition period; pursuing the wrong policies in the countryside, refusing to nationalise the land and to eliminate the well-to-do peasantry as a class; belittling the role of the working class and leaning towards liquidating the CPY; revising the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the party and diluting the party within the Popular Front; suppressing inner party democracy and the practice of election and self-criticism; imposing a "shameful, purely Turkish, terrorist regime"; and embracing nationalism and breaking with the internationalist tradition.

That resolution, very rude in tone and replete with insults, ended with an appeal to "healthy forces in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, those committed

to Marxism-Leninism... to replace the present leaders and promote a new, internationalist leadership".

The 5th Congress of the CPY, held on July 21-28, 1948, qualified the Cominform resolution as "inaccurate, incorrect, wrong and unjustified" and said that Yugoslavia was a socialist country, which belonged in the "socialist camp led by the USSR". It stressed that the CPY was still a member of the Cominform, remained loyal to the principles of international proletarian solidarity and the unity of the anti-imperialist front, and recognised the CPSU (Bolsheviks)'s leading role in the world working-class movement and the need to follow its experience in domestic and international affairs. The Congress instructed the CC to make every effort to overcome the differences so that relations between the two parties should improve anew.¹¹

Following the break between the two parties, Stalin almost entirely discontinued cooperation with Yugoslavia at the state level. The article "Where Does the Nationalism of the Tito Group in Yugoslavia lead?", published by *Pravda* on September 8, 1948, gave the signal for the further escalation of the anti-Yugoslav campaign. The signature under the article ("Tseka", meaning CC), and also its rude and arrogant tone belied Stalin's authorship. The article railed against "the Tito faction", calling it a minority at war with its own party, which had switched to complicity with imperialism, and was "degenerating into a clique of political assassins".

The article became the forerunner of a second resolution on the Yugoslav question. The Yugoslav Communist Party Under the Sway of Assassins and Spies, which was passed by the Cominform in November 1949. It alleged that the CPY had fallen into the hands of "enemies of the people, assassins and spies, who have used the guise of friends of the USSR to worm their way to power",

¹¹ V Kongress KPJ, Belgrade, 1948, pp. 148-159.

"lackeys of imperialism", who "have fully allied themselves with the imperialist circles" and degenerated "from bourgeois nationalism to fascism".¹²

The conflict was clearly becoming protracted and the Yugoslav side launched a broad political and propaganda offensive of its own, holding the CPSU (Bolsheviks) responsible for "the degeneration of socialism in the USSR", for the establishment of a state-capitalist system, for the dogmatic revision of Marxism-Leninism, for thriving bureaucracy in the party and the country, for a great-power and hegemonistic foreign policy and for aggressive pressure on Yugoslavia.

After Stalin's death, the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government critically reappraised the circumstances that had led to the conflict with Yugoslavia. The 20th CPSU Congress condemned his gross and arbitrary mistreatment of that country and instructed the CC "to strengthen friendship and promote cooperation with the fraternal peoples of the FPRY". The party disavowed Stalin's mistaken anti-Yugoslav policy line in a decree, passed by the CPSU Central Committee on June 30, 1956,

¹² *Bolshevik*, No. 22, 1949, pp. 12-22.

THE CONFLICT: CAUSES, MEANING, IMPLICATIONS

THE CONFLICT between our Communist Party and Stalinism had an important part to play in the history of Yugoslavia and in its democratic socialist development. The implications of that conflict, however, transcend national boundaries because they are connected with the renewal of the communist movement and socialism.

It is now clear that the events of 1948-1953 were deeply rooted. Stalin fairly soon discerned tendencies in the Yugoslav revolution which he considered dangerous, and decided to use both his close relations with Yugoslav leaders and

On Overcoming the Personality Cult and Its Consequences.¹³

These decisions were welcomed by the Yugoslav leaders. Soviet-Yugoslav summit talks in Belgrade and Moscow in 1955-1956 resulted in joint documents, the Belgrade Declaration of the Governments of the USSR and the CPY, and the Moscow Declaration on Relations Between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the CPSU, which have since been a sound base for the development of cooperation between the two countries and parties on the principles of equality, independence, autonomy and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs.

Most of the issues involved in the conflict were settled in the course of the subsequent development of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. Both parties drew their conclusions from the lesson and now base their relations on mutual respect and take care not to give each other any pretext for wariness and resentment and to prevent any recrudescence of mistrust and suspicion.

Yuri GIRENKO,
Cand. Sc. (History)

¹³ *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and CC Plenary Meetings*, Vol. 7, Moscow, 1971, pp. 210-211.

pressure to suppress that strong potential and use it to advance his own policy of hegemony. Stalin's aim was to forge a monolithic bloc bound by iron discipline to neutralise all the centrifugal forces, which he thought stemmed primarily from Yugoslavia. When all his attempts to make Yugoslavia toe the line had proved futile, he provoked an outright conflict.

Initially, from February to June 1948, it was actually a clash between the leaders of the CPSU (Bolsheviks) and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which was hidden from the general public. Then Stalin

¹⁰ *Pravda*, June 29, 1948.

involved the Cominform in his attempts to put pressure on Yugoslavia. At first, he attributed the causes of the conflict to the CPY's ideological and political deviations from the general policy line of the communist movement and went out of his way to bring the party and country on to the "right path". Every means was brought into play to break Yugoslavia. As the crisis deepened and its true character became clearer, the Yugoslav Communists changed their tactic of resistance to Stalin's policy of hegemony.

The Cominform's resolution On the Situation in the CPY had a special part to play in Stalin's vast arsenal of pressure techniques: it marked the outbreak of an all-out war between Stalin's circle of leaders and the Cominform, on the one hand, and our party, country and revolution, on the other. The resolution repeated the groundless accusations against the CPY, borrowed from the letters written by Stalin to the Yugoslav leaders between March and May 1948. It qualified the Yugoslav way of building socialism as nationalism and reformism, expelled the CPY from the communist movement, and exhorted the "healthy forces" in the party to overthrow the party leadership and install a new one that would follow Stalin's lead.

The resolution, directed against aspirations for independent socialist development and against relations of equality between socialist countries, was designed not just to tame a recalcitrant Yugoslavia but also to try to suppress similar tendencies in other parties and countries. It was imposed on the international communist movement as a theoretical postulate, a mandatory stand and a general policy line for all parties, whether participating in the Cominform or not. While calling for the overthrow of the Yugoslav system and threatening to throw Yugoslavia out of the communist movement, the resolution, and the draconian measures against Yugoslavia that followed, were intended as a

stern warning to other parties lest they succumb to the phenomena which the document characterised as nationalist and revisionist.

The primary target was the ruling parties of people's democracies. They were in fact ordered to stop building socialism with the specific methods and forms which suited their national conditions. The resolution was followed with an uncritical and crude affirmation of the Soviet historical experience as a universal and mandatory model of socialism. The mechanistic transplantation of Stalin's model and practices to other countries with different historical conditions, our party believes, was the principal cause of dramatic conflicts in the development of a number of socialist states.

In 1948, the Cominform ceased to be, even formally, a consultative body of its member parties, which voluntarily accepted its advice and exchanged experience. Instead, it became the directive centre of the communist movement, a sort of mini-Comintern. In fact, it became what Stalin had meant it to become, a tool of hegemony in the communist movement and a means of subjugating socialist countries and depriving them of their identities.

The CPY Central Committee in a resolution of June 30, 1948, and the 5th CPY Congress a month later forcefully demonstrated that the attacks on our party were groundless, and expressed our willingness to settle the conflict by restoring historical truth. All attempts to force us to follow anyone's prescriptions were strongly rejected. The party called upon the Communists, the working class and all the peoples of Yugoslavia to seek new ways towards socialism.

In late 1948, the conflict between Stalin's leadership and socialist Yugoslavia reached a stalemate. Stalin failed to impose his diktat, to break the Yugoslav revolution or to bend it to his policy of hegemony by ideological and political pressure. Similarly, Stalin's agents were unable to unite

"healthy forces" in our country in order to overthrow the Yugoslav leadership: its links with the mass of people had grown so strong in the revolution that any such attempt was doomed. Neither the prestige of the Bolshevik party or the world's first socialist state, clearly abused by Stalin, nor the straightforward threats of force against the "recalcitrant Yugoslavs" were of any use.

The CPY's proposals to settle the Soviet-Yugoslav differences in direct talks so as to avoid a dead-end situation were rejected because, contrary to what Stalin had claimed from the outset, the point was not the differences but hegemony and diktat. Stalin, however, would not accept defeat. That was why in late 1948 he changed his tactics against socialist Yugoslavia and our revolution and decided on a total break. Every means available was used against Yugoslavia, primarily official policy, with the exception of open military intervention. But even that could not be completely ruled out.

The objective logic of developments threatened the independence of our socialist state. Given Stalin's strategy, there were two distinct possibilities: Yugoslavia's resistance could have been broken and its independent, autonomous and original socialist transformations reversed, or it could have been gobbled up by the imperialist camp (even if under the pretext of protecting the country from Stalin's pressure) with the ensuing restoration of capitalism and the turning of the country into imperialism's appendage and tool.

Since the former scenario was clearly not going to materialise, Stalin's policy was steadily pushing the country to the latter. The overriding objective was to prove, regardless of the costs, that socialism could not be built except according to the standard model that was being imposed.

In 1949, the Stalinist forces tried to justify the situation politically and explain it theoretically: trials

were staged in people's democracies and the Cominform came up with another "theoretical contribution" in its November 1949 resolution on Yugoslavia. It stated, inter alia, that the Yugoslav leadership had completed a transition from "bourgeois nationalism to fascism and outright betrayal of the national interests of Yugoslavia".¹ In other words, the Yugoslav leaders were charged with political degeneration, with having eliminated socialism and the people's democratic system, restored capitalism and established an anti-communist, fascist-like police regime in the country.

Characterising Yugoslavia in terms of international relations, the resolution claimed that it "is fully dependent on the foreign imperialist quarters and has become a tool of their policy of aggression, which has eliminated the autonomy and independence of the Yugoslav republic. The CC of the Communist Party and the government of Yugoslavia have joined forces with the imperialist quarters against the entire camp of socialism and democracy, against the communist parties of the whole world, and against the people's democracies and the USSR". The resolution in fact anathematised all the Yugoslav Communists: "The Communist Party of Yugoslavia in its present composition... has lost the right to the name of a communist party". It no longer appealed to the "healthy forces" to topple the Yugoslav leadership, but stated: "The Information Bureau of communist and workers' parties believes that struggle against the Titoist clique of mercenary spies and killers is an international duty of all communist and workers' parties".²

The conclusion was a quasi-justification for the escalation of Stalin's pressure to the point of psychological warfare against socialist Yugoslavia.

Being exposed to pressure, threats of force and slanderous accusations in the severe conflict which

¹ *Bolshevik*, No. 22, 1949, p. 19.

² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

dragged on till spring 1953, our party led by Josip Broz Tito retained its revolutionary intransigence and vigilance, political foresight, tactical wisdom, and dignity. Its main weapon was the truth, and it was slowly but inexorably gaining the upper hand.

Yugoslav Communists and the working class and people of the country stood their ground. Tito's talent for organisation and the policy line that he and his associates were charting contributed to the further revolutionary transformation of the Yugoslav model of socialism. It was evolving through a *deepening independence and ingenuity and the enhancement of democracy and freedom, including socialist self-government*. Yugoslavia decided to develop its economy through *reforms in the market and planning system*. The conflict gave rise to the emergence and evolution of a *policy of non-alignment* and secured for Yugoslavia sound international positions and a notable role in the non-aligned movement.

Thus, all the major components of the Yugoslav revolution, far from having suffered any damage, were strengthened by the confrontation with Stalinism; *that was the role it played in the development of socialism in our country*. The 1948 conflict also had *major international implications*. We think of the Yugoslav Communists' struggle, and its results, as a major contribution to the process of de-Stalinisation, the renewal of the communist movement and the development of world socialism. The international aspect of that struggle against Stalinism has three important dimensions:

1. For the first time in history a single communist party stood up to the Cominform, which had become a tool of Stalin's policy of hegemony. And that at a time when Stalin's prestige and influence were at their peak. Thanks to its strong links with the mass of people, the CPY stood its ground in the conflict, even though the international communist movement joined in the fierce ideological

and political campaign against it, and even though socialist countries took part in an economic blockade and put military and political pressure on Yugoslavia. The failure of the policy of hegemony towards Yugoslavia encouraged the existing and potential anti-Stalinist forces in other countries.

2. During the 1948-1953 conflict, Yugoslav Communists critically analysed first the foreign policy and then the essence of the Soviet social system, deformed by the personality cult. They rejected the ideology and practice of Stalinism and *put on the contemporary agenda the crucial questions of socialism*, the subsequent solution of which, including today, constitutes the crux of the process of de-Stalinisation.

3. Looking for a way out of the crisis as Stalinism pressured them, Yugoslav Communists relied on the doctrine of Marx, Engels and Lenin and developed and enriched it. They began to assert *new concepts of the economic and political system of socialism and its motive forces and to pursue the principles of equality, independence and sovereignty in relations between communist parties and socialist countries*. Possibilities and prospects were thus opened for development on the basis of the economic laws of the humane and democratic system of socialist self-government. The emancipation of labour was given a fresh impetus and imparted real content, while the image of socialism as a system serving human interests regained its attractiveness to the working class and the other progressive forces. All that helped to expose many Stalinist dogmas and myths and made a practical contribution to the eventual victory over it and to the renewal of socialism as a profoundly humane system committed to freedom.

After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet leadership initiated a gradual settlement of most of the problems and bilateral state-to-state and party-to-party relations were normalised and renewed. However,

there were substantial differences between the two sides' approaches to normalisation and between their understanding of its character. The Soviet position, in our view, displayed a certain vague two-fold tendency: first, to attribute the conflict mostly to Stalin's mistakes and his misunderstanding of the processes in Yugoslavia and, to a lesser extent, to mistakes on the part of both Soviet and Yugoslav leaders; second, following the denunciation of past mistakes, normalisation should lead to Yugoslavia's return to the socialist camp. It was presumed that the country should revert to its early postwar domestic and foreign policy, which it had abandoned in the course of the conflict.

Yugoslav leaders adopted a position which has remained unchanged: the point is not Stalin's mistakes but the conflict between different concepts of relations between socialist countries and ways of socialist development. That is why the conflict can be settled only by embracing principles which meet the needs of socialist development worldwide, precisely what Yugoslavia was pressing for in the conflict. Furthermore, normalisation should not mean either the restoration of the pre-conflict situation or Yugoslavia's return to the socialist camp. Conversely, it should respect the changes both in internal development and in international politics. Normalisation proceeded to create the model for a *new policy of coexistence in the international community*.

The 1955 Belgrade Declaration and the 1956 Moscow Declaration were milestones on that road. They ascertained the de facto and de jure correctness of the Yugoslav Communists' stand in their bitter conflict with Stalinism. The demands for relations of equality between socialist countries and communist parties, for non-intervention in each other's internal affairs and for respect for different concepts of socialist development at last prevailed:

That was the beginning of the practical normalisation of relations between the CPSU and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, and between the latter and other communist parties. The process, however, was not that easy because of the aftermath of the conflict, the repercussions of which were felt even in the 1957 Moscow Declaration of 12 parties, in the 1960 Declaration of 81 parties and in the 1961 CPSU Programme. The general trend of party-to-party and state-to-state contacts was nevertheless constructive, based as it was on the principles of the Belgrade and Moscow declarations. They won broad recognition not just in bilateral relations: the principles of interaction between parties and progressive forces, formulated by the Berlin Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1976, for example, basically are a reflection of the above Soviet-Yugoslav documents.

Yet only Soviet perestroika and new political thinking have created the conditions for ridding ourselves of past grievances, once and for all. The Soviet-Yugoslav Declaration, signed during Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Yugoslavia in 1988, stresses the historical role and everlasting importance of the principles of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality, and non-intervention in each other's internal affairs. The Declaration reiterates the universal significance of these and other democratic principles in relations between parties and movements, which are "based on their inalienable right to take decisions independently on choosing ways of social development", and also their great importance "not just to the relations between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the CPSU, but also to the development and assertion of socialism as a worldwide process".

Prof. Sava ZIVANOV,
Department of Political
Sciences,
Belgrade University

READERS' RESPONSES, PROPOSALS, CRITICISMS

THE MYTH ABOUT AN IDEOLOGICAL VICTORY OF CAPITALISM

The process of internal renewal in the Soviet Union is of great interest to people in the West too. However, the bourgeois mass media are trying to distort its distinctly socialist thrust and to convince public opinion that capitalism has won an ideological victory over socialism. How does WMR intend to combat these views which, despite the efforts of Western Communists, do infiltrate mass consciousness?

Marco ROSSO
Turin, Italy

THE UNCHANGING NATURE OF IMPERIALISM

I applaud your publication in the May 1988 issue of "The World We Preserve Must Be Livable", a principled and necessary critique by Gus Hall, now national chairman of the Communist Party USA, of certain supra-class and non-materialist ideas masquerad-

ing as new political thinking. In this article Hall gave a succinct statement and timely reaffirmation of the fundamental Marxist-Leninist conception of class struggle and opportunism and of the unchanging nature of imperialism, the abandonment of which viewpoint would have grave consequences for the international communist movement.

WMR needs more articles of such scientific rigor, written from a partisan, working-class stand.

Robert SEIER
Yonkers, N.Y., United States

COMMUNISTS AND BELIEVERS

I am gratified to note your articles on cooperation between Communists and believers; besides, their subject is in my academic line. These features highlight the distinctive ways in which the issue of religious freedom is tackled in different countries in accordance with specific conditions. That, I believe,

is as it should be. Many authors maintain that religion is a factor favouring the solution of certain moral and social problems. Consequently, it should perform a normal function as an integral part of society. Aside from that, one cannot underrate the role played by the Church and by believers in the drive to consolidate peace and ensure universal security.

The approach to religious issues in a number of countries, including socialist ones, differs from the experience accumulated in the Mongolian People's Republic. I hope WMR will continue examining various aspects of this important subject.

B. DASHZEEVEG
department chief,
Higher Party School under
the MPRP Central Committee,
Ulan Bator, Mongolia

THE MOST RELIABLE JOURNAL ON PEACE AND SOCIALISM

Dear Comrades,
I have been a reader of

WMR for a decade now, and it remains the most reliable and comprehensive of journals devoted to peace and socialism. It is also pleasing to see a development of the sections on surveys, mail and book reviews. Perhaps a short section on news comment could also be considered. Sometimes I think there is no much theorising in the articles that there is a need to bring these back to the very latest burning issues. Naturally the articles themselves are considering these, especially the most significant such as world peace and the struggles of the working-class movement. But the world is so large and there are so many complicated events happening that a short section of news comment by the editors to begin each issue might help to place the articles in context. Anyway it is only a suggestion...

Yours fraternally,

Peter LIMB
member, SPA,
Australia

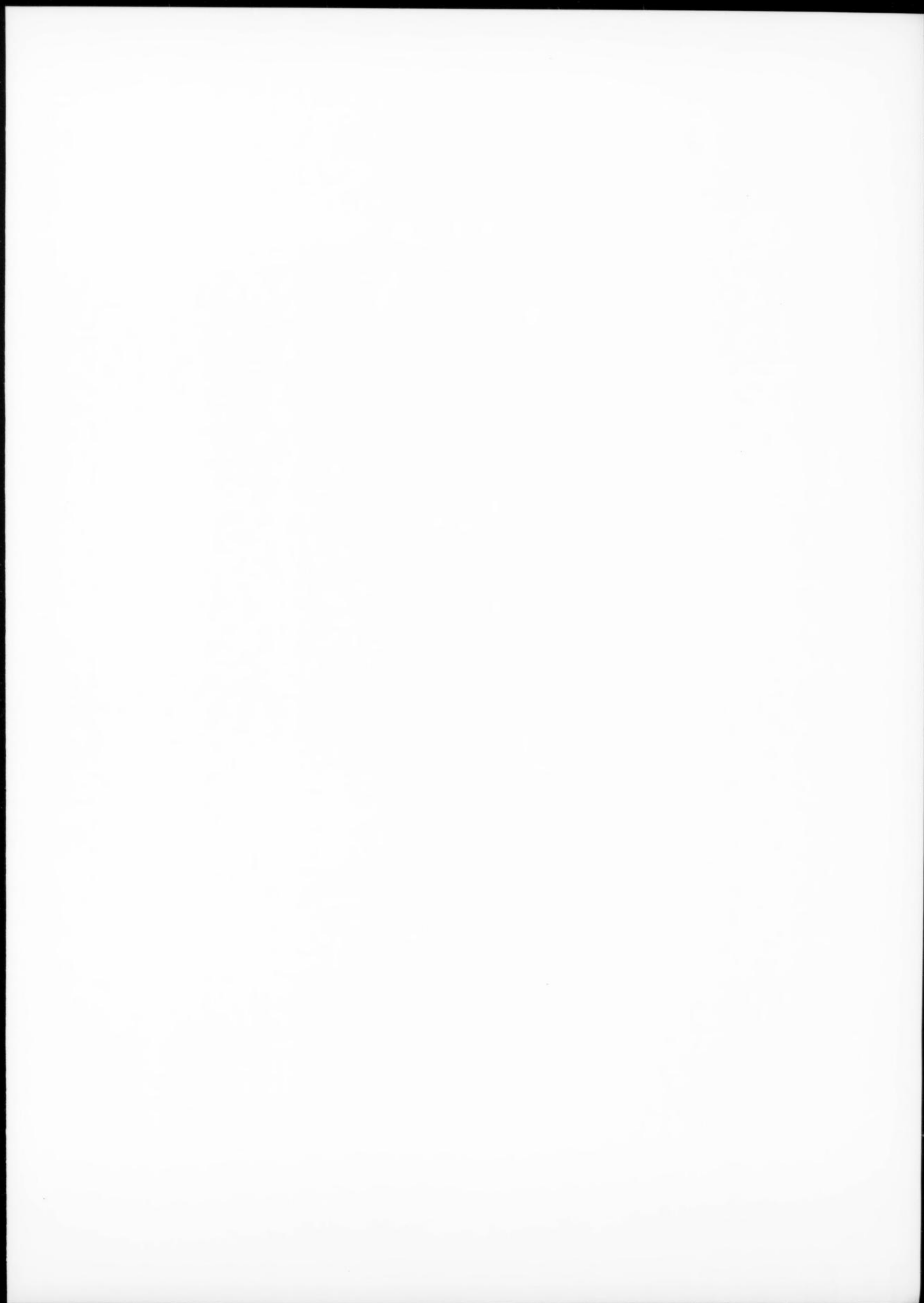
WMR TIES

● Chairman of the National Board (CC) of the Brazilian CP Salomão Malina, visiting the journal with PCB National Board member Antônio Rezq, addressed a meeting of its Editorial Council. He informed the fraternal party representatives about the situation in his country and the tasks facing the Brazilian Communists at this point. The sides also determined specific ways to expand PCB participation in the journal's work.

● Michael O'Riordan, National Chairman of the Communist Party of Ireland, has visited the WMR offices. During the conversation, he described the activity of Ireland's Communists and the preparations for the next congress of the party. Questions relating to WMR-CPI cooperation were also discussed.

● René Mauge Mosquera, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Ecuador, visiting the WMR offices, told the Editorial Council about his party's activities since the new government had come to power, and about its efforts to unite the country's left and democratic forces at this stage of the fight for national and social liberation. He discussed expanding the PCE-WMR links with the Editor-in-Chief.

● Taufiq Toubi, Deputy General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel during his stay in Prague visited the WMR offices. In a conversation with the Editor-in-Chief, questions of deepening cooperation between the CPI and the journal were discussed.





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