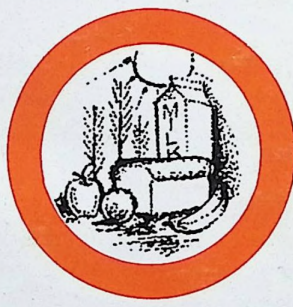


political affairs

JOURNAL OF MARXIST THOUGHT

September 1986

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**THE
ERA
OF
CRISES**

Class Struggle & the '86 Elections / HALL ■ Marxism-Leninism and
the 'Underclass' / JOHNSON ■ Afghanistan Revisited / BONOSKY ■
A New Way of Thinking for the Nuclear Age / GROMYKO & LOMEIKO



THE DOOR IS OPEN...

The door to ending the nuclear arms race is open.

In August 1985 the Soviet Union unilaterally halted all nuclear tests for five months and invited the United States to join in a permanent test ban. Without tests, there can be no new weapons.

When that ban expired, the Soviet Union renewed it for three months. And then extended it again. And again. This fourth Soviet test ban will run until January 1, 1987.

To each of the four Soviet test bans, the Reagan Administration has said *Nyet*. It has responded by setting off sixteen explosive nuclear *No's* under the Nevada desert.

The Soviet moratorium is being monitored on-site by U.S. scientists at the Soviet test grounds in Khazakstan, using seismographs sensitive enough to detect an earthquake in California, halfway around the world.

The simple fact is: In the age of nuclear overkill, there is no security in more weapons or new types of weapons. Only agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union can halt the arms race and avert nuclear annihilation.

**Let's not slam the door shut.
Stop nuclear tests! No Star Wars!**

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political affairs

**Theoretical Journal
of the Communist Party, USA**

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The CPUSA Celebrates 67 Years

CENTRAL COMMITTEE, CPUSA

On Labor Day, September 1, 1919, the Communist Party, USA was founded by workers who were in the thick of the battles of the working class to build a better life in a world at peace.

This Labor Day, September 1, 1986, we celebrate our 67th anniversary in the fighting traditions of our Party and working class, struggling side by side with all who must labor to live, against the problems facing the American people today. This coincides with the increasing movement of the working class to the front and center in all areas of struggle.

This coming together of Labor Day and the anniversary of our founding as a party symbolizes the inseparable ties of the CPUSA to the working class of our country. In the struggles against the greed-driven corporate-Reaganite attack on the quality of life of working people, Communists always know which side we're on.

The union-busting drive, kicked off in earnest by Reagan's breaking of the air traffic controllers union, is reaching a new and brutal all-out stage in the USX lockout of its workers.

At stake are the jobs, the union and standard of living and well-being of all American workers.

On the other hand, victory can be a turning point, raising the fightback to a new level. All out support for and solidarity with the workers!

In supporting the corporate lust for maximum profits, the Reagan Administration is trying to undermine and destroy the gains made in the fight for equality and against racism, working to divide the people and to reap even greater super profits. The resistance to the Reagan-Meese policy of destroying affirmative action programs and refusing to enforce hard-won measures is a major battleground for the coming period in the struggle for full equality.

The Communist Party calls on all to continue and intensify this struggle to end all traces of racism, inequality and divisions, and to continue the fight until the goal of full equality is reached. As in the past, we shall never waver in

this struggle.

Corporate greed is rapidly wiping out the American family farmers and the communities which depend on them for their very existence. To save the family farms from extinction, we say: Use the farm surplus to feed the more than 20 million Americans who are hungry. End all foreclosures and evictions. Declare a moratorium on debt repayment and re-establish 100 per cent parity. Build labor-farmer unity against the common enemy of both.

In pursuing maximum profits, no matter what the cost to the American people and national interests, the transnational corporations are exporting capital and jobs to low wage areas where unions are severely repressed.

The Reaganite foreign and military policy is designed to force open the doors still wider for this drive of the transnationals. This is why the Reagan administration bases its foreign policy on seeking military superiority—to dictate to the world that nothing can be permitted to stand in the way of this anti-national policy.

Reagan supports South African apartheid and attacks the victims of that vicious system, because the virtual slave labor conditions there generate super levels of profits, at the expense of both American and South African workers.

Congratulations to the U.S. labor movement in its leadership to the growing opposition to apartheid. All out for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions! A blow to apartheid in South Africa is a blow against racism at home!

Fearing the loss of corporate control in Central America, the Reagan regime supports the death-squad riddled anti-labor, anti-people regime in El Salvador, while using the contra terrorists against the popular government of Nicaragua. They are determined to overthrow the democratically elected government there, including the use of U.S. military force.

We call on all to fight to end the assault on Nicaragua!

Repeal all aid to the contras! Extend the

hand of friendship to the Nicaraguan people.

The Reagan administration, in the name of fighting the drug traffic, has introduced U.S. troops into Bolivia and demands extra-territorial rights in Mexico, including the right to send U.S. troops into Mexico. At the same time, it cuts the amount to be spent in our country in the fight against drugs. What a sham!

Mikhail Gorbachev, speaking for the Soviet people, has opened the door still wider for moving away from the nuclear danger which threatens all humanity with extinction. He advanced a proposal for ending all nuclear weapons by the year 2,000 and has, for the fourth time, extended the unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing until the end of the year. We must fight for the U.S. to join in so the world can begin to move away from the ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation.

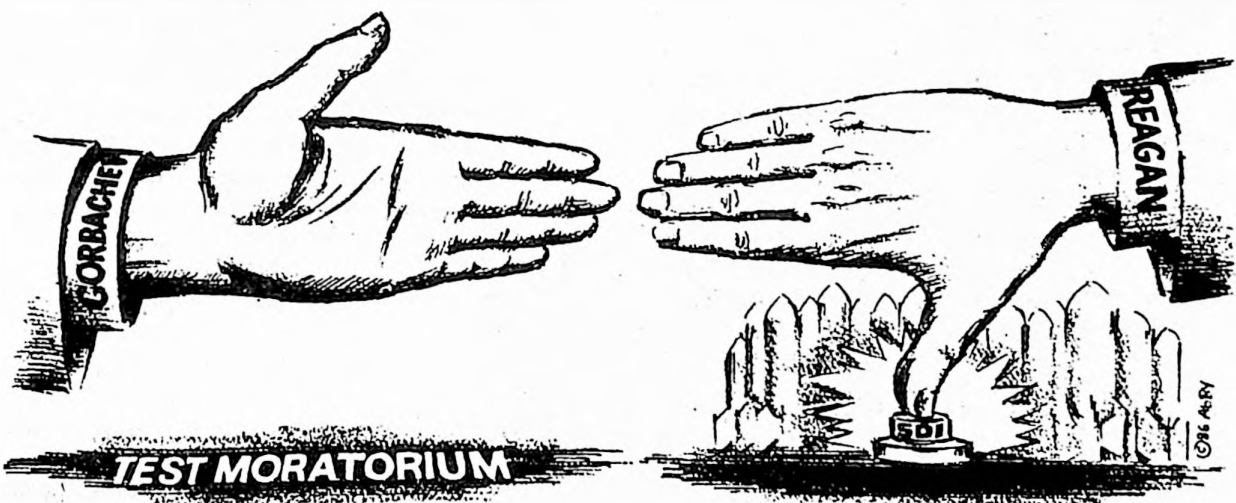
Now is the moment for the 75 per cent of the U.S. people who are for the test ban to demand of the Senate that it vote to cut off funds for testing. The Senators should understand

that their election depends on their stand on the test ban issue.

In all these struggles and movements the Communist Party not only takes a clear position, but fights on the side of the workers and the people for an end to brutal exploitation, racism and the nuclear danger being pressed by the Reaganite military-industrial complex.

As we were in the forefront of labor's struggles for the right to organize, for unemployment insurance, the 40-hour week, full employment and social security and for an end to racism and discrimination, so today we continue that path on today's issues:

- Nuclear test ban now!
- All out support to the USX workers!
Nationalize the steel industry under democratic control and rebuild our crumbling cities!
- No aid to Contra terrorists!
- Comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against apartheid!
- Defeat the Reaganites!



Class Struggle and the '86 Elections In the Era of Crises

GUS HALL

The era of crises sets off its most explosive charge in the arena of the class struggle—worldwide.

There is now a concentrated anti-working-class, anti-trade-union, state monopoly attack in all the major capitalist countries. It is not coincidental or accidental. It is coordinated by the multinational conglomerates and the international banks that have their tentacles in the economies of every capitalist country.

This anti-working-class offensive has the full support of Reagan, Thatcher, Kohl, and Mitterand and Chirac of France. They have picked up the new techniques—open strike breaking, wage cuts by way of two-tier contracts, contracting out, use of part-time workers, elimination of vacations, paid holidays, cut-backs in medical care, health and safety conditions.

The structural crisis is now a factor in all of the major capitalist countries. It has become a destabilizing element worldwide. It adds a new dimension to the general crisis and distorts cyclical developments.

This has created a new, urgent need for world trade union unity, including Left unity and Communist unity in the trade unions.

There is also an urgent need to raise the question of the common enemy of workers in the capitalist countries and workers in the developing countries. This common enemy includes the banks in the imperialist countries.

A joint struggle against the common enemy must include a fight to lift the burden of debt from the backs of the workers in the developing countries by the cancellation of both the interest payments and the crushing loan debts.

To the monopoly corporations and the

banks, imports and exports are all the same, a source of superprofits. On the other side of the class line, for workers and the people of the industrial capitalist countries, it also does not make any difference whether goods are imported or exported. Both ways, they get it in the neck—coming and going.

Internationalization of production, the new level of technology, finance capital that knows no national boundaries, crisscrossing of worldwide investments, development of worldwide industrial and financial conglomerates—all have added a new dimension to the class struggle. These and the corporate merger mania in the United States, especially the megamergers, are very much a feature of the era of crises.

All this is part of a process of internationalization of class exploitation. These new world relationships, these global syndicates of monopoly corporations banded together, have given impetus to further development of state monopoly capitalism in each capitalist country.

These global syndicates run roughshod over national boundaries and the national interests of smaller countries. They use their world advantage in the class struggle in each country. But they remain dog-eat-dog capitalists. They overcome some contradictions only to create new ones.

The working class of each capitalist country confronts the challenge of its own ruling class, monopoly capital. The state in each of these countries has become an important factor in manipulating taxes, import and export laws, investment regulations, etc., to the singular advantage of the monopoly corporations and syndicates.

However, now the workers are increasingly forced to deal with the maneuvers and machinations of monopoly corporations that operate as worldwide syndicates.

The development of high technology, com-

Excerpted from the report of Gus Hall, general secretary of the CPUSA, to a National Party Conference, July 25, 1986. For the complete text, write to: CPUSA, 235 West 23rd St., New York, NY 10011.

puters and robots leaves its own mark on the crises. It is a factor in deepening the structural crisis and in the process of monopolization of the economy. It increases the rate of exploitation and deepens the sense of alienation among workers.

It is possible to make a correct assessment of what is new in the class struggle, including the continuing changes in the trade union movement, only within the framework of the era of crises.

The response of the financial-military-state-monopoly complex is a corporate-Reagan antilabor offensive, which continues without letup.

The initial response of the top trade union leadership was to make concessions, based on the mistaken assumption that the crisis was a passing phase. But with each new plant closing, each new layoff, each new wage cut, each Chapter 11 bankruptcy, the passing of each antilabor law, realization has grown that the crisis is here to stay. This realization is casting its political and ideological shadow on the trade union movement, from top to bottom.

The rising class struggle vibrations shook the halls of the 16th AFL-CIO convention. The intensity measured about 6.3 points on the Wall Street Richter class scale. In our assessment of this convention, we correctly said it was far more politically independent, antimonopoly, antiracist, antiapartheid, antimultinational and antidictatorship. It was also less class collaborationist and less anti-Communist.

These fresh winds have their origins on the shop floor, on the picket lines, in the union halls. These winds continue to blow strong and to gather momentum.

As the folks in California say, there is no question about whether there will be the big earthquake. The only question is when.

The era of crises is creating the new framework for the class struggle, for the trade unions and for our Party. These developments are creating the conditions for class struggle trade unionism. It is not a soil in which class collaboration flourishes.

Our Party's new trade union program,

which has been debated and discussed within and outside the Party, is making its mark on labor and the trade union movement in this era of crises.

It is also a period of very difficult challenges for the trade union movement.

The structural crisis has weakened the industrial base of the trade unions. The top leadership has not yet drawn all the conclusions and has therefore not yet adopted the tactics of class struggle trade unionism. The rank and file are testing the waters for going on the offensive, but still with hesitation.

The tactic of monopoly capital is to fragment the trade union forces, to deal with only one company at a time and more and more to deal with grievances one local at a time. As a result, unsettled grievances are piling up. This tactic is creating havoc with questions like job classification, grievance procedures, etc.

Into this situation the corporations are pushing the Labor Management Participation Teams and quality circles.

We are working with a continuing process of change that is moving toward a new framework for our trade union work. It is a process of change that does not skip stages. It is as important for us to understand the direction and where the process is at each stage as it is to recognize the longer-range effects. Tactics must mesh with both the direction and each phase.

One of the lingering problems in the present phase is that many workers have lost some class self-confidence. They are regaining it on the picket lines, but it is still a problem. Class self-confidence is an important ingredient in turning militancy and anger into appropriate action. The building of class self-confidence is an important task of leaders. It is a challenge for the broad Left and for our Party.

There are many new and complex problems. How should unions organize when half of the work force is either unemployed or on call as part-time workers who can not even afford union dues?

The starting point must be to recognize that unemployed and part-time workers are an inte-

gral part of the working class. They must have organizational ties to the trade unions. However, they will relate to the trade unions only if the unions take up their grievances.

In this crisis period the influence of social democratic ideas at various levels of trade union leadership presents new problems. The steel and auto unions are now led by social democrats.

In the field of political independence, class unity, as part of the Freeze movement to end the nuclear arms race, in the movement against the racist fascist regime in South Africa, in the struggle against Reaganite policies in Central America—in all these areas most of them are on a liberal progressive path. This of course does not include the ultra-Right social democrats like Albert Shanker and Bayard Rustin.

But when it comes to dealing with economic questions, like new labor contracts, these same leaders fall back to class collaboration, concessions, wage cuts and givebacks. The GM Saturn contract is a swindle. But the UAW leaders defend it by saying, "We have our foot in the door." That may be, but it's more like having their foot in a trap and their neck in a noose.

We have moved in the direction of working with social democrats on issues on which we agree and opposing them on their class collaboration on economic issues. But the question is how to get beyond this. How can we help move them a notch higher in the economic struggles? How do we raise the level of the economic struggles in a united front with the social democrats and others at their level? This raises difficult tactical questions when we deal with Left and Left-Center unity. United front relationships in one area do not rule out struggle against wrong policies in other areas.

The objective situation is making class collaborationist economic policies less possible. We not only have to take issue with such policies, we have to expose their dead-end nature.

The only effect of the concessions, wage cuts and corporate tax cuts, which run into billions of dollars, is to increase corporate profits and executive salaries. Concession policies have not saved a single job. There are no solutions to

workers' problems on that path.

The struggle against class collaborationist economic policies must be conducted on the shop floor, in local union meetings.

The import question remains high on the priorities of union leadership. It has become a new avenue for class collaboration. Corporations that are among the biggest importers join the unions in making big noises about imports.

When the issue of imports becomes a substitute for a policy of struggle it becomes counterproductive. The lowering of the value of the dollar was supposed to increase exports and cut imports. But that is not happening. Each time imports are cut the corporations raise prices on American-made products. The benefits are highjacked before they reach the marketplace and therefore cancel any increase in jobs.

In all this we have to take into consideration the very difficult situation the trade union movement, trade union leaders, especially local union leaders and the rank and file are in. Not all the weaknesses in the trade union movement can be attributed to opportunism. In fact, our struggle against class collaboration and opportunism can not be effective in the abstract, but only in the context of the real problems, the real balance of forces.

For example, the USX lockout of 45,000 steelworkers and the LTV Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing are both forerunners of unionbusting tactics in the framework of the structural crisis, the megamergers, high tech, the ever-expanding transnational corporations and banks. Lockouts and bankruptcies are new tactics of unionbusting in the new framework. This is an all-out effort to destroy the union. That is what is at stake in what looks to be a long, bitter battle.

The Reagan-corporate offensive is relentless and brutal. The era of crises is driving them to extreme measures to bolster the rate of profit.

Together with corporate policies of shut-downs, layoffs, speedup and forced overtime there is a companion campaign in the mass media which reflects corporate policy. Look at the

headlines of major articles in the past few months: "Labor's Grand Illusions," "Workers Taking It in the Neck," "Union Busting Made Easy," "Two Tier—A New Way of Life," "The Steel Industry Girds for a Civil War," "Unions Have No Business on the Picket Line Today," "Union Membership Declining—Search for New Tactics."

These reflect a drive to convince the trade unions and the working class that they must buy the line of "unconditional surrender."

Part of this campaign to downgrade the working class is the talk about the "shrinking working class," the "decline in trade union membership," and the "decrease in strike activity." This is the line of the phony Left.

The response to both the objective and subjective corporate onslaught is a rising level of frustration and anger in the trade union movement. But it has not yet reached the point at which hope has been given up. There is still not acceptance that "downward economic mobility" is the order of the era and that concessions will not reverse this trend. Workers are not yet convinced that the "American dream" has become the "impossible dream" for the majority.

This process is reflected in labor contracts and in the uneven level of struggle against concessions and takebacks. There is a strike wave in certain areas, and a hesitancy to strike in others.

In spite of the relentless, ruthless tactics of the corporations, in addition to the many hundreds of smaller strikes and work stoppages, just during the past six months we have seen strikes by:

- Colt Industries workers in Connecticut;
- 15,000 aluminum workers;
- 7,000 lumber workers in the Northwest;
- 100 railroad workers in Maine that grew to 900, then to several thousand, threatening to shut down the nation's rail system;
- 155,000 AT&T workers;
- 3,000 Boston Edison workers;
- 5,000 TWA flight attendants;
- 7,500 GE workers at Lynn over protecting shop stewards;
- 5,000 Philadelphia transit workers;
- 13,500 can industry workers;

- 3,000 Pennsylvania nurses;
- 15,000 California butcher and grocery workers;
- 15,000 public workers in Philadelphia;
- 12,000 public workers in Detroit;
- 70,000 Bell Telephone workers.

And now 45,000 steel workers have been locked out by USX.

In the era of crises the Left has increasingly become a mass development. It is a growing anti-imperialist sector in the struggle against U.S. policy in Central America and South Africa. The resolution passed at the AFL-CIO convention condemning U.S. policies in South Africa and Nicaragua were mainly pushed by broad Left forces.

The Left sector is growing within the movements for political independence. The Left is growing in the struggle for equality, including the new approach to removing the contradiction between affirmative action and seniority, most recently reflected in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) convention resolution.

The Left is the leader in such movements as the 6-hour day, equal pay for comparable work, for nationalization, for strengthening the shop steward system, against the nuclear arms race, against quality circles, labor management teams and profit sharing, against subminimum wages, Saturnization, robotization, speedup and forced overtime.

There is a broad Left among women workers, including in NOW and CLUW, as well as a growing Left among youth. In addition to overall Left formations, it is necessary to help organize Left forms in these specific sectors.

Helping to organize Left forms makes it possible to build Left-Center coalitions in the trade union movement. The need is increasing for Left-Center coalitions—not Center-Left forms, which usually force the Left to trail.

The process of radicalization and militancy continues, the storm clouds in the trade union movement are gathering. The initiative is now more with the Left and Center forces. The Right wing is now largely confined to reacting to the initiatives.

The Left is mostly concentrated at the rank-and-file, local union level. Some tend to think the positions of the AFL-CIO convention are the most advanced in labor. They do not see what is new at the grassroots. They do not see what is fueling the militancy in the whole trade union movement. They do not see that in the majority of cases the militancy and struggle positions at the top are the result of constant pressure from the rank and file. The workers are the basic Left force in the trade union movement.

There are some areas where Left forms are decisive. For example, to build a many-level, more effective struggle against racism, an organized Left is essential. The struggle for Black-white unity needs a Left base. Communists and others on the Left must take the necessary new initiatives for affirmative action programs based on the recent Supreme Court decisions. These programs can go much further now and have a much wider impact. The rank and file is ready to go much further than the top leadership.

An organized Left is needed to raise the struggle for women's equality, especially on such advanced issues as equal pay for comparable work.

An organized Left can deal more effectively with nationalization, and with bringing about closer ties with trade unions in the socialist countries. The working class can not move to offensive struggles without an organized Left.

However, we must also recognize and work with the broader, more spontaneous and less organized sectors. If we fail to do this, not only we, but the more organized Left forces will become isolated. Much of the old center is today's Left. With the growth of a broader Left sector sectarianism is always a danger.

The broader Left is needed to move labor into an increasingly active role in organizing the unorganized and especially in the electoral and political arenas, looking toward mobilizing tens of thousands for political activity on issues and around candidates through trade union organizations and PACs.

The organized Left must be the catalyst for more advanced ideas and tactics, for mobilizing and organizing the broader Left in a more pro-

gressive and active direction.

The Left must include the broader, more spontaneous Left and the more advanced sector. It is necessary to appeal to the Left mass sentiment and to help develop the organizational forms for the more advanced sector.

Today, because of the different, more challenging struggles and our growing influence, the trade union movement expects a lot more from the Party. But doors are not opening for us to just "hang around." We are expected to help solve problems. We are increasingly being approached for consultation, for advice, for guidance and help.

We must also see the role of the *People's Daily World* in this context. It is the most advanced working-class newspaper. It is the voice of the Left. It speaks for the Communist Party.

There are many good trade union papers. There are many things we can learn from them. But they lack an important quality that only the *People's Daily World* can provide—the political and ideological plus.

The 1986 Elections In the Era of Crises

Last January when the Central Committee of our Party adopted a policy and tactical approach for our work in the '86 elections, it was impossible to see just how critical they would turn out to be for the overall struggles of our working class and people. But over the past six months or so the significance and possibility of a shift in the congressional balance of forces is becoming crystal clear.

Now we can say with confidence that any hope of containing and even reversing the policies of first-strike military superiority of the nuclear maniacs that now determine policy in the Reagan Administration is in the hands of the U.S. Congress. Congress can play this role because it alone can impose binding legislation on the Administration.

- Congress can cut the Pentagon's purse strings.
- Congress can force compliance with the

SALT II and ABM treaties.

- Congress can cut off funding for Star Wars.

- Congress can impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against apartheid and end aid to the contras.

- Congress can force the Reagan Administration to bow to its will against all its prowar, antilabor, racist policies.

Through the Congress the American peace majority can generate enough pressure to compel the Administration to retreat from its die-hard policies of aggression and confrontation.

The debates and struggles now taking place in congressional committees and on the floor of the House and Senate show that the unique role Congress can play in this era is already beginning to be felt. The front of the struggle against the Reagan-inspired nuclear war danger extends all the way into the halls of Congress.

The present composition of Congress very much limits the role it can play in the struggle to preserve humanity and prevent a nuclear war. There is a powerful and growing peace majority in our nation. But mass sentiment alone can not change the course of the Reagan Administration. And with a Republican majority in the Senate the initiative will remain in the hands of the Right-wing, prowar Administration, unless we can change the composition in favor of the peace majority.

The only way out of this contradiction is to shift the political balance in Congress, starting with ending the Republicans' Senate majority.

Electing a peace majority to the 100th Congress is an urgent necessity. It meshes with the historic task of saving humanity and human society. Such a Congress is needed to carry out the will of the people expressed in poll after poll, in action after action.

If we win a shift in the political balance, other processes can begin, including a labor-led legislative and political action counteroffensive to reverse Reaganism in many areas. A shift in the political balance in Congress, together with mass protest actions, will set the stage for the working class and broader people's peace forces

to go over to the political offensive in foreign and domestic policy.

The votes on key arms control legislation show what a setback the loss of the prowar Republican Senate majority would be to the President's war policies. The Senate and House votes on contra aid shows how important a shift of only a handful of votes could be to the people of Nicaragua and the U.S.

A different political composition, a different political balance in the U.S. Congress, could mean a different kind of world, one that is safer and more secure.

A different political composition could mean a different kind of country, one more committed to meeting the needs of the working class and people, one more committed to relieving the poverty, homelessness and hunger now spreading with the speed of an epidemic.

Only the unity of action of the broadest forces of the all-people's front can achieve this kind of Congress. It is in the hands of the independent forces, especially labor, the trade unions, the Afro-American people's movement and the movements of the Puerto Rican, Chicano/Mexican-American, Native American, Asian-Pacific and other oppressed people's movements.

The trade unions, especially through their PACs at the local level, are already in full swing for an all-out fight.

The alliance of labor and the Afro-American community, which is decisive for victory over pro-war Republican incumbents in most of the key races, is beginning to reach new levels of coordination.

The '86 electoral and legislative fields are being transformed into a wide boulevard of unprecedented mass struggle.

What is not understood by those who disagree with our policy, who say we are simply out to exchange Democrats for Republicans, to exchange anti-Reaganites for Reaganites, that we are abandoning the fight for political independence, is that the biggest political clout will go to those who make the decisive contributions to shifting the political balance.

The initiative will go to those who act, not those who sit on the sidelines and observe the situation as hopeless. That leads to paralysis and isolation.

At this stage in most contests the only way to defeat Reaganite candidates is to elect Democrats. The quality of candidates who are winning Democratic nominations varies greatly. Several are Right-of-Center politically. Most are in the Center. Some are liberals. A few are progressives. However, where the independent forces have taken the initiative, they have generally been able to help ensure the election of better candidates in the primaries.

In a number of instances the trade union movement has been particularly effective in taking the initiative out of the hands of the regular Democratic Party machine. The Edgar candidacy in Pennsylvania and the Green candidacy in New York are just two examples.

In others, the people's forces were not able to develop sufficient clout to have the decisive voice. In still others, despite mobilization, the independent forces were not able to achieve a liberal or progressive alternative.

But even those situations are not hopeless. In Alabama, for example, the independent mobilization of labor and Afro-American forces is proving decisive to forcing Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate, Richard Shelby, a conservative, to moderate his conservatism, to mend fences with labor and Black leadership.

This is now the situation in Alabama only because the trade union movement in unity with the Afro-American community correctly sees defeating Jeremiah Denton, one of the most anti-labor, racist, pro-war members of the U.S. Senate as the main task. They say, "We'll straighten out Shelby on some issues later." Because many Republicans are running like anti-Reagan candidates, there is a big run on the sale of sheep's clothing.

There are some hesitations about this tactic in the Party. It is understandable in a way because some see us going back to the "lesser of two evils" concept and do not understand that our electoral focus may have to change with

each phase of the elections. A tactic has to be for a specific election, a specific stage, a specific problem. If we want to be a factor in making a difference, this is how flexible we have to be.

To talk about building political independence without working to move the independent forces into the primaries, into moving delegates at conventions, into specific campaigns against the Reaganites—is spinning our wheels.

There is no contradiction between coalition politics and this tactical approach. There is a dialectical interrelationship between the different layers of our tactics. There are moments when we must focus only on one level. When we miss the critical moment we have lost the election. Electoral politics is not going about general tasks. It is concrete nuts and bolts, people moving people.

The door is wide open to convince people to vote against the Reaganites, because the heavy burden that most Republican candidates have to campaign with keeps getting heavier.

They must be tagged with:

- cancellation of SALT II;
- Meese racism;
- criminal corruption (24 Reaganites have been indicted, jailed or fired);
- a \$100,000,000 act of war against Nicaragua;
- the farm crisis;
- not responding to Soviet peace proposals;
- unemployment and a stagnant economy;
- the war party image;
- the federal debt;
- tax giveaways to the corporations and rich;
- cuts in Social Security, food stamps, Medicaid and education;
- the outlaw image in regard to the World Court, the United Nations, and violations of the rights and boundaries of other countries (Libya, Lebanon, Grenada);
- canceling international agreements (SALT, ABM).

To varying degrees, all anti-Reagan currents have been drawn into the flow of this year's pivotal electoral struggles. Some on their

own accord, some reluctantly, some only because of the undertow of masses in motion, some because they are caught in conflicting and contradictory streams of political interests. But, with labor in the forefront, the bulk of the organized forces of the working people are in the headwaters of a tremendous wave of antiwar, anti-Reagan upsurge.

In key congressional contests, labor PACs will be a deciding factor. We must act according to our understanding that the trade union movement is the decisive force, upon whose shoulders success largely depends.

Where there are no union PACs we should take the initiative and organize them.

In most of the contests, the different forces of political independence will be supporting the same candidates. This includes labor, sectors of the Rainbow, social democratic forces, peace, farm, women, senior and youth as well as church organizations.

We should work to unite the independent forces into broad, loose, many-class formations, and to build within these broad mass formations Left and Left-Center forms. However, it is important that Left groups do not make their support contingent on everybody supporting the one issue they are most interested in.

The unprecedented national consensus for ending the nuclear arms race, fulfilling the Summit, and the anticorporate and anti-Reaganism sentiment can be the broad basis of an all-people's front that draws strength and political activity from many strata.

The challenge that confronts our Party is how best to help all forces flow into one focused channel—unity of action to defeat the prowar Republican candidates in the elections. Any other consideration is a diversion from the all-out mobilization of the trade union movement, Afro-American community, Latino and other oppressed peoples, women's, seniors, youth and all mass movements.

It would be criminal to allow diversions or divisions, especially now when it is clear that while only a net loss of four seats is needed for the Republicans to lose the Senate majority,

much more is possible.

The November elections can be turned into an unprecedented repudiation of Reaganism. Prospects are growing because the objective developments now work in favor of the people's peace forces, the all-people's front and the anti-monopoly sectors:

- The massive antiwar sentiment is now being focused on specific arms control legislation pending before Congress. Forcing a vote on them before Election Day will expose Republican incumbents on the issue about which the greatest number of voters have the greatest concern—the Administration's war policies.

- The Supreme Court ruling upholding affirmative action makes for greater Black-white, multiracial and multinational unity in the struggle against racism and the ultra-Right. This puts the enemies of affirmative action on the spot.

- The ruling on Gramm-Rudman-Hollings puts incumbents in a position of having to vote on the eve of the elections either for cuts in military spending or in social programs—including Social Security, Medicare and education.

- The stagnant economic situation exposes the rosy Reaganite rhetoric for millions of voters who are the latest victims of the triple-layered and structural crisis, the deepening farm crisis, the import-export crisis and the debt crisis—the era of crises.

- The series of Soviet peace proposals and initiatives increasingly isolates not only the Administration but also the most diehard warhawks in Congress, among them several incumbents who are already vulnerable.

Unfortunately, for some liberal and right-of-center forces, the Democrats have become the main enemy, not the Republican incumbents, who have been President Reagan's hit men for the past six years. Their focus has become inner-party politics and jockeying for position in the 1988 Democratic primaries.

For some, "acting presidential" has become more important than defeating Reaganism politically and the Republican incumbents at the ballot box. But 1988 may be too late. Today's struggles will determine the alignment of forces and

the possibilities in 1988.

After the primaries, the priority task will be all-out mobilization for the general election. The challenge is to be an integral part of all races. We must not stand apart from these titanic struggles of our working class and people.

In January, the Central Committee advanced the slogan of helping to make the difference in shifting the political balance of Congress in the '86 elections. In several of the primary contests our Party did help make the difference in preventing conservative Democrats from winning the nominations—which would have virtually assured the re-election of the Republican incumbent. We helped make the difference in the victory of progressives, with whom the trade union, Afro-American and peace forces will have more influence than the party machine forces.

We must continue to make this kind of contribution in the remaining primaries, in the general election and on key votes which will take place in Congress before November 4.

The question is: What is the most effective way for us to be a live factor, a Party of mass action, between now and election day?

This applies especially to the trade unions. Our comrades must be most active in labor political action and legislative action committees. We should volunteer for COPE projects. The same approach should be used in other mass organizations and movements.

The main idea is to take the initiative. Our ideas and practical initiatives will help masses mobilize and organize, to help keep the focus on defeating the Republican-Reaganite candidates. We must be the spark for outreach and unity of action.

Our Party also has a big role to play in its own right. Our views are the clearest. This means we must constantly clarify the issues, keep the focus sharp, avoid diversion and division, and above all promote cooperation between the labor movement and other sectors of the all-people's front.

In some ways, the biggest challenge is to work in a very broad way to help build large,

loose coalitions with all opposed to Reagan policies and to combine electoral work with legislative action. The legislative arena is key to pressuring candidates, to exposing and isolating some, while building support for others. For example, campaigning for the Schroeder bill, the Hayes-Conyers bill, etc., provides leverage for the progressive candidates and a way to restrain the Reaganite forces in Congress.

We must very carefully decide where to run Communist and Communist-Left electoral formations. The elections are a challenge to our ability to apply the new tactic of building Communist-Left, Left-progressive electoral formations, starting at the local and congressional district levels.

As in past elections, Communists are running in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Ohio. This is becoming known as the Midwest electoral Red Belt. We commend our comrades in these states. At the same time, we must ask our comrades in other states—how come?

The answer can not be limited to legal problems. If we have no candidates in one election, that is one thing. But when it becomes a pattern, then we have to look for the answer in political and ideological weaknesses.

I propose that we make these campaigns points of national concentration, that we help with both resources and cadre. They can become examples of the Party's influence.

In this period we must accelerate our efforts to share our views with tens of millions of people. This means radio talk shows, TV, Party mass meetings, participation in coalitions, mass actions, public town meetings, taking the issues to the streets, etc.

The '86 elections can be the framework for building a mass readership of the *People's Daily World*. The more closely it reflects specific races, the more completely it reflects the activities of the independent forces, the more effective it will be as a mobilizer and energizer.

The '86 elections will form the political backdrop for the class struggle in the coming period. They can be the backdrop for expanding our influence as well as our membership. □

Marxism-Leninism and the 'Underclass'

TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

The current crisis of capitalism is shaking the very foundations of the U.S. economy in ways not experienced since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Rising unemployment, plant closures and increasing poverty are some of the more visible manifestations of this crisis.

In addition, the crisis has caused an increase in both the relative and absolute impoverishment of working people. In most working-class families both adults must work in order to maintain the same standard of living that could previously be attained through the income of one adult wage earner. The gap between the luxurious lifestyle of the wealthy and the difficult conditions of workers is growing and becoming increasingly evident.

At the same time, the nationally oppressed communities are suffering the most from the crisis. Afro-American communities across the country have been transformed into zones of wasted human potential. The streets are teeming with youth and adults cut off from the opportunity to work at a liveable wage. Millions of people who want to work have been denied the chance for a productive life by a system only concerned with profits. Concomitant with this has been a dramatic rise in police terror and racial assaults.

In the midst of this worsening crisis of the capitalist system, the bourgeoisie has been scrambling for ways to explain the crisis and chart a way out. Incapable of seeing past their own moribund system, their explanations and solutions always rest on the assumption that capitalist relations of production must be preserved.

A fundamental error of bourgeois social theorists, whether on the Right or the Left, is their failure to root their analysis of the crisis and its manifestations in the contradictions of capitalist development.

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One particular expression of recent bourgeois social theory is the concept of the "underclass." This term is used to describe that section of the population who are chronically unemployed, usually subsisting on some form of government subsidy. Most capably presented by William Julius Wilson in his book *The Declining Significance of Race and Changing American Institutions* (University of Chicago Press, 1980), this theory has been picked up and utilized by a number of sociologists and political theorists. Most importantly, the term and concept of "underclass" have come into frequent use in the general population and in popular periodicals.

The use of the term "underclass" to describe chronically unemployed workers is a conscious effort by the bourgeoisie to conceal an inevitable result of capitalism, that is, the appearance of mass unemployment. Furthermore, there is a racist edge to the use of the term. Although Afro-Americans constitute a disproportionate share of chronically unemployed workers, they are not the majority of them. However, when the term "underclass" is used, it almost always refers to Afro-Americans.

The racial coloration to the term "underclass" is manipulated by the bourgeoisie to compound confusion around the root causes of mass unemployment. For example, according to many bourgeois theorists the central problem in the Afro-American community is teenage pregnancy, crime or the so-called deterioration of the family instead of lack of jobs.

'UNDERCLASS' HAS A RACIAL COLORATION

In a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1986) entitled "Origins of the Underclass," Nicholas Lemman argues that the central reason for the existence of social problems in the Afro-American community lies in a heritage of poverty, with its origins in the rural South. Thus, the central problem is not the lack of jobs but

a historic culture of poverty. (In other words: don't give them jobs, give them art!)

While Wilson may not subscribe to all of the theories woven out of his ideas, the very use of the term "underclass" serves the interest of the bourgeoisie and harms the interests of workers. Wilson's thesis is that the factor of class has become more important than the factor of race in determining the life chances of Afro-Americans. He surveys the interrelationship of race and class through different historical periods in the U.S. and concludes that the democratic gains made by Afro-Americans in recent years have left an Afro-American community more stratified by class than ever before. At the bottom of this community is an "underclass" whose continued lack of access to good jobs and decent conditions of living is based more on their inherited economic circumstances than on overt racial discrimination, he argues. Government programs, such as affirmative action, are not the type of programs needed to assist this sector of the population.

Upon the publication of Wilson's book, many people in academia and in the progressive movement viewed it as an attack on affirmative action. In an added chapter to the second edition of the book Wilson draws a line between his point of view and the views espoused by Reaganite social theorists. He points out that,

These arguments are in sharp contrast to those advanced by the economist Robert Sowell and Walter Williams . . . they believe that the problems have been created by such trade union policies as minimum wage legislation. . . . However, the problem for poor blacks is not simply the availability of jobs or access to menial jobs in low-wage industries, but the availability of jobs that pay decent wages and that provide opportunities for advancement.¹

In spite of Wilson's attempts to combat the distortions of his views, they are still widely misrepresented. In a series of articles in the *Chicago Tribune* entitled "The Underclass," reporter William Mullen distorted Wilson's views to such an extent that Wilson was forced to respond in a letter to the editor. In the letter, Wilson states,

. . . my views on the welfare system and the role of government are so distorted in Mullen's article that the reader not familiar with my work and philosophy would assume that I am a strong supporter of the neoconservative movement to cut back or eliminate the welfare state and to reduce government programs. On the contrary, I abhor and reject this position.²

Wilson, like many bourgeois social scientists, is capable of correctly observing social phenomena at an empirical level. However, his theoretical framework acts as a blinder, preventing him from understanding the significance of his own observations.

In the final chapter of *The Declining Significance of Race*, he comments:

. . . the predicament of the underclass cannot be satisfactorily addressed by the mere passage of civil rights laws or the introduction of special racial programs such as affirmative action. Indeed, the very success of recent antidiscrimination efforts in removing social barriers in the economic sector only points out, in sharper relief, other barriers that such efforts cannot begin to confront . . . barriers, which in short, transcend the issue of racial and ethnic discrimination and depict the universal problems of class subordination.³

In the above passage, Wilson comes as close as he has ever come to understanding the class nature of national oppression. Although his views are distorted because he uses categories incorrectly, especially the categories of "class" and "racism," and incorrectly poses them against each other, what is meaningful in this passage is the hint that the problem of national oppression can not be solved within a system of class exploitation.

Wilson's observation that there is a sector of the Afro-American community that is mired in poverty, whose problems do not begin to be solved by existing social legislation, is very true. Wilson's failure is not in this observation, but rather in his failure to locate this phenomenon within the normal process of capitalist reproduction.

What is the Marxist-Leninist view of the

chronically unemployed? As with any other question, Marxism-Leninism's point of departure is partisan. That is, it seeks to pose the questions that will provide solutions that move toward building the unity of the working class and other oppressed sectors of the population.

THE SCIENTIFIC DEFINITION OF CLASS

The question of chronic unemployment must be viewed through the prism of capitalist accumulation and within the context of the present structural crisis of capitalism. However, before delving into the process of capitalist accumulation, we must first clear up some ambiguities in the terminology employed by Wilson, specifically, his use of the category "class."

Wilson, after declaring that the term class is a "slippery concept," states that,

... in this study the concept means any group of people who have more or less similar goods, services or skills to offer for income in a given economic order and who therefore receive similar financial remuneration in the market place.⁴

Contrary to Wilson's statement, the term class is not at all a "slippery concept." In fact, it has a very definite meaning. The accepted Marxist definition of classes is:

... large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labor, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it.⁵

Of these four class-forming criteria, Lenin singled out one as being primary. He stated that,

The fundamental criteria by which classes are distinguished is the place they occupy in social production, and, consequently, the relation in which they stand to the means of production.⁶

Thus, these four class-forming criteria do

not have equal weight. The first criterion—the place occupied in a historically determined system of production—aims at viewing groups of people according to where they stand in relation to the production and appropriation of surplus value, as producers of surplus value or extractors of surplus value from others. Consequently, this criterion is aimed at the very logic of the capitalist system, the production of surplus value. In a society based upon exploitation, as capitalism is, this must be the fundamental criterion.

Where one stands in relation to the second criterion—relationship to the means of production—is largely determined by the first criterion. That is, if one exists through the exploitation of workers, one probably owns means of production. On the other hand, if one produces surplus value, then one is likely to be divorced from the means of production.

The third criterion—role in the social organization of labor—concerns issues such as decision-making and management.

Finally, the fourth criterion—share of the social wealth—is primarily concerned with income.

Thus, Marxism-Leninism takes a dialectical view of class, attempting to view it in an all-sided manner. This is in contrast to bourgeois theories, such as Wilson's, that take a relatively narrow view.

Based on this different definition of class, Marxist-Leninists view the chronically unemployed differently than do bourgeois theorists. Although the chronically unemployed do not produce surplus value, given their employment status, they stand with the active labor force in being divorced from ownership of the means of production. In addition, their share of the social wealth and their role in the organization of labor classes them with the active labor force.

According to the typical bourgeois definition, which Wilson shares, society is composed of an underclass, a middle class and an upper class. This definition bases class singularly on income. More importantly, it obscures the central polarization in capitalist society. It views these classes as existing with no meaning-

ful relationship, and especially no antagonistic relationship, between them. Bourgeois theorists view class in this way because they want to create the illusion of a "community of interest"—all classes seek to improve their conditions, but there are no inherent conflicts between them. This inevitably leads to a non-class-struggle approach. And this is an approach which Wilson shares, as we shall see.

The Marxist-Leninist view is that the basic division in capitalist society is not solely based on income, but rather is based on the polarization between the exploiter and the exploited classes, between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, these two classes stand in fundamental contradiction to each other. Thus, rather than obscuring the causes of class struggle, the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint places class struggle at the center of its analysis.

MARX'S THEORY OF RELATIVE SURPLUS POPULATION

As we shall see when we analyze the process of capitalist accumulation, the chronically unemployed are, in actuality, a part of the working class, as well as a natural byproduct of the development of capitalism.

In Marx's *Capital*, he explains the process of capitalist accumulation and its effects on the laboring population. He notes that one of the tendencies of capitalism is to revolutionize the means of production. The introduction of new machinery leads to a growth of constant capital vis-a-vis variable capital, constant capital being that part of capital invested in machines, buildings, raw materials, etc., and variable capital being that part of capital used for the purchase of labor. Marx referred to this phenomenon as the rising organic composition of capital.

As the process of capitalist accumulation continues, the demand for labor increases at a slower rate than the accumulation of capital. Marx notes that this trend is not an even process, at once observable in each field of production, but rather is reflected in the composition of the total social capital.

This slower growth in the demand for labor

leads to what Marx refers to as a relative surplus population, or industrial reserve army. These are the people who at any given time are unemployed.

Marx states that,

The greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth, and therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labor, the greater is the industrial reserve army.⁷

Marx identifies three strata of the industrial reserve army, or relative surplus population: (1) floating, (2) latent and (3) stagnant.

The floating stratum is described as those workers who have lost their jobs due to the consequences of technological change or the cyclical ups and downs of the economy.

The latent stratum is principally composed of agricultural workers who, due to the increasing level of mechanization and concentration of capital in agriculture, are forced into the city to seek work.

Finally, Marx describes the stagnant stratum, the "lowest sediment of the relative surplus population." He describes their poverty-stricken state of existence and remarks that,

... it furnishes to capital an inexhaustible reservoir of disposable labor power. Its condition of life sinks below the average normal level of the working class. ... It is characterized by maximum of work-time and minimum wages.⁸

Marx further describes this stratum as "dwelling in the sphere of pauperism" and "vegetating upon public alms." He goes on to note that,

... not only the number of births and deaths, but the absolute size of the families stand in inverse proportion to the height of wages. ... It calls to mind the boundless reproduction of animals individually weak and constantly hunted down.⁹

Thus, in *Capital* Marx analyzed the laws of capitalist accumulation and its effect on the working class. He proved that as capitalism developed, there would also develop a sector of the working class condemned to poverty. He

summarized this by noting that,

The same causes which develop the expansive powers of capital also develop the labor power at its disposal. The relative mass of the industrial reserve army increases therefore with the potential energy of wealth. But the greater this reserve army in proportion to the active labor army, the greater is the mass of a consolidated surplus-population, whose misery is in inverse ratio to its torment of labor. The more extensive, finally, the lazarus-layer of the working class, and the industrial reserve army, the greater is the official pauperism. *This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation.*¹⁰

The conditions of life of that sector of the working class categorized by Marx as the stagnant stratum of the relative surplus population mirrors present-day descriptions of the chronically unemployed. However, Marx was writing at a time before capitalism had developed into monopoly capitalism. As Marx noted, as the concentration and centralization of capital grow, so will inevitably grow the relative surplus population, particularly the stagnant stratum. In the U.S., where the concentration and centralization of capital have reached mammoth proportions, it is not surprising that the relative surplus population should be so large and growing.

STRUCTURAL CRISIS AND MASS UNEMPLOYMENT

Another important factor contributing to its growth has been the present structural crisis of U.S. capitalism. In *Capital* Marx dealt with the impact of cyclical crises on the relative surplus population. Because capitalism had not reached its monopoly stage and structural crises had not become as acute, he did not deal with structural crises as fully.

Cyclical crises within capitalism tend to develop every seven to ten years, marked by recurrent periods of boom and bust. Structural crises tend to last through several cyclical crises and involve more fundamental aspects of the capitalist system. They are crises involving the very nature of capitalist production. Rubin de-

scribes some of the manifestations of the current structural crisis as being,

... slashed industries, closed plants, runaway shops; the emergence of mass unemployment at the peak of the cycle, declining living standards and mass hardship.¹¹

The structural crisis of U.S. capitalism has also meant an increase in the relative surplus population. A study funded by the U.S. Department of Labor gives an indication of this growth.

The study focused on 5.1 million workers who had lost their jobs between 1979 and 1984 due to plant closings and layoffs. (The actual number of workers who lost their jobs in that period, according to Labor Department statistics, was 11.5 million, but the study only included those who had been on the job three years or more.) At the end of the study period, 3.1 million had been reemployed (with 50 per cent of them earning less than before), 1.3 million were still looking for work, and 700,000 workers had left the labor force.¹²

In addition, the study found that the hardest hit industries were steel and auto. This fact clearly reflects the impact of the structural crisis, as one of its manifestations is the movement of capital out of basic industries.

The 700,000 workers who had left the labor force represent candidates for the stagnant stratum of the relative surplus population. These are the workers who had worked on the job for at least three years, exhausted their unemployment benefits and had simply given up hope of finding another job.

This short study gives an indication of the numbers of workers who are displaced because of cyclical and structural factors, and may never enter the work force again. One can only assume that, with unemployment benefits exhausted, many are subsisting on various types of relief and swelling the ranks of the stagnant stratum.

Thus, the chronically unemployed that Wilson and others describe is nothing but the historically specific form of the stagnant stratum of the relative surplus population under state mo-

nopoly capitalism in the United States.

Wilson's error is not so much in noting the existence of this sector of the working class, as in failing to understand that it is the result of the law-governed development of monopoly capitalism. The question of how one views this stratum is more than a question of typology or classification. Marxism-Leninism views this problem from a particular perspective both because it is partisan and because it is scientific.

The bourgeois interpretation would tend to view the chronically unemployed in isolation from the active labor force (if not in opposition to it). The Marxist-Leninist interpretation views them as part of the working class and as a normal byproduct of capitalist accumulation. If the active labor army and the reserve labor army understand that the existence of chronic unemployment is part of the very logic of capitalism, they will be one step closer to understanding that their future lies in the abolition of the capitalist system.

Because the term "underclass" separates the conditions of life of a victimized section of society from the dynamics of capitalism, because it attributes the problems of the unemployed to something in their "culture," it is an important notion to combat in the ideological struggle around the issues of homelessness, hunger and unemployment.

Through an analysis of the logical and historical development of the capitalist system we can see that the existence of the chronically unemployed, the stagnant stratum of the relative surplus population, is a natural feature of capitalism.

RACE AND CLASS AMONG THE UNEMPLOYED

However, this leaves one aspect of the problem unexplained. Why does the relative surplus population in the U.S. disproportionately consist of oppressed nationalities, particularly Afro-Americans?

To shed light on this we must explore other categories operating in this phenomenon. These are racism and national oppression.

The importance of the use of scientifically correct categories can not be overstated. Categories function as logical concepts developed from the historical motion of a phenomenon. Their correctness is to be gauged by how helpful they are in explaining reality. As Maurice Dobb wrote,

The justification of any definition must ultimately rest on its successful employment in illuminating the actual process of historical development: on the extent to which it gives shape to our picture of the process corresponding to the contours which the historical landscape proves to have.¹³

Consequently, the way in which we define and use categories such as racism and national oppression are of the utmost importance. In contrasting Wilson's definition with the Marxist-Leninist definition, we must keep in mind that we are searching for the categories that are most helpful in explaining the reality of Afro-American oppression.

Wilson attempts to come to terms with the disproportionate representation of the nationally oppressed among the chronically unemployed. He points out that,

It is true that blacks are disproportionately represented in the underclass population But [this] has more to do with the historical consequences of racial oppression than with current effects of race.¹⁴

In his attempt to explain disproportionate poverty and joblessness of Afro-Americans, Wilson gives us a clue to his definition of racism or racial oppression. In another passage he explicitly states that racial oppression is,

. . . the explicit and overt efforts of whites to keep blacks subjugated.¹⁵

Thus, Wilson views racism as being limited to *current and overt* attempts to discriminate against Afro-Americans.

Marxism-Leninism takes a much less restricted approach to understanding the oppression of Afro-Americans. It views racist ideas as ruling-class ideology, ultimately inspired by the need of capital to rationalize the superexploitation of Afro-American workers and divide the

multinational working class.

The superexploitation of workers, and the monopoly profits derived from superexploitation, form the core of the material basis of Afro-American oppression.

National oppression is a historically rooted system of oppression and exploitation directed against a national group and resulting in lower conditions of life for the oppressed nationality vis-a-vis the general population.

Wilson's definition negates the historical basis and the material basis of national oppression of Afro-Americans. Consequently, he is left with just the category of class—as he understands it—to explain the racial composition and existence of the chronically unemployed.

Marxism-Leninism recognizes that national oppression is a system based upon class exploitation. To confuse the two categories, or artificially pose them against each other, or obscure the causal links between them, as Wilson does, leads nowhere.

Once again the differences with Wilson are not academic nitpicking. They hold profound implications for policy. Wilson's solution to the predicament of the chronically unemployed is more social service programs.

But a key ingredient is missing from Wilson's solution—the ingredient that forms the core of the Marxist-Leninist solution. That key ingredient is class struggle. As was stated above, this is the cornerstone of the Marxist-Leninist approach to all questions. We are not interested in merely posing problems. We are interested in changing reality. To paraphrase

Marx, we are not only interested in interpreting the world, we are interested in changing it.

The Marxist-Leninist solution is rooted in an understanding that monopoly capitalism is the source of the existence of chronic unemployment and the national oppression of Afro-Americans. Therefore, our solution must rest upon the necessity of building an antimonopoly democratic front that is capable of curbing the powers of monopoly capital.

Such a front, dedicated to a policy of full employment and eradicating the social ills of oppressed communities, will be capable of resurrecting the "lazarus" layer of the proletariat.

Notes

1. William Julius Wilson, *The Declining Significance of Race*, University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 166.
2. *Chicago Tribune*, October 16, 1985, p. 18.
3. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
4. *Ibid.*, p. ix.
5. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, Progress Publishers, 1966, p. 421.
6. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6., pp. 262-263.
7. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, International Publishers, 1965, p. 644.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 643.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 643.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 644.
11. Daniel Rubin, "The Triple-Layered Crisis," *Political Affairs*, June 1985, p. 8.
12. Paul O. Flaim and Ellen Sehgal, "Displaced Workers of 1979-83: How Well Have They Fared?" *Monthly Labor Review*, June 1985, pp. 3-16.
13. Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, George Routledge and Son, 1946, p. 8.
14. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 154.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

Afghanistan Revisited

PHILLIP BONOSKY

I last visited Afghanistan in 1980. Six years later the situation can be summed up in this way: (1) The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has successfully defeated a sustained counterrevolutionary attempt, backed by the U.S. and other imperialist powers, to overthrow it by "force and violence." (2) On the basis of its actual control of the country, the DRA can claim that the war has, for all logical purposes, ended and all that remains is for the imperialist side to concede this fact. (3) If hostilities nevertheless continue, it is only because outside forces, notably the USA, do not want to establish peace because of what are, in Reagan's eyes, important strategic reasons.

As a CIA source told the *World Street Journal* (April 9, 1984),

The professionals say that [the Moslem rebels] aren't going to win. The most we can do is give them incremental increases in aid, and raise the costs to the Soviets.

On July 28, 1986, Mikhail Gorbachev announced that the Soviets would *unilaterally* withdraw six regiments of the Soviet army from Afghanistan, preliminary to withdrawing *all* of them if a political agreement can be reached. Peace-minded people who may have been baffled by how to understand the Afghan situation, with its specific complicating features (the presence of Soviet troops) should now see it precisely for what it is. It is not a case of Soviet invasion and occupation, followed by a stubborn refusal to leave the country, keeping it oppressed and exploited (the way imperialism does). It is an imperialist ploy to keep the pot boiling, part of a policy of maintaining a constant threat against the USSR, and also India—and beyond India all Southeast Asia.

Thus the resistance of the Afghan patriots

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to counterrevolution is an important contribution to the security of that area and to the peace of the world.

Reagan's answer to Gorbachev's declaration that Soviets troops would return to Soviet soil was typically arrogant, the same insolence with which he greeted Gorbachev's continuation of a moratorium on Soviet nuclear tests. Reagan torpedoed the "proximity talks" that had been going on in Geneva between Pakistan and Afghanistan through the office of UN representative Diego Cordovez. These talks had been in process since 1980, and had reached a certain measure of agreement on key questions, including the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Even before scuttling these talks, Reagan had signalled his intentions by publicizing a meeting he held with Afghan counterrevolutionary leaders, pledging money and arms to them, and hinting that, at an appropriate moment, he would recognize them as the leaders of the "genuine" Afghan government.

These acts make all talk about wanting peace in Afghanistan so much hot air. The lips move, but they are out of synch with the action. The fact is that Reagan *does not want to permit* the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. The propaganda plums to be gained from their presence are too valuable. Only on the Afghanistan question does the U.S. find itself in the majority at the UN. While posing as a champion of "peace and democracy," the Reagan Administration makes sure that a situation does not develop which will permit peace and democracy.

Meanwhile, there is a crescendo of the grossest kind of propaganda against the Soviets and Afghans. It observes no limits or proprieties.

In 1985, acting through its Commission on Human Rights, the UN appointed Felix Ercora to head an "investigation" of human rights in Afghanistan. After two visits to Pakistan, where he "interviewed Afghan refugees," Ercora came

back with a report, duly issued by the UN, which found that the Afghan government violated human rights.

Unpublicized was the fact that this same Felix Ercora, an Austrian national, had voluntarily joined Hitler's forces early in his career. And this was no wayward impulse. He continued his pro-Nazi activities after the defeat of the Third Reich as a member of the "Organization of Germans from the Sudenland." His "investigation" of "human rights" in Afghanistan is a mockery of every word in the assignment—"investigation" and "human rights."

Not to be outdone, Helsinki Watch also came in with a report, predictably mimicking Ercora's. Helsinki Watch is the brainchild of Robert L. Bernstein, who has reduced the once prestigious Random House publisher to a conduit for anti-Soviet propaganda carried on in refined, hypocritical style.

All this—and much more—is reported in the mass press, which never raises embarrassing questions as to sources and aims of anti-Afghan propaganda. Toward the noble end of anti-Sovietism all lies are truth enough. With this formula Hitler led millions to their graves.

What is the Afghan reality? Is there any fire where there is so much smoke? How much truth is there in the allegation that the Soviets are "invaders," that they came into Afghanistan against the wishes of the people, who oppose their presence and run for their lives to the safety of Pakistan? What is the reality of the military situation? Can the Afghan situation be settled independently of a general political settlement—a new detente—between the USSR and the USA? Is it true, as the *New York Times* claims, that

Even by this century's standards, the occupation has been notable for its violence. A devastated land remains unpacified, the party remains divided and the puppets in Kabul remain universally despised. (May 6, 1986.)

Is it true, as this same editorial claims, that the situation in Afghanistan, which "has been

all but formally annexed" [to the USSR], remains hopeless—that "the Soviet hope of quickly raising a loyal Afghan army was dashed long ago"?

In another editorial it accepted the former Nazi Ercora's "report" at face value, and in its parson's prose opined:

Equally devastating has been the world's judgement of Soviet barbarities in Afghanistan. In its first inquiry into the crimes of a Communist country, a UN commission [Ercora's, they mean—P.B.] confirmed the use of toy-bombs to cripple children and savage tactics to slaughter and starve civilians. . . . This dirty war has so far cost 500,000 lives and driven three million Afghans into exile. Even so, most of the country refuses to lie subdued. If the Soviet Union's war bleeds on, it will say nothing new about the behemoth that launched it. But it will tell a good deal about the stature of the Soviet leader who inherited it. (Ibid.)

So, cheers for Gorbachev's withdrawal of Soviet troops as a step toward ending the war?

Don't hold your breath . . .

Refutations of these slanders were forthcoming from authoritative sources, including general secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan Najib, in answers to questions I asked during the week I spent in Kabul in July.

To begin with the most crucial—where does the war stand? Who's winning, who's losing?

Answers came from Brigadier General Abdul Hao Ulome. Gorbachev had just made his announcement that the Soviets would take out six regiments, and the natural question was: How would this unilateral action affect the military situation? Could the Afghan army handle it alone if the entire Soviet army finally departed?

Yes, was his answer. If all the Soviet soldiers left tomorrow, the present Afghan army could easily take care of the motley group of *dushman* (bandits)—on condition that American and other foreign support to them is ended:

Our [Afghan] army is today much bigger than it was in 1980 [put then at 80,000 by bourgeois sources,

which claimed that it was later cut in half by desertions.—P.B.J. On the other hand, the quoted number of Soviet troops—120,000 to 140,000—is wrong; there are far fewer Soviet troops than that.

He added that the present Afghan army is a disciplined, organized and effective fighting force, highly motivated, a true people's army. The Afghan army carries on the main burden of the war—a point which Najib also stressed—with the Soviet troops acting mainly as backup. The Soviet presence discourages those who dream of sending a professional army across the border into the country. Relations between Soviet and Afghan army personnel are good, the general went on: the Afghans learn from the Soviets, who remain visitors in a country which they came to help.

In addition to the regular army, the general pointed out, Afghanistan today is truly an armed nation. There are, at present, some 120,000 civil defense units, which include armed workers who protect their factories and armed peasants who stand guard over their fields, irrigation systems and crops. To these forces must be added the militia and the police. Women take an active role in the country's defense and so do the youth.

A development which has tilted the balance to the government side, he pointed out, is the decision of the tribes on the Pakistan-Afghan border to move from passive resistance to the counterrevolution to active resistance. This past year, a High Jirgah (council) of Nationalities and Tribes of the Frontier Area was held in Kabul, with 3,700 representatives. A decision was made to mount an offensive against the incursions of the *dushman* forces. Sharp clashes with regular Pakistan army units have taken place. In December, the Pakistan army invaded the "gray area" between the two countries, and attacked the Afridi and Shinwari Pushtoon tribes, which had begun to harass counterrevolutionary bands passing through their territory into Afghanistan proper. This army was badly battered. Some of its Pushtoon soldiers refused to fire on their brother Pushtoon tribesmen, and the army had to be withdrawn. More and more

instances of "rebels" joining the government side are recorded as life in the so-called refugee camps becomes ever more intolerable.

A small item in the *Times* in May 1986 noted:

Although there is widespread sympathy for the Afghan refugees who have fled to Pakistan, there is also concern that they compete with Pakistanis for jobs. Recently, there have also been concerns that the refugees are engaged in smuggling, drug manufacturing and other illicit activities.

Unnamed among these illicit activities is black marketeering and the buying and selling of girls (as young as 12) for prostitution. Bitter gun battles between rival factions have intensified, expressed also by repeated bombings. Actually, most Pakistanis would like to see an end to the camps and the war.

Internal security has tightened considerably since I was last in Kabul. Today visitors to public places, including parks, are frisked by guards. Then it was possible for counterrevolutionaries to slip in and out of the city almost at will, plant their bombs, or pour their poisons in the drinking water of school children, and skip off again to Peshawar in Pakistan to report to their CIA instructors. Supplied with Stinger missiles, they would fire rockets at random at populated areas, killing men, women and children, destroying buildings, schools, mosques, planes, etc. Bombs were planted in shopping centers, movies, trolley buses. In September 1984, a bomb exploded in Kabul International Airport, killing 11 and injuring 22. Others wreaked property damage amounting to an estimated 45 billion afghani.

General Abdul Hao Ulem contemptuously dismissed the charge that the Soviet and Afghan government forces booby-trapped children's toys, a charge made by, among others, Jeanne Kirkpatrick when she was Reagan's mouthpiece at the UN. Children's toys were indeed booby-trapped—by the counterrevolutionaries, for whom terror is the only weapon. "We are a humane army," the general said simply. The *fact* is that all over Afghanistan, hospitals staffed with Soviet doctors have tried to put

together children blown apart, not only by booby-trapped toys, but by bombs aimed at their schools by the Mujahadin.

The hills around Kabul show the jagged profiles of guns aimed at the distant mountains, and from time to time you can hear a *boom* from them, a continuing reminder of what awaits counterrevolutionaries. Helicopters send out flares as they patrol the hills to head off and detonate heat-seeking Stinger missiles which, as Andrew Cockburn writes, have proven disappointingly ineffective:

Recent reports from Afghanistan show that out of as many as 18 Stingers fired at enemy warplanes, not one has downed its target. (*New York Times*, July 22, 1986.)

(Actually *one* did, but about this, later.)

In July, Afghanistan was completing an extraordinary period in its new life—a nationwide election. Carrying out a nationwide, grassroots election for the first time, even in peacetime, is difficult. In wartime it represents something of a gamble. The decision to hold the elections at all showed remarkable confidence of the Party in the people, a conviction that the tide had indeed turned—from the neutrality typical of the majority of the people in 1980 to active support of the revolution now.

This confidence is tied to a second remarkable achievement of the revolutionary forces since 1980. In a country where almost everybody is a Moslem, the counterrevolution banked heavily on being able to marshal the religious beliefs of the people against the revolution, which it characterized as anti-Islamic.

Six years ago when I met with Islamic clergy, it was plain they felt menaced, if not surrounded, by counterrevolutionary assassins. They talked about how many mullahs supporting the government had been assassinated (50 in Kabul, then and later 965 altogether throughout the country). Often their mosques were burned to the ground. I read in the Western press after leaving Kabul in 1980 that the brave Islamic scholar Abdul Aszla Sadegikh, who had

been a spokesman for the loyal mullahs, and whom I had interviewed, had been killed. But the present head of the Organization of Islamic Affairs, Maula Abdul Walk Hujah, told me that Sadegikh had been to see him that very day.

The government has not only repaired destroyed and damaged mosques, but supports several *madresses* where some 3,241 students with 229 teachers are studying. They also made a point of informing us that much of the anti-illiteracy campaign is conducted by *mullahs*, many of whom have themselves just learned to read and write.

Islam has accepted secularization of schools, now in force in the cities and gradually being introduced in the countryside. Also solved is something which had been a sticking-point for years—teaching both girls and boys in the same class. This is a dramatic change from the past, in which girls adopted the *chari* at the age of 13 and no male outside the immediate family ever saw their unveiled faces in public!

"One of the biggest changes that has occurred in the last few years," Maula Abdul Walk Hujah told me, "has been the change of *mullahs* from opposition to the government to support of it. This is indeed a great political victory." This turnabout had effectively spiked the plans of the counterrevolution, which counted on blind belief by the *mullahs* and peasantry that the revolution was an enemy of Islam.

One of the key indices of the moral health of any society is how it treats its children. One can say that to Afghanistan each child is infinitely dear. A significant portion of the state budget is allocated to protect their health and promote their education and welfare. In a country where it was taken for granted that every second child would die before the age of five, it is a profound psychological experience for mothers to realize that *most* of their children will live!

A determined effort has been made to make education universal—extending the educational system even into the remotest mountain villages, where counterrevolutionary raids on schools are most common. Today, about 700,000 students go to school all over the coun-

try, with some 70,000 added in 1984-1985 alone. There are now 784 primary and middle schools and 332 high schools in the nation, and there would be even more if the counterrevolutionaries had not burned so many. Some 9,000 girls and boys have graduated from Kabul University since April 1978.

Since the anti-illiteracy campaign was launched in 1980, some 1,150,000 illiterates have learned to read and write. The noble aim of the counterrevolution, which they've proven by focusing their attacks on schools and teachers, is to return the nation to ignorance and superstition: an ambition worthy of the Harvard-educated trolls of the State Department Afghan desk!

Today all children go to school and stand up courteously when a stranger enters the classroom. They've been vaccinated against diseases and study their ABC's under the scrutiny of doctors and nurses. Hospitals and clinics, many set up under Soviet guidance, exist to care for them. All are well fed. None are homeless. Visiting schools, parks and orphanages for children whose parents have been murdered by the counterrevolutionaries, I found nothing but care and consideration for the children.

Today Kabul has an air of tranquility, despite the fact that one is frisked when one enters a public building, including schools! To charge that children's toys are booby-trapped by their own people or by the Russians—apparently for no other reason than to enrage the people—is not merely nonsense but vicious nonsense. Toys *have* been booby-trapped. But it's not done by people who vaccinate children and rescue them from early death by disease.

Visually, Kabul, now with a population of 1.5 million (the national population is put at 15 million) is a bustling mad kettle of noise. Its streets are jammed with vehicles of every make, from cars seen only in museums elsewhere to the latest Toyota models fresh from Tokyo. Interwoven with them are still the irreducible burros, the plodding camels, the women in *shadri*, following their husband by ten paces and carrying bundles which he does not deign to touch.

On Chicken Street, where tourists once

went, the tradesmen who in 1980 confided openly to me that they hoped the counterrevolution would triumph and who shut their doors in a strike supporting an attempted counterrevolutionary *putsch*, now spoke to me much more modestly. Gone is the atmosphere of naked huckstering. The government has set up shops with fixed prices. Stores are well-stocked with products whose origins are New York, London, Paris via Pakistan. It was surprising to come upon Lux soap and ball point pens from Japan. On the whole, prices are kept in line. But in July, Sultan Ali Keshtman, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, voiced concern that prices of a few staples, particularly the basic rice, were rising and a means to stop this had to be found.

This time I noticed more women working in the factories. I remembered the statement of Anahita Ratebzad—then Minister of Education—that the social emancipation of Afghanistan's women could not proceed independently of their economic emancipation. At factories making machines and prefabricated slabs for housing, I questioned women, chosen at random, as they stood at their machines. What they told me substantially confirmed what I already knew—their pay was the same as the men's, which averaged (in the prefab concrete plant) 3,500 afghani a month (somewhat above the general average), plus about 12,000 more annually as a bonus for good work.

To judge how far such an income stretches one has to know that a month's rent for a very tolerable flat runs about 300 afghani. Since husband and wife both work, their combined income allows them to live quite comfortably.

Led by the chief engineer for the prefab factory, Hami Raofi, I visited both the plant where the slabs are made and nearby homes built with factory profits. The request to see these homes was a spontaneous one, and at the complex I came to, I flipped a coin to choose which apartment to descend upon, unannounced.

This particular apartment—three rooms, not counting bath and kitchen—rents for 300 afghani, has running water and electricity, and houses eight people—including grandparents and in-laws. Questions to the tenants elicited

answers already familiar to me: all workers were eligible for vacations, pregnant women had longer periods off, literacy classes were run by the factory. Some 420 workers at this plant were enrolled in the self-defense unit which patrolled the grounds and inside of the factory around the clock, and, in fact, had uncovered a planted bomb and defused it some months before.

As in the machine-building plant, the best workers were elected not only to union leadership but also to the city government—even to the Loya Jirgah (National Council). Invariably, the best workers are also Party members. Most are now literate, many have studied in the Soviet Union or been trained on the job by Soviet experts (some of whom we met working alongside their Afghan coworkers). This pattern, by the way, I've encountered over the years in countries as distant from each other as Vietnam, Mongolia and even China until the "break" in 1960.

It was important for me to follow up on the successes or failures that had been registered since 1980. At that time, many new organizations were nothing but gleams in the eyes of the Party. Today they are a reality—unions for journalists, writers, cinema workers, hospital workers; women's organizations; youth organizations; artists (6,000 of them nationally); organizations for tribes and nationalities, the extension and spread of unions for production workers—all these now exist and function under the umbrella organization, the National Fatherland Front, which today has a membership of 800,000.

Still, since Afghanistan is primarily a nation of peasants, the land question is crucial. Quite literally, to defeat the counterrevolution the individual peasant has to be convinced that he is *entitled* to the land he tills. And once that is managed, he has to be persuaded to adopt advanced methods of farming, using better seed, taking advantage of government-organized pools of tractors and harvesting machines. The peasant will join a cooperative only after the most painstaking demonstration

proves that it is to his advantage to work with other farmers. Some 300,000 peasants have been *given* land—6 jeribs at first, raised to 30 later. For the individual peasant to feel that he *owns* the land on which he and his ancestors have been nothing but tenant farmers since time began, burdened down by inherited usurious loans and heavy taxes (now annulled) is no small psychological transformation. There are cases of counterrevolutionary peasants on whose dead bodies grants of land were found—they couldn't believe this land was theirs and died fighting against it.

Middle peasants who fled to Pakistan after Amin came to power in 1978, and even those who were better off than that, were invited to return by the present government, which assured them that both land and compensation would be theirs, that they had a place in the social and political life of the nation (as long as they supported its program). Many returned.

To make its land policy succeed, the government has to provide water (new irrigation systems are being built) and to prove that it can repulse the marauders who, early on, were able to swoop down out of the hills on the working peasants and haul away or burn their crops, exact a money tax, and kill those who resisted. Also, the peasant has to be convinced that he now has legal power. While I was there, the nationwide grassroots election process was winding up during which villages elected their local governments as well as (in later elections) their national representatives.

One must remember that in Afghanistan one is dealing with men and women who had had no experience in self-government (or, minimal experience, confined to a small class segment). They had, in fact, just learned how to read and write. They had to learn to work by clock time, not by sunrise and sunset, by summer, winter, fall and spring. This represents a major shift in psychology. It was a major psychological jolt for men to have to look upon women as equals, almost as hard for women to *dare* to think of themselves as equals.

At the office of the National Fatherland Front, leaders explained to us how this organi-

zation (established in June 1981), which joins 17 national organizations, including the Party, under one umbrella, now functions.

Abdul Rahim told us that there now 3,340 jirgahs (councils) functioning and of these 2,953 are located in villages. The Front has no executive power. It proposes candidates for office, but not all of its recommendations are accepted. In Kabul, for instance, of 653 members of the city council, 73 were rejected. Some 89 per cent of the voters of that city went to the polls.

The general secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, Najibullah, or Najib as he is more often called, lacked 15 days to his 40th birthday when I interviewed him. Like many other Afghan revolutionaries, he was born into a civil servant's family. Like many, too, he is an Oushtoon (an exception: Sultan Ali Keshtman, a Hazara). In 1964 Najib graduated from the Habibia Lyceum, and in 1975 he graduated from the Medical Faculty of Kabul University. But he never practiced medicine. By 1975 he was already 10 years a member of the Party, and his revolutionary activities had earned him two jail sentences.

At the 18th plenary session of the PDPA Central Committee in 1986, he was elected—on Babrak Karmal's motion—general secretary of the PDPA, replacing Karmal in that office.

Najib denies that his election implies either basic disagreement with Karmal's policies or a basic shift in the Party's orientation. When he assumed his position in May, his major criticism of the past focused on "lack of energetic action." He went on to say, "We have a well thought out and balanced strategy but are weak when it comes to putting it into practice. Many good ideas and plans are drowned in verbiage and remain on paper." Vigor is the key to his style. He places great emphasis on the need to accelerate all social processes and to insist on efficiency, honesty and dependability.

Najib quickly answered questions I had brought. The main question was whether an end to hostilities could be expected from negotiations then going on in Geneva. (Soon to be

abruptly stopped by Reagan.) Gorbachev had announced that some Soviet troops would be unilaterally withdrawn from Afghanistan. Najib pointed out that this confirmed the position always held by the two countries—that as soon as the situation warranted, Soviet troops would be withdrawn. He underlined the fraternal assistance the Soviets had rendered them in their hour of need. It was an instance of international solidarity, he pointed out.

Najib stated that the only differences in the Geneva negotiations were over details of the proposals for Soviet troop withdrawals. Other sources report that the Americans (through the Pakistani negotiator) wanted an immediate withdrawal, while the Soviets called for a phased withdrawal, testing whether their leaving the scene would encourage new, hostile incursions into Afghanistan by Pakistani army units.

Najib denied that the change in general secretary had any bearing on the negotiations. He dismissed the suggestion that any settlement could be reached at the price of significantly modifying the revolutionary essence of Afghanistan.

Najib repeated what others had already made clear. The Afghan army could wage the war on its own if imperialist backing was removed from the counterrevolutionary bands. As for the Soviet "limited military contingent," in principle the Soviets were committed to full withdrawal, beginning with the return of the six regiments.

He pointed out that despite the war, social progress had not stopped. Some

335,000 peasant families have so far received title to land free of charge. . . . From March 21, 1981, to March 20, 1986, state and cooperative sectors of the national economy have grown 47 per cent. Industrial production has grown by 25 per cent.

So far more than 1.5 million people have learned to read and write. Women of our country not only participate in production, administration and culture but also, shoulder to shoulder with men, work and struggle in the armed defense of the homeland and revolution. There has been a considerable change in

the orientation of the tribes in our country toward the defense of our revolution. The local elections establish grounds for the realization of true democracy.

The people of Afghanistan chose their way once and forever with the victory of the glorious April Revolution.

Probably no single episode characterizes the Reagan Administration's rogue-éléphant role in the world today than the fate of Charles Thornton.

Ostensibly a reporter for the *Arizona Republican*, Thornton was recruited by one Dr. Robert Simon, ostensibly of the University of California. Actually, as Thornton tells in his diary (recovered after his death), "He works for the CIA." That was at the end of 1985.

If you wanted to go illegally to Afghanistan, Dr. Simon was the man to know. His specialty was (and is) recruiting "volunteer medical teams" to go to the assistance of wounded Mujahadin. Oddly enough, instead of carrying medicine, the "doctors" carried guns. Their aim was not to heal but to kill. Dr. Simon had already sent about 200 such "teams" on just such strange missions of mercy. Tied in with the French outfit "Doctors Without Borders," Dr. Simon knew all the ropes.

Thornton, with Dr. Judd Jensen and John Moughan (a male nurse), both Americans, and Peter Schluster, a photographer for an Arizona paper, slipped illegally across the Pakistan-Afghan border early in September 1985. They were equipped with West German passports (which you don't pick up at the local grocery) and, led by an Afghan counterrevolutionary, Malanga by name, they spent 17 days "behind the lines" near Kandahar.

They had chosen the right kind of leader in Malanga, for when the village of Kaare-Nainje, where he used to hold sway, was liberated, Afghan government forces found two wells stuffed with human heads. This 29-year-old "holy warrior" expressed his religious fervor by beheading his victims and stuffing their heads in wells. He would have been delighted to give Dan Rather a sample of his technique if Rather had

been there then, instead of in early 1980, when Rather had to content himself with having the local heroes stone peasants for the benefit of his CBS cameras.

Did Thornton and his "humanitarians" witness an exhibition of Malanga's skills? Afghan sources say they did. On Sept. 4, 1985, an Afghan airliner was brought down as it left Kandahar. Among the dead were seven women and six children. Afghan sources claim that the Stinger missile that shot down the civilian plane had been brought by Thornton and his friends, who actually filmed the firing and the crash of the plane.

To his diary at least, Thornton confided his real aims and opinions. Early in his trip he wrote in his diary that it was not medicine he intended to bring to the "rebels" but guns. On September 11, for instance, he told his diary (which he never expected to fall into the wrong hands): "At times I sort of shudder when I think of the people around me whom we call our friends."

Well he might have shuddered—if he called Malanga a "friend"! Next day he was writing:

The longer I live among the mujahid rebels, the greater is my belief that they'll never succeed. Time is not on their side. Villagers are becoming increasingly disillusioned with their methods, which bring nothing but bombs and violence. When the children of these peasants grow up and finish school, it will be the end of the mujahid fighters.

Earlier, September 7, he had recorded the opinion of Karl Freigang, a West German posing as a representative of the German-Afghan Committee:

Freigang believes that the ringleaders are mercenary and their mullahs corrupt. He refers to them as bandits, says victory for them is out of the question, and ridicules their statement as to the extent of territory under their control. . . . Mujahid rebels have degenerated into gangs of marauding rabble.

Thornton paid with his life to learn that. One of the "gangs of marauding rebels," led by a local gangster by the name of Nabib, a rival for Malanga's turf, ambushed the party near Shah-

walikot, in Kandahar province, and two Americans, including Thornton, were killed.

This isn't the end of this grisly tale. It seems that Thornton's body disappeared from the scene. In due course Dr. Simon got a message from a "religious lunatic" who claimed he had Thornton's body and was holding it until Dr. Simon forked over the dollars he had promised this "lunatic"—to build a clinic.

Dr. Simon eventually washed his hands of the whole affair, complaining that Habibullah Akhund had "inaccurately represented his authority, had zero control over the area and lied to us about the mujahadeen under their control." And, he added somewhat huffily: "We have no intention of meeting his demand. We intend to ignore it entirely." (*New York Times*, April 12, 1986.)

Thus ended this glorious episode, so typical of the entire squalid business.

Anyone who pretends for a moment, as Helsinki Watch cynics maintain in the face of all the facts, that there is a "democratic" stake in Reagan's Afghan policy, are not only deceiving themselves but are luring others like Thornton to their deaths. They are as guilty of the barbarous crimes committed in Afghanistan as are the cutthroats on the scene.

What, then, of the future? The Reagan Administration has made it clear that it does not intend to reach any settlement. A spokesman for the President even went so far as to say that in the coming summit, if ever it transpires, the American side does not intend to focus on arms control—which it dismisses as a "single issue"—but instead intends to stymie the meeting on discussion of "regional issues," especially Afghanistan.

Reagan has declared,

We want to talk about arms control but not exclusively because we want to talk about regional issues.

We mean, what is the Soviet Union doing in Afghanistan if they are such peace lovers? What are they doing in Afghanistan and when are they going to get-out? (*New York Times*, August 21, 1986.)

This from a man who had just announced that he was going to train contra cutthroats to take over Nicaragua!

Had anybody told him that Gorbachev had already announced the removal of six regiments from the country? Is it possible that he and his Neanderthalian advisors really think that by raising "regional issues" they can deflect world opinion from the "single issue" confronting mankind today—disarmament? Solve that and everything else follows. . . .

The Afghan government and Party today look forward to (1) sealing their borders to counterrevolutionary bands; (2) extending the Revolution's popular base to include all classes of Afghans except the out-and-out criminals; (3) widening grassroots democracy so that every village in the country elects its own representatives; (4) speeding up industrialization and accelerating solution of the question of land and water; (5) making further efforts to solve the national question by persuading all Afghan tribes to participate in social life.

Even as things now stand, Afghanistan is in control of its internal life and is able to conduct its foreign policy—as a nonaligned nation—on a just and democratic basis. As its army grows more powerful and skilled, it becomes more of a reliable shield protecting the gains of the revolution. If a political agreement ending the war can be reached, it will be sufficient to meet all of Afghanistan's security requirements.

What is required of American public opinion is to take a new look at Afghanistan and, with Thornton in mind, draw the necessary conclusions. The last two lines in my book on Afghanistan still hold true: "Afghanistan is Nicaragua. The peace of one is the peace of the other." □

A New Way of Thinking For the Nuclear Age

ANATOLI GROMYKO & VLADIMIR LOMEIKO

Our time will definitely be recorded in history as a turning point in many areas of domestic and international policy. Foreign policy is acknowledged to have its origins at home. The Soviet Union's acceleration of socio-economic development finds its logical extension beyond its borders in a large-scale program directed at achieving peace and disarmament. The entire Soviet approach to international relations is imbued with the spirit of responsibility for the destiny of the world and a persevering search for a way out of the labyrinth of nuclear confrontation.

"We are realists and are perfectly well aware that the two worlds are divided by very many things, and deeply divided, too," said Mikhail Gorbachev in the Central Committee Report to the 27th Congress. "But we also see clearly that the need to resolve most vital problems affecting all humanity must prompt them to interaction, awakening humanity's heretofore unseen powers of self-preservation."

All of the foreign policy activity of the CPSU and the Soviet government is dictated by the desire to improve world relations and halt the arms race which, due to actions of the imperialist powers, sweeps the world. A vivid example is the proposals advanced on January 15, 1986, for the complete elimination of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction throughout the world by the year 2000 and new initiatives of the 27th Party Congress aimed at *creating a comprehensive system of international security*. These initiatives represent a realistic program for freeing the world from the threat of universal destruction. It meets the deepest aspirations of mankind. It has evoked so positive a response in various countries precisely because it expresses the age-old dream for

stable peace. At the same time it shows a road to its implementation.

The world public sees in the Soviet proposals a *fundamentally new approach* to solving the most acute problem of today. It is motivated not merely by concern for national interests or national security of one state or a group of states. It is imbued with the spirit of historical responsibility for the fate of the whole world, for safeguarding security for all, and for preserving life itself and civilization on the Earth. To achieve that goal, one has to be able to rise above the existing contradiction between policy and ideas, to look far beyond the disagreements of today and to see new horizons of cooperation. To this end, one must rise above national egoism, tactical considerations, disputes and strife in order to preserve the primary asset—peace and a secure future.

Concern for the fate of the world is incompatible with preparation for war, reliance on force. Attention must be drawn to this obvious truth only because almost daily, representatives of the U.S. Administration make professions of peace which obscure covert or overt interference in the internal affairs of other countries. The way of thinking of too many U.S. politicians clearly lags behind the rapid changes transpiring in the world right before our eyes. Those politicians live in the age of computers and cosmic exploration, but they still think in Stone Age terms. Their philosophy of intimidation rests on blind faith in strength. The only difference is that they rely on a nuclear missile, the more powerful the better, rather than on a long stick or heavy rock.

Some of these politicians are not even averse to discoursing on a need for a new way of thinking, in line with the realities of the

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world. Yet they persist in giving an old interpretation to everything new, and seeing everything through the prism of the arrogance of power.

This is borne out by the approach of the USA to nuclear and space arms. It is well known that in 1982-1983 the U.S. Administration persistently attempted to secure unilateral advantages at the talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms. The result is also well known. The White House drove the talks into a blind alley, having set about deploying first-strike Pershing II and cruise missiles. Subsequently, it stubbornly refused to begin talks, proposed by the USSR in 1984, on preventing the militarization of outer space.

In an attempt to prevent the opening of a new channel for the arms race in outer space, which in turn would whip up the nuclear arms race on Earth, the Soviet Union proposed, in the fall of 1984, new talks with the United States on the whole range of nuclear and space arms. The exchange of views resulted in an agreement on a meeting between the Soviet Foreign Minister and the U.S. Secretary of State to resolve the issue of a subject and objectives of future talks.

That was a difficult and tough talk. It was unclear until the very last moment whether the sides would reach agreement. Today, the world public knows quite well the text of the joint Soviet-American document, in which each word is carefully weighed, as if on a chemist's scales, and each provision reflects an agreed approach. No overstatement or omission is permissible, for otherwise the sense of the agreement would change. It is necessary to say this because such attempts continue. Therefore it is worth recalling the content of this Soviet-U.S. statement:

- The sides agree that the subject of the negotiations will be a set of questions concerning space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate-range, all questions considered in their interrelationship.

- The objective of the negotiations will be to work out effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on the Earth and limiting and reducing nuclear arms and strengthening strategic stability.

- The negotiations will be conducted by a delegation from each side, divided into three

groups.

- The sides believe that ultimately the forthcoming negotiations, just as efforts in general to limit and reduce arms, should lead to the complete elimination of nuclear arms everywhere.

The U.S. Secretary of State deemed it necessary to give his own comments on the Joint Statement. It is important to note that, even then, some of the Secretary's "clarifications" bespoke a peculiar and, to put it mildly, one-sided interpretation of the Joint Statement.

For instance, he noted that the two sides agree that the problems of nuclear and space arms are interrelated and that both sides attach priority to achieving radical reductions in nuclear weapons as a first step toward their complete elimination. The accent has clearly been shifted in this interpretation of the "first step," because in the Joint Statement interrelationship finds expression precisely in the fact that radical reduction in nuclear arsenals is impossible without prevention of an arms race in space.

As to the "strategic defense initiative" (SDI), which aims to militarize outer space, the Secretary of State jumped to its defense, so to speak, and noted that it is fully consistent with the ABM Treaty and that no decision to go beyond research had been made, nor could be made for several years. This was not in conformity with the letter and spirit of the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, which says (Article V, para. 1):

Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based.

Since the SDI sets as its goal not some abstract fundamental research but target-oriented scientific and technological development to create space strike arms, the program is in direct conflict with the ABM Treaty.

No less untenable was the assertion made by the Secretary of State that decisions to go beyond research are allegedly a thing of the future. This is certainly not so. Secretary of Defense Weinberger and head of the SDI program Lt. Gen. Abrahamson have emphasized more than once that research under the SDI program

is inconceivable without testing.

Why go into such detail on this issue? Only to illustrate the real military and political process. Judging by many signs, in January 1985 the U.S. Administration agreed to begin the Geneva talks on nuclear and space arms without any great desire, forced to do so by a good many circumstances, while having no intention, as shown by its actions throughout the past year, to renounce development of space strike arms. Hence the persistent attempts by U.S. officials to give a suitable interpretation both to the Joint Statement and to SDI and the ABM Treaty. This also accounts for the blunt pronouncements, primarily by high-level Pentagon officials, to the effect that under any circumstances they will continue developing space arms. And in this matter there is no parting of the ways between the words and the deeds of those Americans holding the reins of state power.

Analyzing the course pursued by Washington, a careful observer can not get rid of a dual impression. On the one hand, the Administration, to take into consideration antiwar sentiments at home and throughout the world, declares its readiness to search for accords to prevent an arms race in space and terminate it on Earth, limit and reduce nuclear arms, and strengthen strategic stability. On the other, in its approach to these problems the same Administration ignores the vital interests of the international community. This duplicity is augmented by an ever-widening gap between political rhetoric, which is called upon to attribute a positive character to proclaimed foreign policy objectives, and the militaristic essence of the policy pursued by Washington.

Quite indicative are the pronouncements by the Secretary of State to a Senate Committee in January 1985 and his article in the Spring issue of last year's *Foreign Affairs*. In both cases he speaks of "new realities and new ways of thinking." For us those statements were even more interesting because on January 8, on the eve of the U.S. delegation's departure from Geneva, our book *New Thinking in the Nuclear*

Age was presented to an aide of the Secretary of State, who promised to read some abstracts to his boss during the flight.

On January 31, George Shultz started a series of hearings in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the future of U.S. foreign policy.

At the beginning of his Senate statement (and the beginning of his article in *Foreign Affairs*) he refers to Albert Einstein who, in the words of the Secretary of State, concluded that *after the dawn of the nuclear age everything had changed except our ways of thinking*. Everything would seem to be correct, including the reference to Einstein. Yet, as Voltaire used to say, God is in details. And here the "divine detail" is the words of Einstein which are alluded to but not quoted in full. What Einstein said was (and this quotation is presented in our book as one of the epigraphs):

A new way of human thinking is necessary for mankind to survive and to go on developing. Today, the A-bomb has fundamentally changed the world; we know that, and people find themselves in a new situation which their thinking should correspond to.

Everyone is certainly free to place his own emphasis while expounding an idea of a great man, and to draw one's own conclusions from these pronouncements. But we are also entitled to exclaim—like the boy from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale: "The emperor has no clothes!" New attire for the emperor could not be made from the remnants of Einstein's quotation, it has been so truncated.

Those who compare the true words of Einstein with those in the Secretary's speech can not fail to notice what has been changed and to what end. What has been lopped off is the sting of Einstein's thought, the emphasis on the fact that *it is the A-bomb that has fundamentally changed the world and this is why a new way of thinking is necessary for mankind to survive*.

It is obviously not fortuitous that such an operation has been carried out. In all likelihood, it was needed to make Einstein's thesis about the need for a "new way of thinking" serve the policy of "new globalism." This is how the Secretary's thought continues: "Einstein's obser-

vation," he states, molding his interpretation as if from pliable clay,

takes on new relevance: *our ways of thinking must adapt to new realities. We must grasp the new trends and understand their implications.*

This is a surprisingly free approach, but it is there for all to see.

But what is, indeed, the gist of "new trends" as George Shultz understands them? Let us listen to him:

America, after Vietnam, retreated for a time from its active role of leadership. . . . Today, the cycle is turning again . . . *America has recovered its strength and self-confidence. America is again in a position to have a major influence over the trend of events—and America's traditional goals and values have not changed. Our duty must be to help shape the evolving trends in accordance with our ideals and interests: to help build a new structure of international stability that will ensure peace, prosperity, and freedom for coming generations.*

Where, if one is permitted to ask, does the new political thinking fit in? For this "new globalism" is nothing but the old doctrine proclaiming the right of the USA to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries and in any region of the world. Although occasionally one does come across the saying, "the new is the well forgotten old," this homely thought can hardly be used as a basis for comprehending the new realities of the nuclear age.

So, having begun with a call to grasp the new realities of the world and adjust to them, Washington arrives at the conclusion that, since the Vietnam syndrome has been "happily done away with," it is now time to begin establishing order throughout the world at its own discretion and in accordance with its own imperial notions of human morality, values and ideals.

In his speech to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, George Shultz did not confine himself to stating, but also "substantiated" the right of the United States to interfere in regional conflicts in any part of the globe. The substantiation is quite simple: if the socialist countries give support to peoples fighting for their freedom and independence, then why should

the USA refrain from the policy of interventions? Here is an example of old thinking, of hackneyed anti-Communist clichés based on the primitive concept of the ubiquitous "hand of Moscow" which official Washington sees behind every explosion of social unrest and every upsurge of the national liberation struggle.

Instead of acknowledging the untenability of the old political course of backing first the utterly rotten Somoza dictatorship and subsequently Somoza men and other contras, the Secretary of State expressed his "new way of thinking" as follows:

With Soviet and Cuban support, the Sandinistas are seeking to consolidate a totalitarian system in Nicaragua and to promote subversion throughout the region . . . Our nation's vital interests and moral responsibility require us to stand by our friends in their struggle for freedom.

Does this mean that it was not Somoza, the butcher of the Nicaraguan people and a West Point graduate whose dictatorship was propped up by U.S. arms and dollars till its very last days, who tried to foist a totalitarian system upon Nicaragua? Today his myrmidons are portrayed as "freedom fighters" in the United States. It seems incredible, but it is a fact.

This is how lofty words about the need for "new ways of thinking" are transformed in practice into "new globalism," based on the old thesis that "diplomacy should be backed by force." As a result, 1985 and early 1986 as well are keynoted by U.S. support for subversive operations executed by the contras, armed provocations against Nicaragua and a stepped-up campaign of blackmail, threats and economic blockade launched by Washington against the courageous people of that country.

Manifestations of the "new globalism" are also in evidence in other regions of the world, in the Middle East, in southern Africa: provocations against and the trade boycott of Libya, support for the gangs of bandits operating in the territories of Angola and Afghanistan. In the meantime, U.S. leaders persist in stressing that, from the long-term perspective, U.S. policy is geared to variegated conflicts which hold an intermediate place between a large-scale war and

a universal peace. Moreover, it is added, by way of explanation, Washington happens to have no plans for "living in conditions of absolute peace." The reason for such an attitude, evidently, also lies in the "new way of thinking"—in the hawkish style.

Analysis of developments from 1984 to early 1986 and Washington's conduct on the international scene compels one to note the dual trends in U.S. politics. On the one hand, it has shown signs of realism when the realities of the surrounding world and, first and foremost, the growing threat of nuclear war, force the U.S. President to take into account, at least partly, the dangerous evolution of the international situation. This trend manifested itself in the most tangible fashion at the historic Geneva meeting between General Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan in November 1985. Although the summit failed to find solutions to the key issues of cessation of the arms race, the accords reached at Geneva by the Soviet and American leaders heralded a turn for the better in Soviet-U.S. relations and in the whole international situation.

On the other hand, many foreign policy guidelines issued by Washington still rely on the old power politics and the philosophy of intimidation. Moreover, the opponents of detente across the Atlantic bend over backwards to fan sentiments of blatant chauvinism (the USA prefers to speak of "new patriotism"). Believing that they are firmly ensconced in the saddle, the Pax Americana guardsmen are spurring the horse of imperial politics and are blaring the beginning of an expedition "in defense of their vital interests." But where do those interests begin and end? Many people in Washington cynically believe that those interests begin and end where they see fit. This power politics, which rests on the mania of superiority, has already been christened "neoglobalism."

Such duplicity can not but inspire suspicion. It brings in its wake inevitable miscalculations and dangerous collisions. To illustrate, let us return to the above-quoted address by

George Shultz, in which he spoke of "new realities and new ways of thinking." Referring to Soviet-American relations, the Secretary said:

In the thermonuclear age the common interest in survival gives both sides an incentive to moderate the rivalry and to seek, in particular, ways to control nuclear weapons and reduce the risks of war.

This would seem a correct statement and, apparently, a good basis for reaching a conclusion about the need for a "new way of thinking" in the nuclear age. But what follows? Instead of mapping out, on the basis of the shared interest in ensuring survival and lowering the danger of war, ways for limiting and reducing nuclear arms, the head of the U.S. foreign policy department states literally in the following sentence:

We can not know whether such a steady Western policy will, over time, lead to a *mellowing of the Soviet system*. Perhaps not.

And he adds further on:

We must never let ourselves be so wedded to improving relations with the Soviets that we turn a blind eye to actions that undermine the very foundation of stable relations. . . . Experience shows we can not deter or undo Soviet geopolitical encroachments except by helping, in one way or another, those resisting directly on the ground.

Not only does George Shultz believe that it is possible to safeguard international security only provided people refrain from the struggle for independence, and not only does he whitewash counterrevolution, no matter where it operates. But the Secretary openly acknowledges that U.S. diplomacy should strive to "mellow the Soviet system," i.e., U.S. foreign policy should influence Soviet domestic policy.

George Shultz is in no way embarrassed by the fact that this constitutes a violation of the fundamental principles of international relations. It would suffice to imagine the two countries in each other's place to see the utter absurdity of such an approach. What would happen if the Soviet Union set, as a condition, changes in the American system, for instance, elimination of unemployment in the USA, eradication of racism, dissolution of the Ku Klux Klan, or

release of political prisoners such as Leonard Peltier, a fighter for Indian rights?

No less senseless is to see "Soviet geopolitical encroachments" behind any conflicts in the world. According to George Shultz, "neoglobalism" means supporting everyone whom imperialism is interested in, be it the *dushman* because they are fighting revolutionary transformations in Afghanistan or Savimbi's separatists because they are waging a war against free Angola, or the *contras* of every hue who are attacking revolutionary Nicaragua. Even such a "democrat" as Baby Doc (Duvalier), the bloody tyrant and U.S. satrap, was taken care of by Washington till his very last days, when he was helped to flee the ire of the people.

As to arms control and talks with the USSR on this issue, the same antiquated thinking is also in evidence. Says George Schultz:

It is vital for example, to carry through with the modernization of our strategic forces—in particular the MX—to avoid undercutting our negotiators just as they begin the quest for real reductions in nuclear arms.

The Secretary pins particular hope on the assumption that the pace of technological advance opens possibilities for new ways of strategic thinking, whose crowning point, as he sees it, is the death-dealing "strategic defense initiative."

At the same time, Secretary of State declares: "A world free of nuclear arms is an ultimate objective to which we, the Soviet Union, and all other nations can agree." At last we hear nice words. As they say, a *moment of truth* has come, when words are verified by deeds.

On January 15, 1986, Mikhail Gorbachev advanced radical and specific proposals to free our planet from nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000 and to reduce conventional and armed forces to the lowest possible level.

Those proposals have produced profound impression and have been rated by the world public as the most comprehensive, serious and realistic disarmament plan ever submitted for universal consideration.

We could cite hundreds of pronounce-

ments by prominent statesmen, politicians and public figures from various countries lauding Mikhail Gorbachev's statement. Differences in words and intonation in those evaluations notwithstanding, enthusiasm is the predominant feeling. Symbolic is the statement of Prime Minister Olof Palme of Sweden (who was villainously assassinated) at the 1986 New Delhi meeting of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, to the effect that the new Soviet proposals marked the beginning of a new time in the world, a time of hope for all who cherish peace.

No one in the USSR expected that literally everyone in the world, and above all the governments of NATO countries, would forthwith accept the Soviet plan for the complete elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons over the next fifteen years. But international public is fully justified in expecting an interested and serious attitude on the part of the United States, for the U.S. Administration has repeatedly declared its commitment to the goal of completely extirpating nuclear weapons everywhere. Now Washington enjoys a practical opportunity to come to grips with this matter.

Alas, nothing of the sort! It is one thing to utter euphonious declarations about yearning for a nuclear-free world and a need for new ways of thinking in line with new realities. It is quite another thing to translate those good intentions into reality. The essence of *the moment of truth* is that it forces an individual, a state or the entire world community to choose which road to take: either further escalation of armaments or of reductions of arsenals.

A look at the U.S. reply to the Soviet proposals reveals its unconstructive character. It contains no solution to the main, fundamental question—preventing an arms race in space. As far as strategic and nuclear medium-range weapons are concerned, it is virtually a repetition of the old U.S. proposal based on acquiring one-sided advantages. The negative position of the White House on prohibiting nuclear weapon tests can only be understood as a desire to continue the nuclear arms race.

In this situation, the CC Report to the 27th Party Congress stresses,

it is not easy at all to predict the future of relations between the socialist and the capitalist countries, the USSR and the USA. The decisive factors here will be the correlation of forces on the world scene, the growth and activity of the peace potential, and its capacity to effectively repulse the threat of nuclear war. Much will depend, too, on the degree of realism that Western ruling circles show in assessing the situation. But it is unfortunate when not only the eyesight but also the soul of politicians is blind.

The moment of truth in the nuclear and space age also means not putting off responsible decisions. It is no longer sufficient to wish to stave off a nuclear war. The time given to mankind for pondering is running out. The inhabitants of the Earth face the menace of a nuclear time press. This is why it is imperative to act, and to act forthwith.

The question raised by Mikhail Gorbachev concerning the need for a "new way of political thinking" for the sake of mankind's survival requires an answer not in words but in deeds. The deeds call for will, primarily political will.

What is the *essence of the new Soviet approach* to attaining the goal common to all humanity, ensuring survival?

We knew in the past that peaceful coexistence and cooperation are the only way for the two different social systems to exist on one planet. But while previously peaceful coexistence could proceed in various forms of confrontation, now it can continue exclusively in the form of peaceful competition. At the current stage of civilization the human community *vitaly needs a radical turn for the better, a stable normalization of international relations*. In other words, we all need a *different level of relations, higher from the perspective of civilization, so that we all can survive*.

The current stage in the development of civilization is characterized by the fact that the quantity and quality of weapons of mass destruction have reached an almost uncontrollable magnitude. New types of armaments, primarily space weapons, will inevitably plunge the world into the chaos of destabilization and thus bring it to the edge of a nuclear holocaust. At the same time, the planet is also threatened by

other global dangers which, if they are to be overcome, call for gigantic and, once again, concerted efforts by the entire human community. Hence, an important conclusion: In spite of all differences between the two systems, the interdependence between them urgently demands that the great art of living in peace with each other be mastered as soon as possible.

The new level of civilized international relations should exclude armtwisting tactics. Confrontation inevitably paves the way for a continuing arms race and heightens the risk of nuclear war. A nuclear war unleashed deliberately (first strike) or accidentally (technical failure or human miscalculation) can lead to suicide.

As repeatedly stated by the Soviet leadership, new thinking in the nuclear and space age means giving up the desire to impose by force one's ideology and values upon others. Socialism rejects war as a means of settling ideological disputes and interstate contradictions. Advantages of the social systems are proven by peaceful coexistence rather than by power politics.

To compare Soviet and American approaches, the belief of the Soviet people in a communist future (from which our opponents draw a false conclusion about expansionism) rests on analysis of objective and subjective factors governing world development. The new edition of the Party Program says that

the CPSU proceeds from the belief that the historical dispute between the two opposing social systems into which the world is divided today can and must be settled by peaceful means. Socialism proves its superiority not by force of arms, but by force of example in every area of the life of society.

At the same time, contrary to the declared commitment to pluralism and "freedom of choice," the leading quarters in the United States try to channel the evolution of the world in accordance with "their interests" and "ideals." They view force as an instrument to impose their will on other nations. To quote George Shultz's speech (ambitiously titled, "The Future of American Foreign Policy: New Realities and New Ways of Thinking"),

the changes in the international system will follow

the positive trends only if we—the United States and the free world—meet our responsibility to defend our interests and seek to shape events in accordance with our own ideals and goals . . . There is, of course, a broader issue here. . . . This is the basic question of the use of American power in the defense of our interests and the relevance of our power as the backstop to our diplomacy.

This is a deeply mistaken platform, albeit typical of U.S. foreign policy. Elevating force to the rank of a fundamental principle means dooming international relations to continued tensions which could escalate into war.

According to the Soviet Union's understanding, peaceful coexistence should safeguard peace and international security while maintaining the right of peoples to be masters of their own destinies. Genuine international security means maintaining stability based on strategic parity and abandoning the craving for superiority. Hence our fundamental refusal to accept the "strategic defense initiative." Not because SDI is a U.S. project, but because the "space shield" is, in essence, a new type of weapon which will destabilize the military and political situation and whip up the arms race. Experts, including U.S. experts, acknowledge that the "space shield" can easily be used as a "space sword." Those who first possess it will be tempted to put it to use. No government, no nation can permit that. This has been clearly stated by the Soviet Union.

An important measure of the "new way of thinking" is the ability to rise above ideological disputes for the sake of human survival. Guided by this principle, the Soviet Union decided to go along with the Geneva Summit, despite provocative actions by ultramilitaristic forces in the United States. The Soviet leadership proceeded from the belief that even the smallest chance to radically change the dangerous march of events should not be neglected. The significance of the agreements reached there on some cardinal issues is considerable. In fact, a strong impetus was given to the cause of peace. This found expression primarily in the understanding re-

corded in the Joint Statement, that a nuclear war should never be unleashed and that it could not be won, and in the commitment of the Soviet Union and the United States to build their relations on that incontestable truth and not to seek military supremacy.

This agreement is very important because, as is well known, there were no such admissions in the first years of the Reagan presidency. It was only as a result of criticism of the doctrine of "limited" and "sustained" nuclear war on the part of many governments and the world public that the U.S. President was forced to agree that "there can be no winners in a nuclear war." Recording this conclusion and repudiation of the goal of military superiority in the Joint Statement give them the considerable weight of an international accord.

But it is first and foremost deeds, rather than statements, that constitute the actual position of any statesman. It should be emphasized that a higher level of civilized relations also means a responsibility of state leaders for their proclaimed policies to be translated into life.

This also presupposes, in the words of former U.S. Senator William Fulbright, renunciation of the "arrogance of power," which has deeply penetrated the psychology of U.S. politics. Looking at the "strategic defense initiative" from this angle, it is a child born of blatant arrogance, dangerous not only for Americans but for all the residents of the Earth. *No state leader has the moral right to take a unilateral decision upon which depends the destinies of world civilization.* SDI has not been proclaimed just as an idea to debate. It is already being carried out, in spite of affecting the vital interests of the entire world community. Taking into consideration the fact that many representatives of the United States bluntly link SDI with plans for strategic superiority and with expectations of dragging the USSR into a costly arms race, the "star wars" program appears before the whole world as an embodiment of the old "way of thinking."

A logical question automatically arises: Why doesn't Washington, following the Soviet example, make decisions which do not impinge on anyone's interests but, on the contrary, would meet the interests of all? Why doesn't

Washington, for example, pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, or cease nuclear weapons tests?

The fundamental difference between the approaches of Moscow and Washington is clear.

Moscow proceeds from the historical responsibility of all powers to maintain peace, security and stability and strives to manifest its goodwill in practice. This is evidenced by unilateral Soviet renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons and its moratorium on all nuclear tests.

Washington has thus far been going in a different direction. It does not deem it necessary to reckon with the interests of other countries. If the U.S. Administration is genuinely interested in doing away with nuclear weapons, as been declared by President Reagan, it would surely be logical to discuss this problem with those directly concerned rather than make the world face an accomplished fact about SDI.

When people compare the two plans for eliminating nuclear weapons, the Gorbachev Plan and the Reagan Plan, they inevitably stress the fundamentally different approaches. While Ronald Reagan dreams of developing new weapons in outer space, Mikhail Gorbachev proposes to eliminate nuclear weapons without creating space arms. These are two different patterns: "arriving at peace" by chaotically piling up arms, or achieving peace by eliminating weapons of mass destruction. Another fundamental difference is that while Ronald Reagan has taken his SDI decision unilaterally, Mikhail Gorbachev suggests that all countries jointly set about eliminating nuclear weapons.

The CC Report to the 27th Party Congress reads:

In the years to come, the struggle will evidently center on the actual content of the policy that can safeguard peace. It will be a hard and many-sided struggle, because we are dealing with a society whose ruling circles refuse to assess the realities of the world and its perspectives in sober terms, or to draw serious conclusions from their own experience and that of others.

Many Western, in particular American, politicians and military experts perceive the pur-

pose of SDI—attaining military supremacy over the USSR with the aid of space weapons. All the talk about a "defense shield" is nothing but deception. The United States is not reducing but building up its nuclear weapons and developing warheads with new characteristics. This is a reason for the USA's reluctance to give up nuclear testing. Furthermore, Americans themselves acknowledge that SDI can readily be used as an offensive weapon. According to the *International Herald Tribune* (January 13, 1986),

laser weapons being developed as part of the Strategic Defense Initiative could more easily be used to incinerate enemy cities than to protect the United States against Soviet missiles.

This is the gist of a study carried out in the United States.

The Soviet plan for eliminating nuclear weapons offers an honest and businesslike approach to doing away with nuclear armaments without inflicting damage on any country, including the United States, and without creating new problems.

Thus, if the peaceable rhetoric of the U.S. Administration is subjected to critical analysis, comparing words and deeds, then their "new way of thinking" turns into "new globalism" and a dangerous destabilization of international relations.

To think in a new fashion in the nuclear and space age does not mean only to proclaim that we live in an interdependent world, but to acknowledge in practice that it is not permissible, even behind a screen of noble intentions, to seek one's own security without regard for the security of others. On that score Mikhail Gorbachev has stated in no uncertain terms:

The USSR—and I emphasized that in Geneva—has no enmity towards the United States. We are not building our policy on a desire to encroach on the national interests of the United States. What is more: We would not want, for instance, a change in the strategic balance in our favor. We would not want that because such a situation will heighten suspicion on the other side and also increase the instability of the overall situation.

The same wish to strengthen stability moti-

vates the Soviet proposal to eliminate, in the first stage of nuclear disarmament, all ballistic and cruise missiles of the USSR and the USA in the European zone.

To think in a new fashion means to think not only about oneself and one's allies but to see the relationship between disarmament and development and to propose ways for solving the global problems facing humanity. As Mikhail Gorbachev said,

initiating active steps to halt the arms race and reduce weapons is a necessary prerequisite for coping with the increasingly acute global problems, those of the deteriorating human environment and of the need to find new energy sources and combat economic backwardness, hunger and disease.

In accordance with this, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze transmitted to UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar a memorandum of the Soviet government stressing that the "pattern imposed by militarism—arms instead of development—must be replaced by the reverse order of things—disarmament for development."

In advancing its proposals for eliminating nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction and reducing conventional forces, the Soviet Union draws attention to the need for specific and prompt actions by all the forces of peace. "The imperative condition for success in resolving the topical issues of international life," the CC Report to the 27th Party Congress stresses, "is to reduce the time of search for political understandings and to secure the swiftest possible constructive action."

The Soviet Union is doing everything possible to check the nuclear arms race. In answer to an appeal to the USA and the USSR by the leaders of Argentina, India, Mexico, Tanzania, Sweden and Greece to refrain from any nuclear tests until the next summit meeting, Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized that the time granted to the U.S. Administration to weigh the USSR's proposals is running out. We can not indefinitely

extend this offer on a unilateral basis. Having refrained from carrying out any nuclear explosions for eight months, we have already run into costs, both military and economic.

Doing everything necessary to solve the problem of nuclear testing—and in a broader sense the elimination of nuclear arsenals—the USSR is consolidating the position of all the planet's peace forces. This is all the more important because influential forces of imperialism stand in the way of disarmament, forces for whom arms have always been a source of profits, influence and power. The military industrial complex—former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower warned his fellow countrymen against its dangerous influence—is a horde of insatiable monsters with multibillion dollar assets and with powerful lobbyists, penetrating all spheres of U.S. society. Using all their influence, power and money, they are poisoning public consciousness for the sake of deploying wherever possible—on Earth, underwater, or even in outer space—ever more sophisticated weapons. The philosophy of peace without arms is anathema to them, which is why they propound the philosophy of "peace thanks to new weapons," which is beneficial only to them.

In this tremendous battle between the two opposing systems of views, the proponents of the old arm-twisting methods are prepared for anything to justify the "new globalism." They are ready to quote Albert Einstein, ignoring his passionate appeal for rejecting the atom bomb. They are donning the mantle of champions of "new thinking" and are capable of any mimicry for the sake of delaying real disarmament. They know that so far they have had an ally in the inertness of human thinking, the lag of the consciousness of still too many people behind the rapid changes in life.

Awareness of the global dangers looming over mankind in the nuclear and space age and the objective need for new political thinking are becoming imperatives of our time. Mankind should not only ensure its own survival but also pass to future generations all the spiritual and material riches of our civilization. □

'Shootdown'

R.W. Johnson, *Shootdown: Flight 007 and the American Connection*, Viking Press, 1986, \$18.95.

In the early morning of September 1, 1983, a scheduled airliner—Korean Airlines Flight 007—en route from Anchorage, Alaska, to Seoul, South Korea, was shot down by a Soviet fighter plane, killing 269 passengers. The plane had flown deep into Soviet airspace either by accident—through a malfunction or misprogramming of navigational equipment—or by the reckless desire of the KAL pilot to save fuel and time on the flight. At the moment of shootdown, the Soviet pilots knew the plane to be a civilian aircraft. The plane, while in Soviet airspace and before, behaved as a commercial plane would on a normal flight. Despite this and without firing warning shots or attempting to contact the KAL plane, the Soviets shot it down. The U.S. military and government knew nothing of the plane's whereabouts until after it crashed and could have done nothing to warn the flight of the danger it was in.

That's the U.S. government version. I think if I walked out on the street here and asked people about the KAL 007 incident, most of them would agree—by and large—with the above account. *Yet only the first sentence above is true. All the rest is proveably false.* That millions believe such dangerous falsehoods testifies to the persuasiveness and servility of the U.S. mass media and to the ability, so far, of the Reagan Administration to cover up much of what actually took place, during and after the tragic event.

R.W. Johnson, a Fellow in Politics at Oxford University in England, has conducted a serious, effective and compelling two-year investigation—not only

ERNEST O'SHEA

into what happened to KAL 007 but *why*. Why Korean Airlines? Why a civilian plane? Why that flight, that night, at that hour, on that route, over that part of the Soviet Union?

Johnson substantiates that the incursion over Soviet territory did *not* occur by accident or malfunction. The pilots did *not* shortcut their route to save fuel or get home early. The Soviets did *not* lure the plane off course by electronic means. He demolishes these theories, leaving only one explanation: still incomplete, but fitting all the evidence, requiring no imaginative "filling in" or distortion of facts, and explaining both major and minor events before, during and after. It is a masterful accomplishment of research and logic.

Johnson's conclusion is this: that to test the full depth and range of Soviet Far Eastern air defenses, and under pressure to discover Soviet violations of SALT II, the Reagan Administration—at least at the level of CIA Director William Casey and then-National Security Advisor William P. Clark—deliberately sent a civilian airliner 365 miles off course over the territory which—next to Moscow itself—may be the most sensitive area in the Soviet Union, both politically and militarily. (Keep in mind, when thinking about the "accident" theory, that 365 miles off course means flying over Raleigh, North Carolina when you're supposed to be over Manhattan—and not knowing it.)

Among the many disturbing details revealed in this closely reasoned and readable book, are:

- That the captain of the 007 left behind notes indicating that he planned to take the route over the Soviet territory, that he falsified his flight plan and hid the fact that he was taking on extra fuel.

- That President Reagan, UN Amba-

sador Jeanne Kirkpatrick and many other Administration officials knowingly lied, deliberately spread fictitious stories, falsified evidence, and attempted, sometimes successfully, to cover up U.S. activities, intimidate witnesses and stop investigations.

- That U.S. military surveillance facilities—on land, at sea, in the air, and in space—had to know *at that time* what was taking place, and did nothing to save the doomed airliner.

- That to date, only the USSR has carried out an investigation into the affair. The U.S., the Japanese and the South Koreans have not.

- That at the last moment, with Soviet planes chasing it (planes that certainly could *not* tell it was a civilian airliner), Flight 007 took classic military evasive tactics, moving *deeper* into Soviet airspace, while Japanese flight controllers were fed false information, either by 007 or by another plane pretending to be 007.

Johnson, it should be noted, strongly criticizes the Soviets for, in his view, spreading misinformation about the event, bumbling investigations, moments of clear military incompetency, and finally for shooting down the plane. Morally, he concludes: "They should not have shot down an airliner whatever it was doing; and they should not have shot down a plane they could not identify. . . . No excuse is good enough."

He can not be accused of pro-Soviet bias. He lets the evidence speak for itself, laying the criminal guilt for the fifth worst air disaster in history directly on the White House.

The author does not claim that the Reagan Administration wanted the plane to be shot down, only that its desire to sabotage the SALT II agreement and justify massive arms programs far outweighed the possible terrible deaths of 269 passengers and crew. Clark and Ca-

sey probably expected to get away with the intrusion in secret, on the assumption that the Soviets would never shoot down a civilian aircraft: the very opposite of the "brutal Red killers" line the Administration came up with after the shootdown occurred.

The 007 overflight should be seen as one more brutal effect of the U.S. government policy of state terrorism. R.W. Johnson finds it no surprise that an administration which routinely uses civilian aircraft for military espionage, that proposed basing MX missiles on warplanes disguised as civilian aircraft, and suggested hiding nuclear-armed cruise missiles aboard Japan's high-speed commuter trains, would come up with the bright idea of using a commercial plane to

"turn on" the Soviet electronic defense system.

When Spanish fascists bombed civilians in Guernica, fifty years ago, the world was horrified. Since then, successive U.S. administrations have made threatening, risking and killing civilians a "normal" instrument of policy: whether napalming villages in Vietnam, mining country roads in Nicaragua, testing mind-destroying drugs on innocent civilians at home, or, in this case, sending a planeload of sleeping passengers to a flaming death merely to gain a "bargaining chip" in an effort to destroy the SALT II treaty. We must never allow ourselves to become numbed to this terrible "normality." □

cities reported by the bourgeois press as witnessing, at those very moments, raging battles, reminds one of similar experience described by Dr. Du Bois while visiting the USSR sixty years ago.

The decisive role of the CIA and the Pentagon in creating and continuing the awful suffering in Afghanistan is persuasively documented. The class of feudal landlords, drug smugglers, women-slavers and devotees of illiteracy, supported and financed by Reagan, is depicted in profoundly moving prose. Much of this is brazenly affirmed by the boss organs themselves. Thus, Bonosky quotes (p. 263) *Time* magazine (June 11, 1984) discussing Afghanistan: "The CIA spends around \$75 million a year supplying the rebels with grenades, rocket launchers and portable surface-to-air missiles."

Bonosky shows the striking similarity in the U.S. concerning Nicaragua and Afghanistan, remarking that this stems from the fact that in both cases the counterrevolutionary has the same financier. One must add, however, that Afghanistan borders on the Soviet Union. This is an additional reason why Reagan's war in that part of the world is not only especially ominous but also may not be—and will not be—permitted to triumph.

Bonosky's book is of decisive importance now, for the people of the United States, exposing as it does a prime source of the anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism which bulwark Reaganism. All progressives should organize the widest possible study and use of this volume. □

'Secret War Against Afghanistan'

HERBERT APTHEKER

Phillip Bonosky, *Washington's Secret War Against Afghanistan*, International Publishers, 1985, \$14 cloth, \$5.95 paperback; 264 pp.

A prime illustration of the truth of Michael Parenti's splendid book, *Inventing Reality*, is the phenomenon that passes in the United States with the word "Afghanistan." According to the commercial media in this country, the latter word conjures up a struggle for national independence and personal freedom by "liberation fighters" of a remote mountain country that has been invaded by the USSR, seeking to subjugate it. The invasion—this mythology holds—was at the behest of brutal traitors, Soviet puppets, and seeks to add one "more" conquest to "totalitarian's" belt.

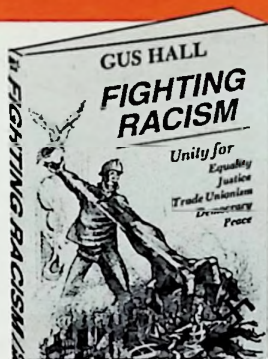
Illustrations of Parenti's message abound: indeed, under the pathological liar, Reagan, there is hardly a domestic or foreign component of his policy which is not based on falsehood. Internationally, prime examples are Washington's propaganda about the PLO, or Libya, or Angola, or Nicaragua. Still, probably, the lie

of lies and the one most "successfully" disseminated is that picturing Afghanistan in the terms sketched above. Those with long memories and the necessary longevity will compare it with the hysteria concerning Hungarian "freedom fighters" of some thirty years ago. If anything, Afghanistan is even a more horrendous example of "inventing reality" than was the Hungary of the 1950s, if only because the former phenomenon is longer lasting.

Bonosky, a veteran author and journalist, has been in Afghanistan for fairly extended visits in the early 1980s—serving as Moscow correspondent of the *Daily World*. Based largely on this on-the-spot experience and an obviously wide reading in the sources, he has produced an invaluable exposure of bourgeois fabrication and a valuable, serious study of Afghan history and reality. Particularly does Bonosky make clear Afghanistan's revolutionary process and the counterrevolutionary forces within the country as well as the decisive reactionary role of U.S. imperialism and of its client, the muderous, fascist-like Pakistan dictatorship.

Bonosky's presence in perfectly quiet

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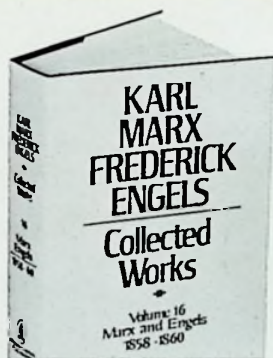
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