

# WORLD


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*Peace and Socialism*

# REVIEW

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**Greece / 21**


**FRG and  
Star Wars / 92**

**Two moralities  
— West / 87**

**Imperialism in  
the 80s / 74**

**Honduras / 44**

**Turkey / 29**



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**PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM**

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

**WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE**

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# contents

The Concept of Peace in the Nuclear Age <i>Bohuslav Chroupek (Czechoslovakia)</i> ..	5
Our Alternative to the War Economy <i>Louis Van Geyt (Belgium)</i> .....	12
Alliance Policy: New Stage <i>Harilaos Florakis (Greece)</i> .....	21
Marxism in Action: Creative Quest <i>Haydar Kullu (Turkey)</i> .....	29

## the party

Principles, Gains, Perspectives <i>Sadek Hadjeres (Algeria)</i> .....	37
Safeguarding National Interests <i>Randolfo Banegas (Honduras)</i> .....	44
Annals of Courage. Line of the Revolution <i>Sardar Prithvi Singh Azad (India)</i> ....	51

## new experience

Reliance on Mass Opinion <i>Trifon Pashov (Bulgaria)</i> .....	55
Documents .....	58
In the Mirror of the Press .....	60
Great Honour to Host the World Congress <i>Henrik Bang (Denmark)</i> .....	60
In Brief .....	63

## exchange of views, discussion

These Potentialities were Opened by Socialism. A Collective Interview with Academics on the Prospects for Levelling Up the Economic Development of CMEA Countries .....	64
The Peculiarities of Imperialism in the 1980s. A Survey of International Symposium Proceedings .....	74

## viewpoints

Two Moralities in Confrontation <i>James West (USA)</i> .....	87
The Bonn Option and the People's Option <i>Lorenz Knorr (FRG)</i> .....	92
The Blind Alleys of Capitalist Orientation <i>Ibrahima Sene (Senegal)</i> .....	100
"To Be an Anti-Communist Means To Be Anti-Christian" <i>Sergio Mendez Arceo (Mexico)</i> .....	106

## surveys, information and mail

Pages of History. Communist Party of the Sudan: 40 Years of Struggle <i>Ali Ahmed el Tayeb</i> .....	111
Relations Between Nations in the USSR: Fact and Fiction .....	113
Diary .....	118

## the book scene

Acceleration Strategy in Action <i>Antonio Boffi</i> .....	118
Nicaragua: Literacy Crusade <i>Natalya Smirmova</i> .....	121
Anatomy of Decline <i>Karel Novak</i> .....	123
New Books .....	126
<b>In Memory of Le Duan</b> .....	128

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## The Concept of Peace in the Nuclear Age

*Bohuslav Chroupek* – CPCz Central  
Committee member, Foreign Minister of  
Czechoslovakia

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THE foreign policy credo of socialist Czechoslovakia is indivisible from the principle of peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems. The policy that stems from it is based on the almost 70 years of experience accumulated by the Soviet Union. This policy took shape beginning with the famous Decree on Peace and, having stood the test of historical practice, has acquired a profound and concrete content and developed multifaceted forms of implementation. The foundations of this policy were laid by Lenin, who noted that it was wrong to mechanically identify relations between states belonging to the two social systems with the class struggle in individual capitalist countries. He emphasised that the case in point was a particular form of struggle 'in a different form and by different means'<sup>1</sup> and in parallel with peaceful coexistence.

History and current developments fully bear out the viable and dynamic nature of the peaceful coexistence policy, as well as its significance as the only and indispensable type of relations between countries organised into different social systems. This policy is evolving continuously, reflecting the changes that occur on the world scene and meeting the requirements of social development. As Comrade Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the CPCz Central Committee and President of Czechoslovakia, noted at the 17th Congress of the CPCz, the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is aimed at stabilising international relations, upholding detente, ending the arms race and attaining disarmament.<sup>2</sup>

Today's world is different from the world of several decades and even years ago. It has become too small and too vulnerable. And if we want to protect and save it for ourselves and for future generations, it is imperative to give up all kinds of doctrines claiming that military settlement of conflicts is acceptable. This means that it is time for all countries to fully grasp the principal lesson of our age: in a nuclear war, there can be no winners.

A continuation of the arms race, let alone its transfer to outer space, would merely increase the already high rate at which nuclear arsenals are being expanded and perfected. The earlier, sinister cycle of a war followed by a brief spell of peace followed by another war cannot be tolerated in this day and age. The 'nuclear considerations' have changed the very essence of coexistence. Of paramount importance is the realisation of the new fact that to live sitting on top of stockpiles of weapons means *no more* than to merely exist side by side under a constant threat of

mutual annihilation. But today, that is no longer enough. The world's nations are facing an objective choice: either peaceful coexistence without weapons of mass destruction, or universal annihilation. There is no other option. In order to survive, one must master the high art of living in peace. This is a demand posed by our turbulent and contradictory age, an age full of complex problems and dangers.

Yes, there is a way out. But one must become aware that, as noted in the Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th CPSU Congress, in the present situation there is no alternative to cooperation and interaction between all countries, that objective conditions have taken shape 'in which confrontation between capitalism and socialism can proceed *only and exclusively in forms of peaceful competition and peaceful contest*'.<sup>3</sup>

Our philosophy of peace implies both a clear understanding of the scope of the danger posed by nuclear war, of the need to do everything possible to avert it, and political will, specific and tangible action to defend peace. This is precisely the approach underlying the January 15, 1986 statement of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. This statement contains a stage-by-stage programme for the complete elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction by the year 2000. The Soviet initiative takes into account the arguments and concepts put forward by other nuclear powers earlier and has a constructive thrust, thus offering a good basis for accords.

We in Czechoslovakia wholeheartedly support the Peace Programme adopted by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. The Political Report of the CPCz Central Committee to the 17th Congress of the CPCz notes that "this is a realistic, clear and profoundly humanitarian programme, displaying the highest degree of responsibility for the future of civilisation and offering a unique opportunity to mankind. If the world's nations want to enter the new millennium without fearing for their future, this historic opportunity must not be forfeited. Our party and the entire Czechoslovak people fully support the Soviet programme. We shall use all our means and abilities to contribute as effectively as possible to the implementation of this great peace initiative."<sup>4</sup>

The realities of the nuclear age rule out the possibility of ensuring international security with the help of military and technical means alone. Should the nuclear arms race continue, even strategic military parity may lose its deterrent function. Ensuring peace and international security is therefore a political task that can be solved only by political means. This is why we fully support the Fundamental Principles underlying the creation of an all-embracing system of international security and formulated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. They open the door to fruitful cooperation with those governments, parties, civic organisations and movements which are genuinely concerned over the future of the human race. The Fundamental Principles stipulate the creation of conditions essential for strengthening peace in all major spheres of international life—military, political, economic and humanitarian. If implemented, they would guarantee independent and safe development of all nations and ensure the broadest possible exercise of human rights throughout the world, beginning with the first and foremost human right, the right to life.

Czechoslovakia has always been striving for the fullest possible implementation of the joint peace initiatives advanced by the fraternal socialist countries. This refers above all to the follow-up of the proposals made by the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries.

Given serious world tensions and peoples facing the overwhelming dilemma of living in peace or perishing in a nuclear war, the socialist countries think there is a critical need to move vigorously to urgently end the arms race, primarily in nuclear weapons, forestall its spreading to outer space, and graduate to disarmament. This is the aim of their proposals to the NATO countries for talks on a treaty on mutual non-

use of military force, complete elimination, on a reciprocal basis, of Soviet and US medium-range missiles in Europe, abolition of chemical weapons and others. The Political Consultative Committee summit, held in Budapest last June, adopted an Address to the NATO states and to all European countries containing a fresh important initiative—a programme to cut back armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe.<sup>5</sup>

Our republic also submits its own proposals to various international forums. Suffice it to recall the Declaration on International Cooperation for Disarmament, sponsored by Gustav Husak, President of Czechoslovakia, and adopted by the 34th session of the UN General Assembly. An appeal urging all countries to display a constructive approach to the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation for disarmament and to make a contribution to the drive aimed at removing the nuclear war threat, the declaration remains topical to this day. It calls on all nations to take effective steps to end the arms race, redouble their efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament, exercise their inalienable right to take part in disarmament talks, conduct these negotiations honestly on all issues of major importance and refrain from blocking their solution. Essentially, our proposals are a code of principles which can be universally applied at any disarmament talks and at any political level and which all governments would do well to observe in order to develop purposeful and sustained cooperation for effective disarmament.

On the initiative of Czechoslovakia, the 40th session of the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution on International Cooperation for Disarmament which develops the Declaration adding two new elements to it—a demand that militarisation of outer space be prevented and a call for a freeze on all nuclear arsenals.

Naturally, it would be naive to think that resolutions or the fact that the forces of peace now objectively prevail over those of war could automatically help lessen the risk of nuclear war. The extraordinary character of the situation in the world requires a fresh look at its problems, ruling out reliance on military force. We assume there is a need for a new approach to the very category of military strategic parity which has so far been the single most critical deterrent to the use of force. Nowadays, operating military high-technology mechanisms involves so many dynamic complexities that the human brain may become subordinate to the electronic one. There is a danger that this could lead to an as yet unencountered situation getting out of hand and resulting in an unpredictable disaster 'willed' by a computer. The possibility of technical error is escalating the risk of war. The US Challenger disaster shows what may happen to sophisticated electronic systems and what the slightest technical oversight with space weapons could lead to.

Awareness of the war threat gives rise to a multitude of political approaches that are often contradictory and rooted in different, mostly class-based interests. Significantly, the people expounding these positions, including those that are diametrically opposed, have recently developed an understanding that the launching of even the most 'limited' of nuclear wars can lead to a global apocalypse no one will be able to escape. And if, in the joint statement on the results of the Geneva meeting between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachov, the US President agreed that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought',<sup>6</sup> he was merely responding to a well-known and universally recognised fact. However, awareness of this fact is only the apex of a philosophical pyramid, an apex of divergent views about the nature and the ways of solving the fundamental problems the world is facing. Besides, the concepts the countries of the two different social systems propose for preventing a global nuclear catastrophe are at the opposite ends of the pyramid's base. Naturally, the greatest distance separates the concepts held by the socialist community and those advocated by the extreme right wing of imperialism.

Awareness of the dangers inherent in our nuclear and space age takes on



completely different forms in the context of the practical steps which one would expect to rule out the emergence of situations conducive to nuclear war. On the one hand, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries pursue a foreign policy that adds new vigour to the Leninist principles of peaceful coexistence—renunciation of war, of the threat or use of force as a means of settling disputes; settlement of such matters at the negotiating table; non-interference in the internal affairs and mutual respect for the legitimate interests of sovereign countries; the right of nations to shape their own future; strict observance of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders; cooperation on the basis of equitability and mutual benefit; etc.

On the other hand, there is a diametrically opposite policy disguised by lip service to peace. Reactionary imperialist forces are 'combating' the war threat by stepping up the arms race, spreading it to outer space, aggravating international tensions and claiming that peace can be preserved only from 'positions of strength'. All their moves are designed to secure imperialist domination. According to the militarist quarters, peaceful coexistence does not prohibit interference in the internal affairs of other countries. These quarters refuse to give up the idea of regaining the social ground they have lost (regain it if not by direct military means, then by exhausting socialism in the arms race). Apparently, they still fail to realise that the concept of social revanche is of the same 'blood type' as the idea of an acceptable nuclear war.

Going by the 'logic' of the militarists, the principal 'threat to peace' emanates from the socialist community. One often hears claims that durable peace will be possible only after these nations adopt the bourgeois concept of human rights, a scheme hatched to erode socialist society from within, to undermine the socio-political system in individual socialist countries. Peace, they assert, is violated by nations that reject imperialist pressure and follow the path of social progress. Nor has the imperialist interpretation of peace any place for the forces that oppose the monopolies' attempts at curtailing the sovereign right of nations to control their natural resources.

Under the present conditions, socialism and capitalism are 'fated' to coexist, and the shape of this coexistence is in fact determined in the course of their rivalry and cooperation. There is every indication, however, that those in the Western corridors of power still refuse to accept this reality and to make a relevant political choice, a choice that would not be susceptible to any short-sighted play of self-serving interests. Otherwise there would have been no fluctuations, no zigzags from detente to anti-detente in Western policies. We know that sometimes it takes the tiniest hint of a warm spell in the international climate for the United States to immediately switch to a tough policy of confrontation.

World events are proving again and again that a class-based and historically specific approach is essential for analysing issues of war and peace. We are convinced that only this approach enables one to correctly grasp the essence of these issues and to objectively assess the ways of their possible solution.

Wars were a natural outcome of the course along which the pattern of social relations created by exploiter systems developed. Here, one could recall Marx's words, to the effect that 'war developed earlier than peace'<sup>7</sup>—peace that was unjust and based on force. It was an armed peace ever fraught with war. Only socialism changed the situation radically and made it possible to banish war from human life, to establish universal peace. The struggle for this goal waged by the socialist countries stems logically from the very essence of the policy conducted by the classes that have created a new social system.

Since durable and democratic peace is essential for the continued survival of human civilisation in our nuclear and space age, the historical role of the victorious working class is increasing substantially and acquiring a new quality. As the leading

force of society, the working class is to ensure that socialism discharge its mission as the main guarantor of peace and human survival. The accomplishment of this mission in the course of the struggle to reduce the war threat and improve international relations is essential for the attainment of all goals and ideals of social progress. As the most humanistic demand of the world's peoples, peace is turning into a factor that integrates the principal interests of socialist society with the key interests of all mankind.

Experience confirms the Marxist-Leninist conclusion that the history of society is not a sum total of chance elements but an inexorable onward process which, for all its contradictions, manifests a certain unity. Its dialectical essence is expressed in the fact that, even with the rivalry between the old and the new, between capitalism and socialism becoming increasingly acute, the trend toward closer interrelationship and interdependence of all countries is nevertheless making headway. The threat of mutual destruction serves to further this trend and the demand for the establishment of constructive and mutually beneficial relations among nations.

The realities of our age impart a greater urgency than ever before to the need for a radically new political way of thinking, for a decisive break with the obsolete traditions and norms of international conduct which developed in the pre-nuclear age and oriented governments and nations on settling international political problems by force. However, the fact remains that given the massive imperialist brainwashing, the idea of 'peace through strength' is still shared by many in the non-socialist countries. Attitudes deformed by anti-communism and rooted in narrow class-based interests make it difficult for many political figures in neutral and non-aligned countries—even though these people may often hold sufficiently realistic views—to get their bearings in the situation they face, spot the true sources of the war threat and see the actual objectives of imperialist policy camouflaged by protestations of commitment to peace.

However, by its very example of consistent struggle for international security, socialism is increasingly influencing world public opinion. In accordance with the Marxist-Leninist concept of peace, the socialist community countries advocate a kind of peaceful coexistence that would be more than a mere absence of war. We favour an international arrangement dominated by good-neighbour relations and cooperation. Our idea of peace is that any threats, power pressure, blackmail, disregard for accords and attempts to dominate other nations and limit their sovereignty are incompatible with the norms of civilised relations among peoples. It visualises the shaping of a democratic and just world providing every nation with equal access to social progress, scientific and technological gains and world culture.

The socialist countries hold that durable and democratic peace can be attained only by ending the arms race, gradually achieving disarmament, and completely barring war and the threat of armed force from the realm of international relations. This position stems not only from their dedication to peace but also from the objective need to create an optimum international environment for continued progress of socialist society. The Political Report to the 17th Congress of the CPCz demonstrated the identity of our republic's foreign policy and internal political purposes: 'Favourable external conditions for the building of developed socialist society remain the principal goal of Czechoslovak foreign policy. Czechoslovak's prestige and influence are rooted in the successful and all-round development of our society, in our country's firm position within the socialist community. A growing economic and intellectual potential serves to increase our country's contribution to the struggle for peace and to the tackling of the key issues of our age—those of removing the threat of nuclear war, ensuring international security and attaining disarmament.'<sup>8</sup>

Strategically, the foreign policy of the fraternal socialist countries is aimed above all at blocking actual preparations for nuclear war. At the same time, our countries

pursue their policy of peace relying on the economic strength, political prestige and defence capability of the entire socialist community. This guarantees that imperialism will be unable to upset strategic military parity in its favour. Since the attainment of this parity, the ruling quarters of the United States and NATO have repeatedly had occasion to realise that all attempts at gaining military superiority over socialism are doomed. The USSR and its allies have proven that they can promptly frustrate all such schemes, whether involving a numerical build-up of nuclear warheads or improved performance characteristics of weapon systems. These attempts are nothing but a waste of material resources, and they increase the risk of nuclear war.

The Soviet Union's initiatives are a clear indication of which road to take to maintain peace and security effectively and reliably. The steps the USSR has made unilaterally—the pledges not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, not to deploy anti-satellite assault systems in outer space as long as the other side refrains from it too, to stop the deployment and reduce the number of medium-range missiles in the European part of Soviet territory—are convincing proof that its disarmament appeals are no mere words. Even in areas where unilateral concessions are particularly risky, the USSR sets an example of goodwill and effectively demonstrates that it is aware of its responsibility for the world's future. The Soviet moratorium on all nuclear weapons tests announced on August 6, 1985 and repeatedly extended since, as well as Mikhail Gorbachov's offer to meet with the US President, negotiate the issue and prepare a relevant agreement are a case in point. Had the US administration responded to this initiative, an end would have been put to nuclear explosions and the build-up of the most dangerous weapons would have been halted. And so it is perfectly clear why world public opinion is so bitter about the continued US underground nuclear tests.

The situation connected with the issue of an end to nuclear testing spotlights the essential difference between the concepts of peace advanced by socialism and imperialism and the diametrically opposed nature of the policies based on these concepts.

In our age, the content and the development of international relations are increasingly determined by the vigorous involvement in world politics of various social groups, classes and nations which used to exert only a marginal influence on world events. Peace and anti-war movements are expanding and gaining in political influence, especially under the impact of the socialist countries' far-reaching peace initiatives and of the public protest against the militarist policies of the United States and NATO. The struggle for international security is therefore being waged not only 'from above', by the diplomatic efforts of the countries dedicated to peace (although diplomacy will continue to be of great importance in politics) but also 'from below', by the mass anti-war movement which comprises millions of people in Europe and on other continents. This heterogeneous movement has emerged as one of the long-term factors shaping today's international relations. Its participants, who have widely differing views, are united in their common striving to prevent man's nuclear suicide.

The fact that the objectives championed by peace activists in capitalist countries coincide with the peace initiatives of the USSR and its allies has gravely alarmed the imperialist quarters. With two antagonistic social systems existing side by side, the socialist countries are promoting the goal Marx and Engels set in their time before the working class in international terms—to strive for a situation in which the simple laws of morals and justice governing relations among individuals would reign supreme in international relations too.<sup>9</sup>

The instigators of the arms race are working hard to cast slurs on the peace activists, to split their ranks and to erode the effectiveness of their action. Particular hopes are pinned on those forces in the peace movement which take a prejudiced view of

socialism and fail to understand that in this day and age, peace can only be preserved through peaceful coexistence. The militarists are eager to fragment the movement and claim fraudulently that it is manipulated from Moscow.

In their efforts to secure the broadest possible unity of the peace forces in the struggle against the nuclear threat, the Marxist-Leninists hold that no matter how gravely the policies of the aggressive imperialist quarters threaten peace, a world war is not inevitable. At the same time, we cannot accept the illusion that peaceful coexistence means reconciliation of socialism and capitalism through 'doing away' with the class struggle. Irreconcilable antagonistic differences between capitalism and socialism are an objective fact. The goal is not to remove them by switching to peace between classes, for this is impossible, but to rule out their resolution by military means.

Nor can one accept another pacifist claim—namely, that the struggle to defend revolutionary gains and to win national liberation is 'obsolete' and can produce political consequences dangerous to peace. The advocates of these views sometimes go as far as to assert that even in case of an imperialist nuclear attack, a peace-loving socialist country has no right to retaliate. They allege that for the sake of saving the human race, one should agree to a restoration of capitalism and hope for emancipation to come later, in some other form, without recourse to arms. Obviously, this is not a philosophy of peace and progress but inadmissible advocacy of surrender to the escalating banditry of reaction. The socialist countries are in the forefront of the drive to save human civilisation and yet they can not reconcile themselves to exploitation and domination of man by man. A social system generating social injustice also generates the threat of nuclear war. The peace campaign and the drive for social progress are closely related, and peace and labour have a common enemy in the more reactionary quarters of big capital.

People have every right to ask whether there is any hope that the democratic concept of peace will gain the upper hand in international relations.

A just peace with steadily dwindling stockpiles of weapons and progressive restrictions on actual preparations for war is essential not only for the advancement of socialism. All nations, all working people have a stake in it. It is essential for defeating the extremely grave and steadily deteriorating plight of the overwhelming majority of the developing countries. Without a cut in the burden of increasing military expenditures, mankind will be unable to afford to solve today's pressing problems such as hunger, disease, illiteracy and other manifestations of material and spiritual poverty that weigh so heavily on the conscience of civilisation in this age of space exploration. Nor, if the arms race is not stopped, will mankind be able to afford to combat the effects of ecological abuse, to protect and improve the environment.

A democratic and just peace is an objective condition essential for the advancement of all nations, including capitalist countries. Realisation of this is spreading among political leaders, and this is borne out by, say, the Delhi Appeal of the six heads of state and by other steps of prominent figures in several non-socialist countries. They are aware that the concept of 'peace through strength' which reflects the 'security' notions of the ruling US imperialist quarters reveals their obsession with domination in all spheres of international relations, including interimperialist ties. This concept underlies the attempts to forge such bonds of dependence on Washington which are at variance with the vital interests of the popular masses.

Realistic politicians in capitalist countries understand the danger inherent in the course steered by the US administration. This is confirmed, among other things, by our experience of diplomatic negotiations and contacts with Western political and civic organisations, as well as by public debate in parliaments, in social democratic and liberal parties and among broad sections of West European public. People are asking whether the current US policy is consonant with the Europeans' view of their

own security and whether the US is taking too much upon itself in its claims to world leadership. The growing congressional opposition to the Pentagon's latest budget plans indicates that even on the US political scene, there are forces which see the fallacy and hopelessness of the militarist course stubbornly pursued by the extreme right wing of big capital.

The 17th Congress of the CPCz has unequivocally confirmed yet again that together with the fraternal socialist countries, Czechoslovakia will consistently carry on the policy of peaceful coexistence and cooperation. Our countries' joint programme for ensuring international security, a programme Czechoslovakia wholeheartedly supports, needs no advocacy because it has already become an important factor of world politics. Many governments, political parties and disarmament experts are studying it thoroughly. It is also at the focus of public discussions. Its various aspects are examined in different forms at international forums: witness the first signs of positive results at the Stockholm conference on confidence-building and security in Europe and at the Vienna talks on mutual arms and force reductions in Central Europe.

This factor is also reflected constructively at the negotiations conducted within the framework of the all-European peace process, such as the Ottawa meeting on human rights or the cultural forum in Budapest. Furthermore, our peace programme is sure to exert a positive influence on the meeting of the Helsinki Final Act signatories to be held in Vienna this autumn.

In conclusion I would like to stress yet again that we in Czechoslovakia, a socialist country traditionally conducting a foreign policy of peace, are fully aware of the need to wage an unflinching and consistent struggle if peace is to be preserved. Sparing no effort, we will participate in this struggle vigorously and do everything possible to bring about its victory. We hold that this lofty goal can be achieved by comprehensively strengthening the unity of the socialist countries and by enhancing our cooperation with all progressive, peace and democratic forces throughout the world. This is what shapes the approach of Czechoslovak foreign policy and diplomacy to all tasks which we are tackling, both long-term and everyday.

<sup>1</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> 'Politická zpráva Ústředního výboru KSČ XVII. sjezdu Komunistické strany Československa', *Radé právo*, March 25, 1986.

<sup>3</sup> Mikhail Gorbachov, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> 'Politická zpráva . . .'

<sup>5</sup> For details, see 'Socialism's Peace Offensive Continues', *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.

<sup>6</sup> *Pravda*, November 22, 1985.

<sup>7</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, Penguin Books, London, 1973, p. 109.

<sup>8</sup> 'Politická zpráva . . .'

<sup>9</sup> See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 18.

## Our Alternative to the War Economy

Louis Van Geyt – Chairman, Communist Party of Belgium (CPB)

IN Belgium, as in most West European countries, the Communists and other left forces have found themselves faced with new complex problems. Some have been generated by the combination of the capitalist economy's crisis and the rapid scientific and technological progress, which is perceptibly altering the conditions of

production and the character of labour and leads to significant social changes. Others are linked to the developments on the international scene.

The new situation is making people think seriously of ways of effectively repulsing the policies of the right and militarist forces that are sparing no effort—so far without success—to utilise the present circumstances to protect and increase corporate profits and reinforce their economic and political domination. Before mounting a counter-offensive it is essential to assess the new realities and work out adequate responses to them.

### **Offensive of the Right**

With the whole capitalist world in crisis the working class and all other working people of Belgium are becoming the target of a ruthless assault by transnational financial capital and its political system. This is an assault chiefly on employment: the number of jobless and people with part-time jobs is now reaching 900,000. Under attack, concurrently, are the population's purchasing power (that has fallen by 10 per cent in the past five years), social programmes, government services, and public utilities. That the government intends to persevere on this course is borne out, in particular, by the decisions passed in April last by the government budget council, which drew up a programme of 'austerity' and 'financial regeneration' at the expense of the working people.

Anti-people socio-economic projects are combined with the government's resolve to pare down the rights of the trade unions and young people and undercut the role of traditional democratic and parliamentary institutions. What we are witnessing is a systematic assault that is jeopardising the important social and political rights won by the working class in alliance with other forces in the long struggle initially in the situation that came into being after fascism was crushed by the peoples and then in the period of relatively stable capitalist development and detente up to the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In this situation technological breakthroughs are used by the financial oligarchy and the political regime doing its bidding to intensify the exploitation of the working people by accelerating the slashing of jobs, downgrading working conditions, eroding the right to work, and crippling trade unions. In short, the big monopoly bourgeoisie does what it can to use in its egoistical interests the scientific and technological achievements that should serve people, and this in no way fosters society's progress and democratisation.

The ongoing world-wide industrial restructuring is, in Belgium, hitting mainly industries such as steel, coal, glass, and shipbuilding and, consequently, leading to the destruction of the most militant core of the working class, on which the left forces had traditionally relied. Mass layoffs, 'fluctuating' working time, and the decentralisation of enterprises are disuniting the working people: those employed full-time are beginning to figure as privileged, while the jobless and those pensioned off early are forming a considerable section of society.

Significant changes are taking place in the structure of the working class. In parallel, a new make-up of the working population is taking shape—that of a diversified world of labour, in which along with contingents of the traditional proletariat there are groups that formerly were non-existent or carried no weight in society. In production and the services industry the scientific and technological revolution is enlarging the proportion of wage labour by brain. In itself this is normal. But much time and effort are needed to enable this section of working people to see that it has interests and ideological affinities in common with the working class.

Finance capital and big business are trying to benefit by this situation and the concomitant social disarray of some sections of the working population. The ideological apparatus, chiefly television, a considerable part of the press, and other

levers controlled by the ruling class are allowing it to conduct an offensive simultaneously on the cultural front. The right is going to all lengths to 'exonerate' wealth, assert authoritarianism, and question the moral values that have crystallised in the course of decades of struggle for democracy.

As ruthless rivalry between transnational capitalist groups intensifies, the utilisation of scientific and technological achievements is accompanied by a steadily deepening subordination of the peoples of the so-called free world to the savage law of the jungle albeit adapted to the age of information.

In a situation marked by international confrontation, a situation that they themselves had brought about at the close of the 1970s, the most belligerent imperialist quarters in the USA have been able to use these achievements to reinforce their domination over their weaker allies and competitors, notably in Europe, and further escalate the arms race, which, with the 'star wars' programme, is under risk of going out of control.

The Reagan policy of total confrontation is substantially eroding the sovereignty of the countries in the military-political and economic alliances with the USA. Suffice it to mention the visit to Washington by the Belgium Prime Minister Wilfried Martens in January 1985, when public opinion and the parliament of Belgium were strongly opposed to the deployment of US cruise missiles in the country. Pressure from the senior partner worked, and on March 15 of the same year the first 16 missiles were transported to the Florennes base under cover of night.

Recent months have witnessed a growing number of instances of the USA's arrogance and indifference towards its junior partners, who, regrettably, much too often show they are prepared to accept American dictation. For example, although there were subtle differences in attitudes, almost all the Western allies ultimately signalled their tacit approval of US state terrorism relative to Libya, subscribed to its obstinate refusal to halt nuclear tests, and in no way dissociated themselves from the strident smear campaign started by Washington after the serious accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the USSR.

It must be noted that in all these and other actions, into which the US administration draws its European allies, one can see not only its drive to attain hegemonistic political and strategic aims of a global dimension, chiefly in the confrontation with the Soviet Union, but also its intransigent course towards undermining the economic positions of its partners (who, as a matter of fact, are competitors of US big business).

Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative is quite obviously designed to tilt the existing relative nuclear parity between the two great powers, enshrined in SALT and the AMB treaty, in favour of the USA and impose another round of the arms race on the Soviet Union, other socialist states, and the world as a whole. Further, many serious analysts believe that to a similar extent this infamous initiative is aimed at consolidating the perpetuating US predominance over its European and Japanese competitors. I am speaking of predominance in the most advanced areas of research and development giving US monopoly groups the license and ability to control progress in these areas. The junior partners in the SDI programme are accorded the role of second fiddle doing somebody else's will.

Analogous egoistic designs favouring the interests of the US monopolies and disregarding those of the USA's allies underlie the limitations being forced upon Western Europe under the screen of COCOM<sup>1</sup> in its trade with socialist countries. For the Belgium working people these limitations have already cost the loss of contracts and jobs at quite a few industrial facilities that, it should be noted, are of no little significance. Washington's course towards whipping up the confrontation with the Third World is objectively undermining Western Europe's economic relations with Latin American and Arab countries.

It makes sense for the West European left forces, the Communists in the first place,

to conduct an in-depth analysis of and hold consultations on all these issues.

### Encouraging Signs of the Times

However, alongside disturbing portents there are in the present situation some encouraging factors in the context of domestic policy and on the international scene.

In Belgium's internal life there are increasingly discernible trends opposing the policies of finance capital and of the Martens-Gol government controlled by it. The unremitting struggle of the Limbourg miners stirred the entire nation. Many strikes and other industrial actions were conducted against the tyrannical 'austerity' plans in May-June by public services workers: railway, transport, and post and telegraph workers and, especially, teachers. In many of these actions there was unity of action inspired by grassroots initiative. They were joined by other segments of working people, unemployed, youth, and women.

Large sections of society continue to articulate their disagreement with the Reagan policy of inflaming the nuclear, chemical, and space arms race and with the Belgium government's acquiescent attitude to that policy. There is a staunch movement of solidarity with peoples denouncing Washington's interventionist policy towards Nicaragua and other countries, and with the heroic anti-apartheid fighters in South Africa.

On the international scene a new, unprecedented optimism is inspired by the vigorous peace initiatives of the USSR and its allies. These increasingly dovetail with the ideas being advanced by leading personalities of the non-aligned movement and the peace forces, including those who are not in all cases of the left, of the progressive persuasion. Among these forces are a section of bourgeois-monopoly, even right-wing, circles who are showing growing anxiety about the arms build-up and the Reagan administration's ambition to dominate the world. This merging of diverse forces and the further invigoration of the peace movements, fostered in large part by Mikhail Gorbachov's initiatives, are creating new opportunities for gradually isolating the ultra-Reaganites and moving towards the peace prospect.

In parallel with the Soviet global initiatives of January 15 that map out an action programme for the period up to 2000, Belgium public opinion and political forces were powerfully impressed by the idea of a separate agreement on a mutual withdrawal of US and Soviet Euromissiles the joint SUPG-SDPG initiative on the creation of a zone free of chemical weapons in Europe<sup>2</sup> and, of course, the repeatedly extended Soviet unilateral moratorium on nuclear tests.

In the context of uniting the forces of reason and making tangible progress towards a future free of wars, similarly great interest has been aroused by the series of initiatives put forward, notably by the Soviet Union, for consolidating peaceful cooperation among all countries and peoples. These initiatives are defined in the Basic Principles for an All-Embracing System of International Security, adopted by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, and their significance was underscored in the CC report to the 15th National Congress of the Communist Party of Belgium in April 1986.

As I have already noted, the problem of eliminating intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe is of major significance to us—and not only to us Communists and not only to Belgium. A realistic way of settling this problem was proposed by Mikhail Gorbachov before the Geneva summit, during his visit to France. But for many months the bourgeois information, or rather misinformation, machine kept misrepresenting the issue, concealing from public opinion the innovative idea that a separate accord on Eurostrategic missiles, on intermediate-range missiles, could be reached.

However, let us recall that prior to this one of the principal arguments used by Washington and its allies, asserting that the Soviet-US talks in Geneva could not be unblocked, was that the three components initially specified and accepted by both



sides were indivisible. Yet as soon as this obstacle to significant progress was removed by the Soviet Union, the Reagan administration and its confederates raised new objections—in part conflicting with their own previous arguments—in order to evade definitive actions.

Those who rose to protest the deployment of US Euromissiles should now use the new opportunity. We consider that here it is important to act quickly to cut short the certain hesitation that surfaced in the beginning. For its part, the Communist Party of Belgium put a number of suggestions to the government on this issue.

It is an urgent task and duty of all the peace forces to press for a solution on Euromissiles. Were an understanding reached in this area, the climate in Europe and the world at large would be more conducive for East-West talks on the most sensitive issues, for instance, the first and second components of the Geneva package. The linkage between them is much more organic and it is not easy to sunder it: one can hardly count on the problem of inter-continental strategic missiles and that of the projection of the arms race into outer space being settled separately.

The Communists and large sections of Belgium public opinion responded affirmatively to Mikhail Gorbachov's new proposals, made last April at the Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, on a significant cutback of NATO and Warsaw Treaty conventional and tactical nuclear armaments in Europe. The Communists paid particularly close attention to that part of the Soviet leader's speech in which he reaffirmed that the Soviet Union was continuing its efforts to achieve a simultaneous disbandment of the military-political blocs. This re-emphasised the topicality of the closing article of the Warsaw Treaty recording this possibility.<sup>3</sup> It seems to us that this idea has received a new impetus, that it has moved beyond the framework of a purely theoretical conception, and can provide effective arguments for practical action by all the peace, by all the popular forces.

We are convinced that these are realistic prospects only if there is good will on both sides. All issues—whether they concern nuclear-free zones, zones with limited conventional weapons, Northern Europe or the Balkans, the withdrawal of chemical weapons from Central Europe, or the creation there of zones free from theatre nuclear weapons as suggested by the late Prime Minister of Sweden Olof Palme—must be addressed on a basis of reciprocity. Significant unilateral steps would, evidently, lead to destabilisation, to disequilibrium.

We believe that within a longer term there may be in the heartland of Europe a sort of non-alignment zone provided the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO agree on a simultaneous demilitarisation of some of the European members of these alliances on the basis of voluntary consent and exacting reciprocity. This would meet the interests of universal security and follow in the channel leading to the dissolution of the two blocs.

#### **Formula of Reasonable Solutions**

But, as everybody knows, the reasonable initiatives advanced by the USSR and by the planet's other peace forces, particularly after the Geneva summit, are encountering stiff-necked resistance from the most reactionary section of transnational monopoly capital, from the section closely associated with the manufacture and sale of armaments. In this situation a growing number of people in and, I am sure, outside Belgium is asking anxiously whether it is at all possible to achieve any significant progress in the struggle against the crisis and the war threat before the conditions arise in our part of the world for the abolition of capitalist relations of production?

Fully aware that the situation is difficult, the Belgium Communists see no other way out. That is why their 25th Congress focused on the problem of working out a set of alternative options based, in particular, on the peace economy concept. We see this concept as reaching far beyond technico-economic solutions and having, in

geographical terms, the potential of becoming a useful instrument for re-directing developments throughout Western Europe or, at least, in the 'Europe of 12', and also in the relations with other parts of our continent and the planet as a whole.

The concept we are talking about has been in use for some time among various progressive and left forces in Belgium, so there was no need to invent a new term. The idea itself was evolved in some quarters of the Belgium peace and working class movements. It conveys their aspiration to find a way out of the economic crisis by satisfying the people's individual and collective requirements, which today inevitably means using the bulk of material and financial resources that must be wrested from the arms race, from the war economy.

The labour, expertise, and wealth now being wasted on the arms race and other anti-social purposes should be placed in the service of society. In terms of the economy this would provide for, while preserving predominantly capitalist relations in many sectors of production and the services industry, the gradual expulsion of groups of finance capital that are the most parasitical and alien to national interests, and the enforcement of a tax reform and other steps to put an end to the speculative transactions presently flourishing.

Further, it is vital to embark upon democratic planning, reinforce the public sector, and create the conditions for the optimal use of new technologies in the interests of society's all-sided progress.

In the context of Belgium society the question is not so much of a steep rise as of the preservation of the existing living standard of the population, a steadily growing minority of which is sinking ever deeper into a new poverty. This process must be halted and, at the same time, a greater accent must be placed on upgrading the quality of life so as to develop better ways of satisfying the people's collective and individual requirements in what concerns working conditions, cultural facilities, participation in public affairs, protection of tenants' rights and the environment, and consolidating democratic liberties.

We consider that it is extremely important to give much more attention than hitherto to muster funds for promoting the various services, including those that finance capital regards as unprofitable. Finance capital shows a measure of interest in services such as education or public health that protect and reproduce labour power. But there are many other legitimate requirements in the life of men and women that a developed society is in duty bound to satisfy. There are people who for various reasons have been fenced off from production and services. Some have been shut out for economic reasons, others are chronically ailing or handicapped, and still others are small children or far advanced in age. They have the right to expect society to look after them. There has been an immeasurable growth of 'non-paying' requirements in culture and environmental protection. All this requires the allocation of material and manpower resources.

Quite obviously, this is feasible provided a definitive choice is made in favour of economic and social development firmly oriented towards peaceful aims.

One more aspect of the peace economy concept is the promotion of foreign economic, scientific, and technological relations pursuing genuinely humanitarian objectives. As we see it, this concerns not only Belgium but the entire Common Market. The question here is also one of broader peaceful cooperation between East and West, between South and North, and among the Western countries themselves because there are many sensitive issues in the relations between them.

For example, as I have already mentioned, the relations between the dollar empire and its allies cannot be regarded as being founded on equality. This state of affairs cannot be ended as long as Western Europe permits the USA to draw it into the arms race, which turns many nations, especially some small and economically weak nations, into appendages of the US military-industrial machine on a growing scale.

The global problems of environmental protection, health, and the development of new sources of energy await constructive solutions. We believe that on all these issues it is realistic to expect broad-ranging international cooperation, including cooperation in addressing the problem of economic backwardness. The contradictions between industrial and developing nations can be settled or they can begin to be settled on the basis of the idea widespread in Belgium, even if it seems to be somewhat romantic, namely, disarmament for the purpose of development.

### **Growing Responsibility of the Peace Forces**

As the Belgium Communists interpret it, the peace economy concept encompasses, apart from its other components, the extremely important idea that there must be a union between the working-class and democratic movements and the movement for peace.

We believe that a twin weakness of the anti-missile movement of the early 1980s was that it was inadequately backed up by the mass organisations of the working class, that their participation in the struggle was limited. On the other hand, while taking a stand against the crisis and its consequences, they gave much too little attention to the magnitude and significance of the resistance to the economy's militarisation.

The huge scale and diversity of the peace and anti-missile actions were due largely to the fact that people rose against a specific threat, which, seemingly, could be averted. This extremely broad movement, which involved, in particular, large but mostly poorly organised, in social terms, sections of young people—Christians and atheists—developed to a considerable extent as a distinctive and autonomous force standing outside the basic structures of the working class movement.

Of course, alongside the youth masses, many environmentalists, activists of the movement for the protection and extension of democratic liberties, and militants of the movement for solidarity with Third World peoples, there were in the anti-missile movement activists of trade unions and public organisations, participating with the tacit consent of their organisations or as private individuals.

However, without the unceasing determined support of the organised working class the broad anti-missile movement lacked an adequately solid and stable social base. As a result it was unable to recover quickly from the shock caused by the deployment of the first missiles in three NATO countries, the counter measures taken by the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, and then the appearance of these weapons on Belgium territory.

For the same reason the movement found it hard to respond with the necessary strength and breadth to new and similarly vital developments: the results of the Geneva summit, the Soviet initiatives and the subsequent Soviet proposals for halting and reversing the nuclear, space, chemical, and conventional arms race.

To resume its drive on the same scale as in the early 1980s, the peace movement is in need of a closer union and interaction with the main organisations of the working class and the democratic forces. In this context, as well, the peace economy concept can prove useful in paving the way to a close alliance among the activists of the struggle against war and the crisis. In our view, the formulation of this objective and, especially, a joint striving to achieve it would give a fresh impetus to both movements. Their potentiality for influencing concrete political decisions and even the choice of a long-term orientation for social development would be more effective than in the preceding period when the right-wing forces were able to mount an offensive in the socio-economic sphere and impose their will in the question of missiles.

We feel that the aforesaid also applies not only to Belgium. At the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of Belgium it was stressed that these issues have to be probed more deeply, that they have to be discussed in the context of analysis and study with the Communists, with the left, progressive forces of 'Europe of the 12' and other

capitalist countries. Moreover, it is important to vitalise contacts with all who face analogous problems in one or another form and on a different scale, and also with the Communists of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. While we do not in any way insist on the peace economy term now current in Belgium, we regard the concept itself as productive and meriting development.

It is our belief that it would be useful for the peace forces to examine in more depth the prospects of the struggle against the militarisation of the national economy in connection with the general economic, social, and financial problems of the capitalist countries and with their relations with the developing nations and the socialist world.

Actually, taken in absolute terms the military budget in Belgium is not all that large by the European standards. The share of the national output at facilities engaged in the production of armaments directly or indirectly is somewhat higher. But even here the percentage is not overwhelming. However, our country is deeply embroiled in the mechanism of Atlantic dependence, by means of which in recent years funds are being transferred from the whole of capitalist Europe to cover the US budget deficit caused precisely by the course towards the build-up of armaments that is being speeded up by the Reagan administration.

The problem is even more acute for some Third World nations that have to borrow money at a high interest to cover what is in many cases a huge deficit brought about by the deterioration of the conditions of international trade. But it turns out that they often borrow from their own national capital 'transferred' abroad. Mexico, for example, has to pay an enormous interest for dollars investments owned by Mexican capitalists themselves. The state debt—whether it is of developing nations, of some of the USA's industrial partners, or of the USA itself—brings up yet another spectrum of pressing issues related to the discussion of the peace economy concept.

### **Strategy of Broad Alliances**

The novelty and acuteness of the tasks now confronting the Communists and all other forces of the left in national life and on the European and global scale are making it incumbent upon the Communists to upgrade their ideologico-theoretical and practical work. This was considered at the 25th Congress of the CPB. It was stressed that effort had to be focused on continuing the elaboration of the aforementioned ideas: the peace economy and the peace options in the context of the country, capitalist Europe, the whole of Europe, and in a broader context.

In the first place, the present policy of alliances has to be redefined in this light. For much too long we and the other forces of the left have regarded this issue through the prism of the realities of the close of the 1970s. By that time the large traditional organisations of the working class and democratic movements had won some social gains and made some headway in protecting democracy. This took place on the tide of the victory over fascism and during the long period of the capitalist economy's growth, which reached its zenith in the 1960s. But when that stage of growth gradually gave way to a deep-going structural crisis, we went on believing that the powerful counter-offensive started by the right at the close of the last decade could be curbed by the self-same traditional forces. However, this proved to be wrong, particularly on account of the structural changes brought about by the scientific and technological revolution and the new alignment of strength, in other words, on account of the new social and political realities.

We feel that today it is necessary to go over to a strategy of alliances encompassing much broader sections of society. In order to stop the offensive of reaction and clear the way for radical changes in a country like Belgium, we have to act vigorously to enlarge the alliances beyond the framework of the traditional forces of the left, and steadfastly enlist the Christian popular forces, those groups of working people (technicians, academics, managerial personnel) comprising the motor of the present

changes, and the large sections of young people and women thrown out of employment as a consequence of the economic crisis and of capitalism's selfish use of sophisticated technology.

As regards the implementation of the peace economy concept and the struggle against the threat of a nuclear conflict generally there are potentialities for cooperation with some sections of the bourgeoisie, including sections of transnational capital interested more in economic exchanges and peaceful development than in armaments production.

Many of those who are now potential allies will obviously not be on the side of the left tomorrow, but the main thing is to help them draw away from the most reactionary and militarist forces of the right, to gain the support of these potential allies or, at least, their neutrality so as to allow more constructive decisions and attitudes to prevail, including at the level of governmental and even right-of-centre forces.

Given a realistic approach, the present stage begs a comparison with the situation of the mid-1930s. In the new situation of those years modifications were introduced into the strategy of the communist movement. The tasks that were given priority looked limited: to close the road to fascism is not the same as to fight for the power of the working people. However, developments made it imperative to unite the popular forces for resistance to fascism. This was essential in order to protect the headway achieved earlier by the working class movement so as subsequently to move to more radical changes.

Similarly, the paramount task today is to unite all the forces of reason in order to stop the insane arms race and create the conditions for more enduring coexistence and broader peaceful cooperation among the states and peoples of Europe and the world as a whole.

The aforesaid also applies to the policy of alliances. For example, in the struggle against fascism the decisive factor was the strategy charted by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International and developed in the practice of the anti-Hitlerite coalition. Of course, the US President of the time, Franklin D. Roosevelt, represented the big bourgeoisie but was oriented towards its realistic wing. It will be recalled that in those years a large section of US monopoly capital (the isolationists) wanted a totally different policy, which was that the entire capitalist world should unite against the Soviet Union and the other forces of progress. The strategy laid down by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International was largely responsible for the ascendancy of the line towards unity in order to isolate and defeat Hitlerite fascism and Japanese militarism.

The present aims are to some extent comparable, with one fundamental exception. Regrettably, fascism was defeated only after war broke out, a war that was won at a high cost. This time around it is vital to defeat the 'war party',<sup>4</sup> in other words, pave the way for peace without militarisation and crisis before a world conflict erupts. In the nuclear age there is simply no other alternative.

That is why in setting up fronts and alliances we consider that it is imperative to proceed from the incontestable fact that in most of the industrial capitalist countries the question of fundamental social reforms is not a task of the immediate future, in any case of the time span left in which to stop the race into a bottomless abyss. In the struggle for peace and a peace economy the watershed runs not between the champions of socialist transformations and those who propound capitalism's values but between the champions of the survival of human civilisation and the exponents of militarism. Hence the priority task of forming the broadest democratic and peace fronts and of their winning the decisive influence.

The forces out to reverse social development, the forces of militarism can be bridled and defeated and the broad alliances needed for this can be formed provided

the overall strength of the forces of progress, the working class and its allies in the industrial countries grows significantly. That would create more favourable conditions for a further advance, having in mind the prospect for a transition to a socialist society consonant with the aspirations of the popular front majority.

The 25th Congress of the CPB drew the fundamentally important conclusion that all who are becoming victims of the neoliberal policy of the ruling circles have to combine their efforts with those of a wide spectrum of anti-war forces in order to withstand capitalism's mounting crisis, the social and cultural regress across the board, and the policy of undercutting democratic institutions pursued by bellicose ultra-right forces, and put an end to the country's subordination to the Reagan hegemonism and confrontational strategy.

The working class is in the forefront of these efforts. In the present situation vital significance is acquired by the ability of the most militant contingents of this class to regain the initiatives in the struggle against the right, gain a more profound understanding of the condition and aspirations of other sections of wage earners, of other oppressed strata, and facilitate the spread of solidarity and coordinated actions. Let me re-emphasise that this concerns not only the traditional allies of the working class but also all social circles, strata, and groups affected adversely by the policy of crisis and building up armaments.

We are confident in the eventual success of the combined struggle of the Communists and other progressive forces of Europe and the whole world to halt the slide into a chasm, place human resources and the achievements of scientific and technological progress in the service of peace and cooperation, of satisfying the needs of peoples so as to reinforce humanity's hopes for a better future as the year 2000 approaches.

<sup>1</sup> Coordinating Committee on East-West Trade Policy. Set up in 1949, its members are NATO states and Japan.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> This initiative, announced in 1985, was later co-sponsored by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The relevant statement was adopted by representatives of the three parties at a meeting in Prague last May.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Article 11 of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, signed in Warsaw on May 14, 1955, states that the treaty will become null and void on the day an All-European Treaty on Collective Security comes into effect. The communique issued on April 26, 1985 on the Warsaw Treaty summit declares that the member-states are in favour of a simultaneous disbandment of the WTO and NATO with the dissolution of their military organisations as a first step.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 371.

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## Alliance Policy: New Stage

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Secretary, Communist Party of Greece (CPG)

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THE Communist Party of Greece is faced with the need to reappraise the theoretical and practical aspects of the alliance policy by the changes now taking place in the Greek society and, to an even greater extent, by our society's acute need of change which still remains unmet. The point is to have the alliance policy more fully accord with the present conditions and the current and long-term tasks of the Communists' struggle, to help know as exactly as possible with whom one can go into battle, which of the allies is unreliable, and who is the real enemy.<sup>1</sup> Another inducement are the international current developments, which are having an ever more profound influence on the country's internal situation, the alignment and activity of its political forces, and the nature of their relations with one another.

When formulating and when implementing the alliance policy, our party consistently looks to the fundamental principles for such a policy as elaborated by the classics of Marxism-Leninism, principles which, the CP Greece is convinced, have been and continue to be a reliable foundation for developing cooperation with other left-wing, progressive forces. That is why we seek to respond on alliance issues to the slightest shifts in the social and political situation and in the social consciousness and mentality of the masses. In doing so we are guided by the creative spirit of our doctrine and the demands of life. We seek to apply flexible tactics, to improve the old and to produce new forms of relations with actual and potential allies of the working class and its revolutionary party.

### **Democratic Gains: the Crucial Factor**

On its long historical way, the CP Greece has gained a wide range of experience in the struggle for uniting the revolutionary and democratic forces. It is vitally important to draw inspiration and energy from the historical lessons of our popular movement, now that the country is faced with serious choices and we want and must take major strides along the way of progressive change.<sup>2</sup> The content of the alliance problem and the forms of its solution in Greece tended to change with the peculiarities of each historical period and have borne the mark of our national specifics. But these changes relate to the particulars of the problem and not to its substance. Our experience, like that of the other Marxist-Leninist parties, including the ruling parties, shows that the winning of allies by the proletariat remains the key problem of revolutionary strategy, a problem that needs to be solved at the stages of the bourgeois-democratic and people's democratic revolutions, in the national liberation movement, in the socialist revolution, and in the building of the new society.

The role of the subjective factor—the role of the Communist Party itself—is brought out in boldest relief precisely in the sphere of alliance relationships. In the early decades of its activity, the CP Greece already succeeded in awakening among broad strata of the working people a sense of working class solidarity and an urge for unity of action against reaction and the fascist threat. Unification of all the sound forces of the nation within the National Liberation Front (EAM), which led the armed struggle against the invaders during the Second World War, was one of our party's historic achievements. EAM not only secured the liberation of Greece, but towards the end of the war effectively became the sole centre of real power in the country. Since then, the Greek Communists have invariably acted as the chief proponents of the tendency towards the unity of the popular masses and progressive movements and organisations fighting against the dictatorial regimes, against the country's subjection to imperialism, and for freedom, democracy and national independence.

Striving for such unity, the party came out for Greece's economic independence, industrialisation and modernisation, and for an independent development of its economy for the benefit of the people, all of which now have a close bearing on the demand for genuine change. It initiated the struggle for the equality of women, and for the rights of the young generation, while its activity helped to consolidate the working people's gains, among them the eight-hour working day and social insurance, higher incomes, longer holidays, and a five-day working week. The CPG has led the struggle for a distribution of land among the peasants, a struggle to provide them with pensions, and also to establish fairer prices for agricultural produce. It was in the vanguard of the struggle for the working people's rights and freedoms, against violence and outlawry, authoritarianism and terrorism in any form. Indeed, the Communists have made what was the crucial contribution to every single democratic gain, and that is the basis for our alliance policy and ever stronger ties with the masses.

There are, of course, not only successes in the annals of the development and consolidation of the people's democratic unity, for it is an intricate and often contradictory process. Mistakes have also been made in the course of it, and for some of them we have had to pay a high price. But we would not be revolutionaries if we were afraid to admit them or tried to delete them from our record. CP Greece documents say, for instance, that after the invaders had been expelled from the country, there was an underestimation of social factors and an overestimation of political factors in the alliance strategy. Having failed to make due use of the potentialities created by the cohesion of the overwhelming majority of the people round the Communist Party and the EAM, the party leadership of the day decided to make unnecessary but serious political concessions to the rightists, as a result of which the latter managed to take power and thwart a social revolution the objective prerequisites for which had been created in the course of national resistance. The opposite mistake—underestimation of political alliances—was made during the civil war (1946-1949), which reaction thrust on the people, a mistake that put the party into a state of some isolation from the other democratic forces.

What then are the lessons to be learnt from our experience of alliance policy? What conclusions have we drawn from that experience in the context of our current tasks?

### **Objective Analysis of Reality: the Basis**

Considering the main and the most essential, one has to emphasise above all that the working class and its party can fulfil their revolutionary mission successfully only with skilful use of any possibility, however slight, to win a mass ally. We say together with Lenin: "Those who do not understand this reveal a failure to understand even the smallest grain of Marxism, of modern scientific socialism *in general*."<sup>3</sup> The broader the alliance basis of the working class, the more solid are its positions in the society, and the better the prospects for the changes for which it is fighting.

Experience shows, furthermore, that the rallying of the masses and the other democratic forces round the working class never takes shape spontaneously. It has to be purposefully fought for every day. Our party believes that it is necessary to look more boldly and resolutely to the working class, the peasantry, the artisans, the handicraftsmen, the intelligentsia, and all the other working people, sensitively perceiving and comprehending their wants and attitudes, and scrupulously taking account of the general level of their political consciousness and militancy whenever it gets down to defining its positions. When entering into a dialogue with other democratic forces, we believe that it is highly important to collate our ideas and policies with public opinion and strive to make known to ever broader masses of people the fact that deep social transformations cannot be effected without the CP Greece. We also seek to make people regard the Communists as champions of all their wants and hopes.

The Marxist-Leninist strategy of alliances shuns any kind of subjectivism. It is a science based on an objective analysis of the concrete historical reality and national specifics, and a summing-up of the experience of the international anti-imperialist movement. That is the basis for a correct formulation of the long-term and current problems in the struggle for alliances, and the forms and methods of their solution, for the assertion of principle and continuity in unity policy, while making it dynamic and capable of flexible response to the changing conditions. The Communists' strategy and the tactics which follow from it call for a constant reckoning with the whole range of factors in social development and their interaction at every given moment, starting from 'a precise analysis of the position and interests of the various classes'.<sup>4</sup>

How does the CP Greece, in the light of these demands, assess the objective conditions which now determine the content and the main lines of our alliance policy?



What effect are these conditions having on the composition and condition of the working class and of its social allies?

The Greek Communists believe that the changes under way within the structure of the society with the development of the country's productive forces and scientific and technical progress are highly important. They have primarily affected the working class, which has markedly grown in quantitative and qualitative terms in recent years. Skill and general education standards have risen, it is more organised and there are more industrial, especially factory, workers who are least susceptible to petty-bourgeois influence and constitute the most revolutionary part of the working class.

The relative industrialisation and intensification of agriculture have been pushing some of the peasants into the urban areas, where they join the ranks of the industrial proletariat. At the same time, the working conditions and social status of wage-earners, engineers, technicians and salary-earners are being gradually evened out, as the latter—their lowest strata, at any rate—lose their erstwhile material and status advantages and increase the number of those who are oppressed by the monopolies, and thereby also the ranks of active participants in the democratic movement. Young people and women are being intensively involved in production, and this stimulates their role in the struggle for the working people's democratic, anti-monopoly unification.

#### **Policy Focus: Genuine Change**

The CP Greece strives to shape its unity policy in accordance with these shifts. On the one hand, this line is differentiated in the light of the peculiarities of the situation and the specific interests of the various groups of the working people within the working class and the rest of the labouring population as a whole. On the other, it takes account of the areas in which all these groups are drawn closer together and which make it possible to bring out their common wants and tendencies, and to develop concrete forms of social and political alliances. The party's attention remains focused on the struggle for the cohesion of the working class itself, as the core and vanguard of the movement to unify the forces of democracy and progress, but if it is to be able to play such a role politically, its revolutionary party needs to conduct a consistent class line and to have the capacity of find the ground and forms for agreements with other democratic movements so as to shape a left-wing majority, at the grassroots in the first place.

When tackling the new tasks, we bear in mind yet another telling lesson, of history dictated to us by the above-mentioned mistakes: in alliance strategy and tactics it is exceptionally important to have the right combination of the social and the political factors. Experience shows that political alliances without a social base are not worth much. They are, as a rule, weak and short-lived. But then, social alliances, which remain unformalised politically—as front, bloc, agreement, etc.—and which are not expressed in joint action by the various forces have little effect and present a potential, rather than a reality of unity. In practice, alliance policy is not realised in direct cooperation between classes or strata, however profound the community of their condition and interests may be objectively, but in social movements and in socio-political coalitions bringing together the representatives of these classes and strata on a relevant struggle platform.

There are no cut-and-dried recipes for the establishment of such platforms, which always take shape according to the concrete situation and the requirements of the given moment. What, in this context, do we feel to be especially significant in Greece today?

There are, first of all, the consequences of the acute economic crisis, which have long been fettering economic life in the country, inflicting social calamities on the working people and inducing them to take joint action for their social rights. There is

also a sphere of the progressive forces' identical interests determined by the need to fight against the system of the country's economic, military and political dependence on the United States, NATO, the Common Market and international imperialism as a whole. After many years of rule by reactionary regimes, democratisation problems are also of wide significance. Social life has only been partially democratised by the defeat in the parliamentary elections of the right-wing New Democracy (ND) party, and the assumption of office by the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) in 1981. Moreover, this process has shown a tendency in the recent period, to wane, and even to run in reverse along some lines.

In short, the Greek society is now acutely in need of radical economic, social and political transformations, and this, for its part, produces the need to unify all the progressive forces. That is why we centre our alliance policy on the problem of change, the programme for whose solution effectively constitutes the CPG's popularity-unity platform. In concrete terms this means unifying all the social groups, parties and public movements desirous of real change for the pursuit of a progressive policy aimed to rid the country of US-NATO dependence, to strengthen national sovereignty, fundamentally democratise state institutions, eliminate the monopolies' domineering acts, and create the conditions for Greece's free social development.

### **No Dialogue Without Good Will**

In the period of struggle against the reactionary regimes, many of its participants assumed that the political alliance dynamics would be determined by successive stages in the democratic process, running from right-of-centre to centre, then on to left-of-centre and, finally, to the triumph of the left-wing forces. The assumption was that a New Democracy right-wing government was better than the military junta, from which it followed that its policy should in the main be accepted and that there should be cooperation with it; the PASOK government is better than the ND government, which means that it should be given unconditional support. On the strength of such logic, one would have to keep trailing in the wake of every successive, more liberal or reformist regime within the framework of the capitalist system, a procedure that would inevitably lead to a denial of the Communist Party's independent political role and to an abandonment of its tactical and strategic intentions.

The solution of the problems considered above implies a totally different course of events: utmost use of all the potentialities for attaining the goals of the working class, and as these are attained, formulation of new and deeper demands alternative to the monopolies' policy. In other words, it means stepped-up struggle for a continuous process of change, for a further growth of the working people's activity, faster maturing of mass political consciousness and unification of the masses on a platform of democratic and social transformations. We assess the situation which has taken shape in the country not only as compared with what happened in the past, under rightist governments, but above all with an eye to the long-term, real change being the criterion for such an assessment.

The CPG programme requires our constant presence in the forward positions of every front of the class struggle, and consistent efforts to unify the forces in a direction leading to the confluence of several streams demanding the solution of the people's economic, social and general democratic problems into a single anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly tide. Our party has always been willing and ready to use every opportunity for cooperation within that tide both on particular and on more general issues at every level with all the forces opposing reaction, including, of course, PASOK as well.

However, we have not met with any positive response on the part of the latter. PASOK preferred a line of 'reliance on one's own forces', or, in other words, a policy of

one-party government. It has gone back on its erstwhile promises, and has confined itself to modernising the management of the affairs of state-monopoly capitalism. The government has pandered to the monopolies' dictatorial acts, it has maintained their privileges, and has shifted the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people. Some of the positive aspects of its foreign-policy line do not go beyond the framework of Atlanticism. Instead of helping to unite other masses and forming a balance of forces necessary to overcome the obstacles thrown up by the ruling class and imperialism, PASOK has pointed to these obstacles as justification of its policy of deferring real change to the Greek Calends.

The government has recently stepped up its attacks on the trade unions, seeking not only to force through its anti-people measures, but also to settle scores with the monolithic, militant and mass trade-union movement, one of the basic barriers in the way of an even more conservative government. The authorities have mounted a juridical offensive against the majority within General Confederation of Greek Labour for the purpose of establishing total control of the trade-union leadership. The courts and the public prosecutor's office are being used for anti-democratic measures against the trade unions and the strike movement.

In March 1986, still maintaining such a stand, the PASOK CC invited us to a 'dialogue and cooperation'. A plenary meeting of the CPG CC discussed that initiative in detail, but found it impossible to give it a positive assessment. Why not?

The PASOK proposals are much too general and contradictory, defining neither the framework nor the purposes of the dialogue and, most importantly, failing to indicate whether, in its view, the government's policy could be revised. Nor did they clarify PASOK's attitude to cooperation on particular problems and on grassroots unity, or the general nature of the ties between the two parties that are to enter into a dialogue. On the one hand, they say that 'the differences between our assessments, which are of strategic significance, make it impossible to work out a coherent left forces' programme in the foreseeable future'. On the other, they speak of a united front on the basis of a minimum programme for the solution of national problems and of the prerequisites for unifying the progressive forces. There is, therefore, no suggestion of an establishment in practice of new forms of relations between the ruling party and the left, but rather a political manoeuvre in the run-up to the October municipal elections designed to present PASOK to the voters as a 'party of left unity'.

The CPG CC stressed in its reply that our party has always stood and continues to stand for dialogue and cooperation between the democratic forces not only on particular issues, but also as a whole, so as to pave for the country a new way leading to change. But that implies identity of positions on at least the basic burning problems confronting the broad popular masses. A discussion of these problems would be of great importance for the country. We are, in principle, prepared to join PASOK and other public circles in reviewing the government's incomes policy, getting down to restoring democratic practices in the trade-union movement, introducing a system of direct and proportional representation, and democratising the laws and decrees which curtail the rights and role of the working people. The Central Committee's constructive proposals have, therefore, outlined the concrete framework for a discussion of tangible matters, and a dialogue benefitting the people and the country, irrespective of differences between the participants on other problems. We believe that some concrete acts by the ruling party in a spirit of goodwill could help to create a climate of trust that would make a dialogue possible and effective.

#### **Towards a United Front of Left Forces**

The Communists have not confined themselves to a general critique of the government's policy. They have set forth the goals of real change closely associated with the solution of the vital problems in the life of the people, and they support any

democratic reform, any sign of disagreement with the policy of imperialism, and any act aimed to preserve peace. The CPG has criticised the negative aspects of the government's policy, and has opposed every impediment to the country's progressive development.

We cannot fail to reckon with the contradiction between PASOK and the rightists or to consider that in certain conditions the popular movement will make use of it in one way or another to bring about change. The Communists emphatically reject the totally groundless assertions that there is some kind of cooperation between our party and the New Democracy party. Those who make such assertions are perfectly well aware that there is no basis for political cooperation with the ND leadership, which has deliberately twisted the idea of any possible joint activity by the Communists and the left-oriented working people with the supporters of New Democracy and other bourgeois parties within the mass movement for anti-monopoly objectives. The CPG has invariably kept its front deployed against the right-wing forces, the main proponents of the monopolies. But we do not regard the struggle against them as any kind of sharp demarcation, hostility, bias or barrier with respect to the conservative-minded section of the popular masses—those who follow New Democracy. We do not rule out the possibility of a positive differentiation in their midst, or joint action on concrete issues in the struggle for peace, democracy and national independence.

Our party has kept stressing the need for the working people's unity on a class basis, and has opposed any artificial division of them into diverse factions. We insist that both wage-earner and salary-earner, regardless of political credo or size of income, are wage slaves of capital. Peasants, artisans, handicraftsmen, researchers, and all other working people have common interests and unite in their mass organisations for the purpose of satisfying these interests. They are not divided into 'rightists', 'centrists' or 'leftists', but find themselves, regardless of their convictions, in roughly the same position in the face of monopoly capital, their common enemy. It goes without saying that views differing from our own do exist within the working class and among the other working people. In carrying on a constructive and democratic dialogue, we insist on our own ideas, our political positions and our right to criticise other views. But we seek to do this in such a way as to help find a common idiom, to strengthen the working people's unity, and to establish relations of trust and equality with them in the struggle for a solution of our common problems.

The policy of popular grassroots unity is the main content of the CPG's line of uniting the democratic forces. The foundation of this unity consists of the organisations carrying on actions by the working people for their daily needs and an improvement of the economic situation, and against the attacks by the government and the monopolies on trade-union and democratic rights. We want this struggle to be closely tied in with social issues, to spread the militant spirit among the working people, helping them to raise their political consciousness and understand the need for unity in the popular movement to get rid of the power of the monopolies, and for democracy and progress.

The way to solving the pressing problems now lies through the establishment of a *united front of left-wing and progressive forces*, a front that could rally the popular majority demanding change, win government power, and put through a programme of social transformations for the benefit of the people, for national independence and genuine democracy.

Do such forces exist?

Of course they do. There is, first, the Communist Party of Greece, the most active generator of change, whose vanguard and unifying policy has the key role in shaping and widening the political space for transformations.

There are the groupings which have broken away from PASOK, are moving along their own way, and opposing the conservative trends in government policy. There are

also considerable progressive circles within the ruling party that disagree with its policy, and are capable of altering their stand and joining the struggle for change.

There are the new mass trends—anti-war and ecological, among others—which have emerged outside the traditional political parties, and which have substantially invigorated the strength of the popular movement and its dynamic development.

There is no doubt that the upswing in popular action, the crisis of the two-party system, and of the parties within it, will also let loose other radical strata and stimulate the emergence of new left-wing forces. This is evidenced, for instance, by the fact that various political groupings, whose ideological positions are a long way from ours, are beginning not only to overcome the anti-communist preconceptions, but are also beginning to feel, in their own way, the need for cooperation with the CPG for the purpose of democratising the country and improving the life of the people.

### Dialectics of Cooperation and Struggle

For the Communists, the united-front policy is not a short-term expedient, but a long-term and constant strategy aimed to rouse all the left-wing forces to the struggle against capital and for democratising the society, a struggle which helps to create favourable conditions for socialist transformations. But we take a realistic view of the potentialities of cooperation. Practice shows that while inter-party agreements help to solve one package of problems, they tend to exacerbate others, and to produce new issues connected, in particular, with the attempts of foist alien conceptions of cooperation on the Communists and make political capital at their expense.

Community of democratic interests is the most important unifying factor of political alliances. Preservation and development of democracy within their framework also serves as a necessary condition for bringing out the centripetal and centrifugal trends among the participants of any coalition. But it is also obvious that internal contradictions which spring from the antagonisms of the capitalist society are bound to remain within such coalitions. Cooperation entails ideological and, frequently, also political differences, and this requires constant efforts to overcome them and to concert positions and approaches to new problems. Unity and contest are not mutually exclusive, but complementary factors in the formation of any front of left-wing and progressive forces.

We are, therefore, faced with the formidable task of mastering the dialectics of a situation in which the party is required, on the one hand, to act as a spokesman for the common interests of the popular majority and, consequently, to develop ties with other political forces, and on the other, to remain independent in the struggle for democracy and social progress. When conducting the unity policy, one needs always to be prepared for polemics with one's partners, and to conduct it in the light of principle, without destroying the basis for joint action or weakening cooperation.

Class and political alliances necessarily imply compromises, but of a kind that do not tie the Communists' hands or limit the possibilities of their own activity or independent political initiatives. In this context, Lenin says: 'In the interests of the revolution our ideal should by no means be that all parties, all trends and shades of opinion fuse in a revolutionary chaos.'<sup>5</sup> That is why we are not carrying on a struggle for coalition in general, but for a common front explicitly oriented towards progressive change, a coalition that is to act as the organising element in the popular movement. Our party's independence consists not in keeping a distance from other left-wing trends, but in a capacity to influence them and the general tenor of activity of the emergent alliances. The contradiction between coalition unity and party independence should be resolved not mechanically—through mutual exclusion—but dialectically, in the process of dynamic interaction between the two elements.

For all their differences, Greece's left progressive forces are united by an urge for change. That is why they can find common ground and bring their positions closer

together so as to create the conditions for formulating a common programme for transformations. The main and most pressing thing now is to continue hammering out a common approach to the fundamental problems of the situation and the struggle of the working masses. The forthcoming municipal elections could be an important step in this direction. Last May's plenary meeting of the CPG CC stressed that the key task in the electoral campaign is for the party to do more in activating the municipal movements and in drawing up broad electoral rolls to express and deepen the consolidation of the progressive forces. There has already been a unification of the Left supporting common tickets for mayoral elections in the big cities. Our party will do its utmost to turn them into the beginnings of a united front campaigning for change.

We regard the struggle for peace and against the danger of war as a constant and highly effective factor in the establishment of such a front, for it brings together ideological different parties and organisations and teaches them to act together to avert a nuclear catastrophe, thereby having a positive effect on the other spheres of cooperation between the democratic circles.

Our party has come forward with the initiative of forming a front of left-wing and progressive forces in the hope of creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding in their relations, and the conditions for going on from cooperation on particular issues to political alliances on the basis of a common programme. Together we must overcome the mutual suspicion and ill-will, abandon the obsolete stereotypes of political thinking and behaviour which hamper unity and use every opportunity to carry the country along the way of democracy and social progress.

<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 473.

<sup>2</sup> See records of the 11th Congress of the Communist Party of Greece, December 12-19, 1982.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 71.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 11, p. 366.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, p. 165.

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## **Marxism in Action: Creative Quest**

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THE growing importance of the internationalist tasks and role of the working class is indisputable, a conclusion suggested by any open-minded examination of the trends and contradictions of present-day world development. In sum, these trends are as follows: with existing socialism providing ever more evidence of its advantages, there is an acceleration in the capitalist part of the world of internationalisation and of concentration and centralisation of capital coupled with mounting exploitation of labour by transnationals. This creates new major problems both in developing countries, including Turkey, and in industrialised capitalist countries.

### **Dialectics of the National and the International: New Features**

Application of the results of the scientific and technological revolution offers capitalism new opportunities for economic and political manoeuvre. At the same time, it has destructive social consequences. The abuse of scientific and technological achievements and their subordination to the aims of imperialism's policy of aggression threaten humanity with destruction in the event of a nuclear war. The military-industrial complex is the most zealous proponent and organiser of

aggression. There is a trend towards reaction along every line primarily in the political sphere. Where relatively liberal forms of bourgeois class rule fail, military dictatorships are imposed. Neofascism is on the rise in the political arena in some countries. Imperialism resorts to the policy of social revanche on a mounting scale. The capitalist system betrays its political, social and moral bankruptcy in various areas.

New rivalries are developing as contradictions between imperialist countries go deeper. They are aggravated, in particular, by the bid of the Reagan administration and US monopolies for world domination, by their aggressiveness and their selfish disregard of the interests of their military bloc partners. One should not forget, however, that the imperialist countries manage to act together when developments reach a critical point.

At the same time, the positions of the socialist community are strengthening, the struggle of the national and social liberation forces and the peoples of developing countries is gathering momentum and so are peace and democratic movements. The working class defends its social rights with increasing resolve.

The main contradiction of our times, that between capitalism and socialism, has become more acute than ever. In this context, the working class strategy of internationalism brings to the fore solidarity with the socialist countries and their ruling parties, primarily the Soviet Union and the CPSU. It also adds immensely to the significance of solidarity among all the forces taking a stand against imperialism and for peace. There are indications now of both an increase in the role of proletarian internationalism and new aspects of the dialectics of the internationalist and the national that enrich its content.

In an attempt to defeat the powerful tendency of fighters for peace and social progress to cooperate, imperialism is stepping up its ideological offensive, fomenting anti-communism and flouting humanist ideals. It resorts to outright violence in pursuing its policy of aggression.

The Communist Party of Turkey has been under bourgeois attack ever since it was founded 66 years ago. Our enemies use the basest slander and demagogy in disputing the fact that the CPT is a national party and national force. But they have been unable to make our party abandon proletarian internationalism. The whole activity of Turkey's Communists shows that, being members of an independent party, they are never 'neutral' in political struggles.

We consider that no sensible person can stay neutral when he must choose between war and peace, between exploitation, oppression, arbitrary rule and freedom. The present Turkish regime tries to intimidate fighters for peace and progress by using the bogey of 'membership of the CPT'. Peace supporters and trade union fighters are accused of belonging to the Communist Party and prosecuted. However, this hoary weapon of imperialism and reaction tends to boomerang, with people coming to realise that the Communists are reliable defenders of peace and democratic rights.

Proletarian internationalism implies, to quote Lenin, the need to do 'the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries'.<sup>1</sup> Lenin, the party founded by him, the Land of Soviets and its working class set an example of loyalty to this principle by accomplishing a victorious revolution and building socialism in their country. Now as in the past, the Soviet Union sets an example of real internationalism.

To do the utmost in Turkey, it is important, first of all, to increase the role of the working class and the Communist Party in the nation's life, to search for ways leading to this goal by creatively applying Marxism-Leninism in the light of the concrete historical peculiarities. This search has been most active in the CPG since its Fifth Congress (1983). The policy which the party is pursuing nationally is more mature now and is gaining in efficiency although the dictatorial regime uses fascist repression against us.

The theoretical and practical application of Marxism by the CPT confirms the well-known thesis that to understand a situation in any country, it is necessary to make a correct assessment of the international situation and of trends towards changes in it. Needless to say, collective theoretical work by Communists and parties helps fulfil this task. Economic, social, political and ideological problems are particularly complicated today. This is also true of the less developed world, a circumstance which substantially enhances the importance of the fraternal parties' manifold investigations.

The historic 27th CPSU Congress and the new edition of the party Programme it adopted aroused natural interest among Turkish Communists. The Programme sums up not only the practice of socialist construction in the USSR and the other countries, but also the experience gained by the international communist movement over many years. We see the theoretical propositions of the Congress as a dependable guide in our effort to decide on ways of achieving peace and social progress in Turkey. The policy line of the CPSU as defined by the 27th Congress makes us more confident of the future than ever. The Congress increased the appeal of socialism as an exponent of genuine democracy.

It is not only Communists but other political forces committed to peace, the prosperity of nations and social progress that can draw useful lessons from Congress documents. You do not have to be a supporter of socialism to realise more than before that the Soviet Union is a reliable ally in the struggle for peace and the survival of civilisation. Even in the atmosphere of the intensive anti-communist campaign going on in Turkey, realistic-minded sections of the Turkish bourgeoisie were unable to ignore the significance of the 27th CPSU Congress for the destiny of humanity.

Turkey's Communists find in the documents of the Congress answers to many of the problems that have cropped up in the course of applying Marxism-Leninism in our conditions. Studying its documents helps us choose a correct methodological approach to defining the programme goals of our party and ways and means of achieving them. The Soviet Communists' critical attitude to their work and problems, their loyalty to fundamental principles, their ability to take account of all that is new, and their uncompromising stand on every manifestation of conformism and hidebound routine are all highly instructive from the point of view of the efforts which our party has been making in the same direction.

Defending and safeguarding peace is undoubtedly the paramount task facing the Communists of any country. We fully share the fundamental conclusion drawn by the CPSU Programme, which says that, 'however grave the threat to peace posed by the policy of the aggressive circles of imperialism, *world war is not fatally inevitable. It is possible to avert war and to save mankind from catastrophe. This is the historical mission of socialism, of all the progressive and peace-loving forces of the world.*'<sup>2</sup>

To stop the arms race and guarantee peace is a universal, global problem, and at the same time a 'local', 'national' one closely connected with the problems of national independence, national sovereignty, democracy, civil freedoms and national development. It is obvious to us in Turkey that the threat to peace and the offensive against democracy have a common source in the shape of the more aggressive bellicose imperialist forces. The fact that an anti-popular, dictatorial regime has been in power in our country for nearly six years is due above all else to the policy of the United States, the mainstay of this regime, and of other imperialist countries.

### **Democracy and Independence**

Can a country endangering peace, a country where peace fighters are put on trial, be called democratic? Far from having democracy, Turkey lacks even independence, and its national sovereignty is ignored. The Turkish people may find themselves at war any moment whether they want it or not. This danger has now become much



more evident than before. The more than 60 US bases on our soil are in combat readiness, and US arms and military personnel continue arriving in our country. The daily *Milliyet* wrote that the U-2 plane shot down in 1960 during its espionage mission over the Soviet Union, had taken off from one of these bases without the knowledge of the Turkish government or General Staff.<sup>3</sup> This happened at a time when our country had democracy, if on a limited scale. The Pentagon has repeatedly used its Turkish bases for aggression in Lebanon. This is a sufficient indication of the great danger threatening our people now that we have no democracy at all. Abolishing a dictator regime which keeps the country tied to the adventurist policy of US imperialism would certainly meet the interests of peace the world over.

The CPT also realises the need to resist the present regime's policy of pandering to any wish of Washington's. The tension maintained in the region by international imperialism is very high, and any ill-advised step, no matter how small, might spread a military conflagration. The Iran-Iraq war as well as the problems of Palestine, Lebanon, Cyprus and the Aegean are inflammable material virtually at our doorstep.

We Communists seek dialogue and cooperation with a wide spectrum of political forces, including those whose concept of democracy differs from ours and even those who belong to the camp of our class enemy, on the basis of opposition to the dictatorship and its policies, primarily its dangerous foreign policy. The Fifth Plenum of the CC CPT (December 1985) adopted a programmatic document entitled 'Alternative for Peace, National Sovereignty and National Security'. The document signifies our party's readiness for such cooperation in the interest of normalising relations with Turkey's neighbours disrupted by the pro-US policy of the dictatorial regime, that is, of normalising them on the principles of mutual respect, equality and non-interference. We believe our country could contribute to world peace primarily by adopting a policy for peace. The recent barbarous US raid on Libya showed this initiative to be timely. Indeed, by attacking Libya, the United States demonstrated its disregard of international legal norms. It was made perfectly obvious that they will not stop short of violating these norms to achieve their ends.

We know that the forces championing peace are not identical with those willing to join in the struggle for democracy. However, there are new developments characteristic of the present in this area as well. The growing scope of anti-war activity strengthens its connection with mass democratic movements. At the same time, the bid for the use of force which the US administration and the monopolies associated with the military-industrial complex make in carrying on their policy of social revanche, the threat of nuclear war and other factors, such as imperialist blocs, make the problem of the threat to security relevant to the industrialised capitalist countries as well. There is growing concern over the problem of defending national interests.

The national factor is growing stronger above all in developing countries (Turkey included), which are dependent on imperialism in many respects. Its impact translates into an ever closer connection with the struggle for democracy.

We would like to stress that the aspiration to defend national interests, while extending the basis for national political unity, does not automatically offer the prospect of progress. In Turkey, for one, there are objective reasons for bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism. This is why the struggle for national interests can hold the promise of progress only if it includes other components opposed to nationalism and chauvinism. At the same time, political leaders who ignore these interests, especially leaders on the left, have no chance of succeeding as we see it. Hence the need to approach the national factor in developing countries with due regard to its new characteristics and its role in the democratisation of society, and to deal on this basis with the problem of working class hegemony.

On winning national independence in the 1920s, Turkey entered the international arena as a newly-free state. But its national liberation revolution did not develop into

a democratic one, nor was the republic able to defend its economic independence, won only by half. Step by step, development on capitalist lines reduced Turkey's political independence. This trend quickened after Turkey had joined NATO. By now national independence is almost non-existent owing to the military dictatorship established in the wake of the September 1980 coup. Imperialism, especially US imperialism, treats Turkey as a satellite and not an ally. What we have today is nothing more than nominal independence.

At the same time, capitalism is developing fast in our country. With support from without and from the state, relations typical of the monopoly stage of capitalism have developed in Turkey. This trend has been accompanied by a particularly painful process of eliminating vestiges of feudalism and of integrating them into capitalism. On the other hand, it has led to the growth of the numerical strength of the working class and contributed to its organisation and militancy.

The backward and multistructural economy typical of a society of dependent capitalism is particularly susceptible to various upheavals. It is hit by recurrent crises that have become permanent in a sense. There is stagnation in capital accumulation and on the home market; difficulties in the currency and credit sphere are growing. The result is a bad tangle of the most diverse contradictions. The so-called stability programme which the generals in power have been implementing by tough methods ever since the 1980 coup in conformity with the recipe of the IMF has run the country into the labyrinth of an economic crisis. Turkey's foreign debt is close to 30 billion dollars. Even untrustworthy official statistics sets the unemployment rate at more than four million. The regime's economic policy has ruined everybody—workers and other working people as well as employers unassociated with monopoly; the only exception is a handful of domestic monopolies cooperating with imperialism. The national economy finds itself on the brink of failure.

Neocolonialism today resorts to practices which restrict developing countries to the role of suppliers of raw materials and cheap labour, prevent their industrialisation and escalate their financial exploitation. Turkey is a striking case in point. As a consequence, contradictions between it and imperialism are deepening.

### **Combining Democratic and Socialist Tasks**

This complicated situation confronts progressive and left-wing forces with urgent problems. However, an incorrect analysis of the domestic situation occasionally leads to mistakes and miscalculations. The revolutionary experience of the Turkish working class shows that in countries such as ours, whatever the level of capitalist development, there is no ignoring problems which are still unsolved because the bourgeois democratic revolution has not been carried through to the end and because the country is dependent on imperialism. Sooner or later, these problems make themselves felt in various ways. In other words, there is no skipping definite stages or phases of social development necessitated by concrete historical circumstances. In fact, disregard of these stages and phases has painful consequences: the working class, the Communists and other progressive forces become isolated and reaction gains ascendancy.

According to an erroneous notion current among 'leftists', the solution of problems of higher stages removes the need to solve those of lower stages. 'Since Turkey already has capitalism, if a capitalism developed only to a degree,' they argue, 'the alternative to it today is socialism.' At the other pole there is a right opportunist trend alleging that, either objectively or subjectively, the social forces of revolution in Turkey are not mature enough as yet, and that more favourable conditions will only shape up with the subsequent development of capitalism, as a result of the policy of the present dictatorial regime. Advocates of these views aspire to a liberal variety of capitalism. The CPT considers both positions wrong. It is necessary to steadfastly

promote the revolutionary process without skipping inevitable stages or making an absolute of them.

The Communist Party envisages the possibility of two consecutive phases in a single revolutionary process that will ultimately lead to a socialist revolution. However, it also bears in mind the likelihood that the social development of the country will pass through a greater number of stages. At present we do not call the attention of the working class to what it should do after the revolution but to the preparatory phase preceding it. This phase is characterised by tasks which must be accomplished to remove objective obstacles to organising the proletariat and other socio-political forces, accelerating the maturing of the subjective factor and training what is known as the 'political army of the revolution'.

These historically unsolved problems are connected with the general democratic struggle. We do not think this struggle should be interpreted in a narrow sense, as a struggle for democratic rights and freedoms only. Democratisation in Turkey implies primarily a replacement of the political regime. Also, we stand for the democratisation of the whole state, including the army, for a policy in favour of peace and for democratic changes in the economic and social spheres.

We see democratisation in developing countries as a complex process rich in content and socially deep-going. It implies giving priority to certain radical transformations needed to alter the political balance in favour of progress and revolution.

The main aspect of the kind of democracy which we Communists are seeking in Turkey is a greater role for the working class, the participation of the masses in the management of public affairs. Recognition of the national rights of the Kurdish people is an inseparable element of this democracy. To bring about such democracy, we need a national democratic government representing all the forces interested in it. This government should embark on independent economic development, rely on it for support and guarantee it.

We have also been discussing the question whether the democracy proposed by the CPT is bourgeois. The answer depends on what 'bourgeois democracy' stands for. If it means a West European type of democracy, one should bear in mind that it is a result of a definite historical development of capitalism. A repetition of this kind of development in Turkey is unlikely. There is no question that even this type of democracy would offer the Turkish working class greater opportunities for struggle compared with today's conditions or the situation prior to the establishment of the dictatorship. On the other hand, so-called Western democracy is not at all what it is made out to be by its advertisers. Increasing oppression and attacks on the interests of the working class and other working people, curbs on their rights are realities in West European countries today. The purpose of extolling Western democracy is to deny the superiority of socialist democracy.

The national democracy advocated by the CPT is not a typically bourgeois form of government. But on the actual stage neither is any one of our demands socialist in the direct sense of the term. After all, not everyone who accepts the prospect of national democracy is willing to accept socialism. Therefore the political organisation of society which we propose would in effect be 'bourgeois democratic' as well and yet amount to overcoming typical bourgeois democracy.

Is national democracy connected with socialism as the ultimate goal? The programme of the CPT says yes. Our party proceeds in this respect from Lenin's following conclusion: 'Whoever wants to reach socialism by any other path than that of political democracy, will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the economic and the political sense.'<sup>4</sup> But by discussing this problem, we are touching on another.

The necessary minimum of material prerequisites for socialism in Turkey is there.

However, the maturing of conditions for the transition to the new social system meets subjective as well as objective obstacles. While Turkish capitalism has attained a degree of development, class differentiation is not over yet. The proletarian core of the working class is surrounded by numerous semi-proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements. The peasantry is a very large class. The middle strata, too, constitute a vast group. This situation creates certain problems concerning working class alliances with other working people and the middle strata. Even so, the young working class of the country is gaining fast in organisation and militancy. We consider that if the workers joined in struggle according to the CPT policy line, which calls for national democracy, these shortcomings could be removed.

As the programme for democratic change provides for overcoming objective hindrances of this kind, it must necessarily envisage a socialist perspective. The general trend of the present epoch—a combination and intertwining of democratic and socialist tasks—also applies to Turkey. Thus the socialist perspective indicated by our programme for democratic change is not a mechanical addition of the word 'socialism' to this programme.

The socialist perspective of democratic change depends on the role of the working class. It cannot materialise without the working class exerting substantial influence on the political life of society, without its fighting at the forefront as a defender of both its own class interests and the national interests of the country.

#### Concrete Alternative

Lenin's advice to the effect that Communists need to creatively choose ways of leading the masses to the revolution and of accomplishing the transition to socialism with due regard to the national peculiarities of the country concerned, and his theory of the development of the democratic into a socialist revolution are set out in the *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* and other writings. They are a source of inspiration to us. Prior to the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin wrote that 'during the transition from the old to the new there may be "combined types" in the economy and in politics.'<sup>5</sup> The programme for national democracy put forward by the CPT with a view to doing away with the historical causes of Turkey's lag and with crises engendered by capitalism, paves the way for independent economic, social, political and cultural development. It is a programme for precisely a combined transition.

We visualise the economic aspect of the programme as follows: end the foreign dependence of the economy by leaning on national democratic rule for support; increase the leverage of the public sector that already holds an appreciable place in the national economy; increase its regulating function and reduce the multistructural character of the economy to the minimum in this way; protect the public sector as a form preparatory to the future transition to socialism, and democratise it so that it operates in the interests of the workers and other working people and not in the interests of monopolies, that it helps strengthen the national economy, and that worker control and participation in management are exercised in state enterprises.

In line with these ideas, the Sixth Plenum of the CC CPT (May 1986) worked out the programmatic document 'Economic and Social Policy Alternative of the CPT'. We are now preparing for a national party conference to discuss our programme for national democracy, including the above document, with broad democratic forces and to perfect it in collaboration with them.

When society is being shaken by deep crises, social and political forces search with much greater determination for ways leading to salvation. However, no section of the bourgeoisie is in a position to solve unaided the complicated economic, social and cultural problems facing Turkey.

The present situation offers the Turkish working class a historical chance to save

the nation and become its leader. 'Since the proletariat,' wrote Marx and Engels, 'must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *then* nation, it is so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.'<sup>6</sup> If the working class assumed what is a national mission and evolved the policy and programme needed for its fulfilment, it could use this rare opportunity of acting as the nation's leader offered it by history. The demonstrations in Izmir in February 1986, and in Eskisehir in June 1986, in which tens of thousands of workers joined for the first time after five long years of oppression and terror by the dictatorship, was a harbinger of the readiness of the working class to shoulder this historic mission.

The Communist Party is organising cooperation with all supporters of democracy. They also discuss problems of the country as they search for a way out of the situation and decide on their future course. We think there is a real basis for cooperation with democrats who prefer the capitalist road at the moment. It is their interest in transforming Turkey into a peace-loving country committed to greater international security. Furthermore, it is the growing contradiction between the interests of the Turkish nation, on the one hand, and the dictatorial regime and imperialism, on the other. Whatever our differences over the road to be taken by our people, we are at one in wanting to develop in conditions of democracy, independently, and in solving our problems without foreign interference. The socio-political forces appreciating these principles of national unification for peace and democracy are growing in our country.

At every stage of the class struggle, we see for ourselves once again the absolute need to approach vital problems of our movement realistically and to search for solutions to them. We must get rid of narrow-mindedness, sectarianism and dogmatism. Where Communists stop taking a critical view of reality, revisionist, opportunist sentiments get a chance, with their exponents trying to substitute criticism of Marxism-Leninism for a critical analysis of reality.

Theory is said to require the highest degree of scientific abstraction. Those who scale these heights can not only look father ahead, but also see the gist of the ongoing processes. Every social theory must, besides, be connected with actual life and the struggle of the masses. Marxism-Leninism meets the criteria of a truly scientific social theory. It is not a passive or contemplative view of the world. It is inseparable from practice. Lenin said that sphere of militant action is the best testing place for our theoretical views, the real test of a Communist being his knowledge of how, where and when to translate his Marxism into action.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New Edition, Moscow, 1986, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Milliyet*, March 28, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 172.

<sup>6</sup> Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 512-513.

# the party

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## Principles, Gains, Perspectives

*Sadek Hadjeres* – CC First Secretary,  
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IN carrying on the revolutionary struggle, each fraternal party looks back on its record and concentrates on the most crucial and telling events in its history from which lessons can be drawn for new battles.

In the half-century of its existence, the Marxist-Leninist party of the Algerian working class spent thirty-six years in the underground, and twelve of these in the period of colonial occupation. Those were years of intense and selfless struggle for freedom, land, bread, democracy, peace and socialism, years of severe trials. Algeria was under fierce colonial exploitation, and the key positions in the society were held by the French minority. But it was the French working people, their political parties and trade unions that brought the liberatory ideas of socialism to our country and into the midst of the Algerian emigrant workers in France.

The communist cells which first appeared in our country were organically linked with the French Communist Party (PCF) and were the first political organisations to proclaim the slogan of national independence for Algeria and the other colonies. The Communists stood up for the demands of the workers and peasants, awakening and developing the working people's consciousness, spreading the ideas of democracy, social progress and socialism, and came out in defence of the rights of the oppressed peoples. They did all that at a time when all trade-union or political activity was banned and harshly put down.

At the same time, there were objective and subjective difficulties and obstacles in applying to Algeria the ideas of the Comintern concerning the role of communist parties in colonial countries. We believe that this matter needs to be studied in greater depth in view of the far-reaching consequences which this had for the Algerian Communists in the first decade of their activity.

In the second half of the 1930s, the democratic forces, notably the Communists, were faced with the task of setting up a broad front against the mounting tide of fascism in many countries. The danger was all the greater for our people, because by then the fascists had already infiltrated the Spanish, French and Italian colonies in North Africa (let us recall that Franco invaded the Spanish Republic from Morocco).

That was the situation in which the constituent congress of the Communist Party of Algeria (PCA) in October 1936 took the stand of proletarian internationalism in tying in the struggle for liberation from the colonial yoke with action in defence of the vital social demands of the popular masses and the anti-fascist struggle.

The Communists worked hard together with the European organisations of the Popular Front to unite the Algerian patriots and, in particular, took part in the founding of the nation-wide patriotic Moslem Congress and in its work. With its numerous grassroots committees, it fought vigorously for the extension of the Algerians' political rights, respect for their national identity, their Arab tongue and Moslem religion, which the colonialists tried to suppress in various ways.

Under the pro-fascist Vichy regime, our party was subjected to the most brutal repression: Communists were imprisoned, deported, and executed; many of our comrades, including party leaders were killed. Following the Anglo-American landing in North Africa in 1942, the Algerian Communist Party<sup>1</sup> joined in the fight against the Italian and German fascists.

From 1936 to 1946, our people acted together with the working people of France, and the French and international anti-fascist movement, and won some of its first social and political rights, which were obviously fragile and ineffective, but which created the basis for the national liberation struggle. The new balance of forces in the world arena after the rout of Nazism gave greater scope to the struggle, and an uprising erupted in Algeria on May 8, 1945, the day of victory over fascism. It involved tens of thousands of people demanding independence for their country. The uprising was fiercely put down by the colonialists. The Algerian Communist Party, like the PCF, was under the impression that the uprising had been engineered by pro-fascist circles, but both parties later changed their assessment and organised resistance to the barbarous repression.

In July 1946, the PCA amended the strategic goals of its struggle in the light of an analysis of the upswing in the popular patriotic movement produced by the May events. It overcame its reformist mistakes and its underestimation of the nationalities question. These errors were connected mainly with the influence, however it may be justified, of a sort of 'Franco-centrism', which continued to have a strong effect on our party, although it had already been constituted as an independent organisation in 1936.

Our party joined vigorously in organising powerful action by workers, peasants, unemployed and clerical workers, who were supported by other social strata, among them artisans and merchants. Their joint struggle made the working people of town and country conscious participants in the battle for national liberation.

The trade unions were tying in ever more closely their action for economic and democratic goals with national political demands. Algeria's General Association of Trade Unions was formed in 1954, at a conference of trade union organisations affiliated with France's General Confederation of Labour (CGT).

The party did much in starting the movement for the development of Algerian culture on the basis of the national and the French languages.

The Communists were members of the Algerian Front in Defence of and Respect for Liberties (FADRL), which brought together all the national parties, the CGT trade unions, and the Association of Oulamas.<sup>2</sup> Despite the spread of reformist trends within it, the FADRL was a milestone on the way to the establishment of a nation-wide front of struggle for independence.

Such a front, which became known as the National Liberation Front (FLN), was forged in the flames of the armed struggle against the colonialists. From the very first day—November 1, 1954—participation in it became the main form of our struggle. The Communists threw themselves into the battle, although they were not prepared well enough for it in practical terms.

The party sought to rally the patriots round the National Liberation Front and called on its members in the areas of the uprising to join the FLN fighters. At the same time, the Communists gave the insurgents political support by legal means, which it was still possible to do in the early months after the start of the revolution. Despite the persecution, the arrests of leading party cadres, the censorship and the confiscation of some issues of its papers.

Here one had to face preconceptions and vacillations on the part of nationalistic-minded leaders of the armed resistance, who feared any broad involvement in it of PCA members, and demanded that they should renounce their views. Our party then set up its own armed organisation, the 'Fighters for Liberation'. We continued simultaneously to call for the cohesion of the patriotic forces and did our utmost to help the FLN's struggle.

As a result, the FLN and the PCA concluded an agreement in June 1956 on the Communists' joining the ranks of the National Liberation Army (ALN) under the political leadership of the FLN. But in contrast to other, nationalistic parties, almost

all of which gradually disappeared from the political scene. (with the exception of the Algerian National Movement, led by Messali, which entered into an armed conflict with the FLN), the Communists did not give up their own independent activity.

Hundreds of Communist fighters—workers, peasants, intellectuals, rank-and-file party members and leaders, including CC members, and thousands of PCA sympathisers, especially in the rural areas where it had its organisations—rose resolutely to the armed struggle. Many were guillotined, tortured, incarcerated, interned, expelled from the country, and suffered from the terrorist attacks of the OAS.<sup>3</sup> Throughout the war of liberation until the winning of independence, the PCA acted in accordance with the line set forth in its letters to the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic<sup>4</sup> in November 1958, and bent every effort for the better mobilisation of the masses and the raising of the level of their political consciousness. That this was the correct line was confirmed by the mammoth popular demonstrations in December 1960, which marked the turning point in the war. They were of invaluable assistance to the ALN, which found itself in difficult straits, having had to fight the French colonial troops with their vast superiority in manpower and materiel, and NATO's support. The demonstrations had wide international reverberations; they were an inspiration to the patriots and they consolidated the positions of Algeria's friends, including those in France, where the Communists exposed the colonialist propaganda lies aimed to confuse public opinion in every possible way.

The PCA's political independence enabled it more effectively to promote the mobilisation of the democratic forces and to organise their joint actions. In order to develop the working people's struggle in 1957, following the ban on the two major patriotic trade unions—the General Association of Trade Unions, and the General Association of Algerian Working People, which supported the FLN—the Communist Party called on the members of the former to unite with the latter. At the same time, it criticised the latter for joining the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, which is controlled by US imperialism. In this way, the PCA helped to preserve and further clarify the perspectives of the revolution, and to deepen the social content of the work in building a new Algeria.

The first few years of Algeria's independence showed that our party was politically prepared to tackle new tasks despite the loss of many of its best cadres in the course of the armed struggle. In April 1962, following the cease-fire, it published its programme for the new stage of the national democratic revolution, voicing support for the socialist option proclaimed by the FLN's Tripoli Programme in 1962. The whole-hearted acceptance by the working masses and young people of the party's slogans and initiatives showed that the PCA's sacrifices for the sake of its organisational independence had not been made in vain, for it was especially important in the trying summer of 1962, when the FLN split up and there were armed clashes between rival factions, posing the threat of a grave conflict.

Just when the PCA's forces were growing rapidly as a result of its tireless struggle to fulfil the tasks of independent development, the Ahmed Ben Bella government announced a ban on the party on November 30, 1962, on the pretext that a one-party system was being introduced in the country (something the Tripoli Programme did not provide for). In actual fact, the roots were much deeper and the ban was introduced under pressure from rightists, anti-democratic and anti-labour elements, which had capitalised on the widespread anti-communist preconceptions in the midst of the petty bourgeoisie. It was also a reflection of the authorities' urge to keep the working class movement under control and to curb its national and international political activity.

The one-party issue has invariably been the central one since the winning of Algeria's independence, and the controversy over it has often produced much



confusion. It is our view that the point of departure in assessing any political system, whether multi-party or one-party, should be the social classes it serves and the democratic opportunities it holds out to the working people for defending their interests. We are sure that it is not the one-party or the multi-party system; that is the touchstone of socialism, or of orientation towards it, but above all the role which the working class and the other strata of the working people have to play in government, the level to which democracy has been developed, and the extent to which the people are assured of economic, social and political rights.

Some saw the one-party system—often quite sincerely—as a means of blocking the bourgeoisie's way to power and safeguarding national interests. In practice, however, it was also frequently used to fetter efforts in mobilising the democratic forces, and to limit the role and representation of working people and their organisations in the sphere of production in managing the affairs of state. But the experience of many countries shows that it is the growing activity of the working people enjoying democratic freedoms in every sphere of life that helps reliably to fend off the onslaught of capital, and safeguard national interests against the encroachment of imperialism.

That is why, from the very beginning of Algeria's free existence, our party has called for the establishment—irrespective of the existing institutions—of a united action front of all the progressive anti-imperialist forces. We did not rule out that the ruling party would have the leading role in it in the whole range of practical action at the current stage. In accordance with this line, so long as the balance of forces within the present institutionalised system gives enough room for anti-imperialist unity of action, the Communists have flexibility and variously used every opportunity for conducting their own independent activity for the benefit of the working people, for the cause of democracy, social progress and scientific socialism. We are aware of the restrictions being imposed on this activity and keep assessing them.

Even after 1962, the PCA carried on its active work in multiple forms, without using its acronym or issuing its central periodical (the daily, *Alger Républicain*, which we published, was officially not a party organ).

The party gave resolute support to the first important measures in nationalisation, primarily of the French colonialists' large landed estates. It fought successfully to extend the social and democratic rights of the working people, the young, students, and women, and their mass organisations whose activity was impeded by diverse anti-democratic measures. We took care to educate young Communists and party cadres, many of whom had fought in the ranks of the FLN and the ALN, and had joined the party after independence.

At that time we had to overcome numerous obstacles, pressures and provocations from the rightist circles, and also from some elements essentially progressive but professing conceptions of authoritarianism. The pressure on the party became most pronounced after the coup d'état of June 19, 1965, when power was taken by a motley political coalition, including populist-minded revolutionary democrats and right-wing conservatives, who were at one in rejecting or curtailing the progressive Algiers Charter, adopted by the FLN party congress in 1964. The anti-communists within the coalition managed to disrupt the cooperation between the FLN and the Communists. *Alger Républicain* was closed down, and attempts were made to prevent our comrades from working in mass organisations. The rightists jeopardised the social and democratic gains of the preceding period (for instance, they returned the lands to some of the big Algerian landowners who had been dispossessed for their collaboration with the colonialists, etc.).

Before the coup d'état and in the early months after it (between June 1964 and January 1966), the Communist Party was in dire straits, feeling strong pressure from its class adversaries, and even from its objective allies, including the closest ones,

pressure designed to force the Communists to give up their independent activity.

In an effort to keep the progressive forces united, the PCA analysed some aspects of the situation before and after June 19, 1965, even if it did so not quite correctly: it overestimated the successes of the first three years of independence, and also the potentialities of the stage ahead. The Communists did not quite manage to distance themselves from the FLN's outrunning of events and its anti-democratic practices characteristic of that period. Our party did not make a sufficiently clear-cut distinction between the patriotic, anti-imperialist circles, and the conservative, reactionary elements in the coalition. Within the framework of the Popular Resistance Organisation (ORP), it concluded an alliance with only one faction of the FLN party, namely, that which contested the legality of the new power, and displayed a readiness to cooperate with the Communists.

In order to strengthen the positions of the anti-imperialist forces, which had been weakened after June 19, the party began resolutely to put forward national-democratic tasks of vital importance for our people. It called for the unity of all the patriots, regardless of their attitude to the June events.

The PCA issued a statement on January 26, 1966, voicing its resolve to preserve an independent working class party, and to join other patriotic forces in stepping up the struggle for building a new socialism-oriented Algeria. The Communists once again publicly made known their existence, now under the name of Socialist Vanguard Party of Algeria (PASA), which was open to everyone who wanted socialism, including those who had earlier taken a prejudiced attitude to the PCA, while professing their adherence to Marxism-Leninism. The principled tenets, forms and methods of the party's work and the principles of its organisational structure were improved and corrected.

The party conducted its class and patriotic line firmly but flexibly. In order to assert its own existence, however, it had to go through some severe trials to fend off the attacks of reaction, and to resist manifestations of narrow hegemonism. From 1965 to 1971, the PASA was subjected to brutal repression: Communists, and even members of their families, were imprisoned, tortured, harassed by the courts, and subjected to various other kinds of discrimination. But despite the persecution, we fought consistently for further advance in satisfying the Algerian people's aspirations. For a long time, the party's slogans were considered to be 'subversive', but the Communists' stand brought them closer to the revolutionary democrats who had come to see the justice of our ideas from their own experience, and this applies above all to the revolutionary-democratic elements in the People's National Army (ANP), whose interests were voiced by President Boumediene.

As a result of mass popular pressure, and the joint actions of the ANP's consistent anti-imperialist wing and our own party in 1971, Algeria's development reached a historical turning point: the oil and gas industry was nationalised, an 'agrarian revolution' announced, and 'socialist management of enterprises' introduced. These measures were resisted by a section of the country's top leadership, and also by the state and FLN party apparatus. The Communists and the FLN's progressive wing responded by mobilising all their forces to consolidate and deepen the measures for developing the economy and ensuring social progress.

In the 1970, we organised a volunteer movement, mainly involving students and other young people, to put through the agrarian reform, and insisted on the democratisation of mass, particularly young people's organisations. The PASA came out for the adoption of a revolutionary-democratic National Charter oriented towards the socialist perspective. We roused positions for the state sector, for developing the national potential, and beating back the multifarious and insidious penetration of the Algerian economy by the transnational corporations. At the same time, the Communists also warned against any attempts to outrun events.

Relying on the activity of its rank-and-file party members and masses of working people, and working for alliance with all patriots at every level, the PASA made a tangible contribution to the efforts of the most progressive leaders of the country in renewing the FLN party on a democratic basis and also in democratising the ANP and bringing it closer to the people through the introduction of a 'National Service'.<sup>5</sup>

Our party advocated a more consistent anti-imperialist foreign policy, notably within the framework of the non-aligned movement, and Algeria's broader cooperation with the USSR and the other socialist-community countries.

With the unity of action by the anti-imperialist forces and the growing (even if inadequate) democratisation of mass organisations, some party leaders and cadres who had been in the underground from 1965 were able to resume their public activity in November 1974, although the PASA itself has never been officially legalised.

We continued to explain the party's positions after the regrettable demise of President Boumediene, in an effort to unite the progressive forces. These efforts did much towards the re-affirmation by the Fourth Congress of the FLN party in January 1979 of the essential progressive orientations of the preceding period.

But these successes did not go to our head. We did not lose sight of the difficulties and the shortcomings in our work. We did not always find the right answers or respond swiftly enough in the mass-addressed party slogans to the new problems generated by the society's development. For various objective and subjective reasons, our organisational and educational work did not always yield the desired results. But we always stood up for our party's independent activity for the benefit of the working people and of the whole country and in the interests of the anti-imperialist struggle.

Developments were quick to bear out the correctness of the party's course. Despite the various difficulties and mistakes, our party turned out to be best prepared for resisting, together with other committed patriots, the line of gradually moving away from consistent struggle against imperialism, and for advance along the way of non-capitalist development, a trend which gradually crystallised among certain circles in the early 1980s. That revolution was itself linked with changes in the situation in the region and in the world.

Serious disproportions, compounded by the demographic evolution, appeared in the country's economic development. There was a growth of contradictions between the social, democratic and cultural aspirations of the masses, and the narrowness of the official approach. To this should be added the stepped-up subversion by reaction, speculating on religious sentiments and the popular discontent for their own self-seeking ends. That being so, we had no right to underestimate the danger of the slide to the right which had been in evidence in various spheres of Algeria's official policy over the past several years, a policy which, nevertheless, continued to have an anti-imperialist potential.

Some have tried to justify this slide on the plea of there being a need to opt for a more 'realistic way' and to keep 'an equal distance between the two extremes'. The fact is, however, that the difficulties spring mainly from the growing economic and political influence of various strata of the bourgeoisie (bureaucratic, parasitic, liberal), which has grown stronger in the presence of the state sector.

Our party has closely analysed the various objective reasons for this backsliding. We are aware of the difficulties of the tasks facing the government, and understand and support some of the technical and organisational measures which are inevitable for consolidating and protecting our economy. Still, the PASA is not responsible for the overall orientation towards the so-called third way, which makes the principal gains of the working people most vulnerable. Nor can the Communists accept the diktat which wants to impale us on the horns of this dilemma: unconditional support for the government, whatever it may do, or total and systematic opposition to it.

The party is carrying on its own work of education and mobilisation, but that has not prevented it from putting constructive proposals before the working masses and the state leadership. We support any initiatives meeting the interests of national independence, developing the productive forces, consolidating the state sector, promoting social progress, democracy and a fair distribution of the national income, and intensifying the anti-imperialist struggle and the movement for peace.

The Communists do not make these initiatives and practical steps contingent on a socialist option, for the essential thing is that they should objectively meet the national interests and those of the working people. We addressed a proposal to the latest extraordinary congress of the FLN in December 1985 concerning a joint action programme.

However, such unity of action is not contingent on 'unity of thought' or on any ideological preconditions. That is all the more so when official propositions in the sphere of ideology, judging by the content of the National Charter, adopted early this year, have become even more ambiguous. The new edition of the Charter is an ideological mosaic marked with contradictions which could be used by the adherents of any trend, even of the anti-socialist one, to vindicate their position. At the same time, in the sphere of practical politics, the party has outlined a number of points and tasks round which there could be contact of interests, an approximation of opinions, and an arrangement of joint actions by a broad spectrum of political forces. In this sense, the PASA's call for a 'yes' vote in the January 16, 1986, referendum on the new edition of the National Charter was much more a vote in favour of unity of action by the patriotic and progressive circles than a vote for the new ideological content of the Charter.

In the face of the stepped-up militaristic moves and imperialist economic pressures, we have devoted much attention to foreign-policy problems. Our country's stand in such international bodies as the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and OPEC, its initiatives on restoring unity within the Palestine Resistance Movement, and its efforts aimed to bring the Maghreb countries closer together meet the requirements of resisting imperialist acts. The results of the meeting between General Secretary of the CPSU CC Mikhail Gorbachov and President Chadli Bendjedid of Algeria in March 1986 testify to the existence of large reserves for expanding our country's cooperation with the socialist community. Progress here cannot depend on the short-term outlook or be confined only to a period of growing danger to Algeria's sovereignty from imperialism. Solid ties with the socialist states must become a strategy, because they meet the interests of our people, the countries of the region and the world-wide anti-imperialist front. The PASA will continue working to strengthen these ties, guided by the long-standing traditions of proletarian solidarity.

The Algerian Communists have always been true to proletarian internationalism, which they have blended in their activity with profound concern for the national interests and for those of the working people and popular masses. Back in the 1920s, the Communists organised demonstrations for an end to the imperialist intervention against the young Soviet Republic, and in defence of the Moroccan patriots in the Rif Republic. Our people and its working class are proud of the fact that in the 1930s hundreds of Algerian volunteers fought on the side of the Spanish Republicans in the international brigades. We remember that throughout the long years of France's colonial war in Indochina, thousands of Algerian dockworkers refused to load a single ship supplying the interventionists in Vietnam. Among our recent acts of solidarity was the protest against the imperialist Zionist aggression in Lebanon and the piratical US raid on Libya.

For its part, during the war of liberation and after the winning of independence, the Algerian people felt the strong support of the progressive forces of the world for its own anti-colonialist revolutionary struggle.

In this era of the scientific and technical revolution, which has made the most diverse problems more interconnected with each other than ever before in the past, even the solution of what are purely internal problems in each country largely depends, in one way or another, on its international environment and its position in the international arena. That was amply demonstrated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the congresses of the other fraternal parties.

The PASA supports the Algerian government's initiatives aimed to strengthen cooperation between the anti-imperialist forces and reiterates: there can be no economic or social development in the present epoch without peace. Those who seek progress must carry on an active struggle for disarmament and peace—in their own region and on the globe as a whole.

On the issue of a new international economic order, we are firmly convinced that it cannot be established merely through a 'dialogue' with imperialism. Success here depends on committed struggle by all the anti-imperialist forces. This is all the more important for Algeria, whose economy suffers ever more acutely from the grave consequences of the crisis of the world capitalist system.

In the Maghreb, our party is working to strengthen unity of action by the popular masses, for greater solidarity between all the progressive forces and organisations in the region, relations of peaceful coexistence and mutually advantageous cooperation between the states of the Maghreb, and a settlement of the ongoing conflicts by political means. We want to see North Africa and the Mediterranean nuclear-free, all the foreign bases in the region dismantled, and all the foreign navies withdrawn from the Mediterranean.

We are sure that Algeria's activity in the international arena cannot be confined to purely diplomatic acts. It must involve the masses and social organisations, so as to demonstrate the people's will and resolve to fight against imperialism and give added weight to the country's official line.

In the light of our wide experience over the half-century, our party will go on striving to have its activity meet the level of the problems facing the working class and the whole Algerian people in domestic and foreign policy. It will do even more to muster its forces, improve its organisation, educate new cadres, and improve the quality of party work.

<sup>1</sup> In 1943, the Communist Party of Algeria was renamed the Algerian Communist Party (PCA).—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Set up in 1931 by patriotically-minded religious leaders and intellectuals.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Organisation armée secrète, an ultra-colonialist terrorist outfit.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> Set up on September 19, 1958.—*Ed.*

<sup>5</sup> The involvement of young ANP servicemen in labour activity, such as building, work on the farms, etc.—*Ed.*

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## Safeguarding National Interests

*Randolfo Banegas* — CC member,  
Communist Party of Honduras (CPH)

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THE Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Honduras was held in the strictest secrecy. The proceedings opened with a tribute to the memory of fallen comrades and a salute to comrades who had for many years fought courageously for the cause of the working class, risking their lives and at great sacrifice.

This congress, held at a dramatic time for the country and for the destiny of the democratic, popular movement, was an event of exceptional significance in that it

gave a fresh impetus to our people's struggle for social emancipation and national liberation. Further, the Honduran Communists regard their congress as a modest contribution to strengthening the position of the planet's revolutionary, democratic, and progressive forces opposed to imperialism and reaction and acting for world peace.

The preparations for the congress were drawn out on account of the repression that rained down on people's organisations, particularly the CPH, and became increasingly brutal as North American troops occupied Honduran territory. Moreover, as was self-critically recognised by the delegates, the long interim (more than eight years have elapsed since the preceding congress) was due to inner-party divergences that surfaced after the Central Committee's plenary meeting of February 1980. This plenary meeting approved the modifications in the party's political line concerning the ways and means for winning power. The validity of the plenary meeting's decision had to be upheld and explained in the course of a tense ideological struggle. In the final analysis the party closed ranks as the congress drew near. The atmosphere reigning at the congress made it possible to work out a consensus on cardinal issues such as the assessment of the situation in the region and the role of Honduras in imperialism's strategy, the character of the immediate tasks confronting the Communists and all other revolutionaries in the country, the attainment of unity of left-wing forces on the basis of a common political platform, and the forms and methods of organising the party's activities among the people.

On account of the situation in which the congress was convened, the number of delegates was confined to an essential minimum of the most tempered and prestigious Communists. Nevertheless, this was one of the most representative forums in our party's history.

The delegates spoke with commitment on all the items on the agenda: the debate on the CC keynote report delivered by the General Secretary Rigoberto Padilla Rush, the drafts of the modified Programme and Rules of the CPH (these documents had to be updated in accordance with the imperatives of the new historical situation and the tasks confronting us), the Platform of Patriotic and Democratic Struggle, the plan of concrete actions in the policy of alliances, and the nominations of candidates to leading bodies. In the frank debates delegates spoke without constraint of what had been achieved, of shortcomings, and of errors in the party's work, and moved suggestions for correcting these errors.

The assessment of the international situation reiterated the party's view that imperialism, North American imperialism in the first place, is chiefly responsible for its steep deterioration. The USA's bellicose, adventurist policies are obstructing the attainment of peace, security, and disarmament. The so-called Strategic Defense Initiative, providing for the militarisation of outer space, threatens humankind's existence. Reagan's plans, delegates noted, have a dual purpose: to tilt the existing military-strategic equilibrium in favour of the USA and still further increase the super-profits of the armaments-manufacturing corporations. The flashpoints on the planet are a serious menace to universal peace. The direct responsibility for fuelling these flashpoints likewise devolves on imperialism. The creation of hotbeds of tension and the kindling of local conflicts are part and parcel of its strategy.

In direct contrast to this, the keynote report stated, is the constructive policy of peace, security, and disarmament pursued by the Soviet Union and the other socialist states. A high evaluation was given of their many initiatives and the Peace Programme put forward by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. It was stressed that the socio-economic achievements of the socialist countries were of immense significance as the material foundation for the defence of peace and detente. Delegates expressed profound gratitude to the USSR and the entire socialist community for their support for the struggles of the peoples of Latin America, Asia, and Africa against social and

national oppression.

In the context of the capitalist system's general crisis the congress examined the distressing economic condition of Third World states, the foreign debt problem, Latin American integration, and the establishment of a new international economic order. Delegates noted the great significance of Fidel Castro's contribution to working out a stand on these problems. The conclusions drawn by him give the oppressed nations a weapon against the common enemy and open up the possibility of forming broader alliances and enforcing democratic social reforms.

The congress noted with gratification that in recent years there has been an upturn of the revolutionary and democratic movements of Latin America and that their prospects are linked to the inescapable downfall of the dictatorships in Chile and Paraguay. It welcomed the triumphant advance of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions and expressed confidence that the patriots of El Salvador would ultimately be attended with success.

Much attention was given at the congress to the situation in Central America and the Caribbean. This region now plays an important role in the development of the battles for liberation in Latin America. It is there that imperialism is pursuing its 'neoliberalist' course with unspeakable brutality and insolence as though it were acting in its own backyard. The USA has drenched small Grenada with blood, destroying the social and political gains of its people, depriving that country of its independence and sovereignty, and pushing it back into the colonial past. A similar lot has been planned by the White House for Nicaragua.

Washington, delegates said, is denying Central American republics the right to any democratic and social changes, and is obsessed with the insane idea of reversing the revolution in Cuba. In implementing this policy, North American imperialism is having recourse to blackmail and undisguised interference in the affairs of sovereign nations, massively attacking them on the economic, political, ideological, and other fronts. All the indications are that the developments in Central America are leading to direct armed intervention by the Pentagon. Evidence of this is, in particular, the decision of the US Congress to allocate 100 million dollars to fund the Nicaraguan 'contras', a decision tantamount to approval of President Reagan's adventurist intentions.

However, delegates did not exclude the possibility of favourable changes in the balance of strength facilitating social transformations. International solidarity with the peoples of Central America and with the efforts of the Contadora group and the nations supporting it is of immense significance.

Nonetheless, the situation remains extremely tense. It is vital, delegates noted, that additional efforts be made to settle the conflict in the region by peaceful, political means and spike the aggressive designs of the North American strategists.

In the obtaining situation, it was said at the congress, the Honduran Communists bear a huge responsibility for the destiny of their country. Following the victory of the Sandinist revolution in Nicaragua, Honduras has been given a special place in the White House's plans. This is due to its geographical location and to the fact that the fall of the Somoza dictatorship has left a vacuum in the system of North American domination in the region.

Within a short span of time Honduras has been turned into a huge Pentagon military base, the principal strongpoint of the counter-revolution in Central America, and a concentration centre for surviving Somoza cutthroats and mercenary thugs conducting raids into Nicaragua.<sup>1</sup> Our country is today, to all intents and purposes, occupied by North American troops and Nicaraguan 'contras'.

To put its sinister plans into effect the Reagan administration is holding one military exercise after another (since February 1982 there have been over 30 such exercises in Honduras with the participation of some 70,000 North American

troops). These exercises differ from each other in code-name, magnitude, duration, and locality. Essentially, they are unceasing manoeuvres whose sole objective is to throttle the liberation movement in the region and prevent further revolutions.

In infringing upon the national interests of Honduras, North American imperialism has gained control of its ruling circles, political parties, and armed forces. For their part, many members of the oligarchy have associated themselves with the imperialists, blinded by the illusion that subservience will be rewarded in the shape of abundant, multimillion dollar injections. They see this sort of alliance as the only way of containing the upsurge of popular actions.

Foreign occupation is the bleakest page of our society's modern history. The Pentagon generals and the US embassy are openly interfering in all aspects of Honduran domestic and foreign policy and imposing decisions congenial to themselves. Washington, states the Programme of the CPH, 'proceeding from its geopolitical and militarist vision of the social conflicts shaking the region, intends to reduce our country to the status of a protectorate and has already turned us . . . into an occupied nation divested of sovereignty and identity'.<sup>2</sup>

In the present situation, delegates said, priority is being acquired by the task of putting an end to the presence of North American troops and of the 'contras'. In addition, the Programme states that the social revolution in Honduras 'must inevitably go through the phase of hard-fought battles for the restoration of sovereignty and national dignity, which have been trampled by foreign invaders. It is therefore becoming a patriotic and national liberation struggle and an inalienable component of the common battles for socialism'.<sup>3</sup>

Honduras' conversion into an appendage of imperialism had adversely affected many aspects of its socio-economic and political life.

The republic is in the grip of a serious structural crisis. Its economy, our Programme states, bears all the hallmarks 'typical of an undeveloped and dependent capitalist country. It is being pillaged by North American imperialism, which uses diverse mechanisms for expansion and exploitation—transnational corporations and the International Monetary Fund and other international financial organisations. The main sectors of the Honduran economy—mining and some other industries, banking, export-oriented agriculture, and trade—are controlled by North American monopolies, and this is causing a chronic shortage of capital'.<sup>4</sup> In rural communities pre-capitalist relations of production persist and huge expanses of land are not cultivated. Small-scale industries predominate in the towns.

The administration of Roberto Suazo Cordova (1982-1986) inherited an ailing economy from the military regimes, an economy that went from bad to worse on account of the servile compliance by the 'civilian' governments with the neoliberal guidelines of the Chicago School and the prescriptions of the IMF. The situation has been still further aggravated by the corruption flourishing in the government apparatus and, above all, by the excessive inflation of the military budget and the outflow of capital (the growing sums needed to service the foreign debt, the expense of importing oil, the export of profits by transnational corporations, and the deposits of local businessmen and high-ranking officials in foreign banks).

The budget and balance of payments deficits (amounting to 300 and 250 million dollars respectively in 1985) are growing. The foreign currency reserves are melting, holding out the threat of a devaluation of the national monetary unit. The external debt has risen sharply, reaching 3,000 million dollars, a sum larger than the gross domestic product. To serving this debt the country has to pay 300 million dollars annually, which is equal to roughly 35 per cent of export earnings estimated at 850 million dollars.

The economic crisis is felt acutely in the social sphere. The people's purchasing power is steadily declining on account of the inflation. Of the able-bodied population



(roughly 1.2(0,000) persons) 37.5 per cent are totally unemployed and 26.5 per cent are partially unemployed. One-third of the entire population live below the poverty line. The neonatal mortality has soared to 98.5 per 1,000.

The facts show that all the development models imposed by North American imperialism 'have proved to be untenable, for they have not helped to end the crisis, which, far from being momentary, is of a structural and politico-institutional character. Under the capitalist system the ruling class is unable to meet the most pressing needs of our people. . . There is only one way to end this situation and give the country the prospect of all-sided development, and it is to *radically change the prevailing capitalist model*. To this end it is vital to carry out the first phase of the Honduran revolution, whose basic aims are to put an end to the domination of foreign monopolies in the economy, eradicate latifundism, and establish control over strategically important industrial facilities, the banks and so on.'<sup>5</sup>

The political situation in the country was closely examined at the congress. There have been significant political changes in Honduras since the last CPH Congress in 1977. The dictatorial regimes, in which the military were at the helm of state (latter half of the 1970s), were replaced by a liberal-militarist model of so-called limited democracy. Its distinctive feature is the 'democratic' facade (regular elections to representative bodies, a civilian president, the appearance of traditional parties on the forefront of the political scene, and so on). But all this is a cover for the 'national security' regime, in which the main levers are in the hands of the reactionary elite of the armed forces. Just one example will suffice to illustrate this. Although there was a constitutionally elected president, the nation's affairs were actually administered in the period from 1982 to March 1984 by a semi-fascist clique headed by General Alvarez Martinez. The situation has hardly changed under the present head of state, Jose Simon Azcona Hoyo. The military continue to hold a major place in the power structure, playing a significant role in the nation's political and economic life. As distinct from preceding decades when (formally, at least) the army's designation was to protect the nation's territorial integrity and sovereignty, today it performs two functions. The first is carry out a 'counter-insurgency' operation, in other words, to suppress actions by the people, and the second—to help the USA in its aggression against a fraternal republic, Nicaragua. For this the government gets dollar hand-outs from Washington that have enabled it to more than double the numerical strength of the armed forces in the past few years and upgrade their equipment and fire power.

The congress noted that together with the oligarchy and the traditional parties the army's right wing is directly responsible for the country's occupation by North American troops and for the anti-patriotic domestic and foreign policies. However, the armed forces are by no means a monolithic institution. They are heterogeneous, containing various trends, including progressive and democratic wing. It is not to be ruled out that in the course of a political crisis when the people's struggle begins to mount many members of this wing will side with the people.

The introduction of the liberal-militarist model of administration was accompanied by a hardening of the punitive operations against the working masses and their organisations. Prior to 1979 the repressions in Honduras were motivated, so to speak, by the interests of exclusively the Honduran ruling class. After the Sandinist revolution triumphed in Nicaragua, these repressions began to serve the aims and guidelines of chiefly North American imperialism, reaching an unparalleled scale. In keeping with the 'national security' doctrine the punitive agencies have been significantly enlarged and given wider functions. The forms and methods of their operations have been 'enriched'. There has been an escalation of politically motivated assassinations and of the number of kidnappings of opposition personalities, many of whom have disappeared without leaving a trace.

A network of 'defence committees' based on paramilitary units has been set up to

complement the existing state punitive apparatus. 'Anti-terrorist' legislation has been passed under President Suazo Cordova, and the judiciary has been turned into an accomplice of lawlessness—it refuses to look into complaints from citizens against abuses by the authorities.

In considering the state and level of the people's struggle, the congress noted that in spite of extremely unfavourable conditions this struggle has been mounting in diverse combinations of forms. At the close of the 1970s the people acted mainly to secure the satisfaction of their socio-economic grievances, but towards the middle of the 1980s these actions began to acquire a political hue. Socio-economic and political demands began to be coupled.

For all the casuistry of imperialism and reaction and despite the attempts of their agents to split the trade union movement the latter remains the locomotive of the people's struggle. Trade unions have, for example, played a key role in forming the Coordinating Committee of People's Organisations. The efforts of this committee, which on May 18, 1984 drew 30,000 people into the streets of the nation's capital, were largely instrumental in removing Alvarez Martinez from power.

On May Day there is a considerable upswing of popular activity. Most of the slogans under which the large rallies and marches are held call for a revamping of the economy, the resumption of the agrarian reform process, an improvement of the condition of working people, the democratisation of socio-political life, the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the restoration of national sovereignty and dignity. Almost a quarter of a million people turned out for the demonstration on the May Day centenary organised by three trade union centres.

Women play a prominent role in our people's democratic and patriotic movement. They are active in the work of the committees of relatives of persons who have disappeared.

A distinctive feature of all actions, it was noted at the congress, is the bent for unity at all levels, above all for joint actions by revolutionary and democratic organisations.

The congress formulated the party's basic tasks on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the situation on the international scene and in the country itself, of the alignment of class and social forces, and the experience of the people's struggle. They are telescoped in the new Programme of the CPH—'For National Independence, Democracy, Peace, and Socialism'.

The objective requirements of the nation's economic and political development, the Programme says, place a *democratic, national liberation revolution* on the agenda. The character of this revolution is predicted by the need for overthrowing the oligarchic minority regime (latifundistas and a section of the bourgeoisie), an ally of imperialism, bringing to power the bloc of political and socio-class forces representing the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, and terminating North American imperialism's predominance in the economic, political, cultural, and other areas of the nation's life.

The party sees the democratic, national liberation revolution as a necessary stage for creating the conditions for the building of socialism. It will be the fruit of the creative effort on the part of the broadest sections of the people, while its main motive forces will be the working class, the peasantry, and the middle strata of the urban and rural population.

The question of the ways, forms, and methods of struggle for power was closely analysed at the congress debate. The CPH believes that in the prevailing circumstances the liberation process will follow the channel of revolutionary armed violence in a people's revolutionary war. This conclusion, which takes national and international experience into account, is by no means tantamount to a negation of other forms of struggle, including a parliamentary struggle. On the contrary, it presupposes combining and intertwining these other forms.

However, the Honduran Communists did not confine themselves to mapping out exclusively strategic objectives. The congress approved the Platform of Patriotic and Democratic Struggle, which concretises the aims of the first phase of the revolution, a phase that is patriotic in content. This Platform envisages, first, the withdrawal of North American occupation troops and the Somoza gangs from the country, the immediate cessation of all US military exercises, the dismantling of US military bases, and the implementation of other steps aimed at restoring national dignity and sovereignty. Second, it calls for the adoption of a series of steps to end the economic crisis; these include the resumption of the agrarian reform, state subsidies for staple products and control over the prices on these products, and an increase of real wages. Further, it provides for a moratorium on the foreign debt and the use of the released funds for economic and social development and for financial assistance to small, medium, and large national enterprises. Third, the Platform proposes a democratic restructuring of society the granting of the right to set up political, trade union, and other organisations, non-interference by the army in their activities, including labour and other conflicts, and the proclamation of a full and unconditional amnesty for all political prisoners, emigres, and persons who have disappeared. Moreover, it calls for the nullification of 'anti-terrorist' legislation and other judicial instruments for suppressing the people, the disbandment of the repressive apparatus, and investigation into cases of the murder and disappearance of people, the punishment of those responsible for this, and the trial of Alvarez Martinez and of all persons implicated in the gruesome crimes that have been committed. Fourth, and last, it recognises the feasibility of establishing a pluralist political and ideological regime, pursuing a foreign policy of peace and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, terminating assistance to Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries, and supporting the efforts of the Contadora group.

The CPH regards this Platform as a sort of minimum programme, a basis for uniting revolutionaries, democrats, and patriots, of all persons, including the clergy, the military, and businessmen, who are not indifferent to their country's destiny. The Communists see a paramount task in setting up the broadest possible coalition of forces with the alliance between the working class and the peasants as its axis.

We are aware that these objectives are unattainable without a strong and military party. That is why at the congress there was a detailed discussion of questions linked to organisational and ideological work and to the ways and means of upgrading this work with account of the specific conditions dictating the need for combining conspiratorial, semi-legal, and legal activities.

At its Fourth Congress the CPH, which is a party of internationalists and patriots, reiterated its fidelity to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and its unshakable determination to translate into reality the hopes of many generations of Honduran revolutionaries, who have been fighting with dedication for their country's independence, freedom, and social progress.

<sup>1</sup> For details, see Rigoberto Padilla Rush, 'Democratic Essence of the Struggle Against Militarism'. *WMR*, No. 3, 1986.

<sup>2</sup> *Por la independencia nacional, la democracia, la paz y el progreso social. Programa del Partido Comunista de Honduras*, 1986, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5-6.

## Annals of Courage Line of the Revolution

Sardar Prithvi Singh Azad – veteran  
member of the Communist Party of India (CPI)

Last spring, when the 13th CPI Congress was greeting veterans of the struggle for the party's revolutionary cause, Sardar Singh, 93, was named first. This is what he told our journal about himself

I might as well begin with 1931 because that year my life entered what I would now describe as a new, meaningful period. Although I was close on forty I set out for Moscow on foot from Karachi, without passport or any other identification papers. I will tell you later why I did it.

It took me fully three months to reach Kushka. In Kabul I was held by the Afghan authorities but managed to escape, and after that I had no chance to stop for rest. By the time I arrived at the frontier I couldn't take off my shoes because my feet were bleeding. I made it clear to the first Soviet frontier guard I saw that I was an Indian revolutionary, and added that if I sat down I would hardly be able to get up. The guards brought me a pailful of warm water. I put my feet in it and when I finally took off my shoes my skin came off with them. They bandaged my sore feet right away, gave me some food and put me up for the night.

Some time around midnight, however, I was roused by two guards, who told me to get up.

"The wolf has a sheep's skin on but its teeth show just the same," one of them said.

Afterwards I understood that the guards had received a report saying that a dangerous spy was about to cross into Soviet territory. They mistook me for him, all the more because I had no papers, as I've said, carried a pistol and couldn't explain things properly. I was put in a cell where there were some men looking like Moslems. The probably took me for a 'true believer', and so they told me how they had been fighting against Soviet rule. They demanded that I should pray to Allah for the 'destruction of the infidels'. I pretended to pray. In the morning, however, when the guard unlocked the door I rushed to him.

"I'm not what you take me for," I said. "I'm a revolutionary. I had thought I could count on a warm welcome in the Soviet Union. But see what happened."

Shortly after that I was summoned to the commander, a stout man with smiling eyes.

"This is a big chief," I was told. "Tell him the truth, the whole truth, if you value your life."

I chuckled.

"What's so funny?"

"Why, we're in the Soviet Union, a country of workers and peasants, aren't we? How come you have so stout a chief here?"

They all burst out laughing, and you know that laughter helps ease tension. In short, we had a friendly talk and I was given two hours to put everything on paper and above all to explain why I had first called myself an Indian revolutionary and then also an American one.

Now is probably the time to tell you why I went to Moscow. In the process I'll have to go back to the earliest years of my life.

I was born in Punjab. My father, a landless peasant, had to emigrate to Burma in search of a better life for his family. In Burma as in India, a liberation potential was building up at the turn of the century. There was a movement for boycotting British goods. I eagerly took notice of all that as I grew up, longing to contribute together with my coevals to the fight against the colonisers. With the maximalism of youth, we

saw 'tit for tat' as the only way. It so happened that in 1908 the British colonial authorities hanged a Bengali terrorist of my age. Besides, they gave a six-year prison term to a noted Indian for writing an article in the boy's defence. I admired the example set by the two Indians. I resolved to join the revolutionaries and fled to Hongkong. There I got in touch with young Indians, Filipinos and Burmese who longed like myself to fight for freedom even at the price of their lives.

"Go to the United States if you want your country to win freedom," people in the know told me. "We are now mustering forces over there."

In 1909, my new comrades helped me make my way to the States. There I really found an organisation of Indian revolutionaries who wanted to free their country from the British yoke. I joined it and was soon one of its more active members. We worked everywhere, collecting money to buy arms. We also took part in the American labour movement. However, the important thing was that we planned to go back to India when the time came to launch an uprising, nor did we doubt that the people would support us. When World War I broke out we decided that now was the time, and so 150 volunteers sailed for India after taking what I now know were naive precautions.

We cherished great hopes but had a poor idea of the situation in India, so that nothing came of our plans. The greater part of the 'American' group was arrested on arrival. A court sentenced 24 revolutionaries, including myself, to death by hanging, and the rest got life sentences. Nevertheless, the seeds sown by our attempt at revolt had already sprouted in India, and our case caused a big stir. As there was a war on, the colonisers found it expedient to revise the sentences, with the result that seven men were hanged and the rest found themselves in prison on one of the Andaman Islands.

We were all in solitary confinement in that terrible prison. Regulations were outrageous. When one of my fellow-inmates, a man 20 years older than I, was beaten to death I called a hunger strike in protest. I refused to take food or drink or to talk. I lay on the bare floor of the cell day and night. Trying to break me, my jailers fed me through the nose. This lasted for five-odd months. I lost over 40 kilograms, or nearly half my weight. But I had my comrades' backing and held out. I feel strong enough even now, at 93, so you can imagine what I was like 70 years ago.

All of us were young and strong and offered resistance as best we could. When British soliders beat us we hit back, refusing to give in even to threats of using arms. Several prisoners managed to escape by locking up their guards. In Delhi a high-ranking British official described the inmates of Andaman prison as a 'pack of wolves'. This is why the British decided to scatter us over various prisons.

I was transported to Madras and from there to a small town in southern India. On arriving there, I realised that the jailers weren't overzealous. One night when the guard on duty fell asleep I made my way to freedom in spite of my irons. It was the rainy season and I had to walk or wade as the case might be. At last I reached a village and found myself in front of a dark peasant hut. It was quiet inside. What was I to do? I couldn't speak the language of the province. I moved my feet and the jingle of my irons woke up the housewife. She came out and saw me, and then she woke her husband and lit a lamp, and both stared at me in surprise. I made a sign to indicate that first of all I wanted to get rid of my irons. But they were poor peasants who had no suitable tool. Using a stick and a stone, we knocked off my irons with great difficulty, adding to my sores. As my clothes hung down in shreds I was compelled to discard them. That left me with nothing on but a loincloth because my hosts couldn't lend me any clothes. I was grateful for the little food they offered me.

I trudged on at random in the dark but at daybreak I was back to where I had waded waist-deep through rainwater. I was so exhausted that it was all I could do to get to a dry place. There I was overtaken by pursuers and sentenced to another 30 years'

imprisonment, this time for trying to escape. The court put me down in its records as a dangerous and incorrigible criminal. This happened in 1921.

A year later the authorities decided to transport me and another three revolutionaries to a safer place, Nagpur prison in central India. We were put on a train with nine guards. We had a long way to travel and on taking my bearings I made up my mind to try once more to regain my freedom.

At a suitable moment I asked to be taken to the toilet. The policeman guarding me stayed at the door outside. I had only a few minutes at my disposal. I tried to open the window but it was safely locked, except that above it there was a large fan. I managed to force it and squeezed myself through the hole, feet first. I dropped out of the train just when it had slowed down because there was a bridge ahead. I got away almost unhurt.

The place was the vicinity of Amravati, a city in the state of Maharashtra. I knocked on the door of the very first house I came across. It turned out to be a student hostel. I was lucky because nationalist, anti-British sentiment was strong among the students. I ventured to come to the point without offering any explanation.

"Take me to the leader of your city's independence fighters," I said. "It's very important, believe me."

To be sure, the students could have taken my request for a provocation but something in my behaviour made them trust me. Without asking any questions, they took me to whom they called the 'doctor'. Well, I thought, it's too late to retreat, and so I told him everything about who I was and where I came from. He turned out to be a real doctor, a courageous patriot. My sores were seen to, I was given shelter and some of the wherewithal to begin underground work.

Incidentally, I imagined at the time that I owed the support people gave me in the most diverse, occasionally critical circumstances, to a sort of personal magnetism. Subsequently I realised, of course, that it was merely an expression of the liberation spirit characterising every section of society.

They helped me get to Bombay, where I was to live under a false name. I needed a suitable job, one that would place me among young people. My experience urged me to infuse them with freedom-loving, patriotic ideas. I decided to have a go at gymnastics as a coach because I had been strong and deft from childhood. The time came when I even fitted out a simple gym which served me as a dependable livelihood and the mainstay of my underground activity.

Eight years went by. The police were unable to track me down but the Communists found out my whereabouts. They strove to win over national revolutionaries, telling them that terrorism is the wrong way to freedom and that only by organising the workers and peasants is it possible to free the country from the colonisers and establish people's rule. Needless to say, they knew my record—from arrest to escape—like many other people in India. As for me, I looked on the Communist Party with distrust at the time because there were too persistent allegations about the Communists 'getting gold from Russia'. But the man who contacted me was an esteemed revolutionary and nothing could make me distrust him. He proposed a meeting with his leader in Allahabad. After a long conversation there which badly eroded my homespun notions of the true road to freedom, I was advised to go to Russia to study Marxism-Leninism. "You've got a pistol," I was told, "but you must remember that knowledge is another revolutionary weapon. When you come back you'll be able to serve your country better than before." I remembered these words well. They served me as a guide on my difficult path.

And this explains why the year 1931 saw me on the Soviet frontier. I was allowed to travel on to Moscow.

Looking back at the time when I had another two chances to go to the Soviet Union and even wrote a book about that country (it was published in India), I smile when I

recall the naive ideas about Soviet reality I had in the past. Coming across people and looking closely at what seemed to be calm faces—one's face reveals a lot, you know—I couldn't help thinking in surprise: "Are these people real revolutionaries? The don't even carry arms. All they talk about is blast furnaces, power stations, harvests . . ." But the very same people soon brought it home to me that they were doing a really revolutionary job by building a new world. And when I was enrolled in the Communist University of Working People of the East, I began to see clear in the very laws governing life and revolutionary struggle.

I studied diligently, giving my all to it. The training of willpower and staunchness I had received in prison came in handy. Things were also made easier for me by the fact that instruction was carried on chiefly in English. Besides, my comrades helped me a lot. In short, I made a name for myself as a conscientious student and was admitted to the Bolshevik Party.

On graduation I decided to return to India without delay. I made a detour, going to Marseilles and then sailing for Pondicherry (it was a French enclave in India at the time). From there it was a stone's throw to Madras. I got there in the end, if not without adventures, by lulling the vigilance of the police. All I wanted after setting foot on my native soil was to get back to work as early as possible, to devote the knowledge I had acquired during my long absence to the liberation of my people, to the revolutionary struggle.

The local organisation of the Communist Party of India, which I joined, instructed me to move to Bombay again to work underground. It was certainly easier to maintain secrecy in a big, multinational city which I knew very well. We began to publish an illegal newspaper there. I had to do almost everything as a staff member—writing articles, circulating the paper, raising funds for its publication. We made progress, experiencing no serious setbacks. Gradually we came to the conclusion that it was time to add work in legal conditions to underground activity.

I must say that the Indian National Congress was very active by then. Pressure from the growing liberation movement made things difficult for the British colonisers. I told my party leadership that I would like to work in legal conditions.

"I think it's time," I said, "because every child can now tell the British outright what it thinks of them."

"What if you're arrested?"

"My arrest would merely add to public discontent. After all, my record is known to many."

The party approved my idea on the understanding that I should meet with Mahatma Gandhi first because if I were jailed again, his prestige among the people would serve our cause.

Gandhi asked me to tell my life story in detail.

"It would be dangerous for you to deliver yourself into the hands of the authorities because you have too eventful a record," he said after hearing it. "This time they might finish you off."

"I'm not afraid of that," I replied. "I want my example to inspire young people. Please make it known that I am here with you."

Although Gandhi advocated non-violent resistance, he hesitated for a long time. In the end he called up the Bombay police because he wanted to defend me before the authorities. But his intervention didn't help even after he had approached the highest-ranking colonial officials. I was arrested and sent back to prison with a sentence that was to run till 1966 for my previous 'crimes'.

Shortly after that, World War II broke out. In an effort to secure the Indians' support, the colonial authorities released the more prominent fighters for the liberation of the country. I was among those who were set free. Gandhi unexpectedly invited me to serve with him as an assistant. "I am apparently nearing the end of my

days," he said, "and I badly need people like you beside me." Yet he knew that I was a Communist. Our party leadership recommended me to accept the offer in order to maintain closer ties with the national leader. I stayed with him until the beginning of the mass movement calling upon the British to quit India. when the colonial authorities stepped up repression again and put me back behind bars along with many others.

Incidentally, in purely personal terms, those brief periods in between two imprisonments gave me the first respite after my studies. In 1943, when I was nearly fifty, I married—I'd had no such opportunity before. By now I have two grown-up children: a son who's a flyer and a daughter, a medical school graduate. My grandchildren are growing up too.

It was in 1947 that independence brought us Indian revolutionaries out of the colonisers' prisons for good. Everything changed and so did our struggle. The emphasis in it shifted to the social sphere, and internationally it concentrated on consolidating independence in a climate of peace. Together with other Communists of the older generation, who had gone through the school of underground activity and harsh trials, I continued working in the party, chiefly in the state of Gujarat. I participated for many years in the leadership of the peace movement. I hope my effort wasn't fruitless, to judge by the proportions the movement has assumed here in India.

However, it is too early to speak about it as a thing of the past. I go on helping the party even now that I've come back as an old man to my home state, Punjab, where I'm closer to my children. I meet with young people, all the more since I'm a counsellor in the Department of Education and also take part in the peace movement. I hope I will be fit enough to carry on, at least until I'm a hundred years old.

Looking back, I can see that my life has been following one and the same line, the line of the revolution. In telling you about my past, I wish to say this to the younger generation: "A Communist certainly needs courage and strength but above all he needs the conviction that comes of Marxist knowledge, and he must be able to take it to people, to translate ideas into revolutionary deeds. He has to learn this all his life."

## new experience

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### Our Interviews Reliance on Mass Opinion

*Triton Pashov* – BCP CC member, First  
Secretary of the Gabrovo District  
Party Committee

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Last April's 13th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) dealt with the need to remodel the style and methods of party work. Success, it was



**said, largely depends on the leading cadres' skill in public relations, and their willingness to listen and to awaken creative initiatives in the masses. Why is that now being given so much attention?**

THE BCP has always regarded close ties with the working people as the pledge of success in tackling social tasks, and that is also true today. Nor can it be otherwise: the Communists are the vanguard of the working class and of the Bulgarian people as a whole, and they do not conceive of party activity without reliance on broad strata of the population.

Lenin urged us to have a good knowledge and understanding of the masses, to develop an ability to take the right approach to them, and to win their total trust, so as to lead them to the goals ahead. Such an approach is especially meaningful now that the 13th Congress of the BCP has mapped out a challenging programme for the country's development over the next five years and over the longer term, until the year 2000. Radical changes are to be made in the economy and social policy, culture and way of life. Wide use of the advances of the scientific and technical revolution will help to highlight the advantages of socialism and to provide timely satisfaction of the people's steadily growing material, cultural and spiritual requirements. The party's goals will be translated into reality if every Bulgarian citizen accepts them as his and her own, and decides on the individual contribution to be made for their attainment.

Another reason is that, as the society progresses, bureaucratic practices, showmanship, indulgence of oneself and others, among other negative phenomena, will be regarded as increasingly intolerable. We still have some leaders who have forgotten their sacred trust as 'servants of the people'. Todor Zhivkov said at the Congress. If such things are to be eliminated, the working people must be more broadly involved in managerial decisions, and control over the activity of organisations, institutions and their personnel improved.

**How does the district committee implement in practice the party's line of further strengthening ties with the masses?**

Party governing bodies now make a point of taking much fuller account in their activity of the working people's wishes. Public opinion research has become a system. Referenda are more frequently held on matters of key importance for the development of the country as a whole, and of individual districts, populated localities and enterprises. There was a wide discussion by citizens, for instance, of the drafts of the new labour and family codes recently adopted by the People's Assembly of Bulgaria.

There is a sustained analysis in our district of the critical remarks and recommendations made at meetings of party and social organisations, at meetings with leaders, in the press, in the course of sociological studies, and so on. We try hard to avoid leaving anything useful without attention or practical implementation.

Problems of concern to the population are discussed in the course of regularly held general political days, on which party, state and economic management leaders go out to enterprises, institutes, schools and residential neighbourhoods to speak to the people and to explain the pressing problems in domestic and international life, and the substance of the latest decisions of the BCP CC, the government and the district committee. The same thing is done by local council deputies, who meet their constituents and report on the fulfilment of their mandates.

The party wants the leading cadres to carry on an honest, direct and frank conversation with the people and to settle matters on the spot. There are, of course, now and again some situations which require thorough analysis, which means more time to think things over and consider all the pros and cons. But when a decision has been taken, the persons concerned are informed of it in due time.

Those who attend such meetings now and again put forward proposals on a scale relating to the development of an entire city, district or industry, and these we usually put up for discussion by the party committee or the people's council. Thus, decisions have been taken over the past few years on the initiative of citizens to start several trolley-bus lines in Gabrovo, to remodel its high street, to search for additional sources of water supply, and to build the necessary installations.

Such political days benefit all those who take part in them. They help the leaders to gain a better knowledge of the mood and wants of the population, to respond to these without delay, and to discuss with the working people ways of correcting any shortcomings. All of this helps to turn the party's plans, calls and slogans into concrete deeds. The inhabitants of the district, for their part, obtain first-hand information, have an opportunity to settle matters of concern without delay, and to exert an influence on the content and style of the work of the governing bodies.

Reception days at enterprises and in the residential neighbourhoods are also held by BCP district and community committees on democratic lines: the working people are notified in advance of these days, and anyone who wishes to do so can have an appointment with the secretaries of the party organs, and specialists in economics, culture, public health and education. These person-to-person conversations give the visitors an opportunity to express their views on any matter, such as how to improve working and living conditions, more fully to assert the principle of social justice, and so on. All personal requests and critical remarks are considered without delay.

Reception days offer an effective means of combating bureaucratic practices, since some of the problems visiting citizens raise could well have been settled by local organisations on their own, without any prompting from 'on high'. Indeed, members of these travelling groups often have to do some blunt speaking with officials failing to meet well-justified demands in good time.

The work done has led to a reduction in the number of letters and oral complaints from citizens about a superficial approach to their problem on the spot, but we believe that there should be no such complaints at all. Utmost attention should be given to every well-justified remark and request, an approach that accords with the spirit of our party, an approach we shall apply without fail.

Here is yet another point. It has become the rule in the district for all cadres of the party apparatus to engage in political studies within their work collectives. If they are not to lose face, they must, first, be conversant with the problems of scientific communism, and to have a deep knowledge of the BCP's general line and current course, and second, help others taking part in the seminar to comprehend difficult questions and organically tie in theoretical propositions with the concrete needs of practice. Here again, living contacts between leaders and rank-and-file benefit everyone.

There are, of course, many other forms of work in which the party establishes its ties with the masses through a diversity of channels, but I have chosen those described above because they are relatively new for our district, but have already fitted well into our work and have produced an effect.

### **What difficulties have you had in remodelling party work? What needs to be further thought through and improved?**

The goal of the remodelling was determined by the 13th Congress of the BCP as follows: to create an ideological, political, moral and psychological climate in all the work collectives in which the introduction of scientific and technical innovations, the raising of labour productivity and the quality of workmanship, economies and thrift, sound organisation, order and discipline are asserted as the supreme social and moral duty. We think that for this it is especially important to enhance the standing of

the creative individual, to mould new moral criteria and models of behaviour, i.e., to turn ideological work into an effective factor behind social advance.

We regard the available experience as the starting point for moving ahead. The superficial approach and procrastination in the activity of our cadres need to be done away with. This means that they will have to raise their ideological and theoretical level and widen the scope of their learning, to enlarge their mental horizons, and improve their skill in the political education of the masses. We intend to give our leading cadres wider knowledge and better instruction, and to put at their disposal the necessary facts before they address mass audiences.

The population needs to be better informed about local developments, for now and again they know more about events in distant countries than about what is happening in their own city or township. Unless the working people are in possession of fresh and authentic information about local affairs, they cannot take the right attitude or display reasonable initiative. So there is a need for more openness. District and community decisions should be made known to everyone, instead of a narrow circle of activists or leaders.

Some persons in office avoid meeting the collectives of lagging enterprises or the inhabitants of cities or townships where everyday problems are not as well tackled out of a fear that they will have to hear much criticism and be held responsible in public for their mismanagement. On the other hand, some categories of the population—intellectuals, office workers, young people, housewives and old-age pensioners—come into contact with representatives of the organs of power less often than one should hope for. That is why the district Communists seek to improve the planning and organisation of such meetings, so as not to neglect a single collective or social group.

'Feedback' has become a household term with us, and it means taking ever fuller account of public opinion, and the people's wants in the practice of party leadership. It is a term which is a fairly accurate reflection of the natural process of our society's development, the process in which socialist democracy is deepened, and the ties between the party and the people are strengthened.

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## Documents

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### *South Africa*

#### **POPULAR POWER: THE SUPREME GOAL**

The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party (SACP) has issued a statement exposing President Botha's attempt to justify his declaration of a state of emergency by smearing the African National Congress (ANC) and the Communists, and their relationship with each other.

The revolt of the oppressed African population flows, not from 'international conspiracy' but from the people's determination to rid themselves of the incubus of apartheid, the document says. The SACP is a vital part of the liberation forces headed by the ANC. The Communists fully support the ANC in its aim to unite all the democratic forces for a revolution that will put an end to race discrimination in all its forms, restore the land and wealth of the country to the people, and guarantee democracy, freedom and equality of rights and opportunities to all.

The ANC and the SACP are independent organisations whose fraternal association has developed naturally over the decades, because they are joined in struggle against the same enemy. Communists who are members of the ANC are

subject to ANC discipline and carry out their duties in accordance with ANC directives. The SACP is in no position and has no wish to 'direct' the affairs of the ANC.

What then is the role of the SACP? In its view, the immediate struggle to destroy racist colonialism and to win national freedom is an essential part of the struggle for a future socialist South Africa. In this struggle, the key forces has always been, and will continue to be, the black working class in alliance with the masses of the landless rural people. It is this class which finds its most staunch champion in the Communist Party.

There are no grounds for competition or conflict between the ANC and the SACP, and President Botha is purely mischievous in his attempt to separate the Communists from those whom he calls the 'genuine nationalists' in the ranks of the ANC. This is the old imperialist policy of divide and rule, and Botha is resorting to the worn-out tactic of anti-communism in a futile bid to weaken the forces of liberation ranged against him.

The relationship of the SACP and the ANC is based on mutual trust, reciprocity and comradeship in battle. It exemplifies the fruitful alliance between the forces of class struggle and national liberation. Their alliance is a living organism that has grown out of the struggle, and it has been built out of their separate and common experience. It has been fertilised by the blood of countless heroes, and reinforced by a common determination to destroy the enemy and by their shared belief in the certainty of victory.

Today the ANC and the SACP have common objectives in the eradication of the oppressive and exploitative system that prevails in the country, the seizure of power and the exercise of the right to self-determination by all the people of South Africa. The mounting struggle of the people on all fronts is rendering South Africa ungovernable and opening the way to the transfer of real power from the white minority to the black majority, who are at present disfranchised. The SACP condemns Botha's declaration of the state of emergency and the state terrorism with which it is being enforced. The party calls on all sections of the South African people to unite under the leadership of the ANC in the struggle to end the barbarism of apartheid and usher in a new freedom and democracy.

## *Chile*

### **CALL ON THE ARMED FORCES**

The Communist Party of Chile has addressed an open letter to the country's armed forces urging them to join in the struggle for the overthrow of the Pinochet dictatorship, and for democratisation, to refrain from punitive operations against the people, and to enter into a dialogue with the National Civilian Assembly, which represents 90 per cent of the Chileans.<sup>1</sup>

The letter is addressed to all military men who bear a grave responsibility for taking part in the immoral and unlawful war against thousands of working people, unemployed, dispossessed, peasants, students, tradesmen and employees, who are in a state of desperation because of the indigence and lack of rights, and the unprecedented repressions. They want to live in a state of human dignity.

The Communist Party warns that the military have been evolving into a closed caste enjoying sinister economic and social privileges and ranged against the majority of the Chileans.

The Communists declare that they have no intention of entering into a conflict with the armed forces. They are fighting the Pinochet dictatorship, which has been using the army as a shield to cover up its impotence and brutality in an effort to hang on to

power. The document emphasises that the military could do much to help democratise the country by creating favourable conditions for the free expression of the people's will on the nature of a new political and social regime. With that end in view, the CP Chile urges the army to enter into a dialogue with the National Civilian Assembly.

That is the only way, the letter says, in which the armed forces will be able to restore their authority and safeguard their honour in the eyes of the people. Otherwise, there will be a sharpening of the confrontation, for which Pinochet and the armed forces high command bear the main responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> The Assembly includes 250 political parties and other mass organisations.—Ed.

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## In the Mirror of the Press

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*Renmin Ribao*

### CP CHINA'S EXTERNAL TIES

THE newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, has carried an article dealing with various aspects of its ties with the international communist movement on the 65th anniversary of the founding of the CP China.

Since its establishment, the article says, the party has had successes in its external ties, but also, of course, some shortcomings. During the 'cultural revolution' in the country, the CP China's relations with most communist parties were interrupted.

Following the rout of the 'Gang of Four', *Renmin Ribao* goes on, the abnormal situation was righted, and the party line in external relations gradually put in order. The CP China now maintains various ties with 200 communist, progressive and friendly parties.

While adhering to Marxism and internationalism, the CP China has been guided by the principle of independence of all the parties. But in the past, the paper says, mistakes in maintaining ties with the communist parties of other countries led to negative consequences.

The Communist Party, the article says, is a component part of the international communist movement, and its efforts in the field of external relations are aimed to promote its sound development. That is why the CPC believes that, whatever the difficulties that may arise on the way to advance, whatever the zigzags that may occur, a new situation will eventually take shape in the international communist movement through the joint and sustained efforts of the parties of the various countries.

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## On the Eve of the Event

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### GREAT HONOUR TO HOST THE WORLD CONGRESS

A world congress of peace forces to mark the International Year of Peace is to be held in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, in October. What are the Danish peace fighters and the Communists within their ranks doing to help prepare it? Henrik Bang of the Committee on Peace Movement at the Central Committee of the CP Denmark replies.

THE anti-war struggle in Denmark has long-standing traditions. In the 1950s and 1960s, it helped to prevent the deployment of nuclear weapons and foreign troops on the country's territory in peace time. At the end of the 1970s, vigorous action was taken against the new US medium-range missiles in Europe. The social democratic government of the day voiced its doubts about the appropriateness of NATO's 'twin-track' decision and came out in favour of preliminary negotiations.

There has been a powerful upswing in the anti-war movement in the present period. Peace fighters have invigorated their activity in the light of the colossal military danger, which is being intensified by the further build-up of nuclear weapons stockpiles, the actual abandonment by Washington and its allies of the policy of detente, the emergence of new high-technology conventional weapons systems, and so on.

The anti-war movement demanded that the leading political parties and the Danish government should ensure the country's security by distancing themselves from NATO's aggressive line, and formulate their own, independent foreign policy. Under mass pressure, the Folketing (parliament) has passed a number of resolutions, binding on the government, which said 'no' to the deployment of new nuclear missiles in Europe, 'no' to the plans for 'star wars', 'no' to the first-strike doctrine, 'no' to chemical weapons, and an emphatic 'yes' to the proposal for a nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe.

The right-wing cabinet, although representing a minority in the Folketing, still has room for manoeuvre in deciding on official policy. That is why we believe that it is important, as never before in the past, for the progressive and democratic circles to step up pressure on the government, to get tens of thousands of citizens to participate in demonstrations and rallies, and to attract new public strata to the anti-war struggle.

The right-wingers have not abandoned their attempts to split and weaken the anti-war movement. They have tried to capitalise on the differences in views which are fairly considerable, and which are a reflection of the diversity of the movement and the novelty of the problems which keep arising, and make use of the bourgeois mass media for their purposes. Thus, attempts are still being made to ascribe equal blame to the United States and the USSR for the growing international tension. Some insist on tying in nuclear disarmament with a solution of the spurious problem of 'human rights' in the socialist countries. Some imagine that rearmament for the purposes of a 'defensive doctrine' provides a realistic way out of the present acute situation in Western Europe.

The right-wingers' strategy is designed to divert the people's attention from the arms race, from the responsibility of the United States, and from its unwillingness to ban nuclear tests, while it is being stridently suggested that nuclear disarmament is solely a matter for the nuclear powers, in which Denmark should not muddle. The idea is being spread that it is local and regional conflicts, instead of the arms race, that pose the greatest threat to peace, with emphasis on the situation around Afghanistan, whose numerous peace proposals are regularly ignored, instead of Central America or the South of Africa.

The right-wingers' propaganda is being carried on under the loud slogan of 'Peace and Freedom', alleging that freedom exists only in the West, and that there is a need to arm to defend it against a 'communist threat'. The peace initiatives of the USSR and the other socialist-community countries are, of course, most often ignored. Most of the population has not escaped the influence of such propaganda: public opinion polls indicate that a majority of the population favours the country's membership in NATO. That, in turn, is being used by the reactionary circles as an argument against the demands for Denmark's independent foreign policy.

The inventions of the militaristic and right-wing circles have been exposed by the Communists. We explain that the socialist states' peace initiatives are concrete and

meet the objective necessity and the democratic anti-war movement's own demands, thereby helping to clarify the issue of where the threat of war actually comes from.

The Soviet disarmament programme for the period until the year 2000 has met with a positive response within the ranks of the peace movement. The USSR's unilateral nuclear test moratorium has met with a highly positive response, an act which turned out to be one that many had hoped for. More and more people are now aware that ending the tests is a radical way of putting an end to a qualitatively new round in the arms race and erecting a formidable barrier to the 'star wars' programme. The Soviet plan for dismantling medium-range missiles in Europe is likewise akin to the ideas being discussed in the peace movement, and the stand taken by many social democratic parties. The Communists believe that it is their duty just now, in the remaining few months of the International Year of Peace, and in the run-up to the world congress, to mount a broad campaign in support of these proposals.

At least 70 per cent of Denmark's population wants to have a nuclear-free zone in our region, and disarmament. This mass mood has been influenced by the fear of a disaster, and the masses want a world in which cooperation prevails and the vital issues of our day are settled through negotiation. We believe that this helps to create a favourable situation for unifying the peace fighters, regardless of whether they are 'for' or 'against' the country's membership of NATO.

It is highly important to prevent the anti-war movement from being reduced to a struggle over folketing decisions or to academic discussions among experts on the benefits of various disarmament measures. The Communists hold that their task is to get Denmark to take concrete steps in favour of peace.

Consider, for instance, the demand to turn Nordic Europe into a nuclear-free zone. Our party not only supports this demand, but strives to map out various partial steps and intermediate phases to make the struggle for its realisation more dynamic. We have proposed the establishment of a special committee of government officials to discuss the nuclear-free zone question, to arrange a conference of Nordic countries to enable them to work out a common platform, and have put forward ideas on the concrete formulations of a relevant treaty.

We attach great significance to involving the working class, the trade unions in particular, in the anti-war struggle. We have been establishing contacts with political parties which enjoy influence among the workers. In the course of the campaign against the deployment of US missiles in Western Europe, for a nuclear-free zone, and for an end to nuclear testing, our party succeeded in arranging good cooperation with Social Democrats, especially within the framework of the Trade Union Movement for Peace.

There are hundreds of local anti-war groups in towns and rural localities in Denmark. Alongside of these, there are a number of organisations set up on trade union lines and bringing together teachers, physicians, lawyers, workers in public health, journalists and others. Those are the associations in which the Communists have mainly been working.

Some anti-war organisations have been acting on the national level. The most important and united of these is the Cooperation for Peace and Security Committee, which was set up in the mid-1970s, and within whose ranks our party cooperates with various political forces: Social Democrats, Liberals and Socialists. The common action programme also includes demands for an active national policy against the threat of war, and a constructive approach to the socialist countries' peace initiatives.

One could say, therefore, that the Danish anti-war movement has acquired the capacity to blend long-term tasks with current ones and to mobilise the masses for vigorous action. It has learned to carry on a dialogue with political parties, and has got the trade union associations to act in defence of peace. Preparations for the Copenhagen congress will undoubtedly give the movement a strong impetus, for it is

a great honour to host such a major international forum.

A Danish Preparatory Committee has been set up to guide the work in the run-up to the congress.<sup>1</sup> It consists of representatives of peace organisations and some political parties (left radical, people's socialist and communist). The Social Democratic Party has chosen to stay out, although its members, including activists in the Social Democrats Against Nuclear Weapons and Militarism are active on the committee. We are well aware that it is no simple matter to prepare a forum of such scope. The right-wing forces intend to do their worst to frustrate its success.

The Communists have countered with active efforts in the trade union and anti-war movements to secure the utmost possible participation by groups of local peace fighters in the activity of the preparatory committees, in organising expositions, exhibition stands, kiosks, etc. Our party hopes that the Danish anti-war movement will be able to share with other participants in the world congress the experience it has gained, and that the representative international forum, for its part, will provide fresh impulses to the struggle for peace in Denmark.

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<sup>1</sup> Over 200 representatives of 140 international and national bodies met in Denmark in December 1985 to take part in the work of the International Preparatory Committee. An International Organising Group and an International Secretariat were then set. National preparatory committees have been formed in many countries.—*Ed.*

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## In Brief

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### JOINT INITIATIVE

The PUWP and the SDPG have proposed setting up a European council to build up trust. Spokesmen for the two parties stressed in Bonn that the initiative aimed to reduce tensions and prevent crises in Europe. The offer is extended to all countries—participants in the European Security and Cooperation Conference. The idea behind the proposed body is to secure regular exchanges of views on vital matters of European security.

### JAPAN

In the national elections last July the Communist Party of Japan, running in a complex political situation with slogans in support of the working people's rights and complete removal of nuclear weapons from Japanese soil, increased from seven to nine seats its representation in the upper chamber of parliament, the Chamber of Councillors, having polled 5.43 million votes, 1.27 million more than in 1983. The party retained its 26 seats in the Chamber of Representatives. Of the 16 women elected to parliament seven are CPJ members.

### LEBANON

A plenary meeting of the Lebanese Communist Party CC has decided to hold the next, Fifth Party Congress, in late 1986. The agenda will include a LCP CC report, discussion of amendments to the party Rules and election of the leading bodies. The meeting considered a draft political report reviewing events in the country following the Fourth Congress and set forth the party's objectives.

### MEXICO

Eleven left-wing parties (supported by 15 per cent of the nation's 40 million voters), including the United Socialist Party of Mexico, have decided to set up a single front for 1988 presidential elections. They claimed they would oppose the current electoral law which denies coalitions presenting single lists of candidates.



## PERU

A Peruvian Communist Party CC plenary meeting has decided to hold the Ninth Party Congress on December 5-8, 1986. The meeting confirmed political theses for pre-congress discussion.

## POLAND

Taking part in the June annual holiday of the PUWP newspaper *Trybuna Ludu* were delegations representing publications in socialist countries and *WMR*.

## SPAIN

In the June parliamentary elections seven political parties, including the Communist Party of Spain and the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain, ran as a single United Left coalition, gaining seven seats in the General Cortes. The victory was scored by the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, which thus proved itself the country's leading political force.

## YUGOSLAVIA

The League of Communists of Yugoslavia now has 2,167,860 members, 1.7 per cent more than before its 12th Congress in 1982. The League affiliates 13.8 per cent of the country's working population, including 34.6 per cent workers, 1.2 per cent less than in 1982, and 23.4 per cent young people.

# exchange of views, discussion

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## These Potentialities Were Opened by Socialism A Collective Interview with Academics on the Prospects for Levelling Up the Economic Development of CMEA Countries

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The joint economic strategy of the CMEA countries for their development throughout the period up to the beginning of the next century is set out in collectively adopted political documents: the decisions of the 1984 Economic Summit and the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technological Progress up to the Year 2000. A central objective is to *accelerate the process of the gradual levelling up of the economic development of CMEA member-states, notably of Vietnam, Cuba and Mongolia, with the fraternal European countries.* This is to be facilitated by scientific and technological advances and the widespread use of these advances in practice.

Many organisations and institutions of the socialist community are researching the acceleration problem and the ways of resolving it. Prominent among them is the Moscow-based International Institute for Economic Problems of the Socialist World System. The following is a summation of a collective interview with staff members of this institute—Filip Alev (Bulgaria), Pham Quang Houan and Duong Chi Thanh (Vietnam), Mario Fernandez (Cuba), Sharavyn Zhumdan (Mongolia), and Stanislav Yovchuk (USSR).

THE economic levelling up of socialist countries is a process consonant with the objective of the world's progressive social forces, namely, that of putting an end to underdevelopment and to the glaring economic inequality between peoples and countries, said Stanislav Yovchuk. Without this it would be impossible to imagine a genuinely equitable structure of human society guaranteeing a fitting life to each nation. But is not this, in essence, an idealistic task?

Indeed, the dream of economic equality may look to be altogether unrealisable if one considers the gulf between the economic potential and the people's living standard in the industrial capitalist powers and in the developing nations of the same system, especially as the living standard is usually gauged by mean statistics that place all classes under one head despite the enormous disparity between them. In terms of per capita gross domestic product<sup>1</sup> this difference is, in the current decade, of the order of 10:1.

Nevertheless, the Marxists have always been and are, of the opinion that the task of levelling up is feasible in the historical perspective. Frederick Engels wrote more than a hundred years ago: 'Between one country and another, one province and another and even one locality and another there will always exist a certain inequality in the conditions of life, which it will be possible to reduce to a minimum.'<sup>2</sup> In other words, it is impossible to level up development in accordance with a single scale, omitting to take all distinctions into account, but it is quite realistic to reduce to a minimum the disparities in national wealth, volume of modern industry, and general abundance. Marxism sees the socialist way as the only way to this.

Historical practice has borne out the prevision of the founders of scientific communism. It is common knowledge that prior to the October Revolution many of the republics constituting the Soviet Union were internal colonies of tsarist Russia far behind the industrial centre in all aspects. In the course of socialist development they have now achieved approximate equality with the centre of the country and among themselves in economic, social and cultural terms.

After World War II, when the socialist world system and a close alliance of a number of socialist countries took shape as a result of the spread of the revolutionary movement, the process of economic levelling up entered the inter-state stage. In those years, for historical reasons, the agrarian Balkan nations of Bulgaria and Romania were conspicuously backward compared to Czechoslovakia and the GDR, which had long been part of Europe's industrially developed region. For instance, Bulgaria's per capita national income in 1950 was 66.7 per cent below that of Czechoslovakia and 54.6 per cent less than that of the GDR. Today this gap has narrowed to roughly 9.1-16.7 per cent, which means that there has been a dramatic levelling up of development. Once agrarian countries, Bulgaria and Romania are now industrial-agrarian nations.

In the period from 1962 to 1978, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which is a new type of international economic organisation uniting countries of the socialist community, was joined by Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam. For the CMEA this further accentuated the urgency of the task of economic levelling up and made it new in many aspects. The gap between the Council's new members and their other CMEA partners was much wider than between its European members. The principal

reason for this in Mongolia was the deep-rooted influence of the heritage of the many centuries of feudal inertness that was still a tangible factor in the initial decades of the present century, and the colonialist and neocolonialist exploitation of Cuba and Vietnam; in the case of the latter there were, in addition, the grievous wounds inflicted by the devastating foreign invasions. The task of levelling up was further compounded by the weakness of the economic relations of these three countries with some of their European partners in the community on account of the enormous distances between them.

How is this historical task being tackled today? We can say without fear of contradiction, the participants in the collective interview declared, that the socialist policy of levelling up development is a model of genuine social justice in international economic relations and evidence of the new social system's lofty humanism. Today this policy continues to yield visible positive results.

### Assessing the Development Level From All Angles

In speaking of levelling up economic development it is important to specify, first and foremost, the parameters used for evaluating development levels. This must be a comprehensive assessment, said Duong Chi Thanh and Mario Fernandez, because if only a few, even essential, indicators of the state of the economy are taken into account, this will not give an accurate picture. It is of fundamental significance that Cuba, Mongolia and, to a growing extent, Vietnam are already now moving into noteworthy positions for the level of public health, education, and other social services, which are in those countries, in contrast to the capitalist world, enjoyed by all their citizens.

In Cuba there are today 23 doctors per 10,000 of the population. All children are encompassed by the education system, although in the past one million of Cuba's population of 6,500,000 were illiterate. In Mongolia there are 24 doctors per 10,000 of the population. Schoolchildren comprise one-fourth of the entire population, and roughly one in 15 goes on to receive a higher education. So far Vietnam is behind Mongolia and Cuba, but since 1975 the number of doctors has doubled and the education level of the population has been rising steadily.

A comprehensive approach to determining the development level has always been the practice in socialist countries, said Stanislav Yovchuk. In the CMEA such assessments are made on the basis of more than 180 indicators divided into three main groups: the first characterises the overall state of the economy, notably the per capita national income and industrial output; the second gives a picture of the development level of the various sectors of the economy; the third shows the living standard and cultural level of the population. Lack of space prevents giving the entire range of statistics of this kind, but it may be said with certainty that in the socialist countries, including those whose development level is still lower, a steady rise is to be observed in all these indicators. For example, in Mongolia real per capita incomes have risen by 12 per cent in the past five years, and the retail trade turnover has grown by 24 per cent. Within the same period, the average monthly wage in Cuba has risen by 26.4 per cent, while individual consumption has shown an annual growth rate of 2.8 per cent. For various reasons the situation in Vietnam is more difficult, but even there, despite the high population increment rate, the established food consumption level, while still low, is maintained and gradually raised and the new society's material and technical basis, that will be the foundation for promoting the people's welfare, is being built.

What is the correlation between the population increase and the growth of the national income in the three above-mentioned countries? During the past five years the annual population growth rate has been 2.3 per cent in Vietnam, 0.7 per cent in Cuba, and 2.6 per cent in Mongolia, while the national income growth rate has been

7.8, 9.4, and 7.2 per cent respectively. In other words, the national income growth rate has been exceeding the population increment by an average of 6 per cent, while, for example, in Latin American states the reverse is the case.

The data we have cited show that there are substantial distinctions in the economic development levels of the three catching up socialist states. The count of their advance begins at different levels; in the 1970s Vietnam's starting point was much below the level reached at the time by Cuba and Mongolia. The lag of these countries behind their European partners is therefore likewise different. It is estimated that in terms of per capita national income Cuba is 33.4 per cent behind the European CMEA member-states and Mongolia is 50 per cent behind. This means that these countries have risen to the level that the European socialist countries had in the 1960s. As for Vietnam, it lags behind the latter by a factor of more than 10.

One sometimes hears, said Sharavyn Zhumdan, that within a period of 60 years Mongolia could have achieved more, but it should not be forgotten that in these years we have surmounted a lag of almost two centuries and have significantly outpaced some Asian countries that had only recently been far ahead of us.

Economic progress is gauged not only by quantitative but also by qualitative indicators, added Stanislav Yovchuk, by indicators that characterise the stage when the economic complex is under construction and socialist relations of production are being established. Cuba and Mongolia have advanced markedly, and their economy now consists of two sectors—state and cooperative. Vietnam's economy is presently multi-sectoral. There are three sectors in the North and five, including the private capitalist sector, in the South. The republic is at the stage of transition to socialism,<sup>3</sup> the national economy is encountering many problems, and there is a vital need for economic stabilisation. By and large, Cuba and Mongolia are consummating the building of socialism's material and technical basis, completing the industrialisation of their economies, and coming close to becoming industrial-agrarian states. But Vietnam is still at the beginning of the road, still remaining an agrarian country with a predominantly small-scale commodity-manufacturing industry.

Meanwhile, the European members of the CMEA have begun a steep turn towards mainly intensive methods of economic development founded on a fuller utilisation of scientific and technological breakthroughs. Their strategy is directed towards accelerating socio-economic progress. Of course, Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam do not remain uninvolved in these essential processes.

In the context of what has been said there is a need for an in-depth study of the question of common and specific features of present-day socialist development. The principal objective of our countries, said Filip Alev, is not levelling up as such but to create the optimal requisites for the operation of socialism's basic economic law. Levelling up is the outcome and an important condition for the implementation of this law, which envisages ensuring a steadily higher living standard to citizens and promoting their all-sided development through collective work.

The socio-economic nature of socialism most directly influences the political aspect of the cooperation between fraternal countries with different levels of economic development. The socialist mode of production, precludes exploitation of man by man, social oppression, and rule by a privileged minority, and is the foundation of international relations of an entirely new type that highlight equality, class solidarity, friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance. Socialist states are sovereign in defining and implementing their international and domestic policies. Their relations with each other are based on close cooperation between the ruling communist parties, a common ideology, and identical socio-economic and political systems. This is the bedrock of internationalism and comradely mutual assistance.

The accelerated development and increased efficiency of the economies of Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia are today a high-priority target of the process of

gradually drawing together economic levels within the CMEA framework and consistent, above all, with the interests of the peoples of these countries, said **Stanislav Yovchuk**. Moreover, this process serves to reinforce the position of the entire community in the world economy. Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia are already today supplying their European CMEA partners with vital raw materials and manufactured goods. Within the next few years their participation in the international socialist division of labour will broaden perceptibly, meeting the specific economic needs of partners and benefiting the international interests of the entire community.

There are many examples to illustrate this. One was cited by **Filip Alev**. Formerly backward Bulgaria is now a major manufacturer and exporter of hoisting and transport equipment. From Bulgaria the other CMEA countries import 98 per cent of their electric-cars, autocars, and all their electric telfers. Every year Bulgarian factories change more than 20 per cent of their output, maintaining it at the highest level by present-day technological standards. It is interesting to note that it has proved to be more profitable to manufacture some modifications of this equipment in Cuba, whose factories are cooperating with factories in Bulgaria. Cooperation of this kind has yielded tangible results also in the electronics industry.

The mechanism of mutually beneficial levelling-up is defined in the Fundamental Principles of the International Socialist Division of Labour, adopted by the CMEA in 1962. This document underscores the need to foster the gradual surmounting of historically-shaped distinctions in economic development levels on the basis of the maximum use of each country's own resources and of the advantages held out by the socialist world system.<sup>4</sup> In other words, this is a question of dialectically combining the internal and external factors of economic progress under socialism. This proposition was subsequently expanded upon in the 1971 Comprehensive Programme for Socialist Economic Integration and then in the aforementioned new documents that define the present stage of joint strategy.

#### **Dialectics of Internal and External Factors**

The correlation between the internal and external factors determining the process of economic levelling up alters in accordance with the stage reached by that process, it was noted in the interview. As long as this or that country lags far behind those that have moved ahead it receives considerable economic assistance. Subsequently, as the economy of countries where its development level was relatively low gains strength, these relations grow increasingly beneficial to all partners.

In the case of internal factors of development, socialism has convincingly proved its ability to mobilise them as is borne out by the remarkable growth of the industrial potential and living standard in all of the community's states over the past quarter century. In the 36 years since the CMEA was founded the aggregate national income of its member-states has increased more than 9-fold, their industrial output has grown almost 15-fold, and their agricultural output has risen 2.6-fold. The new acceleration of development, it was stressed, poses bigger challenges in the levelling up process: the faster the advanced partners move, the greater must be the effort to speed up progress on the part of those who are pulling up.

The extent to which the internal factors of extended reproduction are mobilised is determined, above all, by the share of the accumulation fund in the total usable national income. This fund is the source of the money to pay for the technical retooling of the economy, the building of new production facilities, the development of minerals, and so on. In the European CMEA member-states the accumulation fund currently amounts to between 17 and 27 per cent of the national income. The non-European partners have to increase this proportion still further. For example, said **Sharavyn Zhurndan**, Mongolia plans to channel some 35 per cent of its usable

national income into the accumulation fund. Of course, this reduces the consumption fund but, on the whole, social wealth is distributed in such a way as to allow the people's living standard to continue rising. Mongolia intends to increase the population's cash incomes by 20-23 per cent within the next five years.

At the interview it was noted that the internal resources being allocated in Cuba and Mongolia for industrial development are being increased from one five-year period to another. The capacity of these countries to ensure economic levelling up with the European partners with their own resources is thus expanding, and this serves to reinforce their independence and promote their people's confidence.

In Vietnam, noted **Duong Chi Thanh**, the situation is somewhat different where the formation of the accumulation fund is concerned. Up till now the country has only had resources for simple reproduction, while accumulations were formed of the credits and comradesly assistance from CMEA partners, notably the Soviet Union. Naturally, the republic invests large sums into extended reproduction: in order to make effective use of every rouble coming from abroad, one or two roubles have to be spent on various domestic programmes. Thus, in order to reinforce mutual benefit in foreign economic relations the conditions have to be created for the all-round economic development of formerly backward countries.

That, said the participants in the collective interview, is exactly what is going on in the socialist community. The countries whose resources for accumulation are limited on account of their having lagged behind for historical reasons receive large credits and, in some cases, grants from fraternal states. According to approximate estimates, all forms of such assistance to Vietnam, Mongolia and Cuba amount to from 0.1 to 0.3 or even 0.4 per cent of the national income of their European partners.

The burden of unpaid external debts typical for many developing countries does not cloud economic development and all other social progress in the three above-mentioned countries. Large credits are usually extended in the CMEA on terms that are immensely favourable to the lagging nations: the repayment schedule is much longer and the interest is much lower than is usual in world practice. Other ways are utilised to support the economy. For instance prices higher than in world trade have been established for Cuban sugar exports and for the processed animal raw materials exported by Mongolia.

Needless to say, such cooperation is motivated by a sincere striving to contribute tangibly to the economic progress of partners. The European CMEA member-states provide Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia with needed machinery and equipment and help them to design, assemble, shake down and put in operation production and other projects, set up new industries and modern agricultural enterprises, develop transport, and conduct geological surveys. Much technical documentation is turned over to these countries, specialists are sent to pass on expertise and technological skills, and help is extended in training skilled local personnel. Some 30,000 young Mongolians have received training in the Soviet Union alone. For a country with a population of under two million this is an impressive figure. Similarly impressive figures could be given to illustrate the relations of European socialist countries with Cuba and Vietnam.

Ensured sales of their traditional goods and of the output of new industries in the CMEA market of reciprocal trade are of tremendous significance for the economic development prospects of the three countries we are talking about. For example, this allows Cuba to put into effect a wide-ranging programme for industrial development and the export of sugar, while other Latin American producers of these commodities are finding themselves on the brink of ruin on account of the decline of their exports. Vietnam is laying out hevea plantations on an area of tens of thousands of hectares, while in neighbouring countries of Southeast Asia plantations of this rubber-tree are being cut down. The success of these economic activities is guaranteed by the planned

dynamic of the division of labour in the community, by the programmes agreed between fraternal countries for increasing output and reciprocal exports for the long term and for each five-year period. Internal conditions are thereby being complemented with *external conditions for the planned and proportionate economic development of Vietnam, Cuba and Mongolia*, these conditions being crucial in view of the colossal significance of cooperation to their economies.

Were relations of this kind to be established globally, it was said at the interview, it would be possible to deal successfully with the problem of ending the backwardness of developing nations. In the event, this problem continues to grow increasingly acute in the capitalist world.

Of course, socialism's advantages that create realistic opportunities for accelerating the economic levelling up process do not materialise automatically. They have to be activated, and this is not at all a simple matter, for it requires initiative, organisation, innovation, and an ability to surmount objective and subjective difficulties. In the interview it was pointed out that the material requisites for the levelling up process were affected negatively by the slowing down of the economic growth rates in some of the community's European member-states, the reasons for which were substantively analysed this year at congresses of ruling fraternal parties, and also by the certain inconsistency of forms of the CMEA's work with the imperatives of the day. Also, some instruments of the economy's mechanisms are inadequately efficient, and this reduces effectiveness in the utilisation of the opportunities for progress and of the results of cooperation. Vietnam, for example, encounters extremely complex contradictions of development but lacks the experience of addressing them. This was noted at a number of plenary meetings of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, said **Pham Quang Houan**.

Already today it is important to identify the new elements that arise in the economic levelling up process, correctly evaluate them, and clear the road for the process itself.

#### **A New Approach and New Prospects**

The international division of labour holds a special place among the factors that determine the rate and distinctive specifics of extended reproduction, a process that is going on in both the socialist and the capitalist systems. But in the latter system it generates inequality among the participants. The economy of many developing nations forms in a way that makes these nations monoproducer sources of raw materials for imperialist powers. Socialism, on the other hand, gives rise in each country to an economy whose specialisation in a multistate system combines flexibility with an all-round, multibranch orientation.

That this is a productive principle has already been demonstrated by the CMEA's European members. However, the forms of its embodiment have undergone changes and been upgraded. Drawing upon history, **Filip Alev** said that at the initial stages of the CMEA's operation its members developed their economies along almost parallel patterns—each built its own steel, heavy engineering, and other industries. This was motivated by requirements: in most of the community's countries these industries were small, while the international socialist division of labour was only just taking shape and, at the time, could not provide each of the partners with everything needed by them on the basis of mutual relations. This duplication no longer conforms to the present situation, but there is still a need for comprehensiveness in the structure of the national economies. However, the character of this structure depends more than previously on specialisation in the system of the international socialist division of labour.

**Mario Fernandez** used the example of Cuba to show how this takes place in practice. Sugar remains the principal item in the Cuban economy, but other

branches, notably engineering, are being developed at the same time. Motivated chiefly by the need to grow and process sugar-cane, this industry specialises in the manufacture of spare parts and items for the equipment installed and operated at factories in the republic. It is subsequently to be oriented towards the manufacture of machinery needed by other branches of subtropical agriculture, and towards the output of electronic equipment. In this approach the innovation is the combination of the economy's specialisation with its multibranch character.

Identical processes, said **Sharavyn Zhumdan**, are taking place in Mongolia. In this huge and sparsely populated country extensive livestock-breeding is a key branch of the national economy: in per capita terms, there are some 12 head of livestock. But this industry, too, requires gradual intensification. How and with what is this to be achieved? The money for investment can come chiefly from industry, particularly mining, for the republic has large reserves of coal, non-ferrous metals, and other major minerals that are, as a matter of fact, in short supply in other CMEA member-states. The mining industry was built with the help of friends. An agricultural raw materials processing industry has also been developed. At present almost 33 per cent of the national income comes from industry, while in the new five-year period this indicator is to rise to 35 per cent.

Mongolia's growing national income is enabling it to allocate large sums of money for a gradual transition to modern, intensive methods in agriculture. This cannot be done overnight: in countries like Mongolia and Vietnam it is extremely important to find room in the economy for traditional economic sectors and steadily restructure them on a new foundation. Mongolia is now increasing its population of thoroughbred, highly productive livestock, setting up mechanised breeding and fattening farms, extending the area sown to feeds, and reshaping the living and working conditions of livestock-breeders (known as arats). Moreover, intensive crop-farming is making headway.

Quests for ways of combining the economy's multibranch structure with specialisation within the system of the international socialist division of labour are going on also in Vietnam. But, very much still remains to be done in that country to build a launching pad for economic advancement. **Pham Quang Houan** cited statistics showing that Vietnam is still short of energy, fuel, machines, and fertilisers. The republic is receiving considerable assistance from CMEA members in all these areas. Large hydropower and thermal power stations, and cement, chemical, and engineering factories are under construction. This will give Vietnam a bigger role to play in the international socialist division of labour. It has, in particular, large reserves of phosphates, of which there is a shortage in other CMEA member-states. But considerable investments have to be made to turn the reserves of this valuable mineral into an industrial product.

The international socialist division of labour, said **Filip Alev**, is already now allowing the principle of economic mutual benefit to be applied quite effectively. In the CMEA's European member-states there is a big demand for Cuban and Vietnamese tropical fruit, Vietnamese rubber, Mongolian non-ferrous metals, and many other commodities.

Agreeing with their Bulgarian colleague, **Pham Quang Houan** and **Sharavyn Zhumdan** noted that the potentialities for increasing exports depend largely on the given country's overall level of economic development. In particular, no export-based industry is possible without the relevant industrial infrastructure consisting of, among other things, storage, processing, packing and transport facilities. Considerable investments are needed to build such an infrastructure.

To give economic relations within the CMEA system a further boost in terms of mutual benefit and equality, the Vietnamese comrades pointed out, new forms of cooperation consistent with present-day conditions have to be developed. Vietnam



could significantly increase its supplies of natural rubber to Europe, but in order to do so it has to enlarge its plantations and upgrade its primary processing of latex. Partners, notably the Soviet Union, are extending credits for this to be repaid on a compensation basis—with products from the plantations. Thus, under agreement with the USSR Vietnam has already developed 50,000 hectares of land, and another 110,000 hectares are to be added in the new five-year period. There are agreements on rubber with Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, and an agreement along the same lines with the GDR on coffee. Vietnam has very large potentials for growing export crops. In the coming years it could develop 500,000 hectares of land for hevea plantations, 200,000 hectares for coffee, 200,000 hectares for tea, and several thousand hectares for other perennial tropical crops.

For the time being this programme is being put into effect on a bilateral basis, but more attention has to be given to multilateral cooperation. If several partners were to cooperate in the development of 200,000-300,000 hectares of plantation, they could concentrate and rationalise their participation in accordance with their potentialities. One would supply, for instance, equipment, another would provide fertilisers, yet another would train skilled personnel, and so on.

In the CMEA system, said **Stanislav Yovchuk**, bilateral relations are for the moment more efficient than multilateral relations. At present these are regulated by long-term programmes for economic, scientific, and technological cooperation up to 2000 signed between two partners. Of course, bilateral programmes rest on multilateral cooperation, but the question is whether the extent of this is adequate enough. The problem of combining bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperation is in need of in-depth study.

Mongolia, said **Sharavyn Zhumdan**, has become a sort of large proving ground for new forms of cooperation. It is running industrial enterprises built on the basis of bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Much has also resulted from the currently operating international geological expedition organised in Mongolia on a multilateral basis by CMEA member-states. In the opinion of Mongolian economists, considerable promise is held out by the operation of joint international socialist ventures. The participants provide an equal portion of the funds for building these ventures and the profits are shared equally. A major venture of this kind is the Erdenet copper-molybdenum concentrating mill, which is one of the largest of its kind in Asia. It is owned jointly by Mongolia and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union helped with the designs, supplied the equipment, and took part in building the mill and the new town in its vicinity. Further, Soviet scientific institutions trained a section of the skilled personnel for the mill. Other operating joint ventures in the republic are Mongolsovtsvetmet, Mongolbulgarimetal, and Mongolczechoslovakmetal.

The first of the oil so needed by Vietnam was produced by Vietsovpetro, the joint Vietnamese-Soviet venture surveying for and producing oil on the sea shelf, added **Pham Quang Houan**. In the practice of operating joint ventures there still are many unresolved problems, but they are, by and large, a highly effective form of attaining targets of the economic levelling up process. The operation of internationally-owned facilities is, apart from everything else, of immense theoretical interest. While under capitalism the transnational corporations are an instrument for the exploitation of developing nations by international imperialist capital, the joint socialist ventures embody the principles of equality, friendship, and cooperation and contribute to the economic development of the catching up states.

And yet the principal new task, in whose fulfilment all the CMEA member-states are participating on a multilateral basis, is that of intensifying the economy through the promotion of science and technology, said **Stanislav Yovchuk**. The strategy for carrying it out is given in detail in the Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and

Technological Progress. The fact that Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia are involved in this programme along with their European partners is an indicator of the true equality underlying the relations between fraternal states.<sup>5</sup> Singlehanded, none of the lagging countries could hope to reach the development level envisaged for them in this programme. But with the assistance of the entire community and by using the latest equipment and technologies in production they are able to move forward with redoubled acceleration.

The role played by Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia in carrying out the programme for scientific and technological progress is by no means that of a consumer, noted **Mario Fernandez**. All three are actively participating in research and development. The programme marks out 96 major problems in five principal directions. Cuba, for example, is contributing its share to research on 55 problems, including on 25 of the 36 in electronics and on 18 of the 22 in biotechnology.

The fact that all partners are working on the programme for intensifying the economic system within the CMEA framework signifies the intensification also of the economic levelling up process, **Stanislav Yovchuk** stressed. In addition to earlier operating factors of this process there are today new functioning factors and this requires new parameters for defining it. We have to measure how far the various economies are drawing closer in making efficient use of economic resources, how far this or that economy has been integrated with the overall system, how far it is balanced in terms of foreign economic relations, and how productively it utilises its economic and technological potential.

At the same time, the social effects of scientific and technological progress must be constantly borne in mind, said **Filip Alev**. In particular, problems related to the rational employment of the workforce have to be addressed by joint effort although the causes making them urgent in the community's European and non-European member-states differ considerably. The CMEA has the experience for coping with problems of this kind successfully. There was a time when Bulgaria was faced with the problem of creating jobs and raising the training level of managerial personnel on a mass scale. At that time the USSR and Czechoslovakia provided jobs for thousands of Bulgarians and helped to train personnel. Currently, tens of thousands of Vietnamese are working and, at the same time, studying in European countries of the community, and this international redistribution of labour resources is reinforcing the internationalist foundations of our cooperation.

The collective interview dealt only with a few aspects of the problem of levelling up the economic development of CMEA member-states at the present stage. Socialism is in fact facilitating the attainment of economic equality between peoples. This is stated compellingly in the new edition of the CPSU Programme adopted by the 27th Congress: "Whereas in the capitalist world the law of uneven economic, socio-political and cultural development operates, and strong countries enrich themselves by plundering weak ones and prolong in every way the backwardness of the latter, socialism creates the necessary conditions for raising the less developed countries to the level of the developed ones."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the sum of all end commodities and services, expressed in money, produced in a country (exclusive of investments abroad) within a definite span of time. Services include the salaries of officials and white-collar workers. The national income category used in the socialist economy does not include the sum total of services.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> See Nguyen Vinh, 'Period of Transition on the Socialist Path', *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.

<sup>4</sup> See *Basic CMEA Documents*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1983, p. 16. (in Russian).

<sup>5</sup> See 'Scientific and Technical Cooperation: The Key to Developing Socialist Integration', *WMR*, No. 12, 1985.

<sup>6</sup> *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New Edition, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 14.

## The Peculiarities of Imperialism in the 1980s Survey of International Symposium Proceedings

An international symposium, 'Imperialism in the 1980s', was held in Prague by the WMR Commission on General Theoretical Problems to mark the 70th anniversary of Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

It was opened by WMR Editor-in-Chief Yuri Sklyarov, alternate member of the CPSU CC. Among the papers discussed were those presented by Heinz Jung (German CP), Hugo Facio (CP Chile), Eduard Pletnyov (USSR), Tadeusz Iwinski (Poland) and Semou Pathe Gueye (Senegal Party of Independence and Labour). Among those who took part in the discussion were: Gancho Ganev (Bulgarian CP), Bert Ramelson (CP Great Britain), Duong Ngok Ky (CP Vietnam), Donald Ramotar (People's Progressive Party of Guyana), Randolfo Banegas (CP Honduras), Zenon Zorzovilis (CP Greece), Unni Krishnan (CP India), Satiadjaya Sudiman (CP Indonesia), William Somerset (CP Ireland), William Stewart (CP Canada), Alvaro Oviedo (Colombian CP), Antonio Diaz Ruis (CP Cuba), Sam Moeti (CP Lesotho), Rafic Samhoun (Lebanese CP), Felix Dixon (People's Party of Panama), Cesar Augusto Jimenez (Peruvian CP), Stanislav Menshikov (USSR), John Pittman (CPUSA), Ali Ileri (CP Turkey), Jose Lava (PKP—CP Philippines), Aulis Leppanen (CP Finland), Luis Emilio Veintimilla (CP Ecuador), Essop Pahad (South African CP), and Elean Thomas (Workers' Party of Jamaica).

An abridged text of Heinz Jung's paper appeared in WMR, No. 7 for 1986. Below is a summary of the discussion.

LENIN'S analysis of imperialism and the fundamental significance of his work for the activity of the Communists of the world and of all the other progressive forces have been amply confirmed over the past seven decades, speakers at the symposium said. Lenin's doctrine, a direct continuation of Marx's analysis of the capitalist social formation, has provided a solid scientific foundation for the struggle against imperialism. It is the basis for the theory of socialist revolution, and for an understanding of the law-governed uniformities, specific features and ways of transition from capitalism to socialism, the basic content of the present epoch ushered in by the Great October Revolution. It gives Marxists the methodology for analysing the main trends and contradictions of the world in which we live. Like Marxism-Leninism as a whole, it is a doctrine that the communist parties have creatively developed and amplified.

The symposium focused on the peculiarities of imperialism in the 1980s, an approach which is scientifically warranted and politically relevant, since consideration of the problems now facing mankind shows that Lenin's doctrine of imperialism is viable and effective.

All speakers were agreed that the capitalist system is still at the *imperialist* stage, with all the standard features brought out by Lenin in his analysis: monopoly domination, uneven development, growing exploitation, oppression and reaction along every line, and aggressiveness of finance capital. The nature of imperialism has not changed. Today, it is the working people's chief class adversary and the enemy of all mankind.

But modern capitalism differs in many ways from what it was at the beginning and even in the middle of the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Its economic basis, and its political and ideological superstructure have changed substantially, and this is necessarily reflected in the course of the historical process.

Lenin brought out the basic economic features of monopoly capitalism and showed how they objectively generate imperialist wars, while maturing the conditions for

socialist revolution and rising liberation, anti-imperialist struggles by the peoples. Examination of the latest changes in imperialism in our day helps to indicate the main source of the war danger which now poses a threat to mankind's very existence. At the same time, the Marxist-Leninists have given a clear and unambiguous answer to the question of whether mankind is 'to be or not to be': the forces of peace are capable of checking the forces of war; social progress and the life of civilisation must and will go on.

This conclusion, speakers said, is based on a scientific analysis of the whole set of contradictions in the modern world: the contradictions in the relations between states within the two systems, the two social formations; the capitalist world's own internal contradictions, the contradictions between imperialism and the less developed countries and peoples; and the global contradictions going to the very roots of the existence of civilisation. An analysis of the economic processes under way within imperialism today is also an important aspect.

### The Features of Capitalism Today

The main economic peculiarities of imperialism in the 1980s were summarised as follows:

—the concentration of production has gone beyond the national borders to become internationalisation of production; that is the basis on which transnational monopoly capital has developed and tends to become universal; transnational industrial monopolies have been merging and coalescing with transnational banks to constitute an internationally interwoven finance capital and a financial oligarchy; transnational capital has increasingly coalesced with the bourgeois state to constitute transnational forms of state-monopoly capitalism;

—military-industrial complexes, the economic and political basis of present-day militarism have established themselves as an independent and even mightier force within the financial oligarchy;

—a system of neocolonial exploitation and subordination of dozens of politically independent but less developed states to a handful of imperialist powers has taken shape within the capitalist world economy under the domination of the transnational monopolies and state-monopoly capitalism;

—inter-imperialist contradictions have reached a level at which US finance capital, mostly in its transnational forms, poses a threat to the national sovereignty not only of the less developed, but also of the industrialised capitalist states.

Whether monopoly capitalism has entered upon a new phase and whether these processes are now complete are matters that may well be up for discussion, but one thing is sure: there is evidence of *qualitative shifts* in the basis and superstructure of present-day imperialism which pose some new problems for the communist and working class movement.

The economic peculiarities of present-day imperialism make its domestic policy ever more reactionary, and its foreign policy ever more aggressive.

The participants in the symposium gave much attention to identifying the economic causes for which the ruling circles' internal policy has moved to the right and reaction has markedly increased in the capitalist countries. They indicated several of the key factors behind these processes.

First, there has been a change in the economic situation. The general slowdown in economic growth rates in the 1970s and 1980s, the deepening of the cyclical crises and their interpenetration with the structural crisis, the mass unemployment affecting millions, the inflation, the colossal state-budget deficits, and the growing internal and external debt, all add up to convincing evidence that state-monopoly capitalism and the transnational monopolies are incapable of coping with the growth of the productive forces or meeting the requirements and demands of the latest phase of the

scientific and technical revolution. The fruits of scientific and technical progress are being used by the monopolies against the working masses and for stepped-up exploitation. Millions of wage and salary earners are being pushed out of production, losing their jobs not just temporarily, but for ever, and swelling the 'new poverty' army.

From the 1940s to the 1960s, bourgeois reformism had for its material basis relatively high growth rates in production and employment, while the cyclical crises were then shallower and less acute. The onset of lower growth rates and deeper crises has complicated the problems of reproduction and especially the generation of surplus-value, and has made the further boosting of monopoly profits incompatible with any rise in the working people's real incomes. Hence the direct pressure exerted by the monopolies and the state on wages, the downward review of wage rates, the introduction of 'two-tier' wage systems, and other ways of limiting and cutting back the working people's incomes. Hence also the policy of curbing trade union rights and the attempt to hurl the working classes back decades into the past not only in terms of living standards and working conditions, but also in the extent of their organisation and degree of their militancy.

The worsening of the overall economic situation, it was said in the course of the discussion, has also had an effect on the social policy of the bourgeois state. Whereas in earlier decades, the growth of its revenues was, as a rule, adequate to meeting the military expenditures and making some increases in social appropriations, the vast growth of state-budget deficits has now thrown a harsh light on the incompatibility of the arms race with social benefits and transfer payments, a conflict the ruling circles seek to settle in favour of the arms race and larger subsidies for the monopolies. Hence the general line of 'austerity', cut-backs in existing social programmes, and the attempts to take back from the working people what they gained in stern struggles over the decades.

The growing might and influence of transnational monopoly capital is another key factor behind the shift of bourgeois policy to the right. In contrast to the old monopolies, for which the national economy was the main sphere of exploitation and profits, the transnational monopolies strive above all to maximise global profits. For that purpose, they are engaged in manipulating material, manpower and financial resources across the capitalist world economy, transferring production to wherever they find it most advantageous for themselves in the first place. They have shut down hundreds of enterprises, sharply curtailing production and employment in entire industries under the pretext of 'modernising' and 'streamlining the structure' of industry, while ignoring the requirements of the national economy, especially the interests of the working people.

The growing influence of the transnational monopolies is also manifested in the shifting accents in the economic policies of the bourgeois states. Whereas in earlier decades, the state alternately pressed the levers of anti-crisis and anti-inflation regulation, in an effort to strike some kind of balance between unemployment and inflation, the emphasis is now everywhere on 'combatting inflation' as a cover-up for the offensive against the working class, while the continued existence of mass unemployment is regarded as a 'normal outcome' of technical progress and the operation of market forces entirely compatible with the reactionary circles' idea of social stability. The 'full employment' slogan, first formulated in the 1930s and adopted by reformism as one of its pillars in the following decades, has in many cases been jettisoned by the right-wing forces. This is expressed theoretically in the emphatic departure from the Keynesian model of state regulation, and a general adoption of monetarist and other models compatible with mass unemployment and an overt offensive against the working people's rights.

The growing strength of the military-industrial complexes is the basis on which

imperialism has become more reactionary and aggressive. Speakers noted that this is a matter that deserves in-depth analysis. Military-industrial complexes have now become the economic, material basis for a self-sufficient, self-proliferating militarism, which not only poses a mortal threat to mankind's future, but is even now erecting numerous barriers, to the development of the productive forces, and to social and political progress.

Militarism, which has generated the arms race, is the ugliest manifestation of decaying and parasitic imperialism. It has distorted the very essence of scientific and technical progress by channelling it into the development of even newer types of weapons of mass destruction and a build-up of stockpiles that are more than sufficient to wipe out human civilisation and all other life on the Earth. Politically, militarism poses a constant threat of fascism and of overtly terroristic forms of government, and in the external arena it has produced a policy of state terrorism, the anti-communist 'crusade', and 'neoglobalism'.

Exceptional danger also lies in the tendency towards the internationalisation of the military-industrial complexes, as expressed, in particular, in the involvement of military concerns from Western Europe and Japan in the US plans to militarise space. Imperialism has refused to end the arms race and has tried to spread it to ever new spheres, so generating the danger of a nuclear catastrophe, and running into irreconcilable antagonism with mankind as a whole. That is why the struggle against militarism, and for curbing and removing the military-industrial complexes from power, for disarmament, for detente and peace is a necessary component part of the struggle for social emancipation and social progress.

Imperialism in the 1980s, speakers said, can be correctly assessed if one takes account of the complex dialectics of its evolution not only under the influence of the law-governed uniformities and contradictions organic to the system, but also of its confrontation with world socialism, the forces of national liberation, the international working class, and the general democratic and anti-war movements of the masses. The modifications which imperialism has been undergoing largely result from the attempts by the ruling monopoly elite to adapt to the changing world situation and to the conditions of the class struggle in the capitalist countries. But its adaptation strategy is not just aimed to ensure the survival of the capitalist system, whose contradictions and conflicts are being increasingly exacerbated, but also to effect social takeback, to coordinate the efforts of the imperialist powers in setting up a common front of struggle against socialism, and against all the revolutionary and liberation movements.

This line cannot, of course, stem the further deepening of the general crisis of capitalism. Imperialism in the 1980s is confronted with an unprecedented interpenetration and mutual amplification of all its contradictions, and its social, economic and other crises.

Formidable barriers stand in the way of militarism and the imperialist bourgeoisie, speakers said. There is, first of all, the objective change in the balance of forces in the world arena in favour of peace, democracy and socialism. The potential of the peace forces has been growing, and the struggle for social emancipation and national liberation has been widening. At the same time, processes running within the capitalist system tend objectively to limit the arbitrariness of militarism and reaction, and in this context it is important to make a precise definition of the factors capable of halting the slide towards war, and to bring out and substantiate the need to solve the general human problems which induce governments and peoples of states belonging to opposite social systems to cooperate with each other. That is the point at which there emerges the tendency towards mankind's self-preservation, solution of global problems, and development of mutually advantageous economic, scientific, technical and other cooperation. The Communists believe that their task is to do their utmost

to promote such tendencies, to identify the social forces favouring the development of these tendencies, and to organise and guide these forces in the course of the class and general democratic struggle of the masses.

Consideration of the contradictions within the capitalist class, of the concrete forms assumed by state-monopoly capitalism today in confrontation with the working people is of much importance in formulating the fraternal parties' strategy and tactics, speakers said. There is evidence of a divide in some countries between the national (including partially the monopoly) bourgeoisie, and the magnates of transnational capital, both local and foreign. In our day, it is not only the left-wing forces, but also some bourgeois parties that operate under slogans calling for a curb on the total sway of transnational capital. A new contradiction—that between the transnational corporations and the national-state forms in which the society is organised—has emerged and is gaining in depth. The interests of transnational capital frequently run into contradiction with the existing lines and methods of state regulation. At the same time, there is ever greater evidence of the transnational monopolies' penetration into the bourgeois state apparatus and their coalescence with each other.

Much attention was given at the symposium to the present phase of the inter-imperialist contradictions and to the correlation of centrifugal and centripetal trends in the imperialist camp. On the one hand, the growth of transnational monopoly capital has created the basis for the class cohesion of various national contingents of imperialism, coordination of their strategy and the conduct of a common policy of class and social takeback on an international scale. On the other hand, there is growing rivalry between the three main centres of imperialism—the United States, Western Europe and Japan—in the area of trade, monetary and financial policy, in the fight for capital investment, and for priority along the most important lines of scientific and technical progress. Some countries of Southeast Asia and Oceania have been evolving into new rivalry centres as well.

How is one to explain the fact that the great international interpenetration and class cohesion of capital exists alongside the growth of inter-imperialist contradictions? It would be wrong to go to extremes and underestimate the process leading to the formation of transnational finance capital. But then one should not minimise the acerbity of the rivalry between its national contingents either. Speakers pointed to the following factors behind the mounting conflicts within the imperialist system. First, the amalgamation of the monopolies and their conversion into transnational empires tends to enlarge the scale of the clashes between these economic rivals. Let us recall Lenin's idea that the concentration of production and the large size of enterprises tend to hamper and deepen competition. The ever keener rivalry between the monopolies corresponds to the higher level of monopolisation. The transnational corporations are locked in ruthless battles both within individual industries and groups of industries, and between countries and regions, with the rivals using the growing support of their states and the might of 'home-based state-monopoly capitalism'.

Second, the development of the transnational monopolies, their establishment of associations and joint enterprises, the formation of mixed financial-oligarchy groups on which the capitals of different countries are represented, and the international state-monopoly techniques in concerting the activity of national oligarchies, all of these are no more than milestones in the inter-imperialist rivalry and new forms of the economic redivision of the world between associations of capitalists.

Finally, policy and strategy are more and more frequently coordinated between the capitalist powers in the form of a US diktat with respect to its allies, with the US-based transnational monopolies serving as the vehicles and instruments of US state hegemonism and Washington's imperial urges. That causes discontent and

resistance on the part of the other capitalist countries.

Thus, speakers said, the current conflicts between the industrialised capitalist powers go beyond the framework of traditional inter-imperialist rivalry, being amplified by the struggle against US hegemonism and the sway of foreign capital, and in defence of a national sovereignty infringed and undermined by US transnational monopolies and US state policy. Preserving sovereignty, standing up for the national interest, and preventing a new colonisation by US imperialism is now a pressing problem not only for the less developed, but also for the industrialised capitalist countries. Use of the contradictions between individual strata and groups of the bourgeoisie, and between the imperialist powers objectively offers a reserve in the struggle against imperialism and war, and for peace and social progress.

### **Against the Sway of Transnational Capital**

A number of problems is posed before the communist and working class movement by the new processes within the system of imperialism, it was said at the symposium. One of the pressing problems is the search for ways of *combatting transnational monopoly capital*.

Speakers in the discussion said that there are now almost 11,000 TNCs within the capitalist economy, with nearly 80,000 subsidiaries in various countries. Among the 50 major corporations, 22 are US-based, but the size and activity of monopolies based in West European countries and Japan have been growing rapidly. In the 1980s, all the TNCs together accounted for over one-third of the capitalist world's manufacturing output, for more than one-half of its foreign trade, and for up to 80 per cent of new hardware and technology patents.

Mergers between major corporations, including transnationals, have reached unprecedented proportions in the United States in recent years, said **John Pittman**. This has led to changes in the structure of US state-monopoly capitalism, which is characterised by gigantomania, the growing strength of arms monopolies, the spread of corruption, and the conversion of the state into a usurer.

One manifestation of these processes is the proliferation of investments abroad by the US monopolies, which in the early 1980s came to \$230 billion. The output of their foreign-based enterprises is valued at \$600-700 billion a year, which is over \$200 billion more than the value of US exports. Capital investments in other countries yield a sizable part of US earnings abroad. Citicorp, the largest US transnational bank, receives 60 per cent of its profits from its foreign operations and capital investments.

The relations between the transnational corporations and the bourgeois state have changed in principle, said **Bert Ramelson**. In the past, the monopolies used the services of the state apparatus, which helped them to take over markets and to exploit the peoples of the 'peripheral' countries. Nowadays, the economic and political might of the transnationals is such that it is often greater than the influence of states. Transnational capital now tries to function on a global basis. It seeks to maximise profits through foreign capital investments, increasingly to the detriment of the industrial facilities in its own 'metropolis' and even to the detriment of the policy of the national authorities. Whenever a government tries to maintain social or economic 'stability' by strongly resisting the transnational monopolies, the latter are capable of undermining such programmes and even of toppling the government.

Great Britain is second to the United States in the number of TNCs, but is first in assets per head of the population. The sway of transnational capital has virtually ruined the traditional industries, the level of wages is lower than it is in the other West European countries, while there is an extensive outflow abroad of the capital required to stimulate production.

After seven years of Conservative rule in Britain, the popular masses are deeply



discontented with the policy, but even a reformist government would be powerless in the face of transnational capital, which is an international economic and political force.

There is even greater dependence of the individual countries on the diktat of the TNCs in the North American region, said **William Stewart**. For four decades now, US imperialism has posed a threat to Canada's economic and political independence and sovereignty. By the end of the 1970s, almost 50 per cent of Canada's production capacities was in the hands of mainly US monopolies, while more than one-half of the natural resources was either owned or controlled by them. The United States is now seeking a 'free trade' status between the two countries, an arrangement the Canadian Communists describe as an 'ant and elephant' alliance. Although Canada is also an imperialist power, it is faced with the objective necessity of safeguarding its national independence.

The threat of a 'new colonisation' by the transnational corporations now exists in many capitalist countries. **Zenon Zorzovilis** dealt with the situation in Greece, where the development of state-monopoly capitalism reflects the specific features of the country, which is heavily dependent on foreign, primarily US, capital. Alongside the other forms of economic subjection to capital—commercial, industrial and technological—financial and credit dependence has assumed vast proportions in recent years. The transnational banks control almost one-fifth of all the financial operations, and the external debt has risen to \$15.5 billion. **Aulis Leppanen** noted that Finland's dependence on the TNC-shaped world economic relations has, among other things, plunged its merchant fleet into a state of the most severe crisis, unemployment has risen to 6.3 per cent, intersectoral disproportions have been growing, the tax basis of the state budget is being undermined, and so on.

In the context of the problem of transnational capital, **Bert Ramelson** suggested the need to reappraise some of the elements of the strategy of revolutionary struggle in the developed capitalist countries. The evolution of the TNCs into some kind of 'state within the state' sometimes gives occasion for the assumption that revolutionary struggle on the national level has no prospects.

Such an approach, the speaker said, would doom the working class and communist movement to passiveness. It is quite possible that a developed capitalist country deciding to eliminate the positions of transnational capital would be faced with sabotage and 'retaliation' by the TNCs and an alliance of the imperialist powers. But the domination of imperialism and transnational capital in the world economy today is limited by the growth of socialist and less developed countries, whose markets serve as some guarantee against a potential capitalist boycott. Nor should one succumb to the illusion that industrialised states can exist only at the whim of transnational capital. International economic interdependence cuts both ways, and the law of the uneven development of capitalism continues to operate.

Even the part of the monopoly bourgeoisie fearful of a take-over by foreign capital is opposed to its sway in Canada, said **William Stewart**. This is exemplified by metallurgical firms, and companies in a number of other industries. This produces a basis for a broad alliance of the working class movement with the middle strata and a section of the bourgeoisie in the struggle to strengthen national sovereignty and for an independent foreign policy. But in view of the strength of US pressure, it was said at a recent plenary meeting of the CP Canada CC, there is no purely national economic strategy that would give the Canadian people a way out of the current crisis. If US imperialism applied sanctions against the country, such pressure could not be automatically counter-balanced by the usual expedient of expanding economic contacts with other countries. That would require a radical change in world-wide economic relations, and the establishment of a new international economic order, under which there would be a substantial expansion of Canada's cooperation with

socialist and less developed countries, in particular, with many of the latter on the basis of mutual assistance in the fight against the sway of transnational capital. That is why the CP Canada attaches much importance of the struggle for a new international economic order, and to international economic security.

The statutes of a new international economic order, as formulated in UN resolutions of the mid-1970s, **Eduard Pletnyov** said, are designed for no more than a partial restructuring of international relations, without any change in the internal structures of the participants in world economic ties. Such democratisation is necessary as a first step towards complete liberation from imperialist domination. But genuine economic security cannot be ensured unless the less developed states stop imitating the ways of the industrialised capitalist countries, and the latter abandon their imperial ambitions.

Three-quarters of the TNCs' foreign investments are now placed in the developed countries, their purpose being the exploitation of skilled labour-power as a basis for maximising profits. Labour-intensive lines of production are transferred to areas with lower wage levels, with the result that there are growing differences in employment, skill standards, incomes, and the workers' social consciousness in the various countries. This requires, speakers said, special attention to the practical coordination of the international strategy of the working class on economic and social issues, more active use of the potentialities of international trade union associations, and new forms of contact between progressive circles from various countries.

The outcome of the struggle against transnational capital largely depends on joint action by the international working class, **Jose Lava** emphasised. There is a need to reckon with the objective differences in the living conditions of working people in various countries, such as those in the less developed countries, where masses of able-bodied people are prepared to do any work for low pay, and the workers in the industrialised countries, who have higher pay and better protection under social security systems.

At the same time, the revolutionary and democratic forces can make better use of the contradictions arising between transnational capital and the national bourgeoisie, and conflicts within the TNC system, and between different national imperialisms. This paves the way for broader political alliances and helps to overcome the trend towards sectarianism and intolerance of those with whom there is an objective community of interests in the anti-imperialist struggle.

### **Growing Reaction and Aggressiveness**

Lenin says that 'the specific political features of imperialism are reaction everywhere and increased national oppression due to the oppression of the financial oligarchy'.<sup>2</sup> That fully applies to present-day imperialism.

In the 1980s, there has been a noticeable increase in the influence of extreme reaction in every sphere of the economy, and the political and social life of the capitalist countries. The transnational monopolies have mounted a fierce offensive against the gains and rights of the working masses. Imperialism's external policy is marked by growing aggressiveness and adventurism, and here US imperialism stands out with its global claims, its urge to coordinate on an international scale the fight against socialism and the forces of national liberation and social emancipation.

**Tadeusz Iwinski** said that there are three groups of reasons for the sharp increase in the reactionary nature of imperialism. First, there are the shrinking of its sphere of influence in the world, and the limited potentialities for the traditional methods of capitalist exploitation. Second, the US attempt to overcome the economic and social crisis of capitalism through the arms race, similar to that made in fascist Germany in the 1930s. Third, the failure of White House hopes of using the period of detente to weaken socialism.

In the light of Lenin's well-known formula that 'politics is concentrated economics', speakers said that the economic nature of present-day imperialism as a whole itself generates the trend towards superexploitation and the use of force. The roots of reaction and militarism lies in the concentration and centralisation of capital, the processes which Lenin noted and which are now expressed in an unparalleled strengthening of transnational capital and the military-industrial complexes. It is these, said **Ali Ileri, Heinz Jung and Alvaro Oviedo**, that determine the current switch by state-monopoly capitalism to the ideological and political objectives and methods of neo-conservatism, which has set its face not only against the revolutionary-democratic trends in social development, but also against bourgeois reformism. The adaptation strategy resting on transnational capital and militarism is used mostly in the forms of class violence and social clawback.

The formation of the largest military-industrial complex in the United States was described by **John Pittman**, who showed how the process of vast mergers of groups of capital involves many corporations in arms manufacture and makes them active participants in the corruption which runs through every sphere connected with the state budget and regulation. The arms corporations have the most powerful lobby in the Congress, winning 87 per cent of all Pentagon contracts, and receiving over 90 per cent of the profits from arms manufacture. They are the leading force behind Reagan's policy of militarism and aggression, and the financial basis of the ultra-right, fascist-minded public groupings in the United States.

Speakers showed how the military-industrial complex is internationalised through involvement in Pentagon contracts, notably through participation in the Strategic Defense Initiative by some West European and Japanese monopolies. Its transnational form intensifies militarism and general reaction not only in the United States, but in all the other capitalist countries as well. All these processes suggest that there is a trend towards the formation of military-state-monopoly capitalism in the imperialist countries, **Heinz Jung** said.

**Stanislav Menshikov** said that the arms concerns are systematically enriched at the expense of the treasury and are now among the major industrial corporations of the capitalist world. On the other hand, the diversification of production leads to parallel specialisation of many major monopolies both in civilian and in military products. As a result, whereas arms concerns once used to be a special group located in something like the 'periphery' of finance capital, they are now increasingly grafted onto the very backbone of the financial oligarchy.

Imperialism's growing reaction and aggressiveness are in crying contradiction with the most important objective processes in the modern world. Under the military-strategic equilibrium between imperialism and the forces of peace, a military confrontation between the two systems is not fatally inevitable; indeed, there is an imperative need for developing economic relations between the two systems on the basis of peaceful coexistence and cooperation. However, **William Somerset** said, imperialism continues to reflect the interests and conflicts of the old imperial powers. These imperialisms combine and conflict and they develop unevenly, too, but their affairs are now 'regulated' by the interplay of commercial, business and industrial disciplines, set and changed by the strongest amongst them, primarily the United States, so that they are fraught with the danger of 'mistakes' confounding the imperialist process in the longer term.

Surely, the debt problem is an example of this. Allowing it to proceed to the stage of 'unpayability' is a 'mistake'! It has resulted in unexpected turmoil within imperialism, and lead creditor-debtor relations into an impasse. The attempts to solve 'general' problems have led to a sharpening of 'local' crises. Imperialism is reactionary, and its strategic mistakes tend to make it even more reactionary. Here one needs to reckon with the fact that the considerable role of state-monopoly capitalism in the economy

of the non-socialist part of the world, including most of the less developed countries, the military activation of imperialism and the insufficient unity of the anti-war forces for the time being give some scope for the development of reactionary trends in international relations.

The forms in which the reactionary nature of imperialism is manifested in the individual countries was an important problem under discussion. **Heinz Jung's** typology of the political domination of finance capital and the TNCs in the industrialised capitalist countries (neo-conservative, centrist and social-reformist) was elaborated with an analysis of the situation in the less developed world, the need being noted to take account of the imperialism-generated internal and external prerequisites for growing internal political reaction in this group of countries.

Sensible of the looming danger, transnational and local finance capital resort to overt terrorism, said **Hugo Facio**. Chile is an apt example. But the Chilean experience also goes to confirm that such a form of power is 'fragile', as **Georgi Dimitrov** quite rightly said. The weakening of the tyranny makes imperialist capital and internal reaction cast about for other forms of domination that could help them stabilise their positions and enlarge them wherever possible. Lenin analysed the relevant statements made by Engels and said that the point was whether wealth could dominate under a given form of government.<sup>3</sup> The concrete form of finance-capital domination in our conditions will depend on whether it is capable of attaining its objectives, on the kind of resistance it has to confront, and how its own development proceeds.

A sharp turn towards democracy has been in evidence in South America in recent years. That is the result of large-scale national battles against regimes which have basically outlived themselves. In the face of these changes, imperialism has regrouped and has essentially preserved the effectiveness and scale of its policy of plunder. Fundamental problems of social development remain unresolved. Broad popular masses have to face the same old difficulties. The new governments find themselves in the tangled web of the old bondage, and the situation is further worsened whenever they prove incapable of breaking the web. The major problems keep mounting. Is interest to be paid on the debt which it is no longer possible to repay, or is payment to be withheld? But if the payments are to go on, where is one to take the resources to develop the country and meet the population's vital wants? Is the political scheme outlined by the IMF and the World Bank to be put through? Such questions are posed by life itself. Unless these are studied and tackled in the light of the national interest, the democratic gains will be dissipated, especially where the structures being used by the dictatorial regimes, including the armed forces and the repression machine, remain fully or largely intact. Consequently, defence of democracy brings to the fore the need to give it greater depth.

**Cesar Augusto Jimenez** took up the point and went on to show that the emergence in some countries of fascism, organised and fostered above all by US imperialism, indicates that the contradictions there between the peoples and imperialism are assuming extremely sharp forms, making the revolutionary movements, and the Communists in particular, carry on the struggle with a high pitch of intensity.

**Ali Ileri** cited the political situation in Turkey as an example and drew the following conclusion: it is not so much the use of extreme forms of fascist-type reaction, as the forms of class violence camouflaged as democracy, that is becoming the specific feature of the present period. **Alvaro Oviedo** said that there is a process of 'enrichment' of the state forms stemming from the aggravating contradictions of our epoch, as will be seen, in particular, from the efforts to find alternatives midway between fascism and bourgeois democracy. **Elean Thomas** noted that imperialism has been trying to stabilise its influence in Jamaica precisely within the framework of 'bourgeois freedoms'. **Essop Pahad** said that, apart from the extreme measures of

violence, attempts are being made to corrupt and split the revolutionary movements. Characterising the situation in India, **Unni Krishnan** stressed the specific significance of external sources in intensifying the political reaction and in pitting nations against each other.

But there is nothing historically predetermined in our day about movement along the way dictated by imperialism. The struggle of the working masses and the peoples is a real force capable of resisting imperialism.

### Neocolonialism in Crisis

In their analysis of the basic features of imperialism in the 1980s, the participants in the symposium made a special examination of neocolonialism, and of the relations of dependence characteristic of the world capitalist system. **Semou Pathe Gueye** said that neocolonialism is a special form of imperialist domination and exploitation of one set of countries by others without any juridical partition of territory by the imperialist powers. Despite the disintegration of the system of colonialism and certain changes in the forms and methods of monopoly capital's plunder of the less developed countries, imperialism has managed to keep going the system of exploitation in the regions of the Third World.

Many speakers described the ramified apparatus of neocolonial exploitation in the various countries and regions of the capitalist world. Neocolonialism, **Rafic Samhoun** stressed, is based on a number of objective economic, scientific, technical and historical prerequisites. These are the defenceless condition of the less developed countries within the international-division-of-labour system, a condition which has taken a long time to evolve; the rise of powerful TNCs; state-monopoly capitalism's need to export capital to the Third World; and the need to use the high technology which is monopolised by the industrialised capitalist countries. There is also the formation of a social base for imperialism in the form of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie and other comprador elements in the less developed countries. **Elean Thomas** and **Alvaro Ovedo** noted the growing role of the local financial oligarchy. The internal social basis for neocolonialism is also being intensely stimulated by growing militarisation. **Tadeusz Iwinski** said that the substance of neocolonialism consists not only in ensuring imperialism's economic exploitation of its weakest partners, but also in the urge to promote the development of capitalism in the Third World, and to create an alternative to the national liberation and revolutionary processes in the Third World.

The attention of the participants in the symposium was drawn to **Semou Pathe Gueye's** thesis that neocolonialisation is in a state of crisis. The military, political, economic, financial and other mechanisms of domination which it has created now often fail to function. Thus the crisis in the regulation of capitalist reproduction in the less developed countries has lowered the revenues from export; it has made the mechanism of accumulation used by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie inefficient; and it has eroded the springs of economic growth and technical and social progress, which has affected the incomes of every stratum of the population. This is also expressed in the social and political tendency towards the destruction of the state and semi-state sector, whose emergence was promoted by imperialism in the early years of independence for the purpose of shaping a local bourgeoisie.

The plans for 'ordering' the economics, and the anti-social policies proposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund tend to increase the unemployment and to reduce the working people's purchasing power, so merely sharpening the structural narrowness of the domestic market and plunging local industry into a sharp recession. The export-drive policy intensifies the social poverty, without bringing about the desired upswing. The discontent of the working class has been growing. The bureaucratic bourgeoisie finds itself in a state of ever greater

isolation. The broad masses are coming to see the need for an economic and social alternative to neocolonialism. Although all these tendencies are most characteristic of Senegal, the speaker said, many of them are clearly evident in other countries as well.

The crisis of neocolonialism does not, of course, signify either a suspension of its development or an abandonment by imperialism and its allies of their search for new forms of exploitation and domination. In some cases, this search yields success for reaction, but in others it has to resort to direct acts of terrorism and violence. Hence the mounting danger of neocolonialism and of the imperialist powers' expansionist policy. Neocolonialism continues to be the key component of the economics and politics of imperialism at the end of the twentieth century. It is being modified and 'modernised', and this confronts the working class and communist movement with the task of mobilising all the means of anti-imperialist struggle.

### **The Alternative to Reaction and Militarism**

The analysis of the peculiarities of present-day imperialism logically leads up to the question of an alternative to this aggressive and reactionary system. The Communists believe that socialism alone can bring radical liberation from the threat of war, from the sway of transnational capital and the military-industrial complexes, and from the domination of reaction and neocolonialism. But this strategic goal can be attained only in organic combination of active struggle for peace and consistent struggle for solving the most urgent social problems agitating the minds of masses of people.

One of the most pressing tasks is to push back and inflict a political defeat on extreme reaction and militarism, which determine the face of imperialism in the 1980s. This calls for cohesion of the ranks of the working class and strengthening of its alliance with all the peace-loving, anti-imperialist forces. This general proposition is applied in its own way in each country, in the light of the concrete-political and economic situation.

**Heinz Jung** said that a switch from the most conservative forms of bourgeois policy to centrist and reformist ones is objectively coming to a head under mass pressure in a number of industrialised capitalist countries, and this is ever more actively promoted by the working class struggle and the influence of the various trends within the working class movement, such as its social democratic wing, the communist movement and the trade unions. In the FRG, the Communist Party is doing much for the struggle for democratic and social progress, i.e., for a meaningful policy of reforms, not identical with the reformist-etatist type of development, but one which pursues both concrete and more constructive goals. This policy is centred on the growing strength of the positions and organisations of the working class and democracy generally. The key task in the struggle for peace today is to analyse the basis of what the German CP calls the 'coalition of reason', that is, an alliance of forces going beyond the class framework and concerned above all with the need to ensure mankind's very survival.

In the United States, said **John Pittman**, many strata of the population have condemned the aggressive acts of their government on an unprecedented scale. Although that has not occurred on a consistently anti-imperialist basis, the opposition to the present aggressive line is there. Something like 15-20 million people are involved in various organisations of peace fighters. All have taken up a stand that is objectively and subjectively aimed to strengthen peace, and in particular, they support the nuclear-test moratorium. The US Communists formulate their tactics in the struggle for peace in the light of these processes.

The central element of the alternative policy of Canada's Communists, said **William Stewart**, is safeguarding the country's national sovereignty. The CP Canada has acted as one of the initiators of the broad movement of the working class, the

middle strata, and some groups of the bourgeoisie, including partially the monopoly bourgeoisie, against the 'free trade' relations the United States has been trying to impose, for a democratisation of external economic relations between the two countries, and against the nuclear arms race. This policy cannot solve all the strategic problems formulated by the party in the sphere of the economy, working class rights, and so on, but it is a tactical step in the right direction, and it is supported by broad strata of the population.

In the less developed countries, the struggle for peace has gone hand in hand above all with the struggle against various forms of imperialist domination and neocolonialism.

The Cuban Communists, said **Antonio Diaz Ruiz**, believe that, despite the aggressive character of imperialism, it is no longer able to impose its diktat on the peoples of Latin America, as it once did. The development of the Cuban Revolution, the gains of the Sandinists, the conflict over the Malvinas, the emergence of an opposition to the Pentagon and US imperialism in some countries, the activity of the Contadora group, and the Contadora support group are all evidence of a new state of affairs on the continent.

**Cesar Augusto Jimenez** said that the positions of the democratic and socialist forces in the countries which have reached a medium level of capitalist development have been growing more solid from year to year. These countries already have a fairly numerous working class capable of giving a lead to the popular struggle against the domination of imperialism and the local oligarchy. Living standards there are still low, and the bourgeoisie has scantier resources for cushioning social conflicts. In the present situation, imperialism in Latin America cannot guarantee its continued domination by observing formal bourgeois-democratic freedoms, which allow the people to mobilise their forces legally in defence of their rights and demands, and in defence of national sovereignty. But the people in these countries do not have any special respect for formal bourgeois democracy, which is fairly often no more than a cover for repressive regimes, and a pathetic copy of the West European political system. Popular action is being contained not so much by a policy of fraud conducted under the veil of bourgeois-democratic norms, as by direct police and army repression. The response is a resurgence of anti-imperialist, class battles.

The Communists carry on their struggle in the upper echelons of the political superstructure whenever the situation allows them to do so. Thus, **Luis Emilio Veintimilla** described how the Ecuadoran Communists resist the policy of neoliberalism and imperialism, working to consolidate in their country's Congress a progressive bloc with the support of the left-wing forces and social-reformist circles. All the working people's organisations and members of different strata of the population, constituting a united front, are involved in the trade union movement and in other popular mass movements. This front campaigns in defence of democratic rights, against state terrorism, for agrarian reform, for economic revival, and for stronger national sovereignty.

In countries such as Chile, said **Hugo Facio**, the structural crisis has become so acute that there is a pressing need to find a way out. The first step is undoubtedly to liquidate the tyranny. But that is not enough. There is also a need for far-reaching economic and social measures. Social development requires the establishment of advanced democracy, and this implies profound democratisation of every sphere of life. Accordingly, there is a need to end the policy of plunder and parasitism of transnational and local finance capital, to pull the roots of fascism out of the economy and the superstructure, and to make the people the chief protagonist of the nation's future.

The advanced democracy advocated by the Communists is something greater than bourgeois democracy, said **Alvaro Oviedo**. For Colombia that implies changes in the

power system, and in the political structure, and also modification in the economic and social bases of government.

The Communists believe that the most important means of making the alternative approaches more effective is to express them in concrete terms with sound economic grounding. This may be exemplified by the approaches to the problem of external debt repayment. **Antonio Diaz Ruiz** recalled that Cuba had come out with a clear initiative for liquidating the Latin American countries' external debt. The capitalist states must pledge to pay 10 per cent of their military expenditures to the banks which are these countries' creditors as the way to clear off their external debt.

Many speakers urged the need for further elaboration by the Communists of the problem of democratising external economic relations and the struggle for international economic security. Much importance attaches to the political prerequisites of this struggle, which, **Unni Krishnan** said, consist in certain conditions in ensuring the state's independent political line. India provides an example: it has developed along the capitalist way, but strives for economic and political independence. Despite the ever greater infiltration of its national economy by foreign capital over the past several years through TNC channels, the state has kept the external debt under control, while in the foreign policy sphere India has acted as one of the leaders of the non-aligned movement.

Consequently, the Communists' alternative is based on a consideration of the actual tendencies of our time. The programmatic ideas of the communist and workers' parties are realised in the people's struggle for peace, democracy and socialism, and in this struggle the Communists are not alone. Just as several decades ago, the peoples of the world rose to resolute struggle against the obscurantism of fascism, the potentialities for a new and broad alliance of forces against war and imperialism are taking shape now that US imperialism is encroaching on the life of all the peoples and the sovereignty of all the countries. The realities of the late twentieth century bear out Lenin's prediction that imperialism is a stage of capitalism without any prospects for historical development. That was the global conclusion drawn by the participants in the symposium.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New Edition, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1986, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 287.

<sup>3</sup> See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 46.

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# viewpoints

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## Two Moralities in Confrontation

*James West* — member, Political Bureau, CPUSA, Chairman, Central Review (Control) Commission

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THE contradictions of moribund capitalism increasingly tend toward the breaking point. They permeate the structure of bourgeois society and become ever more



manifest. All of the inner rot of this exploitative system, often hidden from view when capitalism was ascendent, and covered up since then by the rainbow-hued cosmetics of bourgeois propaganda, has in its imperialist twilight years burst into the open. The boasts and claims of capitalism to being the harbinger and defender of a universal morality come into conflict with its everyday realities. These pretensions are belied by the notorious amoral practice of the foreign and domestic policy pursued by the United States, the leading imperialist power, and by many of its allies.

The slogans and catchwords of bourgeois society—'liberty, fraternity, equality,' 'all men are created equal,' 'the pursuit of happiness'—which, in their time, played a revolutionary role in bringing capitalism to power against feudal oppression in our times stand exposed and mocked by what we encounter in the United States—mass unemployment, racism, hunger and homelessness. There is the structural crisis with its shutdown of industrial plants and thousands of ruined family farmers. Widespread functional illiteracy dooms millions of youth, especially among the oppressed Black and other minorities, to a future at the lowest depths of society.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the 'blessings' of the vaunted 'free enterprise system.' Never before has the moral decay of capitalism been as all-pervasive as it is today. Capitalism reduces everything to the auction block; everything is subject to debasement and degradation; nothing is sacred. Pornography is spreading. Youth are beguiled into the debilitating and life-destroying narcotic 'culture,' while millions of dollars are amassed by faceless and ruthless exploiters from the tormented and tortured minds and bodies of young people. Youth gangs seek a way out of the system's blind alleys by becoming predators on whole communities. The glorification of violence dominates TV, radio, mass literature and the commercial press. No wonder that murders are on the rise. In many US cities, streets and public parks are unsafe to walk in. Child abuse and wife abuse grow apace.

Everything is done to foment hatred of the Soviet Union, other socialist countries and the national liberation forces, and this sows the seeds of war and fascism. The growth of the extreme right and neofascist groups has brought with it a rise in racism, antisemitism and antilabor propaganda and provocations.

Corporate corruption vies with government corruption for first place. A recent poll in New York City has shown that 61 per cent of the people believe that government corruption is widespread in the city, while 39 per cent said that corruption is part of the way things work—in other words, that the city could not work without corruption.

The biggest white-collar criminals are corporation executives guilty of embezzling, defrauding the government of tens of millions in taxes, in padding the bills in government contract work, etc.—a widely known condition. And no less widely known is the fact that few of these criminals are brought to justice. In other words, 'anything goes for a buck!'

The attempt to identify a universal morality with capitalist society is least of all credible in precisely this area which, more than any other, can be said to approximate the concept of a universal morality—equality, equal rights for all. More and more workers, oppressed Black and other minority peoples and people generally oppressed by state-monopoly capitalism are learning that equality for all is impossible under this social system.

Indeed, equality is impossible as long as classes exist. Only a classless society can enthronate true equality because it is only in the absence of an exploiting class that the conditions are created for translating this democratic ideal into reality, the way it happens in socialist society. In the bourgeois countries, the material base is lacking for its materialisation. Like 'the pursuit of happiness' under capitalism, it is a chase for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow because the pursuit is on a treadmill which can go nowhere in a society of dominating exploiters and dominated exploited.

The concept of equality in this society is barren because it is hitched to the wagon of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism as the chief vehicle for attaining it. It is exactly this individualism, a derivative of private property so dear to the hearts of the exploiters, which is a powerful tool for imposing the rule of 'dog eat dog and the Devil take the hindmost.' It is the spiritual source of extreme brutality, of man's inhumanity to man, of violence and bloodshed, of fascist torture and death chambers.

Bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism perverts and destroys the best qualities of individuality and personality. The mass mind is saturated with individualism from the cradle to the grave. Individualism is promoted as a basic moral principle, a sacred principle of capitalism. Its purpose is to offset and defeat the influence exerted on the masses by the only moral principle which can bring about the fullest flowering of each person's individuality on the basis of true equality for all—the principle of proletarian class solidarity. This principle provides for the collective action of the working class and its allies in the struggle for antimonopoly democracy and through it, for socialism, the society of genuine equality.

In the flood of volumes of recent years which have been written to disprove, 'improve' and revise Marxism, there are many attempts to depict our scientific theory as indifferent to or devoid of questions of morality. All of these claims merely attest to the inability of their authors to grasp the essence of Marxism-Leninism. In actual fact, Marxist-Leninist science and its practise are profoundly moral. 'In that seething struggle that is revolution,' Lenin wrote, 'at that special post which every revolutionary occupies, at a time when the work of even a small body of men takes the form of deliberations, of enormous importance is high moral prestige won in the course of the struggle, unquestionable and unchallenged prestige, the roots of which lie, of course, not in abstract morals, but in the morals of a revolutionary fighter, the morals of the rank and file of the revolutionary masses.'

Today especially, the fight for revolutionary moral standards has become both a party question and a question of the class struggle, of the mass fight for peace. It is a party question for the CPUSA because our party, just as parties in all the capitalist countries, does not live in a vacuum. Its members, living in the most aggressive, decadent imperialism, surrounded by ubiquitous bourgeois degeneracy day in and day out, are subjected to corrupting and opportunist pressures and influences without letup. Where conscious understanding of the source and reason for these pressures and influences is missing, where there is no struggle against them, they take over and fill the void. In this way, and often imperceptibly, backward, antilabor, racist, chauvinist and corrupt contamination seeps into the party. Without a struggle against it, it grows into centrifugal, disruptive, degenerative and destructive trends. It can be effectively dealt with only by a conscious struggle to safeguard and maintain moral, ideological and organisational principles at all levels of the party, beginning with leadership where responsibility is the greatest.

As a measure toward this end, on instructions from the Central Committee, CPUSA, the Central Review (Control) Commission, after much discussion and collective work, presented a declaration of party standards. Titled, 'To Be A Communist,'<sup>2</sup> it was unanimously adopted by the Central Committee on June 3rd, 1985. CPUSA National Chairman Henry Winston explained that this declaration was essential. He proceeded from a broad analysis of US capitalism today and of the Communists' task.

As a sick body needs blood transfusions to prolong life, so US imperialism leans more and more upon transfusions of arms spending. It clings to the delusion that military superiority over the Soviet Union and a first-strike capability will prolong its life. But as with many 'miracle' drugs, the side effects of the anti-Soviet, anti-Communist 'cure' of Reaganism are dangerous and debilitating to the body politic. Henry Winston lists these side effects US society is suffering from: the cult of savage

violence in virtually all the mass media; the brutalisation of human relations, especially toward Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Native-American, Asian-American and Pacific Island peoples; the attempts by bourgeois ideologists to destroy working-class values and standards of unity and solidarity; the growth of racist and fascist groups; the moods of despair which seek relief in drugs, abnormalities and suicide. These are symptoms of a disease affecting a social system which threatens to drag everything with it as it sinks into the morass.

To combat this danger is to fight for peace, life, a better future. The significance of the struggle for communist standards lies precisely in the need for members of the Communist Party having the qualities required of fighters and leaders against capitalism's inhumanity. Needed are qualities of working-class morality which can surmount the poisonous environment of capitalist decay and inspire the struggle which will open the road to a happy future for all mankind. It follows that communist standards have meaning far beyond the ranks of our party. Among other things, they touch upon the image of Communists among the broad masses. 'Each Communist is an individual personality who has, at the same time, a special quality,' Henry Winston says. "Communists are united by the scientific outlook of Marxism-Leninism and by fidelity to the goals of peace, democracy and equality. Communists are committed to speeding the achievement of economic, political and social advance, of socialism. . . In this sense, this statement of 'Communist Standards' provides an appropriate answer to the often-asked question: 'What are Communists really like?'"

Published as a booklet, *To Be A Communist* points out that in working to change things for the better, Communists charge themselves for the better. The mainsprings of our morality have their roots deep in the working class, in its place in society, in its historic mission, in its ideology and lifestyle. Since workers judge Communists by different and higher standards than bourgeois politicians, whatever hurts the image of our party is below acceptable standards.

With due regard for the influence of enemy ideology upon the working class and the party, the booklet gives special attention to combatting racism, petty-bourgeois nationalism, anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism. The party should prevent any infiltration of these and other alien concepts. We see self-criticism and criticism as an effective weapon against egoism, arrogance, conceit, individualism, bossism, rumour-mongering, gossip and tale-bearing.

The Leninist organisational principles of democratic centralism and collectivity are brought forward as indispensable for the party's functioning and growth of influence. Citing Lenin on sincerity in politics: 'Sincerity in politics, that is, in that sphere of human relations which involves not individuals, but the *millions*, is a *correspondence between word and deed* that lends itself to verification.'<sup>3</sup>

*To Be A Communist* shows why factionalism is impermissible in the party; and explains why Communists consider it a duty to help the party overcome all bureaucratic tendencies and practices. In this connection, the booklet underscores the importance of check-up and control on the fulfilment of democratically-arrived at decisions. 'This means not only *if* decisions are carried out, but also *how* they are fulfilled, what are the results, wherein did we succeed and why, and wherein did we fail and why, what were the difficulties, the ideological and other problems encountered, and how do we overcome them. These are the discussions that are the meat and potatoes of good work and good meetings, for each such meeting becomes a learning experience for all.'<sup>4</sup>

Vigilance against the work of the class enemy, against anti-working class influences on personal behavior and in the party are also given attention, including the use of drugs, drunkenness, family and personal life, male supremacy. Our party works for the happiness and well-being of the family. Capitalism, on the other hand, destroys it. We are for responsible and respectful personal relations. The booklet condemns the

use and dissemination of pornography, opposes sexual promiscuity, conduct which leads to alienation and hostility between men and women, undermining mutual respect and unity in the struggle for common betterment.

The document warns against accepting as members any racists, anti-Semites, persons engaged in criminal activities or lumpen, declassed elements, those who have been destroyed by capitalism and reduced to preying on the working class for a living. They exert an anti-working class influence wherever they are. They are usually pliable in the hands of the ruling class, allowing themselves to become informers, provocateurs, scabs and goons for use against workers and progressive movements.

"As Communists, we are concerned with the welfare of each and every comrade. We all share common interests and concerns and rely on each other for strength and support in the struggle. Such is the meaning and value of the term 'Comrade'."<sup>8</sup>

*To Be A Communist* is a part of the total effort launched by the CPUSA Central Committee to gear our party for the great tasks in these crucial years of the nuclear age. In this nuclear age, the question of fighting for high moral standards is also a mass question.

When Ronald Reagan delivered his 'empire of evil' tirade against the Soviet Union, holding a 'Peacemaker'<sup>9</sup> atomic missile in one hand and plans for escalating the nuclear arms race through 'star wars' in the other hand, he established a new world record for high and low at one and the same time: highest heights in irony and the deepest low point in deception—a thoroughly immoral performance by any moral standard.

Where is the morality of an administration which, swayed by the militarist monopoly cabal, attempts to torpedo arms control and stages one provocation after another—from defiant atomic weapons tests to military muscle flexing in the offshore waters of the Soviet Union and Bulgaria in the Black Sea, the Gulf of Sidra, the Gulf of Mexico and other incendiary acts? What is moral about the conduct of an administration which likes to preach standards of morality to a world it seeks to dominate militarily?

Where is the morality of an administration whose chief public relations spokesman, in justification for withholding the truth, for misleading the people told a press conference on October 19th, 1983: 'You can't let your people know' what the government is doing 'without letting the wrong people know, those who are in opposition to what you are doing?' This from a government which claims to stand for 'freedom of information.'

Where is the morality of a government which accuses the Soviet Union of not being 'open' and then belabors it for openly calling for no more nuclear weapons tests and a 15 year disarmament plan for ridding the world of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000?

It is clear that all of the cant gushing forth from Washington about morality is only a smokescreen to hide the worst immorality in the history of mankind—the striving for military superiority in preparation for military interventions against national independence and against socialism, brandishing the threat of nuclear annihilation which could lay waste Mother Earth and all life nestled in her bosom.

Today such a cataclysmic war can be prevented. It can be prevented by mobilising and asserting the power of human reason, by mass, united world-wide action for peace, against the myopic lust of monopoly capital for profit from the arms business, against the US imperialist drive toward world domination. In this titanic struggle to save our planet from a nuclear death, the policy based on high moral principles plays a powerful role. The amoral atomaniacs must not be allowed to masquerade as defenders of morality.

Today, the standard bearer of high moral principles is the international working class in the socialist world, in the capitalist world and in the developing world—the

working class whose immediate and long-term interests, whose very existence, depends on peace among the nations. Its fight is a fight to save all humanity from a nuclear holocaust. Involvement in this fight is an integral and foremost part of the new morality being molded in the lands where exploitation of man by man has ceased to exist.

The fight for moral standards in politics is part of the appeal to reason along with the appeal to self-preservation to safeguard peace against the 'star wars' atomaniacs. The fight for revolutionary moral standards in the party is also the fight to bring the whole party to the forefront, day in and day out, without cease and sparing no sacrifices, to prevent a nuclear war, to proselytise tirelessly for peace, to join hands with all—irrespective of ideological or other differences—to ensure peace, to put an end to the arms race, to 'star wars', to all nuclear weapons tests, to all nuclear weapons, for peace and equal security for all nations. There is no higher morality today. This is the highest universal morality that applies to the whole world as it is today.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> *To Be A Communist, Party Standards*, Second Printing.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, p. 574.

<sup>4</sup> *To Be A Communist*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> The official name of the new MX intercontinental ballistic missile.—*Ed.*

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## The Bonn Option and the People's Option

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THE agreement on participation in the USA's space weapons programme, signed by the Bonn right-wing coalition government last March, confronts West German and international opinion with many challenging political, military, and economic problems. The attempts that were at first made to shroud the agreement and the accompanying correspondence in secrecy—nullified in information leaks—indicate that there are multiple controversies between West German imperialism's most bellicose quarters and its realistic section. In the face of the mounting political pressure from the peace forces the ruling coalition is going all out to persuade people that it has signed 'civilian' agreements with the Reagan administration. Actually, these have a military-technological thrust, which stems from the 'US bid for military supremacy' recorded in programme statements. The economic component is an expression of the exacerbating state-monopoly rivalry in the capitalist world market, notably in promising high-tech products.

### Dangerous Faith in 'Miracle Weapons'

It is not all that hard to see the main force that in the FRG supports Washington's Strategic Defense Initiative, which may give a fresh impetus to the arms race. This force is the military-industrial complex, whose influence has grown significantly since power was assumed by right-wing conservatives in the Federal Republic and the USA. Its hallmark is its continued effort, even in the age of nuclear fission and microelectronics, to win the contest between the two systems chiefly by military

means, orienting a significant proportion of the scientific potential towards the development of instruments of destruction.

As had all the historically declining classes before it, the capitalist class underestimates the objective processes of social change and the anti-imperialist liberation movements. Its adventurist aggressive minority once believed that the atomic bomb was a 'miracle weapon'. Today it sets its hopes on the SDI, counting that this will enable them to break out of their state of historical defence. In reality, the technological rationale of the 'star wars' project combines with political irrationalism and places the existence of the entire human race at stake.

As regards our country, the US-West German accord has, apart from its international-political, military-technological, and global-strategic aspects, internal political and economic angles linked to profits. By escalating the arms race the ruling class hopes to enlarge the material base of the military-industrial complex in order to hold out in the collision with the spreading peace movement and still have the possibility for further economic expansion. The parasitical element is growing at the expense of productive elements. Moreover, some of the corporations engaged in armaments production and the development of new military technology are trying to avoid the fate of concerns that went bankrupt on account of the crisis and the ruthless methods of competition employed by US monopolies. They count on entering the mainstream of scientific and technological progress by getting a place in the long-term SDI programme.

However, the West German concerns that have opted for this orientation may find themselves the victims of a delusion. Despite all the agreements that have been signed, the expected exchange of technological expertise may turn out to be a one-way street—in the direction of the USA. People have long been speaking of 'high-technology imperialism': on the pretext of firming up national security the USA is resorting to secrecy in order, first, to forestall rivals in winning their share of the world market and, second, to compel its allies to stop selling the high-tech equipment to socialist countries that allegedly may be used for military purposes. The so-called COCOM<sup>2</sup> blacklist on exports is steadily growing longer under pressure from Washington.

It is symbolic that having concluded agreements on the SDI, Bonn supported the US administration precisely at a time when in response to the 'unilateral Soviet moratorium the latter began a new series of nuclear tests and demonstratively accelerated the experiments linked to the 'star wars' preparations. Further, the Soviet proposals for a three-phased disarmament plan aimed at freeing humankind from the threat of a nuclear war by the year 2000, a plan that is getting even wider support from the international community, are being totally ignored.

What does a realistic assessment of the plans of the West German military-industrial complex show? Having started and lost two devastating world wars, it nevertheless still continues to rely on military strength—is this not evidence of patent inability to draw correct conclusions from the lessons of history!

#### **Strike Vehicle of Global Strategy**

When the SDI was put to the West German ruling circles in March 1983, it was quickly realised in Bonn that if the 'space umbrella' conceived by Reagan could protect anything it was the USA itself and its strategic offensive potential but not Europe. A section of the FRG ruling establishment was gripped by the fear that Europe would be made the theatre of a nuclear war, that it would become a Euroshima. Many officials in Bonn, including members of the General Staff and even the minister responsible for equipping the armed forces, who had sought an 'equality of risk' in the North Atlantic bloc, were initially opposed to the SDI (especially as in this period a sharp struggle had unfolded in the republic over the question of

deploying first-strike Pershing II and cruise nuclear missiles in the FRG).

With the backing of reactionary forces in Bonn, London, and other NATO capitals. Washington obtained consent for the deployment of its new missiles in Western Europe, and then went further, seducing the leadership of some countries, including the FRG, to favour its SDI project. The most reactionary political and military leaders and the interests of military-industrial capital gained the upper hand once more.

The GCP Board report to the party's Eighth Congress stated: 'Motivated by vassal subservience to the USA, a thirst for new profits, and an aspiration to revise the results of the Second World War, these forces are prepared to forsake the elementary interests of our country's security and, in the final analysis, place its very existence in question. Their policies do not harmonise with national interests. On the contrary, they conflict with these interests. On a wider dimension, they give nothing to the USA itself, for they are directly against the desire of the people of the USA to live in peace.'<sup>3</sup>

The 'star wars' programme is meant to become the strike vehicle of imperialism's global strategy. But while it is in the research stage, reliance is placed on the Pershing II and cruise missiles. The quarters planning a 'winnable' nuclear war expect the win the 'decisive battle' with a first strike. The West European countries where these weapons are stationed are being reduced to the position of the USA's missile launching pads and the target of retaliatory actions. In the case of the FRG this means, despite all assurances to the contrary, that war, this time the last, may once again break out on German soil and lead to the annihilation of all humanity.

It must be noted that in the political context leaders of the West German government are acting inconsistently, to say the least. Now Bonn calls for easing the war danger, then it agrees to the deployment of new US missiles on West German territory. Its spokesmen speak of fidelity to the cause of peace and disarmament and in the next moment vote with both hands for the SDI, while West German munitions factories start the production of more and more new types of armaments. They show a hardening of a leaning to promote good relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and then promptly join the Reagan campaign of sickening anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. This rushing to and fro is watched with considerable alarm by our peace-loving public, for it does not help to reinforce the FRG's prestige and position on the world scene, increases the threat of war, and breeds distrust and tension in international relations.

One more point must be made. Since some quarters in the European member-states of NATO have no particular confidence in the SDI and are, besides, compelled to reckon with stiffer competition in the armaments industry, they have got down to elaborating their own European 'defence initiative'. In fact, it calls for developing West European high-tech equipment and thus give NATO two equal buttresses: the USA and Western Europe. Bonn plays the leading role in this. 'There is perhaps no other government in Western Europe that has supported the US militarist SDI programme with such zeal. More, Bonn has complemented it with a European variant of "star wars",' Mikhail Gorbachov said in a speech at the 11th Congress of the SUPG in Berlin.<sup>4</sup>

The FRG's right-wing government is using the country's economic and military-economic clout to secure an ever more active involvement of other countries in the war preparations. This is served by, for instance, the civilian technological cooperation among West European nations (Euro-laser and some other joint programmes and projects), which may subsequently be used for military purposes; the West German 'war party's' idea of forming West European nuclear forces with the participation of Bonn has been kept alive for several decades. However, neither France nor Britain want anything to do with the idea of sharing their nuclear status

with West Germany, if only because of their apprehensions, founded on the sad experience of history. Combined efforts on the part of West European states in various areas with, where possible, the FRG playing the dominant role are regarded in Bonn as one of the ways of achieving its hegemonistic designs in Europe.

### **In Whose Interests?**

Moreover, the right-wing coalition in power in Bonn counts on a large military potential financed by the state budget 'to keep the German question open'. The growing material resources for war are nourishing revanchism. In exchange for their support for the SDI the extreme right-wing forces in West Germany count on US backing for their own revanchist, expansionist ambitions in Europe.

Past and modern German history is testimony that an orientation towards military strength, towards a redefining of existing frontiers, and towards opposition to disarmament stimulates revanchist, chauvinist ideology and leads directly to practical steps increasing the threat of war. Precisely such steps are being taken by Bonn. Operations envisaged in the NATO Airland Battle doctrine were tested in the course of exercises—these were aggressive, offensive, not defensive operations. The Bundeswehr is being rearmed under a long-term programme for the period from 1985 to 2000. A sum of at least a trillion D-marks is earmarked for this programme. It would not be superfluous to recall that only two years ago, acting on FRG initiative, the West European alliance lifted the last restrictions on the West German conventional armaments industry.

The course towards war preparations is re-vitalising neofascism. Faced by a growth of crisis phenomena in society, caused not least by the economy's militarisation, the ruling circles are trying to climb out of this situation by stepping up social dismantling, at the expense of the working people's interests. This is, of course, generating opposition from the people, from all progressive forces. Hence the growing need felt in Bonn for a cudgel against them, and this is precisely the role played by neofascist organisations.

Acts of violence are being carried out by neofascist groups, this being, in particular, an outcome of the anti-communist baiting started by the government and the bourgeois mass media. Just as the socialist countries, the German Communist Party and other progressive forces are portrayed as a 'deadly enemy'. In many instances the police provide neofascists with protection against anti-fascist demonstrators.

For the Bonn government it is convenient that the revanchists and neofascists are making foreign policy demands that for some reasons it hesitates to make itself. However, there is another side to the medal. The sordid reputation of these reactionary elements is a hindrance to the hegemonistic aspirations of West German capital in Western Europe: the Nazi occupation is still fresh in the minds of many nations. Government circles are for that reason endeavouring to portray revanchism and right-wing extremism as perfectly harmless phenomena. In parallel, attempts are being made to fix the label of 'carriers of a left-radical threat' to advocates of peaceful coexistence and disarmament, to isolate and cut them off from the country's political life.

The parliamentary debates in Bonn over the SDI agreements with Washington have indicated clearly that there is mounting opposition to the USA's adventurist policies, to unconditional acceptance of these policies. Members of the SDPG and the Greens have demonstrated that the Federal government has been unable either to influence the content of the 'star wars' programme or get any benefits for the republic's economy. The Greens are openly speaking of an 'act of capitulation'. For the sake of a deal with the US ally worth some 100 million dollars, trade with the East worth tens of billions of dollars has been jeopardised. Meanwhile, Washington has gained a speedily expanding possibility for controlling West German exports to



socialist countries and the sale of technology to them. The FRG has undertaken a grave political responsibility for the 'star wars' preparations and a further escalation of the arms build-up. By and large, Bonn has forsworn national and West European interests. The deal with the USA conflicts with the spirit of Geneva, to which the peoples are linking their hopes.

The Social Democratic Party of Germany that had, under Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, favoured the deployment of Pershing-II and cruise missiles is now an 'anti-missile' party opposed also to the SDI. The SDPG leadership has declared that at the first opportunity it would seek the annulment of the agreement with the USA on participation in the 'star wars' programme. This is largely an upshot of increased pressure from non-parliamentary forces and the rising influence of inner-party opposition under the new conditions. Although it cannot be excluded that the posture of the Social Democrats has been motivated by election considerations, the destabilisation of detente and of world peace by Washington has been the main cause compelling this party to pursue its present course and become a major component of the peace forces in the FRG.

The platform of the SDPG and the Greens, rejecting the 'star wars' plans, expresses the opinion of more than two-thirds of the public in the FRG. As in the case of the stationing of US missiles, the Bonn leadership only had the support of a minority of the people when it signed the SDI agreements. The Federation of German Trade Unions, for example, had offered strong arguments against the SDI programme and the FRG's participation in it. Similar arguments were put forward by a significant section of the academic community. The peace movement, consisting of a fairly wide spectrum of forces and constituting the largest mass movement in the country, has started vigorous actions to prevent the republic from being drawn into a space arms race.

Also to be borne in mind is that the sober-thinking sections of big capital in the FRG are likewise distancing themselves from the Reagan course towards confrontation, censuring the SDI and the US-FRG agreement on putting it into effect. Needless to say, as far as class relations are concerned they remain committed to their rigid opposition to the trade unions and are assaulting the gains of the working people. But on the question of peace they are subscribing to some basic views of the socialist states and of Western peace forces. Many of them regard mutually beneficial relations with these states as the material base for ensuring peace in the nuclear age. Thus, realistic sections of West German capital could form a major component of the 'coalition of reason', whose creation was proposed by Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SUPG Central Committee.

These realities are reflected in the GCP Board's report to the party's Eighth Congress: 'The thoughts and aspirations of our people are expressed in the protest against the SDI by widening sections of society, the political and trade union working class movements, the Greens, Christians, the art community, sportsmen, physicians, and many others. This is expressed in the noteworthy initiative of natural scientists . . . There has been no dearth of warnings regarding West Germany's participation in the SDI from industrialists and leading members of the government parties.'<sup>5</sup>

The opposition to 'star wars' and the armaments escalation is strong in other West European states and in the USA itself. Effective assistance to all the peace forces in the West is rendered by the constructive proposals of the USSR and other socialist countries for detente and a limitation on armaments. In addition to the three-phase disarmament plan, the initiatives for a reduction of conventional armaments in Europe advanced by Mikhail Gorbachov in Berlin and then spelled out substantively in the coherent programme put forward at the Budapest meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee lay bare the peril posed by the SDI. The peace alternatives marked out by the Soviet Union and all the other socialist

community countries are consistent with the interests of all peoples, for they are founded on the principle of equal security. Their materialisation would give people the opportunity to improve the quality of their life.

The FRG and the whole of Western Europe are now confronted with the crucial choice of which road to take. There is the road to war suggested by Washington—through participation in the SDI, through a further escalation of the arms race and of international tension. Also there is the road to peace, clearly demarcated by the Soviet Union—through the implementation of its peace initiatives. There is a growing danger that having associated itself closely with the USA Western Europe may find itself on the brink of a thermonuclear catastrophe. In the meantime, regrettably, some West European states (Britain, the FRG, and recently Italy) have aligned themselves with the 'star wars' programme and are going along with the White House's reckless policies. It is in their best interests to shy away from these policies. The possibility for this in the FRG is currently blocked by the ruling coalition, which plays the role of handmaiden of the West German and US military-industrial complex, pursuing a highly perilous policy.

### **Actions by the Peace Forces**

How is the heterogeneous peace movement of the FRG adjusting to the present situation? What contribution is it making to form the 'coalition of reason'?

The Krefeld Initiative,<sup>6</sup> 22 professional peace initiative groups (notably, the union of natural scientists), and the regional peace initiative committees have from the outset regarded the struggle against the SDI as being central to their many-sided activities. Jointly with international law experts, natural scientists have drawn up a draft treaty designed to prevent the development of space weapons and sent it to the Bundestag. Moreover, at universities they have conducted a week of action against the 'star wars' programme.

The alliance of members of different professions on the basis of their determination to safeguard peace creates new opportunities for enlarging the peace movement and enhancing its militancy: experience shows that physicians are more inclined to heed the views of their colleagues regarding the medical consequences of a nuclear war even if their political persuasions do not coincide. A placard of the physicians' initiative committee showing a dying medic against the background of a city devastated by a nuclear explosion and bearing the legend: 'We won't be able to help! A nuclear war must be prevented!', has become one of the most powerful visual warnings. Another impetus to the peace movement was given by a congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War held in Cologne at the close of last May.

Lawyers, military men, writers, teachers, architects, sportsmen, journalists, and farmers are likewise responding more affirmatively to appeals from colleagues that take their distinctive perception of reality into account. For example, members of the Art Workers for Peace are stirring colleagues and viewers to action enterprisingly and emotionally. Also, it must be seen that there is usually a lukewarm response to general appeals for peace and general arguments about the need for peace.

On account of the change in the SDPG's posture, the militant participation of Social Democrats in the work of the Krefeld Initiative and other open peace and disarmament initiative groups has ceased to be a problem. Social Democrats, Liberals, Communists, Greens, Christians of all denominations, members of secular circles, pacifists, and anti-militarists now act together on an issue vital to humanity, although heated arguments erupt over formulations and decisions on various actions. It is noteworthy that there are peace initiative groups even in the Christian Democratic Union, the largest government party.

The traditional Easter marches movement proposed a series of joint actions. A

large contribution was made here by trade union activists. Many seminars and briefings were arranged. This work allowed giving the people a clear understanding of the fact that the situation in the social sphere is related to the costly arms race, that the struggle against the planned deployment of strike weapons in space is, in addition, a struggle for the common good.

On September 1, the anniversary of the outbreak of World War II, the trade unions regularly conduct an Anti-War Day. 'Jobs Not Missiles' and 'Jobs Not Space Weapons' are the most widespread slogans showing what conversion, a planned transition from the manufacture of armaments to the production of civilian commodities useful to society, can give people. The trade unions currently have a key role to play in the peace movement, although it must be acknowledged that not all their potentialities are being used. On the part of the government attempts are being made to take the trade unions in hand, notably to limit the working people's right to strike.

The struggle for peace and disarmament is most directly linked in our country to actions to preserve and extend the working people's social gains. A conspicuous role in this struggle is held by the factory peace initiative committees functioning at grassroots level: their militancy at that level influences the attitude of the trade union leadership.

There are large peace groups among religious people, ecologists, and in women's and youth organisations. They support the actions of the wide peace movement, conduct actions consistent with their profile and help to mobilise the people.

A section of the peace movement represented in the West German Coordinating Committee for Peace musters activists of many organisations at Action Conferences. One of these passed a decision to conduct a massive demonstration on October 11, 1986, by peace activists from all parts of the country, near Haselbach in the vicinity of a US military base where cruise missiles are stationed. The Coordinating Committee's programme envisages action to counter any FRG involvement in the research and development for space weaponry and to press for the withdrawal of Pershing-II and cruise missiles from the country. Moreover, it proposes a cut in the military budget, the prevention of the Bundeswehr's further arming with offensive weapons, an end to the increasing militarisation of society's life, a halt to the export of armaments, and the extension of aid to the Third World.

For the heterogeneous West German peace movement it is of the utmost significance that it did not split or fall into despair after the serious setback to its struggle to block the deployment of US missiles. The movement put considerable creative thought and energy into that struggle but new weapons appeared in our country against the will of some 70 per cent of the population. However, unity of action remained intact.

Moreover, those sections of the population from whom there formerly had been practically no response to the appeals of the peace forces joined the movement after the missiles were deployed. The credit for this goes, in the first place, to the professional initiative groups. Further, the influx of members of the academic community into the movement has made it possible to reinforce the arguments in favour of peace. The enhanced maturity of the forces advocating peaceful coexistence and disarmament is also due to experience accumulated by the trade unions.

In this International Year of Peace people are more aware than ever of the calamities that may be triggered by the course towards confrontation and building up armaments. The West German peace movement has been largely instrumental in fostering this awareness and also in breaking the Bonn consensus on security issues. These are likewise qualitatively new factors of present-day political life in the FRG.

### Problems and Prospects

In countries where anti-communism is an official doctrine the peace movement encounters many obstacles. It is given no media coverage, efforts are made to isolate, belittle, and discredit it as a 'movement of accomplices of Moscow', 'divide and rule' tactics are used against it, and Berufsverbote operates against its activists; an objective is to confuse the people in it about the strategic attitudes of East and West. This discourages some people, while others see this as the natural response of a system forced to adopt a class defence stance. The greater the influence of the people pressing for a peaceful future, the more cynical and malignant become the methods used by the West German arms race fanatics in order to contain this pressure. But in the present situation, especially after the new Soviet peace initiatives, these methods can have a boomerang effect.

In the West German peace movement there still are indications of a dangerous underestimation of the underlying distinctions between the two social systems. Failing to understand that in socialist countries the interests of the government and the people fundamentally coincide, there are persons who reject cooperation with the peace movements in those countries with the contention that these movements pursue the same aims as the governments. Thus, the alignment of forces in imperialist states, where the governments are oriented towards NATO and the peace movements are in the opposition, is mechanically extended to include the socialist community, and misconceived conclusions are drawn on this basis. However, it is often overlooked or ignored that, for example, in Sweden, Greece, India and some other capitalist countries the peace movements are also energetic in supporting their governments when the latter speak up for disarmament and cooperation with the socialist world. Much explanatory work is evidently still needed to give people a clear understanding of this issue, especially as the situation demands unity of action in the struggle for peace.

Problems hindering cooperation often spring from divergences in assessing disarmament negotiations. It is vital to bring many people round to understanding that fundamentally different objectives clash at these negotiations: one objective is peace and disarmament and the other is armament and war.

Over the past five years there has been a rise of the consciousness level of the participants in the West German peace movement, of their receptivity to the information offered them, and of the intensity of the dialogue among them. This allows drawing the conclusion that the movement's will and ability to understand what is taking place in the world is bound to grow and that it will grasp the new truths inducing unanimous actions against the common threat. This process could be accelerated by united actions on the part of Western peace fighters, by a constructive dialogue between them, and also, where possible, by united actions with the peace forces of socialist countries. For precisely this reason it is vital to unburden relations among the various peace groups from every sort of prejudice and patiently meet their need for information about each other.

The relevant experience has been acquired. The clearer the Western peace movements realise that the fundamental antagonism existing between the interests of governments and those of the peace champions in a number of capitalist countries is non-existent in socialist states the easier will it be to conduct successful actions spilling over from one into the other social system against those who profit by the arms race and those who blueprint the strategy of confrontation.

In the FRG and other West European countries the prospects for a qualitative and quantitative growth of the peace movement depend on who is represented in their governments—the more realistic leaders or leaders incapable of developing their own critical viewpoint and thereby sinking into bondage to US aggressive policy. To influence the decision on this question, in other words, to direct actions against the

arms race policy remains one of the paramount tasks of the peace movement. It is of equal importance for the peace fighters of different countries to influence the sober-thinking circles already represented in governments in order to restore the detente process as an inalienable component of effective steps towards disarmament. Also still on the agenda is the problem of fulfilling the Helsinki Final Act's provisions calling upon public opinion to facilitate compliance with the Act as a whole.

In the long term the peace movement could recruit new forces interested in the formation of a system of collective security in Europe. The creation of such an institutionalised system, guaranteeing the territorial integrity of every nation as a condition of the security of all the participants in the system, would release the billions going into armaments for satisfying the people's vital requirements.

<sup>1</sup> This forum is a mechanism for cooperation among a wide spectrum of differently motivated sectors of public opinion. It was set up in 1973. See 'The "Vienna Dialogue" Is Expanding', *WMR*, No. 4, 1986.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> Coordinating Committee on East-West Trade Policy, set up in 1949. Its members are the NATO states and Japan.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> *Unsere Zeit*, May 3, 1986.

<sup>4</sup> *Neues Deutschland*, April 19, 1986.

<sup>5</sup> *Unsere Zeit*, May 3, 1986.

<sup>6</sup> The Krefeld Initiative is a union of large sections of West German public opinion set up on the platform of the anti-missile appeal adopted in November 1980 at Krefeld by a group of eminent civic and political personalities in the FRG.—*Ed.*

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## The Blind Alleys of Capitalist Orientation

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WHEN one considers the reflections of bourgeois and reformist theorists on ways that could lead Africa out of the maze of its complex problems, the picture of a traveller who has lost his bearings springs to mind. These theorists would have us believe that the difficulties of the African countries which are on the periphery of capitalism are rooted above all in the allegedly overdeveloped public and mixed sectors that stifle private enterprise and prevent it from blossoming and bearing fruit.

Hence the recommendations which are in full accord with the neoliberal currents now in vogue in the capitalist West. Like quacks who stubbornly prescribe the same medicine for all their patients, bourgeois and reformist ideologists offer a 'cure-all strategy' to the African countries. The recipe remains unchanged—to curtail the role of the government in the economy, culture and the social fabric; to support the private sector; and, allegedly for the sake of 'modernising' labour relations and using manpower 'more flexibly', to demolish the social security system (in actual fact, to disarm the workers in the face of the employers' blackmail and arbitrary action).

So far, however, no one has succeeded in overcoming or even alleviating the difficulties with the help of these 'recipes'. On the contrary, wherever they were applied, socio-economic problems intensified dramatically, making the neo-colonialist regimes even less popular, pushing the ruling classes into greater isolation, increasing the discontent of the working people and prompting the masses to uphold their demands more vigorously.

That is the only thing the superficial and essentially fallacious approach to Africa's problems has achieved. Meanwhile, bourgeois and reformist theorists refuse to face reality because it pronounces a harsh sentence on the socio-economic development

path they advocate so zealously. The truth is that the African countries' difficulties are in fact caused by the crisis of neocolonialism. The principal mechanisms of reproduction which formed the economic basis of neocolonial regimes have reached their historical limits. As a result, the situation in many African countries truly resembles a Shakespearean drama which could be summed up as follows: to persist in the earlier choice and perish, or to accept a radically different development prospect and save the country. So far, attempts to overcome the crisis of the neocolonial system while preserving its socio-economic foundations have all been total failures.

Cote d'Ivoire<sup>1</sup> and Senegal offer examples that illustrate this conclusion vividly.

These countries' records are interesting from many angles. One should begin by recalling that both had long served, each in its own way, as a showcase of neocolonialism. Having unconditionally embraced the option of capitalist development after attaining independence, these nations' leaders rejected socialist ideas out of hand.

Until quite recently, the situation in Cote d'Ivoire displayed political stability, a steady growth of the productive forces and a relatively high living standard. The country owed its economic achievements largely to its vast agricultural potential and to the favourable world market prices for its principal commodities (lumber, coffee, cocoa and fruit). Several neighbouring countries with comparable natural wealth failed to do likewise. Cote d'Ivoire's president Houphouet Boigny and his regime explained their success by the 'advantages' of the liberal capitalism model they had chosen over their neighbours' 'socialist experiments'. I shall show below how these 'advantages' ultimately turned out.

Less rich than Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal was used by the neo-colonialists as an African showcase of bourgeois ideology and culture. Besides, the country went through a period of relative social and cultural growth: Senegal was where the industrial potential of what used to be French West Africa was concentrated and the development of infrastructures was encouraged during colonial rule. Still, this development was limited due to the limited range of the country's natural resources. The economy is based on peanut production which is affected by periodic drought; export earnings are wholly dependent on the fluctuations of the world capitalist market. This single-crop, dependent character makes for the general weakness of the Senegalese economy. It relied on the 'generous credits' and subsidies of the imperialist countries which worked to bolster the strategic (military and political) position of Senegal in Africa.

Simultaneously, the imperialists used the impact exerted on Senegal's society by its profoundly westernised intellectual elite and advertised it as proof of the 'civilising mission' of colonialism. In order to justify its sponsors' trust, the regime tried to do what it could to show a 'taste for democracy'. The ruling quarters even engaged in intellectual flirting of sorts: they began advancing 'socialist' slogans and talking noisily about the need to 'defend the national values of the Black world against the aggressive cultural imperialism of the West'. Some African intellectuals, subjected to persecution in their own countries, naively believed that they found a new home in Senegal. 'Marxists' of every hue were welcome to come and stage conferences there, but on one condition: that they advocate revisionist ideas which Leopold Senghor, the then head of state, was preaching assiduously himself.

Far from hampering these projects, imperialism encouraged such activities, aware that they served its own interests. First, 'nationalist' intransigence was a pseudo-intellectual trick which camouflaged the neocolonialist policy of the ruling quarters toeing the imperialist line and bowing to the African strategy of imperialism. Besides, since a strong national bourgeoisie, the natural support base of a neocolonial regime, had been absent in Senegal prior to independence, the fraudulent slogan of 'African socialism' covered up the complicated imperialist manoeuvres aimed at creating

socio-economic mechanisms of neo-colonial rule.

In advancing 'socialist' slogans, Senegal's bureaucratic bourgeoisie pursued the same ends as those that motivated the rulers of Cote d'Ivoire to opt for capitalist development. However, both these seemingly different options, both models of capitalist accumulation and reproduction—which were the basis of neocolonial regimes and, until recently, upheld a degree of their stability and development—have eventually reached a dead end.

Neocolonialism is a distinctive form of imperialist domination at the stage of state-monopoly capitalism, a state at which the state not only discharges its traditional functions of maintaining the bourgeois order, adopting draconian laws to protect the interests of capital and suppressing the demands of working people, but also strives to secure internal and external conditions conducive to the circulation of the capital accumulated by the financial oligarchy.

The new alignment of forces on the international scene after World War II, the emergence and consolidation of the socialist community and the collapse of the colonial system forced the imperialists to alter their strategic foreign policy and to emphasise the search for new ways of exploiting the liberated countries. Formal partition of overseas possessions is now a thing of the past. But monopoly capital still controls its former colonies through a variety of political, economic, military and cultural agreements which, in the final analysis, erode the content of the young countries' national sovereignty.

The neocolonial policy of 'aid' and 'subsidies' serves the same purpose. In this field, the strategy of neocolonialism is furthered mostly by financial organisations of monopoly capital (such as the French Foundation for Aid and Cooperation), by EEC agencies (such as the European Fund for Development), and by multinational monetary and financial organisations (such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank).

The imperialists resort to various means to conduct their expansionist policy. In those African countries where precapitalist relations were dominant before independence, imperialism fosters a bureaucratic bourgeoisie which is to govern in accordance with the interests of the proimperialist groups. In those countries where a national bourgeoisie did exist, even though in embryonic form, the neocolonialists are gradually involving it in government and making it develop a taste for power, thus giving it a stake in the defence of neocolonial state structures. By installing its stooges in key government, army, intelligence and security service positions, imperialism creates a praetorian cohort of sorts which, if necessary, can serve as a means of crude interference in the country's internal affairs should imperialist interests be threatened.

In Black Africa,<sup>2</sup> the development of capitalism in its colonial form was based on the exploitation of these countries' natural resources. For example, in the savanna zone with natural water sources where one or two major crops were cultivated, colonial capital encouraged local processing industries. In the forest zone of Tropical Africa, it consolidated its economic positions by exploiting timber and plantations. Promotion of industry by the colonial rulers was restricted to a tiny handful of countries, and the aim was to reduce imports and satisfy the internal market demands of the then vast colonial territories.

Cote d'Ivoire provides a typical example of the development of capitalism in the tropical forest zone. The plantation system and the exploitation of forests favoured the emergence of a rural bourgeoisie from among the local owners of medium-sized plantations. Prior to independence this class consolidated its positions and even played the leading role in the struggle against the colonial authorities. Meanwhile, the bourgeoisie served as the core of the nascent neocolonial system.

The case of Senegal is typical of the way capital developed in the savanna zone.

Here, primitive, manual family farming was dominant. This hampered the advent of a rural bourgeoisie and a rural working class. On the other hand, the indigenous bourgeoisie which had sprung from trade in gum arabic and peanuts in the precolonial period was completely stifled by foreign (primarily French and Syro-Lebanese)<sup>3</sup> capital which acted to paralyse the commercial activity of this bourgeoisie. This explains why, after Senegal attained independence, imperialism had to foster a new bourgeois class in order to ensure a national base of neocolonial government.

The dissimilar conditions which existed in Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire by the time of independence made for the dissimilar ways in which the neocolonial system took shape there.

In Cote d'Ivoire, the existence of an indigenous bourgeoisie prepared to collaborate with the imperialists favoured the creation of a neocolonial system. The community of their interests was reflected in the capitalist orientation the country opted for. The subsidies and credits provided by the imperialist powers and their financial agencies ensured the development of the necessary infrastructure. This, in turn, encouraged the activity of foreign and indigenous capital, above all in the exploitation of forests and plantations. Simultaneously, a massive influx of foreign workers into Cote d'Ivoire from neighbouring countries increased the reserve army of labour; the bourgeoisie used this to dampen the struggle of the indigenous proletariat and to impede the emergence of its class consciousness. This situation helped Cote d'Ivoire attain a measure of industrial growth during the first two postindependence decades, accompanied by a dramatic aggravation of social injustice. In the 1970s, while industry grew by an average of 11 per cent a year, the national income share of the poorer 60 per cent of the population dropped from 30 to 22 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

Subsequently however, as excessive exploitation exhausted the resources of agriculture and forestry, the country's economy reached the verge of collapse. The depletion of the natural resources and adverse world market conditions reduced the volume of export earnings which the ruling quarters used to repay the credits received from the imperialist countries. Meanwhile, the severe crisis that broke out in the capitalist world resulted in reduced aid to Africa, more expensive credits and few sources of financing.

Hit hardest was the working class, primarily migrant workers. The middle strata were also affected. Reductions in government spending and a simultaneous wage freeze, as well as the abolition of certain social gains (for example, the right to housing) caused profound discontent among these strata and moved them to take part in the protest movement.

Obviously, a drastic reform of the plantation system and of forest exploitation which form the basis of the national economy is the only way that can lead Cote d'Ivoire out of the crisis. But if the regime does decide to effect such a measure, it will accelerate the proletarianisation of the smaller plantation owners. Besides, deteriorating conditions may encourage the medium landowners unconnected with foreign capital to rise to a struggle against the neocolonial system. It follows that the country's crisis accentuates social differentiation and keeps the middle strata and certain groups of the local bourgeoisie from strengthening their hand. In the final analysis, this serves to increase the objective conditions necessary for the elimination of the very foundations of the neocolonial system.

This evolution is impossible to explain by citing 'socialist orientation' (bourgeois ideologists kept levelling this charge at, say, the former leaders of Guinea) because it was never welcomed by the ruling quarters of Cote d'Ivoire. Nor can one ascribe the failure of the socio-economic course to the role of the public and mixed sectors which exist in the most primitive forms there, or blame capitalist orientation on the natural conditions (although, in a certain sense, these conditions did influence the capitalist



choice). The economic difficulties in question are products of capitalist development itself. The illusion of the 'Cote d'Ivoire miracle' lasted for two decades. But then the local model of capitalism (its architects referred to it as planned economic liberalism) foundered. The myth of the Cote d'Ivoire economy's 'good health' burst like a soap bubble.

Today, with one of Africa's richest countries bankrupt, the 'experts' of the World Bank and the IMF continue to foist their bourgeois recipes on a Senegal whose socio-economic system is wracked by a severe crisis. The ideologists of the capitalist path urge a gradual dismantling of the public and mixed sectors, presenting their 'excessive' development as virtually the principal cause of the present troubles. The scapegoat remains the same—although actually, with the bourgeoisie in control, relatively strong public and mixed sectors do nothing to impede the development of capitalism. Moreover, they form the basis underlying the neocolonial strategy—as applied in our country.

Earlier, I have noted that by the time Senegal achieved independence there had been no indigenous bourgeois class a neocolonial government could rely on. To fill the vacuum, imperialism had to breed a new class we describe as the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. This new class had to have its own sphere of capital accumulation, a sphere in which it would not infringe on the positions of foreign companies.

Hence the 1960 adoption of a course to expand government involvement in the economy and secure the control of the peanut trade by the public and mixed sectors. In Senegal's conditions, these sectors did nothing to promote the country's economic independence. Their task was to create a basis for capital accumulation, reproduce the new ruling class and prepare the ground for the growing economic expansion of foreign capital. At the same time these two sectors, both controlled by the bureaucracy, prevented the emergence and consolidation of a 'genuine' national bourgeoisie which could later resist imperialist interests. This class-bred strategy is reflected in the official rhetoric which pays lip service to a 'Senegalese path of development'.

This strategy of bolstering the neocolonial regime is based financially on the appropriation by the ruling elite of the differential rent and surplus agricultural produce through the system of state-controlled trade and through the 'cooperatives' and other agencies set up by the government to 'help rural dwellers' but actually robbing them. Add to that the large-scale injections of credits and subsidies from the imperialist powers, primarily from France. This mechanism functioned more or less smoothly up to the mid-1970s but was then thrown completely out of kilter by the crisis of the world capitalist economy to which Senegal was bound by multiple ties.

Reductions in external financing dealt the heaviest blow to Senegal's neocolonial system. Besides, the falling peanut prices on the world market and stiff competition in the marketing of phosphates caused a disastrous drop in export earnings. Simultaneously, the crisis of agricultural production and the consequences of the drought which were aggravated by a pernicious agrarian policy resulted in smaller government purchases of surplus produce from the peasants. The broad network of public and mixed enterprises created by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie in all rural areas became a liability for its architects. At variance with the idea of 'liberal' capitalism, this system also acts as a drag on the capitalist-based development of agricultural policy.

In addition, it is now increasingly difficult for Senegal's ruling quarters to secure credits and subsidies which become more expensive with every passing year—something explained not only by the crisis that has struck the imperialist countries but also by the donors' dissatisfaction with the suicidal carelessness of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which, at the height of an economic disaster, is importuning for external loans while insouciantly squandering its own meagre resources.

It is common knowledge that the creditors make new assistance conditional on the

adoption of a number of tough measures, including improvement of management, introduction of various restrictions, steps to combat corruption, etc. These recommendations incense the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which has a penchant for 'living it up'. Some elements of this bourgeoisie view the drive against illicit profiteering as a sword of Damocles constantly hanging over their heads.

The 'adjustment plan' proposed by the World Bank to overcome the current crisis is based on austerity. Nevertheless, the impression persists that Senegal is still caught in a vicious circle. Each aspect of the plan gives rise to new, often graver problems. Having undermined consumption and shrunk the domestic market, the anti-popular policy of austerity has led to increased bankruptcies, shutdowns, layoffs and dismissals.

Economic marasmus threatens to penalise all classes of Senegal's society. The dismantling of the public and mixed sectors deprives the bureaucratic bourgeoisie of its accumulation and development base while tougher management erodes its unity; some sections of the bourgeoisie are scared by moves to damp down on illicit profiteering. Other classes and social strata grow indifferent to the regime's survival. The indigenous businessmen who are at a disadvantage in resisting the onslaught of stronger foreign capital are alarmed over rampant economic liberalisation. The working class is profoundly dissatisfied with the 'adjustment plan' which inevitably drives prices up and freezes wages. This scheme completely discredits the ideology and practice of reformist syndicalism, a mainstay of the neocolonial system. The country's democratic forces conclude that in the final analysis, the popular masses are acquiring a growing political awareness and understanding ever more clearly that there is nothing to expect from the ruling regime.

Earlier attempts by the authorities to overcome the crisis of neocolonialism merely served to exacerbate it. At the same time, there is the risk that the recurrent failures of the anti-crisis measures proposed by the regime may contaminate public opinion with a fear of an inevitable and utterly insurmountable crisis. Our party is exerting great efforts to check the spread of these views and to convince the people that their future does not lie in neoliberal capitalism which is bankrupt all over Africa or in pseudo-socialist theories which merely hide the neo-colonial essence of the regime.

To counter the 'adjustment plan' adopted by the government under pressure from the World Bank, the Senegal Party of Independence and Labour has advanced an eight-point anti-crisis programme. It articulates the principle of a 'democratic, national and civic alternative' we are urging people to fight for. The programme is a package of political, economic and social measures. To publicise the programme, the party organises press conferences and public debates which are held in the poorer neighbourhoods and in which our experts, journalists and party officials take part. In the course of a round table on Africa's current developments, cosponsored by the *Guestu* periodical and *World Marxist Review* in Dakar in February 1986,<sup>5</sup> we demonstrated that the present decisions of Senegal's ruling quarters were absurd if for strictly technical reasons.

Our party opts for socialist orientation. We are and will be upholding this choice with 'figures at the ready', exposing the fallacy of the economic concepts whose authors boast of their allegedly scientific approach while in fact treading on shaky ideological ground and therefore forced to constantly camouflage their true image.

<sup>1</sup> Prior to 1986 the name of the country used to be translated as Ivory Coast.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> In this case, Africa south of the Sahara.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Syro-Lebanese is the name applied to the people of Middle Eastern extraction who settled in Senegal and other parts of Africa.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> *Jeune Afrique*, December 1985.

<sup>5</sup> See "Tropical Africa: The Way Out of the Crisis", *WMR*, No. 8, 1986.

## **'To Be an Anti-Communist Means to Be Anti-Christian'**

*Sergio Mendez Arceo* — bishop (Mexico)

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The ongoing renovation processes in the Catholic Church of Latin America have affected ordinary parishioners and the clergy at all levels, including the top of the church hierarchy. The former Bishop of Cuernavaca Sergio Mendez Arceo, an advocate of the 'theology of liberation', a doctrine widespread in Latin America,<sup>1</sup> is one such high-ranking clergyman.

Sergio Medez Arceo received his Doctor of Ecclesiastic History degree from the Gregorian University of Rome. He has been serving the Church for over 50 years, more than 30 years as a bishop. A participant in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), Bishop Sergio Mendez Arceo, 80, is active in the anti-war movement. He has been a staunch and consistent champion of peace, directly participating in the work of the Christian Peace Conference (CPC), to which are affiliated Christian associations in more than 80 countries.

*WMR* has asked Sergio Mendez Arceo to share his views on topical world issues. Following are his replies.

### **What do you see as the principal obstacles to durable peace on earth?**

REFLECTIONS on the future of our world inevitably bring one round to the thought that a virulent role is played in international politics by the USA, whose imperialist strength increased after World War II at the expense of a Europe bled white and in ruins.

Numerous US military bases, set up allegedly to protect the host nations, are scattered all over the world. In actual fact, they are used to the detriment of these nations' interests.

The USA uses the 'Soviet threat' myth to cover up its pursuit of self-serving interests. In Europe this myth serves as the pretext for the deployment of nuclear weapons, and in Latin America for launching social reprisals and preventing social change. Here I would like to clear up one important point. Some people speak of 'Soviet imperialism'. It is my view that there is only one imperialism—North American imperialism. I consider imperialism the logical and natural stage of capitalism's development. The USSR is not an imperialist power.

I have concluded, after long reflection, that anti-communism is the main ideological obstacle to peaceful coexistence. My thinking is quite consonant with the conclusion offered in a working group paper of the Third Congress of the Christian Peace Conference, which stated in no uncertain terms that 'anti-communist hysteria is one of the causes of the arms race. It is our duty to help overcome this hysteria.'

The primitive anti-communism endemic to the capitalist world usually has two aspects—religious and secular. In the former case, the emphasis is on the atheism of communism's proponents. The fact that Marxists are atheists or, as Reagan would have it, do not believe in a life beyond the grave, is presented as reason enough not only for rejecting communism but also for proclaiming a 'holy war', a crusade against it. In the latter, the stress is on the circumstance that under socialism the rich are stripped of their privileges.

Spiced with hatred of the USSR and reinforcing each other, the religious and the secular versions of anti-communism are dinned into people's minds. Religious figures

and politicians are disseminating anti-communist fabrications and anti-Soviet ideology all over the world, especially among Christians and Moslems. Any doubts concerning an anti-communism this primitive are rebuffed through an appeal to emotions, and immediately a smokescreen of rhetoric is put up, preventing clear reasoning and acceptance of reality.

In the Third World, the middle class is more exposed to Western propaganda and therefore particularly susceptible to these anti-communist stereotypes. The principal complaint of the middle class is not the absence of God under communism but rather the alleged absence of freedom from state control. There are other preconceived notions, for instance, about the Communists being 'bloodthirsty' and obsessed with violence. These notions are a product of a malicious caricature of Marxism.

Anti-communist sentiments are an important weapon of imperialism and of the world's reactionary forces. The newspapers, most of them linked to corporate interests of the rich, suppress truthful information about the socialist countries, subtly impress upon readers that human rights are violated there, raise a hue and cry about various dissidents, and turn individual court cases into propaganda exercises.

Meanwhile, in a diversionary move, it is asserted that both capitalism and communism are equally bad and that a 'third way' should therefore be sought—which, in actual fact, turns out to be this or that modification of a market economy. All this impedes open ideological discussions both in the industrial nations and in the developing countries.

Anti-communism is a poisonous drug in the real sense. It has enabled the incumbent President of the USA to stupefy many (Congress included) and to make them support reckless plans and the arms race, which holds out the threat of 'star wars'.

That is why I see exposure of anti-communism as one of my direct tasks. As I concluded my report at the Sixth Congress of the Christian Peace Conference, I said outright that there was an urgent need for our leaders and us as CPC members to act—as we saw fit—to eradicate or at least curb anti-communist sentiments.

**Could you cite examples of the USA using anti-communism to consolidate its positions in Latin America?**

The tide of anti-communist hysteria rose to its highest level here in 1959 and 1960, when the Cuban revolution triumphed. 'Christianity—yes, communism—no' was a particularly common slogan in the streets of Latin American cities. Imperialism used it as camouflage to hide its true intention of tightening its grip on our continent. The struggle against 'communist infiltration' was the pretext under which the government of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman in Guatemala was overthrown in 1954. The same is true of the intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965 and of the conspiracy which brought down Chile's Popular Unity government.

Brandishing the bugbear of a mythical 'Soviet presence in Latin America', the USA plans to add new military bases—in Grenada and Easter Island (Chile)—to the ones it has in Puerto Rico and Cuba (Guantanamo). It has turned Honduras into its main beachhead in Central America. On the other hand, it is common knowledge (even in Washington) that the Soviet Union, many thousands of miles away from Latin America's shores, has no military bases on our continent.

Anti-communism is the creed also of the anti-people Central American regimes supported by the USA. There is an anti-communist motivation in the Reagan administration's efforts to cut short the process of national rejuvenation in Nicaragua.

In Latin America anti-communism is, essentially, the biggest obstacle to solidarity and unity among peoples and governments in the struggle against imperialist

interference and intimidation.

It also underlies the attacks against the Catholic Church, which is the most influential denomination in Latin America. These attacks are prompted by the processes of renovation within the Church. International news agencies are working hard to create the impression that our renovation 'smacks' of communism. For example, the Rockefeller Report and the RAND Corporation said, in 1969, that the decisions taken at Medellín<sup>2</sup> were a major obstacle to US policies in Latin America. The authors of the Santa Fe report (1980) went so far as to say in so many words that the theology of liberation was part of that obstacle.

Influenced by anti-communist propaganda, many leading figures in the Catholic Church, each in his own way—some failing to grasp essential factors, and others suspicious of change—refuse to support the national liberation movements and those persecuted or exiled.

However, we have witnessed numerous expressions of solidarity among Christians in the defence of human rights. Large sections of believers have time and again shown fortitude, courage, and generosity in the struggle for liberation. Many clergymen accompanied them in this struggle. Suffice it to recall the noble mission of Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador.<sup>3</sup> Other facts can also be cited to support this view.

Anti-communism is the catchword that US President Reagan, who opposes independence for Latin Americans, uses to find recruits for the crusade. His exhortations still generate a response among many people spurred by religious sentiments. I think that we can and must reiterate that appeal made from the rostrum of the Christian Peace Conference: 'It is our duty to help overcome this (anti-communist.—*Ed.*) hysteria.' For to be an anti-communist means to be anti-Christian.<sup>4</sup>

### **What do you see as the principal cause of the explosive situation in Central America?**

First and foremost, the terrible social condition of our region's peoples. They are no longer prepared to accept poverty and ruthless exploitation. They have realised that US imperialism and its client local oligarchies are to blame for their condition.

The mood has changed under the impact of many different factors, above all, the two biggest revolutions in twentieth-century Latin America—in Mexico (1910-1917) and in Cuba (1959)—as well as the renovation of the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council and the Medellín Episcopal Council (1968), the Popular Unity government in Chile (1970-1973), and other developments.

The USA, especially the present administration, refuses to respect the will of the Central American peoples to attain independence and rebuild the existing system on the basis of genuine economic and political democracy.

To sum up, one can say that the blame for the explosive situation in the region rests with President Reagan.

### **How would you assess Washington's overall strategy vis-a-vis Latin America?**

The USA continues to pursue a clearly neocolonialist course, with the aim of subordinating Latin American countries to its interests—not only through a physical US presence and by armed force, but also with the help of trade, finances, the mass media, and culture.

Take Chile as one of the many examples of direct imperialist interference. First Washington tried to prevent the democratically elected Popular Unity government from assuming power, then abetted in the overthrow of President Salvador Allende.

It now supports Pinochet's tyranny.

The whole history of Mexico is another patent example.<sup>5</sup> Or take the aggressive acts against Cuba in the form of assistance to the counter-revolutionaries and the continuance of the blockade imposed in 1961.

### **How do you see the role of the Church in this situation?**

The Second Vatican Council was inspired by the idea of a Church serving the world, instead of a Church as a tool of the powers-that-be. To proclaim and expose, but not to impose. To assert Christ's injunctions of justice, peace, equality, freedom, and love. In line with these principles we should strive to live in harmony with all people, including the Marxists. We should proceed from the premise that capitalism is by no means an acceptable system. We should not try to impose any system by force, for example, a 'third way'. That is not the business of the Church.

It is our Christian duty to accompany people in their quest to transform society on the principles of equality. By conducting a permanent dialogue, we should perfect the means with which this goal can be attained. I hold that for Latin America, building a democratic socialism in which most of the people are effectively involved in their country's political and economic affairs is the only acceptable option.

Consider the case of Nicaragua. The fact that Christians in Latin America turned to face the demands of the times made it easier for Nicaragua's believers to fight against the Somoza dictatorship and compelled the Sandinists to shape their programme so as to voice their appeal to Christians clearly and unequivocally. From the outset, Christians and Marxists have been acting on absolutely equal terms within the Sandinist National Liberation Front. The same is true of what has happened since, mostly among the working majority of the people who were grouped, besides, in grassroots Christian communities.<sup>6</sup> Christians are joining mass Sandinist organisations and express their commitment to the revolutionary process, saying that 'there is no contradiction between Christianity and revolution'.

Those who are more realistic understand that there is no identification between them either, that revolution must not be treated as an absolute, that it may commit mistakes which have to be corrected. One must respect those who think differently; at the same time they should be made to realise that the time has come for national unity because if frustrated this would be a setback indefinitely delaying the attainment of genuine independence and freedom for the people. This is precisely what some Church leaders fail to see clearly.

### **What do you think is the role that the Church has to play in the light of the threat of direct armed intervention by US imperialism in Nicaragua?**

You have to distinguish between local and foreign Churches. For example, many religious institutions in the USA have set themselves a clear-cut task—to prevent US aggression, drawing believers into civil protest campaigns and other action, and to expose lies and misinformation. The visits of US religious leaders to Nicaragua have been very fruitful: they saw for themselves that there is no persecution of the Church in that country, that serious efforts are being made to improve the condition of most of the people, that revolutionary Marxism does not suffer from orthodoxy, that it is not a synonym of anti-Christianity and, lastly, that Nicaragua is in no way threatening other Central American countries.

Other Churches, particularly the Catholic Church, could act in the same spirit. I think the Pope should forget his displeasure over his visit to Nicaragua, analyse why it failed, and realise that the explosion of believers' anger was caused by his insensibility to the sufferings and plight of a nation having to deal with attacks of 'contras', and by

his failure to understand the essence of US imperialist policy. And, of course, by his unconditional support of Nicaragua's Cardinal Ovando. The local Church hierarchy has only itself to blame for losing touch with the people. It took a stand against the Sandinist government, denying it spiritual guidance.

The threat of an invasion of Nicaragua has become a reality. Coupled with the economic embargo, this spells out new privations for the people. Can we alleviate their suffering? I would like to call on all Churches of Central America, South America, and the USA to mobilise Christians for further actions of solidarity with Nicaragua.

**What is your assessment of the prospect for dialogue and cooperation between Christians and Marxists?**

The dialogue cannot be confined to the academic level alone. Dialogue is at its most fruitful when conducted in the course of the struggle. Many Christians have chosen to face reality and accepted, albeit in varying degrees, the challenge of history. The Marxists who are in power should also display a creative approach. Socialism should not abandon religion to capitalism. It must be remembered that militant atheism sometimes turns Christians into counter-revolutionaries. And this is precisely what makes the Sandinist revolution so significant for the whole world. It is tirelessly looking for a Nicaraguan road to socialism that, while asserting secular rule, would not be anti-Christian.

True, Christians have been anti-Marxist, but Marxists have often been anti-Christian too. Mistrust, suspicion, and fear have been mutual. It is time to stop seeing a counter-revolutionary in every Christian and an enemy of believers in every Marxist. We have a common enemy—capitalism. Imperialism is essentially anti-Christian because, as Marx put it, of its idolatry of the golden calf.

Christians and Marxists alike have to guard against the grim thunderheads of nuclear war, and especially against 'star wars'. Time does not wait. We must resist the forces of death. Let us take the path of world peace and justice.

<sup>1</sup> This doctrine is examined in *WMR*, No. 3, 1986, pp. 83-90.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> The conference of the Latin American Episcopal Council held in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968, took a generally favourable position concerning the liberation of the continent's peoples from poverty and dependence and advocated the eradication of the causes leading to exploitation and injustice.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> Brutally murdered by members of a fascist paramilitary group during mass in 1980.—*Ed.*

<sup>4</sup> Addressing a meeting of government, political, and civic personalities of Latin American and Caribbean countries on foreign debt problems, convened in Havana on the initiative of Fidel Castro in 1985, Sergio Medez Arceo specified this with the words 'Let us cure ourselves of the virus of anti-communism, which is alien to Christianity and is being used by imperialism in the most horrible of bacteriological wars'.—*Ed.*

<sup>5</sup> In the mid-nineteenth century the USA annexed more than half of Mexico's territory.—*Ed.*

<sup>6</sup> *WMR*, No. 3, 1986, pp. 85-87.—*Ed.*

# surveys, information and mail

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Pages of History

## Communist Party of the Sudan: 40 Years of Struggle

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LAST August the Sudan's Communists observed the 40th anniversary of the founding of their party. This was an event of moment to both ourselves and other progressive and patriotic forces of the country, to all who have borne or still bear the brunt of the struggle for its freedom and independence, for democracy, for economic, social and cultural progress.

The founding of our party, originally made up of a few groups, was a logical result of the maturing of objective and subjective, internal and external factors. These included the familiarisation of progressive intellectuals and students and a young working class with Marxism-Leninism (in this we were much helped by the Egyptian communist movement: the Sudanese who studied in Cairo had access to Marxist books translated into Arabic). Another factor was the growth of an anti-colonial liberation struggle under the impact of the defeat of the most reactionary imperialist forces. Hitler fascism, a defeat in which the Soviet Union played a decisive role, Both global and domestic developments helped our people to better understand the nature of colonialism as well as ways to get rid of it and fostered their hopes for national liberation and creation of a sovereign and progressive state. The liberation movement objectively needed the guidance in the form of well-grounded revolutionary ideas. These could only come from the Communists, for the national bourgeois parties already in existence at the time feared the fight for genuine liberation.

In the early decade of its existence, the party called itself for reasons of secrecy the Sudanese National Liberation Movement. With the emergence of the Communist Party, the ideas of scientific socialism spread faster—a development that was also fostered by the reinforcement of the party base. The 1947-1949 period saw the formation of party organisations in Atbara, the country's chief railway hub, industrial districts of Khartoum and in other cities. That was also when the Communist League of Students and Communist League of Women sprang up.

One could hardly describe the formation of our party as smooth sailing. Both in the leadership and at the grassroots there were struggles, occasionally bitter ones, over ideological and organisational issues. These issues were discussed by the First (enlarged) CC Plenum (1949), which concerned itself with inner-party democracy. The meeting resolved that the activity of the leadership should be supervised by the whole party and not by the CC alone.

The First Congress of the CPS (October 1950), attended by party representatives from all over the country, devoted much attention to problems of the organisational consolidation of the party. It resolved that the Central Committee should be elected and not appointed, and approved the principles of the leading cadre's collective accountability.

The Third CPS Congress (1956) had a special significance. It adopted the Rules and Programme of the CPS, which has borne its present name ever since, and published a



fundamental document 'Sudan Way for Consolidating Independence, Democracy and Peace'. The Congress called for the transformation of the CPS into a mass party. It excelled the two previous congresses both quantitatively and in social composition. Its 80 delegates represented the working class, the peasantry and various population groups of the southern provinces.

The Fourth CPS Congress (October 1967) assessed development inside the party and the state of relations with the masses. It approved a programme document entitled 'Marxism and the Problems of the Sudanese Revolution', new Rules and a plan for the organisational consolidation of the party. This time it drew as many as 200 delegates—evidence of its numerical growth since the lastest congress.

Our party has written vivid chapters into the record of the Sudanese people's fight against imperialism, for national independence and economic and social progress. Its members showed heroism in this fight and suffered irretrievable losses. Suffice it to mention those who fell in 1971, during Nimeiri's dictatorial rule. They included Abdel Khaliq Mahgoub, CC General Secretary of the CPS, Shafie Ahmed el Sheikh, CC Political Bureau member, General Secretary of the Sudan Workers' Trade Union Federation, deputy Chairman of the World Federation of Trade Unions, Joseph Garang, CC Political Bureau member, and other Communist leaders. Imprisonment and persecution were for years the lot of many of our comrades; many more were deported.

In recalling this, we have no intention of minimising or ignoring the role of non-Communist patriots, who likewise made great sacrifices in the common struggle. Ever since it came into being, the CPS has been well aware of the need for a broad national democratic front comprising Communists and other patriots. The party's active policy of rallying these forces accounts to one extent or another for the establishment of the National Front for the Liberation of the Sudan (1946), National Struggle Front (1948) and United Front for the Liberation of the Sudan (1952). The Anti-Imperialist Front, a progressive organisation, was formed on the Communists' initiative in 1953 and joined under their guidance the first parliamentary election campaign.

In building up its strength on Leninist principles, the CPS strove to step up its work among the people. It was under the influence of our party that the railwaymen of Atbara set up in 1947 the country's first trade union organisation, which later provided the basis for an important achievement of the Sudanese working class and Communist Party, the founding of the Federation of Trade Unions of the Sudan. The CPS and the trade unions played a big role in the development of the youth and women's movements as well as in the development of the peace movement. It was for the first time in the country's history that mass organisations had a clear-cut anti-colonial programme demanding recognition of the right of the Sudanese people to self-determination as its top priority.

Our party has always regarded the press as an effective means of strengthening its ties with mass organisations. In 1950, it began publication of *Al-Liwa al-Ahmar* (Red Banner), succeeded four years later by *Al-Maidan* (Arena) which has come out as a legal daily since last year. Besides, party leaders and commentators contribute recurrently to national publications. The CPS has set up political commissions for work among the population and formed groups of readers of party publications.

Our press has always played a great role in the ideological schooling of Communists. The CPS started its first periodical for use inside the party, *Al-Kadir* (Cadres), as far back as 1947; subsequently the journal was renamed *Al-Shuyuiy* (The Communist), of which 151 issues have come out to date. We also published *Al-Way* (Consciousness), *Al-Fajr al-Jadid* (New Dawn) and *Al-Munazzim* (The Organiser). Some local party organisations have periodicals of their own.

Now that the CPS is operating legally, our work among the people takes a vast

variety of forms. The party prides itself with good reason on the fact that it has contributed decisively to the formation of broad-based progressive alignments: the Trade Union Front of Workers, the Democratic Front of Sudanese Students, the Youth League of the Sudan and the Women's League.

Throughout the 40 years of its existence, the CPS has been building up relations with the world communist and revolutionary democratic movement. These relations helped it hold out in the difficult years of tyranny, when imperialist and domestic reactionary quarters sought to discredit us with increasing slander and fabrications. They branded the Communist Party as being the devil's creation, which ought to be destroyed by all means, and its ideas as alien to Sudanese society and incompatible with Islamic values, etc.

We have also experienced difficulties of an inner-party nature. Our record indicates that social-class processes occasionally give rise to differences and controversies at diverse levels. The CPS Rules establish the legitimacy of these controversies and specify the party bodies entrusted with removing differences. This has helped us in strengthening the ideological and political unity of the party and in staving off the threat of division, which arose repeatedly in the past (it was last registered in 1970).

For all the difficulties due to the causes listed above and to the illegality of the CPS almost throughout its history, it has been able to evolve its own strategy and tactics at every stage of the struggle for national liberation and social progress.

The historic victory which the Sudanese people won in April 1985 by overthrowing a rotten dictatorial regime entitles us to look ahead with optimism and with confidence in the radiant future of the Sudanese revolution. We now have new and ample opportunities to extend our ties with the people and with the world revolutionary movement. It is in this inspiring context that the CPS is advancing to its Fifth Congress, to be held 19 years after the previous one.

Ali Ahmed el Tayeb  
CPS representative on *WMR*.

## **Relations Between Nations in the USSR: Fact and Fiction**

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Slandering the nationalities policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) is a major exercise among the hostile anti-Soviet inventions of the bourgeois mass media, but these are totally at variance with the actual state of affairs. Below is a short survey on the issue prepared by the *WMR* Commission on Scientific Information and Documentation on the basis of Soviet press reports and statistics.

AS the world's first socialist multinational state was taking shape, Lenin predicted that the bourgeoisie would 'resort to every trick . . . on crushing our unity'.<sup>1</sup> That is precisely what it is still trying to do. The ideologists of capitalism distort the substance of the CPSU's nationalities policy for at least two purposes. First, to reduce the attractive power of the Soviet example in settling the nationalities question on the basis of equality and complete elimination of every form of social and national oppression; the second, to try somehow to erode the Soviet people's political, social and ideological unity by reviving manifestations of nationalism, which has always been and continues to be one of the main instruments in the imperialist forces' subversive activity against existing socialism.

In substance and historical origins, the nationalities question comes down above all to doing away with national oppression and inequality, which are a form of social oppression that can disappear completely only with the abolition of private property in the means of production and man's exploitation by man. In other words, the nationalities problem lends itself to solution only under socialism.

Bourgeois ideologists insist on considering the nationalities question outside the context of its social framework, and claim that nationalism is 'everlasting', that it is rooted in human nature itself. Hence their assertion that it is bound to breed conflict both under capitalism and under socialism. This 'theoretical' construct is backed up with sheer lies about the USSR, with strident and slanderous claims about some 'political domination' by the Russian nation and the 'suppression' of the rights of the smaller peoples.

That is a piece of fiction, if ever there was one. The USSR has more than 100 big and small nations, numbering between more than 137 million (Russians) and 500 (a small ethnic group in the Far East known as the Nehidals). All of them are represented on the state organs of power. The Soviet of the Union of the USSR Supreme Soviet is made up of deputies of 40 nationalities, and the Soviet of Nationalities of 59. Small peoples and ethnic groups whose numbers come to tens or even hundreds of one per cent of the population of the Union Republics are represented on their Supreme Soviets. Deputies of virtually all the nationalities of the USSR work on the local Soviets, and the percentage of those elected to these bodies from the numerically small nationalities, which have their own national state formations, is, as a rule, higher than their percentage of the country's population.

The smaller peoples are also relatively more broadly represented on the higher organs of state power, because the USSR Constitution lays down that each Union and autonomous republic, and autonomous region and district delegate to the Council of Nationalities—the second chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet, which has equal rights with the first chamber, the Soviet of the Union—an equal number of deputies, regardless of the numerical size of their population. As a result, the 20 autonomous republics (about 8 per cent of the USSR's population) have nearly 33 per cent of the seats, and 8 autonomous regions (0.8 per cent of the USSR's population) have over 5 per cent of the seats.

Another fact to note is that Soviet citizens of German, Polish, Korean, Kurdish and other nationalities who have no state institutions of their own on the territory of the USSR, but who have long since adopted it as their homeland are also represented on the organs of the Soviet power.

The 'assimilation' of smaller nations is another piece of slander thrown at the USSR by its ill-wishers. Western ideologists seem to be unable (or unwilling, it would be truer to say) to comprehend the basic law-governed processes underlying the development of big and small nations under socialism—the internationalisation of social life—and so claim that it amounts to 'forcible assimilation' of the smaller peoples, making use for their purposes of a mixed bag of deliberate falsehoods and data taken from Soviet censuses.

Statistics do, indeed, testify that over the past sixty years, the number of registered nationality groups has diminished: from 194 in 1926, to 110 in 1959, 104 in 1970, and 101 in 1979. But that is not due to any 'extinction' or 'forcible assimilation' of any ethnic groups, as Western propaganda claims, but to ethnic consolidation and more precise classification. In short, the gist of such consolidation is the withering away of the tribal ethnic structures as many numerically small ethnic groups draw closer to each other. These processes were most intensive in the outlying areas of the country in the early decades of the Soviet power, and they led, in particular, to the formation of the Turkmen, Kirghiz, Kazakh and Tajik nations.

This consolidation is a form of voluntary and natural assimilation which rules out

any coercion whatsoever. It only involves, as a rule, some of the territorially scattered nationalities and ethnic groups residing on territories most of which are taken up by other ethnic entities. Mixed marriages, whose numbers in the USSR have been steadily growing, are another form of natural assimilation. In 1959, over ten per cent of all families were mixed; according to the latest census, there were almost 15 per cent of them throughout the country, and more than 18 per cent in the urban areas.

The principles of proletarian internationalism provided the ideological basis for the flourishing and drawing together of the Soviet Union's big and small nations, and socialist property in the means of production and the socialist economic system—the economic basis.

For Soviet people, 'backward national fringes' is a concept that now belongs to the distant past, but the anti-communists keep saying that the gap between the economic development levels of the peoples of the USSR is still there and has even been growing, a piece of falsehood refuted by the concrete realities of the economic and social progress of the multinational Soviet state.

The Soviet Republics can no longer be classified either as industrial or agrarian: the Soviet Union has conducted a policy of balanced and complex location of production with an eye to national and overall state interests. In the Soviet period, industrial production in the country as a whole has multiplied 169 times, and in Byelorussia—254 times, in Kazakhstan—256 times, on Moldavia—304 times, in Kirghizia—379 times, and in Armenia—420 times. Latvia's gross industrial output is 46 times up on 1940. Let us note that in the 20 years of its rule (1920-1940), Latvia's nationalistic bourgeoisie had failed even to attain the 1913 output level.

Striking changes have taken place in the agriculture of what once used to be outlying national areas. Here are some data which speak for themselves: since the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1922, gross agricultural output has gone up in Kazakhstan 12.6-fold, in Uzbekistan—11.8-fold, and Tajikistan—14.1-fold.

Energy facilities are being built up at a rapid pace. In 35 less developed countries of Asia, with a total population of over 1.4 billion, power generation comes to 251 kwh per head, as compared with the 2,797 kwh in the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Union Republics have very extensive and close economic ties with each other, because the USSR has an integral state-wide economic complex. Thus, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic receives supplies from 96 industries with enterprises located in other parts of the country, while delivering its own products to 74 industries in other Republics.

The 'Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and for the Period Ending in 2000', adopted by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, says: '*Ensure the harmonious economic and social development of all the Union Republics. Enhance the integrated character of development and the economic specialisation of the republics and economic regions, step up their contribution to strengthening the country's integral national-economic complex and accomplishing social tasks.*'

Socialism has radically transformed the sphere of the Soviet people's spiritual life, and has ensured the creation of a common internationalist culture of the fraternal peoples, which has absorbed all the generally significant elements from the unique traditions of the national cultures. That is a sphere the enemies of the socialist countries have not neglected either, and it seems that bourgeois propagandists have tried hardest to present the internationalisation of the national cultures as assimilation and extermination of the languages and traditions of the smaller peoples, and as 'cultural assimilation' and 'Russification'. But what are the facts?

It is common knowledge that every nation's language and culture constitute a single whole. Lenin focused attention on creating the actual conditions for the free

development of the national languages. On his initiatives, alphabets were devised for more than 40 peoples of the USSR.<sup>2</sup> Lenin's nationalities policy has helped tens of millions of people who once lived on the fringes of tsarist Russia to read and write, so gaining an access, in a short period, to the cultural values available in their mother tongue and in Russian, a language the Soviet people have voluntarily adopted as the medium for contacts between nations.

Consider Central Asia and Kazakhstan, where literacy stood at only one or two per cent at the end of the nineteenth century. In the 1940s, they already had educational standards that were among the highest on the Asian continent. Before the 1917 Revolution, there was, for instance, not a single institution of higher learning in Uzbekistan, which now has 42 and a student body of almost 300,000; it has 169 students per 10,000 of the population (as compared with 98 in Britain, and 106 in the FRG).

Consider also the following set of facts. No books or journals were published in the Turkmen language before the 1917 Revolution; today, there is an annual publication of more than 700 titles of books and pamphlets, with a total printing of over 6 million copies, 35 journals and other periodicals and 70 newspapers. Kazakhstan's publishing houses now issue more than 2,000 titles of books and pamphlets a year, with a total printing of 33.6 million copies in Kazakh, Russian, German, Uighur, Korean and other languages. Every Union and autonomous republic has its professional theatres staging plays in their own language. In the USSR, school textbooks are printed in 55 languages, and radio broadcasts go out in 71 languages.

The Russian language has enriched all the other languages, without displacing or substituting for them. Through the Russian language, millions of men and women of all the nationalities have gained access to the spiritual values, culture and scientific and technical progress. The well-known Soviet writer Chinghis Aitmatov, a Kirghiz by nationality, calls Russian the language of the 'new civilisation', a 'language which for the first time in history has linked the shores of the artistic creativity of different nations, who not too long ago did not even know of one another's existence'.<sup>3</sup>

The bilingualism (mother tongue and Russian) is a profoundly progressive phenomenon in the development of the Soviet society springing from the objective requirements of each nation, each Republic and the country as a whole. That is why the guidelines for the reform of general education and vocational training now under way in the USSR accentuates the need for additional measures to improve the conditions for the study of Russian alongside the mother tongue.

Anti-Soviet propaganda has recently ballooned the idea of some 'renaissance of Islam', for reaction has always resorted to religion in inflating national antagonisms. It turns out that the 'Islam factor', which anti-Soviet propaganda has now trotted out, is not such a novelty in the ideological struggle after all.

Those who capitalise on religion now insist that Moslems are some kind of 'supranational entity' (but this is largely a rehash of what their predecessors used to say). They try to create the impression that the peoples inhabiting the vast territory of the Soviet Union from Bashkiria in the north to Turkmenia in the south, from the Altai in the east to the Caucasus in the west (some 50 million people) are also a part of the 'Moslem entity' isolated from the rest of the country's population by religion, spiritual ideals, values and aspirations. The purpose of the campaign is to try to prove that communist ideas are unacceptable to the Moslem population.

Let us note that bourgeois Islam specialists quite arbitrarily refer to the whole population of Central Asia, Kazakhstan and some other areas as 'Moslems', making peremptory predictions that every other child born in the USSR in the year 2000 can expect to be a 'Moslem'. But why a Moslem? It will be a Soviet citizen, but whether he or she decides to profess some religion depends on their conscience, one of the

freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of the USSR.

There is no need to deny that religious beliefs and rituals are still widespread to this day among some strata of the population in the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. But are these all that widespread, as the enemies of socialism claim? The fact is that they are not. Statistical sampling in the 1970s showed that in the Uzbek Republic, for instance, only 11.7 per cent of the workers, 29.4 per cent of the peasants, and 5.5 per cent of the office workers were under the influence of religion. A similar state of things was found in the other Central Asia Republics. In other words, a majority of the population in the areas in which Islam had traditionally existed in the Soviet Union have broken with religion. Meanwhile, concerning the attitude to the socialist system, the Mufti of the Moslems of Central Asia and Kazakhstan Ziauddin Ibn Babakhan has declared that the Soviet people, even those of them who are believers, 'are taking an active part in socialist and communist construction, without sacrificing the freedom of their religious creed'.<sup>4</sup>

The organisers of anti-Soviet campaigns have invented diverse and frequently mutually exclusive myths about the conditions of the nationalities in the USSR in an effort to set them at each other's throats. Thus the assertions about some forcible 'Russification' were instantly forgotten when the need arose for the very opposite claim of some 'demographic anomaly' in the USSR as a result of the rapid growth of the population in the 'Moslem republics'. At variance with the old canard about the 'oblivion of national traditions and culture', there is the new claim about 'de-Russification'. The ideological subversives have begun to acknowledge what they once denied, namely, the flourishing of the national cultures, a natural process under socialism, which they say is an urge to stay apart from the Russians, and a sign of spreading nationalistic attitudes. When 'Russification' and 'de-Russification' fail to work, they start spreading the lie that the development of the local languages generates nationalism, conveniently forgetting that only yesterday they lied just as brazenly about 'cultural assimilation' and 'liquidation of the national languages'.

A number of research centres in the United States and in Western Europe specialise in the study of the relations between nationalities in the Soviet Union, and their activity is coordinated. The works of the 'Sovietologists', especially the more notorious ones (Richard Pipes, Helene Carrere d'Encausse, H. Setton-Watson, and A. Benningsen, among others) are generously funded and widely published. One of their assignments is to provide 'theoretical' back-up for the inventions spewed out by the numerous radio-stations which broadcast in the languages of the peoples of the USSR almost round the clock (Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, BBC, Voice of Israel, Radio Liberty, Radio Vatican, etc.).

All of them are components of the anti-socialist strategy of imperialism, presenting diverse variations on the theme of the system's 'incapacity' to overcome the political and economic inequality of its nations, and on the need to 'restructure' the process in which the Soviet Republics are being integrated with each other, and on doing so in accordance with the recipes of the political practices of imperialism, which have always been based on bourgeois nationalism.

Meanwhile, the characteristic conflicts between nations in the capitalist world show just what these recipes yield. There are, for instance, the contradictions between the English-speaking and the French-speaking population of Canada, the Flemings and the Walloons in Belgium, and so on. In this context, one must recall the brutal exploitation of immigrant workers in Western Europe on the basis of national discrimination, the oppression of Afro-Americans, Chicanos and native Americans in the United States, and the criminal regime of apartheid in racist South Africa.

The lofty humanism of the relations between nations established in the USSR stands out in bold relief against that kind of background. In the capitalist society, a human being's value is determined by social status and national origin, but in the

socialist society the human being is of paramount importance for being a human being, regardless of national or social origin. Socialism has demonstrated to the whole world that, as the founders of Marxism predicted, the antagonism of nations disappears with the antagonism of classes.

'The path that has been traversed provides convincing proof that *the nationalities question, inherited from the past, has been successfully solved in the Soviet Union.*'<sup>6</sup> The relations between the nationalities of the USSR are characterised by a further flourishing of the big and small nations, as they steadily draw closer to each other on the basis of free choice, equality and fraternal cooperation.

That is not to say, of course, that new issues do not arise in the sphere of relations between the nationalities, as more than 100 big and small nations live and work together. Every process of development has its contradictions, and this area is not free of contradictions either. The CPSU has resolved and will continue to resolve them in accordance with the time-tested principles of Lenin's nationalities policy with the aim of consolidating in every way the friendship of the nations as a component part of the perfection of socialism.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 481.

<sup>2</sup> Altogether, more than 50 peoples of the USSR have been helped to develop a written language throughout the Soviet period.—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup> *New Times*, No. 38, 1984, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, April 9, 1986.

<sup>5</sup> *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, New Edition, Moscow, 1986, p. 47.

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## Diary

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A *WMR* delegation attended the Tenth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party held in Warsaw in late June—early July this year.

Comrade Rene Theodore, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the United Party of Haitian Communists, visited the *WMR* office. He informed the editorial staff of the present political situation in Haiti and UPHC work. Also discussed were issues of closer cooperation between the party and the journal.

# the book scene

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## Acceleration Strategy in Action

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Gerard Streiff, *La dynamique Gorbatchev* (The Gorbachov Dynamism), Messidor/  
Editions sociales, Paris, 1986, 246 pp.

*The Gorbachov Dynamism* is a useful book helping international public opinion to grasp the vast scope of the drive the Communist Party has launched in the Soviet Union to restructure the economic, social, cultural and other spheres of life. Gerard Streiff is a Central Committee member of the French Communist Party and *l'Humanité's* Moscow correspondent. His analysis of the changes under way in the USSR is based not only on official documents of the CPSU and the Soviet government but also on his own impressions from his numerous fact-finding trips around the country. Streiff has met and talked with people of different social strata in the Soviet Union—from industrial workers and collective farmers to managers of big factories and members of the Academy of Sciences. A look at Soviet society from within enables the reader to understand the fallacy of the claims which the bourgeois mass media peddle—both in France and in my country, Italy—about a 'crisis' of socialism, the 'sclerosis' of communist ideology and the like. 'The West, and France in particular,' the author notes, 'does not know the USSR, and not for a lack of competence but for ideological reasons' (p. 71).

The book explains the meaning and the thrust of the Soviet Union's social renovation which is intertwined with the scientific and technological revolution. The process is making great demands on millions of people in the Soviet Union—no matter what their line of work—that they search creatively for new ways of increasing the volume of output and, above all, improving product quality.

Citing the historical experience of the Soviet Union, Streiff recalls that the Communists have always initiated radical change, that they have always shouldered the burden of guiding the country's socio-economic development along those paths which life made imperative and which demanded maximum effort on their part. Change has always been launched by Lenin's party which had the courage to appraise its record sternly and self-critically and to correct the mistakes committed. Regrettably, this is precisely the fact which is completely ignored by those in the West who maintain that Soviet society has ceased to develop.

Renovation, the French journalist says, had been in the air for some time, but it acquired a fundamentally new dimension in the spring of 1985. Discussing the significance of the decisions taken at the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee and the 27th Congress of the CPSU, Streiff emphasises that far-reaching changes will occur not only in the economy but that the style and methods of work of party, government and economic organisations at all levels are to be decisively restructured too. The job will be tenacious and arduous. It is always easier to follow the beaten track; a new approach calls for boldness and fortitude. The inertia of old thinking is making itself felt, and Streiff points to the difficulties that impede progress along the course charted by the party. One encounters cases of a wait-and-see policy, of passivity, old ways, work by spurts and demagoguery; and these things are the target of devastating criticism by the current leadership of the CPSU.

The book convinces the reader that the difficulties will be eventually overcome. He is reminded that, once backward, Russia was able to join the world's leading industrial nations within a historically short period—despite the economic dislocation caused by the Civil War and foreign intervention, despite the huge losses in life and property during World War II. Today, the Soviet Union is Europe's first and the world's second biggest industrial and electric power producer. The USSR unquestionably and firmly leads the world in the production of oil, natural gas, pig iron, steel, coke, tractors, lumber, cement, wool fabrics, footwear and animal fats (see p. 20).

Dealing with the changes occurring in rural areas and with the follow-up of the Food Programme in line with the new policy of the CPSU, Streiff stresses that the emphasis is on the increasingly broad involvement of working people in the



management of agriculture, on more elbow room for the workers themselves, on a closer interrelationship between each worker's personal interests and the common interests of the collective or state farm. This will make it possible to use equipment and the land itself more rationally and to attain the target of 200 million tons of cereals a year in bad weather and 250 million tons and more in favourable weather conditions (the 1978 figure was closest to the target—237 million tons) (see p. 90).

Streiff says that the tasks set by the Communist Party before the Soviet people are especially impressive if viewed against the background of the severe crisis of capitalism. 'It was a coincidence,' he recalls, 'that in mid-autumn 1985 two prospective studies were released in Paris and in Moscow on the development of the respective countries up to the year 2000' (p. 237). In Paris, the Guillaume Report presents a 'terrifying picture of French society tomorrow' (ibid.). Robots will make five million industrial workers 'redundant'. The wages will diminish although people will have to work Saturdays and nights. The suicide rate among young people will rise.

The Soviet project (that is, the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1986-1990 and for the Period Ending in 2000) offers a different picture of the future. The objective is to create, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, 'an economic potential equal to everything the Soviet Union has done since 1917, to double the national income and industrial output, and to raise labour productivity 150 per cent. In social terms, real per capita incomes are to increase 80 per cent and the sphere of consumption and the services, to expand twofold' (p. 238).

The emphasis the 27th Congress of the CPSU laid on the promotion of the masses' creative efforts as the basis of the acceleration drive is of great importance for making all these plans a reality. Numerous new ideas and proposals are being put forward in the Soviet Union, and issues are being discussed at factories, collective farms, government agencies, on television, in research institutes and in the press. The facts cited in the book show that criticism by working people, including criticism of high-ranking party and government officials, has expanded considerably; that ties have improved between elected office holders and their constituents; and that a more precise division of functions has been drawn between the party and the government, the trade unions and other civic organisations.

Fresh winds of change are blowing in literature and art too. Streiff has devoted a special chapter to this subject, noting that particular recognition is now merited by works which are truthful, denounce hypocrisy, bigotry and careerism and mobilise the public to fight more effectively against holdovers of the past acting as a drag on progress.

The book contains a wealth of facts about life in the Soviet Union. This country's people were the first to carry out a socialist revolution, they defended it against foreign invaders, contributed decisively to the victory over fascism in World War II, rejected the imperialist baiting during the Cold War years and have been fighting tirelessly for world peace. 'Our objectives are perfectly clear,' Mikhail Gorbachov said at the June Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. 'They are the acceleration of the country's socio-economic development, broad international cooperation to benefit all, disarmament, the elimination of nuclear weapons, and peace for mankind. Hence the policy we pursue within the country and on the international scene. The more people across the world learn the truth about Soviet policy, the more supporters it acquires.'<sup>1</sup>

This truth is what the book under review is all about. Many people in the West fall victim to the bourgeois mass media which, as was especially obvious in connection with the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, will stop at nothing to malign the Soviet Union. UPI reported '2,000 deaths', while television in Italy and other West European countries showed a 'documentary' film of Chernobyl in flames—in

actual fact, a fire at a cement factory in Trieste. Significantly, these and similar revolting fabrications are at one with the recently revived attempts by US government officials to present the Soviet Union as an 'empire of evil'.

That is why this book by Gerard Streiff is valuable and timely—something for which credit is due to the author's and the publisher's effort to lose no time: Streiff wrote the book from September 1985 to March 1986, and in April it was already in print. A promptitude to be envied.

Antonio Boffi  
Italian journalist

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, June 17, 1986.

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## Nicaragua: Literacy Crusade

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Valerie Miller, *Between Struggle and Hope: The Nicaraguan Literacy Crusade*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1985, 258 pp.

THE book published in the US, deals with one of the initial steps Nicaragua took after the 1979 popular revolution. The idea which prompted the book's name was borrowed by the author from great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda who used to say that only struggle and hope could be the guiding stars in dispelling darkness and lighting up the path to a happy future for millions of people who cannot read or write.

The fight against illiteracy mounted by small Nicaragua was indeed a ray of hope for millions of people, not only in Central America but in other regions where political domination and exploitation left an onerous legacy of ignorance.

The book is, on the one hand, an outgrowth of the interest shown by the author, a prominent US educator, in the problem of uprooting illiteracy, and on the other, reflects her profound examination of the origins and nature of the Nicaraguan revolution. The book exposes the deliberate bias cultivated by US reactionaries towards the land of Sandino. It is an objective testimonial by a person who directly helped Nicaraguans with a critical social problem while working there as a deputy coordinator of the literacy crusade project.

I have been to Nicaragua several times. I most vividly remember my 1980 trip at the height of this campaign. The enthusiasm of thousands of people involved in it galvanised the whole social fabric with great elan and inspiration. I remember meeting officials at the Ministry of Energy and Planning in Managua and peasants in Matagalpa department. An old peasant fervently spoke of how important it was for himself and all his relatives to learn to read and write. 'Only then could we learn to run our factories and offices,' he said, 'and the country's entire wealth would really be owned by people.' No sooner had he learnt to read and write than he joined the volunteers who taught the ABC to their country folk.

The life of this man, like those of many thousands of other formerly downtrodden and alienated Nicaraguans, highlights the reawakening by the revolution of the civic patriotism spirit. Before ordinary Nicaraguans glimpsed this ray of hope, the author points out, they had lived through the plight of an oppressive tyranny and a policy of genocide conducted by Somoza against his own people.

The heinous rule of this US puppet left 50,000 people killed, 100,000 injured, and 40,000 children orphaned (see pp. 21-22). The nation groaned under poverty and humiliation. Over half its people were illiterate; as many as 70 per cent of the peasants were unlettered. When the revolution came the economy was tottering on the brink

of disaster. Foreign debt topped 1.6 billion dollars, and the state treasury boasted a meagre three million which Somoza failed to pick up when fleeing the country. This makes all the more striking the resolve of the revolutionary government to start off by using the scanty resources it had to fight illiteracy.

Miller points out that the Sandinist leadership viewed the crusade as a school of mass political experience where people, apart from learning the basics of education, could master the formidable science of revolutionary struggle. Therefore, lessons in such basics were supplemented by talks on the history and development of the Nicaraguan revolution, aspects involved in defending and consolidating it, and on the government's socio-economic programmes (see p. 76).

Another salient feature of the campaign, making it clear that the Nicaraguan revolution may boldly face the future, is the active part taken in it by young people. According to the book's figures, 100,000 of those who voluntarily turned teachers were also inveterate popularisers of Sandinist revolution ideas. Theirs was a hard lot. A lack of experience, funds, textbooks, stationery, along with malnutrition and trying living conditions, especially in mountainous areas made the work of the brigadistas, as Nicaraguans called their budding teachers, a real trial.

And yet they would not despair. They were, all at the same time, teachers, speakers at meetings, actors in amateur concerts, and, if need be, tillers and builders. In short, they did all that the young republic desperately needed. They helped cultivate thousands of hectares of land and build scores of schools, first-aid centres and houses. They laid roads and built bridges, correctly seeing it as their personal contribution to building a new life. We see that the literacy crusade turned its participants into 'educational combatants in a new war of liberation' (p. 23).

The hardships of this struggle were aggravated by the fact that the initiative of the Sandinists and their allies drew opposition from domestic counter-revolutionaries, who entertained their own hopes—to reverse the events. The still fairly strong big national bourgeoisie and right-wing parties reflecting its interests were bending over backwards to stem the tide of renewal. Writes Miller: "As the enthusiasm for the campaign grew, the displeasure of certain business people and large hacienda owners grew as well. Their hopes to exert the economic and political power that they felt to be rightly theirs were being diminished . . . These elites, of course, grew increasingly concerned about each government measure that consolidated its power and established its credibility" (pp. 212-213).

'Contras', gangs made up mostly of former Somoza guardsmen, were also making their presence increasingly felt. 'Fear and courage marked the lives of all people participating in the campaign. Rumours had been spread prior to the crusade to instill horror and doubt in people, stories of terror and torture circulated everywhere, and death threats were common,' Miller points out (p. 174). These were no empty threats. Hundreds of brigadistas were killed by the bandits. The crusade had to be suspended in some areas, particularly those bordering on Honduras, where the Somozists showed special impudence and barbarity. And yet the enemies of the revolution failed to undo the fight against ignorance.

The literacy campaign placed an overwhelming moral and material strain on the Nicaraguan people. International aid was an important factor in relieving this burden. Socialist countries were sending to Nicaragua large batches of teaching aids, while Cuba sent a group of specialists with practical experience in fighting illiteracy. In 1980 the Sandinist campaign was attended by people from 40 countries and several international organisations.

. . . In the morning of August 23, 1980, which went down in the history of the nation and revolution as the 'Year of an End to Illiteracy', a meeting was held in Managua's central square to discuss the crusade's progress. Brigadistas from all over the country were there, along with their pupils—old men, women and children. A streamer

fluttered over the square, with large letters forming the message: 'Nicaragua, a territory free of illiteracy'. Enthusiastically greeted by the audience. Humberto Ortega, member of the National leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front, defence minister, stressed that Nicaraguans could pride themselves on their gains in combating illiteracy and ignorance.

No great educational heights have been scaled yet, but the start to such an ascent has been made. In only a few months of taxing effort the illiteracy level went down to 12.9 per cent. Over 400,000 Nicaraguans aged over ten, formerly totally illiterate, can read and write now. Their former teachers learnt a lot about their country, too. Brigadistas have gathered valuable material in archaeology, history and folk art and used it to specify data on the country's ethnic composition and compiled records for a census.

Today many people wonder where Nicaraguans are drawing their strength to fight for freedom and independence and against the US economic blockade, diplomatic blackmail and military interference. Any person who has read this book will see that the source of this strength is the resolve to defend the popular power, which clears the way to knowledge, education and a new life.

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## Anatomy of Decline

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Ben Fine, Laurence Harris, *The Peculiarities of the British Economy*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1985, 345 pp.

THIS book by two Marxist economists has been the subject of heated discussion in Britain's progressive press, with the reviewers' assessments ranging from sharply critical to laudatory. It is a work which certainly does not leave the reader indifferent, and this in itself makes it interesting.

The authors have tackled a complicated subject: to analyse the elements and show the interconnection of the root causes of the relative decline of the British economy. Among the leading capitalist countries, Britain is well down on the list in the rate of output and labour-productivity growth, and its share of the capitalist world's aggregate output and international trade has been steadily shrinking. Many books have been written on the subject, but this one has the advantage of going beyond individual particulars to the substantial changes in the structure of present-day monopoly capital. 'The rise of multinational corporations, the transformation of technology, the interpenetration of trade and finance within the advanced capitalist world, the extension of state economic intervention and the emergence of supernational institutions with economic power, such as the IMF and the EEC, imply that the structure of the British economy and society has also been radically transformed. It is relative decline in the light of these transformations that has to be explored in any diagnosis of the British economy' (p. 10).

The authors believe that the decline is a consequence of the peculiar configuration of relations in which the British 'labour movement confronts an increasingly internationalised system of production (through multinational corporations) and of finance (through the City)' (p. 12). The traditionally wide and ramified international ties of British monopoly capital go back to the epoch of empire in its heyday. There was good reason why Lenin called British imperialism colonial, remarking that even at the time the broad export of capital from Britain to the colonies was already

slowing down the development of the productive forces in the metropolis. As the empire disintegrated, Britain itself became the object of expansion by foreign, mainly US, capital, and in our day the British economy is affected by the growing dominance of the multinationals (see p. 81). By the early 1980s, foreign participation in UK industry rose to 19 per cent, and in UK exports, to 30 per cent. The multinationals, including those in which British capital predominates, account for over 90 per cent of UK exports (see pp. 107, 111). A sizable part of the profits of the multinationals operating in the country comes from enterprises in other countries and from international operations.

That has been the basis for the profound contradiction between the domination of the economy by multinational monopoly capital and the requirements of the national economy. The authors make the point that social reproduction is primarily 'organised on a national basis: a national culture, national politics, national structures of education, welfare, and family relations' (p. 28). But the overriding interests of the multinationals stemming from their urge to maximise global profits are most frequently not identical, but in conflict with the requirements of the national economy.

The authors present numerous examples to show how the multinationals' activity leads to the technical lag of British industry. They have relied on lower wages in Britain, as compared with the other leading West European countries, to concentrate labour-intensive production, while developing capital-intensive and high technology lines in other major capitalist countries. Over the past two decades, for instance, Britain's share of US foreign direct manufacturing investments in Europe fell from 55 to 28 per cent, while that of Western Europe went up from 38 to 54 per cent (see p. 108).

In the British car industry, three in four major corporations and 60 per cent of the product are foreign-controlled, with the result that the industry has lost its independence and become an appendage of the multinationals' global operations, and has been systematically losing its positions both at home and abroad. In the recent period, the country has ceased to be a net exporter of cars, and has become a net importer, most of the vehicles being imported by the same companies. The sway of the multinationals in the electronics industry has likewise been paralleled by a lag in growth rates and quality structure.

The authors describe the highly monopolised banking capital and show very well that the City's priority is to maintain its role as an international financial centre, with the banks neglecting the interests of technical progress and competitiveness of national industry. Seventy per cent of the lending by London banks goes to foreign clients, with foreign-owned banks accounting for four-fifths of all international lending.

But that does not mean any rupture or weakening of links between the banking and the industrial monopolies. While the leading merchant banks, concerned about their own liquidity, try not to be too heavily involved in long-term credit for production projects, industrial firms in Britain have not been faced with any shortage of other forms of credit or funding. Over the past decade, more than one-half of the firms' external funds were borrowed from banks. Besides, the banks themselves, and especially through the pension funds<sup>1</sup> and insurance and investment firms, control nearly a quarter of the listed shares in UK companies.

The interpenetration of banking and industry has assumed the most diverse forms and is consolidated through interlocking directorates. A special role belongs to merchant and investment banks owned by the Rothschilds, the Lazards and other families of the local and multinational financial oligarchy. In addition, US banking subsidiaries in London are engaged in lending to British companies in the oil, chemical and electronics industries (see pp. 134-140), and that is the basis for the

growing interpenetration of the financial oligarchy groups of Britain and the United States.

The coalescence of banking and industrial capital in the country has a number of peculiarities, the distinctive feature being the banks' preference for less risky operations with high and steady returns. In other words, finance capital in Britain now has an explicitly rentier and usurious character, which promotes the parasitism and decay of British imperialism as a whole.

The authors show the gradual intrusion of the multinationals and the banks into the system of state-monopoly capitalism, as will be seen from the appointment of representatives of the multinationals to government posts bearing on economic and technical development, including the boards of nationalised companies, and also from the direction of the state's economic policy. 'The commitment given by governments at crucial junctures to furthering the internationalisation of capital, adopting the perspective of MNCs and international banking is part of the explanation for the domestic economy's weakness' (pp. 28-29).

The policy has had the gravest effect on such heavy industries as steel and shipbuilding, but it has also been manifested in the incapacity to build up a solid basis for the development of high technology industries. Hence the defeats on the world market, the relative decline of the economy, and the obvious failure of traditional state-monopoly regulation in the mid-1970s.

Mass disappointment with this policy also explains why the Tory party managed to take power under extremely conservative slogans of an avowed offensive against the working class and its social gains in the earlier decades. But, the authors show, the causes of the structural crisis in the British economy are not at all rooted in the fact of state intervention, but in its class tenor: they do not lie in exorbitant wages (as bourgeois ideologists claim), but in the negative influence of multinational finance capital.

State spending on arms has 'hindered the development of industry while simultaneously enabling a small number of multinational corporations to profit fully from close relations with the state apparatuses' (p. 236). The authors say that military spending has had especially negative consequences because of the systematic diversion of production resources and the R and D potential from the development of high technology and its use in industry. Here again, the multinationals are among the leading suppliers of military products. Their role in the country's arms production further increased in 1986 with the establishment of US control over Westland, the country's leading helicopter manufacturer, and the conversion of a number of British companies into direct suppliers of the Pentagon within the framework of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

The subordination of the Thatcher government's economic policy to multinational capital is clear-cut and explicit. The reprivatisation of nationalised industries, the brutal drive against the trade unions, the refusal to help out afflicted sectors, the continuance of mass unemployment, the concern for protecting the priority interests of the multinationals and the City, and the systematic concessions to US capital and the Reagan administration to the detriment of national interests all testify that the British working class has to face the Tory government as a part of the political power of the multinational oligarchy.

We find, therefore, that the sway of the multinationals in the economy and politics, the parasitism of the banks, and the growing militarisation have all made for Britain's relative economic lag behind the leading capitalist states. Such is the essential conclusion offered by the book under review. The subject taken up by Fine and Harris has, of course, not yet been fully explored, and so naturally remains controversial. This applies especially to the relationship between the multinationals and national state-monopoly capitalism, a pressing problem for the working class

movement not only in Britain, but in other industrialised capitalist countries as well. The authors should certainly be credited with having focused their attention on the matter.

Karel Novak

<sup>1</sup> In Britain, the United States and other capitalist countries, pension funds consisting of regular deductions from wages and company earnings are nominally autonomous institutions, but are in most cases effectively managed by the big banks or insurance companies. These funds are invested in securities (shares and bonds) of industrial and other companies.

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## New Books

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*Kun Béla a kortársak szemével* (Bela Kun As Seen By His Contemporaries), Kossuth, Budapest, 1986, 426 pp.

AN ardent revolutionary, patriot and internationalist who has left an indelible mark in the history of his country and the international working class movement, Bela Kun made a great contribution to the creation of the Communist Party of Hungary and served as head of the Foreign and Military Affairs Commissions under the Hungarian Soviet Republic (1919). The years he spent in Russia as a World War I prisoner of war did much to shape his political philosophy—he contacted the Bolsheviks and then joined their party. Meetings with Lenin exerted a powerful influence on Bela Kun. The Institute of History under the HSWP Central Committee timed the release of this collection to coincide with his 100th birthday. The book contains memoirs by more than 50 of his contemporaries, including Soviet, Bulgarian, Romanian, Yugoslav, British and French Communists.

*The Warsaw Treaty Organisation, 1955-1985. Documents and Materials*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1986, 422 pp. (in Russian)

The collection was prepared by the USSR Foreign Ministry in cooperation with its counterparts in the other Warsaw Treaty countries. The book contains declarations, statements and communiques issued by the Political Consultative Committee, the Foreign Ministers' Committee and the Defence Ministers' Committee and reflecting the activities of this military and political alliance of the socialist countries over three decades. These documents are proof that the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, created in response to the establishment of the aggressive and militarist NATO bloc, is strictly defensive, not targeted on any country and designed to protect the socialist gains and the peaceful life and work of its constituent nations. The book demonstrates and substantiates the consistent stand of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in the struggle to preserve and strengthen security in Europe and the world and to prevent nuclear war.

*Historia polskiego ruchu robotniczego* (A History of the Polish Working Class Movement), edited by Prof. Marian Orzechowski, Książka i Wiedza, Warsaw, 1985, 400 pp.

The first volume of this authoritative work on the history of the Polish working class movement covers the period from the mid-nineteenth century to 1890. The emergence of the proletariat as a social class, the advent and spread of socialist ideas, the development of the economic struggle and its subsequent transformation into

political action are the main subjects of the monograph. The activities of Proletariat, the first revolutionary party established in 1882, and the role of its leaders under Ludwik Warynski in promoting the consciousness and organisation of the working class movement are examined in detail. Also reflected is the development of the Polish proletariat's international solidarity with the working people of Russia and the working class in other countries.

Ladislav Hrzal, *Morálka—smysl života—svoboda* (Morals—The Meaning of Life—Freedom), Prace, Prague, 1986, 135 pp.

Reflecting on the meaning of life and on the interrelationship between the ideal and the actual, the author emphasises the class-based character of the concepts of morals, freedom and truth. Drawing on the experience of Czechoslovakia, he highlights the all-round and harmonious development of the personality and the broadening of man's interests and intellectual requirements in the course of building socialism.

Leonhard Mahlein, . . . *Verteidigt die Einheitsgewerkschaft!* (Defend the United Trade Union), Nachrichten-Verlags-Gesellschaft, Frankfurt on the Main, 1986, 438 pp.

The subjects dealt with in the book include fascism, war, the struggle for peace and disarmament, the tasks of the working class movement in the FRG and the place of writers and journalists in its development. The author, head of the Printing, Pulp and Paper Workers' Union for 15 years, criticises the bourgeois system and exposes the strategy and tactics of the conservatives. He describes how the arms race affects the living standard of working people, encourages revanchist sentiments and increases the danger of nuclear catastrophe. Mahlein's biography and his friends' memoirs, also part of the book, present a profile of a staunch trade union activist who fought tirelessly for the interests of the working class.

Salim Khajata, *A Fever in the West*, Centre for Socialist Studies in the Arab World, Beirut, 1986, 220 pp. (in Arabic)

A veteran of the communist movement analyses the genesis of fascism in Italy and Germany and the role the most reactionary quarters of the European and US monopoly bourgeoisie played in its consolidation. Today, these same quarters are encouraging revanchism in the FRG and supporting ultra-rightist terrorist organisations. Turning to the Middle East, the author notes the ideological kinship between the philosophy of Israel's ruling Zionist elite and fascism: rabid anti-communism, reliance on brute force in international relations and racial intransigence are typical of both of these ideologies. The book exposes the atrocities committed by the Israeli brass using Nazi methods against Arabs.



## In Memory of Le Duan

Le Duan, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, outstanding son of the Vietnamese people, consistent internationalist, prominent leader of the world communist, working class and national liberation movement, and outstanding fighter for the cause of peace and socialism, passed away at the age of 79 after a long and grave illness on July 10, 1986.

Le Duan's whole life was dedicated to the service of the people and the ideals of the revolution. He was one of the cohort of revolutionaries which led to victory the struggle of the oppressed masses of Vietnam against French and US imperialism, against reaction, and for national liberation and socialism. His life's work won him the love and respect of the Vietnamese people, with recognition and authority in the international communist movement.

Le Duan was born into a working class family with long-standing patriotic traditions in the province of Binh Tri Thien (Central Vietnam) on April 7, 1907. At an early age, he took an active part in the revolutionary anti-colonial struggle for his country's liberation. He joined the Vietnam Revolutionary Youth Association in 1928, and became a member of the Communist Party of Vietnam when it was founded in 1930. Within a year, he was arrested by the French colonial authorities for his revolutionary activity and sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment. He was set free in 1936 following the victory of the Popular Front in France, and as a result of the revolutionary movement in Vietnam. In the subsequent period, he carried on party work in Central Vietnam, and was elected a member of the Standing Committee of the party's Central Committee. He was imprisoned once again from 1940 to 1945 and set free by the August Revolution. Le Duan was sent by the party's Central Committee to South Vietnam to work as secretary of its South Vietnam Bureau. He was a secretary of the party's CC from 1951 to 1960, and a member of the CC Political Bureau from 1951 to the end of his life.

A committed Marxist-Leninist and a close comrade-in-arms of President Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan worked as First Secretary and then as General Secretary of the CPV CC for more than twenty-five years. In that high party post, he gave all of his vigour and wide political experience to the solution of the difficult tasks of building socialism in Vietnam, ensuring solid guarantees of its freedom and independence, and developing and consolidating the ranks of the international communist and working class movement.

Le Duan made a great contribution to the elaboration of the strategy and tactics of the Vietnamese revolution at the new stage of development, and to the solution of the problems arising from Vietnam's transition to socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage. He was the author of many theoretical works on the building of socialism in the republic, the fight against imperialism, and on various aspects of the international communist and working class movement. In his capacity as party leader, he devoted constant attention and gave much help to our international journal *World Marxist Review* (Problems of Peace and Socialism).

In recognition of his great services, Le Duan received many high awards from various countries. He was awarded the International Lenin Prize 'For Strengthening Peace Among the Peoples'.

The serene memory of Le Duan will live forever in the hearts of the Communists and all other fighters for freedom, democracy, peace and socialism.

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