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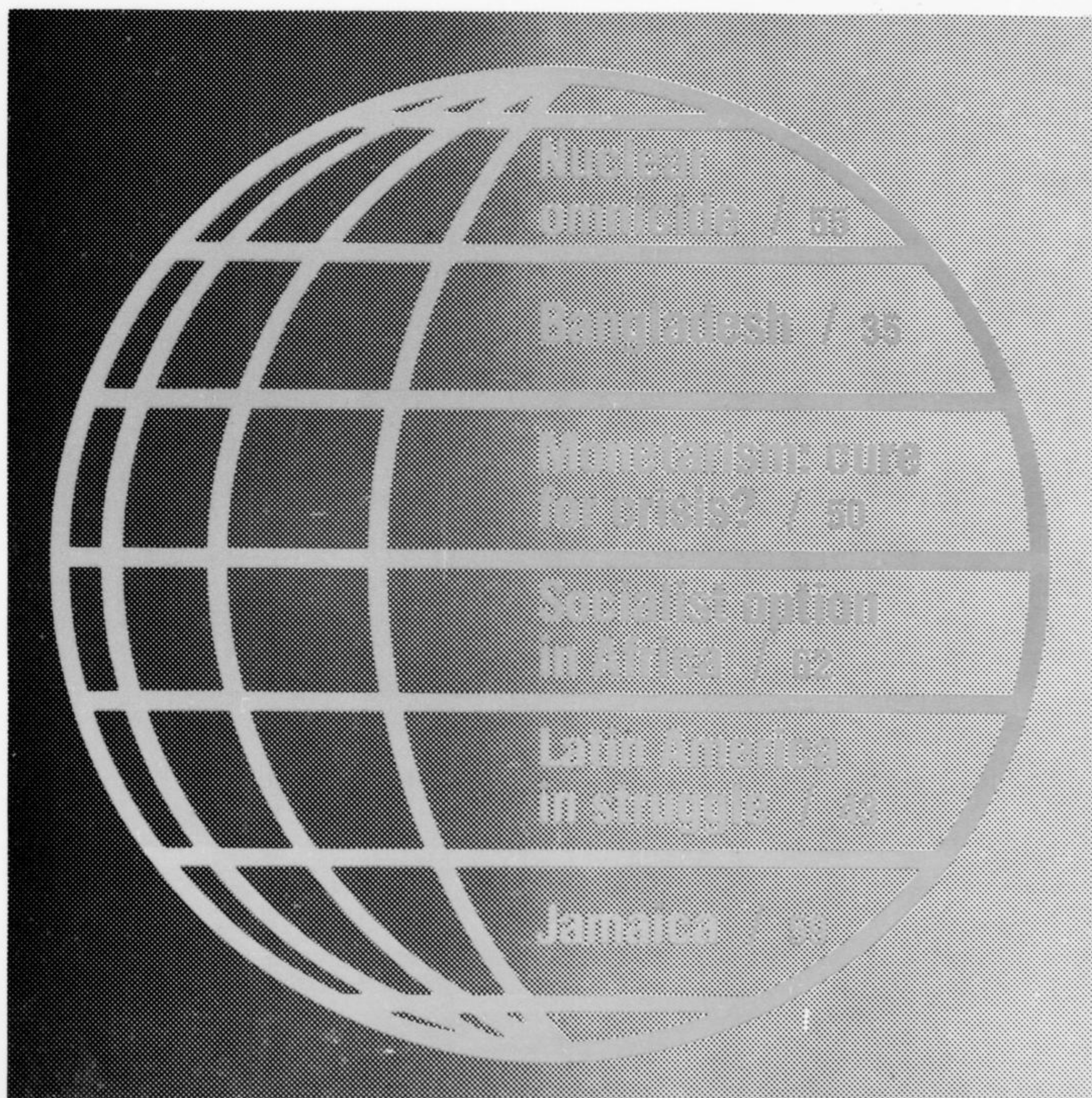
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The party and the building of developed socialism

GDR SCIENTISTS' COLLECTIVE INTERVIEW

The editors of *WMR* have asked a group of scientists of the German Democratic Republic to answer a number of questions concerning the party's leading role in contemporary socialist society. Taking part in the interview, which was held at the Karl Marx Higher Party School, were: Prof. Dr. Gotz Dieckmann, Director of the Scientific Sector of History and Head of the Department of the History of the International Working-Class Movement of the Higher Party School; Prof. Dr. Horst Lipski, Head of the Department of the Marxist-Leninist Doctrine on the Party and Party Construction; Prof. Dr. Heinrich Opitz, Director of the Scientific Sector of Philosophy; Prof. Dr. Siegfried Vietzke, Deputy Head of the Department of SUPG History; Prof. Dr. Karl Hartmann, Director of the Scientific Sector of Political Economy and Economic Sciences; Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schneider, Director of the Scientific Sector of the Marxist-Leninist Doctrine on the Party and Party Construction and Head of the Department of Scientific Communism; Dr. Roland Bauer, CC member, SUPG; and Harry Dietrich, Head of the Sector of the Department of Party Organs of the SUPG Central Committee.

WMR: In the recent period, there has been a growth of theoretical and practical interest in the problem of the party's leading role in socialist society. This is due above all to the specific features of the present stage in the development of socialism and the need to tackle the new tasks arising before the communists. At the same time, bourgeois ideologists, anti-communists have actively joined in the discussion of the problems of socialist construction, with their own axe to grind, of course. They seek to distort the party's role in the socialist society, the very substance of its activity, its relations with the working class and other working people, and also its methods of leadership. These two points also explain our desire to ask specialists in social problems a number of questions, and the nature of these questions.

I. What is the reason for the growth in the party's leading role, as emphasized in SUPG documents, at the stage of building developed socialism? How is this growth expressed? Our ideological adversaries frequently claim that the growth of the party's leading role results

from someone's subjective aspirations, involving ever more direct interference by the party in every sphere of human activity, the life of society and its members, and rigid tutelage of these. What is your view of this problem in the light of the GDR's experience?

Schneider. First of all, we evidently have to note that in the period of building of mature socialism there is a specific manifestation of the general uniformity which is proper not only to this stage, namely, the party's leading role in the revolution and the construction of a new society. The very concept of leading role, I think, expresses the party's historical mission of being the vanguard in the struggle for the interests of the working class and the whole people. As a component part of the nation, the communists fulfil this mission. Our party took shape as the vanguard force simultaneously and in close connection with the deepening of its ties with the masses. The two processes cannot be separated from each other, so that the party's leading role is not something one-sided, is not an end in itself.

The extent to which the party realizes its leading function, its interaction with the masses, I think, is measured by the activity of the working class, the cooperative peasants and the socialist intelligentsia in their creative activity. The substance of the party's leadership is that the party helps the workers and all the other working people to become aware of their own interests and to realize these, and to exert a political influence on all the social processes.

When discussing the question of the growth of the party's leading role in the socialist society, there is evidently also a need to clarify what it is at the present stage.

First, socialism in the GDR is characterized by developed socialist relations of property; the classes of our society are united in friendly relations.

Second, relying on the material and technical basis which has been created, and in accordance with the requirements of economic development, we are going over to intensive expanded reproduction; the party has put forward the conjunction of the advantages of socialism with the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution as the key task.

Third, the ideological, political, cultural and spiritual standards of our people have grown considerably; we note the rising skill standards

of the working class and all the other working people.¹

Fourth, the country has risen to a higher level of cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries; considerable progress has been achieved in tilting the balance of forces in the world arena, and this has also determined the GDR's role in international affairs.

The present stage in the development of our society is characterized by the SUPG as the *period of the further construction of developed socialism*.

What is the message here for the party?

There is no doubt that it has to tackle ever more complex tasks with an eye to the ever closer interweaving of every sphere of social life, making use of the methods of scientific prognostication of the consequences of its decisions, taking account of the fact that, say, some or other measures in the sphere of the economy could produce a desirable or undesirable political effect, etc. These factors, which add a new dimension to the party's leading activity could be said to lie on the surface.

But there is evidence also of something that is more substantial, that lies at greater depth: in a society in which people have ever greater opportunities consciously to make their own history,² a growing role naturally belongs to the vanguard social force which is in possession of an advanced theory, is capable of cognizing and using the objective laws of social development, translating the theoretical analysis of new phenomena into political decisions which are clear to the masses, and on that basis, organizing their creative social effort.

It is quite obvious that those who fail to understand this main point, who rely entirely on spontaneous development and deny the conscious historical creativity of the masses are also incapable of understanding the role of the Marxist-Leninist party in the socialist society, the uniformities underlying the growth of this role, and what this means.

Bourgeois ideologists and politicians keep recommending — for more than six decades now — a socialism without the party's leading role, and have staged subversive action for that purpose. But historical examples show that any minimization of the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party in socialist construction, in its theory, which illumines the way forward, and its organizing action tends to paralyze the creative effort of the masses. The result is that social requirements are not satisfied, and this also harms every individual member of the society; anarchy and chaos may well arise to create the conditions for planned

acts by counter-revolutionary forces leading up to the threshold of a restoration of bourgeois social relations.

Of course, the growth of the party's leading role does not signify any suppression of social activity by the masses, as our ideological adversaries claim. On the contrary, as society advances in the building of developed socialism, the ties between the party and the masses become ever more organic, their interaction ever closer, ever more active on both sides, and this proceeds against the background of the overall democratization of social life, not automatically, of course. Of much importance is the party's policy, a point we shall consider again later. However, this trend appears to be sufficiently explicit.

Today, we can speak of a coordination of efforts on a higher level than in the past, and more efficient action by all the classes and strata of the society, something that was most noticeable in the preparation for the 10th congress of the SUPG.

Opitz: A remark concerning the role of the Marxist-Leninist party. We frequently say that the party is the most important subjective factor of socialist transformations. That is undoubtedly true. Let us recall that the *Communist Manifesto* said that, in contrast to other sections of the working class, the communists are equipped with a scientific theory of social development, which is why they can indicate the way for the proletariat and all the other working people. This Marxist proposition was further elaborated in Lenin's doctrine of the new type of party. At the same time, an analysis of the experience gained by a number of countries in socialist construction shows most obviously that the Marxist-Leninist party is the crucial factor, which determines the whole of social life, and which cannot be fully encompassed by the description "subjective."

We know that the development of society up to the stage of socialism is characterized by spontaneity. Under private property in the means of production, and the division of society into antagonistic classes, people are incapable of mastering its vital process as a whole. It is the socialist revolution which alone brings about a radical change in the situation. A real possibility emerges for the first time in history for consciously directing the social process as a whole, making use of its objective laws. The basis of this is the political power of the working class and the socialization of the means of production. This also implies the existence of a social force which scientifically comprehends the whole process of society's development and directs human activity in accordance with

theoretically generalized experience. It is the Marxist-Leninist party which embodies this objective requirement. It is truly the *conditio sine qua non*, the necessary condition, without which the laws of social development under socialism cannot be used consciously or in a balanced manner. There is good reason why the proposition concerning the party's leading role has been written into our country's fundamental law, and also into the constitutions of other socialist states.

Consequently, the question of recognizing or not recognizing the party's leading role under socialism inevitably becomes a question of recognizing or ignoring objective uniformity. Of course, everyone is free "not to recognize" or to "deny" objective laws, but how long can such subjectivism stand its ground? Sooner or later, it inevitably has to confront the reality, and so goes down in defeat.

From this it also follows that to the extent to which social processes develop and become more complex, higher demands on the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party inevitably arise.

Dieckmann: Considering politics in socialist construction on the pages of WMR,³ comrade Erich Honecker said that its main aspect was the unity of objective and subjective factors. There is no doubt that politics is above all the relation among classes existing objectively, that is, independently of our consciousness, of our will. Under socialism, with the working class in power and socialist property predominant, the correlation between objective and subjective factors tends to change and acquire a new quality. In this sense, the party's policy under socialism is its efforts to promote the development of class relations for the purpose of realizing the interests of the working class.

Consequently, if politics is an objective relation between classes, and if class interests ultimately have an economic basis, constant Marxist-Leninist analysis of reality is — one could say — a vital principle of the party's policy.

There is a need for an analysis which is not confined to recording the existing circumstances, but which goes on to comprehend the political relations between the various classes, both in terms of the historical retrospect, and necessarily also from the standpoint of the future, showing the laws governing the development of each individual class and of all the classes of the socialist society as a whole, naturally with an eye to the balance of class forces on an international scale. This is realized in the party's activity as it exercises its leading role in the society.

Furthermore, in the course of a discussion on the trade unions, Lenin remarked on the kind of cadre the party required to exercise its leading role under socialism at every stage; these are cadre with constant and close bonds with the life of the workers. Party leaders must be capable of unerringly understanding the mood of the masses, literally sensing their true interests and requirements, corresponding to them swiftly and in due time, and making the relevant political generalization. That is the main condition in preventing the party from setting goals which the masses are as yet incapable of understanding, in the light of the actual situation; and at the same time, in preventing it from underestimating the potentialities which already exist at the given stage.

Hartmann. In short, the substance of the party's leading role in a socialist society consists in the following: a theoretical analysis of the reality and the trends in its development, and the elaboration on that basis of a strategy of socio-economic progress, a political line well understood by the masses, the organization of the masses for fulfilling the tasks put forward by the party and approved by them, selection of cadre capable of achieving such organization, exemplary action by the leaders and all the members of the party in fulfilling these tasks and, finally, control over the realization of the elaborated line and advance to the set goals.

WMR. What then is the basic content of this activity today?

Hartmann. Our party proceeds from the assumption that the growing well-being and free all-round development of all the members of the society are the purpose of socialist production. Accordingly, the SUPG gives special attention to problems whose solution helps to guarantee and raise the people's material and cultural standards. This also includes the problem of defending socialism and preserving peace.

Of exceptional importance in our party's policy, as in the working people's initiatives, is the boosting of labor productivity, because it is quite obvious that any progress in the people's well-being implies a considerable increase in labor productivity. After all, one can consume only that which has been produced.

The party is doing its utmost to promote the development of the creative activity of the working class, the members of the agricultural cooperatives and the scientific and technical intelligentsia, inducing the masses to innovation, discoveries and, of course, application of the results of their creative effort in production without delay. All the conditions for this are there.

In political terms, it has proved to be of exceptional importance that our party keeps analyzing in detail the trends in the development of the productive forces, because this has always allowed us to concentrate attention and resources in due time along the main lines, above all in sectors which ensure a marked growth of labor productivity. For us, this is, for instance, microelectronics.

Here is yet another essential point: the party has taken steps constantly to improve distribution according to work, something that is important both in social terms and in stimulating production. More than ever before, wages are now connected with the contribution made by work collectives and individual workers to boosting labor productivity, raising the technological level of production, and improving product quality. A system of moral and political incentives, which helps to develop initiative and activity among the working people, and which has justified itself in practice, is also being broadly developed.

Dieckmann. I do not think that we shall be able to cover all the lines of the SUPG's activity, but when considering the party's leading role at the present stage of socialist construction, one must also look at its foreign-policy aspects.

Other speakers here have already considered socialist economic integration and the consolidation of the socialist countries' community in every sphere. The party shows the masses that that is the basis for the successful development of the Republic. Of key importance in our party's work is the explanation of the law-governed connection between imperialism and war, on the one hand, and between socialism and peace, on the other.

The party constantly explains to all that it is not enough to wish peace, that there is a need to work to strengthen the material foundation for its defense, to make a real contribution to strengthening the defense capability of the socialist community of the forces keeping the aggressive aspirations of imperialism in check.

Schneider. Our answers to the question put before us have naturally not covered all of its aspects and were evidently not exhaustive. I think that it is important to emphasize that the question of the party's leading role is a part — and a highly important part — of the question of the scientific understanding of the substance of socialism. This follows from our discussion.

It also shows the need for a deeper theoretical elaboration of the basic problems bearing on the party's leading role. In my view, we need, on the strength of the level achieved in the development of socialism, to make a broader and deeper analysis of the inter-relation be-

tween objective and subjective factors under socialism, and to clarify the "growth of the party's leading role" conception itself.

II. *What is the SUPG's role in society's political structure, within the power system of the democratic Republic? What are the relations between the Marxist-Leninist party and state, and other parties and social organizations? What are the prerequisites for the development and perfection of socialist democracy?*

Dieckmann. The party is elaborating the basic political, general line for the country's development. This line is being realized in the activity of the state, within whose framework there is a constant strengthening of the alliance of the working class and the cooperative peasants, the socialist intelligentsia and the other working people. The SUPG's policy has the support of the other friendly parties and all the social organizations in the country. From the substance of the workers' and peasants' power it follows that within our system there is no political confrontation between organizations. This meets the interests of the working class and all the other working people, whose basic common interests are embodied in the activity of the Marxist-Leninist party and the state, and whose specific interests are realized through various social bodies.

With the progressive development of the society, the emergence of new problems in practice, the growing consciousness and organization of the masses, the maturity of their organizations, the administration of the country is naturally improved. The growth of the party's leading role does not amount to a minimization of the role and responsibility of state agencies and social organizations — as our ideological adversaries frequently claim, but on the contrary, means an enhancement of their role and responsibility, and the extension of their functions, prerogatives and rights.

Our party's program says that the further development and perfection of socialist democracy is the main line in the development of the socialist state. Socialist democracy can progress successfully only if the living connection between the working class, the party and the socialist state is oriented toward a constant strengthening of the political power of the working class.

The development of socialist democracy increasingly covers other than state institutions. It is ever more obvious that civic initiative and democratic participation are also realized within the framework of social organizations.

Take the trade unions. Our constitution emphasizes their independence. These are organizations with their own collective bodies, which

take decisions. In accordance with the constitution, they have extensive rights. The trade unions have, for instance, the right to conclude agreements and contracts with all the state and other leading economic organs. The trade unions have the right of legislative initiative in the People's Chamber. Here is a concrete example: our new Labor Code. It was drafted by the Association of Free German Trade Unions. It also organized a broad democratic discussion of the draft. Here is only one figure: as a result of the mass discussion, 90 essential amendments were written into the draft text. Only then was it submitted for consideration by the People's Chamber and approved by it, that is, acquired the force of law. We have good ground to assert that the working class of the GDR has itself written the Labor Code, the collection of laws regulating an exceptionally important sphere of life. This is an expression of the high level of civic responsibility and political maturity of the working class, party members and broad masses of non-party people.

The merger of state and social principles is an essential feature of socialist democracy, which is being further developed through the conscious orientation of the party's policy to that end.

Dietrich. It is perhaps worthwhile to back up what has been said with some of the data showing how broadly workers and members of other sections of society in the GDR are involved in the management of production and of all the other spheres of state and social activity. In our trade unions, in the trade-union groups there are 1,348,588 functionaries. Standing production conferences involve 64,632 workers, active innovators' councils 77,933, and workers' control — 92,707 persons. On the whole, there are 2,204,444 elected functionaries working actively in the primary trade union organizations. Furthermore, working on a no-payroll basis in the circuit courts are 2,069, and in the district courts, 49,700 people's assessors. Here is an interesting fact: 51 per cent of the people's assessors in the district courts are women. The workers' and peasants' inspection, that is, the organs exercising control on the part of the masses, consist of 17,939 commissions and 6,336 committees of people's control, involving over 233,000 persons.

Vietzke. The relations between the SUPG and the other parties working in the Republic need to be specially considered. Cooperation with the friendly parties is one of the forms of our policy of alliances which has been tested in practice. This means that our assumption is that at present and in the foreseeable future, other political organizations will exist along-

side the SUPG as the party of the working class. That is reflected in the SUPG program.

The alliance of the working class and the cooperative peasantry, the socialist intelligentsia and all the other working people is organizationally expressed in the National Front, in the political cooperation between the SUPG and the four parties existing in the GDR: the Democratic Peasant Party of Germany (DPPG), the National Democratic Party of Germany (NDPG), the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Liberal Democratic Party of Germany (LDPG). On the whole, the friendly parties have about 370,000 members. This alliance is also realized in democratic mass organizations.

Without going into the details of the history of these parties and our cooperation with them, I should like to emphasize that these are independent political organizations with all the party attributes. Such are their primary organizations, their governing bodies, their own central and regional press (the daily printing of their newspapers comes to three-quarters of a million copies, and of their journals, 50,000). These parties have their publishing houses, printing shops, their own groups in the People's Chamber of the GDR, and in the regional, district and village organs of administration. Nearly 1,000 burgomasters belong to the allied parties. Consequently, these parties are a real political force.

The parties I have been speaking about have made their own contribution to the effort to help a part of the GDR population with petty-bourgeois democratic and frequently bourgeois-democratic views to comprehend and accept socialism. For us that is the main thing. They have gained a comprehension of socialism, of socialist construction in the GDR and recognized the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist party.

I well remember that after the eighth congress of the SUPG, rumors were spread from the FRG that at the new stage of socialist construction in the GDR, the friendly parties would lose their right to exist, would break up or be dissolved. Such rumors were groundless, and our party immediately said so. Of course, we have no antagonistic classes, but socialism is still a society with different classes and social groups, and this needs to be reckoned with in politics.

Recent practice shows that cooperation between the SUPG and the friendly parties has become much more intensive. There are institutions within whose framework they are systematically engaged in joint activity. This is primarily the Democratic Bloc, on which are represented in addition to the SUPG, the friendly parties, the Association of Free Ger-

man Trade Unions, the Democratic Union of the Women of Germany, the Union of Free German Youth, the Kulturbund and other mass organizations. As I have said, the National Front is the forum where the parties constantly cooperate.

I believe that the relations with the friendly parties are an essential element of the SUPG's general line to strengthen the moral and political unity of the people of the GDR.

Bauer. Comrade Vietzke said that the four friendly parties are being involved in socialism. That is certainly true for the present, but that was not, of course, always so. The CDU and the LDPG, which emerged in 1945, were, in effect, successors to bourgeois parties under the Weimar Republic. Both parties held conceptions which were totally opposite to the communist or social-democratic ones, and this was also so when we united in the SUPG. I was a delegate to the Second German People's Congress in 1948, and I remember that the CDU sharply came out against our two-year plan for economic development. On the governing bodies of these parties were men who subsequently became ministers of the Bonn government. The PDPG and the Peasant Party emerged in 1948 as vehicles of the interests of definite strata of the population. I recall this because there is a need to realize the considerable differentiation that has occurred in these parties and in the consciousness of its members over the past more than three decades thanks to the purposeful policy of the SUPG.

Indeed, all the parties being considered here are an independent political force in our society and they are broadly represented on all the organs of power and administration, from the State Council and the government to the regional, district, city and village councils, including both legislative and executive bodies. Expressing the interests of definite strata of the population today, these parties work, as has been said, with these strata and are able to make a substantial contribution to transforming their consciousness along socialist lines. In 1972, when the semi-state enterprises and a large number of private enterprises were converted into socialist ones, we acted largely on the proposals of the LDPG, the CDU and the PDPG. That was a substantial transformation which affected hundreds of thousands of people, but it went through without any social upheavals, in perfect tranquility as a result of the fruitful cooperation between the SUPG and the other parties.

Hartmann. What has been said certainly

does not rule out, but in fact envisages the growing influence of the SUPG on the development of the friendly parties and directly on the classes and strata which they represent. Roughly 70,000 peasants, for instance, are members of the DPPG. At the same time, nearly 100,000 members of the SUPG also work in agriculture.

Here is yet another aspect. We need evidently to be able to combat more skilfully the simplistic view that with the growth of our party's role nothing else can develop, or that all the other organizations in society are doomed to extinction. This is frequently alleged by our enemies. But that is not so. That is why it is necessary to show more vigorously that the growth of the SUPG's role is a prerequisite for the full flourishing of all the other social organizations and the unfolding of their initiative. Here, the following analogy could apply: the founders of Marxism said that the intelligentsia would be able most fully to display its capabilities only in a workers' republic. What once appeared to be a paradox, has now become a fact. I think it is useful to give due attention to this aspect of our party work.

Schneider. One remark concerning the state. The strengthening of the state is expressed in the involvement of broad masses of people in its activity. At the same time, we are working for the observance of socialist legality, making use of all the legal instruments whenever the laws or other democratically established norms of our state are violated. That is also the function of the state, and a very important one, for it ensures the stability of the state and its authority, while giving our citizens a sense of confidence in society.

III. *In its leadership, the working-class party realizes the will of the working class. What does this mean in practice? Does this mean that the workers have, say, some material advantages over other sections of the population or is it something else? How are the interests of the various classes and strata of society generally harmonized in the party's activity?*

Dieckmann. The specific feature of the present stage in the building of socialism in our country consists in the fact that the class interests of the working class tend to become, more than ever before, the common interests of the whole population, and that the class features of the working class and its interests leave an imprint on the development of society in every sphere. This is a central point in the SUPG program, and it is closely bound up with the role of the party as a part of the class, as the political vanguard of the whole people.

In the developed socialist society there is no class antagonism. But if, as a result of one-sided policies, erroneous choice of priorities in economic policy, shortcomings in ideological work and other causes, a rift develops in the society — and I am speaking about this in general theoretical terms, but with an eye to phenomena which have occurred in the history of international socialism — if the party's policy incorrectly expresses class interests (not the group interests of some contingents of the working class, but class interests as such) contradictions tend to arise which could develop into grave social conflicts. In these conditions, there could be some scope for action by counter-revolutionary forces. I should like to emphasize that cooperation between the classes and sections of society, which is natural for socialism, is not realized automatically; it can be fully and consistently realized only if the party's policy is active and correct.

The party leadership, naturally, proceeds above all from the long-term basic interests of the working class. In this sense, no purely economic decisions, for instance, are possible. Each of them is taken in the light of the fundamental long-term goals of the working class and its allies, from the standpoint of consolidating social relations or, in other words, from the standpoint of the working class fulfilling its historical mission.

This is most pronounced in the approach to the problem of accumulation and consumption. Our party's experience shows that decisions on the balance between accumulation and consumption are taken not only on the basis of economic advisability, but also with an eye to the socio-political consequences. Of course, the problem needs to be considered in the concrete situation in each country. But this is the interconnection, the correlation, which are of great importance in practice from the standpoint of mass support for the party's policy. It is wrong here to start only from a subjective desire to increase growth rates and to raise the economic potential as fast as possible, although such a desire is understandable. Whenever voluntarism is allowed and this results in contradictions, a "catch" is also provided for the counter-revolutionary forces, the elements which at once seek to widen the chink and create an anti-socialist platform.

There is no doubt that the balance between consumption and accumulation cannot be determined only by means of theoretical work, by theoretical calculations. In real life, there is a need for constant analysis of the actual political, economic and ideological situation in the context of reality. This also applies to our party

and I think that one of the secrets of the SUPG's successes is its coherent and principled Marxist-Leninist approach to this problem from the standpoint of uniformities of socialist construction and the constant ability to verify policy in life again and again and, whenever necessary, to review and correct adopted decisions. That is truly the crucial condition for the stability of our social development.

Here is another question in this context. I think that our experience confirms the fact that the uniformities of socialist construction must always be realized in their interaction, in total. The party cannot simply select one of these and close its eyes to others. It is impossible, for instance, to build socialism in the town, while leaving the countryside capitalist over a long term. In that case, the political relations, that is, the relations between classes, which tend to arise, do not at root correspond to the substance of the socialist society. Consequently, this is not merely a question of how the peasantry is to develop, but a problem bearing on the interests of the society as a whole, and ultimately on the very foundations of socialism, which requires Marxist-Leninist influence on the development of class relations with consistent efforts to realize the socialist goals of the working class.

Lipski. Our party, according to its rules and program, is a conscious and organized vanguard of the working class and the other working people in the socialist GDR.

In the SUPG, 57.6 per cent of the communists are workers, and over 70 per cent of the members and candidate members have their social origins in the working class. For us, these are not merely statistics. The point is that the party cadre are truly in touch with the workers' way of life, thinking and sentiments, precisely through their own experience. There is good reason, therefore, why cadre coming directly from the working class are appointed to leading posts in the party, the state and the national economy. It is, of course, not enough, Lenin tells us, to style oneself as vanguard: the party must truly act in such a way that the working people recognize its vanguard role. It must also organize action by the working class so that it most fully displays its leading role in the society, so that this role is unequivocally recognized by the other classes and sections.

Incidentally, we believe that it is concern for production accumulation that is required for raising the whole people's well-being, and not just concern for consumption as such that characterizes the maturity of the working class as the leading class of socialist society.

IV. What is the SUPG's approach today to the

task of strengthening ties with the masses, what are the forms of these ties?

Schneider. The ties between the party and the masses and the consequent relations of trust cannot be regarded — as we suggested earlier — as a law that operates automatically. Such relations need to be daily maintained and reaffirmed.

The first and chief condition is the party's correct policy, a policy serving the good of the people. This applies both to big and to everyday problems, ranging from the problem of preserving peace to assurance of stable provision of the necessary goods for the population.

The second point is education and training of cadre which would ensure a strengthening of ties with the masses and improvement of the political guidance of the masses.

Finally, the style of political leadership. Our party's tested method is orientation toward the future, toward the solution of newly arising problems, for this helps to stimulate among the masses a constructive frame of mind and action.

Collective leadership, and also a system of inner-party information, which helps to encompass and sum up the opinion of the communists and all the other working people, help to produce a situation in which the party is always capable of responding in due time to the mood and requirements of the masses.

Bauer. May I make a few remarks about how the party learns from the masses and reckons with the response to its decisions and actions.

First: the SUPG has always striven to discuss at its forums in due time the basic problems in the country's development, whether these relate to international or domestic policy; after a discussion in the party and often simultaneously with it, nationwide discussions were arranged. This also applies to the discussion of fundamental documents adopted at SUPG congresses (like the party programs, when thousands of proposals were taken into account), and the drafting of annual plans for enterprises and districts, and working plans for individual primary organizations or party groups.

Plenary meetings of the Central Committee are held regularly, and at each of these regardless of the agenda, the Political Bureau reports to the Central Committee on its activity after the previous plenary meetings. It reports on the party's view of important international and domestic political problems, suggesting what needs to be done and indicating ways of solving the problems. All of this is broadly publicized, with the exception of some inner-party details, in *Neues Deutschland* and other news-

papers, together with the greater part of the discussion on the matters considered. The same principle of what might be called the leadership's constant accounting to the people also operates on the regional and district scale, and on the level of primary party organizations.

Second, we now have, I think, a good system by means of which we, as a party, constantly seek to keep in touch with the opinion of the masses, so drawing conclusions for policy. Let me only instance the practice of the regional party organization, the secretariat of the regional committee. Analysis of the mood of the masses is a regular item on the agenda of the secretariat's meetings. What are the data and documents on which this is based? First of all, there are the assessments of the party meetings, the studies within the party network of political education, the ideas people have expressed to secretaries, department heads and other party functionaries in their person-to-person contacts, and also to agitators at enterprises and in residential areas. The next source is the statements and letters from the population received by the newspapers, radio and television, state agencies or party committees themselves. As in the state agencies, so in the party committees there is this firm rule: for every critical remark it is established who is responsible for taking the necessary measures.

Third: we have a truly extensive development of direct and constant contacts between all party, government, trade union and other functionaries with the population. From my own experience I can say that a regional committee secretary takes part in meetings of primary party organizations or discussions with some sections of the population between 10 to 20 times a month.

Of course, we also take sociological polls, which yield their own results and comparable quantitative data, which is a good thing. But that is not the main method, the main method is direct conversations.

Fourth: it was said here that a correct policy helps to shape consciousness. I agree with this from the standpoint that people do not evaluate socialism above all on the strength of our slogans and speeches published in the newspapers, but on the strength of what they see everywhere: at the enterprises, in the residential area, in the shops. And if the speeches and the realities coincide, this does much to enhance trust. We want no discrepancy between what we say, between what we strive for and the immediate daily reality. Thanks to the policy of the eighth congress of the SUPG, this is being largely realized.

WMR: Here is an additional question: the

masses are known to be extremely sensitive to how the party, its organizations treat their own mistakes. What is your view of this matter?

Bauer: I think that every Marxist-Leninist party seeks above all not to make mistakes, but no one is, of course, insured against them. Everyone knows that no mistakes are made by those who do not work. And there is, of course, a great difference between the mistakes which are built into the basic conception, policy, line of a party, and the mistakes made by individual comrades. One must also draw a distinction between mistakes and shortcomings, that is, what has been done incorrectly, and what has simply not yet been done. Some problems stem from the process of development and arise for objective reasons. Now and again we are criticized for what has not yet been done — with all the good will in the world — in some areas because of historical or economic conditions. It is highly important to drive this home to the masses, to help them understand us well. But life keeps confronting us with new problems, some of them highly intractable. That is why an important component of the art of political leadership consists in the ability to spot problems in due time, to adjust policy and to prevent any cleavage in the relations between the party and the masses.

I believe that since the lesson of 1953, our party has always been swiftly aware of any policies requiring corrections. Take the period preceding the eighth congress of the SUPG. We noticed — precisely because of the mood of the masses — that there was a need for some changes. At the next plenary meeting of the Central Committee corrections were made, and the eighth congress adopted a corrected political line which is known in our country under the motto of unity of economic and social policy. Its realization has yielded positive results.

Lipski. To discuss all problems with the masses is a Leninist — and in our country Thaelmannist — tradition. For us, in view of the GDR's geographical location, such a dialogue becomes especially important. Not only the SUPG, but also our ideological adversary is engaged in a dialogue with the people every day, every hour. One need merely recall the purposeful radio and TV propaganda and the fact that several million tourists from the FRG, from West Berlin and other capitalist states visit our country every year. They talk with our citizens, and these are not just conversations about family affairs between uncle and auntie. It is a dialogue about capitalism and socialism. The communists have the duty to help the citizens of our Republic be up to the mark in such discussions.

We say: "The party is where the communist is." That is, of course, above all a postulate, a wish, a requirement. We have thousands and tens of thousands of comrades who meet this requirement. We have many who know their business very well and put a high value on the honor and dignity of the German Democratic Republic, of the German working class. But we naturally also have passive party members, and in the exchange of party cards none were issued to such people. It is a task of primary importance to get every communist to be a convinced ideological fighter.

Schneider. In conclusion there is yet another remark: as in every other Marxist-Leninist party, the ties between our party and the masses differ fundamentally from the influence exerted on the masses by variously oriented bourgeois parties. These parties, concerned with the preservation of the system of profit and exploitation, create a mass basis for themselves through combinations of subtle demagoguery and crude and veiled terrorism. It is only the revolutionary parties and the revolutionary movement, whose goal is the people's well-being; that adhere to the "ties with the masses" concept in theory and practice.

V. What happens in the inner life of the party, in its make-up with the advance to mature socialism? How is the principle of democratic centralism realized in contemporary conditions? What importance does the SUPG attach to the use of the experience of the fraternal parties of the socialist countries?

Dietrich. In the course of implementing the decisions of the eighth and ninth congresses of the SUPG, the political level and social activity of the party members and the organizational strength of party ranks tended to grow. The governing bodies display a maturity of scientific prevision and knowledge of reality and a capability of directing the energy of the masses toward the fulfillment of meaningful tasks in socialist construction. Their decisions demonstrate the truthful power of the party's collective thinking, its theoretical potential and depth of analysis.

What is the SUPG today in terms of composition?

Today it has 2,172,110 members and candidate members. In the period since the ninth congress, 351,953 new members and candidates were admitted to the party, mostly among young workers, members of youth teams at enterprises in industry and construction. The fact that since the ninth congress of the SUPG, 263,920 workers became candidates and members of the party shows that the working class has full confidence in its policy. The party now

has more workers than ever before since the formation of the SUPG.

Primary organizations increasingly concentrate on recruiting candidates for membership from youth teams. The party has declared that its goal is to enhance its influence in these teams. Virtually one-fifth of those who became candidates since the 12th CC plenary meeting in May 1980 are members of youth teams. We have never had such a result before. This shows that the party is doing everything to ensure its combat capability for the future as well.

The raising of the combat capability of party organizations is evident in every sphere of social life. The standard of party meetings has gone up, inner-party democracy has been further developed, conscious discipline is being strengthened, and criticism and self-criticism are more extensive.

With the advance of social construction in the GDR, with the growing maturity of the socialist society, the demands being made on everyone who belongs to the organized and conscious vanguard of the working class tend to increase.

Lipski. The Leninist norms of party life are the foundation of inner-party democracy, and the SUPG has consistently practised these. Here the level of democracy depends on the level of the party's development.

A few remarks concerning the principle of democratic centralism. Our experience has shown that this is the solid basis of the party's construction, organization and leading activity, and also of the functioning of the socialist state. The growing demands on party leadership make it necessary to develop both aspects of this principle: centralism and democracy. Our ideological adversaries have been trying to discredit this principle. We are being urged to develop democracy, but to abandon centralism, the norms which ensure the unity of action by the party and the people. Of course, we stand for the development of democracy. We do not merely "favor" it, but we also develop it most consistently. However, to accentuate attention only on one aspect and to underestimate the other would be to create the danger of relaxing the party's organization and combat capability, and consequently its organizational activity in tackling the problems in the further construction of developed socialism. We are well aware that without discipline and organization a party cannot carry to the end the revolutionary undertaking that has been started.

Bauer. In reply to this question, I would say: at least three things have substantially changed in our party over the past few decades.

First, the consciousness of party members and its organizational level which are now

much higher. Second, the educational standards of the communists and the level of their political training. The fact that more than 34 per cent of the SUPG members and candidate members have a higher or secondary education, and that over 33 per cent have a complete political education — with a majority also having a higher or secondary special education — is certainly a totally new quality than what we had some time ago. Or: all the members of the secretariats of regional and district committees of the party have either a higher or secondary education or have graduated from party schools; that is also an expression of a new quality.

Third, the political experience of our cadre. In party elections, nearly two-thirds of the comrades working in the leadership are, as a rule, re-elected.

Concerning the experience of the fraternal parties, the CPSU in the first place, I should like to say at least the following: today, I think, no party is capable of building a socialist society successfully without taking into account the experience of others. But it is also clear that the fraternal parties' policy cannot be copied, while experience — however good — cannot be mechanically transferred to other conditions. We have always striven to apply what we have learned from others creatively and in accordance with our own conditions — and I think we have succeeded in doing so.

In view of the fact that a great deal is now being said and written about socialism, that the bourgeois press has highlighted various negative aspects, I should like to emphasize that the communist parties of the socialist countries have accumulated a real experience in knowledge and practice in building a new society, and this experience cannot be compared with anything (or with anyone). We ourselves are well aware of the complexities and shortcomings in this matter. We strive to learn from the experience of the fraternal parties, having in mind not only the positive achievements, but also the negative aspects emerging in the socialist countries' historical development; we always seek to draw the relevant conclusions from both, and to take them into account in our policy. In the SUPG, for instance, there is now a close and comprehensive study of the material of the 26th congress of the CPSU, which, as it was said by Erich Honecker, General Secretary of our party's Central Committee, was an event of enormous importance for the Soviet people's advancement toward communism, for the whole of the socialist community and for entire international development.⁴

Vietzke. What is the importance for us of the

experience of other fraternal parties in the socialist countries? General Secretary Erich Honecker says in this context: "The exchange of experience is . . . the lowest-cost investment. Correct use of experience, that is, creative use, with an eye to the existing concrete conditions, frequently helps to save considerable efforts and resources. Experience facilitates the adoption of decisions, helps to avoid mistakes, and makes it possible to use all the material and spiritual potentialities ever more productively."⁵

This principle of learning from the fraternal parties is deeply rooted in the history and traditions of our party, and this applies above all to studying the experience of the CPSU as the most experienced Communist Party.

Since the early 1970s, the SUPG's cooperation with the socialist countries' fraternal parties has risen to a new qualitative level. This is due, first, to the fact that with the level of social development attained, common features are ever more pronounced in most of our countries, as a result of which — even taking account of all the historically and nationally rooted distinctions — the parties face tasks which are similar or analogous in many respects and whose solution can be most effective through the creative use of the whole of earlier experience. Second, socialist construction has attained such a scale that, for instance, major technico-economic projects cannot be put through by one country, but require joint efforts, and this once again emphasizes the increased importance of cooperation with the fraternal parties and exchange of experience. Third, our coordinated foreign policy and measures to ensure the security of the community countries, this objectively necessary form of struggle to ensure peace and resist imperialism, requires not only international coordination of action but also exchange of available experience. The SUPG takes account in its policy of these and various other objective potentialities and requirements.

Among the new features in this sphere one has to note the fact that the initially separate and frequently casual relations between, say, the regional committees of the SUPG and the corresponding organs of the fraternal parties have developed to the level of constant and stable relations; all the 15 district committees have established such relations. At the same time, exchange of views and experience now proceeds not only on the level of the Central Committee or the district committee, but also covers the party committees of districts, cities, party organizations of combines, enterprises, agricultural producer cooperatives, and so on. Consequently, one could say that over the past

decade an extensive network of cooperation, exchange of opinion and experience has been established by the fraternal parties, and this is most pronounced in relations between the SUPG and the CPSU, but is also developing for the benefit of all the parties between the SUPG and the other Marxist-Leninist parties of the socialist countries.

The defense, consolidation and development of socialism is the common cause of the fraternal parties, and their cooperation is naturally being strengthened along every line. It exists and, we believe, must be even more vigorously advanced, in particular, in the further analysis of the uniformities governing the exercise by the party of its leading role in the dynamically developing socialist society.

1. Just now, 79 per cent of the working people in the GDR have a complete secondary or specialized secondary education, whereas 10 years ago the figure came to less than 60 per cent, and 25 years ago, to only 30 per cent.

2. See Frederick Engels, *Anti-Duhring*, p. 391.

3. See WMR, No. 12, 1971.

4. *Neues Deutschland*, April 12, 1981.

5. Erich Honecker, *Aus meinem Leben*. Berlin, 1980, p. 369.

Georgi Dimitrov

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History: lessons for today and tomorrow

Alexei Maresyev

Hero of the Soviet Union,
Executive Secretary, Soviet War Veterans Committee

June 22, 1941 was a watershed in the life of Europe and the world. On that day nazi Germany attacked the world's first socialist state, triggering the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people — the main and decisive sector of the Second World War. The memory of it remains unblurred, as though 40 long years have not passed.

But 40 years have indeed passed since then. Although much has changed in the world, there is unflagging interest in that bitter and heroic time when the destiny of human civilization was in the balance. This interest is quite natural because the times we live in are closely linked to history, and the years that have elapsed since the Great Patriotic War allow us to make a more specific assessment of its results and of how it has influenced all aspects of postwar social development. From a distance of four decades the results and lessons of the war are seen as much more significant than in the immediate aftermath.

Innumerable monumental studies by scholars of different countries, and also books, articles, and documented publications have been written on the history of the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War. The events, lessons, and repercussions of the courageous struggle of peoples against fascism continue to be mirrored in literature, journalism and art.

People are also turning again and again to the history, the lessons of the war because having started a world war twice imperialism would have unleashed yet another had there not been the military, economic and political might of the Soviet Union and the other socialist-community states. In this situation to call attention to the outcome of that unparalleled military collision with imperialism's assault forces is to warn those who would settle differences and disputes on the battle-field rather than by negotiation.

The war against German fascism was the most exhausting, devastating and sanguinary experienced by the Soviet Union. History had never known such savage barbarity and brutality as was displayed by the nazi cutthroats from the very first days following the sneak attack on the USSR, such bestial hate as was shown by the nazis for the social system, culture, tradi-

tions and laws of the Soviet Union. However, the monstrous design of the nazi invaders to enslave Soviet people was not destined to materialize. Nazi Germany was crushed and the freedom-loving peoples won their right to advance along the road of progress.

This fact is incontrovertible, an objective reality. But to draw the proper conclusion from it for the future and read current developments more profoundly one should remember the principal lessons of the war, understand the whys and wherefores, and assess the significance for us today of what happened in those years.

Not only historians and writers, but also living contemporaries of those events, people of my generation can confirm that the Soviet people did not want war. More than anything else, they wanted peace, which is the main condition for the building of socialism. The USSR steadfastly urged curbing aggressors and made every effort to create a system of collective security in Europe, and these efforts had the support of all the peace forces, including the communist parties of capitalist countries. The seventh congress of the Communist International, held in 1935, denounced the fatalistic views that it was senseless and hopeless to attempt to avert a world war. The formation of a collective anti-war front of peoples became the central task of the communist parties. This was the aim of a series of important initiatives by the Soviet Union.¹ However, the governments of the leading capitalist powers refused to cooperate. Blinded by their class hatred for the socialist state, they framed their policy on the calculation that war would break out between the Soviet Union and Germany, and tried to isolate the USSR on the international scene.

Also, it is probably worth recalling the fact that although war clouds were gathering over Europe, socialist construction went forward in the Soviet Union. This was an unexplored and difficult road involving the surmounting of the country's economic backwardness, the creation of a powerful material and technical basis, and ensuring independence on the international level. At the price of heroic labor, frequently denying themselves bare necessities, the Soviet people led by the Communist Party had by the

beginning of the 1940s turned backward Russia, which had been ravaged by an imperialist war and foreign intervention, into a country with a powerful industrial and agricultural potential.

The plans for the future envisaged a further acceleration of economic and cultural development. The achieved level made it possible to give more attention to improving the people's living standard. The sneak attack by Nazi Germany was a cruel blow to these plans.

There is evidently little need to recall the complex history of the Great Patriotic War, a history studded with tragedy and mass heroism. The war is remembered by contemporaries and by those who fought in it, while the postwar generation could be recommended, for instance, the Soviet-U.S. 20-series documentary entitled "The Great Patriotic War."² This film is an accurate and consecutive record of the first defeats and first victories, of the heroism displayed at and behind the firing lines, of the atrocities committed by the Nazis on occupied territories, of the actions of partisans, of the liberation of European countries from Hitlerite tyranny and, lastly, of the unforgettable Day of Victory.

The fascist bloc was defeated by the efforts of peoples who were allies in arms. The heroism and courage of partisans in Nazi-occupied countries, and the selflessness displayed by communists and other anti-fascist patriots in Nazi Germany and other fascist states who did not cease the struggle in the face of demoniacal terror are assessed by Soviet people objectively, on their merits. We do not forget how important the military and political cooperation among the nations of the anti-Hitlerite coalition was to victory over the common enemy. Unquestionable valor was displayed in battle by the soldiers and Resistance fighters of many countries. These merits are self-evident. But however great the contribution and effort of others it remains in fact that the main burden of the war against fascism fell on the shoulders of the Soviet Union. On combat mission — I was a pilot — I would see beneath the wings of my fighter plane the ruins of our towns, the charred remains of factories and mills, and gutted bridges, power stations, and dams. My heart would fill with pain and with loathing for the enemy at the sight of ashes where once flourishing rural communities had stood, at the sight of shell pits and abandoned fields and pastures where only recently life had teemed.³ How is one to measure the bitterness of loss, of the death of kin, friends, and comrades-in-arms? In defending their own independence and that of

many other nations, our people lost 20 million of their sons and daughters.

"There is nothing that can compare with the losses and destruction wrought on us by the war," Leonid Brezhnev said in a speech on the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. "The war brought the people grief which to this day wrings the hearts of millions of mothers, widows, and orphans . . . But nothing could break the will of Soviet people, or stop the triumphant onward march of socialism. The bitterness of loss was hard to bear. But side by side with it in the heart of every Soviet citizen there was the jubilant feeling of victory . . . The feat of those who fell inspired the living."⁴

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the Soviet people advanced toward the great victory. For almost four years they pressed forward perseveringly and purposefully, through the fire of hard-fought battle, sparing neither strength nor life itself in order to smash the hated aggressor. And they won. They won because right was on their side. A task of great historic significance, the defense of socialist gains, was fulfilled in merciless battle with a brutal enemy. This bore out Lenin's prophetic conclusion that the new social system brought into being by the October Revolution is invincible. He said: "A nation in which the majority of the workers and peasants realize, feel, and see that they are fighting for their own Soviet power, for the rule of the working people, for the cause whose victory will ensure them and their children all the benefits of culture, of all that has been created by human labor — such a nation can never be vanquished" (Coll. Works, Vol. 29, p. 319). This is one of the central and most striking lessons of the Great Patriotic War. By their victory the Soviet people showed the futility of imperialism's adventurist plans: war against the socialist countries is dangerous to the aggressors themselves.

By beginning a military campaign in the East, the fascist strategists clearly underrated the high morale of the Red Army, of all Soviet people. This factor, it will be remembered, played an immense role. "In the final analysis," Lenin wrote, "victory in any war depends on the spirit animating the masses that spill their own blood on the field of battle. The conviction that the war is in a just cause and the realization that their lives must be laid down for the welfare of their brothers strengthen the morale of the fighting men and enable them to endure incredible hardships" (Coll. Works, Vol. 31, p. 137). I saw the truth of these words on countless occasions during the Great Patriotic War. Time and again I saw my comrades-in-arms perform

miracles of heroism, acts of self-sacrifice, of incomparable valor and gallantry in order to defeat the hated enemy and liberate our socialist motherland from the fascist scourge. The whole world spoke, for example, of the bravery of Alexander Matrosov, who closed the firing port of an enemy machine-gun with his body. But does everyone know that during the war his immortal exploit was repeated more than 200 times? Over 70 pilots repeated the exploit of Nikolai Gastello, who rammed his burning aircraft into a cluster of nazi tanks. War veterans could recall many other similar examples that inscribed a glorious page in the chronicle of the Soviet people's heroic struggle against the fascist invaders. The very fact that over 7,000,000 orders and medals, of which 11,603 were the nation's highest decoration — the title of Hero of the Soviet Union — were awarded is more eloquent than words.

The failure of the nazi invasion of the USSR demonstrated the socialist system's enormous potentialities, stability and viability. Despite colossal difficulties, losses and destruction, the Soviet Union not only stood firm but also quickly rose and stepped far forward. Convincingly demonstrating socialism's indestructible might, the Soviet Union's victory was also a warning to those hankering after the property of others, to all lovers of military gambles.

The huge losses inflicted on the Soviet Union by the war bring into even bolder relief its new achievements in building the material and technical basis of communism after the war. The economic indices of the first five-year plans have been surpassed many times over. In 1980, the last year of the 10th five-year period, the USSR produced 1,295,000 million kwh of electric power, up more than 26 times from 1940, 603 million tons of oil, and 716,400,000 tons of coal (19 and 4.3 times respectively more than during the last prewar year). It has considerably increased its output of steel and pig iron. The living standard and cultural level of the Soviet people have risen immeasurably. Grandiose prospects are charted in the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and the Period Ending in 1990 that were approved by the 26th congress of the CPSU.

While speaking with legitimate pride of our economic successes, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that today we might have had everything that we are now planning for 1990. Had there not been four years of war. Had it not been for the painful period of restoration that required huge material, labor and financial resources to abolish the consequences of the war. That, too, is a lesson of the war. For had it not

been for the tragic irreparability of the losses inflicted by the reckless and criminal policy of the imperialist powers on the eve of the war not only the Soviet Union but all humankind would have progressed far toward the solution of their most challenging problems.

The victory over fascism shook capitalism at its foundations, revolutionized the masses, and created a situation favorable for radical socio-economic changes in a number of countries. It strongly influenced world developments and became a landmark in the life of many nations. However, the communists never considered world wars a factor determining social development, and never linked with them the prospect of mankind's advance toward socialism. A few years before the outbreak of World War II the seventh congress of the Communist International had categorically rejected the slander that "the communists desire war in the expectation that it will bring revolution."⁵ On the contrary, the struggle of the communist parties for the end goals of the working-class movement had always been linked to the struggle against imperialist wars. "We are defending peace," Palmiro Togliatti said at the congress, "not because we are spineless Tolstoyans but because we want to ensure the conditions for the victory of the revolution."⁶

Peace and socialism are indivisible — such is the pressing military-political lesson of the past war, a lesson that is of enormous significance for a correct understanding of the present epoch. Those who went through the war know what peace means for the Soviet people, how dearly they paid for it. Nobody can charge us with cowardice. The whole world admired the courage displayed by the defenders of the Soviet Union during the war. Nor are we afraid of anybody today. The USSR wants peace and peaceful cooperation with other countries not because it is uncertain of its strength but chiefly in order to ensure the Soviet people and the peoples of fraternal socialist countries with the external conditions for carrying out their constructive plans, for building the new society. Precisely for this reason the efforts to diminish the threat of war, curb the arms race and ensure world peace have been and remain, as Leonid Brezhnev said at the 26th congress of the CPSU, "the central direction in the foreign policy of our party and government." At the same time the communists have supported and will always support just wars: wars in defense of socialist gains, national liberation movements, and popular risings against imperialist oppression.

A major lesson of the Second World War is that the Soviet Armed Forces reaffirmed their

liberative mission that springs naturally from the internationalist nature of the Soviet Union, from its ideology and policy. Expansionist ambitions are alien to the Soviet Union: we have no classes, social strata or professional groups interested in war or in preparations for war on the calculation of making profits from it. The USSR does not strive to seize foreign sources of raw materials, expand its frontiers, achieve political supremacy in the world, or change the system in other countries by force of arms. The Soviet Army has never been used for predatory aims. We unsheathed our swords — this is known even by our ill-wishers — only against those who attempted to seize our land, against those who wanted to put the chains of capitalist slavery on the Soviet people and also on other peoples who are fighting for freedom and the new social system.

In the struggle against fascism the USSR relied on its own military and economic might and on the broad solidarity of progressive forces throughout the world, notably the international communist and working-class movement. The communists played an outstanding part in mobilizing the masses in support of the Soviet people.

Nonetheless, regrettably, the Second World War was not averted. One of the reasons for this was the absence of a system of collective security in Europe that the Soviet government had advocated so strongly.

Now the situation is different in many ways. Alongside the socialist community and the communist and workers' parties more and more segments of public opinion representing diverse social and political trends — social-democratic parties, trade unions, pacifist organizations and religious circles — are joining in the active struggle against the threat of war. The nations that have won liberation have become a powerful peace force.

To this day the problem of unity among the anti-war forces, of their understanding that the "question of war," as Georgi Dimitrov said shortly before it broke out, "is not a national but an international question and that international actions are needed" remains on the agenda. A grim lesson of the war is that there must be a coherent system of collective security in Europe and in other regions, that there must be collective resistance by all peace-loving nations to the actions of aggressors.

"Peace can be maintained and consolidated," proclaimed the World Parliament of Peoples for Peace, held last year in Sofia. "No country and no people, no party and no organization can achieve this singlehandedly. Only our joint efforts can cut short the criminal con-

spiracy against peace. There is no other way."

Only a broad, worldwide front can achieve a radical and irreversible turn in international development, prevent the outbreak of another war, and ensure dependable international security.

Four decades separate us from the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War. New generations have appeared since then. The leaders of the nazi Reich responsible for the global tragedy that cost more than 50 million lives got what they deserved. The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg made it plain that aggressors cannot go unpunished, declaring that "the unleashing of a war of aggression is . . . the most heinous international crime."

However, the reactionary imperialist circles, who had created fascism, continue to be the principal aggressive force, the mainspring of the threat of war. The results of the Second World War obviously do not suit them. The breakaway of a number of countries from the capitalist camp, the formation of the socialist world system, the liberation of many peoples from colonial oppression, and the growth of the Soviet Union's international prestige have predicated the intensification of the anti-Soviet bias in the policy of imperialism. The world knows of the massive slander attacks of the aggressive forces of leading capitalist countries against the Soviet Union during the initial years after the war. Today they continue to use their fabrications about a "Soviet threat" to justify their preparations for another war.

The arms race started by these circles is a particularly dangerous threat to peace. The military expenditures of the USA, for example, have reached an annual \$150 billion and continue to grow. A large proportion of this money is used to speed up the development of new types of strategic nuclear weapons. The new weaponry includes the MX mobile intercontinental missile, the Trident-2 submarine-based ballistic missile, and a strategic bomber. Its development is accompanied by proclamations of military doctrines (such as Directive 59 on a "limited" nuclear war) that are fraught with the most terrible consequences for humankind. The USA has foisted on NATO the decision to deploy in Western Europe qualitatively new nuclear missile systems and is once more speaking of its intention to station neutron weapons in that region.

Of course, there is a marked difference between the Germany of the 1930s and the main imperialist power of today: in terms of political traditions, the structure and function of state mechanisms, the system of alliances and so on. But it is quite obvious that many of the methods

used in the USA to mold public opinion and provide the ideological base for its policy generally and its actions on the international scene in particular bear the hallmarks of having been borrowed from the armory of nazi propaganda. Like the fascists who used the bogey of Bolshevism's "aggressiveness" and prepared and started a war on the pretext of fighting the Comintern, the spokesmen of imperialism are today shouting about the need to protect the "free world against the Communist threat." Following in the footsteps of the nazi geopoliticians, who justified Germany's eastward expansion with the contention that it needed "lebensraum," the ruling circles of the USA justify their interventionist actions in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East and the Indian Ocean with the argument that they have to guarantee their "survival." They have proclaimed as the sphere of their "vital interests" entire subcontinents, where they station troops and build bases in total disregard of the will of the peoples concerned.

By charging the Soviet Union with "exporting revolution" and encouraging "international terrorism," Washington's insulting label for the process of national liberation, U.S. imperialism has turned the export of counter-revolution into state policy. This is demonstrated by its participation in the undeclared war against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and by its military aid to the anti-people junta in El Salvador and the terrorist UNITA groups in Angola. Like the nazi government, which regarded international agreements as no more than scraps of paper, the USA is displaying contempt for universally accepted rules and norms of international relations. It unilaterally suspends or indefinitely postpones negotiations on many pressing issues and undermines existing understandings and accords. While charging the Soviet Union with seeking military supremacy, the Pentagon is in fact preparing to create a preponderance in all categories of strategic and conventional armaments. Are not the plans of the imperialist powers to contribute to the growth of the military capability of those who, like the Peking hegemonists, openly declare their implacable hatred for the USSR and lay claim to its territory evidence that the lessons of history are being buried in oblivion?

The situation today is disquieting. Nonetheless, it differs radically in many ways from the situation 40 years ago. Factors making it difficult — and to no little extent — for imperialism to start another world war now operate in international relations. Among the main factors is the fundamental realignment of class,

of social forces on the international scene and the intensification of development trends in favor of socialism. Further, the balance of military strength between socialism and imperialism has changed markedly. The USA has lost not only its monopoly over nuclear weapons but also the privilege to regard itself secure behind the broad expanses of the Atlantic and the Pacific, for it is aware that the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community have highly effective means of defense. In terms of quantity and quality, weapons of mass destruction have reached a level making it impossible to use war as a means of achieving political ends. It is madness to count on victory in a nuclear war. This is understood by sober-minded political leaders.

However, although nuclear war is not fatally inevitable it cannot be considered that such a war breaking out is to be ruled out. That is why there was such a wide response throughout the world to the new foreign policy initiatives advanced by the 26th congress of the CPSU. People of good will saw further evidence that the principles of the foreign policy of peace elaborated by Vladimir Lenin, founder of the Soviet state, continue to be implemented consistently and constructively in the present situation, in which the problem of preventing war has become central for all humanity.

The Great Patriotic War taught the people much. But there is a constant need to draw on the experience of that war. Imperialism's forces of aggression, who are inflaming the international situation and creating new flashpoints, should bear in mind that history does not forgive those who impinge on its truth and ignore its lessons. More, they should remember that a dependable barrier stands today for those who aspire to follow the road of a world war for the third time. This barrier consists of the combined political, economic and military might of the socialist-community countries, the international working class, its political vanguard — the communist and workers' parties — and the national liberation movement. No latter-day claimants to world supremacy can ignore their will to live in peace.

This is what I think, but I am sure that these are also the thoughts of the other veterans of the Great Patriotic War. Though their hair has turned to silver they are devoting their hearts and minds to peace with the energy of their war-time youth.

1. For instance, in March 1939 the Soviet Union proposed an immediate conference with the participation of Britain, France, Turkey, Poland and Romania, the nations

most interested in preventing aggression. On April 17, 1939 the Soviet Union offered to sign a tripartite treaty with Britain and France on mutual assistance in the event of aggression.

2. In many countries it was shown under the title "The Unknown War."

3. The fascist invaders completely or partially destroyed and burned down 1,710 Soviet towns and more than 70,000 villages and hamlets, making nearly 25 million people homeless. They razed 31,850 industrial enterprises that employed almost 4 million workers, and blew up 65,000 kilometers of railway track. They demolished 40,000 hospitals and other medical institutions, 84,000

schools, technical colleges, institutions of higher learning and research institutes, and ruined and sacked 98,000 collective farms, 1,876 state farms, and 2,890 machine-and-tractor stations. The Soviet Union's national wealth was reduced by 30 per cent.

4. L.I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972, Vol. 2, p. 24.

5. *Resolutions of the 7th World Congress of the Communist International*, Moscow, 1935, p. 33 (in Russian).

6. Ercole, *The Tasks of the Communist International in the Face of the Imperialist Preparations for Another World War. Report and Closing Speech*, Moscow, 1935, p. 53 (Russian translation).

Ways of fighting the growing aggressiveness of imperialism

Horst Schmitt

Chairman, Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin

Numerous facts in international affairs now clearly testify to a growth of aggressive tendencies in the foreign policy of the imperialist forces, the United States in the first place. Imperialism is engaged in all-round material preparation for war, carrying on the arms drive on an unprecedented scale, and building up its military strength quantitatively and qualitatively. Its intervention in the affairs of sovereign countries is being extended, special forces are being set up for armed interventions, the imperialist powers' military presence on the seas is being strengthened, and old bases and springboards are being bolstered and new ones set up.

Our party's document, *The Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin and the Tasks of the 1980s*,* published in the run-up to its sixth congress, says that the international situation in the forthcoming decade will be determined by the struggle between two trends: the peoples' urge for peace and progress, and the attempts by imperialist reaction to contain mankind's advance. The aggressive imperialist circles, the document says, "have gone over to a counter-offensive at the start of the 1980s and have opted for confrontation."

In their efforts to cover up the true causes of the growing international tension and to ensure an ideological screen for the expansionist strategy of imperialism, bourgeois propaganda has tried to blame the Soviet Union for the complication of the situation in the world. But these inventions have been exploded by life.

The 26th congress of the CPSU once again demonstrated the peaceable substance of the

foreign policy of socialism. The new constructive Soviet proposals aimed to improve the international climate have highlighted those who pose the threat of war and have shown up the danger of their adventurist line.

It would be wrong to seek the roots of this aggressiveness in short-term or transient factors, or in any twists and turns of current political life in the imperialist countries. The causes lie much deeper: they will be found in the very foundations of their foreign policy, in its class basis. It is not a matter of ill-will or bellicose attitudes on the part of individual statesmen, but of the social substance of the forces which dictate the policy of the capitalist powers, of the most important imperatives which determine their strategy. The whole diversity of these imperatives — economic, political and ideological — constitutes the foundation on which the mounting aggressiveness of the imperialists rests.

The sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism, the deepening of all its contradictions and the narrowing down of the sphere of exploitation as a result of the falling away of more countries from the world capitalist system and the collapse of colonialism induce the imperialist forces to seek a way out of the growing difficulties through militarization of the economy and external expansion. "The core of the aggressive policy of imperialism is the drive to use all means to weaken the positions of socialism, suppress the national-liberation movement, hamstringing the struggle of the working people in the capitalist countries and halt the irreversible decline of capitalism".*

*International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969. Prague, 1969, p. 12.

*Sonderdruck Die Wahrheit, January 5, 1981.

Over the past few years, reactionary imperialist circles were especially alarmed by the fact that the incipient relaxation of international tensions in the 1970s and the deepening of détente create favorable prerequisites for the strengthening of socialism and the growth of its influence, and for successes in the peoples' struggle for national liberation and social emancipation. In their efforts to stem these developments, the most reactionary forces of the imperialist powers, the United States in the first place, try to orient their foreign policy in such a way as to complicate the international situation, wipe out détente and exacerbate the confrontation between the states of the two systems in the world arena.

The aggressive character of imperialism's foreign policy springs from the very nature of its economic and social relations and the interests of the ruling classes. Lenin emphasized that "imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom" (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 22, p. 297).

Although in our day the sphere in which the laws of imperialism operate has been markedly narrowed down, the urge of finance capital and the monopolies to domination has far from weakened. On the contrary, the reactionary forces have been fiercely trying to contain and reverse the course of historical changes, to preserve and stabilize the system of oppression and exploitation of the peoples.

They have made use of the patent imperialist foreign policy methods, with utmost reliance on military pressure as the crucial instrument for realizing their goals. But the build-up of the military potential and the unbridled arms race result from a combination of external and internal factors which spring from the nature of capitalist production and the specific features of its development at the present stage.

As the economic outlook worsens, and the crisis which has gripped the capitalist economy deepens, an influential section of the ruling circles of the imperialist powers comes to regard military expenditures as the regulating instrument and stimulator of production activity, as a means for creating a large arms market to take up the slack in capital that the civilian industries cannot accommodate. Former U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown told the Senate Budget Commission in February of last year that military appropriations had a beneficial effect on the economy because additional spending on weapons allegedly helped to increase production in the capital-intensive and high-technology industries. He is echoed by the present chief of the Pentagon

Caspar Weinberger, who has announced the intention of the new administration to increase the military budget to monstrous proportions: \$250 billion by 1984.

The growth of military outlays will evidently not save the economy of the capitalist countries from recessions or upheavals. On the contrary, the militarization of the economy carries many destructive consequences in its train. But what is also certain is that an influential part of the ruling class linked with the arms business and representing the military-industrial complex obtains huge advantages from the material preparations for war.

A key feature of the imperialist countries' socio-economic development over the past few decades is that the military-industrial complex has a much bigger role to play in economic life and exerts a much greater influence on the domestic and foreign policy of these states. A number of factors have helped to strengthen the positions and bring to the fore the biggest monopolies involved in the arms business. These corporations have essential advantages in the competition against other monopoly groups, and this is highly important in view of the crisis upheavals and difficulties faced by the capitalist economy as a whole. The arms business does not suffer from periodical recessions, because it has profitable stable government contracts backed up by appropriations from the state budget. Let us recall that U.S. direct military outlays come to one-third of the budget, and together with the concealed and camouflaged spending, to an even greater share. Some specialists estimate that they amount to 10 per cent of the gross national product.

The military-industrial complex has increased its role because the militarization of the economy helps to intensify the working people's exploitation, so, in effect, creating an additional mechanism for pumping money out of their pockets into the coffers of the monopolies. Militarization helps the monopolies to deepen and expand the sphere of exploitation, so extracting surplus value not only from the labor-power directly employed in arms manufacture, but also levying tribute on the whole nation in favor of the arms business.

The numerous advantages of the arms corporations promote the growth of their power and enhance their role in the economic and political system of imperialism, and their growing influence on every aspect of development in the capitalist society. The alliance of the major monopolies and the militarists exerts a growing influence on the activity of state agencies, and

the policy of the parliaments and governments of the leading capitalist states.

The factors which determine the aggressiveness of the foreign policy of imperialism do not, of course, boil down to the immediate material benefits derived by the arms manufacturers and their allied socio-political circles. The arms race itself crucially springs not only from the requirements of the arms business but also from the political goals which the strategists of imperialism set themselves. *They regard military strength above all as the key instrument of foreign policy, as the crucial "argument" in the struggle against socialism and the national-liberation movement.*

The history of international relations since the October Revolution has been, above all, a history of struggle by the most reactionary and aggressive imperialist forces against the USSR, which was the first to pave the way for the establishment of a new and exploitation-free society, and which has become the bulwark of all the progressive, liberation and revolutionary movements. Characterizing the situation in the world which took shape after the October Revolution, Lenin emphasized that "reciprocal relations between peoples and the world political system as a whole are determined by the struggle waged by a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world. The communist parties, in civilized and backward countries alike, can pose and solve political problems correctly only if they make this postulate their starting point" (Coll. Works, Vol. 31, p. 241).

The leaders of the capitalist world have repeatedly voiced their regret at having failed to strangle the new system in its cradle. They used every means to do so: armed intervention, blockade and cordons sanitaires. The new system stood its crucial test in the struggle against fascism, that product of the most bellicose and chauvinistic forces of monopoly capital.

After the Second World War, the imperialist circles, alarmed over the changed international balance of forces as a result of the rout of fascism and the falling away of a number of countries from the capitalist system, responded to the socio-political changes by cobbling together aggressive blocs, NATO in the first place, by engaging in atomic blackmail, and by trying to contain the revolutionary liberation process and to limit the growing influence of socialism. The cold war, direct armed action, of which the largest was the aggression in Viet-

nam, reflected these attempts to reverse the course of world development and to halt the weakening of the positions of imperialism.

For a long time, the leaders of the capitalist world would not even hear of peaceful co-existence between states with different economic systems, for which the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries invariably called. Conducting their "brink of war" policy, the most bellicose strategists of imperialism were prepared to go beyond that point on many occasions.

They pinned great hopes on scientific and technological progress, which they expected to give them a decisive weapon for fighting socialism, so as to eliminate, by force of arms, the chief threat posed by the very existence of the new social system. It is not accidental that the earliest advances in the scientific and technological revolution, embodied in nuclear energy, were used by imperialism for military purposes. Nuclear weapons, with their unequalled devastating force, became the crucial factor in the military-strategic plans and calculations of imperialism.

Although the U.S. government signed SALT-I and the principles of relations with the USSR in 1972, so officially recognizing that attempts to obtain unilateral advantages were inadmissible, and that there was a need to abide by the principle of equality, the most bellicose circles of the United States refused to reconcile themselves with the equilibrium in strategic weapons and to abandon their hopes of military superiority. The drive for superiority became the motive force behind the military preparations mounted by the United States and NATO in the recent period. That is above all the root of the intense arms race, and the imperialist powers' astronomical spending for military purposes.

The motivation behind the NATO countries' feverish militaristic activity is not "re-establishment of equilibrium," not a "response to a challenge," as bourgeois propagandists would have us believe, but attempts to attain military preponderance in breach of existing treaties and agreements, so as to dictate their will. One plank in last year's electoral platform of the Republican Party in the United States was: Military superiority, the main goal of U.S. policy with respect to the Soviet Union.

The socio-political meaning of this line is obvious: the imperialist leaders seek to give a military response to the consolidation of the international positions of socialism and the growth of its prestige.

Détente has shown very well that a relaxation of tensions, an atmosphere of good-neigh-

borhood and cooperation among nations create favorable prerequisites for the development and strengthening of socialism and the fulfillment of the creative tasks facing the socialist countries. These developments have alarmed the reactionary circles, which are troubled by the growing attractive power of socialism and its international influence. The policy of undermining détente, which they have tried to conduct in the recent period, springs, in particular, from a deliberate intention to complicate the economic, social and cultural construction in the socialist countries and to make it difficult for them to attain their goals. Of no small importance also are hopes of hampering the growth of the socialist economy by imposing on these countries an arms race carrying a greater burden of defense spending.

Serious observers in the capitalist countries say that such plans have no prospects before them, and that they tend to boomerang on the NATO countries. But, blinded by their anti-Sovietism, and hatred for the socialist system, the reactionary quarters keep stubbornly plodding along this line.

Current developments fully bear out Lenin's analysis of the sources and functions of militarism, which is engendered by the capitalist system: "In both its forms it is the 'vital expression' of capitalism — as a military force used by the capitalist states in their external conflicts . . . and as a weapon in the hands of the ruling classes for suppressing every kind of movement, economic and political, of the proletariat" (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 192).

The aggressive foreign policy line and the attendant militarization of socio-political life in the capitalist countries create favorable conditions for an offensive by reaction and help to limit the influence of the progressive and democratic forces and to suppress the working people's struggle. The right-wingers' assumption is that in an atmosphere of war hysteria it will be easier for them to put down their political opponents and to bolster their own positions. The anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda campaigns help to divert the attention of the masses from the acute and vital problems facing them, and to dampen the rising tide of discontent over the exploiter classes' socio-economic policy.

With the capitalist world in the throes of its present difficulties, the reference to some external threat helps to cover up the true causes of these difficulties and provides a convenient pretext for tightening the screws in various spheres of economic and social life. The myths about "Soviet expansion," a "Soviet threat," "the hand of Moscow," and so on, which con-

stitute the main component of present-day militaristic propaganda, help to camouflage the true sources of the social conflicts and contradictions in the capitalist world and to distort the factors which induce the masses to carry on revolutionary-liberation struggles. These myths pave the way for imperialist intervention in the affairs of nations in any continent, and for the pursuit of a global expansionist, aggressive policy.

In West Berlin, the bourgeois mass media and some political leaders, above all those in the CDU, seek to poison the political atmosphere by mounting a slanderous anti-communist propaganda campaign on an unprecedented scale. This well-orchestrated and tricky campaign has a two-fold purpose: first, gradually to prepare people ideologically for military gambles, and second, as far as possible to prevent the working people from understanding their political, democratic and social interests and from carrying on a struggle for these interests.

There is yet another important aspect to the aggressive policy of the imperialist forces above all those of the United States. By stepping up international tension, they seek to resolve inter-imperialist contradictions on the basis of bellicose anti-Sovietism and a return to the cold war. Here, the United States expects to bolster its shaken positions in relations with other capitalist powers, to weaken its rivals and to amend its business at their expense.

For instance, economic cooperation with the socialist states is of much greater significance for the West European countries than it is for the United States. If détente were undermined and business ties folded up, this would evidently inflict tangible harm on the economy of the West European countries, especially in view of the acute market problems, and would worsen the positions of the rivals of the United States.

By getting its allies to carry an additional burden in the arms race, the United States seeks to realize its self-seeking purposes: on the one hand, there is an enlargement of the market for U.S. weapons, which go mainly into NATO arsenals, and on the other, the competitiveness of some civilian industries in the partner-countries is undermined as sizable financial resources are diverted for military purposes.

On a broader plane, growing tensions help the United States to meddle more actively into affairs of its allies and to wield additional instruments for exerting an influence on every aspect of their life. It is quite obvious, for instance, that the deployment of new U.S. missiles in Europe threatens to bring about a seri-

ous worsening of the situation on the European continent, while converting the West European countries into hostages of the United States, giving the Washington strategists a means for putting powerful pressure on the policy of all the members of the Atlantic bloc.

These U.S. plans pose a tremendous danger to the peoples of Europe and jeopardize their future. This also applies to West Berlin, because it is perfectly obvious that the planned deployment of new nuclear-missile systems in Western Europe poses a threat to its existence. After all, it is situated on the territory of the GDR and would be a target of this inhuman weapon which is designed, as everyone knows, for use against the socialist countries.

One could say generally that there is hardly any other city whose development and future depend to such an extent on peace and security in Europe. Any sharpening of the international situation, any worsening of the situation in Europe creates serious problems and difficulties for it. Its inhabitants have not forgotten the cold war period, when imperialism converted West Berlin into a "front-line city." The four-power agreement of September 3, 1971, gave the city considerable advantages, and eased and improved its living conditions. That is why, the illegitimate involvement of West Berlin in the financing of FRG and NATO expenditures on the arms race has met with growing resistance from broad sections of the population, which refuses thoughtlessly to put at risk everything that has been achieved in the period of détente. That is a stand which is also vigorously supported by our party. We resolutely oppose Western Europe's involvement in any military ventures whatsoever, we oppose the plans of U.S. imperialism to deploy new nuclear missile systems and neutron weapons on its territory. A broad movement in protest against these plans has emerged in West Berlin, and it involves Communists, Social Democrats, Christians, Liberals and non-party people. Our party believes that an important task before it in this context is a struggle for scrupulous observance of the four-power agreement and for the conduct of West Berlin's policy in the spirit of developing normal good-neighbor relations with the socialist GDR. We want our city to make a contribution to the struggle for peace, détente and disarmament in Europe.

Among the key factors behind the growing aggressive tendencies in the policy of imperialism are the changes under way in the zone of the national-liberation movement. International reaction is deeply perturbed by the growing role of the less developed countries in world affairs, by the liberation of many of them

from the fetters of foreign domination, by the formation of progressive regimes with an anti-imperialist stand, all the processes which have been especially intensified in the recent period.

The imperialist circles are fearful of losing the privileges they still enjoy in many regions of the globe. Although the colonial system has disintegrated, imperialism continues to maintain important positions in countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and to plunder their peoples. The open occupation and colonial plunder have given way to more refined forms of neocolonial domination. But as in the past, the ruling classes of the imperialist powers regard the less developed countries above all as an appendage to their economy ensuring a supply of mineral resources and additional profits through the exploitation of cheap manpower. The financial enslavement of the dependent states through the export of capital, which Lenin defined as one of the most essential economic pillars of imperialism, has now assumed tremendous proportions. Today, nearly 70 per cent of the less developed countries' budget outlays go to cover their indebtedness to the imperialist powers, which now comes to around \$400 billion. From 1973 to 1979 alone, their peoples were robbed of more than \$80 billion as a result of the unequal terms of trade and exploitation by the transnational monopolies.

The imperialist powers' urge to entrench and expand their positions in the liberated world inevitably leads to expansionism in their foreign policy. The tendency to seize sources of raw materials, markets and spheres of capital investment, which is organic to imperialism, is ever more pronounced in our day and tends to assume extremely acute and aggressive forms.

The imperialist circles have declared virtually the whole globe a sphere of their vital interests, and brazenly meddle in the internal affairs of sovereign states, seeking to increase their presence in every part of the world and to fetter vast territories with a network of bases and strongpoints. Plans to extend the ambit of the aggressive NATO bloc to new regions are being worked out at its headquarters.

Of course, in our day it is not so simple to venture upon military gambles, ignoring world public opinion, openly suppressing the will of the peoples and risking being firmly rebuffed by the independent countries and their allies. That is why imperialism, without abandoning its direct military acts, increasingly resorts to covert forms of aggression. But such methods have the same purpose as direct armed intervention. Every means is used to "export counter-revolution" and to install and maintain

regimes which best safeguard imperialist interests.

Those are the reasons for which imperialism gives aid to the most reactionary dictatorships, the most blood-stained anti-people juntas and cliques, and the most savage tyrannies. The shah in Iran, the Black Colonels in Greece, Salazar in Portugal, and Somoza in Nicaragua — all were esteemed clients of the United States. Today the United States is trying hard to prop up "bastions of democracy" like South Korea and Pakistan, South Africa and Chile, Paraguay and El Salvador, or a "seat of peace" like Israel. These are the countries to which it has been sending financial, economic and military aid, and expanding supplies of weapons. Throughout the 1970s, the United States increased its arms exports 13-fold, to \$15 billion a year.

The arms deliveries epitomize the two-fold character of the motivations behind the militaristic policy of imperialism: on the one hand, an expansion of the market for highly profitable products, and on the other, implementation of reactionary socio-political tasks, and suppression of revolutionary-liberation movements and the peoples' struggle for social progress. The imperialist strategists hope that the supply of weapons to the forces of local reaction will help the latter to preserve the neocolonialist order and to safeguard and consolidate imperialist positions.

Consequently, although the lines and forms of imperialist expansion today are highly diverse, they are all at root informed by one class motive: the arms race, the dispatch of naval flotillas to distant shores, the deployment of military bases on the territory of other countries and close to the borders of other countries, the formation of rapid deployment forces, and subversive activities by intelligence and espionage outfits, all of this militaristic activity springs from the urge for profit and domination on the part of narrow financial and industrial groups, from the interests of monopoly capital.

This policy which engenders international tension, which is fraught with armed conflicts and which can cause a global catastrophe, confronts the world with an obvious and grave danger. There is still much meaning in these words of Lenin's: "'World domination' is, to put it briefly, the substance of imperialist policy, of which imperialist war is the continuation" (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 23, p. 35.).

The aggressive nature of imperialism, which produces the dangers of wars, has not changed, but that does not mean that in the present-day conditions it is impossible to check aggression and prevent a fatal outcome. The international

situation today is influenced by a series of powerful factors hampering expansionist plans and opening up the prospects for the establishment of peace among nations.

First of all, the changed balance of forces in favor of democracy and socialism has sharply narrowed down the potentialities of the reactionary imperialist circles in the sphere of world politics. Willy-nilly, they have to reckon with the possible fatal consequences of aggression. The growing economic and defense might of the socialist countries, that of the Soviet Union in the first place, keeps the militarists in check.

Present-day international relations are increasingly influenced by the peoples of the less developed countries, who have an objective stake in peace for the solution of their socio-economic problems. Even in the imperialist countries, large segments of public opinion, the working people in the first place, resist the line of military confrontation. The influence of this struggle undoubtedly has an effect on the policy of many bourgeois parliaments and governments. There is no doubt that among the ruling classes of the capitalist countries there are groups connected mainly with the civilian industries, which do not benefit from a worsening of the international climate, and which seek to improve relations with the socialist states and develop trade and other business ties. These circles played an important role in the attainment of the positive results of détente and the conclusion of important international agreements in the 1960s and 1970s which lead to peace and the extension of international cooperation. Tremendous importance, for instance, was attached to the signing of the four-power agreement on West Berlin, the treaties between The FRG and the socialist countries, which helped to improve the situation in Europe, and to advance from confrontation to détente. Prerequisites were, in particular, created for making our city — long a hotbed of tension in international relations and a source of crises exacerbating the situation on the European continent — a constructive element of peace. Many other treaties concluded between socialist and capitalist countries over the past decade laid the foundation of détente.

But the fruits of détente are now being jeopardized. The prospects for the development of international life largely depend on the resistance which will be put up to the dangerous line of imperialism, and on the cohesion and combat capability of all the peace forces. The communist and workers' parties have a primary role to play in the struggle for success in this endeavor. We fully share Leonid Brezhnev's

idea which he expressed at the 26th congress of the CPSU: "The great unifying principle, a powerful factor furthering cohesion and enhancing the prestige of the world communist movement, is the communists' unremitting struggle for peace, against imperialism's aggressive policy, and the arms race that carries with it the danger of a nuclear disaster."

Our party wants to see a continuation of détente, and the development of peaceful and good-neighbor relations among the peoples of Europe. The document *The Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin and the Tasks of the 1980s* sets forth our principled position as follows: "The SUPWB is a consistent anti-imperialist force and a part of the great movement for transformation and renewal in the spirit of peace, democracy and socialism. In view of the existing situation, the SUPWB believes that the struggle to preserve and strengthen peace is the

central task of its policy for the 1980s. It proceeds from the assumption that efforts to ensure peace have now become, more than ever before, a vital issue for the whole of mankind and a prerequisite for social progress . . . That is why the SUPWB unconditionally supports by its actions the struggle of the peace forces throughout the world to ensure political détente by supplementing it with measures of military détente."*

The growth of expansionist, bellicose tendencies in the foreign policy of imperialism poses a threat to peace and international security. That is why the way to rebuff the policy of aggression and war, and to protect the peoples' vital interests is to enlarge the ranks of the anti-war movement, to make it more vigorous, and to mobilize and unite all the forces of peace.

*Sonderdruck *Die Wahrheit*, January 5, 1981.

Indissoluble unity with the people

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Chairman of the Revolutionary Council and
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THE MIDDLE EAST: REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES

The Saur (April) Revolution is three years old. A very short period has passed since the turning point in Afghanistan's destiny. Once one of the world's most backward countries (ranking 127th in education, and 119th in public health), it has started its hard ascent to the heights of social and economic progress. This way was paved for it above all by the Great October Revolution in Russia. In our day, the face of the globe is being changed by the heroic achievements of dozens of peoples, and among them now is our own people, led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

What do these three years of revolution mean? Here a special yardstick has to be used. After all, this is just the start of a fundamental turn in social development, when each victory is achieved at the cost of immense effort, involving the break-up of conservative relations and institutes, and a gradual and circumspect advance of the population to a future, progressive order. For us this has been a period of accumulation of totally new experience, of trial and error, and frequently fairly big zigzags in the country's development caused both by ob-

jective circumstances and subjective human will. The party has gone through the crucible of the hardest trials. Articles published on the pages of this journal have already described the bitter days under the traitor Amin, and the diverse distortions in putting through the first-phase transformations.* After all these trials, there set in a new stage of the revolution, signifying the victory of the healthy forces within the PDPA over a handful of traitors who had pinned hopes for their ambitious schemes on the imperialist forces. This stage saved the revolution which could have foundered on the traitorous acts of the Amin clique and under the blows of mercenary bands infiltrated from abroad and the local counter-revolution. The Soviet Union's timely fraternal assistance helped us to avert this terrible danger and to keep Afghanistan in the camp of the progressive states.

The Saur Revolution has stood its ground — such is, perhaps, one of the crucial results of the three-year period. This has been achieved at a high price. Literally a month after the historic Saur 7, 1357 (April 27, 1978), the first base of

*See Babrak Karmal's interview in No. 4, 1980, of *WMR*, and Sultan Ali Keshtmand's article in No. 9, 1980. — Ed.

aggression against democratic Afghanistan was set up on the territory of Pakistan, and soon there were dozens of such bases. We have experienced at first hand the brutality of the counter-revolutionaries' class terrorism, who joined Amin in wiping out the PDPA activists. The same lot was in store for the whole party.

From the very outset, the new Afghanistan was confronted by international reaction with a ruthless war that had far-reaching aims. The plan was either to wipe Afghanistan off the face of the earth altogether, or to subordinate it to various countries. Thus, our country's eastern and southern territories, which are inhabited mainly by the Pashtoons, were to have gone to Pakistan, and the northern territories, to China, while a terroristic government headed by Amin or some other power-thirsty careerist, directly or indirectly subordinate to the CIA, was to have been set up in Kabul itself. But we succeeded in frustrating the sinister plot and continuing our advance along the way we had chosen in the most difficult conditions of ceaseless aggression.

Having critically comprehended the lessons of the first stage, the party formulated a long-term realistic program which, as we shall see, is being purposefully implemented. The goals of the struggle for a new society, and the way leading to their realization — national-democratic transformations — were determined even before the historic turning point in the revolution. The adopted propositions were then concretized in the *Basic Lines of the Revolutionary Duties of the Government of the DRA*. But what remained open was the question of the pace and methods to be used in putting through the proclaimed reforms, and in establishing reliable and long-term ties with all the patriotic classes and strata. These problems should have been solved through creative quest, but this was not done at the time because of the voluntarism of the Amin clique, which stamped out any creative thinking.

The new stage marked a resolute break with subjectivism and voluntaristic distortions. Having re-established legality and democratic norms, and released from prison thousands of people — PDPA members, tribal elders, businessmen and clergy — the progressive power clearly defined the principles of relations with the various classes, and gave a full-scale formulation of its attitude to the nationalities problem and to religion. A major event was the publication, as a provisional constitution, of the *Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan*. The DRA is defined as an independent democratic republic of workers, peasants, handicraftsmen,

nomads, intellectuals and other democratic and patriotic elements of all nationalities and ethnic groups. The programmatic propositions of the party and the state were elaborated in the theses of the PDPA CC, and in the decisions of party plenary meetings. These documents give us a concrete approach to putting through reforms and are a guide to action for the party activists and all the working people engaged in various sectors of struggle and work.

The revolutionaries have now demonstrated that theirs is a truly scientific program which takes account of the specific features of the historical past and the traditions of their ancestors. Even after the trials that fell to the lot of the fighters for the new society, this program can win for the revolution millions of workers and peasants, the patriotic intelligentsia, the religious circles and the nationalities and tribes inhabiting Afghanistan.

In the vanguard of the working people is the young working class, whose struggle helped to bring on the overthrow of the monarchy and then of the Daoud dictatorship. The workers voiced their support for the changes characterizing the new stage of the revolution. That is quite natural. Our party takes the stand of the working class and defends its interests. The new labor legislation guarantees working conditions in human dignity: rest-days, holidays, the right to a pension, and a say in the management of production. A great deal is being done to enhance the social role of the working people and to improve their material well-being. With the start of the new Afghan year (March 21), wages in the state sector have been increased by 26.6 per cent, and those of low-paid workers by 40-50 per cent. The government believes that it is necessary — with the consent of the owners — to increase wages at private enterprises as well. The first congress of trade unions brought about a sharp invigoration of the activity among the working people, of whom 160,000 are now unionized.

The progressive power has consolidated its ties with the peasantry. The revolution demonstrated its concern for the lot of the peasants by its very first decrees: on the abolition of debts to usurers, and the distribution of lands among the landless and land-hungry peasants. But because of mistakes, Amin's traitorous acts and downright sabotage by reaction, it proved to be impossible to implement the decrees on the projected scale. On paper, nearly 300,000 families were declared to have received land in the course of the agrarian reform, but most of them never actually made use of their rights either because of the mistrust of the authorities, especially under Amin's government, or out of

fear of the landowners. The goal now is gradually to complete the agrarian transformations, while simultaneously putting through an extensive program for modernizing agriculture on the basis of science and technology. The life of the countryside is to be renewed through the utmost development of the cooperation movement. The state has made available to the cooperatives over 1 billion Afghanis* and raised the purchasing prices for the peasants' produce. Altogether, 183,000 families are involved in this movement.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of the peasants remain unorganized, and are still to join cooperatives. At the recent first congress of agricultural cooperatives the task was set to extend their network. Handicraft cooperatives are also to be extensively developed. The PDPA believes that under the leadership of the state and in cooperation with it, the organized peasant movement will be able to solve the most complicated problems of economic and social development in the villages.

Relations with the national intelligentsia have also become closer. The cadre of revolutionary intelligentsia have done special services to the revolution and have done a great deal for its victory. The forward-looking intelligentsia took a direct part in overthrowing the monarchy and then the corrupt Daoud regime. The people's action was brought on by deprivation and poverty. Our party, a true champion of the working people's interests, gave a lead to the progressive national-democratic movement.

Now there is a broader question of cooperation between the progressive power and all honest patriots who are prepared to help their country with their knowledge and professional skills. For this the new phase of the revolutionary process has opened up favorable conditions, which have helped to involve in creative activity cadre of specialists working in production, education and medical services. Creative unions of writers, artists and journalists have been set up in the country bringing together all those who are prepared to dedicate their talents to the revolution.

The extension of the social basis of the regime is proceeding in the specific conditions of a backward country with a weak working class, with most of the population consisting of peasants, and with a large number of nomads. Tribal traditions still prevail in many parts of our multinational state. The Moslem clergy is an influential group in society. The party takes account of all these factors in its internal policy.

Our assumption is that the religious circles, like other social forces, want to see Afghanistan united and strong, and that a sizable section of the clergy takes a patriotic stand. Whereas the Amin clique regarded the Moslem clergy as avowed enemies and encroached on the religious rights of practising Moslems, at the new stage we have done a great deal to re-establish the once-bedevelled relations between the revolutionary power and the religious leaders. The government has demonstrated its respect for Islam. Recognizing its tremendous and important role, like the role of the patriotic clergy and religious scholars in social life, the DRA leadership has set up a Department for the Affairs of Islam, which is under the Prime Minister. The establishment of the supreme religious council of scholars and religious leaders will help the state to take into account better their interests and solve the problems connected with the protection of holy places, the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajja), etc.

These efforts have yielded an effect, and this was strikingly demonstrated by the first conference of ulemas and mullahs to take place in the history of Afghanistan. Its resolution said that the DRA government has devoted tremendous attention to the development and flourishing of the country, and to improving the living conditions of the Afghan people, and that the religious right of believers are being truly respected.

The peoples and tribes inhabiting Afghanistan have voiced their solidarity with the government's course in domestic affairs and in the international arena. Here, by his intervention, which was an affront to our national traditions and customs, the traitor Amin sowed the poisonous seeds of mistrust for the revolutionary power. The freedom-loving Pash-tooni tribes and other nationalities, who took pride in their anti-colonial past, naturally resisted and rose up against this violence. The situation has now undergone a radical change. Here is, for instance, the statement issued by representatives of various tribes from the mountainous province of Paktia, who met the head of government in Kabul in early January of this year: "With the victory of the new stage the policy of meeting and holding popular jirgahs, which are part of the appropriate traditions of our people, was adopted. The imprisoned have been released, the elders enjoy respect, and the rifle and the gun have given way to negotiations."

There are real facts to back up this eloquent statement. Having eradicated Amin's lawlessness, we took the line of a frank and cordial dialogue with the most respected representatives of the tribes and nationalities. Meetings

*43.5 afghanis = U.S. \$1.00. — Ed.

with their authoritative delegations are regularly held at the highest level and in the localities. The key questions of the country's present and future are discussed in an atmosphere of profound mutual respect. At the end of the past and the first half of the present year (1980-1981), state leaders have exchanged views with a large number of such delegations, which on behalf of their tribes and nationalities voiced support for the DRA government and their readiness to defend the country against external aggression. A firm stand on the side of the government is also now being taken by those of them who, because of the Amin clique's terrorism, recently displayed hostility to it, like the Nooristanis, who live in the south of the Badakhshan Province and the provinces of Laghman and Kunar. We gave a high appreciation of their voluntary decision to stand up in defense of the Saur Revolution, and of Afghanistan's independence, territorial integrity and national sovereignty. At a meeting with representatives of that people, we emphasized that that people can solve its own problems in Nooristan by convening jirgahs, the traditional assemblies. Such assemblies have been held in many of the tribal regions, and their participants voiced their confidence in the government and declared that the government's enemies were their own.

Businessmen ever more frequently now take a patriotic attitude to the government. With the change of power in the spring of 1978, many businessmen saw the PDPA's proclaimed economic policy as opening up broader opportunities for participation in economic activity. But it was only with the downfall of the Amin regime and the country's entry upon the present phase that real conditions for such participation were created. In the event, an effort had to be made to do away with the effects of the mistrust in the private sector, which responded to the repression by cutting back production by 26 per cent (in the state sector the drop came to only 4.5 per cent).

We now have an economic consultative council consisting of four state ministers and representatives of the private industrial sector, national traders and owners of capital. The steadily developing process of normalization of the political situation opens up fresh potentialities for enterprise and makes real cooperation between the state and the private businessmen for the solution of various economic and social problems. The state is prepared to help them to set up industrial and commercial enterprises, notably, to help decide on where to invest and how to market the finished product.

While giving encouragement to business circles, the revolutionary power intends to pursue a policy that would help to avoid the danger of masses of capital being concentrated in the hands of a few. We are prepared to cooperate above all with those who do not contrast entrepreneurial interests and patriotic duty. And this duty dictates that everyone should do what he can to promote the country's economic progress and to turn it into a strong and flourishing state.

We now have a totally different atmosphere in the country, although it entered upon the new stage only 18 months ago. The party and state leadership has succeeded in restoring the faith of the masses in the ideals proclaimed three years ago, and in securing their support. The authority of the progressive power has been enhanced. The party and the government's direct dialogue with the people and with various patriotic groups has yielded fruit: this is seen above all in the growing urge for cooperation in effecting democratic and anti-imperialist tasks. People want to serve the revolution freely and display a sincere urge to defend it. Units to fight the gangs of mercenaries are being formed from among PDPA members, workers, peasants and young people. The militia units set up by the tribes help to guard the state borders. The government has responded to a call issued by a number of tribes to make available arms to fight the enemies of the revolution. Thousands of those who were forced to leave the country because of Amin's repressions are returning home.

The party's campaign to mobilize the people in order to beat back the enemy attacks and sorties has produced a real effect. The biggest bands have been routed, and the government's steps to strengthen the country's defense capability are a stern warning to the external and internal forces who have not abandoned their hopes of re-establishing the old order by means of armed force. Special importance is attached to the recently enacted law on universal military service.

The working classes have responded most ardently to the great effort being put in by the PDPA to normalize the situation and to establish democratic practices and norms. This is also expressed in a growth of the party's ranks. Workers, peasants, soldiers and officers are joining the PDPA. The Central Committee regards admission to the party as a most important aspect of the activity aimed to enhance its influence in the masses and to deepen its ties with the people.

We are aware that these achievements could have been much greater but for the systematic

subversive activity to which the country is being subjected from outside. But the enemies have failed to achieve the main thing: to destroy the alliance between the party, the government and the people, to separate them from each other, so as to put paid to the revolution. Indeed, throughout its new stage developments have run in the very opposite direction. Between the progressive power and the national, patriotic forces, relations have either been re-established or arranged anew which are marked by a growing spirit of trust, equality and fraternal cooperation. Fresh evidence of this came from the representative conference of national and patriotic forces which assembled in Kabul at the end of 1980. It was attended by members of the PDPA, workers, peasants, intellectuals, honest religious leaders and representatives of the peoples, ethnic groups and tribes from all over Afghanistan.

The conference adopted the historic decision of calling in the near future a Constituent Congress of the National Fatherland Front. It is to include all social and political organizations, patriotic and democratic strata and classes, and representatives of the peoples and tribes inhabiting the country. Practical preparations for the congress have already begun. The establishment of the Front will mark a major step toward national consolidation and the strengthening of unity, a necessary condition for fulfilling tasks of the national-democratic revolution.

The PDPA's direction of society is the guarantee of successful advance along the chosen way. Long before the historic Saur, the party proposed the idea of uniting the national and patriotic forces, and when the revolution took place and the objective conditions for this matured, we actually put on the agenda the question of uniting all patriots in a broad fatherland front. The party regards it as the best form for organizing the masses and their involvement in the construction of a new Afghanistan, free from oppression and exploitation.

The gratifying phenomena in the life of the DRA cannot but gladden all the fighters for the cause of the revolution at home, and those who deeply sympathize with it abroad. But current developments do not suit the avowed enemies of the people's power, external reaction in the first place. That is quite natural. After all, the plot against revolutionary Afghanistan is its product, a major international scheme of U.S. imperialism, Chinese hegemonism and their allies in the region; the threads of the plot run to Washington, Peking, Islamabad, Riyadh and Cairo. Those are the capitals from which the operations by the mercenary bands are being

directed, and from which the flood of misinformation and invention is being disgorged upon the world.

The lies being spread by imperialist reaction are designed to keep galvanizing the myth of an unstable and contradiction-ridden Afghanistan that is about to fall apart like a house of cards. The more successful the process of normalization, the more lying the propaganda; again and again, leaders of revolutionary Afghanistan who are safe and sound and engaged in directing the country are declared to have disappeared or to be close to suicide, and this is followed by wishful-thinking reports about the occupation of some Afghan town by the bandits.

The hostile campaign being orchestrated by imperialism is constant and long-term, which is why its conductors have adopted as its basis some "governing ideas" which are designed to direct the whole propaganda stream into a single channel.

What are these "ideas?"

Idea No. 1: the revolution in Afghanistan has no roots in the local society, it has been brought in from outside;

Idea No. 2: the Saur Revolution is hostile to Islam, to local customs and traditions;

Idea No. 3: the revolutionary regime is a "creature" of the Soviet Union, which is why its existence is illegitimate.

Those are the starting premises for virtually all the ideological subversions against our country.

From the very outset, the April 1978 events were interpreted by the bourgeois press as a "pro-Moscow military coup," while the fact of the revolution was being ignored altogether. With the start of the new stage and the liberation from Amin's tyranny, the propaganda machine of imperialism has been trying in every possible way to drum in the idea that the Saur Revolution has no roots among the people and that it is alien to their past and present history.

But let us look at the facts. The shifts and changes which were to play a crucial role in Afghanistan's future occurred in social development over a decade and a half ago. The domination of archaic feudal and pre-feudal relations, combined with brutal social oppression, objectively led to a sharpening of class contradictions. The dire poverty and the exploitation of the working people by the feudal landowners and the khans aroused protests among the masses. In the minds of many people, these injustices were associated with the monarchist regime. The struggle against the ruling order assumed the form of clandestine and open action involving mainly the working

strata of the town: workers and intellectuals. Our party headed the national-democratic movement which took shape in the 1950s and 1960s.

The PDPA emerged in response to an objective social need for a vanguard force capable of leading the struggle for a radical change of the existing society. Long before becoming a ruling party, the PDPA was known among the people by its action against the reactionary monarchist order. Our comrades organized demonstrations, marches and strikes, and exposed the regime of oppression and exploitation in the press and in parliament. Here, great importance was attached to the activity of the PDPA's parliamentary group in the 1960s.* The party drew for its cadre on the toiling masses and the democratically-minded intelligentsia. It won considerable influence in the officer corps of the army, and this had a tremendous role to play in the preparation first of the anti-monarchist action in 1973 and then of the popular Saur Revolution. Our activity proved that we are prepared to go beyond purely cosmetic changes. Those were effected during Daoud's "aristocratic republic" which preserved all the privileges of the feudals and the bureaucratic élite.

I recall these well-known facts merely to show how the revolution stemmed from the very contradictions of life itself. Attempts to present it as some kind of "historical anomaly" are unscientific and do not square with the facts.

The claim that the revolutionary ideas conflict with the traditions of the peoples and tribes of Afghanistan is equally biased. There are no revolutions outside the framework of national traditions. The progressive movement is always rooted in the mass of the people and draws for its ideals on the patriotic legacy, on the humanistic culture of ancestors. The Saur Revolution is no exception.

First of all, it inherited the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist traditions of the Afghans. We deeply respect the exploits and feats of our country's sons like Naye Aminullah Khan Logari and Emir Amanullah Khan, who fought against British rule in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Such traditions are equally cherished by worker and peasant, by PDPA member and Moslem theologian.

Then there are the national and tribal customs and norms of life. Respect for these has been re-established at the new stage. As I have shown here, this policy met with a positive response among the population.

*It was led by Babrak Karmal — Ed.

Finally, about Islam, the religion. Its role and importance are fully recognized by the people's power. It is we and not the counter-revolutionary scum perpetrating crimes on our native soil that are the champions of religious rights. These "fighters for the faith" or "true Moslems," as they styled themselves, have tortured and savagely massacred mullahs in the district of Injil, the province of Paktia. In the town of Kunduz, they burned down a school: 400 volumes of the sacred Koran were lost in the flames. The bandits mined a mosque in the town of Mazari Sharif; they dragged praying Moslems out into the street and shot them. All true Moslems have condemned the acts of the killers and apostates who are supported from abroad. The masses of believers have come out in support of the government and its measures to protect the population against the attacks of counter-revolutionary bands being infiltrated from neighboring Pakistan.

In conclusion, about yet another Afghan tradition, that of friendship with our great neighbor, whose assistance helped us to win state independence and decades later, saved the Saur Revolution.

It is our national patriotic duty to defend the gains of the revolution. In December 1978, the DRA government signed a Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighborhood and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. We regarded that step as a natural and logical one, because it followed from the whole long history of Afghan-Soviet relations with their spirit of traditional friendship. Following the overthrow of the exploitive system in Afghanistan, these relations entered upon a qualitatively new stage: the two countries are united by fraternal ties of comradeship, their common revolutionary stand, and their loyalty to the principles of internationalism. Even in the early months of the revolutionary power, the USSR gave us invaluable assistance. When the country was subjected to undeclared aggression, the Soviet Union was once again on Afghanistan's side and, at our request, sent in a limited contingent of troops to defend the DRA.

The enemies of the revolution seek to throw a false light on these events. The elimination of the traitor Amin and the entry of a limited contingent of Soviet troops into the country are presented only as Afghanistan's "loss" of its state independence. The bourgeois press deliberately ignores the fact that all this occurred within the framework of the power established earlier, through the will of the vanguard party which had been the ruling power since 1978. The continuity will also be seen in the revolutionary policy proclaimed by the Saur Revolution ("Basic Lines of the Revolutionary

Duties"), and in the personal composition of the party and state leadership organs set up since then.

There is also deliberate silence over the armed intervention from outside, which forced the DRA to ask the USSR for assistance. Finally, sovereign will of the government to choose the means for defending the national interests is simply being ignored, to say nothing of the traditional historical ties which had taken shape between the two states and peoples, and which after the revolution were sealed by the Afghan-Soviet Treaty.

This is not at all a new propaganda trick: it has been well tried in the past. Let us recall that after the Second World War the "Moscow puppet" label was tagged by the imperialists on the people's democratic governments in some East European and Asian countries, which, in effect, were restored — in the course of liberation by the Soviet Army — to the national sovereignty they had lost under the Hitlerite and Japanese militarist domination. Later on, the Nasser regime in Egypt was also labeled as "pro-Soviet." In the 1970s the birth of independent Angola was seen by the imperialist and Peking circles as a victory for "Soviet expansionism." The same thing is now being said about Afghanistan.

Sooner or later imperialism has to recognize the existing realities. But this is preceded by a fierce struggle and many attempts to reverse the liberation process. Our country is now passing through just such a phase. Since the revolutions in Afghanistan and Iran, the imperialist circles have literally been rattled, and have brought into the region a vast military force. The so-called Afghan problem is used for the purposes of escalating the counter-revolutionary offensive against the gains of the peoples which have risen to national and social struggle.

Our party and all the other progressive forces of the DRA believe it to be their revolutionary and internationalist duty to rebuff this sinister activity. Our struggle in Afghanistan is a part of the common battle of all the peoples for freedom, security and peace. We welcome the Soviet Union's new initiative on the Persian Gulf. Implementation of the USSR's proposals would help to establish an atmosphere of peace in the area, to overcome the hostility and bring about the development of friendly ties between states and a strengthening of their independence and sovereign rights. This Soviet initiative is directly aimed against imperialist intervention in the affairs of the peoples of our region, intervention which has become the chief cause of the dangerous growth of tensions.

Now to sum up. Every anniversary of the revolution is significant in that it provides a milestone in progressive development. The present anniversary marks the exit from the phase of the hardest trials and the return of the Saur Revolution to the true path. At the new stage, conditions for the implementation of the proclaimed goals — never more favorable than they are today — are being shaped in society itself. There is a deepening of cooperation between the national and patriotic forces, a growth of the authority of the party and the government among the various strata, and a steady development of the process of democratization. This helps to create the prerequisites for our advance and for the solution of the whole complex of tasks in the economic, political and social spheres.

But the democratic transformations are proceeding in complicated international situations, marked by the growing aggressiveness of imperialism and the Peking hegemonists, who have been expanding their collaboration with regional reaction. This, for its part, has induced the latter to take a more active part in the schemes of imperialism. An eloquent example of this is the stand taken with respect to the DRA by Pakistan, Sadat's Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

International solidarity acquires tremendous importance for us in a situation which is fraught with many dangers and surprises. Thanks to the support and assistance, above all of the socialist world, imperialism has failed to defeat the Afghan revolution. This assistance now serves the interests of our country's security and independence, its social and economic progress. We have a sense of deep gratitude to the peoples of the socialist countries, to the communist and workers' parties and to the national-liberation movements for their consistent solidarity. It will continue to be an inspiring stimulus in the transformative activity of the revolutionaries of the new Afghanistan.

Détente and Anti-Communism

Y. Nalin

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Effort and more effort

Grisha Filipov

CC Political Bureau member, CC Secretary,
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The Bulgarian Communist Party's 12th congress, held in March-April, was the eighth after the socialist revolution in the country and ushered in the highest stage in the development of our party, people, and country. It was held in a year marking the 1,300th anniversary of the Bulgarian state, the 90th anniversary of the party, and the 25th anniversary of the historic CC plenary meeting of April 1956.¹ As Todor Zhivkov, General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee, noted in his closing remarks, this congress was of decisive significance for our further development. It held its sittings in a businesslike atmosphere and on a high political and ideological level, demonstrating the party's maturity, ability to avoid resting content with what has been achieved, sense for the new, and unshakable confidence that it has chosen the correct road.

The strength of the congress was eloquently shown in the report, which has the significance of a program for our party and is a contribution to Marxism-Leninism thanks to the profound analysis presented in it, and to its internationalist spirit, lucidity, cogent argumentation, and combination of theory and practice.

The congress reaffirmed the efficacy of the Leninist line adopted in April 1956 as a consistent class line that has led to colossal progress and striking quantitative and qualitative changes in the nation's material and cultural development. The past quarter of a century has been the most productive period of our country's history. Viewed from the angle of the national income increment, it may be said that the Bulgaria of 1980 was six and a half times larger than the Bulgaria of 1956.

An immensely important component of the preparations for the congress was the discussion in the party itself and throughout the nation that produced nearly 68,000 recommendations. The broad sharing of views continued at the congress itself, at which in addition to plenary meetings there were sittings of five sections on basic questions of party policy. This was the first time we had resorted to this method and it proved extremely useful.

The 12th congress was an important rostrum of the international communist, working-class, and national liberation movements: it was attended by 125 delegations from communist, workers' and democratic parties, movements,

and organizations. Their high evaluations were recognition of socialism's achievements in Bulgaria.

The congress further enhanced our party's prestige as the vanguard and acknowledged leader of the working class and entire people of Bulgaria. The post of General Secretary was reconstituted. A plenary meeting of the new Central Committee held after the congress noted Todor Zhivkov's great contribution to the elaboration and implementation of the party's Marxist-Leninist policy and unanimously elected him General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee.

A central place in the work and resolutions of the congress was accorded to questions related to the *further creative shaping and practical realization of the BCP's economic policy*. As a projection of previous practice, in the period of the eighth five-year plan (1981-1985) and up to 1990 this policy will be aimed at building mature socialism and, in the long term, communism. There will be dynamic changes, quantitative and qualitative, in the development of the productive forces, in the improvement of social relations, and in the molding of the harmoniously developed individual. There is to be a substantial growth of the nation's production, scientific and technological potential and of its material and cultural wealth.

Let us consider what is most characteristic of the conditions of Bulgaria's economic life in the coming period.

Further economic growth will be accompanied by a broad intellectualization of labor and production, of all forms of activity in parallel with the steady expansion of the international division of labor. Then there are, on the one hand, the beneficial factors springing from the consolidation and strengthening of existing socialism, the continued deepening of integration among the CMEA member-states, and the ever closer links between Bulgaria and the USSR in all areas. Simultaneously, on the other hand, there will be the effect of capitalism's deepening general crisis and of the attempts of imperialist circles to aggravate the international situation in contravention of the will of the peoples.

Proceeding from these premises and the party program, the 12th congress declared that the main socio-economic task in the eighth five-year period would be "to continue the course toward the *comprehensive satisfaction of the people's growing material, cultural, and social requirements by intensifying the economy through the consistent application of the new economic approach and its mechanism*

and the further improvement of socialist social relations."²

Today the fundamental factor of the nation's progress is the transition from chiefly extensive to primarily intensive development. This is an objective regularity of the building of mature socialism and stems from the potentialities of the large (by our standards) material and technical basis we have built, the need to make the utmost use of all the potentialities of the socialist system, the scientific and technological revolution, and society's objective requirements.

In this area the main aims are:

— first, in addition to making fuller and more effective use of extensive factors, to shift the accent to intensification. This concerns all material production and the entire non-production sphere, in other words, it means going over to intensification in all spheres;

— second, to save live labor and make more effective use of the means and objectives of labor. On this basis labor productivity has to be raised several times over;

— third, to base intensive development on the rapid introduction of the latest scientific and technological achievements in all sectors of production and reproduction.

The 12th congress marked out the basic orientations for the implementation of the course toward intensification in all areas. These orientations are: comprehensive automation of what are key industries for our development and mechanization of some basic and, especially, ancillary operations, and a reduction of manual labor; close study and massive dissemination and application of advanced expertise, perfection of the organization of work, intellectualization of labor, and improvement of the skills of personnel; a fundamental reshaping of investment policy with a particularly large emphasis on the modernization of operating production facilities within the shortest possible span of time.

It is planned to direct the efforts of science mainly toward improving the technico-economic, technological, organizational and intellectual level of production, enhancing labor productivity, further perfecting social relations and social administration, and molding the individual.

The course toward intensification is closely tied in with consistent implementation of the new economic approach in all areas of society's life. A coherent system of economic methods, means and forms of influence and regulation embracing planning, production, distribution and management has been worked out on the initiative and under the personal

direction of Todor Zhivkov. This has nothing in common with the spontaneously operating market mechanism. Our purpose is to dovetail the organization of the economy more closely with the requirements of socialism's objective laws.

In more specific terms, this means establishing a harmonious balance between centralization and decentralization in planning, promoting democracy, ending armchair management and subjectivism, and making broader use of economic levers by management. Better use is to be made of commodity-monetary relations, production is to be linked closely to the market, and a new, more effective organizational structure of the economy is to be built up by forming combines and agro-industrial complexes as its basic units. The harmonization of the interests of society, the work collective, and the individual is becoming a cardinal principle.

Implementation of our economic policy, it was said at the 12th congress, requires the further enlargement and improvement of the material and technical basis while ensuring the balanced growth of all sectors of the economy.

Ensuring energy and raw material resources and the rational utilization of these resources are becoming the nation's paramount task. We plan to switch to a more comprehensive processing and employment of raw materials, increase the output of these materials, and achieve the maximum expansion of international cooperation in this area.

Importance is also acquired by the question of progressive structural changes in the economy and of the priority development of industries directly linked to the intensification and intellectualization of the national economy. The multiple approach is to be applied on a much larger scale.³ The growth of group B industries is to be stepped up in parallel with the steady growth of group A industries: this will make it possible to satisfy the demand for high-quality goods more fully. The task before the agro-industrial complexes, which embody Lenin's ideas on cooperation, is to ensure the year-round satisfaction of the people's demand for all types of foodstuffs.

Prominence has also been given to the question of the quality and renewal of output. Here the purpose is to bring up to world standards the technical, functional and aesthetic specifications of those items and industries that are structure-determining and in which the nation specializes.

Our party has always been against autarky in socialist development. The 12th congress pointed out that construction will continue to use the growing potentialities and advantages

of socialist economic integration and new, more effective forms of cooperation.

For the BCP the charting and realization of economic policy is not an end in itself but the decisive factor improving the welfare of the people and asserting the socialist way of life. Concern for people is the central purpose of the party's Leninist policy.

While reiterating this policy, the 12th congress set the task of bringing the new approach to the living standard to full realization in the period of the eighth five-year plan. Satisfaction of the people's requirements is becoming the point of departure in planning, in determining the growth rates and balances of social production. Fundamentally new criteria are being used to measure the living standard: the growth of real consumption will be brought into line with scientifically substantiated dietary norms and rational satisfaction of other requirements; this will allow taking the dialectical links and dependencies between all aspects of the living standard into account and achieving a better balance between requirements, resources and the development of the relevant industries.

Emphasis is to be placed on measures in this area more vigorously promoting social progress, because consumption is not merely the use of goods but also a process serving the formation of the psychical, intellectual, professional and other qualities of citizens. In combination with raising the living standard, social development is accorded the role of the basic criterion of the efficiency of social production.

Under the eighth five-year plan the appropriations for social requirements are to exceed 88 billion leva: under the seventh five-year plan they amounted to 64.5 billion leva.

A few words about the main directions of this work.

Consistent application of the socialist principle of *distribution according to the quantity and quality of work* asserts social justice. Throughout the nation wages and benefits will be made dependent on the actual results of production and on the funds remaining at the disposal of enterprises after they have met their financial obligations to society.

Alongside the growth of incomes there is to be a continued increase of the quantity of goods and services and an improvement of their quality and range. The party attaches special significance to the successful fulfillment of this task. Moreover, the congress stressed the importance of the system of self-sufficiency, calling for a further utilization of the advantages of

social production and also of the potentialities of personal and ancillary husbandries.

Guaranteed extension of social insurance for all citizens, including the rising generation, remains an important factor improving the welfare of the people. Moreover, it was decided that pensions would be periodically brought into conformity with the changes in the incomes of the gainfully employed population. The provision of housing for every family was defined at the congress as an extremely urgent task: nearly 850,000 housing units are to be built under the eighth and ninth five-year plans. Measures have been mapped out to improve medical care and working conditions.

The party is doing much to enrich society's cultural life, which is exercising a growing influence on the shaping of the socialist individual. A major orientation of development in this area is the broadening of integrational links between science, *belles lettres*, education and the mass media. In the field of education, policy is aimed at fulfilling the decisions adopted at a BCP Central Committee plenary meeting in July 1979 to restructure the education system, by among other things, setting up new standard secondary polytechnical schools and a new type of vocational school, and also to restructure higher education.

The 12th congress noted that the time had come to take a new approach to social consumption funds, which are the material basis of social and cultural policy. There are two features in this new approach that merit special mention.

The first and basic is the correct distribution of social funds, thereby significantly enhancing their importance as an economic and social factor and stimulating initiative by the working people. That was why in the report to the congress it was noted that "in this area it is of no little importance how people work, although the social funds have their own specific which should always be borne in mind."⁴

The other is the creation of the most favorable conditions encouraging initiatives by work collectives and the population as a whole in the use of local potentials for forming and using social consumption funds. This is the only way to implement the fundamental guideline, set by the December 1972 BCP Central Committee plenary meeting, stating that the promotion of the people's welfare cannot be the concern solely of the state. This must involve every work collective and every individual.

Everything linked to improving the people's living standard becomes the substance, content and aim of the plans for social development of every work collective. The new approach re-

quires a distinct demarcation of the duties of the state, the districts and the population centers in forming and using social consumption funds. Central bodies define strategy and implement nationwide measures in this area, but everything else comes within the competence of communities and local officials. Work collectives are getting more possibilities and rights to settle socio-cultural problems. It is very important to create the conditions for balancing the plan for socio-economic development from top to bottom.

The relevant conclusion in the report to the congress was: "We shall make visible progress in satisfying the material and cultural requirements of the people, in developing our social, scientific and cultural policy. But we shall do this in a new, more effective way for society as a whole and for each citizen individually."⁵

A point stressed at the congress was that it was of paramount importance to continue improving the political system of socialism and enhancing the leading role of the BCP.

The party is guided by the Marxist-Leninist tenet that the development of the political system depends on the depth of the changes in the material and technical basis and in the socio-class structure. Of course, account is taken of the strong influence exercised by the superstructure on the economic basis. "The consolidation of the people's political unity, their cohesion around the Communist Party's policy, the historic aims and interests of the working class, and the growth of their political and labor activity," it was stated at the congress, "are the highest criterion which we use to measure successes and assess the development level and improvement of our political system."⁶

While doing all in its power to strengthen its links to the masses, the party strives to combine public, collective and individual interests in such a way as would stimulate the main motive force of Bulgaria's development, namely, the initiatives and energy of work collectives, of every citizen. Where the commodity-monetary character of the socialist economy, implicit in the new economic approach, is taken into account congenial conditions are created for the smooth functioning of the political system and for strengthening the material foundations of socialist democracy.

In the coming period the development of the socio-class structure will be characterized by an enhancement of the leading role played by the working class, which now comprises 56 per cent of the gainfully employed population. Marked changes will take place in the work, everyday life, and culture of the rural popula-

tion. There will be a perceptible growth of the role played by the intelligentsia. All this will ensure a new social climate marked by a greater sense of responsibility on the part of working people, of the whole nation, for the affairs of the state and of society.

The period of building mature socialism witnesses the *steady extension of socialist democracy and growing participation by the people in social administration*. The new elements introduced into this area by the congress are linked to the need to combine representative democracy more comprehensively with direct democracy. This combination will enable citizens to take a direct part in the settlement of all issues concerning their interests. In concrete terms, this depends on the development of the state-social and social-state basis, the extension of the principle of electivity and competitiveness in the formation of administrative organs, and the growth of the role of updated planning. Moreover, this depends on the unfolding of criticism and self-criticism, the study of public opinion, and the extension of the political, economic, social and juridical guarantees of the working people's rights and freedoms.

The congress adopted a program for enriching the forms and methods of work used by the People's Assembly, the Council of State, the Council of Ministers and the people's councils, underscoring the important role of the system of population centers as a new and particularly significant link of our political system.

Much attention was given to the ways and means of promoting and improving the work of the Fatherland Front, the trade unions, and the Dimitrov Young Communist League. The congress highly evaluated cohesion and unity of action with the Bulgarian People's Agrarian Union, which is the party's dependable ally in socialist construction.

The *Bulgarian Communist Party* is the real guarantee of the socialist political system and the inspirer of its democratic development. This is a "party working in the Leninist style and spirit: consistently applying the method of collective work, creating the conditions for criticism and self-criticism, steadfastly abiding by the norms of democratic centralism, and carrying out its leading role and political program dynamically, with initiative, and a high sense of responsibility."⁷

The 12th congress called for further emphasis on the political approach in any leading post as placing this role of the BCP on a qualitatively new level. Considerable importance is attached to enhancing the prestige of local party organizations as the political backbone and prototype of the future work collectives.⁸ It

is our aim that at the workbench every person should have the opportunity for creative growth, for showing his abilities, and receiving payment commensurate to this growth.

The congress called for the most active, massive participation by communists and all other citizens in the nation's administration, for this imparts flexibility and efficacy to the political system and helps to extend and enrich socialist democracy.

The 12th congress took place in a contradictory and quickly changing international climate. The past decade has witnessed many significant events and unexpected twists and turns in world development. The preservation of peace and the curbing of the arms race are central to the planet's life. Today this issue is increasingly becoming the concern of the peoples themselves, who are starting powerful campaigns in defense of peace. Universal recognition has been received by the World Parliament of the Peoples for Peace, held in Sofia in 1980, and the Banner of Peace International Assembly of Children, which on our initiative and on hospitable Bulgarian soil laid the beginning for a worldwide movement of children for peace. Bulgaria has sponsored the traditional Sofia International Meeting of Writers, meetings of ministers of culture and cultural personalities, and some other international forums.

Our party strongly denounced the activation of militarist circles in the USA, the attempts to deploy new U.S. nuclear missiles in Western Europe, imperialism's increased military activity in various parts of the world, and Peking's hegemonistic foreign policy. We express our unanimous support for the talks in Vienna and Madrid, whose purpose is to facilitate peace and security and foster cooperation among nations. The Bulgarian communists and the entire Bulgarian people accept as their own the program drawn up by the 24th and amplified by the 25th and 26th congresses of the CPSU and are doing all they can to translate it into reality.

Our highest forum wholeheartedly approved the basic guidelines of the party's and government's foreign policy, which is aimed at consolidating the unity and cohesion of the socialist community and promoting friendship and cooperation with fraternal parties, countries and peoples.

It reiterated Bulgaria's immutable commitment to the principles of socialist internationalism. Motivated by the spirit of fraternal solidarity, the Bulgarian communists unanimously stated their confidence that the Polish Communist Party and the Polish people would

give a determined rebuff to internal and international reaction, take Poland out of the crisis, and ensure its successful socialist development.

In the history of new Bulgaria, a cornerstone of its foreign policy has been and remains the all-sided strengthening of fraternal relations with the CPSU, with the great Soviet Union, with the Soviet people. Today the relations between Bulgaria and the Soviet Union serve as a model of socialist internationalism in action.

Our party and people expressed their warm solidarity with the Cuban communists and with the just struggle of the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea.

The BCP sees one of the main directions of its foreign policy in contributing to cooperation and unity of action in the international communist and working-class movement. It contributed to the success of the Berlin Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties and the Paris Meeting of European Communist and Workers' Parties for Peace and Disarmament. Together with the journal *World Marxist Review*, the BCP sponsored the theoretical conference on "Building of Socialism and Communism and World Development" in Sofia in 1978. We shall not relax our efforts to ensure the strengthening of unity and cohesion among the communists, deepen proletarian internationalism, and use every opportunity for a broad exchange of experience, for a collective discussion of pressing problems.

In keeping with the Helsinki spirit and accords and also taking the lessons of history into account, the Bulgarian communists put forward at their 12th congress concrete proposals for ways and means of *establishing a climate of confidence in the Balkan Peninsula*. We are prepared to sign with neighboring countries bilateral agreements on the code of good-neighborly relations, the renunciation of territorial claims, and the prohibition of hostile aspirations and actions against each other. Bulgaria is prepared to continue multilateral cooperation with Balkan countries on questions of mutual interest, including the specific areas where understanding has already been reached. The new Bulgarian initiatives spell out not only support for the Peace Program of the CPSU but also its concretization in the Balkans.

The efforts of the Bulgarian communists and entire people are now directed toward carrying out the decisions of the congress in order to achieve further progress in the building of a developed socialist society. The people are determined to mark our country's 1,300th an-

niversary with new achievements in work. The party's 12th congress called for the fulfillment of its decisions under the motto: "Effort, effort, and more effort!"

1. This plenary meeting denounced the personality cult as being alien to Marxism-Leninism and the BCP and passed resolutions creating the conditions and guarantees for the unswerving observance of Leninist principles and norms of public and party life and activity. It defined the party's Leninist general line for the consummating period of transition from capitalism to socialism, under conditions when socialism had been established and the course had been set toward building a mature socialist society and achieving a gradual transition to the building of a communist society in Bulgaria.

2. Todor Zhivkov, *CC Report to the 12th Congress of the BCP and the Tasks Ahead*, Sofia, 1981, p. 21 (in Bulgarian).

3. With the concentration and specialization of production as its aim, this approach lays stress on the standardization of units and parts as this allows using them in various combinations in the manufacture of diverse products.

4. Todor Zhivkov, op. cit., p. 59.

5. Todor Zhivkov, op. cit., p. 79.

6. Todor Zhivkov, op. cit., p. 82.

7. *Resolution of the 12th Congress of the BCP on the 25th Anniversary of the BCP Central Committee Plenary Meeting In April 1956*, Sofia, 1981, p. 17 (in Bulgarian).

8. The point here is that the ideological, political and moral qualities of Communists should be the hallmark of every person.

Self-critical analysis

Anil Mukherji

CC Secretary, CP Bangladesh

The profound economic and political crisis in Bangladesh is becoming ever more acute. In the over nine years since the winning of independence, the country's productive forces have hardly been developed, the socio-economic situation has not substantially changed, and the condition of the mass of people has not improved. Bangladesh remains one of the poorest and most backward countries of the world, with income per head coming to no more than \$100 a year. The people have to live in terrible poverty. Even according to official data, the living standard of nearly three-quarters of the population is below the poverty line. Actually, the situation is even worse: almost 9 in 10 people are undernourished, and two-thirds of the population face constant hunger. The floods in summer and the droughts in winter which constantly hit the country are fraught with crop failures and starvation, and the number of victims runs to tens of thousands.

Some 90 per cent of the population is employed in agriculture, where feudal and semi-feudal relations still prevail. The bulk of the land is in the hands of the big landowners, while almost one-half of the peasants have no land at all. Agriculture cannot provide the country with the minimum of foodstuffs: every year, nearly 2 million tons of grain have to be imported.

The grave situation has been compounded by the acts of the present government. The political resolution of the third congress of the CP Bangladesh (1980) says: "The government is incapable of offering the right solution for the

problems in the life of the country and the people. On the contrary, its anti-popular reactionary policy and the steps it has taken in practice have led to an incredible exacerbation of all these problems."

Having abandoned even the very limited progressive transformations put through under Mujibur Rahman, the founder of the republic, the present regime has encouraged economic development along the capitalist road, even if it has not said as much officially. Together with the provision on secularism, another fundamental principle — socialism — which, it is true, was interpreted in nothing like the Marxist way, but still meant a principled rejection of capitalism as a socio-economic system, has been dropped from the constitution. There is growing reprivatization of earlier nationalized enterprises. Private capital has had the doors flung wide open even into jute, the leading Bangladesh industry, which yields the bulk of the export earnings and which was earlier concentrated entirely in the state sector. Private enterprise is encouraged in textiles and sugar. A new law permits the establishment of private banks.

But there has been no response to the call on the owners of capital to invest in the economy. Given the acute economic and political instability, the local bourgeoisie is fearful of losing its investments, and prefers to take the money out of the country, or to use it for speculative operations to make a killing. Meanwhile, the productive sectors of the economy, industry in the first place, face a great shortage of investments and are in a state of stagnation.

The handful of rich upstarts also make fortunes through black-market operations, smuggling, plundering the public till, bribery, which has assumed unbelievable proportions, and commission services for foreign companies. Tens of multimillion fortunes have mushroomed on that basis over the past few years.

In its efforts to plug the numerous breaches in the economy, the regime has been forced to turn for financial assistance to foreign "donors," and this has increased the external debt. The authorities have demonstrated in every possible way their readiness to extend ties with industrialized Western powers and the oil-exporting countries of the Arab East.

This has necessarily had an effect on the country's foreign policy. Despite the slogan — "Friendship with all, enmity with none" — proclaimed by the Ziaur Rahman regime, there is an obvious tilt in its foreign policy toward the imperialist powers, the reactionary Arab states and Maoist China. This will be seen from its refusal to recognize the legitimate government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the unwillingness to condemn the Chinese aggression against socialist Vietnam, the urge to close its eyes to the ignominious Camp David deal, the silence on the U.S. build-up of military strength in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, and the unfriendly attitude to revolutionary Afghanistan.

As the third congress of the CP Bangladesh said, a major political problem before Bangladesh at the present stage is the fact that "in patriotic, democratic and progressive circles no alternative force has yet been formed to instill in the people faith in its capacity, as a minimum, to return the country to the progressive way of development and to assure the working people of a full measure of democratic rights."

The Awami League,¹ founded by Mujibur Rahman, is the country's largest opposition party. At the latest parliamentary elections in February 1979, it won 39 seats, ranking second to the ruling Nationalist Party.

However, the Awami League has lost its reputation as a militant political organization standing up for the people's interests. It does not appeal to the broad masses, and does not carry on any active explanatory or organizational work in their midst. Its arguments that everything was fine when it was in power have fallen on deaf ears. Some of its leaders do not enjoy the confidence of the people because of their vacillations and time-serving attitudes in the post-Mujibur period.

Muzaffar Ahmad's National Awami Party is

another relatively important opposition party. Declaring that its goal is to build socialism, it has some support in the masses. It used to be a part of the Popular United Front, set up in 1973, which also included the Awami League, then in power, and the CP Bangladesh. But the National Awami Party and the Awami League now take a cautious stand to each other.

The other parties of the democratic opposition are numerically small and do not have any extensive or strong mass basis. One could say that they are nearly all still in the emergent phase, now arising, developing splits (again and again), now disappearing from the political arena altogether. These splits mostly occur for personal motives and not over differences on issues of principle. Generally speaking, in our country political leaders and public men, far from being less, are frequently more influential and well known than the organizations they head, and that for a number of reasons. On the one hand, most parties in Bangladesh do not have anything like a considered and elaborated program of action in the political and socio-economic spheres, which is why they fail to find their own clear-cut political identity and so have to rely on the personal popularity of their leaders. On the other hand, because of the generally low level of political consciousness, the masses are inclined to personify political parties and organizations and to identify them with the personality of this or that prominent political figure.

Virtually the only demand, the only goal of the opposition parties now is to unfold a struggle against the Ziaur Rahman regime — on that they are all agreed, and that is the basis for the alliance of the nine parties of the democratic opposition. It has no socio-economic program common to all the participants, and in practice amounts to agreements and understandings on concrete issues that may be reached.

Having concentrated all their efforts on the struggle against the regime, the opposition parties tend to devote little attention to other spheres, including foreign policy. Most of them, for instance, failed to formulate their stand on such an acute problem as events over Afghanistan. Only the leader of the National Awami Party, Professor Muzaffar Ahmad, has openly spoken out in parliament in support of the revolutionary Afghan regime and the stand it has taken in beating back the attacks of external counter-revolution. Some statements issued by the Awami League and the Labor Party (a small outfit set up by former CP members who had once embraced Maoism and were sub-

sequently disenchanted) could be interpreted as an indirect expression of support for the Afghan revolution. Other opposition parties have said nothing at all, although — and this needs to be specifically stressed — none of them has come out against revolutionary Afghanistan.

However, there is opposition to the present regime from another side as well. It is being actively attacked by the avowedly pro-imperialist, right-reactionary communalist² forces and also by the Maoist groups, which are, for all practical purposes, seeking to eliminate the fruits of the hard-won independence. They are disappointed with Ziaur Rahman's policy, which has not fully met their desires. In foreign policy, for instance, the present regime is trying to maintain a position of "equidistance" from the socialist countries and the imperialist powers, a stand which has been justly criticized by the progressive forces. But then this stand does not accord either with the interests of the blatantly pro-imperialist elements, or the calls of the communalists for a coalescence with Islamic reaction, including the establishment of a confederation with Pakistan, or yet with the demands of the Maoists, who want the country to serve the Peking leadership's hegemonist schemes. Ziaur Rahman has not succumbed to the attempts to make him pursue a line of open hostility toward India, attempts that have been made by the imperialist agents, the proponents of religious intolerance and Maoist henchmen. Nor has he satisfied their claims to power.

Still, the acts of the present regime cannot be described otherwise than as actually pandering to these elements. The government has tolerated the presence of the leader of the arch-reactionary organization Jamaat-i-Islami, Golam Azam, who is resident in the country with a Pakistani passport, a man who has been carrying on an unbridled campaign of lies and slander against the patriotic forces. It has released from prison before the end of his term a pro-imperialist reactionary like the former president of the country Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed, who took power as a result of the villainous murder of Mujibur Rahman and his family. It has closed its eyes to the conspiratorial and subversive activity of the Maoist groups, although many of them still maintain illegal armed bands.

In the recent period, the pro-imperialist, right-reactionary and Maoist elements have taken steps to concert their demands and to cobble together an alliance. This effort is being led by the Maoists, who have urged the

formation of a united front of all those who take an anti-Indian and anti-Soviet stand.

Five leftist groups announced in Dacca in September 1979 the establishment of a bloc called Democratic Front. Announcing the aim of the new outfit, its initiator Mohammad Toaha, the leader of the so-called Communist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist-Leninist), began by flatly accusing the government of betraying the country's interests "to Soviet social-imperialism and Indian expansionism" — terminology frankly borrowed by that leader from his Peking patrons — and promoting the political rehabilitation of the Awami-Baksalites.³ He said that the struggle against the Awami-Baksalites would be the main task of the front. Emphasizing that they had always been the chief enemies of the Bangladesh Maoists, the leader of the United People's Party Kazi Zafar Ahmed declared: The Democratic Front will also fight the Ziaur Rahman government.

Following the attempts to overcome the in-fighting and conflicts in their midst, the pro-Peking elements got down to arranging contacts with the ultra-right reactionary opposition. Mohammad Toaha, following a trip to China for instructions, announced that the Democratic Front had started an exchange of opinion with the Democratic League headed by Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed, to work out a common line of action by these two outfits. For his part, Khandaker Mushtaq Ahmed, relying on the support of U.S. imperialism and its henchmen in some Moslem countries, has been actively working to unite the right-wing forces, making a stake on the parties and political leaders once opposed to the independence of Bangladesh and now engaged in using national sovereignty as a downright bargaining counter. Ahmed, for instance, has established strong ties and political understanding with Golam Azam, the head of Jamaat-i-Islami. The emergent coalition has the blessing of Saudi Arabia and some other reactionary Arab states. This has once again borne out the truth that, for all their ultra-revolutionary catchwords, those who follow in the wake of the present Chinese leadership inevitably find themselves in the same camp with the agents of imperialism and the forces of diehard reaction.

The Communist Party of Bangladesh is the only party to put forward a real political alternative to the policy of the present regime. Our party has had repeatedly to act in complicated and confused situations, facing sharp turns in the development of events. It has had its ups and downs, and has made its share of mistakes.

These questions were discussed in an open and self-critical spirit at the third congress of the CP Bangladesh. The CC political report to the congress said that the communists had failed to implement, correctly and effectively, the principle of "unity and struggle." Pursuing the policy of a united front with other patriotic, democratic forces, mainly representing the petty and middle bourgeoisie, we have not been sufficiently aware of the fact that it is equally important to struggle against their limitations and the negative aspects of these sections and the political parties expressing their interests. This applied above all to our relations with Mujibur Rahman's party, the Awami League, and BAKSAL, its actual successor.

While correctly emphasizing Mujibur Rahman's role in the people's liberation struggle, the Communist Party had a tendency to rank him over and above his own class. The report showed that this approach is wrong and that, while the communists had never denied the role of the individual in history, it is not right to separate entirely this or that political leader from his class. It was, in fact, Mujibur Rahman's petty-bourgeois limitations that prevented him from consistently implementing the progressive principles he himself had proclaimed and to do so with the support of the masses.

Another important conclusion from the analysis of our previous activity is that the communists must not cease even for a moment their persevering and consistent struggle for the re-establishment and extension of democratic freedoms for the working people. The CPB says that the trend to curb democratic rights and fold up democratic institutions is fraught with the most dangerous consequences. Considering from this angle the experience of introducing a one-party system in Bangladesh, as Mujibur Rahman did, we feel that in our country the elimination of the multi-party system was not a necessary prerequisite for social progress. The development of mass revolutionary initiatives and the raising of the level of consciousness and organization of the masses are of special importance for putting through progressive transformations. But the monopolization of political activity by one party, contrary to the objectively shaped socio-political structures, has done harm, for it produced dictatorial attitudes and trends among leaders of middle-class origin. Life has shown the groundlessness of our hopes that BAKSAL, the country's only legal political party, would differ in class character from the Awami League, and would become a nationwide organization capable of putting through a program

of non-capitalist development. We were also wrong in assuming that in these conditions, the communists could confine their activity to the framework of this one party. Hence the conclusion that, in any case, it is a vital necessity for the Communist Party to remain ideologically and organizationally independent.

The second congress of the CP Bangladesh (December 1973) determined that our country was going through the stage of a national-democratic revolution paving the way for advance along the non-capitalist road of development. For Bangladesh, transition to this way in historical terms is possible and necessary. The third congress reaffirmed this assessment, and emphasized that there has been no change in the main task facing the party: to work for the full implementation of the goals of our national-democratic revolution and for the realization of the potentialities of development along the non-capitalist road. However, it is now much more difficult to fulfil this task. In 1973, when the second congress was held, we relied on the head of the government, Mujibur Rahman, and, to some extent, on the ruling party as well, and had hopes that they would advance together with us. Today, the progressive, patriotic forces and broad masses of working people have to carry on a stiff struggle against the authorities' policy that cuts across the people's interests, for a change in the existing socio-economic conditions, and for political demands.

In 1980 alone, various sections and groups of the working people staged all kinds of militant action. On the first day of the third session of the National Assembly, a nationwide strike swept across the country, and this set the tone for the subsequent action by the working people. The workers of the leading national industry — jute — downed tools, demanding better working conditions, wage increases and the provision of housing. The dock-workers of Chalna, the second most important port in Bangladesh, came out in defense of their rights. In mid-March, there was a strike at the government institutions. Over a half-million low-paid officials demanded that the government should take urgent measures to stop the growth of the cost of living, to provide jobs, and to increase appropriations for social needs. The strike, in effect, paralyzed the government departments across the country and threatened to break up the administrative structure. In early November 1980, a general strike was held in the capital of Bangladesh. Shops and offices were closed, the city transport came to a standstill, and the streets were picketed by the strikers. That was an expression of the discontent among broad masses of people over the worsening living

conditions as a result of inflation and the growth of prices, the indignation over the corruption which is deeply entrenched in virtually every sphere. Among the demands and slogans under which the strike was held was the resignation of the government and new parliamentary elections. There was evidence of ferment among bank employees, medical workers and other categories of working people. Student disturbances forced the authorities to close down higher schools, notably, the universities at Rajshahi and Mymensingh.

The communists' activity among various strata of the working population helps to organize them, to rouse and mobilize the masses for action for better working and living conditions, and for democratic rights and freedoms. Our party's main demands were expressed in the slogan put forward by the third congress: "Food, clothes, land and jobs for the people." The Communist Party has been working hard for the solution of acute problems like the provision of a subsistence minimum income for workers and their families, a reduction and stabilization of prices for food and other prime necessities, implementation of an effective plan for combating unemployment, and realization in practice of the basic democratic rights of the people.

The communists, attaching special importance to profound transformations in the countryside, have worked out concrete proposals on this matter which are based on the principle of "land to those who till it." Our party believes that the first thing that needs to be done is to lower the ceiling of landholdings from 100 bighas⁴ per family to 50 in one-crop regions and to 30 in two-crop regions, to eliminate the feudal share-cropping system, to give landless peasants allotments from state stocks, and to establish firm purchase prices for farm produce. The party resolutely insists on collective labor in agriculture, because cooperation alone can create the prerequisites for eradicating the exploitation of the poor and indigent peasants, and for meeting the country's food requirements.

The CP Bangladesh has called on all the national, patriotic forces in the republic — both within and without the democratic opposition parties — to unite for the purpose of defending national sovereignty and independence, and securing radical socio-economic transformations for the benefit of the working people. We are sure that these forces, working together on concrete burning issues and mobilizing the working people for the struggle for their vital demands, can win the confidence of the people and present themselves to it as a real political

alternative to the present regime. But here it is exceptionally important in every way to develop the independent initiative and activity of the Communist Party, which means above all that the communists should be initiators of mass action, organizers of action by industrial and agricultural workers and the toiling peasantry, artisans, intellectuals and students in defense of their rights, and active participants in the progressive movements of various social strata and groups.

By following this line, the CP Bangladesh has won considerable moral authority among the people. The communists are respected and are regarded as staunch and dedicated fighters for the working people's cause. Against the background of the corruption and the currying of favor with the authorities for the sake of personal benefit so commonplace, the communists are a model of moral purity and fidelity to principle. That is why the CPB has been so fiercely attacked by the reactionaries, the religious fanatics and the Maoists, and has been persecuted and harassed by the authorities.

Capitalizing on the illiteracy and low level of political consciousness of a part of the population, and speculating on its religious feelings, reaction has brazenly attacked the communists as atheists and "foreign agents" working "for India," etc. The present regime has already tried on one occasion — in the autumn of 1977 — to ban our party, but under public pressure at home and abroad it was forced to lift the ban within just over a year.⁵

In the spring of 1980, another blow was dealt at the CP Bangladesh. Many party leaders, including CC General Secretary Mohammad Farhad, were arrested without any grounds, on the deliberately false charge of "sedition." The pretext was our comrades' active participation in the strike by government officials, with some of them acting as leaders of the strike movement. Simultaneously, reaction made use of periodicals, reputedly financed by the CIA, to make loud noises and to claim that the communists intended to stage in Bangladesh an "Afghan-type revolution," with reference to our party's organization of rallies, demonstrations, and other mass measures in defense of the revolutionary regime in Afghanistan.

The authorities' arbitrary acts generated a wave of protest throughout the country. The parties of the democratic opposition condemned the government's unlawful acts. The campaign of solidarity with the communists produced results: most of the arrested men were released. However, Mohammad Farhad is still being detained without trial or investiga-

tion. In prison, the state of his health is reported to have seriously worsened. We have called on the progressive forces of our country and the whole world to demand resolutely the immediate release of the Communist Party's General Secretary and other imprisoned democrats.

No amount of persecution or repression can break our party, just as the Pakistani authorities' bloody terrorism could not break it in the period before the Bangladesh people won their independence. Having critically analyzed our past experience, we have set ourselves clear goals for the future. These goals are in line with

the vital interests of all the working people in our country, the interests of social progress, and this is an assurance of success in the struggle being carried on by the communists.

1. Awami League, the Bengali name for the People's League. — Ed.

2. The forces of religious intolerance. — Ed.

3. BAKSAL (Bangladesh Workers and Peasants Awami League), the name of the political party set up by Mujibur Rahman in February 1975, then the only legal party in the country. — Ed.

4. 1 bigh = 0.13 hectare.

5. See Matiur Rahman's article in WMR, June 1979. — Ed.

New experience

OUR INTERVIEWS

LIVING BONDS

Tibor Ritter

Deputy Head, Agitation and
Propaganda Department, HSWP CC

Q. The 12th congress of the HSWP has set the task of carrying out a complex analysis of public opinion in the country. Why is this being done by the party? What has and is being done to realize this idea?

A. On the strength of historical experience, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party has reached the conclusion that a knowledge by the communists of the working people's moods, opinions and aspirations is one of the main conditions for winning, keeping and consolidating the people's power. That is why in its in-depth study of the social reality, the party also takes account of the characteristics of the consciousness of the population.

It was emphasized at the 12th congress of the HSWP that the party invariably formulates and implements its policy on the strength of the experience and the opinions of the masses, and believes that broad involvement of the working people in the solution of social problems is a key task. The congress emphasized that democratic forums have an essential role to play in bringing out and concerting various interests, in discussing domestic and foreign policy issues, and in realizing the basic social interests. We believe that constant contacts and interactions between the party and the people are the key to successful fulfillment of the program for the country's social and economic development that has been outlined.

Here we are following the Leninist tradition. Lenin said that success in the activity of the

revolutionary vanguard of the working class directly depends on its capability of maintaining living bonds with the broadest masses of the working people and its ability to merge with them to a certain extent (V.I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 24). We are sure that these ideas of Lenin's are of universal significance and are valid for the whole period of socialist construction. They reflect one of the basic hallmarks of the new type of party and its leading role in the society, and determine the principles, norms and style of party life.

More than two decades ago, the HSWP re-established the Leninist norms and has been undeviatingly following them since then. The results have been summed up by the 12th congress in this brief formula: *the party is sure of the masses, the masses are following the party.*

Our party responds sensitively and swiftly to changes in the society. It formulates its strategy and tactics on the basis of concrete analysis of the concrete situation in the light of the propositions of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and its methods. The HSWP consistently stands up for the Marxist principle that theory is based on the facts, instead of the facts being fitted into theoretical constructs. Whenever the reality clashes with any decision adopted, say, 10 years ago, the party takes a new decision which is more in accord with the situation. Rejecting subjectivism and one-sided assessments of phenomena in the reality, it works to create in the society an open political atmosphere which

is based on socialist democracy and in which diverse opinions can be expressed, and arguments and counter-arguments can contest with each other. Our people have come to realize that no one is victimized for criticizing shortcomings. The communists come out against erroneous views, and not against individuals, seeking to use discussions with opponents to develop the citizens' socialist consciousness.

The congress of the HSWP has pointed out that in the process of socialist construction the party and the people have to tackle qualitatively new and more complicated tasks. In this context, it was emphasized that ideological activity, propaganda and agitation need to keep in step with the development of the society, and that there must be readier perception of new problems.

Knowledge of the state of public opinion is one of the factors in the planning of the party's propaganda, agitation and mass political work. Hence the importance of profound analysis of the general uniformities governing the functioning and change of public opinion and the here-and-now moods of the masses. A study of these phenomena implies an all-round approach to the collection, processing and summing up of diverse information concerning the attitudes of people in the society, and the use of the Marxist-Leninist theory and empirical methods of analysis. The resolution of the 12th congress of the HSWP says that the achievements in the social sciences need to be more broadly used in practical work.

However, the importance of research in this field goes well beyond the framework of propaganda and agitation activity. Under socialism, public opinion is an indicator of the solid bonds between the party and the people. This factor is considered by the political leadership when it takes its decisions. The use of diverse information about the attitudes and views of people, about their approach to important problems is a component part of the scientific direction of the society. The party seeks to obtain information that would help it to take decisions not only on the basis of separate facts, but of their reliable aggregation. The information required for taking effective decisions needs to include information about how actual living conditions influence people, how the masses respond to party and government decisions, how these are transformed in the minds and acts of people, and how they influence social processes and relations between collectives and individuals. The HSWP's experience shows that well-considered and systematic study of the working people's opinion and various expressions of public opinion does very

much to enhance the substance and effectiveness of political decisions.

Under socialism, political, economic and social goals of the Marxist-Leninist party accord with the objective interests of the working people. That is why various strata and groups of the population quite naturally — and not accidentally — support these goals and work actively to realize them. At the same time, we take account of the fact that support for the policy of the party and the state must not be passive, but active and must be expressed in a search for the best ways of practically implementing the tasks facing the society. In the course of such quest there is a natural clash of standpoints and this has an influence on policy. These standpoints need to be known, because the availability of authentic information about the opinion prevailing in the society and the response by the masses to the existing situation, to the facts need to be the starting point in the shaping of opinions and convictions, and in the explanation of the policy pursued.

Q. How does your party obtain such information? How is it used in the activity of the party's leading organs and in the party organizations?

A. We have an organized system for studying, assessing and analyzing the views of party members and the population. This is a component part of the work of all the echelons of the party, from the primary party organizations up. The forms, content and lines of this activity in studying public opinion are determined by the decisions of the CC Political Bureau and Secretariat.

Party organizations are faced with the task of providing the leadership with rapid and precise information about the mood of the population, the views of various social sections on the important domestic and foreign policy problems, and events in the country's economic and cultural life. Through this channel data are systematically received on the progress in fulfilling party decisions and concrete information on the activity of elective party organs at various levels and the primary organizations, the work of the communists, and their proposals and remarks expressed at party meetings.

Members of the HSWP CC regularly receive two types of reports. One concerns the meetings of the CC Political Bureau and Secretariat, meetings of commissions under the Central Committee, information concerning the main issues discussed at meetings of the leadership of the party regional committees, mass organizations and movements, and experience of party meetings in primary organizations. The

other contains an analysis of trends in public attitude to domestic and foreign-policy events, with processes in Hungary's scientific and cultural life, including a survey of written complaints and statements received by the Office of the HSWP CC, the editorial offices of the national papers and radio and television. This also includes an analysis of hostile propaganda and conclusions from operational studies of political public opinion.

In addition, the political aspects of public opinion are studied by the Scientific Center of Mass Media under Hungarian radio and television, the Institute for Theoretical Studies of the Hungarian Council of Trade Unions and other organizations. They are in fact one of the "feedback" instruments linking the organs of administration with the masses. These studies tell us how party decisions are accepted, how effective the mass media are in the society, and what exerts an influence on the minds of men in the first place. This helps to bring out the

mood of the population in the country as a whole, and also among the various demographic and social strata (young people, women, intelligentsia), the citizens' approach to important socio-political issues, like the international situation, the party's economic policy, price regulation, medical services, etc.

The attitude of various strata of the society to economic matters and economic development have long been an object of study in Hungary. The results of these studies help to make economic policy and propaganda more effective. We have brought out, for instance, that the masses associate the concept of "raising living standards" only with the growth of wages and stability of prices, apparently ignoring the development of housing construction, communications, education and public health. An effort to change these notions has become an important task in our work. Similarly, the activity of party organizations and ideological organs was being corrected following studies of public opinion concerning the solution of some important economic problems connected with the use of manpower, tightening up of work discipline, improvement of wage systems, etc. People tend sharply to criticize careless and dishonest work, low quality of products, poor organization, incorrect approach to production and waste. The party believes that these attitudes to shortcomings are a healthy phenomenon expressing the sense of civic responsibility, a desire to help the common endeavor and a readiness to act.

One should emphasize that the studies of public opinion in Hungary have borne out the political information received through party channels, but they give the leadership more concrete data concerning the views of individual social strata.

The fundamental identity of the stand taken by the party and broad masses of people was most visually borne out by the response on the part of the population to the key decisions on the country's development. Thus, retail prices were raised in Hungary in July 1979. Political information and special studies brought out the same facts: the people were, of course, not happy about the decision, but they accepted it as a measure serving to advance economic progress.

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A continent in struggle

THE INTERNATIONAL FACTOR IN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLES

Advances or reverses of the liberation movement in Latin America and in other regions of the world depend above all on internal factors. However, the communists, without in the least minimizing the importance of these factors, give their attention to the international situation, whose significance has grown of late. The main reason for this is socialism's growing strength and impact on the revolutionary struggle of peoples. "There is no country or group of countries and no ideological or political school that has not felt the influence of socialism to one extent or another," it was noted at the 26th CPSU congress. "This is a reality of the closing years of the 20th century." Another important reason is that while imperialism is still strong, it is hopelessly declining and unable to recapture the historical initiative it has lost. These aspects of the international factor were examined in the context of Latin America by a *WMR* research group composed of Raul Valdez Vivo, CC member, Communist Party of Cuba; Felix Dixon, CC member, People's Party of Panama; Jaime Barrios, CC member, Communist Party of El Salvador; and Alexander Sukhostat, Cand.S., member of the *WMR* editorial staff. Its point of departure was the theme "Motive Forces of the Liberation Process in Latin America," which is being studied by the *WMR* Commission on Problems of Latin America and the Caribbean. The following are some of its findings.

Latin America is entering the last two decades of the 20th century in an atmosphere of intensifying struggle between the forces of progress, democracy and socialism, on the one hand, and those of the oligarchy and imperialism, on the other. This struggle encompasses virtually this whole region and every sphere of public life — the economy, politics, ideology and culture.

The spread of Marxist-Leninist ideas, world socialism's growing strength, the course toward détente, the active resistance to imperialism, and solidarity with embattled peoples make Latin America less dependent on capitalist centers and influence the revolutionary movement in many ways. Needless to say, this influence is neither direct, nor mechanical; it is modified by internal socio-economic, political and ideological conditions and varies from country to country.

The Cuban revolution showed how a changed international climate and the growing strength of socialism influence the course and outcome of world events. While it was made possible by the Cuban people's heroism, revolutionary unity and consciousness, and the discernment and flexibility of their leaders, there is no doubt that the operation of internal factors was reinforced and intensified by external conditions, which by then had become more favorable.

The Cuban revolution was a turning point in the destiny of Latin America. It dealt a telling blow to U.S. imperialism's seemingly impregnable positions and refuted the concept of "geographical fatalism," which claimed that Latin American countries were doomed to perpetual dependence because of the territorial proximity of their powerful northern neighbor. The epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism, ushered in by the October Revolution on a worldwide scale, has reached Latin America as well. The new social formation has become a reality in the Western Hemisphere, an important stimulus for the liberation movement going on there.

Latin America's communists agree that the influence of the international factor on the revolutionary struggle of peoples is mounting. The Havana Conference of the region's communist parties (1975) stated this as follows: "Changes taking place in Latin America are part of a worldwide trend toward social progress, a trend developing in the age of the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism."¹ The conference noted the great significance of support from socialist countries and of international solidarity.²

The communists of Latin America are consistent in upholding the unity of national, regional and global factors in the liberation struggle and feel that this approach, more than anything else, makes it possible to take political initiatives, define prospects in good time, and head off the dangers threatening the revolutionary movement in and outside the country.

For instance, long before the new Canal Treaty was signed, the People's Party of Panama declared that the Panamanian people could not confront the United States singlehandedly, without support in the form of international solidarity. Its sixth congress (1980) stated that

the PPP "attaches equal importance to international and internal factors of struggle and thinks highly of the assistance that we are getting from the socialist community, particularly the Soviet Union."³

On the strength of the vast experience of revolutionary struggle, communists warn the masses of the danger of either minimizing imperialism's potentialities or thinking of it in terms of its former power. To hold this view is to condemn left-wing organizations to passive tactics, to hoping for particularly favorable international changes. "Unquestionably, imperialism is acting," says Shafik Jorge Handal, CC General Secretary of the Communist Party of El Salvador, "but it is equally unquestionable that its potentialities are shrinking and that in the conditions obtaining today its actions no longer achieve the goals it wants."⁴

This trend is also noted by the communists of other countries, who emphasize that thanks to socialism's growing strength and imperialism's decline the struggle waged by the peoples has become more productive and major changes have occurred in the region.⁵ What are these changes?

As the research group sees it, the new socio-political situation on the continent is determined by at least five important factors. These are listed below according to their priority and confirm the historical optimism of the communists.

First, the argument advanced in the cold war years that it was undesirable for Latin American states to maintain relations with the socialist world was blown sky high. In the 1960s and 1970s many of them established or re-established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Also nothing came of the policy of blockading and isolating Cuba, whose prestige has soared on the international scene.

Second, the strongholds of colonialism in the Western Hemisphere have fallen, and 10 new independent countries appeared on the political map.⁶

Third, the crisis of the ideological postulates of pan-Americanism ("continental security," "joint defense," "inter-American solidarity") and anti-communist doctrines ("ideological frontiers," "incompatibility of communism with the democratic institutions of the Western Hemisphere," "the internal enemy," and so on) has deepened. The Organization of American States is finding it harder than ever to function as a U.S. "department for colonies."

Fourth, the crisis of the entire system of imperialist domination in Latin America has intensified. In an effort to adapt to the changed

situation, the U.S. has come to attach special importance to economic pressure and disguised expansion, and also to operations, orchestrated by the CIA and other special agencies, aimed at destabilizing governments that do not suit it. Accordingly, it assigns an important place to local oligarchic circles and to so-called subimperialist centers to which it has partly transferred the function of coordinating the struggle against revolutionary forces.

Fifth, the Latin American peoples have stiffened their struggle against imperialism and local reaction, for social change. This is demonstrated by the advances made by socialist Cuba, the upturn in the liberation movement in Central America and the Caribbean, the victory of the Grenada and Nicaraguan revolutions, the mounting class struggles in South America, and the tangible progress that has been made by Mexico, Panama, Ecuador, and some other countries in defending and consolidating their sovereignty.

But revolutionary optimism and confidence in complete victory should not eclipse the problems of today and the need to prepare all the revolutionary forces for a long and intensive struggle. The enemy will not retreat without resistance; in some instances he is temporarily successful. Indeed, Chile, Uruguay, Guatemala, Paraguay and Haiti are still ruled by brutal dictatorships. There has been a reactionary coup in Bolivia. Power in Jamaica has passed into the hands of the right. A difficult situation fraught with the danger of fascism persists in Colombia. Argentina cannot get out of its political impasse. In Brazil democratization is on an unsteady course. Even so, the dominant trend on the continent is that the workers and peasants, and all other democratic segments of the population, patriotic, revolutionary parties and organizations have become more active.

It is an answer to the new situation, particularly on the Latin American continent, that in the closing period of the Carter administration and especially after Reagan took over at the White House, the U.S. imperialists have hardened their foreign policy line, accentuating the ideological stereotype alleging that the up-trend in the liberation movement stems from the "intrigues" of the Soviet Union, Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua and other progressive countries.

In this connection the group analyzed the issue of the so-called export of revolution. To justify armed intervention, imperialist spokesmen describe it as "defense," or as response to victorious revolutions, which, they claim, are deliberately "fomenting" social up-

heavals in other countries. Let us take a closer look at these "arguments."

In the countries of Simon Bolivar, José de San Martín, Francisco Morazan and José Martí, who led Latin American peoples, united by a common history, geography and culture, in the struggle for national independence; armed intervention became a U.S. policy instrument nearly a century before the appearance of the Soviet Union and a century and a half before socialist Cuba came into existence. U.S. presidents applied the hegemonist Monroe Doctrine⁷ long before 1917.

Lenin stressed that the socialist revolution triumphs as a result of the operation of objective laws of social development; every attempt to impose a social revolution from without or to hasten it is contrary to Marxist theory. "Of course," he said, "there are people who believe that revolution can break out in a foreign country to order, by agreement. These people are either mad or they are provocateurs" (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 480). He went on to say that "revolutions cannot be made to order or by agreement; they break out when tens of millions of people come to the conclusion that it is impossible to live in the old way any longer" (*ibid*).

Meaningful action by international revolutionary forces can make the struggle of a people easier or help them consolidate their victory. Cuba is a case in point. "Without the Soviet Union's assistance," Monty Johnstone, a British author, notes, "countries like Cuba or Vietnam would never be able to repulse the attempts of U.S. imperialism to crush them."⁸ But this assistance has nothing to do with export of revolution, for it cannot aggravate the class struggle, let alone resolve the historical contradictions between the antagonistic classes of any specific country.

When a victorious people support the struggle of the working people of another country they do so not to accomplish a revolution there but to help them beat off the attacks of reaction backed by the strength, including the military strength of the external counter-revolution, of imperialism in the first place.

In the case of the Cuban revolution, even those who are far remote from it have to admit, along with the Swedish social democrat Bernard Casson, that it "sprang from truly national sources and is finding the strength to survive to this day."⁹

The peoples of Latin America have never stopped fighting exploitation and foreign oppression. It is only natural that in looking for a road to freedom, they turn their eyes to countries where the masses have overthrown their

oppressors. Victorious revolutions have always inspired Latin Americans and reinforced their faith that they can win.

"We consider," said Narciso Isa Conde, General Secretary of the Dominican Communist Party, at the second congress of his party, speaking for a country that has been invaded by the USA twice in the century, "that armed imperialist interference and military intervention justify a political and military presence of socialist countries beyond their frontiers as an expression of solidarity. In such cases, it is wrong to equate the political and military solidarity extended by socialist countries to the governments and revolutionary movements of oppressed countries with imperialist intervention undertaken against the will of the majority of the people . . . We respect the national values of every people. However, we are well aware of the difference between the forces of imperialism, oppression and war, and the forces of socialism, national liberation and peace."¹⁰

The developments in Latin America, the group members noted, are a further indication that accusations of "export" of revolution are a variation of the classical trick used by rogues crying "stop thief!" The only purpose of this is to cover up export of counter-revolution. The latter seeks outside support, for it is the handiwork of an exploiting minority linked economically and politically to imperialist quarters abroad. It means the restoration of power, property relations, ideas, institutions and customs that have become an obstacle to social progress. But abolishing old institutions, replacing people who served the old regime and doing away with reactionary ideology is a long and complicated process. Lenin warned that until the historical epoch of transition from capitalism to a new formation is over, "the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this hope turns into attempts at restoration" (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 28, p. 254).

Counter-revolution is exported both directly (through armed intervention) and in disguise (through material, financial and propaganda support for local reaction by imperialist powers and their monopolies). In view of the present balance of world forces, imperialist leaders — after the many object lessons they have been taught — prefer the latter method.¹¹

This method has been tested in Chile. The Communist Party of El Salvador warns of the "creeping" character of this method, stressing that "imperialist intervention is a phased operation."¹² As for the latest political developments in that country, the Salvadoran revolutionaries consider that the only stage that

has not yet set in "is outright armed invasion."¹³

Imperialist tactics are described in similar terms by Maurice Bishop, leader of the Grenada revolution. Speaking in St. George's in August 1980, he said that imperialism had tried every means and every method to turn the tide of the revolutionary process in Grenada. The last means left to it was direct intervention.

The consequences of the "new" approach are evident also in the case of Bolivia, where local reaction effected a coup in 1980 with the support of the USA and Argentina and stopped the advance of the left-wing forces at the stage of presidential elections.

"It is incredible," said Fidel Castro at the second congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, "that in the the modern world there are people who talk of military interference and of the need to return to the 'big stick' on our continent. Such illusions should better be dropped as soon as possible. There have been persons who dreamed of conquering the world, but ended by turning into dust themselves. Today the peoples have mastered many and varied forms of struggle. The population of Latin America and the Caribbean exceeds 300 million and their territory is twice that of the United States.

"Reagan once said that the mistake was not that the war in Vietnam was started, but that it was lost. In Latin America a war may lead to a bigger defeat than in Vietnam."¹⁴

What imperils the free expression of the will of Latin American peoples is, therefore, not the mythical "export of revolution" but the perfectly real export of counter-revolution.

The aggressive forces of imperialism and world reaction use the word "terrorism" to describe the people's liberation struggle. The current slander campaign carefully orchestrated by Washington is intended to lull the vigilance of world opinion and help carry out the plans for armed intervention in countries which have chosen the path of social emancipation. Communist parties and other progressive forces are firm in rebuffing this campaign. They call it the height of shamelessness and hypocrisy and point out that terrorism has been raised to the rank of state policy by none other than Washington. The whole history of Latin America is evidence of this. Have not U.S. Congressmen themselves admitted officially time and again that there had been dozens of plans to assassinate Fidel Castro? Who but the CIA together with Pinochet's secret police DINA organized the assassination in Washington of Chile's former Foreign Minister Orlando Letelier?

The Reagan administration has not only stepped up military aid to the Salvadoran junta but has set out to coordinate the activity of its repressive agencies, smuggling into that country the Green Berets and "experts" in terrorism and other dirty operations.

Washington is trying to use the events in El Salvador to inflame international tensions steeply and take the world back to the cold war; threaten all who support the peoples' movement for freedom and independence; intimidate progressive states, above all Cuba and Nicaragua which it qualifies as "the main source of subversive activity on the continent;" take in hand its West European and other partners who are not always prepared to follow the "big stick" blindly; and, lastly, divert world opinion from the peace initiatives of the socialist community.

Protest has been growing across the continent against Reagan's attempts to revive the "manifest destiny" theory, which was rejected by the majority of Latin American countries. According to its present version, Canada, Mexico, Central America, and also the Caribbean are declared three of the zones vital to the USA. That theory was sharply attacked by President José Lopez Portillo of Mexico who again warned the White House last March of the danger in the policy of intervention, and stressed that the will of the peoples for self-determination should be respected.¹⁵

As matters stand, resistance to attempts to smear the national liberation movement by depicting it as "international terrorism", and to impose "ideological borders" to contain that movement is becoming a pressing task for all progressive forces. The destiny of the revolutionary struggles in Latin America, too, will largely depend on how this task is accomplished.

The socio-political changes that have occurred on the continent and the world are so considerable and the strength and influence of socialism have grown so greatly that they have "enabled the revolutionaries of many countries to raise problems of which one could not even think before," to quote Rodolfo Ghioldi, CC Executive Committee member, Communist Party of Argentina.¹⁶

In this connection the communists logically turn to the experience of Nicaragua, which they consider to have telescoped the most important aspects of the liberation movement in the region. They do not confine themselves to putting it on record that the international situation was favorable to the victory of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, but note the creative character of its foreign policy aimed at winning

friends and neutralizing enemies. The Sandinistas were able to use the contradictions among the ruling circles of the USA, doing it flexibly if at an understandable risk. In the wake of the Cuban revolution, they showed that in present-day conditions a pro-imperialist regime can be defeated not only in distant areas of Africa or Asia but in that part of the Latin American region seen by the USA as the closest "strategic hinterland" and where traditional U.S. influence is particularly strong.

Progressive world opinion, whose solidarity tied the hands of the most aggressive imperialist forces, played a tremendous role in the victory of the SNLF. The support extended to anti-Somoza forces by many Latin American governments, including governments that do not share the Sandinistas' views, was a new and highly important factor. The Andean group of countries came out unanimously in defense of these forces. What united them? First of all, membership of a common economic alignment that at the time had a perfectly real if moderate nationalistic trend. Thus a clash with imperialism in the economic field had political implications as well. It was no accident, therefore, that even the OAS voted down the U.S. plan for intervention and denounced the Somoza regime.

Latin American patriots note the breadth of the international solidarity movement in support of the Sandinistas. The movement was expressive of the spirit and imperatives of the day. Of course, what is needed for a revolutionary situation to mature, let alone for a people to achieve victory, is something more than increased international support, the growing impact of the consequences of the general crisis of capitalism and the political and economic dislocation of the social structure. This is seen in the periodical deterioration of the situation in various countries that does not, however, result in social upheavals. A condition of victory in a revolution is above all the existence of a revolutionary force capable of interpreting the people's demands correctly and in good time, evaluate the opportunities, and lead the people.

The Nicaraguan revolution showed that unity of the forces seeking deep-going social changes is a decisive condition for success. As long as the Sandinistas operated separately, their struggle bore little fruit. The SNLF did not win international support until it overcame its internal contradictions, became a truly monolithic force, and led the entire anti-Somoza movement. T. Borge, Minister of Internal Affairs, the only surviving founding member of the Sandinista Front, punctuated every word with emphasis when he said that "there is no

victory without unity" and that "sometimes we are compelled to give in, not to our enemies, but to our differences."¹⁷

The Nicaraguan revolution has confirmed that far from impeding armed struggle, as some petty-bourgeois theorists contend with reference to the experience of the 1960s, the present international situation largely predetermines its favorable outcome. To be sure, the events in Nicaragua do not warrant the view that henceforth the only method of winning power is the armed one. The fact that so far this method has been the only one to lead to victory in Latin America does not imply that other methods or combinations of them are alien to the revolution. The lesson of Nicaragua does not at all refute the Chilean communists' following conclusion: "In some countries and under certain conditions (our italics — the authors) the possibility of winning power by non-violent means has not been invalidated by the fascist coup in Chile... By the same token, the temporary defeat of a national movement that has had recourse to insurrection or other forms of armed struggle does not signify that the revolution in that country is doomed to failure."¹⁸

Rodney Arismendi, CC First Secretary of the Communist Party of Uruguay, has said that "what miscarried in Latin America in the 1960s was not the possibility of guerrilla warfare as a method, but 'guerrillism.'"¹⁹ Guerrilla warfare has deep roots on the continent. It was brilliantly used by Augusto Cesar Sandino and Fidel Castro. Besides, not all guerrilla movements of the time were inviable from the outset. The Sandinista Front also had two severe military setbacks before it won in new conditions, having changed in many ways, both politically and ideologically.

The Sandinistas consider that no form of struggle should be absolutized, that a road which led to defeat in the past may in future lead to victory. As T. Borge puts it, "peoples fighting for independence or liberation can achieve their goals by diverse means, by using legal opportunities or by an armed struggle, in each case depending on the concrete situation."²⁰

The experience of Nicaragua and of Grenada confirms another important view: it is difficult or even impossible to explain many important phenomena of the liberation struggle in Latin America without taking account of the growing influence of the powerful anti-imperialist revolutionary forces of our epoch (the socialist world system, the proletariat in industrial capitalist states, the working class and other exploited people in dependent countries, and also the peoples of the colonies). For instance

why is it so that, apart from the existing communist and workers' parties, new organizations appear in the region, including guerrilla groups, advocating an openly anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic, and sometimes anti-capitalist program? This is especially characteristic of countries where the proletariat, though it grows in numbers and its quality is improving, is still weak, while pre-capitalist survivals are very strong. "It is wrong to consider," the Sandinistas point out, joining issue with the opportunist approach to the problem of power, "that organized revolutionaries should refuse to destroy the repressive capitalist apparatus and refrain from taking power, if only under democratic slogans, in societies in which the proletariat does not constitute the majority of the population, the process under way is not markedly socialist, and the masses are not under the influence of Marxism-Leninism or do not operate consciously in accordance with its tenets."²¹

The impact of the new balance of world forces also accounts for a certain discrepancy between the level of socio-economic development attained by one country or another and the scope, depth and general orientation of the liberation movement. A revolution could also have triumphed before, at the time of undivided imperialist sway. However, it could only have come about in relatively developed and more or less large and densely populated capitalist countries. This is what Lenin meant when he wrote in one of his notes that "without a certain degree of capitalist development we would not have achieved our aim." *In the international conditions obtaining today, any country can embark on far-reaching social changes irrespective of its area, the size of its population or its economic level, provided there is a revolutionary situation.* Lastly, if local conditions alone are taken into account, it cannot be explained why Marxism-Leninism has spread so widely in Latin American countries, most of which are shackled by neo-colonial dependence and influenced by pro-imperialist ideology.

The continent's communists have always pointed to the need to constantly specify the program of the advanced classes and social strata, bringing it into line with the given historical moment. This is particularly important where objective conditions for radical, anti-capitalist changes have yet to mature. The primary target of such a program is, first, to win supporters, if only temporary and unsteady ones, by using the changed balance of world forces, and second (after victory), to avoid turning yesterday's allies away from cooperation

and go with them as far as possible. In other words, the task is to shoulder a burden that can be carried and distribute it among all participants in the process. This can be done in the new international situation with the support of peace-loving, democratic forces, with existing socialism showing solidarity. "Tactics," Lenin wrote, "must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of *all* the class forces of a particular state (and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over) as well as on the experience of revolutionary movements" (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 63).

The countries that have put an end to the regime of exploitation are faced with difficult problems. First and foremost, they have to combine accelerated economic growth with improving the standard of living. In Nicaragua, for instance, an important matter in this respect is the new regime's attitude to that part of the bourgeoisie which has contributed to the struggle against the dictatorship and is willing on definite terms to help rehabilitate the economy. This is why we consider Fidel Castro's assessment of the Sandinistas' policy very accurate. "Nicaragua," he said, "is carrying out a new revolutionary project which gives priority to national renaissance on the basis of cooperation among the interested forces . . . We consider that in the light of the international situation and Nicaraguan realities the project worked out by the Sandinistas is the best and most reasonable thing that can be done at present."²²

It is the changed balance of world forces deterring the aggressive circles of imperialism and internal counter-revolution that enables the countries that have broken the chains of oppression to solve formidable economic problems at a smaller social outlay and to pursue a flexible home policy.

Latin American realities lead many revolutionaries to another important conclusion, namely, that the part of the petty bourgeoisie (civilian or military) which has assumed the leadership of the revolution is equal to taking a country (in certain circumstances, as, in particular, when revolutionary proletarian ideology is considerably widespread) to a point beyond which capitalist relations can be broken. This is because what we have here is a "transition class"²³ vacillating between the capitalists and the proletarians. *Within the framework of the struggle between the two world systems, under the impact of the mounting general crisis of capitalism, under pressure from below, and with solidarity from progressive regimes and*

the world revolutionary and national liberation movement, the advanced segments of this petty bourgeoisie are capable of moving gradually to the left, entering into alliance with the working class, and effecting far-reaching structural changes.

It is from this angle that the group analyzed the current phase of the liberation process in Panama. Panama's communists believe that "a transition from bourgeois democracy, which is in a deep crisis, to progressive democracy, which is an intermediate stage on the road to a people's democracy and serves to consummate national liberation and carry forward the transition to socialism,"²⁴ has been going on ever since 1968, when progressive military of petty-bourgeois origin took over.

However, such a trend may weaken, in the opinion of the People's Party of Panama, for it depends on narrow national and continental factors rather than on global ones, primarily on the balance of internal forces (which is very mobile and inconstant), the revolutionary energy of the masses, and on the gains of other Latin American countries in the struggle against imperialism. The worldview of the ruling circles, the instability of the petty bourgeoisie's policy line, its voluntarism and its distrust of the communists, whom it regards as a rival in the struggle for the masses if not an outright enemy, also play a role. The zigzags, halts and occasional reverses that have marked the Panamanian process, speak for themselves.

This question obviously requires clarification. The point is that the communists want to stir all the people to struggle so that, when they come to power, they will have as many people as possible taking part in the transformation of society on a humane basis. However, they are convinced that only the proletariat as a class, having rid itself from manifestations of anarchosyndicalism, reformism and revisionism, is capable of advancing along this path consistently. True patriots and internationalists, the communists exclude nobody from the revolutionary process and never impose their ideas on others but see to it that these ideas are widely disseminated and explained, believing that scientific Marxist ideology is in itself an attractive force for all people who are honest and far-sighted.

The research group only concerned itself with some of the problems related to the role of the international factor in the revolutionary struggle. However, these problems bear the indelible stamp of the present, when rela-

tions between the United States and Latin America have greatly deteriorated, the structural crisis has gone very far in many countries, and the working class as well as the majority of other working people on the continent have come close to a sharp and perhaps decisive clash with imperialism and the oligarchy.

The Havana Conference pointed in no uncertain terms to "the universal character of the struggle between the peoples and imperialism" and stated that "the struggle of Latin America is a component of the worldwide political and economic battle."²⁵ Developments have borne out this estimation. The Central Committee report to the 26th CPSU congress says that "the communists, armed with the Marxist-Leninist teaching, see the essence and perspective of the process in the world more profoundly and more correctly than anybody else, and draw the right conclusions from them for their struggle for the interests of the working class, the working people of their countries, and for democracy, peace and socialism." It is more and more evident that the liberation movement in one or another country of the region can be successful only when the subjective forces of the revolution attain the required degree of maturity and are able to use an objectively emerging revolutionary situation, when they can consider all the pros and cons in the context of the international situation and make the correct decision on the basis of a detailed analysis.

1. Conferencia de los Partidos Comunistas de America Latina y del Caribe, Havana, Cuba, June 13, 1975, p. 40.

2. Ibid., p. 42.

3. "Documento central del VI Congreso nacional del Partido del Pueblo de Panama", Panama City, 1980, p. 32.

4. *Libertad*, October 26-November 1, 1979.

5. *Por la victoria democratica y el ejercicio de la soberania nacional. Hacia un partido de masas*, La Paz, 1980, pp. 12-13; *PCU. Boletin del exterior*, 3/1980, p. 2; *Tribuna popular*, September 19-25, 1980; *Documentos do Partido comunista brasileiro*, Lisbon, 1976, pp. 213-214; *10 preguntas a Fernando Nadra*, Buenos Aires, 1980, pp. 10-14, 22-24; *El Partido comunista frente a la crisis actual*, Mexico City, 1977, pp. 36-45; *Partido Comunista de Chile, Boletin del Exterior*, 26/1977, pp. 84-85; etc.

6. Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Barbados, Bahamas, Grenada, Surinam, Dominican Republic, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and Grenadines; Belize is on the way to independence. — Ed.

7. Proclaimed in 1823, with "America for Americans" as its chief slogan, it became a vehicle of U.S. expansionism in Latin America. It seemed that in the past few decades this notorious doctrine has been buried, but the Reagan administration has resurrected it to justify its interference in the affairs of El Salvador and other Central American states.

8. *Marxism Today*, August 1979, p. 230.

9. *Le Monde diplomatique en español*, May 1980, p. 19.
10. *Hablan los comunistas*, March 16-22, 1979, pp. 19-20.
11. The latest direct U.S. intervention occurred in 1965 in the Dominican Republic, where the revolutionary democratic forces were on the threshold of victory.
12. *Boletín exterior del Partido Comunista de El Salvador*, No. 5, 1980, p. 3.
13. *Boletín de prensa. Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional*, No. 15, 1981, p. 3.
14. *Granma*, December 20, 1980.
15. *Granma*, March 11, 1981.
16. Rodolfo Ghioldi, *Escritos*. Vol. III. Buenos Aires, 1976, p. 222.
17. *Le monde diplomatique en español*, January 1980, p. 24.
18. *WMR*, August 1974.
19. *Estudios*, No. 73, 1979, p. 22.
20. *Le monde diplomatique en español*, January 1980, p. 24.
21. Orlando Nunez, "Los sectores medios en los procesos revolucionarios." *Conferencia teorica internacional. La estructura de clases en America Latina. Memorias*. Havana, March 26-28, 1980, p. 249.
22. *Granma*, July 28, 1980.
23. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works in Three Volumes*, Vol. 1, p. 426.
24. "La legalidad de nuestro partido es una victoria," Panama, 1980, p. 9.
25. *Conferencia de los Partidos Comunistas de America Latina y del Caribe*, Havana, Cuba, June 13, 1975, p. 76.

Monetarism: cure for crisis?

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The remark attributed to Helmut Schmidt, that "things will never again be the same as they were before 1974," is amply borne out by even a cursory glance at the type of statistical series for gross product for the "market economies," world trade and the level of employment presented annually in the UN Statistical Yearbook. The crisis which has gripped the capitalist system is sharply reflected in current bourgeois economic thought and policy, most obviously in the collapse of the previous dominance of Keynesian economics. But it is also evident in the obstinate adherence to "monetarist" policies,¹ of a more or less strict type, in the majority of advanced capitalist countries despite both the questionable validity of the underlying theory and the complete lack of success of the policy up till now.

While Keynesian economists were very willing to attribute the long postwar capitalist boom to the widespread adoption of Keynesian policies after 1945,² the late 1960s brought a new phenomenon, "stagflation", or the combination of inflation and high unemployment, which proved to be the point at which monetarism began what was ultimately to prove its successful attack on Keynesian dominance. It was not easy in Keynesian terms to explain stagflation,³ since inflation as such was seen within that framework as arising only as the economy reached full or near-full employment and bottlenecks in the supply of particular inputs, especially workers and particularly skilled workers, began to appear. Empirically, then, Keynesian economists were unable to provide an explanation for what was to become the

primary characteristic of advanced capitalist economies in the 1970s, except by throwing off their supposed expertise and restraint as economists and undertaking the type of dubious sociologizing which led them to see prices and incomes policies⁴ as the main way out of the dilemma they faced.

Initially, the Phillips Curve⁵ had provided them with an apparent escape route. In this model, if inflation were to be held at "tolerable" levels, two possibilities presented themselves: either unemployment could be forced up to levels at which (the model predicted) inflation would be checked, or, as was preferred by most Keynesians, the trade union movement could be induced to accept "restraint" in wage bargaining, in effect to shift the terms of the trade-off and enable the former "solution" to be avoided. Here the Keynesians relied on the doctrine, formulated by Keynes himself, which says that money and real wages tend to move in opposite directions. They claimed that it was useless to fight for higher money wages because this only led to a growth of prices and eroded real wages. But if money wages were reduced, they said, prices would fall, and real wages go up. Keynes said that the struggle for higher money wages was nothing but a struggle for a re-distribution of aggregate real wages between various groups of workers. Wages were thus given the primary responsibility in determining the rate of inflation, a belief bourgeois economists still hold.

In the early 1970s came the collapse of the Phillips Curve relation. The Keynesians therefore suddenly found themselves in the same

camp as conservative critics of trade union power, the "trade union state" and the characterization of trade union leaders as "feudal barons," though they were somewhat more likely than the latter to have some comment to make about increasing monopolization within industry.⁶

The collapse of Keynesian economics was thus closely related to its theoretical collapse in the face of stagflation, the main feature of developed capitalist economies in the 1970s. But, leaving aside the general inadequacies of Keynesian economics as such, the theoretical collapse had been prepared by the willingness of the Keynesians themselves to accept what became known in the economic literature as the "neo-classical synthesis,"⁷ i.e., the welding-together on a purely formal plane of Keynesian economics and neo-classical economics into an overall explanatory model which was claimed to be "more general" than that of Keynes, in the sense that it could be used to explain the behavior of the economy in a wider range of situations than could Keynesian theory.⁸

Not merely did the neoclassical synthesis suggest that Keynesian economics was applicable only to situations of depression; it also made the choice between neoclassical economics and the Keynesian approach a purely empirical matter. If the functional relationships between what were seen as key economic variables possessed certain values or adopted certain configurations, Keynesian policy measures were indicated; in other cases, the neoclassical measures were to be preferred. No real issues were then at stake, it was concluded, only matters which could be made the subject of empirical testing, and certainly not any difference as to the way in which a capitalist economy worked. On the purely theoretical level, Keynesians had no real answer to the deployment against them of that very neoclassical synthesis they had accepted.⁹ Although they continued to cling to some of the insights bequeathed to them by Keynes, e.g., the inherent instability of a capitalist economy, they were able to do little more than assert them as beliefs.

A wide range of consequences followed from this theoretical defeat. If Keynes had been right to downgrade the importance of monetary policy in times of depression, critics argued, Keynesians erred in inferring a general ineffectiveness of monetary policy. Similarly, if government intervention through fiscal policy was valid and essential to stabilize the capitalist economy in times of recession, it was wrong to infer a need for continuous government intervention, as Keynesians had done.

When monetarism developed in the late 1960s, therefore, it did so in response to a real problem to which Keynesian economics appeared to have no answer, at least an answer which lay within the framework of the bourgeois economic theorizing which Keynesians themselves firmly accepted. If the success of the monetarist counter-attack was due, initially at least, to its skilful exposure of the theoretical and empirical weaknesses in the dominant orthodoxy, its final victory must be seen, however, as stemming from the real support it offered to a capitalism confronting a crisis of historic severity. To clarify monetarism's role in this respect, we need to begin with an attempt at a definition of monetarism.

Methodologically, monetarism tends toward the most naive kind of positivism. The classical statement of its procedural basis was given by Friedman: rather than the "validity" of a theory being an object of concern, it is predictive ability which is the crucial aspect. A theory's assumptions cannot be compared directly with reality; hence the question of the realism or fantasy of the hypotheses in terms of which the theory is framed is irrelevant. The "ultimate goal" of a theory is prediction, and it is its success (or lack of it) in performing that function which is the sole criterion for acceptance or non-acceptance.¹⁰

The strength of this approach was two-fold. On the one hand, it did describe what bourgeois economists actually did in their theorizing (especially given their unwillingness to examine critically the methodological procedures with which they customarily operated). On the other hand, it switched the argument between Keynesians and monetarists to the purely empirical sphere. It was on this terrain that monetarism first gained acceptance in the economic profession itself: the classic empirical studies by Friedman and Meiselman and the model developed at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis were of great significance in this respect.¹¹ The latter in particular yielded striking results: fiscal policy was found to be less effective than monetary policy in influencing economic activity, and such effects as fiscal policy did have were far less certain than those of monetary policy.

This did not lead, however, to the proposition that government intervention should in future emphasize monetary rather than fiscal policy, but rather to the conclusion that government discretionary intervention in general must be reduced. For while monetary policy was more effective than variations in tax rates or government expenditures, it was argued, it was subject to such long and variable

time-lags that government use of it was bound to destabilize rather than stabilize the economy, especially given the time-lags that already existed between recognizing a deviation from a desired path for the economy, forming a policy to overcome it, and putting it into effect. Better, in short, to remove all discretion from government, and subject its interventions to rules of various kinds: a fixed rate of growth of the money supply, for example.

The monetarist emphasis on the importance of money thus has paradoxical aspects. The money supply is so important, with all inflationary situations being explicable in terms of an "excessive" expansion of the money supply, that it should be controlled; but it should be controlled via fixed rules. Yet in a more basic sense, the money supply is not important: its "misbehavior" can certainly distort and inhibit the operation of the "real" (i.e., non-monetary) economy, but ultimately it is powerless to prevent that real economy from delivering the rate of growth, level of unemployment, and so on, that the "real" variables of technological change, etc., make possible.

For there is nothing in the empirical testing and its results in themselves which would lead directly to the type of policy conclusions associated with monetarism. As monetarists themselves argue in their *academic controversies* with Keynesians, the only issues at stake between them are empirical ones: what is the correct specification of the demand for money, what is the way in which monetary impulses are transmitted to the level of economic activity, and so on. The empirical testing upon which monetarism places so much emphasis is both prior and subsequent to the underlying ideological framework characteristic of monetarism. Prior, in that the movement of monetarism in public has been from the empirical tests to the ideology; subsequent, in that the ideology has provided the framework within which the results have been pressed into justifying a particular view of the nature of the operation of a capitalist economy.

The essential feature of this ideology is the belief (for that is what it is) that a capitalist economy is inherently stable: like a homeostatic device, it possesses adjustment mechanisms which ensure that any movement away from the path dictated by the real variables will be short-lived. When it is pointed out that this is clearly at odds with the state of the British economy, the monetarists reply: "It is government intervention that has made the system less stable and efficient by depriving it of flexibility." The time dimension of this adjustment process is not specified in terms of calen-

dar time, but rather in terms of the time required for the adjustment process to work itself out. Hence the "long-run" may embrace a very long period of calendar time indeed to be achieved. From this it follows that government intervention must be aimed solely at providing a stable framework within which the self-adjusting mechanisms (the "market forces") can operate, for any other type of intervention inhibits and distorts this process. Minimum wage laws; earnings-related unemployment benefits; the extension of social security benefits for illness, etc.; government aid to particular industries and regions suffering from dislocations of economic restructuring: all such interventions fly in the face of the objective compulsions of the market. Indeed, by introducing "rigidities" into the system, they actually exacerbate the very difficulties they seek to solve. Moreover, they involve government expenditure of various types, and hence a government sector whose size exceeds that which would be dictated by the operation of the "real" variables of the economy. Even more, since the government sector can only be financed by taxation, borrowing, or "printing money," its expansion "crowds out" the private sector, absorbing resources which would otherwise be allocated to "more productive" uses via the market mechanism.¹²

The broader propositions of monetarism that are more ideologically based possess a feature which, in view of the trend's permeation by positivism, is striking: *their validity cannot be subjected to satisfactory empirical testing.* The fact that the "long-term" has no calendar-time specification means that the success or failure of monetarist policy is bound to remain an open question forever: if after a certain amount of time, they have not yielded the results claimed for them, the defense is ready at hand that they have not yet had sufficient time to operate. Consideration of the concrete manifestations of monetarism in the policy of big capital goes beyond the framework of my subject, but I think that it is unlikely that any such period of time could or would be allowed to the monetarists by governments in advanced capitalist economies faced with the increasing social unrest that is bound to be created by the savagely restrictive policies normally associated with monetarism (though the Pinochet regime, which has resorted to Friedman's help, provides a more favorable laboratory).

The ideological significance of monetarism is emphasized by the increasing scepticism among some economists, on purely technical grounds, with the validity of some of the empirical tests used by monetarists to support their

policy prescriptions. This type of opposition, an opposition on detail, could almost be said to be centered in the staffs of the central banks whose role in economic policy has been sharply increased by the monetarist dominance. Simply, many in the central banks do not really believe that they can control the supply of money in the relatively direct way claimed by monetarists.¹³ Similarly, while the earlier studies referred to above have been severely mauled by academic economists, the later work has also had serious question marks put against it.¹⁴ But the opposition among bourgeois academics and experts has basically remained on this level, while the monetarists' emphasis on microeconomic¹⁵ (or "supply side") considerations now dominates the approach even of their opponents.

Monetarism, as an ideology, has a strength that is obscured by characterizing it simply as an atavistic throwback to the general economic opinions dominant in the 1920s and 1930s, or an encapsulation of the fears of small businessmen facing expropriation by large capital. Clearly, monetarism in our country does embody both these strands, but what is more important is the Tory government's hard-headed attack on working-class positions and a much more elaborate body of theory than any government has done since 1945.

All of this is a reflection of the so-called decline of social democratic sentiment alleged to be occurring in all advanced capitalist economies, but the brutality of the Tory government's policies is said to owe most to the peculiar solidity and intransigence of the working-class movement in Britain. "Getting tough with the unions" is seen as one essential part of its policies, but this is to be done not so much by law (though some steps are being taken in this direction) as by creating an economic and ideological climate which in effect aims at weakening union strength and inducing among workers an extremity of concern for their jobs which will lead them to acquiesce in attacks on their wages and on their general living standards.

Here, capital relies on the monetarists, who claim that one way to increase employment is to cut wages. They assert that the existing level of wages and the strong trade union movement are an obstacle to higher employment.

Another source of monetarist strength in the industrialized capitalist countries lies in the fact that it has presented itself as populism which capitalizes upon the widespread resentment felt by ordinary people at the arbitrary attitudes of government bureaucracies. On the other hand, while monopoly capitalists cer-

tainly require the aid of the state in the reproduction and restructuring of capitalism, they are also aware of the dangers that greater involvement of the state in their activities could bring with it in other circumstances.

Britain's Tory government has failed to make any headway in improving economic life in any appreciable way. Still, the government shows every sign of being quite prepared to stick with this policy, despite the increasing unrest among its own supporters, because it believes that its effects will take at least one term of office to achieve. It is emboldened in doing so, first, by the initial successes it has had in discouraging and dividing the working class in action to defend its positions. Second, its own supporters either wholeheartedly support the policy, especially the massive cuts in government spending on everything but defense and the police, or have simply nothing to put against a policy which remains within the capitalist framework.¹⁶

But no real opposition to monetarism is posed either by the economic theorists or the leadership of the social democratic parties (when in power, the latter themselves pursued monetarist policies). The only departure by these groups from monetarism is to regard the prices and incomes policy as a panacea.¹⁷ There is growing and fundamental resistance to monetarism only from the working-class movement, including the left forces in the social democratic parties,¹⁸ the forces which have put forward an alternative economic strategy.

These proposals are being developed through the efforts of the Communist Party of Great Britain and the left of the Labour Party. Differences still remain on just what constitutes such an alternative economic strategy, but on many points there is agreement. Certainly, there is realization among the left forces that the adoption of an alternative strategy entails a basic change in the terms upon which Britain has been inserted into the world capitalist division of labor, namely, withdrawal from the EEC and other similar "international" organizations.

It is certainly highly indicative in this contest that such a strategy proceeds from a recognition of this fact: changes in the character of economic policy required to overcome the crisis cannot be put through without broad democratization of the whole of society. That is the problem of political economy in the true sense of the word. So long as it remains unsolved, bourgeois economic thinking — in its monetarist version — may and does find itself in a state of crisis. But that does not at all mean that its ideological domination is about to end.

Many Labour Party members seem to be coming to realize that vital changes in the economy and the surmounting of the recession are inconceivable without important extension of democracy both within the party and in the whole of society, something that does not simply add up to a political task. The alternative strategy not only paves the way for the shaping of a broad democratic alliance, but in fact makes it necessary. It can give the working class the strength it needs to issue a challenge to the ideological domination of the bourgeoisie and take the first few steps along the road leading to a socialist Britain.

1. Monetarists attach crucial importance to the monetary sphere of the economy (hence the name of the doctrine), believing that all the improvement of the capitalist economy requires is for the growth of the money supply to be slower than the production of goods and services. The basic ideas of the doctrine were formulated by the U.S. economist Milton Friedman. Its advocates want state intervention in the economy to be sharply curbed, for they claim that it merely upsets the balance of the private capitalist market mechanism. Monetarist type views are professed by many statesmen in the capitalist countries, among them by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Commenting on her visit to the United States in February and March of this year, *The Economist* said that President Ronald Reagan was inclined to share these views. At any rate, it said, Reagan also aims to roll back the development of state industries, shift resources to private people and industries, stimulate competition between companies, and allow the market to fix prices without intervention by the state (see, *The Economist*, February 28-March 6, 1981, p. 17). The present article considers some theoretical aspects of the critique of the monetarist conceptions in the context of Great Britain. — Ed.

2. Walter Heller, *New Dimensions of Political Economy*, 1966.

3. Although a Keynesian approach has recently been advanced by J.A. Kregel: "A Keynesian Approach to Inflation," in: D.C. Heathfield: *Perspectives on Inflation: Models and Policies* (1979).

4. The prices and incomes policy, bourgeois economists claim, should lead to a fair distribution of the social product. In practice, it degenerates into a freeze on wages without any corresponding freeze on prices. — Ed.

5. The New Zealand economist A. Phillips used British data for the 1861-1957 period to establish an allegedly stable relation between the level of prices and employment. He asserted that recession could be overcome and employment increased by sacrificing the purchasing power of money. Conversely, the maintenance of stable prices and the strengthening of the currency imply a drop in the level of employment and economic activity. This inverse proportion between inflation and unemployment is reflected in the Phillips Curve. — Ed.

6. See, for instance, J.K. Galbraith, *The Observer*, August 31, 1980. Keynesianism itself was, in effect, engendered by the sharp crisis processes which the monopolization of the capitalist economy produced. The founder of this school of bourgeois economics, John Maynard Keynes, in his main work, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), asserted that state intervention (provision of "effective demand," in the first place) would help the capitalist economy to function. — Ed.

7. The merger of neoclassical synthesis and Keynesianism was made possible by the fact that the Keynesians

adopted some fundamental neoclassical tenets. While Keynes himself, for instance, rejected the labor theory of value as a whole, and especially that part of it which helps to expose the exploitive nature of capitalism, but regarded the social product as an embodiment of the labor expended on its production. His followers adopted the neoclassical subjective theory of value, according to which the value of a product is created by three "factors of production:" labor, capital and land, which means that income must be distributed in accordance with the "contribution" made by each factor in creating the social product. — Ed.

8. This "synthesis", first mentioned in an article by J.R. Hicks, "Mr. Keynes and the Classics", *Econometrica*, 1937), has been turned into something of a canon by the writings of Paul Samuelson, and especially as a result of the numerous editions of his textbook on economics, which has had an effect on the broadest readership.

9. Neoclassical theories brought out some of the vulnerable elements of Keynesian and post-Keynesian models. For instance, the Keynesians asserted that increment in production was a function of new investment. Actually, such increment could result from the employment of new workers to make use of idle capacities. While the Keynesians regard investment as the chief factor behind economic growth, the neoclassics add labor, natural resources and technical progress. — Ed.

10. Thus, says Friedman, the hypothesis that firms seek to maximize profits by producing at a level at which marginal cost equals marginal revenue must be seen as an "as-if" proposition: they do not really know the relevant cost and demand functions, but they act "as if" they do, in the sense that their behavior is "compatible" with this hypothesis. Moreover, the "survivor test" provides additional confirmation of the hypothesis, in that, whatever the immediate determinant of firms' behavior really is, the firm will "prosper and expand" "whenever this determinant happens to lead to behavior consistent with" the profit-maximization hypothesis (Milton Friedman, "The Methodology of Positive Economics." In his: *Essays in Positive Economics*, 1953.)

11. Milton Friedman and D. Meiselman: "The Relative Stability of Monetary Velocity and the Investment Multiplier in the United States 1898-1958," in: Commission on Money and Credit, *Stabilization Policies* (1963); L.C. Anderson and Jerry L. Jordan: "Monetary and Fiscal Actions: A Test of Their Relative Importance in Economic Stabilization", *Review*, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, November 1968.

12. For the arguments behind this approach, see: H.R. Vane and J.L. Thompson: *Monetarism: Theory, Evidence and Policy* (1979).

13. "Monetary Base Control": *Bank of England Quarterly Bulletin*, June 1979.

14. As one example, Ekkehard von Knorring, "Der Zusammenhang zwischen Lohn- und Beschäftigtenstruktur": *WSI-Mitteilungen*, 2/1980; also D. Savage, articles in the *National Institute Economic Review*, February 1980 and August 1979.

15. The advocates of microanalysis hold that the economy is made up of economic units linked via the market. Hence the emphasis on the consideration of the motives for the activities of the individual enterprise, individual firm, the prices of individual products, and so on. — Ed.

16. The British press recently carried a letter addressed to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer signed by 364 economists. It said that the government's economic policy tended to deepen the depression, to destroy industry and to jeopardize economic and political stability. It urged an end to the economic experiment which had not justified itself. — Ed.

17. This also applies to the financial sector. Christopher Johnson, *A Monetarist Strategy: Lloyds Bank Economic Bulletin*, No. 17 (May 1980).

18. London SCE Group: "Crisis, the Labor Movement and the Alternative Economic Strategy", in: *Capital and Class*, Summer 1979.

Nuclear omnicide — threat to civilization

SCIENTISTS STATE THEIR VIEWS

To safeguard and consolidate peace is the central task of our time. All people of goodwill are directing their efforts toward that end. Progressive scientists are becoming increasingly active in the struggle to curb the arms race and avert a military catastrophe into which imperialist aggressive circles are trying to drag the peoples. For many years now the Pugwash Movement of Scientists for Peace and the World Federation of Scientific Workers have been active in this role. Public opinion has been increasingly influenced by the world association "School As an Instrument of Peace," which has many Nobel Prize laureates among its members, and also newly-formed anti-war organizations, such as the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and Physicians for Social Responsibility in the United States, Scientists Against Nuclear Weapons in Great Britain, and Science for Peace in Canada. Their members see their duty in scientifically showing it is imperative to ban nuclear arms. "The peoples must know the truth about the destructive consequences for humankind of a nuclear war," said Leonid Brezhnev at the 26th congress of the CPSU. *"We suggest that a competent international committee should be set up, which would demonstrate the vital necessity of preventing a nuclear catastrophe. The committee could be composed of the most eminent scientists of different countries. The whole world should be informed of the conclusions they draw."*

The WMR Commission on Problems of Peace and Democratic Movements addressed a number of outstanding scientists, asking them to answer the following question:

— *What would a nuclear war spell out for mankind and life on earth generally?*

— *Will it jeopardize coming generations?*

— *Can such a war be won?*

— *Is a "limited" nuclear war possible?*

— *What must be done to prevent a nuclear catastrophe?*

— *What can scientists do to that end?*

These questions have been answered by

Bohumil Kvasil, President of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences; Professor Georg Fuchs, President of the International Institute for Peace in Vienna; Academician Josef Riman, Director of the Institute of Molecular Genetics, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences; John Somerville, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, City University of New York; and Academician Vladimir Hajko, President of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Their answers are given in the form of an exchange between the scientists by correspondence, as it were.

The Hiroshima and Nagasaki tragedy cautions

Fuchs. In August 1945, U.S. planes dropped one atomic bomb each on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The consequences of that act defied imagination: some 200,000 people died in Hiroshima and about 80,000 in Nagasaki.

Death came in three different ways. First the strike wave rushed across the cities, demolishing most of the houses and burying a huge number of people under their ruins. Simultaneously, the fireballs formed at the places of atomic explosions radiated intense heat, causing acute, in many cases terminal burns. The heat turned bodies into vapor and all that remained of a human life was a black spot — a shadow on the ground. This was followed by "fire hurricanes," which finished the job, burning everything that had not yet been burned. The third source of death was ionizing radiation emanating from the fireballs.

Initial radiation lasted only one minute and there was no way of avoiding it — it reached every person no matter where he or she was at the moment. Radiation was most intense directly around the epicenters of the explosions. Those who were a few hundred meters away from the epicenters were exposed to an irradiation dose of 6,000-8,000 roentgens and died of various kinds of radiation sickness affecting the central nervous system and destroying the cells of the brain nerve centers. This

caused convulsions and unconsciousness, and in a few hours, death. Those who were a little farther away from the explosions and received a radiation dose of 800-1,200 roentgens suffered from the irradiation of the mucous membrane of the stomach and the intestines. In that case, severe stomach disorders were accompanied by infectious diseases and people died of a gastro-intestinal irradiation sickness within a few days. A dose of 300-500 roentgens affected the blood-forming organs, above all the marrow. A dose of 400 roentgens is considered to be semi-fatal; half of those who received it have survived.

However, for the victims of nuclear irradiation to "survive" did not mean to recover. Many of them died years and even decades later. Among the delayed after-effects of irradiation are tumors of the lungs, chest, the thyroid gland, and the salivary glands. Other victims died, or are dying, of leukemia, a disease resembling marrow cancer.

Never before has there been a weapon causing cancer. Nuclear weapons have given war a new, monstrous dimension.

Somerville. For the first time in the history of life, every living thing is now confronted by a common enemy more powerful than death. What we have always called death is, after all, a natural transition to other forms of life, to new living units of one kind or another. But nuclear omnicide destroys living things in a way that renders impossible any transition to new living units. By killing the cell itself, it stops the cycle and destroys the natural relation of death to life. It is therefore the common enemy of both life and life-giving death. If this is not absolute evil, what is? Beside it, every other evil is dwarfed into insignificance.

Riman. The two first-generation nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had an equivalent of 13-20 kilotons of conventional explosives and they wrought indescribable havoc. It was the first time that human beings saw and were exposed to the direct and indirect consequences of all the energy forms released by nuclear fission.

This horrifying experiment staged by U.S. imperialism on people to demonstrate its military strength cannot be ever justified. The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is a warning against the further use of nuclear or any other global weapons in any form.

After 1945, the additional knowledge that came from studies of the consequences of the 1,221 nuclear test explosions of various yield — in the atmosphere, on the ground, underground, and deep in the sea — has given humankind a fairly clear picture of their

destructive force. This force covers areas measuring hundreds of thousands of hectares and destroys both the geosphere and the atmosphere, up to stratospheric altitudes.

The threat to coming generations

Riman. For every living system — from protozoa (viruses and micro-organisms) to plants and animals — radioactive irradiation causes changes that irreparably damage the basic vehicles of heredity — genes programming the formation of the natural components of living matter and its function. When such changes, or mutations, occur in the heredity-forming material of the embryonic cells of plants, animals and human beings, they become hereditary. Mutations may surface (according to the level and amount of the damage done to the genes of one or both parents) in the next one or two generations. This irradiation-caused damage of hereditary material usually results in disturbances of the vital functions, a high mortality rate, sterilization, or increased susceptibility to various, including tumorous, diseases (as of the thyroid gland), and also diseases of the blood.

Examples of hereditary disturbances caused by nuclear irradiation are known today not only from studies of the tragic experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also from a study of the consequences of the explosion of a 13.6-megaton nuclear bomb on the Pacific island of Bikini in 1954 when 112 persons, who were 185 kilometers from the explosion site, got a radiation dose of 0.2 kR.

There is no doubt that in a total nuclear war, radioactive irradiation could damage and completely cripple the human race's entire stock of genes, dooming it to gradual extinction.

Fuchs. The experience of the two affected Japanese cities shows that the greatest tragedy was in what happened to children who were irradiated when they were in the womb. They were either still-born or born with hideous abnormalities. Of these, the most widespread was microcephalia. The children were born with an abnormally small skull and brain, which left them mentally retarded.

The nuclear bomb — instrument of genocide

Fuchs. The arms race has now entered a new phase. Thousands upon thousands of atomic and hydrogen bombs with an explosive yield running into megatons have been stockpiled. The explosive power of each of them is a thousand times greater than that of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. There would be

thousands of Hiroshimas in all countries, on every continent. That would make another world war an act of collective suicide.

Somerville. It is clear that nuclear weapons which now exist in the arsenals are capable, if used, of annihilating all forms of life and all vestiges of civilization in a new kind of holocaust for which a new term had to be invented: omnicide. This is abundantly confirmed in the overkill statistics of weapons technology.

Riman. We know enough today to be able to see distinctly the actual limits of actions that would bring about the destruction not only of the human race but of everything making its existence possible. Even if we do not take into account the current escalation in the development of new horrible types of chemical, geophysical, and biological weapons; nuclear arms alone would be enough for that. They can be carried in the warheads of ballistic missiles to any part of the globe with an accuracy of a few hundred meters and have become a constant threat to the earth's entire ecological system. An integral part of that system, the human race now numbers about 5 billion and is dependent on the environment, on the biological mass of plants and animals, on water, and on atmospheric and geospheric conditions, including sources of energy and raw materials. It should be clear to any reasonable person that any type of modern nuclear war cannot end other than in a global disaster, destroying all the links between the living systems, including the human race. There will be neither winners nor losers in a nuclear war — it will annihilate everything.

"Limited" wars with unlimited consequences.

Fuchs. The illusion is being spread today that in a "limited" nuclear war many people will survive in shelters. This is a dangerous illusion. There is no guarantee that shelters will afford effective protection from megaton bombs. Even if they do, the people hiding in them will have to go outside sooner or later, and everything there will be contaminated by radioactive fallout to such an extent that they will inevitably fall victim to irradiation disease.

Somerville. Among the reactionary circles in our country there is a widespread opinion that the United States made a mistake when it did not use nuclear weapons in the Vietnam war and that now we can and must use the advantage of possessing this kind of weapon and base our policy on the threat of using it. Precisely this gave rise to the talk of a possible "limited" nuclear war. In 1977, President Carter said in the United Nations that the USA would be ready to be the first to use nuclear weapons in

case of anything judged to be an "attack," even if it is made only with conventional weapons, against its armed forces, against any of its 400 military bases or its allies. In other words, the U.S. President declared that the USA would use nuclear weapons in the event a military conflict broke out in any part of the globe.

But the U.S. public is not yet clear about the danger overhanging it. I would say that 90 per cent of the American people are still in delusion about our policy of a possible nuclear first strike. And 95, or perhaps 98 per cent have no idea that five years ago the Warsaw Treaty nations proposed that the signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki European Conference sign a treaty on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons against one another. Our mass media said almost nothing about that proposal. It was not discussed either in Congress or by the President. This only increases the danger that the U.S. government will get into a military conflict with the U.S. public not even aware that it could have been prevented by ordinary negotiations or by an agreement acceptable to both sides.

Hajko. The "limited" nuclear war doctrine (limited in a geographical sense) was framed in the United States and became an element of government policy. The thinking underlying such doctrines, like the thinking of those inclined to accept and spread them, is a sick and very dangerous thinking. Such ideas come only to those who stop at nothing to satisfy their narrow, self-seeking or group interests and are for that purpose prepared to jeopardize the very existence of humankind.

Talk about the possibility of confining a nuclear conflict to geographical limits is obviously unrealistic. But it would be natural to seek a way to eliminate the threat of nuclear war gradually. This would meet the needs of mankind, the striving of people to save the present and future generations.

For us scientists the existence of doctrines like a "limited" nuclear war is made more bitter by the fact they are an abuse of scientific achievements that might have benefited society. But I am convinced that no honest scientist in the world wishes such a "linkage" of science with the life of society, that he or she emphatically rejects and denounces it. Abuse of science evokes legitimate protests throughout the world.

How to avert a catastrophe?

Somerville. To prevent total annihilation we must above all intensify the peace drive. The peace movement is growing in the United States. Though the number of people still ig-

norant about the possible consequences of a nuclear war is very great, broad actions for peace are making people increasingly aware of the present danger. This reminds me of what happened during the Vietnam war: the anti-war movement grew as we became more and more involved. The fact that something of this nature is going on in the United States is very encouraging.

We can and must exert influence upon the persons and conditions determining whether omnicide is to be brought about or not. We can and must address the governing leaders who hold the keys to the arsenals. Let all those who take decisions on the production or use of nuclear weapons understand, under pressure from the people, that such weapons must never be produced and never be used.

In a sense, the human race is right now engaged in a worldwide referendum on the question whether the growing stockpiles of omnididal weapons should continue to exist or should life continue to exist? Those who take no action against these weapons will, in effect, be casting their votes for omnicide.

Riman. A way out of this extremely dangerous situation for humankind has been indicated in the Soviet proposals, including those made at the 26th congress of the CPSU, on establishing rigid control over nuclear weapons and ending the rapid arms race, which is devouring over 17 per cent of world production.

What can be done by scientists?

Kvasil. Never before have scientists and research organizations had such a great responsibility as today. As a result of the arms race, almost 40 per cent of the world's aggregate scientific potential is used for military purposes. This is incompatible with healthy scientific progress and is causing ugly deformities in the structure of science, far uglier than may seem at first glance.

The big problems confronting mankind today — energy, food, dangerous diseases, and so on — can be solved only through international collaboration. But the militarization of science destroys the conditions for its own development. It is the responsibility of scientists to restructure science so that the scientific potential may be used for mankind's peaceful development.

Scientists can contribute to the struggle for security also by educating people in a spirit of peace. They have a clearer understanding of the real dimensions of the threat from the arms race. Scientific and technological progress cannot be stopped, nor can its results be con-

cealed, including those in the military sphere. The danger is that the process itself can get out of the control of those who started it. That is why I think it is extremely important to implement the proposal on setting up an authoritative international committee of scientists to study the real consequences of the arms race. By reporting the results of its work to governments, the United Nations and the world public, such a committee would prove that it is vital to prevent a nuclear war.

This proposal by Leonid Brezhnev allows consolidating and developing the valuable achievements of the movement of humanistic scientists for peace, security and cooperation. Let me recall the major acts that have gone down in the history of science — the manifesto of a group of well-known scientists drawn up on the initiative of Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein, a petition signed by thousands of scientists headed by Linus Pauling on banning nuclear weapons tests, 30 conferences of the Pugwash Movement against the threat of nuclear war, and the setting up in every part of the world of institutions studying problems of peace.

It is also clear that the aggravation of the international situation over the past few years, when NATO adopted a new strategy and a new long-range program with the purpose of achieving military superiority over the Warsaw Treaty Organization demands a greater effort by scientists.

Today everyone should think of what must be done for the successful implementation of the basic international documents adopted so far. I think it appropriate to recall here that in December 1979 the UN General Assembly approved, on a motion by Czechoslovakia, a declaration on international cooperation on disarmament. That declaration was specified by our proposals for an international program of education in the spirit of disarmament and is being implemented under the aegis of UNESCO. A similar 10-point program document was adopted at the World Congress on these questions held in the summer of 1980 in Prague. Our Academy of Sciences and Charles University have suggested holding an international symposium at which the leading scientists of the world would explain the main theoretical and methodological problems of educating people in a spirit of disarmament, which is a new scientific trend formalized in UNESCO documents.

Somerville. To prevent nuclear omnicide is the most pressing task confronting mankind today. But this is not yet sufficiently clear to the

overwhelming majority of people. In other words, many of those who say they know these facts exist do not really believe they exist. The facts referred to are of such a nature that a genuine belief in their reality would immediately result in a radical change of behavior.

The central problem therefore is to bring home the truth to the people who will be annihilated if they do not believe in it and do not act accordingly. We must help millions of people understand this, persuade them to take action against nuclear weapons. Action or inaction of any one person might mean the difference between omnicide and eternal continuation of life.

We must also bear in mind that tensions and issues of such magnitude cannot long endure without being resolved one way or the other. Robert C. Aldridge, who resigned his post as nuclear weapons designer for the Lockheed corporation in order to work for peace, said in a 1978 speech in Tokyo: "I feel we have, at the most, four or five years to change the direction that the world is going, especially in my country, the United States. I feel that nuclear weapons will be used in a first-strike strategy." The eminent nuclear scientist, Dr. Bernard Feld, Secretary-General of the Pugwash Conference, predicted that a nuclear war would break out before the end of the 20th century if

people did not increase their activity to prevent it.

Whatever we are capable of doing must be done now.

Fuchs. The world is inundated with horrible weapons. But we scientists also possess a powerful weapon: dissemination of the truth about the consequences of using them. We must convince public opinion that security can be achieved not by manufacturing an increasing number of weapons, but by stopping the arms race, by nuclear disarmament.

Summing up the scientists' replies, the WMR Commission on Problems of Peace and Disarmament Movements noted that those taking part in the interview, irrespective of their political, ideological, or religious convictions, are unanimous in their conclusions:

- a nuclear war would be a disaster for mankind and the environment;

- its consequences would be catastrophic for coming generations;

- any nuclear conflict would inevitably grow to global proportions;

- it is the duty of the scientists of the world to use their knowledge and influence on world public opinion to prevent the threat of a nuclear war and curb the arms race.

The Commission hopes that the discussion on this vital issue will be continued in WMR.

Despite the setback

Rupert Lewis

CC member, Workers' Party of Jamaica

The changed political situation in Jamaica has confronted the communists and other progressive forces of the country with big problems. People abroad who subscribed to the changes under way in this country are wondering about the reasons for the reversal that occurred as a result of the general election last October.

The election had been expected to settle a dilemma of tremendous importance to the destiny of the country. A consolidation of the positions of the People's National Party (PNP) and the Workers' Party of Jamaica (WPJ)¹ would have assured a continued democratic revolution. The assumption of power by the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) has led to a rightist, pro-imperialist regime. Understandably enough, the electoral atmosphere was marked by political confrontation involving the bulk of the popula-

tion. Voter turnout was 86.11 per cent. This was the highest turnout of voters in elections in our country.

The official results indicate that the Jamaican Labour Party led by Edward Seaga won 501,000, or 59 per cent, of the votes. The People's National Party, whose leader, Michael Manley, was Prime Minister before the election, received 351,000, or 41 per cent, of the votes. Under the constitution, however, the parliamentary distribution of seats² is not based on a proportional distribution but on single-member constituencies. The JLP now has 51 seats and Manley's supporters have 9 seats.

It was clear in the very first days following the election, whose interests the new government was going to represent. Those who had tided over the "hard times" in Miami came

back. There was rejoicing over Seaga's victory in the U.S. and British embassies. Rightist sections of the military and police celebrated with wild gunfire and got ready for their promotions. There were many parties in the bourgeoisie's mansions.

Our Central Committee considers that the setback resulted from insufficiently thorough application of a revolutionary approach. Yet firmness was imperative to counter the tactics of imperialism and home reaction. Their tactics were based on economic destabilization and psychological warfare, especially through the media. Nor did these forces stop at political assassination.

A month before the election our party said that if Prime Minister Manley showed "restraint" in dealing with the subversive activity of the right-wing opposition in the army and police he would endanger the whole national liberation movement in Jamaica. This was a logical deduction from an analysis of developments. There had been an attempted military coup in June 1980. Numerous supporters of the People's National Party had been slain by the conspirators. The Parliamentary Secretary in charge of National Security, Roy McGann, had been killed by the police the day before the nomination of candidates. Attempts had been made on the lives of the then Prime Minister, Michael Manley, and his Minister of National Security, Dudley Thompson. A few days before the election three members of the Central Committee of the WPJ were arrested on trumped-up charges. Over 600 people were killed in the period January-October 1980 as a consequence of political terrorism.

In an atmosphere of growing tensions, centrist-minded social sections shifted to the right, feeling uncertain concerning the capability of the PNP to achieve economic recovery and stop violence. The rightists also owed their gains to financial support from abroad, the intervention of imperialist special services and the doctoring of election returns in some constituencies.

The American, British and Canadian intelligence services were most active. They had close relations with leading political, military and business personalities. The CIA was directly involved in violence and in propaganda against the government and the left. The British were involved in the electoral arena and volunteered some of the electoral equipment. Revealingly, the Director of Elections has now taken up a job in London with the Commonwealth Secretariat³ in the midst of legal proceedings brought by the Opposition against fraudulent practices. There is evidence of soldiers taking

charge of and tampering with ballot boxes before the counting on the orders of reactionary officers. Other features of electoral fraud by JLP backers exist.

The PNP leadership compromised for too long on the critical question of agreements with the IMF. The left wing of the PNP objected to this kind of "cooperation." The WPJ campaigned from the outset against submission to IMF dictates. These agreements, in force since 1977, put the burden of the economic crisis on the backs of the working people. Our campaign — through national radio broadcasts, *Struggle* (our party's fortnightly), mass rallies held in several parts of the country, as well as a demonstration of government workers led by party members — played the central role in raising the consciousness of the people against the IMF.

The work of the left bore fruit. In March 1980 a majority of delegates of the National Executive Council of the PNP voted against the IMF path. Afterward the PNP adhered more consistently to its anti-imperialist line. That was when the WPJ decided against running candidates on an independent basis in favor of giving our full support to the re-election of Manley.

The communists worked in all areas of the electoral campaign on the basis of cooperation with the PNP. The PNP masses appreciated our contribution although there was some opposition from right-wing leaders.

In doing door-to-door canvassing, we introduced ourselves as members of the WPJ and handed out our party publications which explained why we supported Manley. We argued that his re-election was necessary to the future progress of our country. An indication of our sustained effort was that between January and September 1980 the distribution of *Struggle* went up from 10,000 to 20,000. Party members visited and spoke to over 20,000 people in 15 of the 60 constituencies. In areas where we had party branches and so could campaign, PNP candidates to Parliament either won or the margin of defeat was not as great as where we were not strong enough.

From this work the WPJ gained a great deal of experience. This experience and the response of the people indicate that there is a social basis for our party and for growing cooperation between revolutionary democrats and communists.

The negative outcome of the election is a setback for the national democratic revolution and the anti-imperialist movement. The party now in power represents the oligarchy, and its leader's ties with the new U.S. administration

are close. This clearly means that for the time being Jamaica's foreign policy will be tied to Washington and the initiatives taken by Manley to broaden relations with the socialist countries and countries of the developing world have been shelved.

The imperialists fully back their ally in the Caribbean, where they have lately lost considerable ground. The new Prime Minister of Jamaica and the dictator of South Korea were the first to be officially invited to Washington by the new administration. In the very first months of Seaga's term in office, the United States, Britain, Canada and the IMF offered him more financial aid than the Manley government could obtain in a year. Heartened by this open-handedness, the JLP leader has in fact proposed a Marshall Plan for Central America and the Caribbean.

The new government's economic policy is geared above all else to encouraging private enterprise, reducing the public sector, giving foreign investors access to the nation's resources, keeping down the price of labor and hence limiting the working people's incomes.

The capitalist class and Seaga's men are moving swiftly into the key areas of the state, forcing progressive journalists out of the mass media and building up the army and police by appointing JLP supporters. The new regime has set out to persecute the trade unions and progressive people, and many political assassinations have already occurred with the connivance of the authorities. Every effort is being made to impose undivided rightist control all over the country.

Vacillating elements amongst the democratic forces are downhearted and many of them are fearful. People outside the national liberation movement are now more anti-communist and anti-democratic. It is a much more difficult situation for our party, for all the left.

However, we reject the view that the progressive front has suffered a decisive defeat. The electoral setback has caused no split in the vanguard, that is, a split between the Marxist left in the PNP, and the WPJ. Secondly, the election has produced no split between the center and the left as a whole (among the people and at the leadership level) and so no breaking away of the masses from the PNP, the WPJ, from trade unions, women's, students', youth and professional organizations led by the progressive forces.

This is why pro-imperialist forces are trying to drive a wedge between the communists and other democrats. The reactionaries have tried to make out that it was because of his relations with the communist movement that Manley

lost the election and this is also alleged by the right-wing sections of his party. The PNP right wing is trying to cover up for its disastrous IMF policies as well as its collaboration with imperialism against the national liberation movement. It says he will never win another election unless he purges the Marxists within his party and stops cooperating with the Workers' Party. The attacks against Manley continue because the rightists realize that this recognized leader continues to have considerable influence among the people. The attacks against comrade Trevor Munroe, General Secretary of our party, continue because the reactionaries know that the communists constitute an important political force.

Despite the electoral setback and the vicious anti-communist campaign, the democratic movement is holding together. While the PNP remains a multi-class organization, the left-wing forces defending the interests of the masses are now stronger within the organization. It is indicative that most of those elected to Parliament are left-wing, center-left or centrist members of the PNP. The level of activity, organization and understanding achieved by the masses has been higher of late. This is an unquestionable result of our party's ideological and organizing work, a result of our correct strategy and tactics.

Having won high prestige among the masses by steadfastly defending their interests, the WPJ remains as active as ever. It is preparing for its second congress at the end of 1981. The Young Communist League of the WPJ was launched last January. It grew out of the Jamaica Union of Democratic Youth which had been politically active, especially among poor youth in urban communities. There has also been an expansion of progressive trade unions as more industrial, agricultural as well as professional workers seek membership.

What are our party's tasks today? Immediately after the election we analyzed the causes of the setback in a Central Committee document that was studied throughout all sections. We called the membership's attention to two articles written by Lenin after the setback of December 1905 in Russia. These were "The Present Situation in Russia and the Tactics of the Workers' Party" and "The Russian Revolution and the Tasks of the Proletariat." What does the Leninist approach to tactics mean in our situation? It means that we must stand firm without provoking the enemy but take him on in accordance with the means at our disposal, on any and every front on which he is trying to advance, must call on the working people to stand with us on each front and always, and

then, after each battle, assess the situation and draw lessons from it.

Operating in the new conditions, the WPJ attaches great importance to three things: first, strengthening the alliance between revolutionary democracy and communists at the top and the bottom, nationally and internationally. Secondly, exposing the aims of the Seaga government's economic policy. Thirdly, changing our tactics should the regime and its repressive apparatus resort to fascist-type violence.

Our tactics in the present situation are defensive but they are preparing the ground for a later offensive of the struggle for national democracy. They are the tactics of resistance to hold every inch of revolutionary ground and every position won by the PNP and the WPJ and to maintain their influence amongst the masses.

We communists see our duty in evolving a program intended to bring about an early upturn in the national liberation movement.

1. Regarding the activity of the WPJ, its cooperation with the PNP and the domestic situation in last year's pre-election period, see Trevor Munroe, "From Marxist Study Groups to the Revolutionary Vanguard," in *WMR*, November 1980. — Ed.

2. The Jamaican Parliament has two houses. The first is the House of Representatives, which is elected. This House has 60 members corresponding to the 60 constituencies. The upper House is called the Senate. It is made up of nominated members. The governing party nominates 13 Senators. The opposition party, 8 Senators. All bills and draft laws are debated and voted on by both houses. In practice the Senate rubber-stamps the decisions of the House of Representatives. Elections are held every five years.

3. Jamaica is a member of the British Commonwealth. — Ed.

The socialist option in Africa: a distinctive experience

Rustem Sevortian
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A POLITICAL REPORT

The socialist option . . . This is a report about revolutionary and democratic transformations on a continent where colonialism was supreme, virtually yesterday, and where already today the first steps are being taken in the direction of the socialist future.

I visited East Africa, touring Madagascar, Tanzania and Mozambique. All three are advancing along the channel of social progress. Far-reaching changes are being put into effect; the working people are playing an ever bigger role in public affairs; the world knows of the principled stand taken by these countries against imperialism and racism.

Since I am going to speak of the evolution of specific countries that have their own history, traditions and hallmarks, I will be justified in speaking also of distinctions. These are seen, in the first place, in the form of political leadership: a one-party system in Mozambique and Tanzania, and a multiparty patriotic coalition in Madagascar. But the distinctions go deeper, reaching out to the class, ideological sphere.

In Tanzania the ruling revolutionary democrats are, above all, champions of the people's democratic aspirations and they aim to put an end to backwardness and underdevelopment and build up a modern lifestyle. Here the party

is a broad movement chiefly of the peasant masses, who comprise the base for the administration of society and the process of change.

A similar orientation is followed by the regime in Madagascar, although its social base is more heterogeneous, consisting of working sections, chiefly the peasants, and also a segment of the local bourgeoisie. The revolutionary democratic leadership personifies the people's anti-imperialist and patriotic unity, their determination to prevent any return to neocolonialist practices and to press forward with democratic reforms.

The most significant period of the liberation movement's development, namely, the period of distinct class demarcation, has been passed in only one of these three countries: Mozambique, where it took place during the years of the armed struggle against the colonialists. Since then the leadership of the movement has been in the hands of the most consistent revolutionaries abiding by working-class positions. A people's power has been established and the changes are directed by the vanguard party.

In Madagascar and Tanzania the ruling revolutionary democrats accentuate the national, the specific, while the distinctive foundation of their ideological doctrine is expressed termi-

nologically as the Malagasy socialist revolution in the first case and ujamaa and self-reliance in the second. In Mozambique the FRELIMO Party has adopted Marxism-Leninism as its platform and has set a course toward applying the laws of socialist construction in an African society. The distinctions in the class essence of the concept of socialism determine the political approach, notably in party building, in transformations, and in links with the external world. This is precisely what necessitates an examination of each specific experience separately.

Prestige of the party

Signs of change are visible everywhere. They are what first strike the visitor in Mozambique. The new life is seen in the order, the safety, the spotless cleanliness of the streets in Maputo, the capital. The strains of music were reaching the city center from the traditional international fair. The many colorful pavilions — local and foreign — were not only delightful but also enlightening: here people saw the fruits of their labor — farm produce, textiles, car tires, and articles made of metal — and got an insight into the scale of the changes. There were large numbers of people in the pavilions of the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia. One can appreciate their interest: in Mozambique cooperation with socialist countries is seen as the decisive factor reinforcing social justice on African soil. In Africa today there are countries where the ruling progressive forces have started a fundamental remolding of life along socialist lines.

At the fair the FRELIMO pavilion was unpretentious: it contained photographs, paintings with a revolutionary content, and slogans. But this stood for much: the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) personifies a triumphant struggle for national independence, the establishment of a people's power, and the commencement of the advance toward a socialist future. With the party that emerged from the Front the people identify all their major achievements — the transfer to the revolutionary government of the banks, insurance companies, and principal industries, education and health; nationalization of the land, the mines and apartment houses; abolition of the old judiciary, institution of people's courts and extirpation of racial and social discrimination. In this country the party enjoys the unqualified confidence of the people and by its actions justifies this confidence.

Modern production is an exceedingly important sector of party work. At the fair one of the stands gave a good idea of the large agrarian-

industrial complex now under construction in the Limpopo valley: it employs 2,519 permanent workers and between 4,500 and 7,000 seasonal workers, and has 212 party members and six party locals. These figures indicate that a small party organization has the task of mobilizing people for dedicated work and bringing knowledge and culture to them (nearly 3,000 people attend illiteracy-abolition classes). The FRELIMO locals are today the focal points of the massive organizational and educational activity now going on at many factories. At the large PETROMOC oil-refinery one gets a picture of the character of this activity.

A blackboard stands opposite the refinery's gates: on it are chalked reports on the main international and domestic events of the day. The editor of this "people's newspaper," as it is called locally, is a member of the FRELIMO Party. Luis Gerald, secretary of the party local at the refinery and a mechanic by profession, told us that this is a widespread medium of information in the country.

"From the experience of others and our own practice," he said, "we realized how important it was to give permanent and concrete assignments to people. At our monthly party meetings our comrades give an account of what they have accomplished and are given new assignments. For instance, one of the assignments is to listen to Voice of FRELIMO broadcasts and then pass the information on to the workers, because far from everyone has a radio receiver."

Party work has always to be thorough and concrete. The local at the refinery wins the respect of the workers by educating them politically, planning the curricula for two illiteracy-abolition groups, and directing all the work of improving the people's cultural, educational, and skill levels. Moreover, it gives its attention to basic production problems. "Our refinery," Luis Gerald said, "produces 720,000 tons of oil-products annually. This is vital to the country. Much of the credit for the fact that the output plan is exceeded is due to the party local. Many people are prepared to work overtime."

The fulfillment of production assignments and the teeming life of the work collective are evidence of the local's close contact with the workers. The FRELIMO members consult the people on everything and heed their views. Take, for instance, admittance to FRELIMO membership. Currently a large group of people, including the refinery's directing-manager and his deputy, are probation members. But having recommended these people for membership, the local verified the correctness of its decision at a meeting of the refinery's personnel. Many

non-party people spoke at the meeting, saying what they expected of the future FRELIMO members. In Mozambique the sense of such meetings is regarded as the people's mandate.

In the conditions prevailing in Mozambique, the formation of a vanguard party with a network of base organizations (locals) is the realization of the Marxist-Leninist concept of party building that has been tested time and again in practice. This concept has to be implemented in a socio-economically backward country, a backwardness manifested in many forms: preponderance of peasants in the population, a numerically small working class, mass illiteracy and ignorance. Colonialism has left a legacy of passiveness, fatalism and bourgeois and petty-bourgeois prejudices. This is why care must be exercised in selecting the most class-conscious and worthy people. In this nation of 12 million people, the party's backbone consists of a few tens of thousands of fighters, who have gone through the stern school of liberation battles.

On the other hand, on account of the vanguard's numerical smallness, the situation made it imperative to adopt a highly creative approach to forming around FRELIMO a stable nucleus of activists capable of enunciating its revolutionary policies in the different areas of life and work.

On the outskirts of Maputo the chain of street lights fades, and in the dusk one can just see the outlines of the one-story houses of a large district. The darkness melts as one enters a spacious neon-lit building. This is where public functions are sponsored by the Hulene district group of dinamizadores, one of ten in this large workers' district.

The dinamizadores groups are a product of local revolutionary experience. The very name speaks for itself, and it was not accidental that it was applied in the mid-1970s to loyal FRELIMO fighters, whose mission is to safeguard the nation's independence and state property against counter-revolutionaries and saboteurs, and to spread the people's power throughout the country.

The district secretary Julio Ubissee spoke of the activities of the dinamizadores.

"More than a thousand adults now attend our illiteracy-abolition school. Also we have a medical aid center with a paramedic and six nurses. Wells have been dug, and there is a bakery and a sewing service. Some public telephones have been installed. The district has a market and a civic center. A poultry cooperative was set up recently. The work is done by the district's residents and their collective labor is or-

ganized and directed by the dinamizadores groups."

The people I spoke to stressed the importance of socio-economic work. This can well be appreciated: before independence was proclaimed the illiteracy rate was 95 per cent, and there were only 100 doctors for 10 million people.

As in other parts of the country, the new life is being built by the people themselves, while the dinamizadores groups in each district (the smallest territorial unit) fulfil many administrative and organizational functions: they convene fortnightly meetings at which they explain the aims of social measures and they form work teams for various projects. The money is donated by the people, while state institutions provide materials, doctors and teachers. In this way the illiteracy-abolition school and the medical aid center were set up in Hulene. These are run on a voluntary basis. The nurses, for instance, are volunteer workers. Julio Ibissee spoke of plans for forming a fund — with the money donated by the people — to pay them a salary.

But the dinamizadores are first and foremost political workers, agitators. They explain the party's policies and guidelines to the people. Throughout all these years their political mission was to assert the people's power and the influence of FRELIMO. This aim has now been achieved. The experience accumulated by the movement is of particularly great value in the view of the present party building campaign. From among the dinamizadores the party enlists tested cadre. In Hulene, only the district secretary and his deputy are FRELIMO members, but it is planned to form a district local. This is one of the cardinal results of the many-faceted activities of the dinamizadores groups.

The FRELIMO Party, said its Chairman and President of Mozambique Samora Machel, was formed in the course of the people's war against foreign invaders, in the fire of the class struggle in the Front itself, in the liberated regions, in the battles against internal reaction and the new exploiters.

Indeed, this conversion into a vanguard organization was a long and complex process. But virtually two years after independence was proclaimed (1975) the historic decision was taken to turn the Front into a working people's party adhering to working-class positions and implementing a policy of alliance of the working class with the peasantry.

How was this decision arrived at and what made the revolutionaries morally prepared for it? I put this question to Jorge Rebelo, member of the CC Standing Political Committee and

Secretary of the Party's Central Committee for Ideological Work.

"FRELIMO," he said, "began as a front, but as the struggle progressed it acquired the content and features of a Marxist-Leninist party. In the early 1970s these features were in the main already implicit in it. Although FRELIMO was not called a party at the time, it was not a party in the exact sense of the word, but in practice it functioned as a party. Our ideological posture crystallized, in the main, in 1971-1972. By that time we had a strong, mass-based organization with democratic centralism as its underlying principle. Much attention was given to discipline and the personal moral behavior of its cadre. The leading nucleus was profoundly conscious ideologically and united."

The conditions for the Front's conversion into a party thus took shape historically, and it was natural that it should become the ideological and political vanguard of the workers and peasants. Nevertheless, at certain stages this role was limited to some extent by objective circumstances. "When we took over the nation's leadership," Jorge Rebelo continued, "we were confronted with the urgent tasks of consolidating power, organizing education and health care, distributing housing, and so on. In other words, we had to handle matters that come within the jurisdiction mainly of the state. It was then that there was a shift toward concentrating effort and cadre on state functions. As a result our own party work was neglected to some extent."

Steps have been taken by the Central Committee to correct the situation. Two CC secretaries — Marcelino dos Santos and Jorge Rebelo — were appointed to full-time party work. At its plenary meeting in July 1980 the CC passed a resolution on raising the political, ideological and organizational level of FRELIMO's activity, enlisting new members, enlarging the apparatus, wiping out illiteracy among its members, and assimilating Marxism-Leninism. In the context of the assignments for the new decade these are extremely important steps: the nation is determined to overcome backwardness and put an end to hunger, poverty, disease and illiteracy; collectivization in the countryside is to be completed, agriculture is to be partially mechanized, and the foundations are to be laid for a modern industry. In order to carry out these plans it will be necessary steadfastly to enhance the efficiency of the party leadership.

At the stage of a steep historical turn the revolutionary movement can only be headed by paying close attention and responding to what the masses think. The party insists on precisely this style of leadership. In Mozambique there

are long-standing traditions of interaction between the political vanguard and the people. Ever since the armed struggle was started it has been a practice to bring the people into the discussion of all problems, big and small, at meetings. In the selection of the Front's cadre the people have the final say: this point was emphasized.

Analogous guidelines are followed by the dinamizadores and other public movements. Julio Ubbisse recalled: "The groups were formed under the leadership of FRELIMO representatives, but the candidates were endorsed by the people at mass meetings. The selection was strict. A person could become a dinamizadore only if he was not compromised by service in colonial agencies, lived by his own work, was morally reliable, non-religious, and loyal to the revolution. Only the people could really know if a candidate had these qualities." The procedure for admitting probation members is in principle similar. The voice of the work collective at a general meeting is decisive.

The approach is thus that the opinion of the people is the main guarantee of the purity of the revolutionary organization's ranks. The essence of this approach is most fully conveyed by comparing the people with a filter. This is popular in Mozambique. The filter is the attitude of the working people to this or that candidate for party membership, the efforts of the masses to expose hostile elements, and control from top to bottom of the course of changes.

The latest example of the people acting as a filter is the campaign to uproot bureaucratic distortions, incompetence, poor discipline, and colonial-bourgeois and petty-bourgeois survivals. This campaign, which is carried on at many factories and offices, is called a political and organizational offensive. Its initiators are workers, who were the first to draw the attention of the leadership to the unhappy state of affairs in the distribution of housing. Instead of assigning housing to people who needed it, many officials distributed it among friends and relatives. But the slogan of "offensive," now heard throughout Mozambique, was formulated by the party, which gave it a concrete content and thereby expressed the will of the workers, their determination to build the conditions for Mozambique's advance toward a socialist future.¹

Ujamaa and self-reliance

On the door of one of rooms in the management building of the bicycle factory on Bagamoyo Road in Dar es Salaam is a plaque with words: CCM Branch. This is the acronym in Tanzania for Chama Cha Mapinduzi, the ruling party

which was founded in 1977 with the merging of two revolutionary-democratic organizations: the Tanganyika African National Union and the Afro-Shirazi Party. In the factory's CCM department we spoke to Mrosso, interim party branch chairman. "Here the party branch is new. The factory itself was officially opened in August 1978 by our party's Chairman, President Julius Nyerere. The party committee was elected a year later."

Mrosso and his comrades began working here relatively recently. They still do not have the experience of the party branches set up earlier at other industrial projects. They have wide powers and strongly influence the elaboration and fulfillment of production tasks. "We try to act in close contact with the management, but our members must also show initiative," Mrosso declared. "This was said at many of our meetings."

The methods of work at the CCM production branch are outwardly similar to those employed in Mozambique: cooperation with management in production affairs, meetings, activity in contact with public organizations, and so forth. There is even something in common in this approach. For instance, the line toward fostering a respectful attitude at enterprises to the opinion of the personnel and drawing them into decision-making.

But the distinction lies in the objective role played by the party local in Mozambique and Tanzania. In the former it is the basic element of a relatively small party, of a vanguard of the working class guided by its ideological stand; in the latter it is only a unit of the ramified structure of a large revolutionary-democratic organization that has nearly two million members. In Mozambique the emphasis is on the vanguard, cadre character of FRELIMO. In Tanzania people say that the CCM begins directly in the individual household. There is a cell for every 10 households, and altogether there are several hundred thousand cells in this country of 18 million people. The party thus preserves the character of a broad mass movement. As a result, the CCM production branches formed not so long ago are obscured, as it were, in the overall party structure based on the ten-household locals.

"Most of our members live and work in the countryside. The working class is very small," said Costa Kumaliya, a ranking official I spoke to at the Central Committee. "We are a party of the working people, of workers and peasants."

The requirements made of all its leaders and rank-and-file members include mandatory peasant or worker origin and non-participation in private enterprise. The revolutionary demo-

crats see their duty in preventing bourgeois, neo-colonialists, and other exploiting elements from infiltrating the party and the country's political institutions.

True, the social source of this anti-bourgeois line is different from that in Mozambique. Having encountered the most reactionary manifestations of the activities of emergent Tanzanian capitalism as early as the 1960s, the revolutionary democrats rejected it from the position of the working majority and opted for a socialist orientation. The 1967 Arusha Declaration, now a fundamental document of the party, was a major landmark. The workers and peasants, in other words the working people generally, were proclaimed the motive force of the struggle for socialism without any characteristic of the historical role each of these classes play in the restructuring of society.

The distinctions between the two approaches — class, proletarian; and populist, revolutionary-democratic — is usually seen most clearly in the ideological sphere. The proponents of the first approach look for their own ways, adequate to local conditions, of social renewal on the basis of the theory of scientific socialism, and this gives their social practice an internationalist content. An example is the offensive in Mozambique against worldviews and practices alien to the working class. The advocates of the second approach attach even greater significance to local specifics, and they look for the key to changes in the existing social system, in its traditions. In Africa people usually refer to collectivism, to mutual aid in communes, from which the idea of socialism is sometimes initially deduced. In Tanzania, what is called "own theory," i.e., the locally-evolved socialist concept of ujamaa, substantiates the policy of radical reforms.

"Ujamaa means socialism," explains Costa Kumaliya. "It determines the content of our ideology, and our aim of transforming the present society into a socialist society."

This is now the interpretation of this concept. But its literal translation from the Swahili is "a big family," which points to the traditionalist roots of the idea itself. Formerly ujamaa was taken to mean fraternal relations, relations of kinship, family community, and solidarity. Its new interpretation is more profound and, in class terms, more clear-cut. It is considered that to adhere to the principles of ujamaa is to reject capitalism and exploitation of man by man, to assert the superiority of collectivist over private-ownership principles. Ujamaa spells out collective work by the people in the building of a workers' and peasants' state.

Based on the ujamaa concept, the policy pur-

sued by the revolutionary democrats in Tanzania has one more aspect that has become widely known. This is the principle of self-reliance.

This principle, also known as reliance on own resources, has been implemented differently in different countries for a long time. In the early 1960s China's Maoist leaders used the slogan of reliance on own resources to disguise their departure from socialism and rupture with the Soviet Union in order, virtually a decade later, to steer a course toward the establishment of broad contacts with imperialism in all areas. Also, self-reliance is interpreted as autarky. Essentially utopian and reactionary, this interpretation pursues the aim of conserving social and technological backwardness, of isolating society from new tendencies.

That is why when I visited the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (DEVPLAN) I asked what the interpretation of the principle of self-reliance was in Tanzania. It seemed to me that my question was expected — perhaps they were used to questions from foreigners who found the local policy of self-reliance contradictory. R.A. Rweyemamu, an economist and staff member of the ministry, put it in a nutshell:

"Ever since we opted for socialist construction, the concept of self-reliance has acquired a clear and concrete meaning. It embraces recognition that as far as possible Tanzania's development must be based on its own resources and that foreign aid serves only as an addition to them; the significance of money receives much less emphasis than before in economic life. Self-reliance is the bulwark of our independence."²

This assessment of the significance of money in this concept, advanced in 1967, reflected the objective situation, namely that due to the extreme poverty of the population it was impossible to obtain large revenues through taxation. It was thereby acknowledged that the nation's financial potential was small and that therefore the people had to rely mainly on their own labor effort and local resources. An attempt was made to apply precisely this approach by organizing ujamaa villages. These began to be set up throughout the country in the 1970s by bringing scattered households together, resettling large numbers of people in new areas, and enlarging villages. The state bore much of the burden of this campaign. The formation of villages is still to be completed and is proceeding not without problems. One of the aims of the reform is to make villages self-sufficient. However, self-reliance is not interpreted as autarky.

In Tanzania the people are aware that without assistance from the towns, without the commodities made by workers, and without specialists trained at town colleges the backward countryside is doomed to destitution.

Nor does the concept that foreign economic assistance plays a limited role give any reason to speak of autarky. On the contrary, the role of this assistance is growing. The nation has built its first industrial enterprises and need has arisen for equipment, spare parts and raw materials not manufactured locally. These have to be imported. In this sense, too, one sees the conditionality of the literal understanding of the term "self-reliance."

What then does it actually mean? As I see it, the answer is in the concluding phrase of the Tanzanian economist I have quoted. Self-reliance signifies concern for Tanzania's independent economic and political future.

At the bicycle factory one of the engineers said that it was cheaper to import many components of this machine which people need so much and assemble them locally. But in the given case, he added, a pragmatic approach would hardly be appropriate. The country wants to have a factory with the entire cycle of production so that in future it will not be dependent on foreign states. This fact alone is expressive of a political orientation. In Tanzania it is called self-reliance, but many other developing nations call it a struggle for economic independence. As a matter of fact, in Madagascar, too, they speak of reliance on own resources, but they interpret it as the prospect of building a national industry and a highly productive agriculture, and of consolidating economic and political sovereignty. There, too, foreign aid is regarded only as a complementary factor. In the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution, the regime's program document, it is stated: "The policy of self-reliance quite obviously requires us to take the command levers of our economy into our own hands."

Tanzania was able to begin implementing this principle earlier. Following the adoption of the Arusha Declaration, the foundations were laid for a public sector of the economy as a result of the nationalization of foreign-run banks, insurance companies, and large firms and factories. This sector continued to expand with the building of new factories and with the government acquiring part and in some cases the control packet of the shares of private firms. The small and medium factories built over the past few years manufacture farm implements, car tires, mineral fertilizers, radio receivers, bicycles, cement and other vital commodities.

All this unquestionably reflects the aspiration to advance toward economic independence.

However, revenues from exports do not cover the external expenses for the development of industry and agriculture, especially in recent years when large funds were required to abolish the consequences of a series of natural disasters, finance participation in the war on the side of the patriotic forces of Uganda, and meet urgent economic requirements. The difficulties were compounded by the growing prices of manufactured goods and oil in foreign markets and the simultaneous diminution of Tanzania's exports due to the plummeting of prices and of the demand. The consequences of the Tanzanian economy's attachment to the capitalist world market are seen in bolder relief than ever before.

It is hardly necessary to mention how significant the economic aspect of independence is in the obtaining situation. Tanzanians told me that their country's economic troubles are used more and more frequently by the imperialists as a pretext for attacking the socialist orientation. The International Monetary Fund, in which U.S. capital is predominant, has attempted to resort to pressure. In talks on a loan vitally needed by Tanzania, the IMF chiefs demanded a "liberalization" of its economy, with a view to securing a "liberalization," in other words, the bourgeoisification of the regime. True, after long procrastination they agreed to grant a short-term loan at a high interest rate. The government has time and again repulsed pressure of this kind.

The democratic content of the ideological guidelines and class orientation of the revolutionary democrats are seen most distinctly in domestic social policy.

As a result of a reform, the main burden of taxation has shifted to high-income sections of the population. The ratio between the lowest and highest state salary in Tanzania is 1:6 (this takes tax deductions into account), while in Zaire, which has opted for capitalist development, it is 1:500. The minimum wage has been raised several times and today stands at 480 shillings.³ Amendments have been introduced into labor legislation to protect the interests of wage workers.

In Tanzania 40 per cent of the villages have clean drinking water, 35 per cent have medical aid centers, and 74 per cent have shops. An improvement of the life of the peasants and the surmounting of many other indications of backwardness are one of the principal aims of the revolutionary democrats.

Tuition is free at all state schools. Universal elementary education has been made compul-

sory despite the shortage of teachers and equipment. A result of this is that the number of elementary-school pupils aged 7 to 14 has grown from 825,000 in 1967 to 3,200,000. Among young people there is now a growing number with a secondary-school or higher education. In the past three years the government has more than doubled its appropriations for education.

Tanzanians are very proud of these achievements. Despite the shortcomings and difficulties in building a new life (for the record, these are frankly acknowledged), the people do not wish to return to the capitalist way. In Tanzania a person wishing to stand for election to parliament or to get a government post has to prove that he is not an exploiter. Pride in the new Tanzania is fostered as early as in school, where the young citizen has the opportunity to study at state expense. This pride is shared by the peasant who goes to a medical aid center instead of a witch-doctor, and by the worker who now has a larger say in the affairs of his factory. Led by the CCM the working people see their goal in continuing to deepen the transformations and in creating dependable guarantees against the restoration of exploiting practices.

Base unit of authority

In Madagascar the small town of Antsirabe is known as an industrial center. It produces textiles, foodstuffs, soft drinks and cigarettes. There is a large working-class segment in its population. I spoke to people in the modest headquarters of the local branch of the FISE-MARE trade union, which is affiliated to the oldest revolutionary-democratic party on the island — the AKFM/KDRSM.⁴ Across the road stands the modern Cotona textile mill. The talk was about this mill.

Only a few years ago Cotona was run by private capital: the state had only a small share. In 1979 it was decided to increase this share to 51 per cent. What followed was related by Rene Razafindranaivo, secretary of a trade union local:

"As soon as the government's decision became known the private share-holders began a cunning game. They got one of the trade unions to demand a steep wage rise from the management and also permission for the workers to take packing from the mill free of charge for their own requirements. The management turned down these demands and this sparked disorder. In that strained atmosphere we told the workers who had prompted this idea and why: it was a maneuver of the capitalists to divert the workers from the effort to give the state greater control of the Cotona mill. The first attack was

repulsed and the state became half-owner of the mill. Reaction then had recourse to sabotage, damaging machines and other equipment. It took nearly two years to bring the situation more or less back to normal. The government now enjoys enhanced prestige and the trade unions are widening the scope of their work. To forestall machinations by private capital, the trade unions have set up a commission which unofficially monitors the distribution of profits."

That 51 per cent was hard to come by. This is not surprising because only five years ago practically all economic activity was concentrated in the private sector. The bourgeoisie has not relaxed its resistance to this day. But the situation has begun to change. The banks, insurance companies, the production and distribution of oil products, the power engineering industry, and large industrial enterprises were nationalized after the revolutionary-democratic government of Didier Ratsiraka came to power. As much as 62 per cent of the economy is now in the hands of or controlled by the state.

Thus, this country, too, has set a course toward curbing capitalist elements. The Cotona experience shows that this course is supported by the working people, who are interested in nationalization, even if it is as yet incomplete. At nationalized factories the social situation is different, said Valerien Maniry, a trade unionist working in Tulear. The trade unions have the right to hold meetings and circulate their publications. The working people are winning important gains — free medical care and the opportunity to improve their skills. All these changes became possible with Madagascar's development in keeping with its socialist orientation.

Before starting changes, the revolutionary democrats drew up a program, which we have already mentioned. This Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution expresses the determination to fight imperialism and neo-colonialism and win economic independence. In domestic policy the course is toward "radical revolutionary changes," the building of a "more just society." The Charter recognizes the role of the class struggle, which is characterized as the "sole, rational, dynamic, and historically conditioned way for the whole people to assume power." Also, note is made of the patriotic potential of the local bourgeoisie and even, "to some extent," of what is called its "revolutionary spirit."

This document unquestionably has a revolutionary-democratic content, for its central postulate is the transformation of Malagasy so-

ciety under the leadership and in the interests of the working people. True, as in Tanzania, the classes are not specified, and the terms most used are "oppressed peasants and working people" and "working people." In Madagascar, too, one of the main directions of the effort of the people is to put an end to backwardness, which obstructs any movement toward social progress.

Further, the Charter spells out the ways and means of renewing the state structures. The fundamental aim is seen as turning the fokolonas (rural communes) into the basic unit of the administration of public affairs. A state-administrative reform making the fokolonas and urban neighborhoods the primary territorial units nationwide was launched with the democratization of the rural and other links of local government.

The reform was preceded by a series of major political changes. In 1976 progressive, revolutionary-democratic, and patriotic forces formed the National Front for the Defense of the Revolution (NFDR), in which six parties are represented.⁵ The political leadership headed by President Didier Ratsiraka, who is also Chairman of the NFDR, acts on behalf of these forces. Following the general elections in 1977 the parties and organizations of the Front set up organs of power at all levels, beginning with the fokolonas and ending with the National People's Assembly.

Situated about 100 kilometers from Tananarive there is a village called Andraikiba. In 1977 it elected a committee headed by Simon Ramarokoto, a long-standing member of the AKFM/KDRSM. Also represented on the committee are AREMA and VONJY, two of the organizations affiliated to the NFDR. All own what by local standards are relatively small plots of land — from two to five hectares. Owners of big plots (20-30 hectares), and there are some in Andraikiba, are not represented on the village committee.

"We feel that our greatest achievement is that we have built a school," Simon Ramarokoto said. "The entire commune took part in the work and we now aim to have a collective field. We have found a suitable plot. It belongs to a big landowner, who filed a suit as soon as he learned what the peasants had in mind. But the land is not cultivated, and under the new law such plots are confiscated. That is exactly what has been done. We are now waiting for a verdict to transfer the land to us."

The building of elementary schools by the people on their own funds is going on in villages and urban neighborhoods throughout Madagascar. During the past five years the

number of these schools has nearly doubled, and the number of secondary schools has tripled. In the same way the people are building medical aid centers, cultivating land for rice and export crops, and marking out and developing collective fields. There is some similarity between this and the Tanzanian concept of ujamaa. The government looks for ways of increasing the village budgets. For instance, part of the taxes which the fokonolonas are authorized to collect is left at their disposal. The state, too, spends large sums of money on social requirements: the investments into the building of an education network increased from 398 million to 3 billion Malagasy francs between 1976 and 1980; during this same period the state spent more than 5 billion francs on equipment and on training personnel for medical institutions, and 7 billion francs⁶ on medicines.

The main accent is on the communes deciding local problems by themselves, and consequently the changes there depend largely on who sits on the village committees. One does not find the situation everywhere the same as in Andraikiba, where the middle peasant is predominant. I was told of cases where the committee is heterogeneous: middle peasants share power with more prosperous peasants, and the latter often have the final say. Hence the friction and conflicts, some of which are ideological. This is quite natural. It must be remembered that the parties united in the NFDR propound different ideological views: some advocate scientific socialism, others champion the "philosophical principles implicit in Malagasy culture — religious belief and priority of the spiritual element" — and still others advocate leftist maximalism. Greater activity by the parties in rural communities and in the towns contributes to bringing their actual class sympathies to light.

Proclaimed as the basic units of Malagasy society, the fokonolonas themselves reflect many of that society's contradictions. These have an objective foundation: although there is no land hunger in Madagascar, fertile land is nonetheless scarce and the well-to-do part of the commune seeks to monopolize it. This is prevented by the revolutionary-democratic leadership, which wants to halt any further stratification. The Charter records a ban on the sale of land. A peasant may inherit land, but if he no longer wants to cultivate it he is obliged to turn the land over to the state.

The prospect for democratic development is being opened by cooperation. But the cooperative movement is encountering many problems. Benott Sangamena, a peasant, said:

"I come from the north, from the village of Manantenina, Maroamby canton. I own three hectares of land. Our village is rich. We grow rice, manioc, sugar cane, coffee and, of course, vanilla, which is profitable and helps us get credit from the state more easily. True, the credit must be returned within seven months. But if a loan is taken through a cooperative it has to be repaid within three years. The peasants thought this over and decided they would tend the crop collectively and harvest and sell it together. We wrote to the canton center requesting permission to form a cooperative, but have not received an answer. I can't say why. But the fact remains that they have shelved the matter."

Benott Sangamena said that in the village of Manantenina the formation of a cooperative was being blocked by reactionary elements who had infiltrated the local committee. He spoke of an "ordinary" case of sabotage. But a definite system arises out of such cases — a line of behavior by right-wing elements hoping to see a revival of former bourgeois and neocolonialist practices.

A line of cars had been standing for several hours at a filling station in the center of Tananarive. There was no gas. The drivers said that this was probably due to sabotage. It is hard to say what caused the delay in the delivery of gas, but there were grounds for this comment.

"Internal opposition to the steps being taken by the government is more and more frequently acquiring the shape of sabotage," the AKFM General Secretary Gisele Rabesahala said, explaining the situation. "There have been many acts of subversion on the railway and elsewhere with the objective of disrupting supplies and disorganizing the economy. This is a favorite tactic of the advocates of neocolonialism and of their foreign imperialist backers, who take a dim view of Madagascar's socialist choice."

I was told of the firing of a train with benzine cisterns and the derailment of a train transporting fuel to the capital from the island's only oil-refinery at Tamatave. President Didier Ratsiraka is himself more and more frequently pointing to the threat of destabilization. Lately there have been many outbursts of orchestrated dissatisfaction by the population. Early this year reaction showed its teeth once again in the capital with the complicity of foreign intelligence agents. Using its own agencies and racist South Africa, imperialism is active throughout this region in a bid to destabilize progressive states like Angola, Mozambique and Madagascar.

Who stands at the back of these acts of subversion in Madagascar? Usually the finger

is pointed at neocolonialist elements linked to the former ruling social-democratic party of Philibert Tsiranana. His regime fell eight years ago, but its legacy is felt to this day. The influence of the social forces on which the neocolonialist rulers relied has been undermined but not broken. According to the journal *Renouveau*, as late as the mid-1970s the bureaucratic, military and entrepreneurial bourgeoisie comprised 15 per cent of the population and commanded 90 per cent of the income. It is hardly likely that these elements have reconciled themselves to the changes now taking place.

Another danger which patriotic forces in Madagascar speak of is the upswing of profiteering by private traders. "They stop at nothing to jack up prices, going so far as to dump rice into the river," Ralaisolofo, chairman of a neighborhood committee in Antsirabe, said, his voice trembling with anger. "This has been reported in the newspapers. In our district the profiteers act in a simple way: they hoard grain and then sell it at higher prices."

We spoke in the premises of the neighborhood committee that has been turned into a shop: on the floor there were old sacks filled with rice, and on the shelves there were soap, matches and sugar. These items are supplied by state organizations and are sold at fixed prices. Here it was hard to believe that after a drought there is a shortage of grain in the country. But in the entire district of Antsirabe there are only a few such shops. In many cases the local authorities take a passive stand toward people who hoard food, toward profiteers, and there are elected officials who act hand in glove with the latter.

Another highly important problem is that of the relations between the revolutionary power itself and the local bourgeoisie. In the local press it has been noted time and again that private Malagasy companies continue to grow and increase their investments. The bourgeoisie has considerable leverage in the state apparatus. For the time being this class is still camouflaging its political ambitions. However, bourgeois and neobourgeois elements are trying to build up influence with the view to claiming the leading role in the state at some future date.

In Madagascar the struggle between the old and the new begins at factories, in villages and in urban neighborhoods. The question of "who will win?" — cardinal in any revolution — is being decided. Either the bourgeoisie, the well-to-do sections in the village communes, and the private capitalist elements in alliance with neocolonialism will check the movement

toward changes and bring the revolution to a halt and then kill it — there have been many instances of this in Africa — or by combined effort the patriots will consolidate and further develop the orientation on progress.

On the example of three African countries I have tried, in brief, to show how the diversity of the ways of social progress is manifested concretely. Each way is itself new, but in each case this innovation is qualitatively different. While the experience of Mozambique enriches the practice of the early stages of socialist construction in backward countries under the leadership of the vanguard party of the working people, in Tanzania and Madagascar the new lies in a specific experience of advance along the lines of socialist orientation at the stage of democratic development fostered by the people's desire for radical changes.

However, there is, I feel, something in common in each specific experience. What I have related indicates that in their policy of radical changes, progressive African states rely on the people, on the public activity of the masses. By the people are meant mainly or exclusively the working classes.

1. This is discussed in Sergio Vieira, "Stage of Fundamental Changes," *WMR*, January 1981.

2. The Tanzanian concept of self-reliance is discussed in Kighoma A. Malima, "Overcoming Underdevelopment," *WMR*, May 1978.

3. 8 Tanzanian shillings = U.S. \$1.

4. For information about this party see Gisele Rabesahala, "A Party of Patriots, of Internationalists," *WMR*, January 1981.

5. The parties in the NFDR are: the Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution (AREMA), the Salvation in Unity Party (VONJY), the Power to the Common People — Defenders of the Revolution (MFM/MFT), and AKFM/KDRSM, the Socialist Organization MONIMA, and the Union of Christian Democrats of Madagascar (UDECM).

6. 203 Malagasy francs = U.S. \$1.

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For the benefit of all

To the Editors,

I am not a communist. I am writing to you as an ordinary American tax-payer and a World War II veteran with combat experience in the Pacific theater who does not want his children and grandchildren to fight anybody anywhere. I was greatly heartened by the first reports about the 26th congress of the Soviet Communist Party. One got the impression that the Russians do not, in fact, want war, that they want talks. But within days all these Soviet initiatives, including the proposals for a Soviet-U.S. summit, began to be questioned in the USA, to be depicted as another political subterfuge benefiting only Moscow. Now nobody here knows what the Russians had in fact suggested, and whether their proposals are actually peace-oriented, or whether all this is only politics, bare politics.

J. Webster,
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Dear Mr. Webster,

The situation you write of is not an accidental concurrence of circumstances. Year after year the Soviet Union has been suggesting an ever wider and all-embracing program for consolidating world security, easing international tension, and ending the arms race. But forces invariably come forward who immediately attack these proposals, call them in question, and denigrate and distort them.

Therefore, allow me first to remind you of the content of the new Soviet peace initiatives, which I, as a guest of the 26th congress of the CPSU, heard for myself in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses.

Here and now let me say that in the report delivered to the congress by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, it was underscored that all the preceding Soviet proposals for strengthening international security and curbing the arms race remain valid. This means that:

— *in the field of nuclear weapons*, the most dangerous to humanity, the USSR will continue to press for an end to the stockpiling of these weapons, for steps to exclude their proliferation, and for a total ban on testing them. It was reiterated that the Soviet Union would not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states that forbid the deployment of such weapons on their territory. There was another call for an end to the manufacture of nuclear weapons generally and for the commencement of a reduction

of their stockpiles up to their total destruction;

— *in the field of other weapons of mass destruction*, including chemical and radiological weapons and neutron bombs, the USSR restated its immutable stand that all these weapons should be banned;

— a reiteration of the proposals, made repeatedly by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Treaty nations, on concrete steps to achieve *military détente in Europe and other regions of the world*. The nations that took part in the Helsinki European Conference pledge they would not resort to a first strike against each other with nuclear or conventional weapons and would not enlarge or set up new military blocs in Europe or other continents. Moreover, it was suggested that the Middle East and Africa would, in the wake of Latin America, be proclaimed nuclear-free zones. It was noted that the Helsinki accords were in fact oriented on making Europe a nuclear-free zone as well.

The Peace Program, proclaimed by the 24th and 25th congresses of the CPSU, has been and remains a series of measures aimed at radically improving the international climate. In the meantime, the state of affairs in the world is changing. These changes, it was stated at the 26th congress, require reinforced efforts to eliminate the threat of war.

Specifically, it was proposed:

— *extending the zone for confidence-building measures in the military field in Europe now being put into effect in accordance with the decisions of the European Conference*. These measures apply to European countries, including the Western regions of the USSR, and they consist of, among other things, advance notification of military exercises of ground troops and invitation to these exercises of observers from other countries. The Soviet Union declared, as it had on earlier occasions, that it is prepared to go farther and give notice of naval and air exercises and also of major troop movements. An extension of the zone of confidence-building measures would signify their application to the entire European part of the USSR, provided the European nations, for their part, extend the confidence zone accordingly;

— *the holding of concrete confidence-building measures in the Far East with all interested countries*. The elaboration and application of confidence measures in this region, where the USSR, China and Japan border on each other and the USA has military bases, would defuse the situation there and be an extremely useful

contribution to strengthening world peace;

— continuing, without delay, the negotiations with the United States on the question of limiting and reducing strategic weapons while preserving all the positive elements that have so far been achieved in this area. Further, the USSR proposed that these negotiations should be conducted on the basis of equality and equal security and that they should be joined by other nuclear powers at the appropriate time;

— talks on limiting weapons of all types. It was proposed that an agreement should be reached on limiting the deployment of new types of submarines — the Ohio type by the USA and similar ones by the USSR — and banning the modernization of existing and the development of new ballistic missiles for these submarines;

— readiness to come to terms that already now a moratorium should be set on the deployment in Europe of new medium-range nuclear-missile weapons of the NATO countries and the Soviet Union, in other words, to freeze the existing quantitative and qualitative level of these weapons, naturally including the U.S. forward-based nuclear weapons in this region. The moratorium could come into force in parallel with the commencement of negotiations on this question and remain in force until a permanent treaty was concluded on limiting or, still better, reducing nuclear weapons in Europe;

— the formation of a prestigious international committee, which would demonstrate the vital necessity of preventing a nuclear catastrophe.

And, lastly, since there are many other pressing international problems for which a far-sighted approach, political will, courage, prestige and influence are needed, the Soviet communists stated at their congress that it would be useful to call a special session of the Security Council with the participation of the top leaders of the Council's member-states in order to look for keys to improving the international situation and preventing war. The sittings could evidently be attended by the leaders of other countries. More, the settlement of the most pressing problems could be served by the proposal for a USSR-USA summit.

This is the gist of what is most important. The Soviet proposals cover a wide spectrum of issues affecting the situation in practically all parts of the world. Let us now see whom they benefit . . .

Of course, the purport of these peace initiatives is chiefly to ensure conditions conducive to economic and cultural development in the Soviet Union, to raising the people's living

standard. But does one have to prove that by championing peace in order to achieve national aims, the Soviet communists are also acting in the interests of all humankind?

Of course, one cannot reduce concern for consolidating peace only to the initiatives of the CPSU and the Soviet government. The peace forces are active throughout the world, including the American continent. But you will agree that the all-embracing, realistic Soviet proposals are an important impulse for uniting these forces for a new, broad peace offensive. Of course, this is alarming the circles that want a return to the cold war. Hence the efforts by reactionary propaganda to portray the proposals of the 26th congress of the CPSU as benefiting solely Soviet interests. As you are aware, many people in our countries still believe stories of that kind.

By way of comment let us try and see who would benefit by an agreement, based on equality and equal security, on the question of medium-range missiles in Europe. It would indeed benefit the Soviet Union. But, in equal measure or perhaps even to a larger extent, it would benefit the West Germans, the Italians, the British, the Dutch — in short, the inhabitants of all the countries where NATO plans to deploy these missiles. . . .

Would it be in the interests solely of the Soviet Union if strategic weapons were limited and reduced? There is no nation in the world that would not benefit in the context of security and economic considerations. . . .

Would it harm anybody if nuclear-free zones were created? Or if nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction were banned? On the contrary, everybody would profit by it.

Understandably, the Soviet people desire any summit that could define possible steps to improve the international situation. But does such a summit harbor any threat to other nations? If it is successful it would only bring them joy.

I would recommend, Mr. Webster, that you analyze the proposals I have mentioned closely, one by one. There can be no mistaking the conclusion that you, or, for that matter, any other unbiased, honest person will draw. It is that these initiatives benefit all people and that the future belongs to them. I am confident that history will bear me out.

Peter Boychuck,
Central Executive Committee
alternate member,
CC of the Communist Party of Canada,
Chairman of the WMR Commission for
Peace and Democratic Movements

On the front line of struggle

Interview given by Carlos Fernando Chamorro, Editor-in-Chief of *Barricada*, the central Sandinista newspaper (Nicaragua)

Q. First, I should like to ask when and how your newspaper was founded?

A. *Barricada* began publication on July 25, 1979, exactly six days after the revolution triumphed. It happened like this. Bayardo Arce, one of the leaders of the Sandinista National Liberation Front who was in charge of the press at the time, summoned a group of journalists with the Sandinista army, myself among them, and gave us two days in which to start a newspaper. He said we needed a newspaper to tell the people the truth about the aims of the revolution, help the Front to establish a new order in the country, and facilitate Nicaragua's economic revival.

Today it is a daily newspaper with 12 to 16 pages and a circulation of 75,000. We have about 20 journalists working in the editorial office and also 10 correspondents in the country's various departments. We have no permanent foreign correspondents.

Q. What prompted the name "*Barricada*?"

A. This was decided by the Sandinista leadership. I understand that it is a tribute to the liberation traditions of our people, of which barricades are a symbol. They played an important part in the revolution, especially during the decisive Sandinista offensive. Moreover, the name obliges the newspaper to be in the forefront of the ideological struggle.

Q. Could you say a few words about other mass media in Nicaragua today?

A. In addition to *Barricada*, there are two central dailies: *La Prensa*, which states the views of the right-wing bourgeois circles, and *El Nuevo Diario*, which is an independent progressive publication. Further, some public organizations have their own journals and dailies. Together, their circulation stands roughly at 30,000 copies. However, at present these publications are being restructured on account of financial and other difficulties.

Television is entirely under Sandinista control. There is a ramified network of radio stations, many of which are run by the government. The Sandinista Front has its own radio station.

Q. What, would you say, is the main distinction between the pre-revolutionary and present press in Nicaragua?

This interview was taken in Managua by our correspondent, A. Sukhostat.

A. Chiefly that today there are media that openly champion the class interests of the working people. In the media prior to the revolution there were supporters of the Somoza regime and also people opposed to it. The latter, I believe, were predominant. Among the opposition journalists some believed that the Somoza dictatorship should be removed but felt that the old social system should be left intact; others were more radical. However, the problem was that it was very hard to state these views. Those who overstepped the mark paid for it with their lives. Only the underground press could be consistently revolutionary during those times. Its experience is successfully used by *Barricada* — but in a new situation in which the Sandinista Front wields real power.

Q. What reflection does the present demarcation of the nation's political forces get in the press?

A. The most direct. One of the most eloquent illustrations of this is *La Prensa*'s departure from democratic positions. That newspaper has been functioning for more than half a century. During the years directly preceding the revolution it won prestige not only because it was a trusted source of information but also because it contributed to molding public opinion against Somoza. I believe that to some extent *La Prensa* owed this to my father, Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, who was its managing director. After my father's assassination on January 10, 1978, a crime that shocked the entire nation, the newspaper's staff members who shared his views became more vocal in denouncing the Somoza regime. When the revolution triumphed, the newspaper became the arena of a struggle between two opposing schools in Nicaraguan journalism: a progressive, revolutionary school, and a conciliatory, pro-imperialist. Of course, this struggle was linked to the social conflicts that persist in this day.

In May 1980, after a series of collisions and conflicts with *La Prensa*'s bourgeois owners, three-fourths of its writing staff and also most of the printers quit and set up a new newspaper, *El Nuevo Diario*. *La Prensa* ceased to be a progressive paper, becoming a spokesman of right-wing political parties, big capital, and imperialism. Actually, it is now a far cry from what it was originally, although it tries to pre-

serve the image it had on the eve of the revolution. Although it claims it is "impartial," it slants or simply falsifies information. Its objective is to disunite the people, to sow distrust of the government and the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

A bitter ideological struggle is now raging in Nicaragua over the mass media. With the demand for a "free press" as their cover, some quarters are trying to facilitate the actions of the counter-revolution. Their main mouthpiece is that selfsame *La Prensa*, which has the support of the pro-imperialist Inter-American Press Association.*

Genuine freedom of the press is the right won by the people to defend the revolution, disseminate progressive ideas, build a new life, and promote culture. This is the stand of the recently founded Nicaraguan Journalists' Union, to which most newspaper, radio, and television journalists belong.

Q. What would you say are the main functions of *Barricada*?

A. Before answering that question I would like to mention one of the things that characterizes our newspaper. It is not only the official organ of the Sandinista Front but also the voice of our revolution. It is addressed chiefly to Sandinista Front members and the nation's working people. It seeks a readership also among patriotic small and middle entrepreneurs.

By addressing large segments of the population, *Barricada* performs the function of agitator, propagandist and organizer, a function mentioned by Lenin when he spoke of the workers' press. I believe we are performing this function to the extent we are able to articulate the standpoint of the Sandinista Front, orient the people on the fulfillment of the tasks confronting the nation, and explain that negative phenomena such as triumphalism (the name we give to the dangerous complacency generated by victory) have to be combated.

Much remains to be done before *Barricada* becomes an effective organizer of the people. We have, first, to enhance the influence of the printed word and, second, improve the newspaper's distributive mechanism. Here, we face serious difficulties. Sales are mainly not through party and public organizations (which account for less than 30 per cent of our circulation) but through the trade network. This reduces our efficacy. However, we have already taken steps to distribute the newspaper directly through party organizations and trade unions,

particularly in the capital. There is something else. The efficacy of the printed word depends to a large extent on how the Sandinista Front and its locals as well as public organizations use the newspaper in their day-to-day work, on whether they organize collective reading groups and bring special issues to the notice of the working people.

Q. What are today the most topical subjects for the Nicaraguan progressive press generally?

A. The effort to achieve economic revival and safeguard the revolution. But I must admit that economic development problems, which are paramount in the present situation, do not as yet get adequate coverage in newspapers, including ours. In 1980 there were two important developments: the formation of the Trade Union Coordinating Committee of Nicaragua (to which the largest trade unions are affiliated) and the Committee of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs. *Barricada* believes it is important to give coverage to the work of these committees. I should like to note that since small and middle entrepreneurs play a large part in the nation's economic life, we should help to speed up their breakaway from the big bourgeoisie.

Now, a few words about the defense of the revolution. This is exceedingly important in the present tense situation when the threat to it has become very real indeed. We are more and more frequently carrying articles giving interesting glimpses of the Sandinista people's militia, a mass voluntary paramilitary organization set up at factories, educational institutions and residential districts. Special units, formed on the basis of the people's militia, are sent to the northern districts to combat the counter-revolutionary gangs infiltrating into our country from Honduras. The newspaper gives systematic coverage to these operations with the aim of enlisting more people into the militia. It exposes the attacks of the counter-revolutionaries on our army, which they seek to depict as being in no way different from the Somoza praetorian guard. The truth about the Sandinista forces helps to strengthen their links to the people.

Q. You mentioned the need to fight triumphalism. How is this reflected in the revolutionary press?

A. I only referred to the content of the materials being printed. However, the hardest thing is to present them in a manner the people can understand. We sometimes unwittingly use a complicated language, abuse abstract concepts, and repeat the word "revolution" endlessly without explaining in simple terms what it means. Involuntarily we are creating a sort of

*Constituted in 1926 at the First Pan-American Convention of Journalists in Washington, this association expresses the interests of the U.S. "newspaper dynasties" and also of the reactionary regimes in Latin America. — Ed.

ideological vocabulary studded with stock phrases in which words begin to lose their original meaning. Precisely in this context propaganda becomes triumphalist, in other words, uncritical. It glosses over phenomena instead of going into their substance. In this bracket I would also include fear to portray the actual situation. It is very important to surmount these weaknesses, for we want the people to learn to understand what is happening, to look for guidance to the revolutionary and not the right-wing press, which, I regret to say, still strongly influences people.

Q. How does *Barricada* keep abreast of what its readers think?

A. We still lack a smoothly operating mechanism that could enable us to take the wishes and requirements of our readers into account. Mostly, we use informal communications channels. We receive great help from mass organizations. They never refuse to give us their opinion about our work. We run a column under the heading of *Mailbox*. Many of the letters are about what worries the people most of all: the content of new laws, the work of government agencies, the education problem, and so on. We have made headway in our work with these letters. People are beginning to believe that the issues they put before the paper will be considered and settled. We send some letters to the relevant state agencies and make sure they are answered, even if the reply is sometimes negative. Letters from readers are important, for they give journalists an idea of what is in the minds of the people and are a source of topical subjects for feature stories.

Q. What are your newspaper's sources of international information?

A. We use the services of Nueva Nicaragua (the national agency) and also various foreign news agencies. As a rule, information from capitalist agencies has to be heavily processed because in most cases they report events ten-

ditionally or side-step important international developments. I believe that this processing and the addition of comments to reports are a novelty introduced by us into our national press. If you look through other Nicaraguan newspapers you will find that they confine themselves to printing news as they get it from information agencies, without worrying, for instance, that the terminology used in it is often inconsistent with our concepts (suffice it to note that revolutionaries are called terrorists).

I feel that by opening the Nueva Nicaragua agency (which has joined the information pool of the nonaligned states) we have contributed to the efforts to create a new international order in information.

Q. What is your assessment of the prospects for the development of the Nicaraguan press?

A. I feel these prospects cannot be considered in isolation from the overall development of the revolution. Confirmation of this is the nationwide drive to wipe out illiteracy. It has given people the opportunity not only to learn to read and write but also to acquire a greater sense of political, class awareness. As a result of this drive, the reading public has grown by almost half a million. As the people's education level rises they begin to make higher demands of the press, radio and television.

Much still remains to be done by the Nicaraguan Union of Journalists and other organizations to improve the quality of journalism. More attention must be given not only to content but also to presentation, to combat the bad taste that has become deep-rooted in the national press. Our press should be more operational, flexible and attractive. As I see it, any material, even if it is of the entertainment genre, should have a clear-cut ideological orientation and help to promote the ethics and cultural level of the reader. In this work use should be made of the finest traditions of progressive Nicaraguan journalism.

I am sure that the ideological struggle in the nation will mount. We, revolutionary journalists, are therefore preparing for a decisive offensive. Defense will not do. One of the main conditions for going over to such an offensive is to unite with the people as far as possible and give every encouragement to revolutionary criticism. The right-wing forces likewise give much of their attention to criticism, but their criticism is destructive. Its one and only aim is to pave the way to the seizure of power for reaction. For our part, we urge constructive, effective criticism. Efforts in that direction will unquestionably bring more and more people over to our side and help to develop the revolution.

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Book reviews

COLONIALISM TODAY

Bohuslav Doubrava. *Imperialismus a rozvojové země*, Praha, Horizont, 1980, 199 pp.

In response to the powerful tide of the national liberation movement and to the disintegration of the colonial system, imperialism has switched to a policy and ideology of neocolonialism. *Imperialism and Developing Countries* by the Czechoslovak scholar Bohuslav Doubrava (Horizont Publishers, Prague) looks into the essence of neocolonialism, into its theoretical and practical aspects.

By the late 1950s neocolonialism had become the predominant trend in the policy of the imperialist powers toward the newly-free states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Having lost direct political control over them, the former colonial powers sought new ways and means of exploiting developing countries and securing dominant positions there. The realities of the modern world convincingly bear out that Lenin's theory of imperialism remains fully valid today whatever the bourgeois theorists try to do to refute it. Lenin wrote that colonial expansion is an inalienable hallmark of imperialism. The economic substance of this hallmark is manifested in bold relief in neocolonialism, which is, as Doubrava says, "a complex and multifaceted system of indirect and thoroughly camouflaged control over politically independent countries by imperialist states and monopolies" (p. 22).

That system has its material base in developing countries — the sector of monopoly property, it rests on cooperation with local conservative forces, above all the most reactionary sections of the local bourgeoisie. Neocolonialism is a combination of political and military interference, economic pressure and ideological influence. Its strategic goal, the book says, is to prevent the spread of the struggle waged by the progressive forces in young national states against imperialism, against economic dependence on foreign monopolies, and to hamper, halt, or render completely impossible the development of these states along socialist lines.

The numerous facts cited in the book show that neocolonialist tactics consist of constant maneuvering and attempts to adapt to the new conditions of the struggle between the world's two socio-economic systems. There are many reasons for the constant modification of neocolonialist theory and practice. The main

reasons, however, are the changed balance of strength in the world in favor of socialism and the spreading influence of Marxism-Leninism. The appeal of the example set by existing socialism, the economic and political cooperation between developing and socialist countries, and the new tendencies in the international division of labor also play an important role. Besides, the sovereignty of the states pursuing an independent course is being consolidated and the national liberation struggle is growing into a struggle for the social emancipation of working people. And, last but not least, neocolonialist tactics are influenced by the changes in the former colonial powers themselves caused by the intensifying class battles of the proletariat.

Neocolonialism's main stake in the political sphere is on a combination of strength and ideological pressure. The imperialist powers, above all the USA, still make extensive use also of their traditional "police strategy" whenever there is a danger of "undesirable changes." Brute force, threats, subversion, provocations, and direct military intervention are the neocolonialists' favorite methods. Besides, they resort increasingly to various forms of indirect political pressure. In this context Doubrava notes neocolonialism's "differentiated" approach to the newly-free states: "To the imperialist powers and monopolies," he writes, "the government of one or another country is acceptable so long as it ensures free scope for foreign capital and effectively obstructs any profound socio-economic transformations" (p. 44).

This "differentiated" approach to developing countries is motivated by the striving to prevent the fulfillment of the programs of the national democratic revolution and give every support to reactionary dictatorships. Present-day colonialists look for any opportunity to overthrow progressive regimes, they extend economic "aid" and offer credits of international finance organizations primarily to those countries whose governments follow in the wake of imperialist policies and are oriented on capitalism.

In order to dampen the growing contradictions between the former colonial powers and young independent countries, imperialism en-

gages in all kinds of political maneuvering. For instance, it gives verbal recognition to the just demands for a new world economic order and a "code of behavior" for transnationals, but in fact opposes these demands in every possible way. The book examines other methods that are used to smooth out contradictions, including dialogues among partners, which are neocolonialism's way of influencing the foreign and domestic policies of newly-free countries (p. 44).

In the economic sphere, writes Doubrava, a major instrument of keeping the young countries dependent on imperialist monopolies is the import of capital from the former colonial powers (p. 50). Using various forms of financial and technical "aid" and encouraging a "limited industrialization," the neocolonialists seek to turn the developing zone into a subsystem of the capitalist world economy, into a profitable but still unequal economic appendage. Transnational corporations play first fiddle in that policy.

In its efforts to expand its social base in developing nations, neocolonialism relies on the local bourgeoisie. The most widespread among its social concepts are the theories of "class conciliation," "élite," "the new middle class," and the division of nations into "bourgeois and proletarian," into "rich and poor." All these theories are substantively examined in the book (pp. 99-106).

Anti-communism, described by the author as "the response of imperialist theory and practice to the growth of the national liberation movement" (p. 107), is assigned a special role in the ideological arsenal of the modern colonialists. Parallel with primitive, vulgar anti-communism, the new trend toward creating a "positive" anti-communism and offering a "constructive alternative" not only to scientific socialism but also to the revolutionary-democratic interpretation of the road to socialism, is growing more pronounced in bourgeois propaganda.

Anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, writes Doubrava, are aimed at breaking up the expanding relations between developing countries and the socialist world community. In this context, the hegemonism and ideological concepts of today's Peking élite play into the hands of the imperialists. "In China's Maoism," Doubrava writes, "the neocolonialists have found a faithful helper in inventing and spreading anti-Soviet slander and politico-strategic concepts. Bellicose anti-Sovietism . . . now serves as a link between Chinese policy, neocolonialism, and extreme reaction in Asia, Africa and Latin America" (p. 146).

There are three parallel processes in the national liberation struggle undermining the neocolonialist system: the socialist orientation, the policy of nonalignment, and the demand for a new international economic order. These processes mirror the differentiation of the liberation forces and the dynamics of the mutual influence of the anti-imperialist and social movements (p. 163).

Although neocolonialism like the capitalist social system which produced it is doomed, the progressive forces in developing countries, the author stresses, have a hard battle on their hands for the hearts and minds of the masses, and the further successes of the national liberation movement depend on the outcome of that battle.

Pavel Auersperg

STOLEN CHILDHOOD

On June 1 the world marks the International Day of the Protection of Children. Protection from starvation and disease, from fear and humiliation, from ignorance and racial discrimination, from the horrors of war and back-breaking labor — from all that has hitherto been the lot of the smallest citizens wherever capitalism rules.

In 1959 the UN General Assembly unanimously passed the declaration of the Rights of the Child, which proclaimed, among other things, that the "child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty, and exploitation." This document together with the International Year of the Child (1979) focussed public and expert attention in different countries on the condition of children, particularly on the problem of the exploitation of child labor. Many books have lately appeared on this subject. This article is devoted to some of them.*

We should evidently begin with statistics. How many are there of these child laborers? The French researcher Christiane Rimbaud answers this question in the title of the book, *52 Million Child Workers*. This is the official figure of the International Labor Office. A fantastically large number, but Rimbaud makes the reservation that "this is only the tip of the iceberg" which "hides at least another 100 million" (p. 14).

What underlies these assessment dis-

*Christiane Rimbaud, *52 Million d'enfants au Travail*, Paris, Plon, 1980. *Children at work*, Geneva, International Labor Office, 1979. James Challis and David Elliman, *Child Workers Today*, London, 1979, Elke Stark von der Haar und Heinrich von der Haar, *Kinderarbeit in der Bundesrepublik und im Deutschen Reich*, West Berlin, Die Arbeitswelt, 1980.

parities? The publishers of the book *Children at Work*, prepared by none other than the International Labor Office, point out that they cannot take the responsibility for the accuracy of the statistics cited by them because a large proportion of child labor is employed illegally. Rimbaud, however, sees the reason in the fact that international agencies get their information from national sources, which downgrade figures to avoid compromising their respective countries in the eyes of world opinion. Further, in many countries the category "economically active juvenile" is interpreted differently as to age and job. In industrial capitalist countries, Rimbaud notes, "it is sometimes hard to assess the information on the employment of child labor for the very simple reason that it is non-existent" (p. 12). However, this by no means signifies that the problem itself is non-existent.

More than a hundred years ago Frederick Engels wrote that "it is inexcusable that the time which should be devoted exclusively to the physical and spiritual education of children is sacrificed to the greed of the callous bourgeoisie: children are denied schooling and fresh air in order to squeeze profit from them for the gentlemen manufacturers."¹ Let us note that the founders of Marxism-Leninism never denied the importance of labor upbringing. As the experience of socialist countries demonstrates, this upbringing inculcates in children a respectful attitude to work and its results, helps them to choose a profession, and prepares them for their future work in production. Capitalism pursues entirely different aims. To quote *Cahiers du communisme*, journal of the French Communist Party, it "regards the child as potential surplus value, frequently exploiting him at a tender age."²

Italy heads the list of West European countries for the scale on which juvenile labor is employed. Ten years ago the Italian Ministry of Labor and Social Security had to concede that at least half a million children of school age (under 14) were employed at small industrial enterprises, building projects, farms, bars, and restaurants. But other surveys, Rimbaud writes, place the number of juvenile workers at about a million, which adds up to 7 per cent of the nation's entire child population (p. 63).

Torn away from their families and friends, the children come face to face early, with the brutalities of life, crime, and debauchery, and reach adulthood prematurely. Most of these children don't even know how to play (*I Do Not Play: I Work*,³ is the title of a book published in Italy).

In the FRG, a country more "better off" than Italy by capitalist standards, children work in

factories and mills, in the services industry, and in agriculture. Published last year, the book *Child Labor in the Federal Republic and the German Reich* says that the number of child workers exceeds 300,000. "Because of the difficult material condition of workers with large families and of poor peasant families," the authors write, "children have to go to work early to help their parents and provide themselves with the means of subsistence."⁴

"You begin at the breaker and you end at the breaker, broken yourself." This saying originated at the turn of the century in U.S. mines, where mainly children and old men were employed to break rock. But to this day the leading power of the capitalist world dooms many children to suffering and exhausting labor. At least 800,000 children, according to statistics cited by Rimbaud, sweat on farms and plantations. "This means," Rimbaud writes, "that 25 per cent of agricultural laborers are under 16" (p. 88). The vast majority of juveniles work not for pocket money but by necessity, to add to the meager budget of their families. Of the total number of child workers, 300,000 are children of immigrants. In the State of Washington, for instance, 99 per cent of immigrant children over the age of 6 have to work for their daily bread (p. 89).

The problem of child exploitation is particularly acute in developing countries, which, due to economic backwardness and imperialism's neocolonialist policy, cannot find the funds for creating elementary conditions of life for the rising generation. Of the officially registered 52 million child workers in the world, over 47 million are in Asian and African countries.

In Morocco the law forbids the employment of children under 12: they have to go to school. However, 1,500,000 girls do not have a primary education (Rimbaud, p. 128). This is not accidental, for girls are the main victims of exploitation. The nation's carpet factories employ 12,000 juveniles. Their working week is from 48 to 72 hours. The poor lighting and ventilation, the sharp temperature fluctuations, and the poisonous vapours shatter the health of child workers, making them invalids.⁵

According to the London-based Anti-Slavery Society, some 500 children daily pass through the slave market in Bangkok, the Thai capital. Merchants buy children of between 11 and 14 years of age from impoverished families and resell them to the owners of local factories.

In many countries shops are flooded with toys bearing the trademark "Made in Hong Kong." All these beautiful dolls and mechanical toy cars are assembled by children and bear another trademark — cruel exploitation of

children. One is outraged, Rimbaud writes, at the very thought of what goes through the mind of a child worker making toys which he cannot himself enjoy (p. 157). The growing number of occupational accidents is the result of moral and physical exhaustion and the absence of elementary safety engineering. Although there are no official statistics on this score, it is known, for instance, that in Hong Kong more than 5,000 juveniles aged 15 to 18 were victims of occupational accidents within the space of only two years.

E. Mendelevich, author of one of the chapters in *Children at Work*, writes that the main task of the movement to abolish child labor should be to explain to the peoples of the countries that have won liberation that far from increasing the family income the economic activity of juveniles ultimately reduces that income because it contributes to adult unemployment and enables entrepreneurs to pressure the latter's wages. This task should be fulfilled as part of economic and social reforms. One of the hindrances, he says, is the traditional system of values shaped under conditions of poverty and denial of rights. Child labor is in inverse proportion to society's economic development level. Neither the child, convinced that he is voluntarily helping his family, nor his parents, who virtually compel him to do so, realize that in this way they are perpetuating poverty and ignorance, Mendelevich writes. And adds: The

blame for this vicious circle does not devolve on them (p. 5.)

Although the responsible party is not named, it is obvious that capitalism is meant. "In the imperialist world," writes *Cahiers du communisme*, "children are the first victims of social inequality, poverty, racism and injustice."⁶

The books considered here contain extensive factual material and give a horrifying picture of the condition of children in the capitalist world. Their authors are sincerely outraged by the scale and level of the exploitation to which children are subjected. However, when the question is raised of possible ways of resolving this problem, the recommendations boil down mainly to wishes addressed to international agencies and to measures to ease the condition of child labor and not to abolish it entirely. To guarantee children the right to happiness and to ensure the harmonious physical and mental development of the rising generation and, hence, a healthy future for humankind it is necessary to abolish the root of this evil, namely, the capitalist system of exploitation.

D. Vital

1. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 2, p. 386.
2. *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 6, 1980, p. 82.
3. *Io no gioco: lavoro!*, Altamura, 1977.
4. *Deutsche Volkszeitung*, July 3, 1980.
5. *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 6, 1980, p. 79.
6. *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 6, 1980, p. 82.

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