

WORLD

Problems of

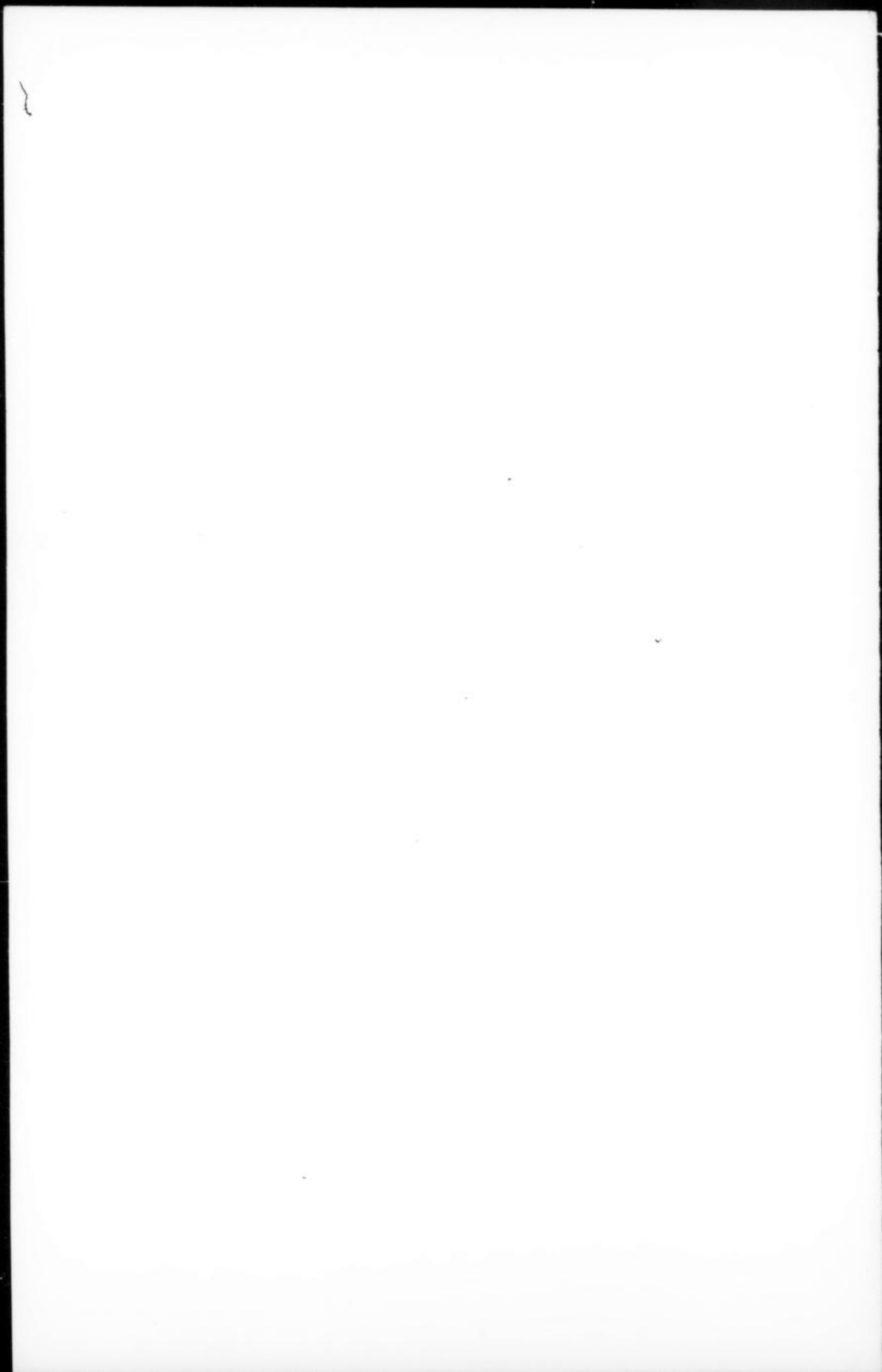
MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

REVIEW

March 1988 Vol. 31, No. 3
\$2.50 ISSN 0043-8642







world marxist review

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 3 MARCH 1988

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

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

WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE

PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM

is also published in Arabic, Amharic, Baluchi, Bengali, Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dari, Farsi, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Kurdish, Lao, Malayalam, Maltese, Manipuri, Mongolian, Norwegian, Oriya, Pashtu, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Singhalese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, Vietnamese.

On the Editorial Board and Editorial Council of *Problems of Peace and Socialism* are the representatives of parties of the following countries: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South African Republic, Spain, Soviet Union, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, Vietnam, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

contents

Reality Calling for a High Sense of Responsibility <i>Alvaro Cunhal (Portugal)</i>	5
Soviet Foreign Policy: Basic Principles and New Thinking <i>Anatoly Dobrynin (USSR)</i>	15
Sharp Turn to Revolutionary Forces' Unity <i>Athos Fava (Argentina)</i>	28
The Decline of the Santa Fe Policy <i>Narciso Isa Conde (The Dominican Republic)</i>	35

step by step to disarmament

There Is Much Work Ahead . . . <i>Tengiz Menteshashvili (USSR)</i>	43
The Initial Phase of a Continuum . . . <i>Claiborne Pell (USA)</i>	45
THE WAY THEY ARE TO DO IT (INF Treaty Highlights)	46
Washington Summit Opens Up Broad Prospects <i>Elena Flores (Spain)</i>	48

the party

To Break the Vicious Circle of the Two-Party System <i>John Bizzell (Canada)</i>	51
Change of Generations: Conflict or Continuity? <i>Jean Blume, Eric Remacle (Belgium)</i>	56
A Landmark in Building a New Society <i>Charles Kileo (Tanzania)</i>	62

INFORMATION

International Contacts	66
In Brief	67
WMR Introduces	69
LIBERTY, JUSTICE, PEACE! Survey of Press Reports and FCP Documents on the 26th Congress of the FCP	69

the women's movement today

'Socialist Feminism'? No, Complete Equality <i>Marie Kabrhelová (Czechoslovakia)</i>	77
We Are Half the World <i>Elean Thomas (Jamaica)</i>	85
For Women's Interests <i>Gisèle Rabesahala (Madagascar)</i>	92

exchange of views, discussion

THE COMMUNISTS IN TODAY'S WORLD: PARTNERSHIP AND ITS RATIONALE. Survey of a WMR Discussion	96
--	----

viewpoints

Accomplishments Unprecedented for the Korean Peasants <i>So Gwang Hi (Korea)</i>	118
--	-----

MARXISM AND RELIGION

Christians in the Social Struggle <i>Orlando Millas (Chile)</i>	125
No Peace Without Justice <i>Leonidas Proaño (Ecuador)</i>	132

AROUND THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS

Using the War as a Pretext <i>Muhsin Abdallah (Saudi Arabia)</i>	137
To Save the Nation From Disaster <i>Salah Djaber (Kuwait)</i>	140
Under the Pretext of Defending Sovereignty <i>Saif Ben Ali, Youssef al-Hassan (Bahrain)</i>	142
25 Years in Racist Prison <i>Winnie Mandela (South Africa)</i>	146

the book scene

Success Without Euphoria <i>James West</i>	148
Stalin: the Triumph and the Tragedy <i>Dmitri Volkogonov</i>	154

Reality Calling For A High Sense Of Responsibility

Alvaro Cunhal — General Secretary,
Portuguese Communist Party (PCP)

We open a new series of interviews — with leaders of communist and worker's parties answering questions from representatives of parties on the *WMR* Editorial Council (70 of them).

Comrade Alvaro Cunhal was the first to respond to the *WMR* request. Following is the part of the interview on international problems. The conclusion will appear in the April issue.

The International Communist Movement: Past and Present

You took part in the Seventh Congress of the Communist International which set the objective of creating a broad anti-fascist front. Do you believe that the Comintern did all it could to translate that slogan into reality? What lessons could be drawn from this experience as applied to the current conditions and the Communists' tasks in the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress? (Zenon Zorzovilis, Communist Party of Greece).

I TOOK part in the Sixth Congress of the Communist Youth International which was held in Moscow in 1935 and in the talks conducted at the Comintern with the PCP delegation within the framework of the Seventh Congress. Facts bore out the basic guidelines of the Seventh Congress which called for a struggle against fascism and war. In France and Spain, the Popular Front scored major electoral victories. Left governments were

Alvaro Cunhal (b. 1913), a lawyer by training, has been a PCP member since 1931. He served as Secretary General of the Communist Youth Federation of Portugal in 1935-1940, became a member of the PCP Central Committee in 1936 and a member of its Secretariat in 1942. In March 1961 he was elected General Secretary of the party. Repeatedly arrested for revolutionary activities under the fascist dictatorship, he spent more than 11 years in prison; after the overthrow of the regime he served with the Provisional Government in 1974-1975 and has been a member of the Council of State since October 1982. Alvaro Cunhal is the author of many books and articles. — *Ed.*

formed. In Spain, the victory of the Popular Front opened the way for a democratic revolution supported by the masses. However, despite the heroic struggle of the Spanish people, it was strangled — not so much by the internal counter-revolution (Franco's rebellion) as due to the armed fascist intervention by Germany and Italy and to the benevolent 'neutrality' of socialist and social democratic parties, particularly of the French Socialist Party and the then French Prime Minister Léon Blum.

Both during and after World War II, a great store of anti-fascist experience was accumulated, which enabled peoples to win important victories in the struggle for democracy, social progress and national independence. The Portuguese learned a great deal from their resistance to the fascist dictatorship.

Two important lessons which generally remain topical in many countries can be drawn not only from the experience of the Popular Front of the 1930s but also from the subsequent experience of democratic fronts. First, unity of democratic forces can ensure the success of the struggle, the support of most of the population and the creation of a government capable of resolving the problems of the people and of the country. Second, it is indispensable to make this unity real and not confined to an electoral alliance which disintegrates after the formation of a cabinet.

The alignment of parties differs greatly from country to country. However, one can affirm that the establishment by the Communists of a certain system of social and corresponding political alliances in each specific case is of universal significance: it is a necessary way of fighting for national independence, freedom, democracy and social progress.

One should stress that the systems of alliances on domestic and international issues may not — and often do not — coincide.

Given the current situation in international affairs, the unity of all peace forces fighting to end the arms race and remove the threat of nuclear omnicide has emerged as an imperative. The cause of peace is a cause for all mankind. It follows that on the international plane, there must be neither social nor political divisions in the unity of peace champions.

However, joint international action to attain these goals does not mean that in every country the same forces act in concert in pursuing foreign and domestic policy.

How do you assess the current state of the international communist movement? What do you think should be done to enhance its unity in the struggle for peace, democracy, national liberation and socialism? (Hugo Campos, Paraguayan Communist Party).

In today's world, the international communist movement remains the decisive political force that keeps the revolutionary process developing and shapes society's progressive transformations, which are typical of our age. However, the spread of the liberation struggle waged by the working people and by nations to all continents, and the fact that it unfolds in diverse economic and social circumstances confront the communist movement with new questions.

Despite the forecasts made several decades ago, the bourgeoisie has

consolidated its positions in many developed capitalist countries while in others, where the proletariat is only just emerging as a class, national and democratic revolutions have occurred. New revolutionary forces have surfaced to lead and direct the struggle of their peoples; in some cases they have scored historic victories.

All these facts make it necessary to analyse the scope of the international communist movement and of the forces that comprise it.

One should also remember, we believe, that, on the one hand, every communist party is independent and decides on its course and activities without outside interference and that, on the other, the independence of the parties does not rule out but, on the contrary, implies the need for a more profound exchange of experience, for greater cooperation, joint action and mutual solidarity.

It is perfectly clear that within the framework of international relations, the ruling communist and workers' parties develop ties with diverse political forces of other countries. That is also a legitimate right of other communist parties. However, we believe that there is a condition to be observed here: a communist party's relations with other political forces (both at home and on the international plane) and its participation in joint action together with different parties (specifically, with the Socialists and the Social Democrats) should not lead to the loss of its identity or weaken its ties of friendship and cooperation with the communist and workers' parties.

Honest and frank exchange of views, closer bilateral and multilateral cooperation of communist and workers' parties, and joint international initiatives for the attainment of specific objectives — such are only a few aspects for the consolidation and greater unity of the communist movement.

What do you think about the prospects of the communist movement and the democratic forces in Western Europe? (Antonio Diaz Ruiz, Communist Party of Cuba).

The future of the communist movement in Western Europe depends primarily on the Communists themselves, on their policy and action.

In Portugal and in other countries, our adversaries have mounted a large-scale campaign to convince the public that the 'decline of the European communist movement is irreversible'. Apparently, this claim stems from the fact that many communist parties have lost their positions and their influence, and that in several countries, internal divisions among the Communists have led to the emergence of several parties. Besides, objective factors have also produced new difficulties which the Communists encounter in their activities. One cannot, for example, underrate the impact of the mass media (primarily of television, radio and the press) controlled by the forces of capital.

However, only the communist parties and no other political force can show the workers and the peoples of their countries how to resolve their pressing problems. In West European countries, capitalist exploitation not only continues but also intensifies, in both old and new forms.

Unemployment is growing. The social situation is deteriorating. Under the existing conditions, the Communists are the only consistent champions of workers' interests. They are the only ones to open the unique prospect of abolishing capitalist exploitation. A class-based policy (which does not rule out but, on the contrary, stipulates effective defence of the interests of all classes and social strata affected by monopoly capitalism) is, in our view, a good basis for overcoming the current difficulties of the communist movement in capitalist Europe, for improving the situation, for strengthening the parties and making them more active. In this way we would confirm that advancement of the communist cause is the only 'irreversible' thing.

Now that Thatcher, Kohl and the five-party Italian government have been re-elected, the impression is that a conservative tide is rising powerfully in the industrially developed capitalist countries of Western Europe (with the possible exception of several Nordic countries). Meanwhile, mass support for the Left as a whole — that is, of the Social Democrats and the Communists — has contracted. Some sections of the Left hold that this trend born, among other things, of the scientific and technological revolution, is irreversible. What is your opinion on this score? (Bert Ramelson, Communist Party of Great Britain)

How do you explain the rise of the conservative tide in Western Europe and the certain degree of decline and even retreat of the Left there? (Zenon Zorzovilis)

An analysis of the evolution of the political situation and of the correlation of political forces in the capitalist countries of Europe makes it necessary to study both objective and subjective factors which may help to either increase or reduce the influence of different parties.

Objective factors comprise the social and economic characteristics of capitalist development over the past few decades — specifically, the changes in the social composition of every country, the alterations in the structure of the working class, the contraction of the peasantry, the mind-boggling increase in the number of technicians, the swift expansion of the service sector, etc.

Subjective factors include the orientation and the activities of the political parties themselves.

We do not regard either the consolidation of the conservative quarters or the reduction in the influence of democratic forces, particularly of communist parties, in some countries as irreversible. The temporary strengthening of the right-wingers in the more developed capitalist countries should not be viewed in isolation from the rapid development of the productive forces under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution and of high technology, from the temporary stabilisation of the economic situation, or from the growing gap in the development levels of these and the more backward countries. The success of the right was also largely due to the inability of socialist and social democratic governments

to resolve their nations' problems.

There is a group of countries where governments comprising socialist and social democratic parties have failed to deliver on the promises they made to the people, to resolve the problems facing the working people and broad social strata. They have discredited themselves as representatives of the Left and paid a price for their policies.

In Portugal, for example, the Socialist Party has several times won in elections since April 25 [1974. — *Ed.*] and formed governments led by Mário Soares, who was then its Secretary General and is now President of the Republic. But instead of conducting a Left policy in accordance with its programme, this party entered into alliances with the right and pursued a right-wing course aimed at destroying the democratic gains of the April Revolution, a policy which aggravated the social and economic situation in Portugal. Hence the sharp decline in the prestige and influence of the Socialist Party: while 37.9 per cent of the electorate supported it in 1975, in 1985 it lost 844,607 votes, emerged with only 20.8 per cent of the ballots cast and secured 56 seats instead of 100.

As for the communist movement in Western Europe, the influence of many communist parties has indeed declined since the end of World War II: their numerical strength has diminished, their positions in the trade union and other mass movements have become weaker, and in some cases they lost all parliamentary seats.

There exists objective causes that create new and grave difficulties for the communist parties — the changes in the structure of the working class produced by technological shifts in the process of economy production, and the availability of millions of foreign migrant workers which makes the social fabric of some countries differ radically from their political and electoral arrangement. That happens because migrant workers are integrated into the economic system as the more numerous and more exploited working class sections deprived, however, of political rights. Obviously, similar and other circumstances explain the difficulties encountered by some communist parties — but in our view, they do not explain everything.

It is also imperative to find out whether the decline in the Communists' influence has been precipitated or aggravated by subjective factors (those involved in the elaboration of policy or in practical work). That is a problem of common interest to all communist parties. Therefore, each has a vital stake in learning about the experience and views of others.

We maintain that it would be very useful for the communist parties of capitalist Europe to discuss these issues jointly. For its part, the PCP is ready to take part in this examination, not only within the framework of bilateral relations but also at multilateral meetings.

In recent years you have repeatedly noted the importance of searching for new forms of contact and cooperation among the Communists — forms consonant with the spirit of the times and with the demands facing the communist movement today. Could you specify the PCP view of these forms (Alexander Subbotin, Communist Party of the Soviet Union)

New forms of contact and cooperation are dictated by the actual situation in the communist movement, by the diversity of the conditions under which the parties are working and of their tasks, as well as by the need to combine joint action by the Communists themselves and in alliance with other political forces.

For many years, monologue and statements of firmly established views dominated relations among the communist parties. But it is essential for them to launch a constructive dialogue based on a genuine exchange of opinions, on borrowing what is useful from the experience of others, on examining jointly and collectively the problems of common interest, on searching for ways to draw closer to one another in common, albeit limited, initiatives and actions. Tangible progress has been made in these directions, but we should advance more audaciously and more rapidly.

As concerns Europe's capitalist countries, it is high time that we end the practice of exclusively bilateral contacts and meetings. For our part we hold that the actual situation in the communist movement in capitalist Europe calls for a joint and collective analysis of general and particular objective and subjective causes behind the widespread reduction of communist influence. This does not mean that conferences attended by all parties and organised along old, outdated patterns should be organised. One can find less formal but equally responsible forms to embark upon this path and advance faster along it. We all need that.

Does the PCP maintain contacts with the sister parties of the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean so as to intensify the struggle for peace at the regional level? If it does, what are the problems of and prospects for this cooperation? (José Lava, Communist Party of the Philippines)

We maintain not only contacts but also relations of friendship and cooperation with virtually all European communist parties. These relations have been recently gaining strength and, in keeping with the wishes of many parties, conditions for new steps in this direction are emerging. Besides, for initiatives of a unitary character (including the struggle for peace) to be successful, we should also enhance substantially cooperation among the communist parties.

What is the reaction to the change under way in the Soviet Union (perestroika, glasnost, democratisation) in different political and social quarters of Portugal? What response does this process generate in the PCP and how does it influence PCP activities? (Hugo Campos)

What do you think of the current CPSU policies' impact on the international communist movement (Mahmoud Shoukeir, Palestinian Communist Party) and on the opportunities they open for its consolidation? (Mostafa Azzaoui, Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco)

Contrary to what propaganda hostile to socialism claims, we the Communists of Portugal insist that the perestroika process under way in

the USSR draws its strength from the working people, is based on the accomplishments of socialist society and confirms the continuation and the future-oriented thrust of the October Revolution.

The acceleration of socio-economic development, the reorganisation of the national economy along the lines of today's scientific and technological revolution, the enhancement of democracy in the state, party and society, better satisfaction of the people's needs and the efforts to overcome backwardness, shortcomings and mistakes — all that confirms, not denies the superiority of socialism over capitalism, the liberating and revolutionary essence of the socialist system.

We salute the policy of perestroika defined by the 27th Congress of the CPSU as a new stage in the perfection, enrichment and development of socialist society because what we are witnessing is not a retreat but a new breakthrough of socialism. In this sense, perestroika is a valuable contribution helping the Portuguese working people to see socialism as a prospect of their own struggle.

Naturally, other political and social quarters assess and interpret perestroika differently. While the more consistent democratic forces are sincerely sympathetic to it, to what it is and what it means, a different attitude is nevertheless more widespread.

A superficial examination of the responses and opinions expressed can, of course, lead one to conclude that, aside from some ultra-reactionary analysts, everyone in Portugal supports Soviet perestroika. While verbally applauding the change occurring in the USSR, the right-wingers and, generally, all enemies of socialism have launched a furious campaign to 'prove' that perestroika demonstrates the collapse of socialism, that it is a requiem for socialist society, that socialism has been abandoned. In this campaign the anti-communists make wide use of the documents and news connected with grave situations, shortcomings and mistakes in the development of perestroika itself. In this way they succeed in influencing important sections of the population.

Anti-communism seeks to use perestroika to 'substantiate' another conclusion — that the communist parties as such have lost their reason for existence, that the communist movement is destined to decline and disappear, and that the PCP should effect a 'perestroika' of its own. According to anti-communist propaganda, this 'perestroika' should specifically imply a change in the party's class essence, an end to the class struggle, and replacement of the current leadership with opportunists who would accept a counter-revolutionary victory.

Naturally, this campaign is bound to fail as socialism forges ahead. The accomplishments of socialism in the USSR and in other socialist countries are no doubt a factor of importance for winning the confidence of the masses in the capitalist world and mobilising them for the struggle to attain the goals and ideals upheld by the Communists.

Another point should also be made. Perestroika is inseparable from the Soviet Union's peace proposals and initiatives aimed at preventing global catastrophe, from its dynamic foreign policy and remarkable achievements. In this respect one can say that the peace-loving policy of the USSR and the role played in it by Comrade Gorbachov, General

Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, arouse universal sympathy and help the masses realise what the Soviet Union really is and what it represents for the world.

Communists and Believers. 'Liberation Theology'

What is your assessment of the role played by the Vatican and the Catholic Church in world affairs — specifically, in the struggle against nuclear war and the neofascist threat? What do you think about 'liberation theology' (José Lava)

I would like to draw a dividing line between the religious and political influence of the Vatican and of the Catholic Church. The Vatican is active in international affairs as a state, albeit a state in a class by itself; its influence is exercised not through its citizens (they are very few) but through a religious impact on the churches and believers in other countries. Hence the importance of the positions the Vatican assumes when it condemns nuclear war or apartheid, and we take a positive view of its diplomatic efforts in these spheres. One cannot fail to note, however, that with regard to some of the more acute problems of world politics and in relation to the domestic situation in many countries, the Vatican has assumed positions which coincide with the policy of imperialism and of the reactionary forces. It would be illusory to expect this orientation to change in the near future.

As to the political influence and the political activities of the Catholic Church, the situation is different in different countries, and in every country it is not static either.

In Portugal, for example, where a large part of the population is Catholic, the political attitudes of the clergy, whose anti-communist and conservative prejudice still remains widespread, no doubt exert considerable influence, particularly during elections. However, this does not prevent Catholic workers, peasants, intellectuals, women and young people from being active in the social and political struggle together with the Communists.

We impose no restrictions of a religious character on newly admitted party members. Experience shows that religious faith does not affect a party member's militancy if he accepts the programme, the policy and the struggle of the party and is ready to act accordingly. Many thousands of party militants are Catholics. In some villages, they go to mass in the morning and to the local party centre in the evening.

As far as 'liberation theology' is concerned, this current demonstrates the far-reaching impact exerted on the consciousness of vast sectors of believers by the social inequality and injustice of capitalism and by the profoundly just cause of national liberation. This current also expresses the growing awareness of the fact that mankind's problems can only be solved by a new society free from exploitation of man by man, not by capitalism. Therefore, the activities of the 'grassroots communities', priests and bishops belonging to this current, particularly in Latin America, should be regarded as part of the struggle waged by the forces of democracy and social progress. The demands advanced by 'liberation theology' — that the

Catholic Church return to the humanitarian ideas of Christianity and defend the poor — are not only a valuable democratic undertaking in themselves. In several countries they also influence the political positions of the local church. It is perfectly natural for communist parties to cooperate with 'liberation theology' activists in some countries.

Problems of Non-Capitalist Development

Discussing your trip to China, Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos in your *Avante!* interview in the spring of 1987, you touched on the issue of these and other developing countries' transition from feudal to socialist relations of production in which they would bypass the capitalist stage. Some hold that Lenin's ideas on this score are inapplicable to the modern conditions in the Third World. What is your opinion? (Badamyn Lhamsuren, Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party)

The socialist choice made by the revolutionary forces and the peoples recently liberated from colonial rule, as well as the transformation of national liberation movements into vanguard parties proceeding from the ideological basis of Marxism-Leninism in their analysis of the situation and the problems they face and in searching for solutions to them in their countries, is an inspiring feature of the world liberation process and a salient characteristic of our age.

The obstacles and difficulties along this path are, of course, immense. In many cases, the assistance provided by the socialist countries, notably by the USSR, is of decisive importance, and it imposes great obligations on the socialist nations. Besides, subjective difficulties also surface in some cases.

However, we hold that in many countries that have liberated themselves from colonial rule and made the socialist choice, the efforts to build a new life are hampered and impeded largely by acts of imperialist aggression and intervention, by counter-revolutionary forays supported with arms and money, and by the economic sanctions and financial strangulation on the part of imperialism.

Therefore, despite the immense difficulties involved in the efforts to build socialism in countries at a precapitalist and often even prefeudal stage of socio-economic development, one cannot conclude that in today's world, the capitalist system is an inevitable stage of social progress and that it is utopian and impracticable to try and attain socialism bypassing capitalism.

The example of Mongolia is of historic importance in this respect.

Capitalism can offer no solutions to the problems of the peoples. In today's world, all paths of social progress lead to socialism.

Former Portuguese colonies are subjected to intensive imperialist pressure and to armed attacks launched by the Pretoria regime. How does the PCP act jointly with other forces in order to compel Lisbon to provide these countries with effective assistance, since Portugal is historically responsible for their present condition? (Mostafa Azzaoui)

We the Portuguese Communists display vigorous solidarity with the peoples of former Portuguese colonies, particularly with the peoples of Angola and Mozambique who are subjected to attacks of terrorist gangs supported by US imperialism and to acts of aggression and incursions by the armed forces of racist South Africa.

However, Portugal's other major political forces have assumed a different attitude. From the outset, both the right-wing parties (the SDP and the SDC)¹ and the Socialist Party have strategically oriented their policy vis-à-vis the independent states of former Portuguese colonies on preventing them from implementing the political projects approved under the guidance of those movements and parties that brought independence to their peoples.

Let us recall that on the eve of the declaration of Angola's independence in November 1975, two armoured columns invaded Angola — a South African one from the south and another one from Zaire, from the north — and advanced in the direction of Luanda, the capital, to prevent the recognition of the MPLA government as the government of the new independent state. At that time, confident that the intervention would succeed, the right-wing parties, together with the Socialist Party, kept Portugal from recognising the Angolan government.

This explains why our country's relations with its former colonies were literally sabotaged, why Portugal still serves as a base for unhampered activities of anti-Angolan and anti-Mozambican counter-revolutionary groups (UNITA, RENAMO and others), why our government not only allows them to function but also supports and aids them and, finally, why the Portuguese government and the right-wing parties still maintain normal relations with the South African racists.

The Communists and other democrats are fighting for a complete ban on the hostile activities freely conducted in Portugal against the newly independent states, for respect of their political choice and for the establishment of genuine relations of friendship and cooperation with them.

I would add a few more words on the subject of former Portuguese colonies. The question of East Timor remains open. East Timor has been overrun by Indonesian troops which practice what amounts to genocide in relation to the Mauberi people. The right-wing political forces and several Portuguese governments have tried to accept the occupation as a fait accompli and to recognise — in a more or less veiled form — the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia. Portugal is historically responsible (and that is formalised in the Constitution of the Republic) for ensuring the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence. Our party maintains relations of friendship with FRETILIN² and works hard to compel the Portuguese government to act in accordance with this historical responsibility and constitutional obligation.

Former Portuguese colonies attained independence and proclaimed their choice of a socialist orientation more than ten years ago. How would you personally reflect on these countries' experience and what

lessons do you think could be drawn from it? (Semou Pathé Gueye, Senegal Party of Independence and Labour)

We believe that the experience gained by the peoples of former Portuguese colonies who won their independence in an heroic struggle makes a very valuable contribution to the world revolutionary process in the twentieth century. Liberation from colonialism is in itself a major historical accomplishment. The refusal to submit to new forms of imperialist domination and of neocolonialist exploitation and the firm commitment to non-capitalist development — to the creation of a new society free from capitalist exploitation — confirm that the socialist path is the best guarantee of national independence for the liberated nations.

Naturally, that is an enormous undertaking, given these countries' economic underdevelopment, socio-economic structures and the grim legacy of colonialism. One should remember that shortly before Mozambique and Angola proclaimed their independence, the colonial rulers organised a large-scale exodus of more than 500,000 Portuguese and some 100,000 Africans from those countries. Both states were virtually deserted by administrative personnel, technicians, skilled workers and businessmen. But we are certain that even under such conditions, these countries would have made considerable progress along the chosen path had they not been subjected to various forms of economic and political pressure and to terrorist and military intervention. The difficulties they face are immense. We the Portuguese Communists believe the future will prove that these peoples, their parties and movements have made the right choice.

¹ The Social Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Centre. — *Ed.*

² Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor. — *Ed.*

Soviet Foreign Policy: Basic Principles And New Thinking

Anatoly Dobrynin — CC Secretary,
Communist Party of the Soviet Union

THE new foreign policy philosophy worked out by our party is above all the result of in-depth study and analysis of the basic trends in world development today, but it also rests on the Soviet state's experience of seventy years in pursuing its policy of peace in the international arena. It sheds light on the connection between the period when Lenin's Decree on Peace set the task of establishing universal democratic peace on just terms for all the peoples without exception, and the period of the programme put forward by the 27th Congress of the CPSU for creating a comprehensive

international security system and building a nuclear-free and non-violent world. Both these historic acts were marked by genuine renewal, a renewal which has become a Soviet foreign policy tradition.

That is just what has turned it into a powerful factor in restructuring inter-state relations on democratic and humanistic principles. The Soviet Union introduced into international practice that which had earlier been beyond the pale of 'big politics': common sense and the interests of the working masses. Mikhail Gorbachov said as much at the commemorative meeting to mark the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

These changes were truly revolutionary. It took a long time for the world not only to comprehend their significance, but also to see that they offer the only realistic way to vindicating "the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations".¹ For many that seemed to be a beautiful utopia seventy, and even twenty, and ten years ago. But in our day, the principles put forward by the October Revolution have become an integral part of international law mainly because throughout its history the USSR has upheld the gist of the general line worked out and initiated by Lenin in the international arena and because the other socialist countries and the entire communist movement have carried on a persevering struggle for these same goals.

Even today some declare the nuclear-free world proposed by the Soviet Union to be a utopia. We think that if the new political thinking triumphs, those who take such a view will be remembered in the next millennium just as we now remember the false prophets of the early years after the October Revolution.

The peoples of our country marked the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution in an unusually interesting, intricate and responsible period of their history. A start has been made on a radical restructuring of all social relations. It is based on the whole of our history since the October Revolution and on the solid foundation of the socialism built in the Soviet Union. Its purpose, to put it briefly, is *completely to restore Lenin's conception of socialism theoretically and in practice, to give socialism its second wind, to renew in greatest depth every aspect of life in our society, and to bring out to the utmost the humanistic character of the socialist system*. It was stressed at its 27th Congress that this, i.e., Soviet society's successful advance along the way of the October Revolution, is regarded by the CPSU as its principal international duty.

Perestroika is a manifestation of socialism's capacity for constant renewal, development and self-improvement, the resolution of its own contradictions, and the imparting to socialism of the most modern forms of social organisation. That is why the enemies of communism find it ever harder to smear not only our country but also the parties and social and political forces displaying solidarity with us. That is a most important element of the new reality now taking shape, a sort of stimulus for invigorating and expanding the struggle of the communist and working class movement and of all the left-wing, liberation and progressive forces for peace, democracy and social progress. There is an organic connection

between our perestroika and the solution of the global problems facing mankind to which attention was drawn by all the participants in the meeting of representatives of foreign parties and movements held in Moscow on November 4 and 5, 1987.

In the international sphere as well, the CPSU gives priority to the desire to produce a humanistic, Marxist-Leninist answer to the main questions which time now sets before mankind. There are, essentially, two such questions: how to save the world from a nuclear catastrophe? And how to put at the service of people the vast potential of knowledge and material and spiritual potentialities they have accumulated?

The contemporary Soviet foreign policy philosophy is an organic part of the single whole which is determined by two words now known to the entire world: the 'new thinking' which now characterises the CPSU's internal and foreign policy course.

Our party and our country have also tried to give an impetus to the start of *restructuring of inter-state relations*. The CPSU's foreign policy programme, formulated by its 27th Congress, is a mixture of the philosophy of creating a secure world in the nuclear-space age and a platform of concrete action. That is its response to the challenge of the times.

The need for such an approach to the problems of war and peace, and to the conduct of international affairs did not dawn upon the CPSU leadership all at once. It was the result of reflection, in-depth scientific analysis of the situation, and consideration of the realities of the modern world and the interests of our state and of all the other states. The development of the concept of the new thinking required a detailed and far-ranging analysis of the modern world, of the whole diversity of the realities which characterise it and the trends of their development, as also, of course, an analysis of the whole way traversed by Soviet foreign policy, of the problems which it has been possible to solve, and of those which, for various reasons, remained unsolved. What is more, that which we call the new thinking is not something consummate, closed and immutable in all its parts. On the contrary, the new thinking implies a capacity for perceiving and comprehending new phenomena and seeking new solutions. It is a long-term methodology for the conduct of international affairs whose effectiveness directly depends on how universally it is applied.

The main realities of the modern world ultimately boil down to the following.

First, the development and accumulation of nuclear weapons allow humankind to destroy all life on Earth. It is now generally recognised that there can be no victors in a nuclear war. Such a war means universal ruin.

Second, the world itself has changed substantially. It has become both more complex, diverse and contradictory, and also more interdependent. In other words, it constitutes a contradictory entity with common problems dictating the need for mutually acceptable solutions precisely because of its diversity.

All of that has made it urgent and imperative to effect a radical change in many of the habitual foreign policy approaches, a change in the traditional political thinking and in the views of the problems of war and peace, of

defence and of national and international security. But the main thing is that this has demanded a resolute break with the mode of thought and action for centuries based on the admissibility of wars and armed conflicts.

Today, the most important postulate of responsible foreign policy must be the comprehension of this simple fact: nuclear war cannot be a means for attaining any reasonable objectives in the international arena. Considering that nowadays non-nuclear war tends to some extent to be comparable with nuclear war in terms of its fatal consequences, the assessments applicable to nuclear war can also rightfully be applied to this 'variant' of an armed conflict between the major powers.

Another such postulate is that it is no longer possible to win the arms race, like nuclear war itself.

First of all because the continuation of the arms race could — now not in the too distant future — lead to a situation in which the quantity and quality of the accumulated weapons would deprive man of the possibility of effectively controlling these weapons and their 'behaviour'. In other words, an unlimited arms race could get out of control and force on the politicians its own lethal logic under which even parity in the means of destruction will cease to be a guarantee of maintaining even a fragile peace. Military technology has been developing at such a rapid pace that it leaves less and less time for political decisions, ever more swiftly reducing the possibilities of halting mankind's slide-down to a nuclear catastrophe. This means that consideration of the critical factor of time is becoming one of the most important elements of the new thinking.

On the other hand, even now the mechanism of nuclear deterrence is not all fail-safe. The risk of unpremeditated, accidental outbreak of a nuclear conflict is intolerably high, and it has continued to grow. And this means that the 'balance of fear' is in itself no longer a factor of military-political deterrence.

These objective facts inexorably lead to the conclusion that the security of states in the nuclear age cannot be ensured by military-technical means alone, to say nothing of programmes like SDI, whose realisation will not make US territory invulnerable, but will simultaneously lead to a destabilisation of international relations and, thereby, to a growing threat of war. More weapons now means less security, not more.

In the actually existing conditions, states belonging to different social systems and military-political alliances can and must act as partners in tackling the cardinal problems of security. In our day, there can be no security for the USSR without security for the United States, nor security for the Warsaw Treaty countries without security for the NATO countries. And without their mutual security there can be no universal security either. *The security of any state is impossible without equal security for all.*

Negotiations, of which the main element is the finding and establishment of a mutually acceptable balance of interests, are the instrument for ensuring equal security for all. That is why in negotiations and in the whole of our foreign policy activity we combine firmness in standing up for our principles with tactical flexibility, a readiness for mutually acceptable compromises, and an orientation on dialogue and mutual understanding.

The legally defended interests of states, which deserve to be respected,

cannot in any case be identified with claims to some kind of privileges or special status, to issuing orders to the modern world, or to regarding the world or its separate regions as one's own backyard. On the contrary, now, as never before, respect and defence of the right of the people to decide their own destiny freely is a prerequisite for the normal development of international relations.

Guided by this philosophical conception of the world, and of its present and future, the CPSU has worked out the principles of a *comprehensive international security system* as the epitome of our new approach to international politics. The concept of a comprehensive international security system covers all countries and regions, and takes into account all the factors affecting the state of international relations: military, political, economic, ecological and humanitarian.

Translating these politico-philosophic concepts into the practical language of solving security problems in the military sphere, the first thing we propose to all the nuclear powers is to undertake the commitment to repudiate war against each other or against third states, whether nuclear or conventional. Measures for a radical reduction in the level of military confrontation should be the guarantee of the rigorousness of such a commitment.

The idea of the need to maintain a rough military equilibrium, chiefly between the USSR and the United States and between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, is known to be one of the key features of the Soviet conception of disarmament. But our point of departure is that the present level of this equilibrium is excessively high. The USSR wants to have rough military equilibrium at the lowest possible level.

There are now virtually no types of arms with respect to which the Soviet Union has failed to express a readiness to have reduced or eliminated, or has also failed to make highly concrete proposals on this score.

The first and main requirement of the new thinking in this sphere is recognition both of the necessity and of the possibility of a nuclear-free world. Mikhail Gorbachov's Statement of January 15, 1986, containing a programme for eliminating nuclear weapons by the end of the twentieth century, is a *practical expression* of this requirement.

The first practical step in this direction is the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, which was signed during Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to Washington. The conclusion of this Treaty and implementation of the programme agreed in Washington for working out concrete measures to reduce strategic offensive arms will essentially mark the end of a long stage at which security strategy was invariably based on a build-up of nuclear potential, and will open up a new stage in the step-by-step elimination of this potential and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

The specific feature of the Soviet position is that we take a totally new conceptual approach to the problem of reducing and eliminating nuclear arsenals: we regard it not only as a military-technical, but also as a political and psychological problem. That, in particular, explains the unprecedented dynamism of the Soviet response to our partners' concerns, which far from always meets with a similar response from the other side.

That also explains our refusal to gauge the significance of the Washington Treaty in the light of 'who won and who lost' categories. Attempts to channel public attention in this direction are a throwback to the old thinking, which sees the guarantee of security only in ensuring advantages for one of the sides. The understandings reached at the Soviet-US meeting are the fruit of common-sense compromise which meets the interests of one and all. The urge to assess them from the angle of rivalry and arguments in favour of the 'firmness and strength' policy not only contradicts the substance of the understandings, but is also objectively aimed to erect moral and psychological barriers in the way of disarmament, to argue the need for a 'pause' in advance along this way, for 'compensation' of the arms being eliminated, although it should be perfectly clear that it is not right to engage in disarmament in some spheres and deploy the arms race in others.

The Soviet conception of nuclear disarmament is an integral part of *the overall process of disarmament*, including the prevention of an arms race in space, the elimination of chemical weapons and reduction of conventional arms and armed forces.

Following our January 15 proposals, Reykjavik and then Washington, the world has entered upon a new phase of a global anti-nuclear process, a phase not only of hope, but also of realistic plans and the consequent concrete actions. In these conditions, control of disarmament acquires especial significance. Now that the point is to reduce and even to eliminate entire classes of nuclear weapons, the measures to verify compliance with the agreements on these matters acquire a qualitatively new significance. Control becomes one of the most important means for ensuring security. That is why it must be real, comprehensive and convincing. The negotiations on eliminating intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles and on banning and destroying chemical weapons show that given the will, such control is possible, and that the difficulties in working it out are by no means created by the Soviet Union.

The creation of an international control mechanism is a component part of the disarmament process itself. It inevitably entails substantial modifications not only in the structures of inter-state relations, but also in the social atmosphere. The attitude to control has become a sort of touchstone for each society's honesty, *glasnost* and openness.

The content and tenor of military doctrines, both of individual states and of their alignments, are of primary significance for ensuring universal security. At the latest meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries, the socialist countries formulated with utmost clarity and detail their military doctrine, specified and elaborated in the context of the conditions of the modern world.

Our countries have translated the new political thinking, which meets the conditions and demands of the nuclear age, into practical terms: the Warsaw Treaty states reaffirmed, publicly and in a binding form, that their military doctrine is subordinate to the task of preventing war, both nuclear and conventional. This document of the Warsaw Treaty countries is, in a way, an action programme in building their armed forces. This programme is based on *the principle of reasonable adequacy*. The gist of it is to have the

number and structure of the armed forces that would be adequate for fulfilling the tasks of defence, for repulsing any possible aggression, but not adequate for acts of aggrandisement.

The conception of reasonable adequacy provides both for consistent reductions in armed forces and armaments with equilibrium at each stage, and for the establishment not only of a quantitative but also of such a structural parity, if one could put it that way, which would make it impossible for either side to launch a surprise attack.

We have followed with much interest all the useful thoughts and considerations of our partners in the negotiations and of other states and political and social forces. We have been doing that in order, so to speak, to accumulate them for our initiatives. And in this context we have followed with growing interest the concept being elaborated in the West of 'non-offensive, non-provocative defence' as an alternative to one based on nuclear deterrence.

It and our concept of reasonable adequacy seem to have a common premise: preserving only defensive functions for the armed forces. And we have long been inviting the NATO countries to discuss such matters. As also to reach agreement on radical reductions of armed forces from the Atlantic to the Urals, having in view above all the withdrawal of the most dangerous, offensive weapons from the zone in which the two blocs are in direct contact.

It is exceptionally important that, having clearly formulated their military doctrine, the Warsaw Treaty states addressed NATO with this concrete, business-like proposal: to start consultations with the aim of comparing the military doctrines of the two alliances, analysing their character and lines of their further evolution so as to agree on the conditions for ruling out the possibility of an attack on each other. We think that this is the right way to truly strengthen confidence in Europe and the world generally, and to remove the overlays of the past, the mutual mistrust and suspicion that had been building up for years.

However important military security problems may be, their solution cannot in itself be the sole guarantee of mankind's survival. Ensuring security in the political sphere is also an essentially important element in averting a nuclear catastrophe.

This is a complicated task involving the de-blocking of crisis situations and arranging bilateral and multilateral cooperation. But, we feel, its core is the establishment of confidence in the world arena, and, moreover, primarily between the nuclear powers, and among them, between the USSR and the United States, and between the Warsaw Treaty and the NATO countries.

Confidence and disarmament are, of course, problems closely bound up with each other. The one is impossible without the other. Such is, indeed, the dialectics of world politics today. It is, however, wrong in principle to formulate the matter as follows: first, confidence, and then all the rest — disarmament, cooperation, joint ventures. Indeed, the reverse would hardly be right either: first, disarmament, and then confidence, some time later on. No, there is a need to move through concrete acts, via concrete steps in common to move towards confidence-building, and this will help to

secure further progress both in disarmament and in cooperation. That we believe to be the rational way.

When advocating the peaceful coexistence of states, we naturally believe that it does not deny, but implies each people's right to a sovereign choice of the ways and forms of its development.

The Soviet Union's assumption is that the danger of regional conflicts, which spring from an urge to prevent the peoples from realising their right to choose their historical road, lies not only in the fact that they poison the atmosphere at this or that point of the world with the miasmas of hostility, but also in that they impair the entire system of inter-state relations and destabilise the overall world situation.

In contrast to the imperialist circles, which regard regional conflicts as a constant reserve for manoeuvring with the level of confrontation, strength policy and anti-Soviet propaganda, we believe that it is not right to turn these conflicts into a field of confrontation between the two systems, between the Soviet Union and the United States. For us, the pacific settlement of regional conflicts is a task dictated by the logic of a world that is one and interdependent.

The Soviet Union's desire for a dialogue with the United States should in no sense be interpreted to mean that we would renege on our solidarity with the people's liberation struggle, and forgo the interests of the less developed countries — and that is something of which we have kept reminding the Americans. In every case, the Soviet Union has consistently countered the imperialist policy of exporting counter-revolution with the principle of law, of which renunciation of interference by states in each other's affairs is a key component.

That is precisely what determines the Soviet Union's positions, which are well known to everyone, on the Middle East crisis, the Iran-Iraq conflict, the state of affairs in Central America and other hot spots of the globe. This also applies to a political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan and Kampuchea.

The new thinking must also be manifested in the sphere of economic relations. The concept of economic security is a component part of the principles of a comprehensive international security system put forward at the 27th Congress of the CPSU. Implementation of the economic security concept can and must serve to create an international climate most favouring the cause of peace.

For this purpose there is a need first of all to exclude from international practices any kind of attempts to use international economic ties for pressure and interference in the internal affairs of states.

Second, it is necessary to have a just solution to the problem of the less developed countries' debts. The situation in which three-quarters of the population of the Earth has a bad debt, while a small group of Western states has acted as almighty usurers is not only in radical contradiction with the requirements of ensuring economic security, but also is accompanied by the threat of grave political and social upheavals.

Third, there is a need to work for the establishment of a new international economic order based on the principles of equality and economic security for all the states.

Fourth, the principle imposed by militarism of 'armament instead of development' must give way to the reverse order of things: 'disarmament for development'. This approach has won wide recognition in the international community, as can be seen in the results of a representative conference on the interconnection between armament and development, which was held at the UN headquarters in New York in August and September 1987.

Finally, fifth, there is a need for all states to join efforts in solving the global problems on which the destinies of civilisation depend. There is a need to eliminate the vast zones of hunger, poverty, epidemic diseases and illiteracy; there is a need to meet mankind's growing requirements in energy, raw material and food resources, protection of the environment, the peaceful opening up of the World Ocean, and the exploration and peaceful use of space.

We believe that it is useful to convene in the future a world congress on economic security problems at which it would be possible to discuss, as a complex, everything that is a burden on world economic ties. These are also important in themselves. Their improvement would, at the same time, mean the creation of major material pillars for lasting peace.

The struggle for *human rights* is ever more insistently placed on the agenda of international life on the eve of the twenty-first century. People refuse to reconcile themselves with arbitrariness and lawlessness both in international affairs and within states. That is most natural and is a reflection of the level attained by civilisation. The struggle for social progress is ultimately a struggle for social transformations leading to an ever wider extension of human rights for an ever larger mass of people.

We, Soviet Communists, believe that freedom from exploitation is the main prerequisite for actually ensuring all human rights and freedoms. We stand for the exercise in practice of the whole set of rights and freedoms for which the working class and democratic movements have been striving. We believe that these include primarily the right to work, the working people's right to self-governance, i.e., real participation in managing production and in running social affairs and the state. We stand for the unconditional — not only legal, but also actual — equality of all big and small nations. We stand for freedom of speech, for the right of citizens to criticise that which they believe to be counter to the norms of social justice and our socialist democracy. Individual and social human rights do not lie on different shelves: they are interconnected, and they supplement and amplify each other.

The socialist countries want broader international cooperation — naturally, with respect for each country's laws — in the sphere of the political, social and personal rights of citizens. If one is to speak of human rights, then one must speak of all rights, primarily of those which relate to millions upon millions of people. However, the West has evaded such a discussion.

The USSR has proposed the holding of a conference in Moscow on humanitarian cooperation. For a long time, the West assumed that this set of problems was its 'trump card', but it now wants to fence itself off from our concrete proposal with a wall of 'preliminary conditions'. We are

convinced that ideological differences are no obstacle to humanitarian cooperation. Cooperation, I emphasise. The real obstacle is the speculation on humanitarian problems in the interests of a confrontation policy.

Taking the broader view, the Soviet foreign policy philosophy is ultimately aimed at humanising international relations, and that implies above all efforts to overcome the separation of politics from the general human norms of morality, and to create moral guarantees for the preservation of peace. There can be no dichotomy of consciousness in international affairs: one cannot be an apologist of the arms race, while simultaneously claiming to be an advocate of peace; it is not right to combine condemnation of nuclear wars with defence of nuclear weapons. Obtrusive sermonising of entire states and peoples is incompatible with a humanisation of politics.

The new thinking is an expression of a special stage in the development of the general human consciousness in a critical period when the entire human race is faced with the immediate problem of self-annihilation or self-preservation. It is also a reflection of the realities of the nuclear-space age, and a kind of compass providing bearings for political behaviour in the conditions of these realities. It is quite natural, therefore, that different people start from different premises in reaching the assessments and conclusions inherent in the new thinking: they start from a rigorous scientific analysis of the present situation in the world arena, from consistent class political positions expressing the vital interests of the working class movement, from moral principles, and from the positions of political pragmatism, which draws on the idea that mankind's nuclear suicide is the only alternative to the new thinking.

It is necessary to continue the quest along paths of the new thinking, comprehension of the new realities and approaches to a better international community. Much remains to be understood and the situation changed for the better through joint efforts.

For us, Soviet Communists, the key and road to the new thinking is creative development and application of the Marxist doctrine to the present conditions. This has required in-depth thinking about the complex dialectics of the general human and the class aspects.

We live in an epoch when the objective contradictions between the exploiters and the exploited have not been eliminated in the greater part of the world, so that the struggle between the various social and political forces for this or that social system is inevitable. But the peculiarity of social development is such that the struggle for mankind's survival needs to be won precisely in these conditions, even before these contradictions have been eliminated. There is now no longer any other way out for the self-preservation of our civilisation.

However, is this way out a realistic one? Can one in the present conditions seriously speak of a radical turning point in world history, while imperialism continues to exist on a sizeable part of our globe, and not simply to exist but to be in possession of considerable internal reserves and economic, political and military strength, which enables it to exert a

substantial influence on the course and character of international processes?

These are truly difficult questions requiring thoughtful analysis in the light of Marxism-Leninism. And they are not only of theoretical, but also of practical interest, because, as Mikhail Gorbachov said on November 2, 1987, having in the main established by means of the new thinking the need and possibility of a comprehensive international security system in the conditions of disarmament, we must now "prove that the attainment of this goal is necessary and feasible".²

The point now is primarily to consider the problems, which could be formulated roughly as follows.

The main danger of war now lurks in the nature of imperialism. It will not change basically of its own accord, under the influence of external factors alone. Is it, nonetheless, possible in the conditions of the nuclear age to exert an influence on it that would block its most dangerous manifestations? Is capitalism capable of getting rid of militarism, can it function and develop economically without it? Finally, is the capitalist system capable of doing without neocolonialism?

In other words, the reality and realistic nature of the new thinking and the triumph of a fundamentally new policy based on it, which recognises the principle of peaceful coexistence as the universal norm of behaviour in the international arena, largely depend on whether capitalism is able to adapt itself to the conditions of a new and just economic order, to the conditions in which the spiritual values of the two worlds are honestly compared. It is not easy to find the answers to these questions. Our party has been seeking them in theory and simultaneously in practice: by consistently translating the new thinking into its foreign policy activity and correcting and giving it greater precision by means of the experience gained in this work.

That appears to be of exceptional importance. There is, of course, ever wider awareness among ruling groups in the capitalist world of the imperatives of the nuclear age: the need to reckon with its realities for the sake of self-preservation, an understanding that militarism, neocolonialism, and the reliance on force in international relations ultimately undermine their own chances of survival as well.

The strengthening positions and attractive power of world socialism, the class struggle, and other manifestations of social contradictions which exert an influence on the objective processes in favour of peace, survival, and a radical restructuring of interstate relations are an important and, in a sense, crucial factor capable of having an impact on the policy of the ruling groups in the capitalist countries. In this sense, the consistent struggle of the communist, working class and liberation movements, and of all the left-wing and democratic forces, both against a nuclear catastrophe and for the solution of pressing social, political, economic and cultural problems merges into a single whole as never before. After all, the enemies of peace, the enemies of survival, and the enemies of the working people are ultimately the same set of forces.

The state of nuclear confrontation makes it a duty to seek new ways and forms of relations between various social systems. Today, the contest

between capitalism and socialism can proceed only and exclusively in the forms of *peaceful competition and peaceful rivalry*. This foreign policy proposition of ours does not require socialism to renounce either its principles or its ideals. It signifies the seeking and finding of ways of adequately applying these principles to the new situation, and different approaches to the struggle for one's ideals.

The new thinking in international politics requires that *general human values* should be given priority. Marx and Engels did not separate the vital interests of the working class from the interests of mankind as a whole. The specific feature of its mission and ultimate goals is that the proletariat cannot liberate itself without liberating the whole of society from exploitation and oppression. Comprehension of this fact, as an expression of the proletariat's own class interests, is a component part in shaping its class consciousness.

Indeed, the political vanguard of the working class movement, Lenin said, tends to lose its proper role if it concentrates "the attention, observation, and consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone". Lenin went on to say that "the self-knowledge of the working class is indissolubly bound up, not solely with a fully clear theoretical understanding — it would be even truer to say, not so much with the theoretical, as with the practical, understanding — of the relationships between *all* the various classes of modern society, acquired through the experience of political life".³ This kind of orientation of the proletariat's class consciousness towards the entire system of social relations, and not only within the framework of one country, but on an international scale, is a distinctive feature of the consistently socialist world outlook of the working class. In our day, this feature of its world outlook brings it even closer to general human interests, to a conception of the world which gives reliable guarantees of mankind's survival. The working class does not isolate itself from general human moral norms, it does not close itself into a shell of purely sociological notions, but stands up for the norms which meet the interests of general human progress, and which coincide with the interests of the vast mass of people, including those who hold different world outlooks and political views.

A new, very broad and diverse but powerful movement is now taking shape in the world, a movement for mankind's survival, of which last year's International Forum in Moscow was a most vivid manifestation. The struggle against the nuclear threat has already provided important moral and political schooling in which broad masses and entire peoples have been learning the art of living in peace with each other. They are increasingly convinced by the realities of the modern world that the nuclear threat can be removed only by cooperating with each other, and overcoming the inevitable ideological and political barriers which divide people. There is a growing conviction that the solution of this most important problem of our day cannot be left solely to the politicians.

But something else is equally important: there must also be a radical change in policy itself because man, millions of men, the peoples are now

being directly involved in world affairs. And the policy of any state will be constructive and effective only if it takes account of this factor which is now highly important: the strivings, aspirations and hopes of man and mankind, whose main interest and supreme right is to survive and to learn to live in a civilised and human manner, in other words, if it is based on the new thinking which rests on modern realities and the will of the people. Otherwise it tends to become an unpredictable improvisation, a force capable of eroding both the national security of the countries which it is designed to safeguard, and so also international security as a whole.

A dialogue between the social and political forces of the most diverse, even opposite, political, social and ideological orientations is possible and necessary in the struggle against the danger of a world war, and for disarmament. But it is most important within the framework of the working class, liberation and democratic movements. The Moscow meeting in November 1987 of the representatives of communist, socialist, social democratic, liberation, democratic and progressive parties and forces showed their common concern for developing the dialogue on the main issues on whose solution the destinies of life on Earth now depend. This is a basic element of the reality of our day. The CPSU is convinced that our communist movement can and must make an important, constructive contribution to developing such a broad dialogue between the international left-wing forces on a party level, and to strengthening the positions of the potential of peace, reason, goodwill, the potential of mankind's survival and increasing its influence on the historical process.

History now puts on the Communists and all the other fighters for social progress the responsibility for translating the new thinking into life whose cornerstone is preserving the human race and life on Earth.

Here all of us have gained much experience. It is exceptionally important that the exchange of this experience between us is extended, that not a grain of it is lost, and that the experience of each party is summed up to be used by their fellow-fighters in other countries.

With even greater urgency, all of us are now faced with the task, set by Lenin's Decree on Peace, to "help the peoples to intervene in questions of war and peace".⁴ On its fulfilment hinges the existence of intelligent life on Earth.

In this context, one should bear in mind that there can be no mass movement in favour of a secure world without initiating steps by the socialist countries, which must develop these on the basis of the new thinking and the new ideology of international relations.

As for the Soviet Union's foreign policy ahead, it was clearly stated by Mikhail Gorbachov at his meeting with the Board of the International Fund for Mankind's Survival and Development on January 15 of this year: "In the period ahead all the efforts of the Soviet leadership in foreign policy will be aimed to strengthen and develop the incipient positive trends in international relations. And this means that you can expect of us new constructive efforts, above all in disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament."

¹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 18.

² Mikhail Gorbachov, *October and Perestroika: the Revolution Continues*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1987, p. 62.

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 412-13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, p. 252.

Sharp Turn To Revolutionary Forces' Unity

Athos Fava — General Secretary,
Communist Party of Argentina

THE heavy blows and defeats suffered by the working class and democratic movement of Argentina and by our party over the past ten years require profound analysis. Opportunistic mistakes must also be honestly scrutinised so as to determine the ways for correcting them. Indeed, a contradiction between the reformist trend, which had an effect on many areas of its activity, and the character and goals of the class organisation set up seventy years ago for the struggle for socialism did emerge in the Communist Party of Argentina. At one point, the party was effectively turned into a political force not aspiring to power.

Dogmatism in theory and pragmatism in everyday work and tenuous ties with the masses prevented us from giving a timely Marxist-Leninist class analysis of the changes in the economy and the balance of forces in the society and in the political arena, in the ruling circles, parties and other organisations, and that led us to opportunism and sectarianism, it is said in the *Theses* for the 16th Congress of the CPA.¹

The theoretical foot-dragging and dogmatism impeded us in seeing that while capitalism in Argentina was dependent on imperialism (a fact established by the party's Eighth Congress in 1928), it had attained a fairly high level of development. We failed to analyse and understand the important changes in the society, such as the concentration of production and centralisation of capital over the past two decades.

A section of the old latifundist oligarchy had interlaced with the big bourgeoisie, and in particular with the local and foreign monopolies, into a financial-type oligarchy, a new ruling élite produced by the objective tendencies of capitalist development and the policies of the military-fascist dictatorships of the 1966-1973 and 1976-1983 periods. The tendency towards the coalescence of the monopolies with the state had also intensified.

Athos Fava was born in 1925. He was a worker at various metallurgical enterprises. He joined the CPA in 1945, and has repeatedly been subjected to arrest for his active participation in the revolutionary movement. He became a CC alternate member in 1963, and a CC and CC Executive Committee member in 1965. In 1968, he joined the CC Secretariat. In 1981, he became a member of the CC Political Commission. In July 1980, he was elected General Secretary of the CPA.

The non-monopoly section of the numerous 'national bourgeoisie' had lost its economic, political and ideological influence. The big entrepreneurs had evolved into monopolists whose interests were closely interlaced with those of the transnational corporations and the latifundists. The less affluent section, represented on the Peronist government of 1973-1974 revealed its incapacity to put through the reforms it had earlier proclaimed and displayed a tendency towards accommodation with imperialism and a fear of the working class.

The working class likewise experienced noticeable changes. The TNCs and the ruling circles had sacrificed the internal market in an effort to adapt Argentina to the new international division of labour, aiming to modify the productive forces and reduce consumption and the share of the wage-workers in the national income. Industrial output and the number of industrial workers had gone down. The number of unemployed, including those in the technical fields and the professions, had increased, and there had been a rapid development of a section of 'self-employed'. At the same time, the service sector had expanded, especially that part of it which was involved in financial speculation.

The development of capitalism and the changing social-class structure over the past two decades *revealed a sustained tendency towards a sharpening of the class struggle in the economic sphere and, at some periods, in the political sphere as well.*

A powerful wave of action by the working people, students, the poorest peasants and progressive intellectuals swept across the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s. There were more frequent clashes within the Peronist movement and new revolutionary trends emerged.

In that period, the Communists made a superficial assessment of these processes, regarding the growing consciousness and action by the masses only from this angle: to what extent these processes were directly connected with our party's activity. The mass action was taken under two main slogans: 'Free Homeland' and 'Socialist Homeland'; both had been formulated by left-wing Peronists against the right-wing Peronists and the right-wing generally, rousing tens of thousands of activists, notably young people, to political struggle and even to armed action. These circles were represented on the government in 1973.

For our part, we had then forgotten the golden rule of 'concentrating the forces against the principal enemy', underestimated these massive processes and entertained illusions about the potentialities of bourgeois reformism; while calling for 'broad unity', the party ignored the other revolutionary and left-wing organisations, preferring alliances with the bourgeoisie and its political groups. The view that it was necessary to work with 'Peronism generally' led us to 'tailism', and to blind orientation towards this or that bureaucratic faction in the trade unions. We failed to take a firm, vanguard stand on uniting the masses, and the progressive trade union trends, the left-Peronists in the first place, which were acting against the employers, the trade union bureaucrats and the state.

Our attitude to the other left-wing forces was determined by the sectarian assumption that we were the sole revolutionary force. We did not

have any discussions with them, but simply rejected anyone who was not on our side.

Sectarianism, dogmatism and opportunism were most pronounced in the 1970s, particularly in the assessment of the 1976 military dictatorship. We said nothing about the class character of that regime, about its fascist state terrorism, or about its commitment to the Pentagon's 'national security doctrine'. The Communist Party refused to face the truth, and kept stressing that the Armed Forces were split into different factions, and that the putschists belonged to a 'moderate', 'non-Pinochet' wing. In this context, we put forward the erroneous slogan of 'civil-military convergence'.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the Armed Forces and the high command got down, in accordance with the strategy of preventive counter-revolution, to brutally suppressing the working class and popular movement and massacring the left.

These grave errors, however, did not on the whole impede *the party from carrying on the struggle*. Many Communists were thrown out of work, persecuted, subjected to repression, imprisoned and killed. We supported and promoted the human rights movement, although even there sectarianism had an effect on our relations with the most active of such organisations, as in the case of 'The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo'.² The party did much to revitalise the trade union and general democratic movements, but even there some opportunist limitations made themselves known.

That kind of policy tended to generate some grave doubts. There was a gradual sharpening of the contradiction between the convictions and the revolutionary practices of the leadership and rank-and-file Communists, and the opportunistic spirit of the party's general political position. *The decisions of the 16th Congress of the CPA in November 1986 signified a sharp turn in the whole of the party's activity and a re-establishment of the revolutionary traditions* laid down in 1918 by its founders: Victorio Codovilla, Rodolfo Ghioldi and Luis Emilio Recabarren. If these errors were to be corrected, there had to be "an in-depth re-appraisal of the significance of the subjective factor in radical transformations, primarily the role of the Communist Party in its struggle for power. We managed to halt the ideological degradation and the reformist deviation in formulating revolutionary theory".³ The party congress was preceded by principled and often painful self-criticism by leading party members under the guidance of the Central Committee.

The changes in our party are a part of the general processes within the world communist movement. The 16th Congress analysed the international situation and defined the CPA's international tasks, among the most important ones being solidarity with the peoples of Latin America. The delegates highly appreciated the significance of the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the perestroika in the Soviet society, and its influence on the development of socialism on a world scale. Developments in the Soviet Union and the revitalising of the ideals of socialism and its practices inaugurated by the October Revolution seventy years ago are having and will continue to have a great impact on the working class and the peoples of the world. The CPSU's bold self-criticism and its resolve to correct past

mistakes and censure dogmatism undoubtedly stimulate the creative development of the Marxist-Leninist theory.

We also welcome the great contribution by the 27th Congress to the Leninist policy of peace, which takes account of the realities of the nuclear age, sets forth the new thinking, lays emphasis on general human values and on ensuring the survival of the human race through consistent steps towards disarmament and the establishment of a comprehensive international security system.

This is a general human task, and it is primarily a task before the Communists of all the countries. The 16th Congress stressed the need "to define in concrete terms in every case the real content of the policy serving the cause of world peace."⁴ Our yearning for peace and for a global system of international security implies the solution of mankind's basic problems, among them the external debt problem which is most acute for the dependent Latin American countries.

The efforts to avert a nuclear catastrophe include exposure of US imperialism as being chiefly responsible for the arms race and the policy of aggression. Advance towards a non-nuclear and non-violent world, disarmament and détente requires common-sense agreements even with the Reagan administration. Therein lies the high value of the treaty on the elimination of intermediate and shorter-range missiles as a step towards a 50-per-cent reduction in strategic armaments. It is *a victory of the humanistic values upheld by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries over the values of imperialism*, which continues to be essentially aggressive even when agreeing to take realistic steps.

The struggle for peace is inseparable from the struggle against imperialism. Accordingly, we support the activity of the Argentinian Peace Council, and welcome the proposals of the Delhi Six, the efforts of the Contadora Group and the Support Group, the initiative of the Movement of 100 for Survival, and of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

The struggle for peace in Argentina is linked to demands for a restoration of national sovereignty over the Malvinas, a colonial enclave of British imperialism and a NATO military base. This campaign is a part of the action to turn the South Atlantic into a nuclear-free and demilitarised zone.

The struggle for peace in Latin America implies active solidarity with Sandinist Nicaragua, and with the peoples of El Salvador and Chile, and broad action against the imperialist efforts to fan regional conflicts and 'low-intensity wars', which the Reagan administration has been conducting with the aid of local armies and terroristic mercenary troops.

We are convinced that in our country the struggle against the nuclear threat requires the widest combination of mass action and firmness of class principles. We take account of the positive aspects of the foreign policy of Raúl Alfonsín's government on disarmament, a nuclear-free zone in the South Atlantic and a pacific settlement of the conflict in Central America. We are simultaneously fighting against the government's intention to appease imperialism and succumb to pressures from the Reagan administration. We oppose the anti-people plan of 'modernising

dependence' in accordance with the recipes of the IMF for the benefit of foreign bankers and the local monopoly bourgeoisie. The policy of concessions is bound to compromise the positive aspects of the government's foreign policy. We believe that success lies only in a combination of struggle along two fronts: for peace, and for social emancipation.

A people's, patriotic, democratic, anti-imperialist, agrarian and anti-monopoly revolution for socialism is the party's main programmatic goal. The principal issue for us is power, and the instrument of victory is a *front of national liberation and social emancipation led by the working class*, with the formation of a revolutionary vanguard. The way to power is mass struggle, whose forms and methods will depend on the concrete efforts.

The congress defined the present stage as one of accumulation of forces in the conditions created since the recuperation of bourgeois democracy, under which it noted the clash of two trends: the attempts by imperialism and the local ruling classes to limit democracy for the masses, on the one hand, and the people's struggle under the leadership of the revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces for expanding and deepening the democratic gains, on the other. The former, which is essentially reactionary, fits within the Pentagon's doctrine of 'low-intensity conflicts', which prescribes 'democracy with security' or 'restricted democracy'.

The removal of the latest military dictatorship forced the ruling classes and US imperialism to restore formal democracy for the sake of a social consensus meeting the interests of the monopolists. The positions of the reactionary military have remained essentially intact, and it remains a factor of pressure on the government that could move back into the foreground if the circumstances change.

Among the first steps taken by the Alfonsín government under intense popular pressure was the trial of members of the first three military juntas who are now serving their sentences, an unprecedented step in Latin America. Nevertheless, in accordance with the requirements of the 'democracy with security' doctrine, the repression apparatus remains virtually untouched, while the 'law on due obedience' let off scot free most of the assassins and torturers who carried out the policy of state terrorism under the dictatorship. The acts of the Argentine government, especially in 1987, testify to its retreat in the face of the 'military party' and those pressing for another coup. When these forces showed their face once again last April, the Communists and other left-wing forces worked actively to mobilise the people in defence of democracy. But the action was spontaneous and the progressive circles were unable to give them a lead, so that the crisis ended in a deal between the government and the putschists with the passage of the 'due obedience law'.

The government's growing concessions to the reactionary militarists encouraged by the Reagan administration are connected with the class character of official policy. The government has tried to cope with the crisis of dependent capitalism in Argentina avoiding the overdue changes and preferring to 'modernise' the system, that is, trying to adapt to the international division of labour dictated by the imperialist transnationals. It has been paying exorbitant interest on the external debt, denationalising

the economy and allowing more privileges to big foreign and local capital. Unemployment has been growing and the people's working conditions have been worsening. Such are the inevitable effects of the policy of 'modernising dependence'. In their efforts to keep the country under their political control, the ruling class now prefer to see two parties — the Radical Civic Union (UCR) and the Justice Party (PJ) — either alternating in power or ruling the country together. The former of these parties has the support of the middle strata, and the latter, of the working masses.

In the leadership of both parties (especially of the Peronist party), the shots are called by the most influential groups of the monopoly-type big bourgeoisie, and that is a source of serious contradictions between the leaders and the social base of both parties. On the whole, the political preferences of the masses of Peronists and Radicals which have taken shape over a long historical period are fairly stable, but in both there is an internal differentiation into rightists and leftists, mainly on class lines.

In view of the situation in the country, the 16th Congress of the CPA set the task of forming a front of national liberation and social emancipation as an instrument of the revolutionary struggle of the masses, and of left forces unity on a popular, anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly platform. Our assumption is that both leading political parties are in a state of crisis, because their leadership, representing the big bourgeoisie, is opposed to the masses of rank-and-file members. This objective process got under way recently; it has been developing but has yet to be fully manifested.

The Communists have modified their assessment of the main parties. We had earlier assumed that they could take part in the establishment of a front, while we should oppose differences within their ranks, ignoring the class nature of these contradictions. We now take a different view.

The Communist Party wants to see the development of militant Peronist trends within the working class, the growth of the so-called popular nationalism movement (with an anti-imperialist edge) and, especially, the strengthening of the trends of revolutionary popular nationalism, which has anti-capitalist features. Their most forward-looking members accept scientific socialism and Marxism-Leninism.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s some of these trends assumed organisational form and then merged into the so-called 'Peronist revolutionary tendency', a part of the Peronist movement which broke with reformism, won considerable support from the masses, and took a resolute stand against the rightists. The experience of that period is also important for our own day. The left-wing Peronists have, naturally, made some ideological and political mistakes and have exaggerated the importance of armed struggle. Their most consistent activists subsequently made a self-critical assessment of past errors.

Confrontation and internal stratification are again under way within Peronism, a difficult process because many of the best fighters were killed and the revolutionary wing of the movement suffered a crisis during the dictatorship. But the left within Peronism is on the way up.

We have continued the work begun in 1985 with the establishment of the Popular Front, which was recently transformed into the Broad Liberation Front (FRAL). The point of departure was the initial agreements between

the CPA and other left-wing organisations. In its present form, FRAL is no more than an *embryo of a future liberation front*, and that depends on the participation of the working class and mass strata of the population, and a strengthening of the progressive trends among the Peronists, Radicals and members of the Intransigence Party. The 1985 and 1987 elections showed that the front's positions, like the left-wing forces themselves, are still weak, and that calls for serious reflection and practical action by all of us, Communists and all the other revolutionaries.

Organising the masses of Peronist working people is the main problem in setting up an alliance of political and social forces of the revolution in the country, a problem closely connected with the leading role of the working class in the historical battle for emancipation and socialism.

The struggle for economic demands is now being intensified in the country in the form of strikes, marches, demonstrations and take-over of enterprises, but although these are massive and militant they often fall short of the mark. That is because they are scattered and uncoordinated, and this plays into the hands of the employers, the government and the trade union bureaucrats. The Communist Party and the other revolutionary organisations do not cooperate as well as they should, and their influence is inadequate. The masses have displayed an urge for unity when carrying on the struggle for the satisfaction of their immediate demands, and such unity, we believe, should be supported and developed.

Joint everyday action by various social forces is a step towards the establishment of a front of national liberation and social emancipation. There is a gradual accumulation of experience and elaboration of the strategy of unitary action which should ultimately lead to the winning of power. That is the basis on which a genuine revolutionary vanguard — a vanguard in deed, and not in word — is being forged.

We believe that a revolutionary vanguard in Argentina will be created not only by the Communists. A number of non-communist organisations, whose ideology includes Marxist-Leninist propositions, and which use these in their practical activity, emerged in the 1960s. A strong influence on them was exerted by the successes of world socialism, notably by the Cuban revolution. We do not idealise this experience, but are absolutely sure that this incipient process has a great future before it, and of this there are clear signs at present.

The 16th Congress of the CPA formulated this main task: *to fight for the unity of the country's revolutionary forces, for the merger of the most consistent trends into a single Marxist-Leninist vanguard*. Our contribution to the attainment of this goal depends on consistent and creative application of the policy approved by the congress, and on the complete restoration and further development of the attributes of the Leninist-type party. The important thing is to do away with the organisational shortcomings accumulated in the past, to set up strong party cells at the enterprises, in the working class neighbourhoods, at the universities, and among the peasants, and to keep working in other strata of the society. The CPA will serve the cause of the workers and the whole people, and in alliance with the left-wing forces, create a Marxist-Leninist vanguard for leading the revolutionary struggle of the masses.

The year of the 70th anniversary of the Communist Party of Argentina is for us a time of discussion, reflection, analysis of successes and mistakes, and the learning of historical experience, which is sure to help bring out the best qualities of the Communist: Marxist-Leninist, patriot, and internationalist, Argentinian and Latin American. These qualities are needed by every party member — a fighter for national liberation and socialism.

¹ *Thesis politica preparatoria del XVI Congreso del Partido Comunista, Buenos Aires, 1986, p. 9.*

² 'The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo', an organisation uniting the mothers of the victims of political repression under the military dictatorship. — *Ed.*

³ *Frente y acción de masas por la patria liberada y el socialismo. Informe del Comité Central del Partido Comunista al XVI Congreso, Buenos Aires, 1986, p. 11.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20

⁵ A June 1987 law under which members of the police and the armed forces involved in repression 'on orders of their superiors' were exempt from prosecution. — *Ed.*

The Decline Of The Santa Fé Policy

Narciso Isa Conde — General Secretary, Dominican Communist Party

A CLOSE look at the present international situation will reveal two obvious facts: the failure of the bellicose counter-revolutionary US policy on the one hand, and the aggravation of old problems and the emergence of new ones which tend to deepen the crisis of US imperialist domination, on the other.

Short Retrospect

Once in power, Ronald Reagan and his ultra-conservative team set out to establish absolute US supremacy throughout the world and put down the triumphant revolutions and liberation movements in the Third World. The main lines of this foreign policy were set forth in a document entitled *New Inter-American Policy for the Eighties*.¹

The means and ends of the Reagan administration's aggressive policy were formulated as follows: the West's moral rearmament through US military superiority; re-establishment and consolidation of US hegemony in Latin America and the Caribbean; abandonment of every form of peaceful coexistence with the socialist countries and a policy of

Narciso Isa Conde was born in 1942. From 1960 to 1962 he was a member of a left-wing youth political organisation, and simultaneously secretary of the Federation of Dominican Students and leader of the Medical Students' Association. He joined the Dominican Communist Party in 1962, and in 1963 and 1964 worked on the party's Santo Domingo City committee. He became a member of the Central Committee in January 1965, and was elected General Secretary of the Dominican CP in 1969. In 1978 he was nominated DCP candidate for the post of president. He is the author of several theoretical works. He has been repeatedly subjected to arrest.

confrontation with the Soviet Union; switch from the policy of containment to a total reversal of the revolutionary processes in the world; and the practice of state terrorism against regimes escaping US control; aid and support with arms and funds for contras, separatists and terrorists of every stripe; war against the liberation theology and its followers.

The key posts at the centre and in the localities in the United States were taken over by the hawks and superhawks, the forces intimately linked to the military-industrial complex, a species of neofascist trend waxing nostalgic for its erstwhile supremacy. In the early years of his term, Reagan began impetuously to conduct this criminal and aggressive policy. Never before had mankind faced such a threat. World peace had never been so fragile since the end of World War II, and counter-revolution was feverishly encouraged.

Nonetheless, this crusade against the liberation forces could not be sustained, and imperialism was soon forced to retreat. It simply lacked the resources. The ambitions of the latter-day crusaders were being blocked at every step by the realities. *The world had become a different place, with a new balance of forces; socialism was stronger and more experienced, with a heightened striving for peace and progressive change; in many parts of the world the revolutions became irreversible* because of the unexampled heroism of the peoples, who had learned the invaluable lessons of Vietnam; the economic, political and moral crisis of imperialism was growing deeper. In consequence, the results were the opposite of those the Reagan team had expected.

The successes of the USSR and the other socialist countries turned the imperialist project of attaining military superiority into a mission impossible. The USSR's serene, flexible, consistent and firm proposals for peace won the hearts and minds of the peoples to a point at which the Reagan administration was forced to enter into negotiations, which led to the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.

Existing socialism was neither destabilised nor debilitated. Indeed, just when Reaganism was in full spate, a process of renewal began in the USSR, an important stage of all-round democratisation, revitalisation and strengthening of the Soviet society, *a qualitative leap*, as the country moves out of stagnation, having averted a crisis of considerable proportions on which the ideologues of imperialism had pinned great hopes for destabilisation. The perestroika undertaken by the party, led by Mikhail Gorbachov, has produced some other positive results as well: it deprived the enemy of initiative, disarmed dissension of every stripe, and enhanced the international influence of socialism and its attractiveness on a world scale by overcoming the various limitations, obstacles and distortions.

Hopes of detaching Poland from the socialist community likewise failed. There, the deterioration was halted, but not for a return to the past when the PUWP was out of touch with the masses. Following the emergency measures taken to put a stop to the anarchy and attempts by the counter-revolution and the agents of imperialism to capitalise on the popular discontent there followed a process of renovation, which included the recovery of the party's political authority, bold economic and political

reforms, a drive against corruption and bureaucratic practices, and resolute democratisation of social life.

Nor did the US counter-offensive in the Third World justify the hopes of its proponents.

The United States has invested fabulous amounts of money in the war in Central America in support of the counter-revolutionary army of former Somoza guardsmen in Honduras, and the 50,000-strong Salvadoran army; several thousand marines have been dispatched to Honduras, and 15,000 troops are stationed at 17 military bases in the Panama Canal Zone. US airforce planes and warships keep violating the air space and territorial waters of the Central American states. The escalation of the conflict has had truly tragic results; 130,000 dead, hundreds of thousands of wounded and disabled, a million and a half refugees and displaced persons, and entire villages and neighbourhoods wiped out.

What has the aggressor achieved? Nothing but more defeats and ignominy. It has been unable either to isolate or to strangle the Sandinist Revolution, which has been daily growing stronger, enjoying ever wider support at home and abroad. The signing of the Guatemala Agreements was effective recognition of revolutionary Nicaragua's right to exist on the part of the other Central American governments. In El Salvador the FMLN-FDR² alliance, far from being vanquished, has made extraordinary gains. It is now an army which has carried the war into every department, which controls vast areas, which has inflicted 23,000 casualties on the puppet army, and which captures some 600 light weapons every month. The forces of the FMLN have been steadily growing, with ever more active support from the people amid mounting social discontent throughout the country. Protests have been spreading against the presence of the contras in Honduras. Costa Rica is beginning to play an important role in attaining peace. The moves by reaction have faltered. In Guatemala, the forces of the URNG³ have been growing stronger, and the ruling circles fear involvement in a war beyond the country's borders. The Cuban revolution has been consolidated into an invincible bastion. In Peru, the positions of the left wing have been fortified, and the insurgent movement has not been suppressed, and has, in fact, been expanding. In Chile, resistance to Pinochet is mounting, a popular uprising is looming, fascism is in crisis, and continuity for the benefit of Washington has been jeopardised. A grave defeat was inflicted on the progressive forces by the US aggression against Grenada, which was in part made possible as a result of mistakes by revolutionaries and by the murder of Maurice Bishop.

Reaganism has halted the offensive of social democracy in the Third World, and its advocates lacked the will and the independence required to establish it in our countries. The subordination of a section of Latin American Social Democrats to US dictates has led to a marked reduction in their initial influence, if not to their demise.

The forces supporting the liberation theology have been growing in the Third World countries, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. The churches of the poor have been committing themselves to the liberation of the oppressed, and for genuine national independence, so developing into a source of protest and revolutionary action.

There are, of course, many strands to the process of change. In Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, neofascism has returned to barracks but there the local dependent bourgeoisie and the Reagan administration have managed to limit the changes to a political liberalisation without a structural breakdown, and to move to a democracy run by the millionaires. That gave them a political breathing space for prolonging the life of the scheme of domination, but it has not averted the crisis.

To all that should be added the volcano of the *external debt*, together with the effects of the imperialist recipes for its solution. Life shows (and the Dominican Republic is a case in point) that the continued dictates of the IMF, the World Bank and the transnational banks are bound to cause fresh social upheavals and revolutionary action in various countries of our continent.

All these problems and reverses have had repercussions in the United States itself. Together with the recent Irangate scandal and the stock market crash, they have seriously eroded the Reagan administration's internal and international authority and deepened its institutional crisis.

In short, neoglobalism is faltering, it has been losing strength and abandoning one position after another. It is not yet defeated and continues to be aggressive, but it has been forced to adapt to the new circumstances.

Island in Flames

For our people, Joaquin Balaguer's assumption of the post of president of the Dominican Republic (1986) has meant a prolongation of domination by the United States and the multimillionaire groups, a deepening of the country's most acute economic and social crisis, with an ever heavier burden falling on the vast majority of the population.

From the very start of Balaguer's term, the national economy was put into a straitjacket by the IMF and the World Bank, a criminal policy of further devaluing the peso, reducing the purchasing power of wages, depressing consumption and eliminating jobs. The effects were quick to tell and increased the discontent of the population. In view of the situation, and in an effort to prevent a rapid decline of his authority, the president took a number of political steps 'in defence of morality and the freedoms'. Legal proceedings were instituted against members of earlier administrations involved in corruption, the state apparatus is being purged of those who had engaged in underhand dealing over the past twelve years, something is being done against the drug traffickers, and a limited purge of the army command has been carried out. The authorities have tried to ensure observance of the won democratic rights, have taken some steps to establish contacts with Cuba, and have helped in finding and restoring to their families the remains of Caamaño and other guerrilla fellow-fighters.⁵

These measures have helped the new government to keep face for the time being and postponed a wide-ranging confrontation with a people experienced in urban and rural fighting, but their effect has diminished in consequence of its economic and social policy and the obvious limitations of its moralising and liberalising initiatives. The people are being stifled by the crisis and killed by hunger; their condition is being worsened and wide strata of small and middle proprietors are being ruined, while the living

conditions of the intelligentsia and the students are being increasingly affected. *The people are again beginning to protest, to mobilise and fight against the economic policy, which shows every sign of proving a fiasco.*

The rural areas are in turmoil, and organised take-overs of land have been multiplying. Veritable pitched battles have now and again been fought in the poor neighbourhoods and suburban areas. The ever more frequent actions by the workers for higher wages testify to a resurgent working class struggle for its rights. Even before the first year of Balaguer's administration had run out, it was faced with a national strike, a clear sign of repudiation of its economic policy by the masses.

Much harm has been done by the political system and government apparatus, the constitution and the electoral law, and the intervention by the army and the police in the process of government decision-making: all the problems have been aggravated, and the votes of the majority merely serve the interests of the anti-national minority. That is how it also was under the two previous administrations headed by the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), which has failed to stand the test of power and has effectively betrayed its progressive propositions and national-reformist orientation, presenting to the world the sad image of thoroughly corrupted and discredited organisation formally affiliated with the Socialist International, but actually taking orders from the right.

The course of the crisis has revealed that the main issue is the *character of power*, since there is now an inevitable gulf between it and the aspirations of the Dominicans. There is a need for an alternative and much more democratic form of government supported by the masses and relying on a bloc of all the forces taking a stand against the oligarchy and imperialism. That is the essence of our idea of a popular government.

The situation is even hotter in Haiti, which lies in the western part of the island. There authoritarianism is in growing crisis. The National Governing Council headed by Henry Namphy, who took over from Jean Claude Duvalier, lost no time in showing its true face. It was a species of Duvalierism without Duvalier, producing indignation among the masses which was expressed in a string of strikes and wide protest campaigns. The Council kept afloat through the use of arms and terrorism, and because of the absence of any concrete project for an alternative government capable of winning the hearts of the people and rousing them to action to destroy the relicts of Duvalierism. That is what has enabled the regime to keep going, and the United States to continue its moves to keep a possible change of government under control. The United States has been preparing new forms of covert intervention in an effort to reconstruct the Haitian counter-revolution with the support of the Dominican power groups and, in the event of a failure to influence the course of events by political and parliamentary means, to start a 'low-profile' war, as the Pentagon calls it.

The internal situation in Haiti is highly fragile, and the periods of apparent stability attained by timid steps towards restricted democracy are precarious. The protests against extreme poverty and curtailed freedoms indicate a *continued deepening of the democratic revolution and mounting struggle against the military-political forces in the way.*

Haiti is now one of the weakest links in the chain of imperialist domination. Real changes will come about in the country only when the power issue is decided in the interests of the people and full-scale popular action is taken against the violence and the crisis. Success also depends on the extent to which the people are in possession of technical means and weapons, of which the bulk is now in the hands of the Duvalierists and the pro-US military.

Creatively Developing Theory

The failure of the Sante Fé policy has intensified the crisis of imperialist domination in Latin America and has amplified the potentialities for a popular, national and revolutionary alternative. That is objectivity a blow at the local allies of the United States, who have undertaken the thankless responsibility of governing with the help of dictatorship or through restricted democracy. They have not even contemplated the idea of shedding the yoke of dependence, the external debt and the diktat of the IMF and the private banks, with which they have been saddled by the US strategists. Washington lays the main emphasis on privatising and transnationalising our economies and on completely denationalising local industry, and that, far from helping to surmount the difficulties, is bound to have shattering and intolerable consequences for the immense majority of those who live in Latin America and the Caribbean.

One may well ask: *why then, with such a profound and extensive crisis, is there such a slow change in some countries in the balance of forces between reaction intent on maintaining the status quo, and the forces of progress and revolution?* If one is to give the right answer, one has to take an honest and self-critical look at the key political problems, to review the lines of activity, get rid of mistakes and deviations, and to make a detailed study of positive and negative experience. *If the revolutionary alternative is to triumph, theory must be continuously developed. Our lag here is obvious, and our responsibility undeniable.* The international situation, the state of the continent and the country-demand efforts to bridge the gap between the rapidly maturing objective conditions of revolution and the formation and development of the revolutionary vanguard.

The communist parties, the Marxist organisations and militant anti-imperialist movements have one duty: to be in the lead of the revolution, which means more than existing within it or even becoming an influential factor, but *playing the leading role in the radical restructuring of the exploitive society*, to avoid becoming passive observers, minor participants in the process of change, to say nothing of swimming the tide. In most countries of Latin America and the Caribbean the crisis has brought to the fore of the agenda the question of a programme for alternative power expressing the needs of the present period, the urge of the masses to restore national sovereignty, do away with political despotism, and restricted democracies serving the military millionaires, and establish a popular and sovereign democracy.

Here, the *unity of revolutionaries and the policy of alliances are of primary importance.* A bloc of all the forces opposing the dominant system, including the communist parties, other Marxist trends, the

'people's churches', and Christian movements like liberation theology, must have a face of their own, with coordinating bodies, accords and plans for struggle. The cohesion of the left will alone enable them to evolve into a vanguard, and this should not be done on paper, but by mobilising the masses and acquiring the leading role in the popular struggles.

That does not mean, of course, that we are to close in upon ourselves within a narrow circle. In accordance with the national conditions and the actual requirements and potentialities, we also need *alliances at other levels and accords on tactics and joint action* with other political trends. The line of left unity, not excluding the broadest fronts and accords is, we believe, a duty both of revolutions which have won, and of movements fighting for power. It is our common duty to give pride of place to solidarity, and ties with the forward forces and organisations, coming out against imperialism and capitalism, without forgetting, of course, ideological and political principles.

In the analysis of the social composition and social subjects of our revolutionary process, it is time to abandon the schemes which life itself has disproved. Along with the working class, it is important to reckon with all the popular strata: the wide and highly diverse spectrum of wage workers, exploited, poor, and deprived, who can play an important role in toppling the existing system. We should also reckon with the mass movements: cultural, youth, women's ecological, ethnic minority, religious, etc.

There are, of course, definite distinctions in the social composition of the working people, their numbers, and the traditions of struggle by the working class and the oppressed masses in the various countries and regions of Latin America. These are most essential in projecting the line of turning these categories of the population into active participants in radical change. The gist of the problem, however, is that the *proletarian programme should become the main political compass of the popular movement*, which is diverse, but which is objectively aimed against the crisis-ridden system.

Unity and joint action with Christian organisations which have opted for the poor deserve special consideration. While this trend, as a rule, lacks any political articulation, its concrete activity and ideological and political formulations are of exceptional value in our revolutionary processes. The 'people's church' is an indispensable component of the 'new left' in forming the revolutionary vanguard.

If the contradictions and weaknesses of the dominant system are to be used, we must also take a clear stand with respect to the military so as to win over a section of them to the cause of progress and change. The armed forces and the police, a pillar of the existing system, are ruled by a rigid discipline and subordination as instruments of the ruling class. But they are not homogeneous in social composition and are to some extent influenced by democratic ideas, patriotic sentiments and popular aspirations. If patriotism and the spirit of Latin American brotherhood are to be fostered among the military and the police, there is a need to expose the negative role of Pentagon advisers and 'patrons' trying to turn our armed forces into an instrument of foreign monopolies and a means for realising the political and military plans of the United States.

Peace and Liberation Are Indivisible

The dependent character of Latin American societies in itself determines the need to use *every form of struggle for social change* and liberation of the peoples of the continent. In order to prepare for consistent conduct of this line it is important to overcome right-wing and 'leftist' opportunism, revisionism, ultra-revolutionism, conservatism, sterile radicalism, ultra-pacifism and ultra-militarism. We should, besides, vigorously reject any conceptions which regard the problem of political power as a minor or purely rhetorical one.

The class enemy has repeatedly played on the people's yearning for peace and their urge for democracy, and has used the mistakes, and sometimes the limitations, and one-sidedness of revolutionary movements. Among the Communists' prime duties are *defence of peace, resolute action against the arms race, the threat of nuclear war and 'low-intensity wars', such as those imperialism has unleashed in many parts of the Third World*. Wars, whether nuclear or local, have a common origin and the same set of promoters.

The Soviet Union, the other socialist countries, the peace forces of Europe and all those who oppose the build-up of nuclear arsenals have been doing a great deal to save the world from a cataclysm. Our own activity has run along the same course. *The peoples' armed resistance to the 'counter-insurgency' sorties of imperialism is a form of struggle for peace in which violence has to be met with violence.*

The struggle for peace is also expressed in the support of armed action for freedom. In opposition to the military gambles of imperialism, the bloody repression, economic genocide by the IMF and the transnational banks, state terrorism of the USA and 'new Vietnams'.

All the anti-imperialist forces are inspired by a yearning for peace. We have been fighting not only for bread and sovereignty, but also for more democracy, for more freedom, for more power of decision by the people themselves.

The perestroika in many socialist-community countries, the fruitful and creative rethinking of Marxism, the acquired experience, the failure of dogmatism and right-wing opportunism, and the deepening crisis of imperialism — all of these help to renew our thinking, to vivify theoretical thought, and to fortify the struggle for advancing towards a world without wars, violence, exploitation and poverty. To a world of love, happiness and liberty!

Known as the Santa Fé Document. For details, see Rodney Arismendi, 'Global Madness Once More', *WMR*, No. 7, 1981. — *Ed.*

² The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front. — *Ed.*

³ The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity. — *Ed.*

⁴ Francisco Caamaño Deñó (1933-1973), a Dominican military and political leader who fought for democratic change in the country. In 1965 and 1966, he led the popular uprising against the US intervention in the Dominican Republic. He was killed when trying to land on the island with a group of insurgents. — *Ed.*

step by step to disarmament

The Soviet-American Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles has been concluded. What do other countries think of it? How are the USSR Supreme Soviet and US Congress moving on its ratification? What is being done at the missile bases and around them? The editors have put these questions to politicians, public personalities, peace activists, military men and ordinary people. Some of the first answers are published below, and more will appear in our April issue.

There Is Much Work Ahead. . .

Tengiz Menteshashvili — alternate member, CPSU Central Committee.
Secretary of the Presidium, USSR Supreme Soviet

PEOPLE entered the new year of 1988 with fresh hopes and concerns. The hopes and desires for peace undoubtedly are paramount in the broad spectrum of public thoughts and sentiments. This is easy to understand: people cannot live their lives to the full unless there is peace. Men and women have grown tired of the dogging fear of nuclear catastrophe. That is why the Soviet-American summit at the close of last year and the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles were in the focus of world public opinion.

That Treaty is important to us first and foremost because it is the starting point of the practical implementation of a major principle of new political thinking which the USSR offers to the whole world. It says that the security of nations cannot be ensured by military technology alone in the nuclear age. More weapons today mean less rather than more security. It is only by political means that security can be guaranteed. Objectively, no one can benefit politically by the arms race or by a drive for military superiority, let alone by nuclear war.

The Treaty concluded in Washington is proof that the renewal of political thinking is making itself felt already not just in the formulation of new foreign policy concepts but also on the practice of state-to-state relations. In fact, that accord is the first step towards a nuclear-free world, towards the elimination of nuclear weapons; it not just puts ceilings on the existing arms arsenals, as was many a case in the past, but physically abolishes two entire classes of nuclear missiles.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet keeps receiving numerous letters and telegrams. "We have now heaved a sigh of relief for the future of our children and grandchildren," says one of them. "Let this beginning lead to the total disarmament of all the countries and peoples."

The Treaty has forcefully proved, in the teeth of both honest doubters and malicious sceptics, that it is possible to resolve by joint efforts a very intricate question, moreover, one involving the security interests of many other countries as well as of the USSR and the USA. This is very important for the future. Now, when the elimination of nuclear monsters is put on the agenda, no one can say: 'This cannot be done because it has never been done before.'

The Treaty has toppled one more argument of the opponents of nuclear disarmament. They have always claimed that agreements cannot be dependably verified because of either technical difficulties or, and in the first place, the unwillingness of the Soviet Union to allow inspectors into its territory to see military and industrial facilities concerned. The conclusion of the INF Treaty has invalidated the first allegation and shown the second to be clearly malicious. By signing that document the Soviet Union effectively matched with deeds what it had been saying all along: when it comes to the reduction and elimination of armaments, we will be the first to demand the strictest and most effective verification possible. In this situation verification acquires a special importance: it will be a major guarantee of security. That is why it should be real, comprehensive and credible.

By demonstrating in practice the possibility of eliminating nuclear weapons under strict control, the Treaty has produced an unprecedented stimulus for progress towards accords in other areas of disarmament. That progress can materialise, moreover, in the not so distant future if the negotiators recognise in the spirit of goodwill each other's real concerns and look for mutually acceptable solutions; the Soviet side demonstrated in deeds rather than in words in the talks on the INF Treaty that it is willing to accept such solutions.

The Treaty will begin to work, of course, only if it enters into force, which first and foremost necessitates, as the text of the document says, ratification "in accordance with the constitutional procedures of each Party".

Under the Fundamental Law of the Soviet Union, ratification of international treaties is the prerogative of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.¹ Before going to the Presidium for ratification, the treaties are usually reviewed by the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet, which then report their findings and recommendations to the Presidium. The commissions themselves define procedures for their work and hear reports of government officials and, if need be, of experts on specific matters. Naturally, the procedures will be observed in the present case as well.

The Treaty in question, however, is an unusual document. It is in the focus of attention in the Soviet Union and in countries allied with us precisely because solutions to the problems settled by it are unconventional and innovative — and these problems are of vital importance to the

security of the country today and in the longer term. There are pros and cons here.

As Mikhail Gorbachov has observed, it is for the first time that such a question is not having a smooth passage in our country. People wonder if the Soviet leadership did right by agreeing to scrap three to four times as many nuclear weapons as the other side. They raise in their letters to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet some other points. In an opinion poll conducted by the Institute of Sociological Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences in Moscow, 37 per cent of those polled believed the Treaty to add to the Soviet Union's security, 43 per cent thought that it would not detract from it, 8 per cent expected that some damage would be done, and 12 per cent were undecided.

Both the Foreign Affairs Commissions and the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, I think, will have to work hard to analyse the problem in its entirety. Naturally, they will receive relevant presentations and clarifications from the foreign affairs and defence ministries. The opinions of non-governmental experts and leading authorities on international relations and international law, nuclear scientists, ecologists, etc., will be useful as well.

The members of the Foreign Affairs Commissions of the USSR Supreme Soviet are likely to follow closely debates on the Treaty in the US Senate and its committees; such attention is a must in view of possible reservations and amendments to the document that the Senate may approve. We will have to weigh the meaning and significance of such steps, if they are really taken. It cannot be ruled out, I think, that a need for contacts between the Supreme Soviet commissions and the Senate committees may arise to clarify some points and settle some problems.

Such discussions are without precedent in the practice of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Neither has the Supreme Soviet ever refused to ratify a treaty signed on behalf of the Soviet Union. Sometimes, however, ratification was not considered at all because the other side publicly stated its refusal to go through with ratification; one example is the SALT-2 Treaty. It is to be hoped that history will not repeat itself.

¹ In late January the INF Treaty was submitted to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet for ratification. — *Ed.*

The Initial Phase Of A Continuum . . .

Claiborne Pell — Senator, Chairman
of the Committee on Foreign Relations,
US Senate

I BELIEVE that the INF Treaty advances the national security interests of the United States, the Soviet Union and the world at large. Reducing some nuclear weapons on each side is the essential first step in arriving eventually at a safer and more stable balance of nuclear weapons between

the United States and the Soviet Union. Superpower reductions are also important in providing the necessary confidence to non-nuclear powers to refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons.

I feel that the verification procedures, as agreed upon in the Treaty, are adequate, and I also believe that the breakthroughs achieved in this Treaty will serve as helpful precedents for a follow-on treaty covering strategic weapons. A high level of confidence in verification will not, however, guarantee that one or both parties will always consider compliance with the Treaty's obligations to be in its national interest. Only a careful management of the bilateral relationship in all of its aspects can do that.

I am hopeful that the Treaty will be approved by the full Senate by the end of April, but it is really too early to say with a high degree of confidence how long the process will take. We will have a better idea sometime during the course of the hearings, opened on January 25 in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. At this time, I do not see strong opposition in terms of the number of Senators who will vote against the Treaty, but I do foresee a period of vigorous debate and efforts to change the terms of the Treaty. The opposition will be bipartisan, but I expect the vast majority of the opponents to be from the President's own party.

I certainly feel that the Treaty could be instrumental in opening up the road to further, perhaps even more important, steps for reducing nuclear arsenals. For me that is the primary significance of this Treaty. The weapons to be reduced under the INF Treaty constitute only some 3 per cent of the nuclear arsenals on each side. But, as I see it, the Treaty is the initial phase of a continuum of arms control. If I am correct, the INF Treaty will be followed by agreements on strategic weapons, nuclear testing, chemical weapons and on conventional forces as well. Each step taken in this process, if compliance has been unambiguously verified, will provide the necessary confidence to take the next step. And each step taken furthers the cause of peace.

The Way They Are To Do It (INF Treaty Highlights)*

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, hereinafter referred to as the Parties,

Conscious that nuclear war would have devastating consequences for all mankind,

Guided by the objective of strengthening strategic stability,

Convinced that the measures set forth in this Treaty will help to reduce the risk of outbreak of war and strengthen international peace and security, and

Mindful of their obligations under Article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

* For the purpose of this Treaty the term 'intermediate-range missile' (IRM) means a ground-launched ballistic missile or a ground-launched cruise missile having a range capability in excess of 1,000 kilometers but not in excess of 5,500 kilometers; the term 'shorter-range missile' (SRM) means a missile of either of the two types having a range capability equal to or in excess of 500 kilometers but not in excess of 1,000 kilometers. — *Ed.*

Have agreed as follows:

Each Party shall eliminate all its intermediate-range missiles and launchers of such missiles, and all support structures** and support equipment of the categories listed in the Memorandum of Understanding associated with such missiles and launchers, so that no later than three years*** after entry into force of this Treaty and thereafter no such missiles, launchers, support structures** or support equipment shall be possessed by either Party.

This Treaty shall be of unlimited duration.

Subject to elimination by the Soviet Party are 826 deployed and non-deployed IRMs, including 470 deployed IRMs; and by the American Party 689 IRMs, including 429 deployed IRMs.

As regards the SRMs, the Soviet Party will eliminate 926 deployed and non-deployed missiles and the American Party 170 such missiles.

The various data included in the Memorandum apply to about 100 facilities for the Soviet Party and to more than 30 facilities in the US and on the territory of five West European basing countries. As is known, the Soviet IRMs are deployed exclusively on the territory of the USSR, while the respective American systems are on the territory of the following US NATO allies: West Germany, Britain, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands.

There is also data concerning the location of storage and missile and launcher repair facilities, training centres and elimination facilities.

Also cited are the Soviet and American plants manufacturing IRMs and SRMs and their launchers and the exact geographical location of those works. (In the USSR there are four such plants and in the US five.)

The Protocol provides for the elimination of missiles by explosive demolition or burning and, in the case of an agreed-upon number of intermediate-range missiles, by launching. The front section of a missile will be crushed or flattened in a press, and the nuclear charge shall be subject to utilisation.

The total number of inspections the USSR may conduct within the territory of the USA and in the West European countries for the 13 years of operation of the verification mechanism is about 240; the USA may carry out a total of about 400 inspections in the USSR, Czechoslovakia and the GDR.

** The Article covering shorter-range missiles omits mention of support structures.

*** The Article covering shorter-range missiles stipulates a term of 18 months.

Washington Summit Opens Up Broad Prospects

Elena Flores — Secretary for
International Affairs, Spanish Socialist
Workers' Party (SSWP), Senator

In continuation of the dialogue with leading representatives of Socialist, Labour and Social Democratic parties we asked Elena Flores, a SSWP leader, to answer several questions. Here is what she had to say.

To judge by the results of many recent forums of the Socialist International, the Socialists and Social Democrats are increasingly searching for new approaches to the global problems of our day. It is above all a matter of broad socio-political forces cooperating with each other, despite class, political and ideological differences, in averting a nuclear catastrophe and resolving the problems of starvation, poverty and under-development. Does the SSWP support such an attitude to international cooperation? If it does, how is this reflected in the practical activity of the government headed by your party?

TO be precise, I would say that it is not merely that the SSWP supports such an attitude: the latter mirrors the goals and principles determining the directions of our activity.

As for the question about the approaches to resolving global problems of our time, it is too broad to be answered in brief. In my opinion, the most disturbing problems are those connected with the preservation of peace, with ensuring international security, and with inequality, lack of freedoms and the violation of human rights in many countries on earth.

The international activity of the Socialist government and the party has aimed at vigorously supporting the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts, the signing of disarmament agreements which would promote détente and the implementation of cooperation projects of development within the boundaries of our economic potentialities. We help the democratic forces fighting to restore freedoms and democracy in the countries under dictatorial regimes and denounce the violation of human rights wherever they occur.

I believe it of interest to recall, though many readers are aware of it, that it was the proposal of the Socialist government of Spain that led the 1983 Madrid meeting of the states participants in the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe out of a deadlock. That was, to my mind, an important step not only with respect to the subsequent negotiations which crystallised in the Stockholm disarmament conference but also in view of the fact that the agreement was signed at a time when the international situation was especially tense and that indisputably helped ease tensions.

Another noteworthy example is the Spanish government's decision supported by our people to keep the country's territory free from nuclear

weapons. This attests to the government's intention to espouse the aspirations of the people and to contribute to the process of peace and international détente, particularly in Europe. In 1987 the government decided that Spain should become party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Peace, security, détente, democratic freedoms and cooperation for development are the pillars for the world to rest upon to be freer and more just, to show more solidarity and to be able to live in peace.

Today some influential Social Democratic parties in NATO countries (e.g., the West German and Danish Social Democrats and the British and Norwegian Labour Parties) have in many respects changed their attitude to the problem of ensuring national security in the nuclear age. Calls are being insistently heard in these parties to renounce some antiquated postulates of the North Atlantic Treaty, first and foremost the deterrence and 'flexible response' doctrine, and to replace them by the mutual security concept. What do the Spanish Socialists think in this connection?

We share the concern showed by many fellow Socialists in Europe over peace and international security. In the past few years we European Socialists have conducted and continue conducting a series of meetings within the framework of an informal forum of the Socialist parties of the European NATO countries. These meetings have led to an important convergence of views of the need to revive the process of détente, to work out confidence-building measures and to achieve substantial agreements on arms control and disarmament, maintaining defence at a level indispensable for common West European security. It should be borne in mind at the same time that for geographical, historical and other reasons every country logically has a distinctive idea of its own security.

The SSWP is known to pay heightened attention to some regions, such as the Mediterranean and Latin America. How do you explain this peculiarity of your party's policy and in what way do the Spanish Socialists contribute to the solution of burning problems facing the peoples of those regions?

It is true that for historical, geographical, cultural and other reasons Spain has special relations with Latin American and Mediterranean countries. That is why Europe, Latin America and the Mediterranean constitute three main trends of our foreign policy.

We Spanish Socialists have been following with concern the conflict in Central America, supporting from the outset both along governmental and party lines the Contadora Group peace initiatives, which contain elements necessary to promote peace and stability in the region. Despite the difficulties and obstacles it encountered in these years, the Contadora Group has played an important role as a forum of dialogues and contacts and prevented the escalation of the conflict.

Within our economic potentialities the Spanish government has

developed a plan for comprehensive cooperation with five Central American countries. We believe that the origin of the conflict is rooted in underdevelopment (in the global sense of the world), which afflicts Central American countries with the exception of Costa Rica.

Within the European Community and as part of political cooperation Spain promotes European cooperation with all the Central American countries without exception, to say nothing of food and medical aid it gives to Nicaragua.

What role, in your opinion, can be played by contacts, continuous dialogue and joint and parallel actions by broad public forces, in particular cooperation between the Communists and the Socialists, in resolving the burning problems of today?

Dialogue, mutual respect, understanding and tolerance underlie democratic coexistence within nations and should equally underlie coexistence of nations.

As we believe in these principles, we profess that a dialogue always has positive meaning. For this reason, like other Socialist parties, we maintain frequent contacts with the communist parties of Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, this dialogue is sometimes not easy in Spain and in other West European countries. For instance, our Socialist government is subjected to more attacks and criticism by the Communist Party of Spain than the government of the Democratic Centre Union¹ was in its time.

The Soviet-US summit in Washington became a landmark event of the past year, which demonstrated in practice the importance of joint efforts, patient dialogue and ability to come to a compromise on complicated international matters. What does your party think of its results and what should, in your opinion, be the aims of disarmament talks now?

The Spanish Socialists appreciated the fact that the Soviet Union had accepted the Western proposal of the zero option which reflected the 'two-track decision' of 1979. It is important that seven years later the USSR made that decision.

Speaking at the Congress of the Union of Socialist and Social Democratic parties of the European Community at Estoril (Portugal), SSWP General Secretary Felipe Gonzalez said that the Soviet decision was in the interests of Europe and that it should avail itself of that historic opportunity to achieve agreement on medium and shorter-range missiles, which would also lead to the reduction of conventional weapons and the disappearance of chemical weapons.

I think it important to stress that the Socialist government of Spain was the first to adopt a clear-cut stand on this issue in NATO by backing first the zero option and then the double zero option.

Our party was deeply satisfied to see the United States and the Soviet Union sign the Treaty on medium and shorter-range missiles. The agreement on the so-called double zero option is an unprecedented event:

for the first time in history it is a matter of eliminating a certain category of nuclear weapons rather than of merely putting them under control, as was the case heretofore. This historic accomplishment makes a valuable contribution to the cause of peace and international security and opens up new prospects in relations between East and West conducive to the climate of détente and strengthening confidence.

The treaty envisaging a rigorous system of verification and control over its implementation also sets an important precedent for subsequent disarmament agreements concerning other categories of weapons. In this sense the SSWP advocates that negotiations be immediately started on the 50 per cent reduction of conventional weapons in Europe and the total eradication of chemical weapons. We are sure that the treaty would be ratified in the shortest possible time and that the sides would rigorously observe both the letter and the spirit of that agreement.

¹ The Union was set up in 1977 on the basis of the election coalition of some small bourgeois parties and stayed in power from 1977 to 1982. After it suffered a crushing defeat at the 1982 parliamentary elections, it disbanded itself in March 1983. — *Ed.*

the party

Communists And Elections: Discussion Continued

To Break The Vicious Circle Of The Two-Party System

John Bizzell — Central Executive
Committee member, Communist Party
of Canada (CPC)

THE distinctive feature of Canadian politics has been the tacit pact between the two parties of monopoly capital, the Liberals and the Conservatives, to maintain a strict monopoly on government. They have been successful in this for 120 years at the federal level.

Built into the Canadian electoral form is the tendency to vote against what the people do not want by electing what is perceived as the only

For the beginning of the series, see Kenneth Kvist, 'Working Within the System and in Opposition to It', *WMR*, No. 1, 1988.

realistic alternative, even if this will not yield what they actually want. The vote often becomes a punitive weapon. Thus, in the last election (in 1984), the people were sick and tired of more than 20 years of Liberal rule, and elected the neo-conservative Tories with the biggest majority ever given a government in Canada. Although the NDP¹ program provided for what the majority wanted, the electorate could not conceive of them being able to form a government.

Canada, like most Commonwealth countries, uses the first-past-the-post mode of election² rather than some form of proportional representation. This naturally makes election to Parliament a great hurdle for Communists and other progressive candidates. In the post-World War II period we did win seats at both federal and provincial levels,³ but have been excluded since the height of the Cold War.

Generally, the political conditions in which elections take place make it difficult for our party and all other progressive organizations to make parliamentary headway. Gerrymandered electoral districts give much greater value to the more conservative rural vote than that of the urban working class and middle strata. Or take another example: under law, all registered political parties are accorded free time on radio and television. But the ruling party gets several hours of free time, while our party, only a few minutes.

The costs of elections are so high that they make competition-in-kind out of the question for working class candidates. Laws have been passed to regulate the funding of elections — ostensibly to prevent the buying of elections by the corporate sector, but in fact making that more possible than ever by making political donations a tax write-off. At the federal level the state refunds more than half of the election expenses of candidates provided they poll more than 15 per cent of the popular vote. This allows the 'big' parties to spend vast sums and effectively excludes the smaller parties.

Several other factors make it very difficult for the Communist Party to participate in elections successfully — first and foremost, the substantial reserve of anti-communist prejudice among the electorate. These biased attitudes are fomented by the extreme right whose base includes large communities of émigrés from socialist countries. In some communities, these émigré groups are decisive in elections.

There is also the rather low level of political consciousness that has existed among some of the working people since the period of post-war 'prosperity'. Finally, there is the 'wasted vote' syndrome whereby electors vote not for what they really want but for what they really do not want, all in the name of defeating what they perceive as an even worse option. They hold that voting for Communist candidates would be useless.

Therefore, our main task is to try to *influence the outcome of the election in a positive direction*. Our main political slogan invariably identifies the main political enemy of the working people at the time. The CPC always stresses unity of the progressive forces and spells out the best possible alternative to a right-wing victory.

Canada's Communists do not have the strength to run in all constituencies at this time and normally confine their candidates to

between one-tenth and one-fifth of the seats being contested. In the selection of candidates, our provincial party organizations try to find a slate that is balanced with regard to class background, gender, age and national origin, to find candidates who can best present the party's program and have a solid public record of activity in a range of fields.

We circulate our platform to as many households as possible and to selected factory gates both where we have candidates and where we are not running. We place advertisements where we can afford them in newspapers and on radio.

Communist candidates raise questions their rivals prefer to avoid — such as peace, unemployment and poverty — and in this way compel other candidates to address these issues too. The CPC pays great attention to play an active role in the electoral process.

The many tactical questions that present themselves in the course of elections include where to run; who to suggest supporters of our party vote for in areas where we are not putting up a candidate, etc. We do not have cast-iron rules for these kinds of conditions but deal with each as it arises. The only principled question involved is what is best for the working people. Thus, we would think twice about putting up a candidate in an area where our vote might mean the difference between election and defeat of a good social democratic or other reform candidate with a good track record, the more so if this could mean a change in provincial government.

Nevertheless, one should note that more Canadians supported Communist candidates in the latest election. Generally, the *people are increasingly looking for change*. The fact that most of the electorate voted for the Conservatives did not mean a rightward shift in popular sentiments. The vote was not so much for the Conservatives as against the Liberals and their inability to cope with economic recession, growing unemployment and inflation.

The search for change reflects major shifts in the composition and psychology of the electorate. In the last decade the working class of Canada has grown faster than the population as a whole because of the mass entry of women into the workforce, the continuing elimination of family farmers and the 'proletarianization' of professionals and some categories of services. Despite unevenness and ebbs and flows, the working people have moved rather more in the direction of class struggle than away from it, while the different crises besetting Canada have grown in scope, intensity and complexity.

There is a marked swing away from the Liberals and the Conservatives toward the New Democratic Party which has won some provincial elections in recent years. There has been a marked increase in the popularity of the NDP. An opinion poll conducted last year indicated that those favouring socialism in Canada have increased from 17 to 28 per cent. We can be sure that the respondents were not expressing confidence in socialism as we the Communists know it. Rather, the majority of these would understand socialism to mean greater public intervention and better social services. Still, the poll reflects a growing lack of confidence in capitalism and its institutions, and this is a welcome shift in the face of the neo-conservative drive in the capitalist world.

By and large, the *level of social awareness of the electorate has increased* since the 1970s. There has not been the phenomenon of large-scale decline in voting in Canada that has afflicted other capitalist countries. Despite the efforts of bourgeois politicians and the monopoly media, more and more people are aware of the main issues in elections. The Communists have played a role in this, as has the NDP, although it usually tries to avoid controversial questions. Much credit is also due to the wide range of people's movements — the peace, women's and environmentalists' movements — which were active in the latest election.

Canada is already preparing for the next election (to be held no later than September 1989). Socio-economic questions continue to dominate the unfolding struggle. These issues have virtually merged with issues involving Canada's independence from the USA in economic, military and foreign policy matters. Naturally, the Communists fight hard to promote the idea of Canadian independence, but not in a narrow nationalist manner, for we stress that the alternative to US control is not control by Canadian monopoly interests.

Unemployment, housing, poverty are increasingly intruding into the political and electoral process as major issues, as is the uneven development of Canada which results in lowered standards of living for the working people in some areas. The national question, connected with the unequal position of the French Canadians, the oppressed aboriginal population and various immigrant communities, remains acute.

Although the connection between peace and jobs is not yet perceived adequately, Canada's role for peace or war is becoming a major issue, particularly around questions such as Canadian participation in Star Wars, the testing of US cruise missiles in Canada, the size and scope of the Canadian armed forces, and the growing militarization of Canadian economic life. A campaign in which the Communists are active is under way now, facilitated by the Canadian Peace Alliance which embraces over 400 affiliated organizations, to circulate Voter Peace Pledge Cards in all federal constituencies in anticipation of the next federal election. By signing these cards, people pledge to vote only for candidates who stand for the main peace and disarmament questions of the day. Significantly, the NDP whose popularity has increased drastically in recent years would have Canada pull out of NATO and NORAD and opt for a defense of Canadian sovereignty as the main task of the armed forces.

The cumulative effect of the forces for peace in Canada, the movement for Canada's independent development and the sustained peace offensive of the Soviet Union on the one hand and, on the other, the pro-war policies of US imperialism and its supporters in Canada may become a major question in deciding the next government.

Now that people's movements are on the rise, our party sees an alternative to the two-party system.

While present conditions in Canada lead us to favour the peaceful path of change, we cannot confine ourselves to parliamentary activity. *The Communists pay the greatest attention to extra-parliamentary activity which they see as primary. Real and lasting changes in the complexion of parliament will stem primarily from the will of the masses of working people*

in action. At the same time, the parliamentary process is deeply ingrained in the consciousness of Canada's peoples. This must be both respected and transformed into an instrument of popular power rather than bourgeois rule. As monopoly rule becomes more clearly identified as the source of all problems, Canada's working people will have to decide whether their political will can be served best by existing political formations and parties or whether new forms will have to be developed to enter the electoral arena.

We have been advancing for some time now the *idea of a people's coalition as a mass extra-parliamentary force to influence political life and the direction taken by parliament.* We see this as a coalition of existing organizations built around the trade unions, the peace, women's, farmer's and youth movements, some of which are both large and influential and based upon quite advanced programs. Recently some significant reform forces, including religious and labor figures and organizations, have moved to a similar position around an essentially anti-monopoly approach. The main recipient of this and of changing public opinion will likely be the New Democrats. However, at the current stage of development this serves the interests of the progressive forces and of the working people as a whole.

Coalition policies are even now a *potent fact of life in Canada.* At the municipal level, we have accumulated a good bit of experience. At neither the federal nor the provincial levels have politics matured to the point where such an arrangement has been possible, specifically because of outright hostility by the Social Democrats to a united electoral approach involving the Communists. The pattern of alliance politics at the civic level is assisted by the tradition of political parties staying out of municipal elections by name: competing are individual candidates, coalitions or local organizations.

In Vancouver, for instance, the Committee of Progressive Electors (COPE) is active. It is a coalition of left-leaning municipal activists, Communists and Social Democrats operating as a municipal political party, with an almost twenty-year record of election to City Council. COPE formed an alliance with the NDP and the Labor Council of Vancouver (the organized expression of the trade unions at the city level). Together they were able to challenge and beat the right-wing monopoly-supported candidate, formed a majority on the council and achieved some noticeable success in running the city.

Our party participates in electoral alliances in most major cities. Our signal contributions are in the development of civic reform programs, the maintenance of unity around these programs, the development of strategy and tactics, and the fight to involve organized labor in municipal politics. Almost without exception, our participation is welcomed by other democratic parties, movements and organizations, although we face a constant battle for recognition — in too many instances, our skills are wanted but not our label. Cold War fears die a slow death, unfortunately.

¹ In 1961, the social democratic Cooperative Commonwealth Federation transformed itself into the New Democratic Party with the support of the Canadian Labour Congress. It is affiliated to the Socialist International. — *Ed.*

² Under Canada's majority electoral system, the candidate receiving a simple majority of votes wins. — *Ed.*

³ Canada is a federation comprising ten provinces (each with its own parliament and government) and two territories. — *Ed.*

Communists And Youth

Change Of Generations: Conflict Or Continuity?

Jean Blume, Eric Remacle — CC
members, Communist Party of Belgium

Is there a 'generation gap' problem in the communist movement? Do people now join the communist party for different reasons? Does the Communist have a different face now? Is there anything in the rules of party life that may attract or repel young people? Such questions inevitably arise when considering the drive for more members and efforts to prevent its cadres from ageing. Members of two generations of Belgian Communists have held a dialogue on this score at the request of our journal.

A few words about the two men. **Jean Blume** was born in 1915 and joined the communist party in 1936. He worked in the communist press and was an active participant in the Resistance; in 1943 he was arrested by the Gestapo, sentenced to death and then had his sentence commuted to incarceration at the Buchenwald concentration camp. After the war he was elected a member of the Central Committee and the Political Bureau of the CPB CC, and was in charge of the newspaper *Le Drapeau Rouge*. **Eric Remacle** was born in 1960, and is chairman of the Communist Youth of Belgium.

Jean Blume. My generation, those who joined the party just before the war, during the anti-fascist Resistance, or soon after the victory over Nazism, have had to experience a great many shocks and trials over the past forty years. We were surprised by some of the major events in the post-war history of the communist movement. There was the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the conflict with the Communist Party of China, Nikita Khrushchov's removal in the USSR, the problems connected with Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, and other facts which one could hardly have anticipated. In a sense, our generation is divided into those who have in one way or another refused to jettison the ideological potential of the 20th Congress, and those who have found it

Another in the series, see: 'How to Recruit, Educate and Retain New Members', *WMR*, No. 1, 1988; Ginette Despretz, 'Who Are They Going To Follow?' *WMR*, No. 2, 1988. — *Ed.*

more convenient to go on giving unconditional support to existing socialism and making the straightforward contrast between the 'camp of peace' and the 'camp of war', to the detriment of the ideas of peaceful coexistence.

The generation which was taking over was different in that it had been spared many of these trials. Every age has, of course, its own problems, but the young, for instance, have not had to work so hard to shed the fetters of sectarianism, which remained from the period before the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. The experience of mass action which swept across Western Europe in May and June 1968 has, I believe, also had a role to play.

The views of the members of the '1968 generation', as of those who grew to adulthood later, were at the same time marked by disappointment and disorientation, and that also included the effects of the Maoist excesses. Finally, the deepening crisis of the capitalist economy led almost everywhere to a retreat of the West European working class movement. Nowadays, I feel, young people regard it without the erstwhile enthusiasm.

One has to admit, regrettably, that for the time being the change of generations has not always led to a full-blooded replenishment of the party ranks.

Eric Remacle. In terms of quantity, at any rate. Nor are we an exception in this respect: there have been signs of a trend towards shrinking numbers in other progressive organisations as well. I should like to draw attention to what I believe to be the main reason: the inability of our working class movement to reckon with the new features of the young, and with their needs and concerns in time of crisis. And there is the danger that, because of sectarian narrowness or the urge 'to rely on themselves alone', the left-wing forces have made less than full use of the potential of social protest and the noble urge to make political life more moral which we find among the young generation. Many leaders have, unfortunately, not yet learnt to carry on a dialogue with the young, with *their* young: that will be seen both from the often suspicious attitude taken by some trade union members to the young, all kinds of accusations made against them, and the disparagement now of long manes, now of crew-cuts . . . The whole point is to prevent any rift between young people and the working class movement.

The young generation the party has to deal with in the mid-1980s is a 'crisis generation' strongly affected by the deterioration of many social values: young men and women nowadays have no notion of the struggle for social gains or of trade union work; they only know what is depression and unemployment, and so close in upon themselves and succumb to individualistic moods, which is often expressed in total nihilism and violence.

But some take a sounder approach. Isn't that the message of recent action by young people for peace, against Euromissiles, and the student unrest? Political activity by young people nowadays tends to assume altogether different forms, and it has roots other than those of yesterday. The unusually massive and largely spontaneous movement against racism had this apparently simple slogan: "*Touche pas à mon pote!*" (Don't touch

my pal). The new and original forms in which young people are involved in social life appear to be developing parallel to the traditional ones.

J.B. One should not contrast them, however. The young people's high-strung sensitivity to the problems of war and peace, and their keen sense of injustice are both consonant with those of our own generation.

E.R. Still, both for veterans and for young people, there remains the task of including these forms of social activity by the young in our political arsenal. After all, we have entered upon a stage at which social movements are ever more diverse and tend to run along new lines: the struggle to democratise education, for environmental protection and solidarity with the dispossessed in the less developed countries.

One should also reckon with the great importance for modern youth of the problems of culture, audio-visual culture in the first place. Young men and women are alive to the trends in music, fashion, clothes, and that is something we cannot hope to escape, for they affect the society as a whole.

J.B. Indeed, how a Communist looks and behaves, his preferences in music and literature are of paramount importance for young people. I recall the period (for instance, when Andrei Zhdanov¹ delivered his speeches) when everything, including the attitude to poetry and love, was said to be either communist and Bolshevik, on the one hand, and bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and God knows what else, on the other. That approach was rooted in Stalin's idea that we, Communists, "are forged from special stuff". That, I think, is sheer nonsense from the standpoint of principal ideas of the Marxist classics. On the contrary, we should differ only in our effects to seek the best ways to unite all the forces committed to progress. Indeed, the Communists cannot claim any superiority 'by the grace of God', so to say.

While it is too early to say that the sectarian approaches are behind us, I must say that the movement of life itself has left very few people, even of my own age, who will insist that Communists are 'made of special stuff'.

E.R. I also think that such notions are on the way out.

J.B. I find it all the stranger, therefore, to hear that some Belgian young pioneers in international camps, for instance, have refused to march under their national flag, which was said to be a relict of the bourgeois state. The 'infantile disease' of sectarianism is like malaria: its bouts have a tendency to recur.

E.R. But I think that the main discussions between the generations today run on different issues, say, on the attitude to the rules of party life and discipline. The older generation of party members was formed in other and sterner conditions, and the inner structure of the CPB itself was different.

J.B. Discipline was forced on us by the circumstances, for that was the only way to survive in the years of the underground and the anti-fascist Resistance. Since then conditions have, of course, changed radically, but the importance of this question must not be underestimated. Many of our young comrades now find it hard to abide by some organisational rules, which seem to them to be unnatural. But let us consider this: what kind of notion of discipline, order and punctuality can a young man have if he has lived to the age of 30 or 35 without ever having had a permanent job? In a developed country, where the urge for precision and organisation has

become almost instinctive, such people are in a sense outside the whole fabric of life, outside the society. One also has to reckon with such effects of the crisis.

E.R. This is no more than yet another indication of a more complex phenomenon: the alienation of many young men and women from *organised* participation in social life. I have already said that, along with the traditional forms of involvement, new — more individualised and . . . passive ones (however paradoxical that may sound) have been developing: young people prefer not to join any organisation and not to work with it on a permanent basis, while taking part in one-off measures, mostly cultural events, such as support for the Live Aid for Africa performances, the Rock Against Racism in Great Britain, and Rock Against the Right in FRG, and the 'anti-missile' carnivals. They are easily roused to some concrete action for a purpose that can be attained here and now, but it is hard to get them excited about the distant prospects of a 'radiant future'. Still, one should seek to find in the struggles and moods of the young the 'ferments' of the new society we want to build, instead of taking a supercilious attitude to them.

J.B. All of that also has an effect on attitude to the party as such, to the notion of the party spirit. In my day, one valued the party simply because it was one's own party. Today's young people are different. I would not venture to say that faith in the ideal has been lost, still . . .

E.R. I agree that the new generation regards the party mostly as the best place for meeting and working with one's comrades, but just outside vibrant life goes on, and one's cell, one's organisation is ever more rarely viewed as a family. And if that does not lead to loss of contact with the party, I would refrain from simply regarding such a trend as being something dangerous. Rather, the encouraging point here is the possibility of avoiding the other extreme: one could, after all, lose the ability of looking at the party from aside, from taking a sufficiently self-critical view of it, and that tends to breed some kind of complex of innate infallibility, which induces one to preach to others and so to lose touch with other people.

J.B. Some experience is required if one is to have this sense of family, and so to integrate with the party as people of my generation were wont to do in their day. After all we, too, had our doubts, and moments when one had to take some hard decisions: to go on being with the party or not.

When I joined the CPB in 1936, I had no Marxist education to speak of. I simply sympathised with Communists, whom I regarded as the chief enemies of fascism, and I was on the side of the October Revolution because it had buried tsarism, which I saw as Dostoyevsky's 'Dead House'. I appreciated Maxim Gorky and Vladimir Mayakovsky. As for Stalin, my attitude to him boiled down to mere yessing. At any rate, I honoured him, as I did Lenin, because his name was linked to the struggle against human deprivation, a struggle whose successes I sincerely desired.

Then came World War II, the underground, tortures at Fort Breendonk and Buchenwald, the dissolution of the Comintern, the victory, the Cold War, the Cominform . . . There were relapses to attempts to assert one's identity in contrast to all those who did not accept the views of the

Communists. Still, I feel that I have not lived in vain, and I have no regrets about the choice I made half a century ago. Why? The fact is that I have a big score to settle with the war. I can't help thinking about what I have put into it, about all the human potentialities it has destroyed. It is impossible to settle scores with the war outside a definite political trend, outside the party, unless you want to become an impotent evangelist, a man who is admired but whose words are not heeded. Despite everything, the communist movement, the communist party continue to be the most reliable vehicles of the ideas of peace and progress. That is why I belong to it.

E.R. The motives for which people join the party nowadays are, of course, quite different. Some join the CPB after coming to know the Communists in the course of struggle for a concrete objective. Others find the party's programme interesting and attractive, and capable of inspiring and uniting people, and leading to success. I myself, for instance, when taking part in the student movement, reached the conclusion that the Communists were serious people and the most consistent in standing up for its goals. I also know some who joined the CPB because they agree with its stand on the problems of the Third World.

Foreign policy issues and the struggle for peace here have an important role to play, like the public image of socialism, and it is shaped not only by us, a small party with limited potentialities for spreading its ideas.

Many people of your age joined the Communist Party under the influence of the attractive power of the Soviet Union and its role in the struggle against fascism. I myself, on the contrary, became a Communist in 1980 despite, one could say, everything that was then being said about Afghanistan. And I believe that this distinction between our generations is most important. Today, the experience of the USSR and the other socialist countries is seen in a different light, more realistically than it was yesterday.

J.B. It is highly important for all of us — old and young alike — to realise that it is not right to rush from one extreme to the other, say, from identifying socialism with the consummate ideal to declarations that we were wrong all along. I could never agree with those of my young (and not so young) friends who keep talking about the 'self-styled socialist countries'. One has to see socialism as it is, for there is no other for the time being, and the only correct conclusion is: 'Building a new society is a hard endeavour. Socialism in Belgium will not be a copy of what there is in the USSR.'

E.R. These problems are truly of key importance for those who decide to commit their life to the Communist Party. As for the internal factors which influence the renewal of our ranks, the main one is the changes in the working class under the crisis.

At its latest congress, the CPB recognised that there was some lag in analysing this problem. The working class, as it was once viewed, has been shrinking, but then there has been a marked growth in the number of wage-workers in government employment, education and the services. In the succession of generations these strata of working people, I think, will have a role to play in the communist movement that is as important as that

of those who are a part of our traditional social base.

Establishing contacts with the new strata and even speaking to them have, of course, to be done in a different way. They are more fragmented and disarrayed, and have their own view of the world. The problems they are most concerned with are 'non-production' problems, one could say, the problems of culture, ecology and leisure. Let us recall that not so long ago we used to have discussions at party meetings about whether we, Communists, should concern ourselves with environmental protection. But the fact is that, once the working person leaves the factory or office, he or she does not disappear: there are all the 'non-production' problems to contend with. It is young men and women who are most sensitive to these problems, sociological studies tell us.

J.B. The difficulties we face in the renewal of party ranks have many causes, including historical ones. An entire generation of Belgian Communists, men and women with our ideology and values, was wiped out during the war, in the fight against fascism. Virtually the whole of the CPB leadership was then annihilated. We lost many fine activists during the Cold War, particularly because of the split in the world trade union movement. The 'Maoist' split in the early 1960s also took its toll of the CPB's cadre reserve. As a result, instead of giving way to the young, I myself, for instance, remained in leading posts on the Political Bureau for another five years, although I was then 60. But, you know, I could have had one or two successors with greater dynamism and capacity for work to take over in a very natural way. Instead of a contact and cohesion between the generations, there was a gap between them.

E.R. As a result, the 35-year-olds took over from the 60-year-olds, and that is a very abrupt changeover. It involved a loss of valuable experience which is the party's collective memory. That is a real tragedy! After all, the young have a lot to learn from their older comrades, and they do want to learn a lot from them.

J.B. I believe it to be most encouraging that the new generation has the urge of advancing by absorbing the experience of their predecessors, and by continuously renewing themselves. I myself know some highly promising young people, who, it is true, are not all that numerous for the time being, but the important thing is that they are there and that they are working.

Our movement is going through a difficult period. We have yet to emerge from the tunnel, but we do see a light at the end of it, and we see those who are capable of reaching the goal. They will have to learn a great deal. Now and again they have to swim against the tide, but indicative changes have been taking place in our country's public opinion and in the surrounding world. I have in mind, for instance, the resonance of Mikhail Gorbachov's policy.

E.R. It is in trying conditions that one comes to feel most keenly that your country needs you, as a Communist. Indeed, our generation must always bear that in mind.

¹ Andrei Zhdanov (1896-1948) was elected Secretary of the CPSU(B) Central Committee in 1934 and member of its Political Bureau in 1939. — *Ed.*

A Landmark In Building A New Society

Charles Kileo — Participant in the National Conference of the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania (Chama Cha Mapinduzi — CCM), Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office

THE Third Congress of the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania, held in Dodoma in October 1987, became a signal event in the life of the Tanzanian people.

What was the situation on the eve of the congress?

Acute economic problems persisted. The country is plagued by continuing drought; the terms of international trade keep worsening; foreign indebtedness has plunged many a developing country into financial crisis and Tanzania is no exception: it has to pay a very big chunk of its currency reserves and foreign exchange earnings to service the national debt.

But what is making the situation worse is that we have been trying in vain to negotiate with the International Monetary Fund to get some foreign exchange so as to balance payment support. We could not reach agreement because the terms we were offered were meant to change the political, ideological and economic orientation of Tanzania rather than to restructure the economy, as they say. While we kept trying to reach an agreement with the IMF, production of certain key crops was going down. Although from 1985 the economy started picking up, even without the IMF, it had already been boxed into a corner because of non-investment from the capitalist countries and institutions, loose organisation of production and shortages of raw materials and other resources. There have been planning blunders, too.

We have had to pay also for mistakes made years ago. Tanzania went through a period when imports were made a substitute for industrialisation, and is now reaping the whirlwind. You build factories that use imported raw materials but when the terms of trade start going adverse against you, you are running short of raw materials. This is what has happened to many of the factories established in Tanzania, with the exception of those which are using local materials, like the textile industry. There is a large textile industry in Tanzania that ought to be doing well — but there are problems with the procurement of chemicals, dyes, other primary materials and also spare parts.

Tanzania saw important developments in the period since the second party congress in 1982. In 1985 we had a smooth transfer of power from our first president Julius Nyerere (who retained his post of CCM Chairman) to Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Some people, particularly in the imperialist countries, expected that there would be turmoil and disunity but this never materialised.

Since the transfer of power, the foreign mass media have been trying to

aggravate the situation. They speculated that there were frictions between the party leader and the President. People were saying, especially on the eve of our congress, that Mwalimu¹ would relinquish his post of Party Chairman. But there arose a mass movement of most of the party members — ordinary workers, peasants and students — in favour of Mwalimu remaining the Party Chairman. It reached a climax about two weeks before the congress, when the National Executive Committee of the party met to discuss the situation and came to the conclusion that the party should ask Mwalimu to retain the chairmanship. The decision of the Executive Committee was put before the Congress.

Julius Nyerere made a key address to the Congress; its highlights were reaffirmation of the country's policy of socialism and self-reliance, as enunciated in the Arusha Declaration of 1967 and reinforced and further elaborated in the 1971 and 1981 party guidelines. He also analysed the problems in different spheres of national life and noted the importance of national unity, the all-round strengthening of the party ranks and the further development of democracy within the party. *Julius Nyerere came up with the important conclusion that socialism was the only alternative that could carry the country through all those problems and that there was no alternative to socialism.*

The major document that was discussed by the Congress was the party's first programme, drawn up for 1987 through 2002. The Programme defines the principles of and guidelines for our activities in major spheres of life and draws the basic theoretical conclusion that Tanzania is in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism. The delegates took a sober view of the national economy and stated that the country could not pull through without limited private enterprise. The economic potential is not yet sufficient for self-reliance to become reality, and the country depends in many ways on foreign capital investment. Different socio-economic structures, including the public, cooperative, capitalist and petty-commodity sectors, will remain. The chief part, however, is to be played by the former two as representing the whole people. Questions of party guidance of the economy figured prominently both in Mwalimu's speech and in the Programme.

The delegates approved a socio-economic development plan for the next five years. It envisions a rise in the national income and the strengthening of national economic independence, and obliges state bodies to resolve the problems of food supply, to improve efficiency in all the sectors and to boost exports. Tanzania's commitment to the policy of socialism was reaffirmed; that entails that the commanding heights of the economy, including banks, insurance companies and major factories, should remain nationalised.

As has been said above, economic problems, such as the need to boost agricultural production, were the focus of Mwalimu's speech and the Party's Programme. State-owned agricultural farms came under especially harsh criticism. Agriculture still is an area in which we need joint ventures with private capital, both local and international, on one important condition: land is a national asset in the republic and will remain nationalised.

The ujamaa villages² will continue to be consolidated, first of all through lending and credit and through supplies of technology, fertilizers and seed stocks. At the same time cooperatives in stock-breeding, fisheries and other fields will be encouraged. The party is going to use them to strengthen the socialist sector in agriculture. State farms and farming complexes will continue to be developed as well.

As for industry, our task is first and foremost to rehabilitate it, the programme noted. The existing capacity is under-utilised because of the lack of raw materials, so a range of practical measures were outlined to overcome those difficulties. The lack of comprehensive planning was criticised as well: national industry cannot sustain its growth without a plan.

Hence the problem of the timely and correct allocation of resources to the economic sectors and the social sphere. It is especially hard to allocate the scarce foreign exchange reserves when the problems to be addressed include fuel and spare parts for industry, fertilizers for agriculture and medicine for the huge and pervasive social services, health centres and clinics and dispensaries all over the country. But then, bureaucrats want cars. What should be our priorities? Fertilizers, seeds and fuel to run the economy, or cars for bureaucrats to roam around? There can be no two answers, but even today these are the kind of things we have to deal with when it comes to the use of foreign exchange, which is always scarce. The party thinks that it must always go where it can make the most impact on the national economy and national life in general.

The congress called for the establishment of a new international economic order. The developing countries can no longer continue to sell their raw materials cheap and to buy expensive manufactured goods: the poor countries thus get poorer and the rich ones grow richer. There is absolutely no equality on the world capitalist market, of which we are appendages. And while we grapple with the problems of disengagement, we must fight for a more just international economic order.

In foreign policy the congress reaffirmed the correctness and validity of our policy of non-alignment. It is positive non-alignment which means the fight for world peace in the belief that there can be no development without world peace.

The arms race is bad in two ways: first, it diverts useful resources of the world economy to destructive purposes and away from development. These funds, expended by the socialist camp and the capitalist camp, could better be utilised to solve mankind's crying problems instead of building bombs and missiles of destruction. Our country, represented by our Party Chairman, is one of the six members of the four-continent initiative which is fighting for disarmament and for making our world a better place to live in through the elimination of nuclear weapons and all the other offensive weapons as a matter of priority. The congress noted the great role of international organisations, such as the UN and the OAU, in the achievement of peaceful solutions to problems and regional conflicts.

The party reiterated its continued quest for the liberation of Africa and the delegates unanimously deplored the ideology and practice of apartheid. We pledged continued support for the liberation movement in

Southern Africa till the elimination of apartheid in South Africa and the total liberation of Namibia.

The atmosphere of the congress was one of criticism and self-criticism, which are the lifeblood of any party that calls itself socialist or wants to build socialism.

Along with the situation in agriculture, neglect for ideological work in the CCM and for training cadres came under criticism: there are shortcomings in the placement of party cadres and in recruitment. We were not vigilant enough and allowed elements who were not ideologically clear and did not fight consciously for socialism to get into the party: their only purpose was to rise to positions of authority.

The congress endorsed amendments to the party's Constitution. Under one of the new provisions, the President and the First and Second Vice-Presidents of the republic automatically become members of the CCM Central Committee and the National Executive Committee.

There is one point to be clarified: the structure of our party and of the organs we have is slightly different from that of other revolutionary parties. The supreme organ is the National Conference (congress) and between the congresses the National Executive Committee, what you normally call the Central Committee, elected by the congress. The National Executive Committee for its part elects the Central Committee, which corresponds to what is called the Political Bureau in the communist and workers' parties of the socialist countries. Our Central Committee has 20 members, including the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary-General of the party.

In electing the Chairman of the party, the congress considered the recommendations of the National Executive Committee and re-elected Julius Nyerere for another five years with an overwhelming support of 98.5 per cent of the votes. Our President Ali Hassan Mwinyi was re-elected party Vice-Chairman, Rashidi M. Kawawa Secretary-General, and a number of other leaders retained their seats. But there are many new faces in the party leadership as well.

The congress took the decision on invigorating political education. The departments of political education, of ideology and training of cadres, of organisation and of mass propaganda and political mobilisation were entrusted with the work of educating the people through seminars, through meetings at workplaces and shopfloors, in the ujamaa villages, in the schools, in the colleges, etc., to make sure that the message of the congress, of Mwalimu's speech and of the party programme and other documents of the congress is clearly understood in every cell and every organisation (our party has more than 6,000 grassroots organisations). Every party member should have a clear idea of the socio-economic tasks and bear responsibility for their implementation.

Those are just highlights of the work of the Third CCM Congress. The party has already launched efforts for the implementation of its major decisions.

¹ The Tanzanians respectfully call Julius Nyerere 'Mwalimu', meaning 'teacher'. — *Ed.*

² *Ujamaa* — development villages. — *Ed.*

International Contacts

Advancing In The Same General Direction

ALTHOUGH the scope and pace of change in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia and the forms and methods by which they are working for their goals have some features that are specific to each country, the overall thrust of the perestroika processes in them is the same. Favourable conditions are being provided in this way for the further comprehensive development of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations in the economy, ideology, science and culture. All this was noted in the communique on the meeting of Mikhail Gorbachov and Miloš Jakeš, who paid a working visit to Moscow at the invitation of the CPSU Central Committee, his first visit in the capacity of General Secretary of the CPCz Central Committee.

As regards world affairs, the two leaders noted the priority of further reductions in the nuclear arms and also in the conventional armaments and armed forces in Europe. The sides reiterated the resolve of the two parties and countries to continue vigorously to cooperate with the allied states — members of the Warsaw Treaty organisation, and with all the other socialist countries in the efforts to avert the nuclear threat, achieve disarmament and build a comprehensive system of international security.

Useful Dialogue

The Communists and the Social Democrats are finding common ground and possibilities for cooperation on matters of war and peace regardless of all their political and ideological differences, Erich Honecker said in a conversation with Herbert Mies, Chairman of the German Communist Party. The document 'Dispute of Ideologies and Joint Security', approved by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Social Democratic Party of Germany, was characterised by the GDR leader as a guide to ways of respecting the common interests and settling the existing differences for the benefit of mutual understanding rather than against it. The GCP for its part, Herbert Mies said, welcomes and supports the ongoing dialogue of the West German Social Democrats and trade unions with the GDR on labour of the future, on the assimilation of technological achievements and on other global problems. The traditional relations of fraternity between the GCP and the SUPG are contributing to this process.

Unanimity of Views

Soviet-Indian cooperation is an important factor for peace and stability not only in Asia but all over the world, said the participants in the Moscow meeting between CPSU CC Secretary Anatoly Dobrynin and a delegation of the Communist Party of India (M) led by the CPI General Secretary E. M. Sankaran Namboodiripad. The sides noted the imperative of asserting the principles of the Delhi Declaration in international practice.

They also exchanged information on the activities of the two parties and dealt with outstanding problems of the world situation and the communist movement. Namboodiripad, the *Hindustan Times* says, made it clear that there had never been such a degree of mutual understanding between the two parties on international affairs ever since the CPI (M) had been established in 1964. Talking to a PTI correspondent, the CPI (M) leader strongly denied the allegations of some of the Indian mass media that his party's policy had been discussed on his visit to Moscow. The Soviet Union does not lay down guidelines for other countries or parties, he said.

A Contingent of The European Left

The landmarks of the international activities of the Italian Communist Party this year will include a meeting between Alessandro Natta and Mikhail Gorbachov, visits of an ICP delegation to several countries of Latin America, a forum of representatives of the progressive forces of the Mediterranean and a congress on cooperation with and aid to the Third World, ICP CC member Antonio Rubbi said in an interview to the AGI. He noted the successful evolution of the party's strategy under the keynote 'ICP is a contingent of the European left' and characterised it as the political assertion of a new, modern concept on security and a fresh impetus to European integration and unity. Alessandro Natta's bilateral meetings with the leaders of the West European left and communist parties, he said in the interview, are important to the continuation of the essential dialogue, concord and cooperation among all the contingents of the European left. The ground has been prepared for joint initiatives.

In Brief

ARGENTINA

THE three-day-long discussion at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Argentina (CPA) centred on the situation in the country and the tasks of the Communists in the light of the general elections scheduled for 1989. It was pointed out that in the four years under the government of the Radical Civic Union the country has slid to the right in favour of the privileged strata and saw worsening crisis and the curtailment of democracy. It was decided to speed up the regrouping of the left-wing forces, intensify social struggle and promote the unity of actions with all the progressive public circles with the aim of offering an election alternative to the existing regime by 1989.

BELGIUM

Beginning with last January party organisations launched a debate on how to raise the reputation of the Communist Party of Belgium among the Belgian voters. The decision to the effect was adopted by the plenary meeting of the party Central Committee, which considered the party's

setback in the preterm parliamentary elections held in December 1987. The participants in the plenary meeting called upon the Communists to exchange opinion to determine a new strategy and tactics of upholding the interests of the working class and all the working people. It was deemed necessary to step up efforts to unite the left-wing forces, to put into effect the possibilities of bringing closer together the Communists, the Socialists, the ecologists and the progressive Democratic Christians.

BRAZIL

In the 66th year of its existence, during only two of which it worked legally, the Brazilian Communist Party (BCP) was provisionally registered as a political party by the decision of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal. After the civilian government of President José Sarney came to power in the country the BCP was granted the political right to participation in the parliamentary elections and succeeded in having three of its candidates elected to the National Congress.

CANADA

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada is to propose George Hewison, Labour Secretary, to the 27th Party Convention scheduled for May 21-23 as General Secretary. The decision was passed by a plenary meeting of the CPC Central Committee, which pointed out that dynamic changes both in Canada and on the world scene sharply increase the work of the party leader and that a representative of the younger generation should be proposed for the post. The plenary meeting spoke out in favour of creating the position of Chair of the Central Committee and nominating current CPC General Secretary William Kashtan to this position.

LUXEMBOURG

The next, 25th Congress of the Communist Party of Luxembourg (CPL) will be held on April 23-24 in Differdange. The announcement was made by *Zeitung vum Letzebuurger Vollek*, a CPL press organ, quoting the decision of the plenary meeting of the party Central Committee.

SPAIN

An opinion poll sponsored by the newspaper *Diario 16* showed that five per cent of voters would have voted in late 1987 for the United Left coalition, which includes the Communist Party of Spain. CPS General Secretary Gerardo Iglesias got a 3.6-point popularity rating according to a ten-point system, that is, two points less than the leader of the ruling Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (SSWP), Felipe González, and Chairman of the Democratic and Social Centre Adolfo Suárez.

ZIMBABWE

The country's two major political parties, which had fought together for its independence — the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the Patriotic Front (ZAPU) decided to merge under the common name of ZANU-PF. Robert Mugabe, the present head of state, is to remain its chairman, while ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo was offered to become one of its two vice-chairmen. The new party will be guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism and work towards building a socialist society in the country.

WMR Introduces

Siefuddin Ahmed Manik

CC General Secretary, Communist Party of Bangladesh

SIEFUDDIN AHMED MANIK was unanimously elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh by the CC Plenary Meeting in Dhaka on January 5, 1988.

S. A. Manik was born in Dhaka on June 24, 1939. He is a graduate of Dhaka University. From 1953 on he was active in the youth and student movement and then in the trade unions. He joined the Communist Party in 1964 and was active in the national liberation struggle of the Bangladesh people, who won independence in 1971.

In 1972 S. A. Manik was elected General Secretary of the National Trade Union Centre, one of the largest mass organisations in the country, and continued to work in the party. Since 1973 he has been regularly re-elected a member of the CC Secretariat.

The Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, held in April 1987, elected S. A. Manik Deputy General Secretary of the Central Committee and in October 1987 he became Acting General Secretary.

Liberty, Justice, Peace!

Survey of Press Reports and FCP Documents on the 26th Congress of the FCP

THE 26th Congress of the French Communist Party, which was held from December 2 to 6, 1987, was an important event in the political life of the country. It adopted a new party programme, decided on its strategy and tactics for the immediate period ahead, and defined the tasks in the run-up to the forthcoming presidential elections, and the prospects of struggle for

a socialism à la française. In his closing speech at the Congress, FCP General Secretary Georges Marchais said that the party was continuing the efforts to renew its activity launched at the 22nd and 25th congresses, and that enables it to "carry on a broad and open policy of cohesion in opposing the destructive programme of the forces of capitalism and opens up a new way to alliance for the sake of change".

The presence at the congress of the representatives of 116 communist and workers' parties, national liberation movements and other progressive organisations showed the deep interest of democratic forces in many countries in the French Communists' activity and internationalist solidarity with their struggle.

The Realities of the New Period

Georges Marchais, in his report to the congress, analysed the main features of the present stage of world development, and recalled the assessment made by the French Communists on the eve of the present decade: '*We live in an epoch of revolutions.*' We now have before us a new historical period in which the human race is gradually mastering the means that enable it to satisfy its needs and to decide its own future. This will be seen from the vast potentialities of scientific and technical progress, improvement of social relations and development of democracy and culture.

It was emphasised at the congress, however, that efforts need to be made to prevent the vast new potentialities from being used against human beings, for increased exploitation, domination and accumulation of ever more lethal types of weapons. *The French Communists now face the future with optimism*, and one of the main reasons is the 1987 Soviet-US treaty signed by Mikhail Gorbachov and Ronald Reagan. The congress was quite clear on this point: "The door has been opened to an era of peace. Our goal — a zero level of nuclear weapons by the year 2000 — is also attainable."

The French Communists believe that *changes in the socialist world* and their powerful positive impact on world developments and global social processes are among the key factors in international life today which determine its movement and line of development.

The deep changes in the life of the socialist countries, notably of the Soviet Union, are regarded by all the progressive forces, the Communists in the first place, of course, with interest and hope. The congress resolution says: "The Soviet Union's history is being accelerated. It is a veritable 'revolution within the revolution'." The congress voiced support for the CPSU's measures to improve economic management and social policy, to vivify cultural life, and increase glasnost, and declared: "The Soviet Communists have openly formulated the fundamental idea that socialism and democracy, socialism and the development of all the freedoms must go together. They have defined the socialism they are building as 'a society for people'. This orientation coincides with the FCP's conception of socialism."

This idea was expressed by many speakers, François Lucas of the Eure Department said, for instance, that the Soviet perestroika is "opening up new perspectives for the triumph of justice, peace and freedom". Christian

Roulette of the Seine-Saint-Denis Department said that the perestroika "has revealed to us the deeper meaning of internationalist solidarity".

The report, resolution and speeches by the delegates noted the role played in the process of disarmament by initiatives of the USSR and the other Warsaw Treaty countries, the stand taken by China, a nuclear power, and the anti-war movements, to which the French Communists have made their own contribution.

For the first time in the whole period of its domination, the capitalist class is faced with the prospect of having to maintain its power and the growth of profits in an atmosphere of disarmament, it was stressed at the congress. Indeed, the capitalist class has already been looking for ways to adapt to these conditions.

The capitalist system has always been tied to the arms race, for it has been in need of armed strength to preserve its domination. Militarism not only has political roots, but is also spurred by greed and the drive for profit. This policy tends to generate deep contradictions in the capitalist economy and is one of the basic causes of the financial upheavals that weaken the productive basis of the society.

The congress criticised the French government's stand on disarmament. Instead of promoting it, the government has recklessly built up the strength of the armed forces. Over 40 per cent of the country's government-funded research and two-thirds of government investments are connected with the military complex.

The Communists put forward a foreign policy programme, which is formulated in the congress resolution. Carrying on the traditions of Jean Jaurès, it says, the FCP *is fighting for a world without weapons, a world without wars*, and in defence of the country's sovereignty and independence. Balanced disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons throughout the world are now the main parameters of security.

The congress expressed this policy in concrete terms, when, in particular, it demanded a review of the military-programme law under which 500 billion francs is going into super-armaments, and tends to involve France in the 'European defence' system, which is dependent on the United States. The FCP believes that the country should take part in disarmament negotiations and help eliminate all types of nuclear weapons. While supporting 'strict maintenance' of national nuclear forces, the Communists firmly oppose the continuation of French nuclear tests, and the development and production of any new nuclear devices, the neutron bomb and chemical and biological weapons. They want an end to the building of new submarines and missiles, and to the manufacture of shorter-range tactical missiles, and a start on their dismantling; they want the 'rapid action forces' to be disbanded. The party wants France to repudiate 'star wars' and to support efforts to set up a disarmament control mechanism under UN auspices.

The congress considered the national problems in the context of the processes in the capitalist world as a whole, and in Western Europe in particular, and gave special attention to European affairs. For 30 years now, a capitalist Europe has been in the making within the EEC framework, and it is characterised by a destruction of the producer

potential, unemployment, a drive against the people's democratic social gains, subordination to the US policy of hegemony and super-armament, and a ranging of various countries of the continent against each other.

"Instead of encouraging closer relations and friendship among nations, the 'Europe' confined to the EEC countries has acted on the bloc logic, which now needs to be overcome," says the report. In contrast to this 'Europe', the Communist Party *has formulated its own conception based on the ideas of détente and cooperation*, a working people's Europe without 'cold war' or 'iron curtain'.

"We propose that Paris should become a venue of dialogue, détente, initiatives and meetings for peace and disarmament," says the congress resolution, which contains a package of proposals for settling regional conflicts, consolidating the spirit of détente and cooperation, and building a new international economic order. To all of that, the Communists believe, "France should make its own contribution and play a role in accordance with its progressive, peaceable and humanistic traditions".

Social Restructuring and Political 'Modernisation'

The congress described the economic, social and political situation in the country and declared: "France and its people are at the crossroads. For 15 years the country has been in a state of crisis, which is rooted in the capitalist system of production, spurred by the drive for profit and accumulation of capital, instead of satisfaction of the society's requirements. France's vast material and human resources and productive forces, together with the potentialities of scientific and technical progress, are being used primarily for the benefit of a handful of the privileged, instead of being used in the national interest. The privileged have never been so rich as they are today: 100,000 families are in possession of a vast amount of money — 1,200 billion francs in stocks and bonds. That is more than the whole of the state budget! Over the past five years, profits have doubled, and the big fortunes — trebled."

This accumulated wealth does not serve the growth of the productive forces, but is being ever more widely used for diverse financial operations, the purchase and re-sale of property, and foreign exchange speculations. This 'financial tumour' eats away at the vital forces of the economy. "All the economic institutions predict that the countries of the capitalist world are moving straight into another recession. Close to zero economic growth is being forecast for France, and an even faster increase in unemployment in 1988," says the report.

There are now over 3.5 million jobless in the country while a large number of people find themselves in an intermediate state, without permanent and guaranteed income, and having to make do with temporary or casual work. 'Flexible working', which the employers have been extending and widely advertising, tends to make the working people's condition even more precarious, depriving many of social benefits, undermining their economic and social rights, and increasing the number of dispossessed, and those suffering from various privations. Eight million citizens have to live on less than 50 francs a day, which is well below the minimum cost of living. "Poverty has re-appeared in France at the close of

the twentieth century," says the resolution. "There are children suffering from malnutrition, elderly people suffering from cold, and a growing number of homeless; this is inhuman and intolerable. All this poverty, which is often covered up out of a sense of shame, is a disgrace on a country like ours."

Big capital's policy of super-exploitation has deepened the social inequality. Not everyone, of course, it was stressed at the congress, lives in poverty or has to face shortages, but no one can be sure of being protected against decline in one's sphere of activity, at one's enterprise, and consequently against dwindling wages or loss of job. No sphere of life is ultimately free from the reproduction and aggravation of class inequality. There are schools for the élite and for the ordinary people; there is medicine for the rich and for the poor; there are the luxurious residential areas under private police protection for those who have 'won', and the dilapidated and dangerous suburbs for those who have 'lost'; culture worthy of the name for some, and the world of US TV serials and garish advertising for others.

Big capital has mounted an offensive against the freedoms in order to establish 'a real totalitarianism of the most conformist and reactionary ideas', so as to retain its privileges and to carry on its policy unimpeded. There are grave threats to democracy. Amid noisy political shows and propaganda gimmicks, the ruling class has conducted its 'real policy'. Its agents, the top government apparatus and business organisations have from day to day been thoroughly and effectively recarving the French society to suit the capitalist interests. The stifling of democracy is being covered up with an extreme personalisation of political life. The caricature decentralisation of the government services is a screen for control over the elective organs. Behind the front of the 'legal state' lurk police violence and the use of the courts to trample on the basic freedoms.

The congress analysed the alignment of forces in the country and said that big capital has sought a configuration in the political area to maintain its domination, whatever happens. Here it has relied above all on the right-wing parties: the Rassemblement pour la République and the Union pour la Démocratie Française, both backed up by the ultra-rightist National Front. As for the leaders of the Socialist Party, their activity fits into the framework of the shifts in political life contemplated by the ruling class. Such is the result of the changes made in the Socialist Party's stand since 1982, and especially in the two years of the 'cohabitation' of a Socialist President and a right-wing government.

That does not mean that the Socialist Party is among the right-wing forces. Many of its voters and activists cherish progressive ideals and join the Communists in opposing the rightists and ultra-rightists, a fact the party's leaders have to reckon with. But on all the main issues today, the class choice of these leaders is similar to that of the two other parties, says the congress resolution.

Big capital wants to use the presidential elections slated for April to 'modernise' French politics. The future president will have the mission of overcoming France's traditional divide between rightist and left-wing forces by concluding an alliance with the other camp.

In contrast to this line, the FCP offers the *way of struggle for a change of power*, and against the policy which has led to the present crisis.

'More Bastilles Will Have to Fall!'

The party's programme, which was approved by the congress (the previous one was adopted in 1971 and gave way to the joint programme of the left-wing forces), provides for deep social change in every sphere of the country's economic, social and political life. Its content is epitomised as follows: *'Liberty, Justice, Peace'*.

The Communist Party stands for the building of a self-governing society in a democratic way — socialism à la française — and it has proposed concrete steps aimed to improve the living and working conditions of broad strata of the people. Minimum wages, benefits and pensions must be raised for the sake of social justice, and their purchasing power must be guaranteed. It put forward a set of measures to do away with poverty, to consolidate the social security system, to maintain employment, and to give all citizens broader access to medical care, education, housing and culture. The funds for the conduct of a social justice policy could be got through a democratic reform of taxation, in particular, on the big fortunes and incomes.

A prominent plank of the programme deals with the changes required to boost the economy, to democratise it and to free it from control by capital. It proposes the expansion of the public and nationalised sectors, democratic planning, involvement in it of the working people and their organisations and deputies at every level, and the use of financial and material resources for economic growth.

The Communists say that just before the bicentennial of the French Revolution, freedom in France is on the retreat, and so have proclaimed in their programme: "We declare more resolutely than ever before: liberty, equality, brotherhood! More Bastilles will have to fall!". The party wants individual and collective freedoms preserved and extended in every area, in particular, the right to strike, the abolition of any discrimination, of the inequality between men and women, and the right to obtain honest and pluralist information. The party insists on measures to ensure freedom of expression, assembly, demonstrations, and religious freedoms, and an end to all abuse of power and arbitrary acts.

The party condemns the anti-democratic 1958 Constitution, which vests excessive powers in the president, and wants to see it changed, the government institutions democratised, and a guarantee of sovereignty, which must belong to the people.

How is this programme to be implemented? Delegates to the congress said: the main thing is to change the balance of forces which has taken shape in the country.

The congress assessed the party's 20-year policy oriented towards an alliance of the left-wing forces on a common platform for governing the country, and recognised the strategy as erroneous: "It trimmed the wings of the popular movement by subordinating its development to the election calendar. It pushed into the background the basic issue: the essence of the transformations required to pull out of the crisis. It obscured the

distinctions between our party and the Socialist Party, thereby facilitating the joint efforts by the Socialist Party and the rightists aimed to weaken the influence of the Communists."

The deep disappointment in the Socialist Party's policy produced among millions of people a sense of frustration and lack of confidence that real change was possible. The working people's class consciousness and the influence of progressive ideas and values were weakened and there was a 'slide to the right' in the public mood.

That is why the 25th Congress of the FCP formulated the idea of setting up '*an alliance of the majority of the people*' bringing together broad strata of the population, regardless of the political blocs which had existed in the past. This must be an alliance of struggle against the big bourgeoisie and for a change of policy, power and the society. Capital's plans are at odds with the vast majority of the population and so offer greater opportunities for setting up such an alliance.

Centre of Attraction for the Popular Forces

The Communist Party must be an inspiring force in uniting the majority of the people. The FCP does not believe that it can give the impetus to change on its own. It is prepared to conclude accords with other political forces, including the Socialists, and to take part in running the country in accordance with the general election returns. But the growth of the Communist Party's influence as the centre of attraction for the popular forces is one of the imperatives for change. That is why the congress called on the electorate to cast their votes in the presidential elections for the Communist Party's candidate, André Lajoinie, a member of the CC Political Bureau and a Secretary of the FCP CC.

Concerning the forthcoming elections, the congress stressed that they will become a major political battle, although they present some difficulties for the Communists. The electoral procedures, under which only two candidates are left in the second round, carry to an extreme the tendency to engage in 'useful voting' and force the voters to back the candidate who has the most chance of winning and who appears to be the lesser of two evils, instead of the one with whom they sympathise. It is necessary to mobilise all the party organisations and all the Communists to prepare for the elections, to explain the FCP programme as widely as possible, and to resist the anti-communist campaigns which in the run-up to the elections have been sharply stepped up, and which are perhaps fiercer and more vitriolic than those under the Nazi occupation.

A downright hunt on the Communists is under way in the country, with sackings and judicial harassment of activists taking part in working people's action for their rights, and attacks on Communist Party members on the local organs of power. The Communists' proposals, views, ideas and acts are being distorted in the bourgeois mass media in the grossest and most brazen way.

A major anti-communist operation was launched in the run-up to the presidential elections over the renewed activity by a group of factionalists led by Pierre Juquin, who wants to 'renovate' the party. He nominated himself as candidate, in opposition to André Lajoinie, for the post of

president of the republic, although he was not supported by a single delegate of the 1,228 who attended a National Conference which met to nominate the FCP candidate. This was designed to spread confusion among those voting for the Communists, and to reduce the attractiveness of their programme. When Juquin was expelled from the party, the bourgeois mass media made a great fuss over the fact, announcing the 'break up' and imminent demise of the FCP, and accusing it of 'monolithism' and suppression of democracy and freedom of thought.

The best refutation of these attacks, says *l'Humanité*, came from the 26th Congress, the preparations for it, its work and its decisions. Its documents resulted from free and lively discussions over a period of months in the grassroots party organisations, at conferences of the departmental federations, and then at the congress.

In the course of these discussions, thousands of Communists made proposals for improving party activity, and made a great contribution to formulating its programme and policy. The report and speeches by delegates reaffirmed that the principle of democratic centralism has been and continues to be the basis of the FCP's activity as a revolutionary force, ensuring the party's unity and independence, making its policy effective, and giving all the Communists wide opportunities for freely electing their leaders, voicing their views, and taking part in formulating its policy and implementing it.

Replying to those who claim that the FCP is 'outdated', that it 'belongs to the past', and that it stands up for 'archaic ideas', the congress resolution declares: "*The Communist Party is the only truly modern party*". It is modern because "it is a party of the vital forces of the society". It is modern because "it carries on a struggle against the old system of exploitation and oppression so as to enable man fully to master the changes caused by the development of science and technology, because it has proposed a truly new way, the way into the future — socialism à la française in a world free from nuclear weapons". It is modern because "its decisions rest on revolutionary theory, on Marxism, on scientific socialism, while its analysis proceeds from the new political practice which gives priority to action and to uniting the people themselves".

That was borne out by the character of the congress and its composition: 1,700 delegates represented 600,000 Communists working in every sphere of economic, social, political and cultural life of the society. Two-thirds of them were workers, technicians, engineers and office workers, all those who make up the working class today.

Among the delegates were Communists of varying ages, political experience and experience in life. There was an exchange of views between the generations at the congress. Fernand Grenier, chairman of the Union of FCP Veterans, recalled the fine history of the French Communist Party, the staunchness, dedication and heroism of thousands upon thousands of its activists in the hardest and most trying conditions during the periods of crisis in the 1930s, the Popular Front and the anti-fascist Resistance, and declared: "If we had to start all over again, we would go the same way." In something like a response to these words, Marie-Claire Araza a lycée student from the Essonne Department, and a member of the Communist

Youth, greeted the participants in the congress on behalf of other young people and declared: "You can count on us in storming the Bastilles of injustice!"

Many young men and women are looking to the party and this is borne out by these data: of the 45,000 members who joined the party in 1987, over one-half are under 25. The delegates said that the positive growth trends in the ranks of the FCP since the 25th Congress need to be consolidated and developed. There is a need above all to enhance initiative and activity of the grassroots organisations, to extend the still inadequate network of party cells at the enterprises and in the working class townships and neighbourhoods, and to carry on a broader dialogue to involve millions of people in the struggle to transform the society.

André Lajoinie, in his speech at the congress, quoted the great revolutionary Saint-Juste: "Victory comes only to those who fight." The FCP congress, according to the party press, demonstrated the Communists' resolve to work perseveringly for their noble goals, which meet the vital interests of the French people, and the aspirations of all the democratic and progressive forces.

the women's movement today

'Socialist Feminism'? No, Complete Equality

Marie Kabrhelová — CC Secretariat
member, Communist Party of
Czechoslovakia; Chair, Czechoslovak
Women's Union

What, in your view, are the problems women in the socialist world are now concerned with? What are the similarities and dissimilarities of these concerns with those facing women in the capitalist and less developed countries? Is there anything like 'socialist feminism'?

THE status of women is, of course, not the same throughout the modern world because of the different economic and social systems in which we live. In many countries, both industrialised capitalist and less developed countries, most women still have a hard time. In this context, I recall the

World Congress of Women, which was held in Moscow last year, and at which many spoke about the plight of women. For example, Ifigenia Martinez of Mexico, President of the Association of Women for Sovereignty and National Integration in Latin America, stressed that the external debt, which has been a drain on the dependent economies of the countries in that region, has further worsened the plight of women: there is a glaring scarcity of food, it is very hard to obtain an education, and there is not enough housing. Sun Young Kim, Chair of the South Korean Revolutionary Women's Organisation, spoke with deep feeling about women in her country who have to work for 16-18 hours a day. Many of them are illiterate, their pay is only half of what men get, and they are deprived of the elementary human rights.

Let us now look at the condition of women in the socialist world. Back in 1920, Lenin said that Soviet power in one of the most backward countries of Europe had done more for the emancipation of women and their equality with the 'strong' sex within two years than all the advanced, enlightened and 'democratic' republics of the world had done together in 130 years.

Women are equal members of the society in Czechoslovakia, as they are in the other socialist countries. They do not have to contend with social ills like unemployment or discrimination. They are entitled to a higher education (free of charge), to say nothing of secondary education or occupational training, to work in accordance with that training, and to equal pay. They also have equal opportunities for taking part in the activity of the party, social organisations, government, and local organs of power. There is, for that reason, hardly any point in introducing a concept like 'socialist feminism'. I should say, in contrast: women's complete equality.

Tell us in more detail about the status of women in the socialist society, and particularly in your own country. Is there any contradiction between the proclaimed rights of women and their actual practice?

Let us recall that in bourgeois Czechoslovakia (1918-1939) there were several independent women's organisations fighting for emancipation, but many of them took an idealistic approach. The 1920 Constitution spoke of the equality of women, but it remained a dead letter. Many more women than men were unemployed, and they were paid less for equal work. There were many barriers to education. Only the progressive-minded women who were linked to the Communist Party understood that a radical transformation of the society is the main condition of genuine equality.

Under the Nazi occupation, thousands of women were in the front ranks of the anti-fascists, and took part in the Slovak National Uprising (1944) and in the Czech people's May 1945 uprising.

Czechoslovak women gained truly equal rights only after the working class victory in February 1948, and that is one of the great advantages and achievements of socialism. It is not only written into the Constitution of Czechoslovakia and into a number of laws, but is being purposefully practised in everyday life. Let us note, incidentally, that there are 400,000 more women than in men Czechoslovakia, and that is due mainly to the

fact that women have a longer life span — about 75 years.

Women on the whole make up almost one-half of the working people in our national economy. It is true that some industries are feminised, such as textiles, garments, footwear, marketing, everyday services, education, culture, public health and social security, where up to 75-90 per cent of those who work are women. In Czechoslovakia, women are barred from arduous operations and from noxious production, and also from doing night work.

A few words about education. It is a noteworthy fact that we have more women than men who are fully secondary school graduates. There are, as a rule, more girls in economic, medical and industrial trades colleges, and they make up about one-half of the student body at institutes, and over 65 per cent in the humanities. No wonder, nearly 60 per cent of specialists with a secondary education, and about 40 per cent with a higher education are women.

It is true that only 26 per cent of executive posts are held by women, most of them in education — 47 per cent; culture — 45 per cent; public health — 44 per cent; and marketing, everyday services and public catering — 55 per cent. We do, of course, have women working as executives of ministries and departments, as directors of institutes and enterprises, but from the standpoint of economic activity and skill standards among women, I feel that the number of women executives is still inadequate. That, I think, is due to several, most essential, reasons. Women very often prefer to take on easier jobs, for, as it is, they have their hands full of family chores, the upbringing of children, care of elderly parents, and so on.

I believe that 30 is the best age for women to start a career (for men it is slightly lower). Under socialism, women who are older likewise seek to put their abilities to creative use instead of confining themselves to staying at home and taking care of their grandchildren. Women can really devote themselves to an executive job when their children are old enough. After all, everyone of us is ambitious, and one can do one's job well only with complete and full-time dedication. I know this from my own experience. When my children were small, I refused to take on any executive job, and only later on could afford to commit myself to working with people full-time.

Women executives, perhaps more than men, are in need of good family relations, and especially of understanding on the part of their husbands. That is sometimes lacking in our conditions and men's conservative approach at the work place sometimes also has a role to play. But these contradictions are not antagonistic, and they are being gradually resolved.

It is gratifying to note that the number of women taking an active part in social life has been steadily growing. Thus, after the general elections in 1986, women made up 29 per cent of the deputies to the supreme legislatures (Federal Assembly, Czech National Council, and Slovak National Council); women made up 31.7 per cent of the deputies to the National Committees, the organs of state power and administration in the territorial units (townships, towns, districts and regions). Women are also

massively involved in the activity of social organisations and the political parties.

There are, of course, now and again some contradictions between the rights proclaimed and laid down by the laws, and their exercise in practice. Actual equality on the job is often not paralleled by equality in household chores and the upbringing of children. In my view, men have yet to live down some of their antiquated habits.

Our women's organisation, and its various weeklies (1.2 million copies) and monthlies (1.7 million copies), have also been helping to set things right.

How much have Czechoslovak women and their Union been doing for perestroika and democratisation of the Czechoslovak society? What, in your view, impedes their more active participation in these changes and dampens their creative efforts?

Women's role in political, social, economic and cultural life, in consolidating the family and bringing up the rising generation was given a high appreciation at the 17th Congress of the CPCz in 1986. It is a key component of party policy nowadays to have women broadly involved in restructuring the economic mechanism and deepening socialist democracy, as the December 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPCz said.

The Czechoslovak Women's Union and its primary organisations, for instance, took part in a wide discussion of the draft laws on the state enterprise, and on agricultural, producer, consumer and housing cooperation. Many proposals were made for giving greater depth to the basic principles of economic restructuring. It was suggested that women's employment and their participation in the management of enterprises should not diminish in the process, and that in the new conditions of economic management more use should be made of women's skills and initiative, especially in introducing new ideas, labour organisation, etc.

I do not believe that there are any obstacles to women's active participation in the on-going economic and social transformations in Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak Women's Union has a considerable role to play in the process. It has a million members of every age and from every field of endeavour, of every political affiliation and religious creed. A large section of our membership — over 55 per cent — are women working in industry and agriculture, in management. Forty-five per cent of women under the age of 35. The Union relies on 13,000 primary organisations. Its administrative apparatus is small, and much work is being done by public-spirited activists.

The Union operates only in the residential areas, in the towns and townships. Enterprises, cooperatives, institutes and other organisations have active women's commissions set up under the trade unions. There are, in a sense, two sides to a single process aimed to assure women of their rights, while increasing their participation in imaginative and constructive work and in the management of production.

The Union has many successful acts to its credit, such as in protecting

and improving the environment, developing the services, child welfare institutions, and the system of additional care for elderly citizens. Ten years ago, for instance, we launched, with the support of the party and the government, a nationwide campaign to achieve full provision of places at nursery schools. For several years now, there have been no problems with placing children in nursery schools: they take care of over 90 per cent of children from three to six years old.

We are now more concerned with young people's leisure. Czechoslovakia has enough stadiums, swimming pools and skating-rinks, but not enough neighbourhood playgrounds for football, volleyball, tennis and other games. There are also not enough places where teenagers can get together, and so our task is to have mini-stadiums and clubs in every neighbourhood.

Another of our concerns is to see that new residential areas and townships have a full set of shops and everyday services.

Women's participation in social and production activity does, of course, enhance their social authority. But women are also mothers, wives and educators. To what extent are they able to play this part in the socialist state? Is it possible to ease their burden, considering that their household chores take up so much of their time and effort?

Women in socialist Czechoslovakia have a great role as mothers and educators of children. Ever more favourable conditions are being created for them by the state and the society. We have a system whose purpose is concern for the family, for mothers, children and newly-weds. Here, Czechoslovakia surely ranks among the leading countries of the world.

Let me briefly describe their privileges. Every woman has the right to paid maternity leave (90 per cent of her wages) lasting from 28 to 37 weeks (including two weeks before parturition). Once a child is born, she is paid a one-off aid of 2,000 crowns (roughly two-thirds of the average monthly wage in the country). She can then choose to stay at home for up to three years, while receiving maternity aid. So long as the child is a dependant (until the completion of higher education), the parents receive a monthly addition to their wages (200 crowns for one child, 650 for two, 1,210 for three, 1,720 for four, etc.).

Add to this the tax privileges, grants to mothers, easy credits for newly-weds and rent rebates, and you will see just how much the state is doing to help mothers and families with children. Social consumption funds have become an important element of life for all the citizens of the socialist state.

But there is more to it than that. All the citizens of Czechoslovakia have the right to free medical treatment and care at hospitals and other medical institutions, where medicinal preparations are made available free of charge, regardless of their cost. There are only 270 persons per doctor.

Now about social security. The length of service for receiving a pension by women includes the time the mother has not worked when bringing up her child at home. Depending on the number of children, the pension age starts at from 53 to 57 years.

These conditions are, of course, being gradually improved with the growth of our society's economic potentialities, and also as we comprehend new phenomena. Just now, for instance, we are working to allow mothers to have the right to reduce working hours to a greater extent. They are entitled to do so under the Labour Code, but the final decision depends on the management of the enterprise and the trade union. Our Union believes that the mother should decide for herself how long her working day is to last, while the management has the duty to accept her decision.

Women, like men, have the responsibility of seeing that from childhood future citizens are brought up in a spirit of respect for their people and culture, and for people of other nationalities. What is your view of the plusses and minuses in the upbringing of the young?

The young, and now also the middle generation in Czechoslovakia were born and have grown up under socialism. They know nothing of the contradictions of the capitalist society, and they take our gains for granted. That makes much higher demands on the entire process of education of the young — in the home, at school, and in the work place. The absolute majority of our young people regard socialism as truly their own social system, they love their homeland, and have profound internationalist sentiments. They also have all the specific traits of the young: a sense of justice, of truth, and of openness.

There are also, regrettably, some young people who are indifferent and passive. A handful of them take the slippery road and run into conflict with the law. We also have some drug addicts, but they are very much fewer than those in the West. The main cause of this malaise is broken homes, but schools and society certainly have to share the blame with the parents. We strive to return every deviant young person to full-blooded citizenship.

I do not think that young people are too strongly affected by Western propaganda in the shaping of their world outlook and the infiltration of the bourgeois ideology which is hostile to socialism. But some, and not only young people, display a grovelling attitude to Western goods, especially electronic gadgets, cars and ultramodern goods. I feel that the problem here is that we ourselves should turn out goods whose use and design qualities are not worse than those of foreign goods. I think that the dynamism and attractiveness of socialism should be the main thing. We seek to explain to the young that everything depends on each person's labour inputs in accordance with the spirit of our time.

We can put our trust in the rising generation, and we are fully entitled to pin our hopes on it, it was said at the 17th Congress of the CPCz. The young have proved that by their honest and active work and study, their efforts in sports and culture, and their high activity in social life. We believe that our prime duty is to protect children and young people from everything that tends to jeopardise their sound development, and to inculcate in them an appreciation of the value of the socialist way of life.

Can one view the family as something static? What is your attitude to divorce, marriage of convenience and sexual licence? How acute is the problem of AIDS in the country?

The family is said to be a mini-society. It gives one a sense of happiness and fulfilment. That is where human character and morality, convictions and cultural habits are moulded. The family is a sensitive organism that is alive to all the changes in the society.

The family certainly is not static. It is in a process of development, just as is everything else around it. In Czechoslovakia, the attention of the party, the government, the National Front, and its organisations is continuously focused on the family. One of the main tasks of our Union is concern to see that it is socialist. We try to find acceptable forms of work so as to enhance the sense of responsibility in mutual relations and the fostering of the young generation.

Much is being done to release the family from some of its daily cares, and this is being helped by the developing everyday services, marketing and public catering, which supplies the population with take-away foods. The availability of consumer durables is important: reckoned per 100 families, there are 146 washing machines, 117 refrigerators, etc. Recreation and travel have become part and parcel of family life. Every other family has a car, a country house or cottage in the countryside.

Our country has a highly developed marriage tradition, but the age of those contracting marriage has now gone down, so that young people now and again marry before they get to know each other well enough. A large number of marriages take place because the girl is pregnant, and these often go on the rocks.

Not every marriage is successful, and that for various reasons. The whole point is to reduce the number of divorces down to a minimum, especially when children are involved. They are the ones who suffer most from divorce, and the consequent shock and trauma may well affect the rest of their lives. I think that here much can be done by effective preventative work, above all by efforts to educate young people in the right attitude to marriage and responsibilities of parenthood.

We have many advice bureaux for people planning to marry or who are already married. We have been opening up courses for newly-weds and there is a system of small family schools where thousands of young women have studied. Family clubs have become a new form of our work in the recent period.

The Union recently discussed the problems of family life and ways of solving them, and these matters will also be dealt with by the Czechoslovak government. We have made the proposal, among others, to have the present birth-rate commission replaced by a government committee with broad powers to coordinate the work of all the institutions and organisations that are, in one way or another, connected with the family. We also propose that specialists working on the problem should be brought together and that an institute of the family should be set up for making a more effective study of the problems in its development not only in our country, but in others as well, primarily the socialist countries, and to work out relevant proposals and documents.

Marriages of convenience? We do, of course, have those, but they are not widespread. Young men and women nowadays decide to marry quite freely, although often thoughtlessly, as I have said. What is known as sexual

licence has existed, and will continue to exist, and there's nothing one can do about it. But let me stress once again that in our country marriage is a tradition. There are, it is true, a few couples who do not bother to go to the registry office.

AIDS is a disease that has terrified the world. Because of Czechoslovakia's high standards of culture and public health, and its social gains, AIDS is not such a threat here as it is in some other countries, but for all that I insist on the most stringent prophylactic measures, on the one hand, and on faster scientific research, regardless of the cost, on the other. Since AIDS, like any other contagious disease, knows no boundaries, I believe that the whole of world science and the whole of world medicine should unite in combating it.

How do Czechoslovak women carry on the struggle against nuclear war?

Nothing is more precious for women than life in peace; there is no greater joy for them than to see the skies above clear and to hear the happy laughter of their children. That is why women have spoken out ever more loudly in the struggle for peace and construction, for national independence and social justice. That was reaffirmed by the World Congress of Women.

Incidentally, to celebrate the congress, Czechoslovak women staged an interesting action which we called 'The Nine Flowers', each designating a problem that had to be solved. The first, for instance, provided for the collection of things for women in the less developed countries. Tens of tons of these have been sent to women in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The second involved the travel fares for some delegations from the capitalist and less developed countries attending the congress; the third, the collection of gifts for delegates to the congress. Women also planted 15 million trees and shrubs, to say nothing of flowers. I describe this in detail to give readers a better idea of our high sense of patriotism, genuine internationalism and love of peace.

Our Union cooperates with 170 organisations, and not only with those affiliated to the Women's International Democratic Federation, but also with social-democratic, religious, trade union and other bodies. We pool efforts in defending peace and supporting the just struggle of the people of Nicaragua; we stand for a new international economic order, and oppose racial discrimination. We take part in the work of some other organisations, such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Parliamentarians for Peace, and the international committee Women for a Meaningful Summit, which is headed by Margarita Papandreou. I myself am most impressed by what she once said: "How could we, grown-up people, have allowed thousands upon thousands of nuclear weapons to be deployed on our planet? When my grandson asked me why people and states were killing each other, I was at a loss, because there is no answer to madness."

We want to break down the war machine, and to do more to ensure peace on the globe, and for disarmament. Here much depends not only on

the leaders of the two great powers, but also on the sense of responsibility among men and women throughout the world. On the eve of Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to Washington, which ended with the signing of the treaty to eliminate two classes of missiles, the delegations of the Women for a Meaningful Summit committee and some other organisations held a number of meetings in the US capital in its support. The treaty also provides for the elimination of Soviet shorter-range missiles which were deployed, some of them on our territory, in response to the deployment of US medium-range missiles in Western Europe. We understand that this is only the first step towards a world without weapons of mass destruction, towards a world without fear of a nuclear catastrophe. Hence, the high activity of Czechoslovak women in the struggle for continued disarmament. We have given every support, in particular, to the joint initiative of Czechoslovakia and the GDR for a corridor in Central Europe free from nuclear and chemical weapons, and will arrange in Czechoslovakia a meeting of women from countries in the region to back it up.

The women of Czechoslovakia believe that the strengthening of socialism, which has been and continues to be the chief guarantee of peaceful life on the globe, is the most effective contribution to the preservation of peace.

We Are Half The World

Questions To The Readers, Women, Men And Myself

Elean Thomas — CC Political Bureau
member, WPJ

GLOBAL problems dominate our discussions today: they prove our world's interdependence and integral nature to a large degree. Is not the *women's question* also one of these problems? After all it affects every family and everybody wherever they live. And surely the efforts of the representatives of only one sex are not enough to resolve this question.

The Communists have always been explicit about the class aspect of this question and its fundamental link with socio-economic conditions. Only the radical transformation of these in pre-socialist societies can ensure genuine emancipation — this is the main direction for solving the women's question. Indeed, this is the ABC of our Marxist-Leninist ideology and revolutionary methodology. But while asserting this, can we deny the importance of ethics or ignore relations between the sexes? The human factor should be accorded its legitimate place in the communist analysis and actions.

Such analysis would hardly be comprehensive if we confine it to the pages of the *WMR* March issue alone and to the opinion of a few women from among the communist party leaders. Can we not benefit also from the experience of the broader left democratic forces? This was one of the problems discussed last November at the Moscow meeting of the representatives of parties and movements. The World Congress of Women held in June 1987 provided an opportunity for this type of broad exchange of views.

There is a further question which bothers me equally, namely, whether Communists consider the problem deeply enough, bearing in mind its complexity and with adequate attention to the subjective factor. What is it specifically that prevents the communist parties, the democratic and progressive movements from coping with the women in question? The original approaches that are called for today make us be realistic and exacting towards ourselves. Are the Communists, both men and women, capable of changing their attitude to the women's question?

It is time to take a better look at the complexities of the women's movement generally and to get away from the old labels and stereotypes. The view, widely prevalent in the broad women's movement two decades ago, that the communist movement was just 'another patriarchy', is being undermined, the more communist parties everywhere unflinchingly take up the struggle for women's equality — and the more the women see for themselves the hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie in this sphere. This is exceptionally important because anti-communism is a main tool of the backward forces in dividing the women's movement and attempting to isolate it from its major allies nationally and internationally.

But has not the division operated in more ways than one? Decades ago, we branded feminism as a bourgeois implant into the women's movement. We divided the movement for women's equality into 'feminists', on the one hand, and 'the revolutionary women's movement', on the other. Is such a sharp division as true today as it may have been in the past? Does a feminist only press for women's equality or isn't she objectively engaged in a broader democratic mass movement? Isn't she actually pushing for equality for half of humankind? After all, *the struggle for women's equality is a class question; it is part and parcel of the strategic task of the proletariat: Marxism-Leninism strives to emancipate all the people.*

To give a brief description of feminism today, I may say, for instance, that some West European communist parties divide it in their publications and documents into reactionary, liberal-bourgeois, social democratic, socialist and other trends. I may state that by characterising the diverse forces within the women's movement as being either good or bad we get a poor picture of its reality and, what is more important, unwittingly we strengthen reaction pushing to its side groups of wavering women who still have narrower viewpoints. But I'd rather discuss that topic at length.

Women of different ideological persuasions, of varying political and no political affiliations, in varying positions in their countries, are being led by their life's experiences closer to the realisation that *the overriding concern to live in peace, the assertion of the rights of women as human beings, the improvement of the situation of life for children, the elevation of the status of*

families and in particular the place of women and children in the family — none of these can be separated from the political, social and economic standards of life in the different countries and the alignment of forces in the world. Besides, it became evident that the women's movement has reached a plateau where the bulk of it is seeing the connection between class, race, national and sexual oppression.

The conditions of women's life, the crying needs and disgraceful humiliations that weak and underprivileged women must bear under the bourgeois system indisputably impel them to not only identify with, but be an indispensable part of the forces of peace, democracy and social progress. They oppress and harass women of most diverse social and class positions — "the working woman, the wife of the worker, the peasant woman, the wife of the little man and in many respects the woman of the propertied classes".¹ Their aspirations can be translated into fulsome reality only if the subjective factors are properly taken into account. These factors include, first, the scope and accuracy of theoretical generalisations and revolutionary scientific conclusions that the Communists make.

Among them also is the major thesis of new political thinking which postulates that our class approach must take into account that today many things and processes are intertwined, are mutually complementary and interact in a most surprising manner.

We are witnessing today the erosion of former antagonisms and hostilities in social life, in the midst of mass movements. Hostility is disappearing today between the people with traditional views of sex and those with alternative views — the lesbians and the homosexuals. I am not here intending to pronounce myself in favour of or against such persons: they are quite capable of and have in fact been organising themselves to put forward their case. My concern is about our attitude to what is in fact a form of social protest with a platform no longer confined to some specific demand. Isn't it somewhat like hiding our heads in the sand to pretend that homosexuals do not exist? And worse; does it not smack of bourgeois hypocrisy and political opportunism, when we mobilise and fight shoulder to shoulder with lesbians and their organisations in peace actions, in the trade union struggle, in the anti-imperialist struggle, in a broad range of political actions — and then treat them as lepers after such actions? Are not such actions and attitudes contrary to communist principles of alliance? The challenges of today demand that we at least think on these matters.

I would say that correct assessments of the women's movement and of particular contingents in it have to be rooted in the class content and substance of their platform and activity. And further, that 'class content' embodies struggle against everything that blocks the overall advancement of humanity.

My sisters living in the capitalist and the developing countries demand *economic independence*, first of all, which is the basis for genuine independence and equality. Above all we seek full-scale free access to education and training and to satisfactory child-care facilities, deeming these prerequisite for equal participation in social production. Even those who do have such an opportunity are restricted in their choice and have the scales weighed against them from the beginning.

A Jamaican example here is by no means peculiar to my country but in different forms has a more general applicability. There is an examination called the 'Common Entrance' in Jamaica, which each child must sit in order to be eligible to gain a place in Secondary Schools. More than 30,000 children take that examination every year. But there are places in the schools for only 9,000 children so 21,000 must 'fail' the examination. Furthermore, two times more girls than boys qualify to sit for the examination but more boys than girls pass it and are thus admitted to secondary schools. The Jamaican Ministry of Education sets the passmark for girls higher than that for boys on the spurious grounds that 'boys mature later than girls'. Add to this that the girls who do get to secondary schools face the prospect of being put into the so-called 'female subjects' like 'Domestic Science', 'Cookery', 'Needlework', and so on.

The majority of the world unemployed are women; in the underdeveloped countries at least three out of every five unemployed persons are women. At the same time the social burden on women has grown tremendously with the economic crisis. To the exploiting classes, women constitute a constant reserve of cheap labour, some of them being forced to accept the most terrible conditions and terms of work, at low wages, and without trade union representation. These realities prompt us that greater cooperation between the women's movement and trade unions is needed. The latter should take up more vigorously the conditions of women workers as a specific issue.

Women have a special place in society, first of all as producers and reproducers of humankind itself, secondly, as reproducers of the dominant norms and values of society and at the same time they are agents for change and reproduction of new norms and values. There is a dialectical connection between this role of women and their equally important role as producers, as direct and indirect creators of the material wealth of society. In all societies, women's labour has contributed, certainly in quantity and in many aspects in quality also, the greater part of the material values. The direct labour of women in preparation and sustenance of the labour force is too often mystified under the terms: 'mother', 'wife', 'sister', 'daughter', 'grandmother'; 'domestic servant', 'nanny', 'midwife', 'nurse', 'secretary', and a whole host of so-called 'service and caring professions' which are almost totally sustained by women. The propertied classes seek to hide their brutal exploitation of the labour of the oppressed classes and the appropriation by themselves of the fruits of the labour of the majority, by glorifying these roles while ignoring the super-profits stolen from this 'indirect' labour. Neither can we just add this labour to that of the wage worker, which itself remains partially unpaid. We in the communist movement need to look again at Marx's *Capital* from the stand-point of this 'hidden exploitation' of the labour of half the human race.

The family and the role women play in it must necessarily be examined when problems of peace, development and equality are discussed. The new approach which is required in inter-state and intra-state relations, in which settlement of differences and disputes by peaceful means becomes the dominant trend, should also be applied to the family.

Peace starts in the family, and it has to be pursued and taught inside and

outside the family. In fact, the earliest concrete conception of the violence of war that many women gain is in the family — father-beating, domination, frequent physical abuse by elder brother, uncle, sexual abuse, not to mention the constant psychological beatings to make her 'keep her place'. This terrible violation of human norms is hidden under numerous superstructural mystifications, suggesting that this is a 'domestic matter' and therefore 'private'.

Similarly, many women and men never question their spontaneous move to hit a child when they are upset at something that child has done. We usually do not go below the surface to think that the reason we settle this dispute with the child in this way is because as adults we are physically stronger than the child, who as well depends on us entirely. Transfer this approach to the sphere of inter-state and international relations, for example, when the US 'punishes' tiny Grenada, seeks to 'chastise' Libya and Nicaragua for disobedience, uses dollar injections to put the International Monetary Fund under control, and resorts to intimidation, threats and embargoes with respect to the newly-free countries and the socialist community, and you will see that *an entirely new approach is required for all spheres of relations between the people and the states.*

In the current ideological struggle within and around the women's movement, the neoconservative forces resort to the craftiest of demagoguery. Keeping pace with the times, they shift their line and tactics to take into account the growth and diversity of the movement. Their main line is to exploit issues vital for the movement, making an absolute of some in order to try and channel those issues along a politically reactionary path against the interests of the masses of women. For example, they seek to set the correct struggle for divorce outside the context of women's economic situation. They take the preponderance of male supremacy and sexism to push a line among women, and within their organisations, that organisational structures themselves and leadership itself are features of male supremacy and patriarchy. Such a line helps to fragment the organised struggle of women, to split and weaken women's organisations by inhibiting their collaboration, say, with trade unions, which are advancing both general and individual rights of the working people. This line is also deeply anti-democratic and deprives the mass of women members of the right and necessity to involve themselves into decision-making, as such organisations usually end up being run by a smaller and smaller clique of the intellectual élite.

In working to unite and strengthen the movement, we should concretely and convincingly unmask such spurious 'friends' of our emancipation by showing the ways they are blunting women's militancy in leading us away from the real world and the struggle for equality.

However, we cannot ignore or underestimate profound contradictions, which are connected with women's role in the family and which do not depend directly on the socio-economic conditions. These contradictions date far back in history to the time of the overthrow of 'mother right' and what Engels refers to as the decisive defeat of the female sex.

No sincere person can deny that socialist society is the most advanced in the provision of the material base for the equality of women inside and

outside the family. The material underpinning for the legal and institutional emancipation of women is in the easy access to training and education; full employment; adequate provision of good and inexpensive child-care facilities; maternity leave with pay; child allowances; other concrete measures which allow the woman to combine her roles as mother and worker. Subsidised housing, controlled prices for food, essential clothes, electricity, heating, gas, free medical care, cheap and efficient transportation, special measures to assist single mothers and all these assured by a system of stern laws prohibiting discrimination against women and making it possible to have action taken against anyone who practices violence against women. These advances cannot be underestimated because *without the material base any talk of changing the status of women is not worth even the breath used to express it.*

Nevertheless, even where the material base is advanced to the level which can sustain the equality of women major contradictions reveal themselves if the dominant norm is still one in which the woman is seen as having main responsibility for sustenance and care of the family. Some women are not able and thus not willing to take full advantage of the available material resources to assume fully their proper place in the mainstream and all aspects of social life as one-half of humankind. Thus the individual man (husband) or the individual family may benefit but society loses on the labour, including the creative labour and the contribution of half of its members. The view that the main role of the woman, as finally determined, is to produce, reproduce and sustain the family and that all reforms must take place within that context prevents women from realising their all-round human potential, despite its seeming humanism.

As well, without fundamental change in the cultural superstructure, where the woman is involved in social production, there is an additional burden, compared to the housewife. Such a woman must work her full share in social production, and then do another full-time job at home. At the same time she must bear the physical and psychological pressure of not being able to cope adequately with either the individual home labour or the social production.

I suggest first of all that this is an area in which genuinely new thinking is required. We must question whether the biological division of child conception between male and female justifies the assumption that the female sex must carry the main responsibility for child rearing. And who benefits most from such an assumption?

Practically, *women's organisations as well as all other mass organisations should stimulate the struggle for equal partnership between men and women, joint decision-making, joint responsibility for the education of children, more child-care centres, greater aid to the disabled children and the women's guaranteed social right to be or not to be a mother.*

An objective look at real life will show that the subordinate place of most women in families both reflects and helps to consolidate their subordinate positions in the workplace and society.

Making this observation in relation to the Jamaican struggle, the programmatic document in defence of women's rights of the Workers'

Party of Jamaica has this to say: "... to a great extent, men feel they do and can in fact benefit from women accepting their position of subordination. Men feel they benefit if a woman feels it is only her duty to wash, cook and take care of the family. So even in relation to our Party . . . we face opposition from men and must think of ways to show men how this 'benefit' is a double-edged sword; how it dulls the consciousness and activity of one-half of the forces available to the national and social revolution."²

In his well-known talk to Clara Zetkin in 1920 Lenin spoke of the special place of women and their special burdens, and of the need for special attention to this question; of the need for special organisation of women around their special concerns, which *should also be the concerns of the entire party and the entire revolutionary movement*. He recognised *men's responsibility in the solution of these problems*. Our communist work among the masses of women and our political work in general involves considerable educational work among the men. We must root out the old slavemaster's point of view, both in the party and among the masses. That is one of our political tasks, a task just as urgently necessary as the formation of a staff composed of comrades, men and women with thorough theoretical and practical training for the party work among working women.³

Lenin's thesis has lost none of its topicality. The unwillingness to consider, in earnest and with due self-criticism, the problem, which is comfortably referred to as 'specific' and 'of interest to women themselves' is itself a manifestation of male supremacy. Incidentally, isn't this one of the reasons for the virtual absence of Communist papers or books written by men on the subject?

There is much concern in many quarters about the 'breakdown of the family'. I suggest that some of the aforementioned contradictions are at the root of the so-called breakdown of families because the striving for human beings to be free to contribute fully to society, to develop their full potential, cannot forever be constrained within any institutional bounds — even the family. It seems to me, therefore, that the question is not about the breakdown of families, but about the need to clarify our theoretical understanding and take practical actions towards establishing a family in which the members have equal and mutually interdependent relations.

The struggle for such a family also includes divesting ourselves of notions of a static form of this family. Already, new forms of partnership and family relations are being evolved in practice. This is not to say that everything new in this sphere is necessarily an advance on the old. But some of these new forms correspond more closely to the ideal that exploitation of humankind by humankind should be abolished. The essence of such relations is for the free choice of those involved to try to achieve non-exploitative partnerships and family relations. It is this content rather than the institutional form, which is the more important. The World Congress of Women in Moscow was therefore in accord with real life when it espoused an open mind on the question of partnership without marriage. This is connected as well with women's demand for control over their personal lives. Real life, genuine partnership will prompt

the form of family organisation which will correspond to different stages of social development as it moves towards the abolition of any exploitation whatsoever.

It is time to step up concrete, practical actions on the women's question. We must take the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) out of the dusty files and step up our pressure on all governments for its ratification and implementation. We must bring up-to-date our theory and practice in combating the violation of women's rights as human beings. We must step up our actions in encouraging and assisting the development of grassroots women's organisations. We need more of these in the countryside, the neighbourhoods, the workplaces, colleges and universities. International women's gatherings are useful but they must be more consciously organised to help various contingents of the women's movement in developing and coordinating actions on an international scale and to fight against backward outlooks and ideologies and for a worthy place in all fields of life.

It is the duty of the Communists to be in the midst of women to understand them and to involve all the people, men and women, in the discussion and solution of the problems facing civilisation. Women are a full half of the world and potentially an enormous force quite indispensable in achieving Peace, Development and Equality.

¹ See Clara Zetkin, *My Recollections of Lenin*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1956, pp. 71-72.

² On Developing the Women's Rights Struggle. Programmatic Document of the Workers' Party of Jamaica.

³ Clara Zetkin, *My Recollections of Lenin*, pp. 75-76.

For Women's Interests

Gisèle Rabesahala — Chair of the Revolutionary Women's Organisation, Madagascar Independence Congress Party, Minister of Revolutionary Culture and Art of the Republic

WOMEN account for more than one-half of the total 10-million population of Madagascar, but just under one million of them have guaranteed employment. The rest are engaged mostly in farming, work their family plots or hire themselves out as farm hands for seasonal work.

The employment patterns and the national economic structures

Gisèle Rabesahala, a leader of Madagascar's revolutionary and liberation movement, has since 1959 been General Secretary of the Madagascar Independence Congress Party (AKFM/KDRSM); she also heads the Permanent Commission in Defence of Mother and Child Rights and participates in international and regional democratic public organisations.

themselves are still weighed down by the vestiges of colonialism and also by other difficulties (which I will address later). That is why the economic and social emancipation of women cannot be achieved easily and quickly. The National Constitution and the laws on economic and political rights ban any discrimination on the grounds of sex and proclaim equality between men and women. My countrywomen extensively participate in the administration of the affairs of society, especially at residence, that is, at the village, town district and province level (more than 2,000 women were elected to responsible posts at all levels in the early 1980s). However, these examples, though graphic, do not yet mean that prejudice and the customary view of women as 'inferior beings' have gone away.

Most of the Malagasy women are united in their own organisations, which function under government decrees. The first such decree was promulgated in 1960, the year of independence, and the next in 1976, following the popular approval of the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution and the proclamation of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar. Some of those organisations, the 'women's groups', consider themselves outside politics and tackle the specific problems of women; others, the 'organisations of revolutionary women', concern themselves also with politics and are affiliated with the parties and movements making up the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution.

The very first organisation of that type, the Permanent Commission in Defence of Mother and Child Rights, emerged way back in 1950, in the period of independence struggle, rising on the crest of a tide of solidarity with victims of colonial repression and their families. On the Commission's initiative, the country began to mark International Women's Day, March 8, which has now become an official holiday of the republic. The Commission contributes towards the eradication of illiteracy among women, helps with running first-aid centres, sets up schools for children from needy families and organises for girls' occupational training schools (sewing, crafts and knitting). Other functions of the Commission include relief for natural disaster victims and assistance in UNICEF inoculation campaigns.

The AKFM Revolutionary Women's Organisation was set up in 1976 from party-affiliated women's sections (of which there are 461 today). It is doing a great deal in both town and countryside, promoting communal hygiene, helping with food supply to the population and with school-building projects, and organising care for the elderly.

My countrywomen, united in numerous associations, engage in political work and contribute towards the speedy solution of problems of health care, education, family planning, religion and also humanitarian questions. The government does not demand that they act in a uniform manner or along the same lines. As for assistance to them, the Ministry of Population and Social Affairs, Youth and Sport, for instance, runs courses to train nurses for crèches and kindergartens, provides for the work of women's cooperatives, and coordinates campaigns for the eradication of illiteracy and preparations for festivities and international forums.

Professional education, occupational training and many jobs are out of the reach of many Malagasy women because they are illiterate. The

negative economic effects are aggravated by psychological traumas: the stereotype view of women's 'inferiority' is gaining ground and they themselves withdraw into their shells and do not look beyond housekeeping and raising children.

Not only women's but also other public organisations are trying to rectify the situation. The Solidarity Committee and the Democratic Committee of Youth and Students, for instance, are running a free daily school: since 1974 it has had a branch for girls from large families and for young married women. There are no age limits for those who would like to continue studies. Students themselves have helped with the construction of a new school building, in which they attend a two-year general educational course, get political education, develop their ideological awareness, hear lectures of physicians and psychologists on relations between the sexes and learn housekeeping.

The AKFM Revolutionary Women's Organisation and the Permanent Commission attach much importance to problems of peace and independent development by taking part in WIDF actions and by arranging joint projects domestically. The keynote of the Women's Day celebrations last year, for instance, was the 40th anniversary of the outbreak of the armed uprising against the French colonialists. A successful mass competition of poetry was organised; its results were announced at a formal rally in the capital. Still another area of our work is support for women of South Africa in their fight against apartheid. We have always manifested our solidarity in practical forms, such as campaigns to collect signatures, resolutions of mass rallies and the sending of parcels to centres caring for orphaned and refugee children from South Africa.

Preparations for the Women's World Congress held in Moscow last year gave an impetus to a far-ranging campaign to discuss social problems and arrange a series of seminars, talks and concerts. We sent a large delegation to the Congress; having returned home they made a public account of their work, as it were, at a press conference and at a rally organised jointly with other women's organisations of the country.

Our women's political awareness has grown considerably in the 13 years since Madagascar embarked on a new road of development. It has been promoted in good measure by our advance along the road of progressive reforms, by the experience of political struggles and by the popularisation of the United Nations programme and resolutions in connection with the UN Decade for Women.

Regrettably, however, tendencies towards the depoliticisation of women's organisations are making themselves felt as well. They are explained by the fact that even the best wishes do little to mobilise those who have to grapple with difficulties from day to day. Women often have to make immense sacrifices to cushion their impact on their families: they contract for unbearably exhausting work at home and otherwise stretch themselves to the limit to make the two ends meet. In so doing, they limit their opportunities to participate in the work of the organisation because they cannot regularly attend meetings, pay membership dues or even take part in major activities. Lastly, working women are more vulnerable to defeatist propaganda, which justifies abandonment of the ideas of the

Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution, and also to the intrigues of the political forces which are opposed to the advance of the country along the road of progress.

Madagascar, like other developing countries, has been living through serious economic difficulties in the past few years. They are in many ways after-effects of the acute crisis of the world capitalist system. Anarchy in production and social injustices that are characteristic of the capitalist system are worsening the terms of commodity exchanges and enable the financial monopolies to lay down tough dictatorial terms. Hard currency shortages are a brake on the efforts of the government and make it imperative to start talks on the external debt with the IMF and the World Bank. The so-called recovery and readjustment measures, prescribed by those two institutions, have a negative effect on the situation of the mass of people, first and foremost women and children.

To mitigate the plight of the needy, members of women's organisations help distribute food to the poor and look after baby hygiene and feeding in their families. Yet shortages of basic necessities, growing unemployment and the impoverishment of some sections of the population have provoked the revival of the reactionary forces, which are going out of their way publicly to lay the blame for the difficulties on the socialist orientation policy pursued by the authorities. The situation was compounded by the intrigues of the imperialist forces in the Indian Ocean, the increased aggressiveness of the Pretoria racists and attempts to destabilise progressive regimes in the region. AKFM members are coming under attack and attempts are being made to stir up ethnic strife and to exploit the political immaturity of some of the young people. Demonstrations and strikes were inspired at Antananarivo University and some other educational institutions last year to disrupt the academic process and to incite public opinion against the government. Our activists were not mere onlookers at that time: they demanded that the professors who sympathised with the strikers immediately resume classes.

The key question therefore is that of fighting reaction. The AKFM believes that the activities of all the groupings and parties making up the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution, including our Revolutionary Women's Organisation, should have at their core the task of supporting socialist orientation and the policy of the state. For that reason we should not play up differences or let ourselves be carried away by blind intolerance but rally around national interests.

Our party stated at its October 1987 Plenary Meeting that the exceptional situation at the moment demanded the preservation and defence of the sovereignty of the republic, including economic sovereignty. Accord between the parties is necessary to avoid any attack or other action that may provoke clashes between ethnic groups or tribal and religious forces. The Plenary Meeting of the AKFM Central Committee noted: "The National Front for the Defence of the Revolution should not be used as a guise for the subversive actions of its enemies, who are out to undermine the sovereignty and independence of the country". Translating these principles into practice, our activists and all the other party members are acting in the spirit of unity to advance the socialist choice.

The long history of the Malagasy people's struggle for national liberation and social progress has been marked by the vigorous contribution of women, who have always worked side by side with men to promote human dignity. That is why we are optimistic about prospects for the women's movement in the country and about its contribution to the building of a just society on Madagascar and to world peace.

exchange of views, discussion

The Communists In Today's World:
Partnership And Its Rationale

Survey Of A *WMR* Discussion

In December 1987 the *WMR* Commission on the Exchange of Party Experience held a meeting with a group of scholars from the Social Sciences Institute under the CPSU Central Committee (SSI). The scholars submitted an advance paper on the Communists' relations with other democratic, progressive and peace-loving forces. Professor Yuri Krasin, SSI Rector, and SSI researchers Solomon Ghililov, Boris Manzerov and Sergei Semyonov were the scholars invited by *WMR*.

Taking part in the discussion were *WMR* Editorial Council members David Moraes (Communist Party of Bolivia), Antonio Granja (Brazilian Communist Party), Gerry van Houten (Communist Party of Canada), Orel Viciani (Communist Party of Chile), José Arizala (Colombian Communist Party), Francisco Gamboa (People's Vanguard Party of Costa Rica), Antonio Diaz Ruiz (Communist Party of Cuba), Ib Nørlund (Communist Party of Denmark), Sully Saneaux (Dominican Communist Party), José Regato (Communist Party of Ecuador), Kamel Magdi (Egyptian Communist Party), Jaime Barrios (Communist Party of El Salvador), Aulis Leppanen (Communist Party of Finland), Georg Kwiatowski (German Communist Party), Bert Ramelson (Communist Party of Great Britain), Donald Ramotar (People's Progressive Party of Guyana), Unni Krishnan

(Communist Party of India), **William Somerset** (Communist Party of Ireland), **Said Salem** (Jordanian Communist Party), **Ornel Urriola** (People's Party of Panama), **Hugo Campos** (Paraguayan Communist Party), **José Lava** (Communist Party of the Philippines), **Stanislaw Wronski** (Polish United Workers' Party), **Semou Pathé Gueye** (Senegal Party of Independence and Labour), **Essop Pahad** (South African Communist Party), **Ahmed El Tayeb** (Communist Party of the Sudan), **Khalid Hammami** (Syrian Communist Party), **Ali Ileri** (Communist Party of Turkey), and **Hector Mujica** (Communist Party of Venezuela).

Following is a summary of the statements made in the course of the discussion, grouped by different subjects. Only those provisions of the SSI paper that gave rise to particularly heated debate are quoted in the summary.

OPENING the discussion, Commission Chairman **Georg Kwiatowski** said that the end of 1987 was marked by two events of great importance for mankind, for the international communist movement and all forces of peace, democracy and progress — the signing of the INF Treaty during Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to the United States and the Moscow meeting of 178 delegations of parties and movements during the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. Both these events and the changes occurring in the world confirm the conclusion made by the 27th Congress of the CPSU — that the communist movement has encountered many new realities and problems and that it has itself entered a radically new stage in its development.

We have gathered here precisely to discuss in an open, comradely way some of the new problems and to chart the ways of our future creative quest. As the Soviet scholars emphasised themselves, in preparing their paper, they sought to depart from well-known and self-evident truths and to frame their questions in a deliberately acute manner so as to provoke a lively exchange of views.

The Dialectics of Priorities

"The revolutionary, democratic and progressive forces fighting to find a way out of the crisis-ridden blind alleys in the development of civilisation, above all to prevent nuclear catastrophe and ensure human survival, are expanding and becoming more active . . . Joint action by today's progressive forces is based on universal human values central to the very existence of society. They have priority over the differences rooted in class or national interests. Does the recognition of this priority mean that we are giving up our class-based positions, the class struggle and the revolutionary nature of the communist party? In pondering an answer to this question one must not lose sight of the fact that in the nuclear and space age, the priority of the interests common to the human race is essential to social progress . . . In this connection it appears necessary to reflect on the system and order of priorities, tasks and values inherent in the struggle of the working class, of the Communists."

(From the SSI paper)

Unni Krishnan. I agree with the authors of the paper that priority should be accorded to universal human values, first and foremost to peace, to human survival. That is a problem in whose solution everyone has a stake, no matter what his or her social background. But don't we often interpret this concept in a much too abstract way? Take the Third World problems. Here, social questions come to the fore. They cease to be above-class global issues. Hence, while according priority to the problem of preservation of human civilisation, Communists should not contrapose this struggle against social and class questions, but strive to link it with the struggle for democracy and social progress.

Bert Ramelson. I cannot accept the idea of some supraclass values. Every class has its own values. Of course, there are areas where different interests converge — say, preservation of peace, or environmental problems. In those areas, cooperation is possible. But the value orientations of classes and social systems will remain different. It is true that ours is an integral and interdependent world. Within it, there are interests common to both capitalist and socialist countries. But can Marxists speak of any universal ideology?

Essop Pahad. I am alarmed by the use of the word 'civilisation' in the broad sense of the term. For instance, the racists use this word to justify the colonial oppression of our people. We must distinguish clearly between the Communists and other forces in our ideology, practical policies and organisational structures. The Communists have their distinctive features, interests and goals. We are fighting for socialism. I agree that for us in South Africa it is not on our immediate agenda. But it should always remain our stated objective — otherwise we will be no different from other forces.

Jaime Barrios. In the given context, the raising of the issue dealing with the priority of universal human values transfers the class struggle onto a plane of abstract humanism in which the convergence of positions held by different social forces has priority over the struggle for revolution and socialism.

Ahmed El Tayeb. In the nuclear and space age, the priority of the interests common to the entire human race is essential to social progress. But the reverse is also true: the class struggle is essential to the preservation of universal human values. Our parties express the interests of working people and, guided by Marxism-Leninism, conduct the class struggle both nationally and internationally. One can hardly imagine what would have happened to, say, the Communist Party of the Sudan had it abandoned the class struggle during the 16 years of military dictatorship. It would have simply ceased to exist. Let me stress, however, that this position of principle does not reject the idea of cooperation with all anti-war forces to prevent nuclear catastrophe.

Kamel Magdi. Unlike the old concepts of World War III as a way to the worldwide victory of socialism, new political thinking acknowledges that this war will extinguish life on Earth. There will be no victors in it. It follows that everyone has a stake in preserving peace. However, many questions arise. How do we combine universal human interests and the class struggle? How can we bring the working people, particularly in the

developing countries, to recognise the priority of the peace issue when they face hunger, poverty, underdevelopment and exploitation? In Egypt, even the Left does not accord priority to the struggle for peace out of fear that this would weaken the resistance to the Israeli occupation of Arab territories.

José Regato. We are all in the same boat, and we must keep it afloat. But in the Third World, where every year hunger and disease kill as many people as would a dozen nuclear bombs, the very choice between a nuclear disaster and the tragedy of day-to-day existence is regarded as absurd.

Donald Ramotar. I agree that maintenance of peace is particularly important to us. But I don't think that peace can be ensured through a policy of appeasement or by allaying the class struggle in this or that country or region. I think that defence of peace is an integral part of the overall class struggle we are waging in our countries.

Semou Pathé Gueye. You won't come across the word 'priority' in anything written by Marx or Lenin because it is a mechanistic concept which has nothing to do with dialectics. The interrelationship between peace and socio-economic progress can be expressed with the help of categories such as the essence and the phenomenon, the general and the particular. If we say that some things have priority and others are secondary, I don't see how we can solve the pressing problems of the Senegalese people. Nothing can convince them that the struggle to overthrow the neocolonial regime is second to the issue of peace.

Stanislaw Wronski. There is the well-known Marxist precept that being determines consciousness. Isn't that a matter of different priorities — even if ideas do become a material force when they are embraced by the masses? There you have dialectical materialism dealing with the question of priorities.

Khalid Hammami. I think that the problem of priorities has a great deal to do with dialectical materialism. Marx and Engels formulated it for the first time in the *Communist Manifesto*: At that time, the matter concerned a more or less simultaneous victory of the proletariat in the leading countries of developed capitalism. Nevertheless, the classics of Marxism-Leninism sought to distinguish between the ultimate — communist — goal of the working class and its immediate task (at that time, the priority task) of winning power and building socialism. Today the situation is different. Socialism and communism remain our ultimate goal. But in order to attain it, human survival must be ensured.

David Moraes. Now that the world is facing the threat of nuclear destruction, the struggle for peace is a matter of first priority for humanity. But the masses at large will join this struggle only when they grasp its connection with social progress, with the elimination of poverty and backwardness, with the exercise of the right to development. Therefore, the priority of peace does not mean that social issues take a backseat to it.

Georg Kwiatowski. West German peace activists say that peace is not everything, but without peace everything comes to naught. Indeed, we all know that aside from defending peace (which is the prime issue of the day), there exist a number of problems which must and can be solved, which should be tackled now in a way that would benefit the working people —

the overwhelming majority of humanity. I am referring to the issues of securing economic, social and political rights for all individuals and all nations. That means overcoming unemployment, hunger and poverty, developing the Third World, banishing acts of aggression and regional conflicts, promoting genuine democracy and asserting the principle of equality and mutual respect in international affairs. It is therefore a matter of the ideals and principles of a world that would meet the interests of the overwhelming majority of the human race and isolate the more reactionary, militaristic and pro-fascist forces.

That is why the search for the right combination of the struggle for peace and the drive for democratic social progress is becoming increasingly important. The working people are asking what an integral international community should be like. We the Communists are to offer our answer and to explain how this world can be built.

Sully Saneaux. I don't think we should be afraid to admit that the Communists are both revolutionaries and peacemakers in the loftiest sense of the term.

Hugo Campos. The peace movement is inseparable from the class struggle. One cannot oppose one to the other. It is not true that the former weakens the latter. Devising one's strategy and tactics at a given specific stage is a matter for every communist party to decide independently. However, no party should lose sight of the international situation or of the key task of the day — that of saving the human race.

Said Salem. We should convince the forces of goodwill and peace that the Communists can best express universal human aspirations, be particularly staunch and earnest champions of these interests, while at the same time fighting consistently for social progress, against imperialism. The policy of the CP of the Soviet Union offers an example of such a combination.

Hector Mujica. The USSR is doing all it can to preserve peace and achieve disarmament. But I cannot even contemplate the idea of the CPSU urging, say, the Farabando Marti National Liberation Front to lay down their arms or the Chilean Communists to accept Pinochet's regime for the sake of universal peace and disarmament.

Antonio Diaz Ruiz. Can the modern world with its common features and interdependence neutralise the aggressive nature of imperialism? Can capitalism survive the elimination of neocolonialism and continue to operate within the framework of a new international economic order? These complex questions should be analysed in depth. As to the Third World, its distinctive problem may be summed up as peace and development. These two factors are essential to each other. I think that that would be a dialectical approach to the issue. I like this formula better than the one contained in the paper and referring to the order of priorities within the system of objectives, tasks and values inherent in the class struggle.

Ali Ileri. The immensely important fact that nuclear war would spell the end of all class struggle is now a generally accepted truth. It is this, and much more, because it means that for the class struggle to be successful, we should pay the necessary attention to the impact of global problems, and,

consequently, link militancy and international solidarity with an ability to enter into alliances and compromises, with flexibility. Here, not only objective but also subjective factors come into play. In many countries (and not only in the more developed ones), people are more inclined to tolerance and cooperation than to confrontation. I think one of the reasons is that humanity now confronts new dangers. If we fail to combine these new realities with the prospects of social progress, the result is likely to be mysticism and fatalism. But we can and must use these new realities to mobilise the masses in a vigorous battle for peace, democracy and a new, democratic political culture.

William Somerset. The threat of nuclear destruction means that everyone can and must join in the struggle against it. After all, even the most extreme members of the military-industrial complex have to fear both the retaliatory and the pre-emptive strike. Moreover, the situation in the world and the self-interest of the bourgeoisie are already forcing it to take part in tackling many global problems. In the distant past, the self-interest of the bourgeoisie gave us city drinking water and sewerage mains because they, too, died in the epidemics these things eliminated — just as now they donate money to research and to curb AIDS. It is not for any humanitarian reasons but out of its own self-interest that the capitalists in the EEC are subsidising farmers. It saves the cities of the better-off from an inundation of destitute countryside people bringing intolerable pressure on housing and other facilities. Today, a parallel exists with the dangers of drought and famine. What can stop the desperate millions from moving towards the North in search of a better life? All that explains quite well the 'concern' of the realistic part of our class adversary over universal human interests, but it is a *selfish* concern, and one we would try to canalise.

From Violence to Accommodation

"The question of the Marxist position with regard to the forms of the revolutionary struggle adopted in individual countries also needs to be studied. Is it possible to use force now that domestic and international developments are growing ever more interrelated? Does this situation motivate the trend towards national reconciliation which has surfaced in regions where revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces are in armed conflict? And generally, how does the use of revolutionary force fit into the concept of a non-violent world?"

(From the SSI paper)

Orel Viciani. I think that the specific historical methodology underlying the Marxist-Leninist theory dealing with forms of struggle remains fully topical. It would be a big mistake to interpret the present situation to mean that it necessarily calls for some definite forms of struggle. At the national level, this may imply the use of only non-violent forms and a renunciation of armed ones. Naturally, one should always pay attention to the international situation which is now marked by a struggle for human survival. But one should avoid oversimplification and the use of rigid models. On the contrary, the time we are living in calls for a flexible

combination of diverse forms of struggle to secure peace, national liberation and social emancipation, for bold and novel political decisions, and for the simultaneous use of different modes of action. Only by paying attention to the distinctive conditions of every country and every region can one conduct a policy leading to a world without nuclear weapons, without wars or, as the paper says, to a non-violent world. One should remember that this phrase applies to international violence. Generally, violence can disappear only with the elimination of antagonism between classes.

Jaime Barrios. In fighting for human survival, we cannot question the use of revolutionary force because we live in a world brimming with counter-revolutionary violence. A non-violent world is so far a dream and, frankly, I don't think it will come true soon.

We the revolutionaries of the Third World set great store by the great revolutionary experience of this century, and we draw lessons from it. We believe that the experience of the revolutions in Vietnam, Cuba and Nicaragua is closest to us. Those peoples clashed head on with imperialism whose counter-revolutionary role increased after World War II. On the other hand — and I am now speaking with a full sense of responsibility, in a spirit of brotherhood and respect — we have long been unable to borrow anything or next to anything from the experience gained by political movements in developed capitalist countries as far as the struggle for socialism in the distinctive conditions of the Third World is concerned.

Essop Pahad. The paper speaks about building a non-violent world. But let us recall the concept of just and unjust wars. That is not only a Marxist-Leninist concept: in different ways, it is recognised by other ideologies too. As for South Africa, not only the socialist countries but also, say, the World Council of Churches recognise our right to armed struggle. Of course we would like the world to be non-violent, especially in terms of coexistence between the two systems. But at a national level we cannot make an absolute out of non-violence. We cannot turn the other cheek if our adversaries resort to the use of open, naked terror and mass repression.

Kamel Magdi. Of course we cannot allow the confrontation between the two systems to escalate into a world war. The Communists have always advocated peaceful settlement of conflicts. But the use of force is imposed by the reactionaries. And the use of force on our part is merely a legitimate response. Who can persuade the Arab peoples to give up their struggle against the Israeli aggressors, to lay down their arms and surrender to the invaders?

Sergei Semyonov. The scientific and technological revolution is making society ever more complex and its class structure, ever more diversified. The changes in the composition of the working class, the addition of new social groups to it and the advent of new generations alter the character of working class interests. Scientific and technological progress is imposing limitations on the means that can be used by classes to further their interests; in turn, the means influence the objectives too. That which could previously be accomplished through the use of revolutionary force on a global scale, regionally or sub-regionally is now unattainable given the

existing alignment of forces. This makes it necessary to resort to a certain — naturally, not unlimited — degree of accommodation, not to surrender to nuclear blackmail. Revolutionary practice demonstrates that the forms of the class struggle, of the national liberation movement are becoming increasingly civilised under the impact of the efforts to uphold universal human values. Today, it is impermissible to make an absolute out of armed force, the way the ultra-Leftists do. They underrate the struggle of the masses, the importance of acquiring a broad range of allies, and they deny the need for political accommodation. The other side of this coin implies a right opportunist renunciation of the prospect of the working class winning power.

Semou Pathé Gueye. I cannot accept the idea that the scientific and technological revolution must necessarily lead to compromise and weaken the class struggle. On the contrary, this revolution aggravates all contradictions — within the capitalist world, between capitalism and socialism, between imperialism and the dependent countries. Capitalist modernisation exacerbates unemployment and affects the interests of the working class. The optimum use of socialist relations of production against the background of the scientific and technological revolution should enhance the position of socialism in the competition between the two systems. As for the Third World, the more access it has to science and technology, the less will imperialism be able to dominate it.

Francisco Gamboa. While gearing the forms of the class struggle to reality, to global threats, one should not give up the struggle itself. One should conduct it by all available means.

Said Salem. I don't think we should introduce the principle of priority into the forms of the class struggle. Each party makes its choice in accordance with its local conditions. I do not deny that a peaceful, gradual transition to socialism is possible in some countries; we have seen examples of this. But one cannot generalise the experience of several parties or countries and offer it as a recipe to others.

José Arizala. Any local conflict may lead to a global disaster. One should therefore resort to a degree of compromise and mutual concessions. At any rate, the revolutionaries should choose the forms of their struggle so as to prevent a nuclear catastrophe from breaking out as a result. However, one should also remember that imperialism has made the situation in the countries dependent on it so explosive that instead of diminishing tensions keep growing. One cannot rule out the possibility of armed conflicts continuing or breaking out anew in different parts of the world.

Can the Class Adversary Be a Partner?

"Today, revolutionary tasks should be tackled in the context of the struggle for survival, and this struggle concerns all people regardless of their class affiliation . . . In order for progress and, consequently, for the solution of social and class problems to remain possible, joint action and compromise involving social forces divided by class barriers are in order . . . Paradoxically, the class adversary should become a partner in the efforts to solve this universal problem. Hence the need to look for such forms of the class confrontation as

would be adequate in this situation. In order to survive, the two opposite social systems must compete only peacefully . . .

"The need for joint action by the international community to tackle global problems puts the methods of the ideological struggle in a new perspective. Ideology has a class-based character. It is an area of confrontation between classes. However, is it not true that the integrity of our contradictory world generates universal ideas promoting intellectual, ideological and ethical contacts which cannot be reduced to an ideological rivalry?"

(From the SSI paper)

Solomon Ghillilov. A total of general democratic problems has been mentioned in our discussion. That expands the opportunities for allied relations. I think the important thing is not so much who to fight against as what to oppose and what to seek in our struggle. In every section of society one can find allies, people who are aware of pressing problems and want to resolve them — even people in the camp that opposes us. The objective is therefore to look above all for partners and to isolate the extreme reactionaries.

In theoretical terms, the concept of the democratic stage should attract our interest. Is it not true that we often sought to go through that stage as quickly as possible on the way to socialism which appeared so close, and to link any democratic demand directly with our ultimate goal? But Lenin said that the working class could not fight for socialism effectively without fighting for democracy. He referred not merely to the recognition of the role played by the democratic stage but to its theoretical substantiation and to the practical implementation of its tasks. Significantly, he admired the ability of Marx and Engels to spot stages of transition. Conversely, we previously believed that the October Revolution had resolved all democratic tasks as a matter of course, off-handedly. But reality proved that it was not quite so.

Jaime Barrios. Can the paradox of the class adversary turning into a partner in saving mankind from destruction lead to class collaboration, a deviation which the Communists have always combated? What kind of compromise should be reached between social forces divided by class barriers so as to preserve the possibility of progress? Can this type of compromise help in the attainment of class-based, social objectives?

Lenin did not deny that the advocates of the proletarian revolution should, under certain conditions, accept a compromise or agreement with the capitalists. But he stressed that one can and must distinguish between an agreement which is legitimate from the viewpoint of the proletarian revolution and a treacherous sell-out.

Bert Ramelson. Partnership between imperialism and socialism is a concept from the right-wing vocabulary. That sort of lasting unity is unattainable. The right-wing Social Democrats may be satisfied, but the communist party will end up losing everything it has accomplished in its fight for the hegemony of the working class.

Sergei Semyonov. When Latin America tries to solve the issue of the

foreign debt, the effort calls for joint action on the part not only of peoples but also of governments, for cooperation with those sectors which, while not distinctly anti-imperialist, are ready to act in common on specific demands. In the course of this effort, contact is established with representatives of the Latin American bourgeoisie and even with some transnational corporations whose interests in the continent's markets are affected by the protectionist policies of other imperialist monopolies.

José Regato. The issue is that of linking such joint action with the tackling of our revolutionary tasks, with our day-to-day struggle for democracy, social progress and, in the final analysis, socialism. The bourgeoisie may enter into an alliance with the working people to take on the problem of the foreign debt, of combating unfair trade practices. But is it ready to yield its class interests of its own free will? It is not. Everything will be decided by the alignment of forces.

José Lava. The formula 'the class adversary as a partner' ignores the existence of a pigheaded minority in the midst of monopoly capital — of the military-industrial complex. These people are rabid anti-communists, and their political objective is to secure superiority over the Soviet Union with the help of SDI and to keep socialism from perfecting itself peacefully by drawing it into the increasingly costly arms race. At the same time, among those who have been poisoned by anti-Soviet propaganda there are many people who are looking in earnest for answers to the pressing problems of our age. Dialogue, cooperation, joint action and, if possible, even alliance with them is the Communist's duty.

Said Salem. For forty years our party has been fighting underground. The authorities suggest that the Communists abandon Marxism-Leninism and dissolve their organisation — then, they say, you will be left in peace. That's the stand of the reactionaries in Jordan. How can one conduct a dialogue with these forces?

Gerry van Houten. While we support every effort of the Soviet Union to advance the struggle for peace and nuclear disarmament through arms control agreements with the United States and to solve other common problems through cooperation between states with different social systems, it does not necessarily follow, as the paper says, that cooperation between states with different social systems can be translated into cooperation between social forces divided by class barriers in the solution of social and class problems. During World War II, some Communist leaders in the USA concluded that, because the USSR and the USA were allies in the war against Nazism, it was possible to extend that cooperation in relations between opposing classes. This class-collaborationist conclusion led to the temporary liquidation of the US Communist Party and hindered the struggle of the Communists in that country.

Hugo Campos. I have no objection to what was said here about the need for a dialogue with representatives of hostile classes and groups. There is a lot of evidence proving that negotiations with the adversary and agreements on some issues are essential if life on Earth is to be preserved — for example, the INF Treaty and the accords on a Central American settlement.

Unni Krishnan. The struggle for human survival implies a struggle aimed at a definite target — at the real course of the threat of nuclear holocaust, the extremely reactionary section of the monopoly bourgeoisie. It follows then that the peace forces — and the Communists first of all — can and should strive to mobilise all potential anti-war forces, including the non-militarist sections of the bourgeoisie, as allies in the struggle. It is not ruled out either that at certain points of time in this effort, even certain compromises of a non-fundamental nature can be agreed upon to reach accord for joint efforts to consolidate the peace factor.

Undoubtedly, we need a closer look into the question of ideological struggle. The questions of human rights, democracy, Third World problems like hunger, have already begun to be issues of ideological struggle. Communists have specific positions on these questions. Provided the struggle is conducted in a sober and convincing manner — which implies also conceding where the opponent happens to be approximately right — it can only open up opportunities for dialogue and cooperation. In the past the Communists' ideological 'struggle' had been sometimes sterile and counter-productive. It lacked truthful and objective analysis, contained dogmatic assertions and was therefore unconvincing. We have to make a definite break with this.

Boris Manzerov. In the past, ideological struggle was often not based on actual practice. That is all the more inadmissible today because the climate in which the struggle is waged is changing. Ideological struggle is not just a tug-of-war between ideal concepts of this or that socio-political system; it is a comparative analysis of the actual state of affairs with all their contradictions. That is the only way of assessing the degree of development or maturity of a given system or socio-political force.

Semou Pathé Gueye. That is an abstract approach to ideological struggle. If it should be based on a comparative analysis and on practical contacts with other forces, how can this idea be applied in concrete terms, say, to our relations with the Social Democrats? What kind of practice are we to be guided by? If the national level is meant, we know that the practical record is negative in most countries because the Social Democrats not only refuse to enter into any kind of alliance with the Communists but also wage a struggle against them. Therefore, one can hardly talk about dialogue and discussion as a form of ideological struggle.

Ib Nørlund. Our age calls for a considerable ideological effort to rebuff anti-communism and free the masses from its impact. The practice of establishing alliances is developing, and this means that ideological struggle should be conducted by convincing and persuading people. For this, an open and honest dialogue is needed. It is important to increasingly master this method of ideological work. That is the only way of making it effective in this day and age.

Hegemony, Not Hegemonism

"The new approach to alliances and to the interaction of progressive and democratic forces raises the issue of who should possess hegemony in these alliances. Some obsolete notions concerning the

hegemony of the advanced class — notions that link this hegemony with claim to domination by a single party — should perhaps be revised. Today's broad and contradictory interaction of diverse socio-political forces rules out all claims to leadership, no matter who may voice them. A vanguard, advanced role of the Communist in this interaction of heterogeneous forces should be earned through practical efforts, through thorough, day-to-day work aimed at rallying these forces together on a democratic basis and by democratic methods. Instead of the organisational and political hegemony of this or that party or organisation, we have the hegemony of the values held by a particular social class, the values that express the imperatives of human survival and progress as fully as possible."

(From the SSI paper)

Jaime Barrios. The fact that the paper rejects 'claims to leadership' calls into question, as it were, the vanguard role the Communists are to play in popular movements. Hegemony is not something preordained, it does not appear by itself; all the more so, it cannot be imposed by decree. It results from the experience of the masses. The issue of the vanguard is connected dialectically with the hegemony of the working class and with the policy of alliances. One of the dogmas that played a negative role in the past is that the communist party was expected to become the vanguard of the revolution almost automatically. But in actual fact, no party, however revolutionary its propaganda image, can win the respect of other political or social movements if it fails to act as a tangible force.

Ahmed El Tayeb. The Communists should consolidate their leading role in alliances through day-to-day practical struggle, by seeking to unite different social strata on a democratic basis. The experience of the Arab countries shows, however, that in many cases broad alliances eventually lead to the domination of a single party or group. Therefore, the Communists should be more vigilant and see to it that genuine democracy be practised, that the interests of all partners be taken into account, and that a hegemony detrimental to the communist party and its struggle does not arise.

Antonio Granja. The working class becomes hegemonic when it consolidates its own forces, establishes a firm alliance with the peasants and the middle strata, and defends the common interests of all forces comprising the united front. For the sake of unity, the Brazilian Communists sometimes even handed over their own plans and ideas deliberately to their allies who advanced them as their own. Wherever we work, we should be selfless, consistent and tolerant with regard to our allies. That was the only way we in Brazil operated successfully, without retreating from our ideological positions, within the framework of a front which included, among others, dedicated conservatives, extreme Leftists and radicals of all types.

Khalid Hammami. It is true that the struggle to prevent nuclear catastrophe and to achieve complete disarmament demands unity of all strata. But does that mean that communist parties will not play a vanguard

role? How do we Communists view this struggle today, and who is to lead it?

In Syria, the Communists have agreed without hesitation to join the National Progressive Front, although the leading role in it is played by the ruling Baath Party. We believe we are pursuing the right policy despite the difficulties and the acute social problems rooted in the petty-bourgeois character of the ruling party. But as long as the Baath Party keeps to an anti-imperialist position, supports the peace-loving policy of the Soviet Union and pursues a just settlement of the Middle East problem, the Communists should remain its allies.

Gerry van Houten. We do not demand hegemony as a party in alliances we might form with other parties and social forces. But we do recognise that social progress, and ultimately the achievement of socialism itself, can only be achieved under the hegemony of the working class. The role of the working class in alliance with other social forces is central to the struggle for political and social change in Canada, but the role played by the Communist Party depends on concrete historical conditions and on the activities of the Communist Party itself.

Georg Kwiatowski. There are, of course, tasks common to all partners, above all in the struggle for human survival. But in any alliance, the Communists must preserve their distinctive identity at all times.

Essop Pahad. The paper connects the hegemony of the advanced class with 'claims to domination by a single party'. Do the authors apply their call for a revision of this approach to the socialist countries where the leading role of the ruling party has been institutionalised?

Solomon Ghililov. Claiming an exclusive position, denying honest equality to allies and trying to strengthen one's own hand at their expense can be an obstacle to success. Hegemony should be above all a moral category, a matter of values oriented on social justice. It manifests itself in an ability to find the right answers to complex questions that affect the interests of all society. Then other political forces that have a stake in the solution of pressing problems will, sooner or later, accept the ideas of the Communists. This also applies to the ruling parties of the socialist countries, for the strength of socialism lies above all in the conscious commitment of the masses. If a party fails to live up to what is expected of it, if it does not respond to the interests of the people, it encounters a crisis of confidence, and experience bears this out.

Bert Ramelson. Who are the 'progressive and democratic forces' the paper refers to? Can one really advocate indiscriminate alliances with the Social Democrats? Of course there can be fairly close relations between the Communists and some Social Democratic quarters. But Social Democracy also comprises forces that are closer to imperialism than to us. Abstract formulae of this kind, especially those that include representatives of the ruling class, serve merely to confuse the issue.

Aulis Leppanen. The restoration of unity in the trade union movement and in the workers' athletic movement, which had long been fragmented, was a major accomplishment in the cooperation between the Communists and the Social Democrats of Finland. In another example, however, the Finnish Social Democratic Party has refused to join a unitary organisation

of peace champions, although many prominent Social Democrats are active in it in their private capacity. Joint action is hindered by the striving of the FSDP to keep stressing its unique status and to impose its policy on others. The difficulties in the Finnish communist movement which were followed by a split have also had an adverse effect.

The current situation is contradictory but interesting. On the one hand, the awareness of the acute nature of global problems is growing, and so is support for joint action against the threat to humanity. On the other hand, the domestic political situation does not favour Left cooperation. The FSDP is part of the government, together with representatives of big capital. The Communists are in opposition to the government. The viewpoints of the two working class parties are often mutually exclusive, particularly with regard to economic and social policy. Meanwhile, joint action is intensifying instead of diminishing on the shop floor and in trade union locals. The threat of lay-offs and the issues of wages and industrial safety are seen as common problems. In tackling them, Communists and Social Democrats realise that they are comrades within the same class.

Orel Viciani. Lenin and subsequently Gramsci held that the hegemony of the working class depends primarily on its ability to organise a struggle not only for its own interests but also for those of all social strata and that it is therefore important to accept the interests of others as one's own. In the opinion of Gramsci, the working class should lead a worldwide intellectual and moral reform so as to promote a national popular awareness. Today, the working class is to advance new political thinking so as to promote the emergence of a worldwide awareness of the need to save the human race. Apparently, we should turn to the primary sources of our theory in this and other issues and overcome the pedantic, scholastic and rigid approach which has resulted in what the paper describes as an "outdated concept of hegemony".

Kamel Magdi. Hegemony cannot be imposed by force. Through practice, other classes and strata may themselves realise that the Communists, the working classes can play a leading role.

Cooperation is possible at different levels. For example, we in Egypt regard our alliance with the National Progressive Unionist Party and with the Arab Socialist Nasserist Party as the nucleus of a front we would like to create so as to bring about far-reaching change. We also maintain relations with other opposition forces, including those on the right, so as to win democratic freedoms. The alliance of peace activists has a broader scope: the Egyptian government has declared its opposition to the militarisation of outer space and its support for the programme of ridding the world of nuclear weapons by the end of the century.

Sully Saneaux. In our contacts with allies and in identifying the common goals of the strategic struggle for power, we in the Dominican Republic do not seek to predetermine anyone's hegemony in advance. Having outlined the conditions essential to the creation of a front of Left and other progressive forces, we also find it necessary to search for forms of cooperation with non-revolutionary organisations on issues such as the foreign debt, the environment and the defence of peace. Each of the forces involved in this struggle should have a proper place in it.

Francisco Gamboa. I think that the form in which the authors of the paper examine the question of hegemony produces a confusing effect. In an attempt to abandon obsolete, sectarian views, they confuse the general theory of working class hegemony with hegemonism. That trend has destroyed many alliances. The sectarian deviations that led to hegemonism must be uprooted resolutely. Conversely, the issue of working class hegemony in the revolutionary struggle is becoming increasingly clear to other progressive forces, and I think its future is assured.

Ornel Urriola. The Panamanian Communists have accumulated a certain body of experience in the struggle for national liberation and sovereign nationhood, for the demilitarisation of the Canal Zone and for its transformation into an area free from US colonial interference. We have sought to rely on the support not only of the working class but also of the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie, the business community and the progressive part of the military. Our party has never regarded the assertion of its vanguard role as an attempt to secure an unchallenged position of leadership. Today, in opposing IMF policies and in defending the Panamanian-US agreements on the status of the Canal, we strive for the formation of a broad front of all political forces objectively interested in national liberation.

Essop Pahad. It seems to me that the SSI paper is too abstract and therefore ignores the concrete experiences accumulated over many decades by fraternal parties. In South Africa, for example, the African National Congress is the leading force in the struggle for liberation, and the Communists are doing all they can to preserve the movement's integrity, cohesiveness and unity. They form part of the ANC and of the people's army, and they strictly observe these organisations' rules and regulations. We have gained a rich store of experience in joint action and alliances against apartheid. We accept cooperation with those who do not share the views of the Communist Party and even of the ANC.

As members of the ANC, Communists meet and discuss issues with diverse and wide-ranging political organisations, religious and cultural bodies and solidarity and peace movements. In these meetings we do not water down the positions of the revolutionary alliance in order to win new friends. But by an objective analysis and clear-cut, reasoned arguments we convince many doubters that we are pursuing the correct tactics and strategy.

William Somerset. I don't agree that a policy claiming hegemony and leadership applies to most parties. Perhaps the bigger parties were guilty of that in the past. The experience of our party is almost the opposite! For us the leading role had to be surrendered to a stronger partner, almost as a precondition of any alliance at all. With that necessary surrender went the calculated risk that the leadership of this partner would veer away to the distortion and betrayal of the agreed policy and, indeed, its subversion all along the line. But we know of that risk and we fight against any subtle changing that makes the agreed policy no longer a joint one but a reflection of the policy of the dominant alone.

Donald Ramotar. The paper produces the impression that past actions of the Communists were all wrong. It is implied that we failed to establish

relations of dialogue with the Social Democrats, and we are virtually blamed for the lack of international working class unity. I won't say that we have always been right, but we weren't mistaken all the time either.

In Guyana the attempts of the People's Progressive Party to build working class unity were thwarted by the present ruling party — the People's National Congress — which chose to work with US imperialism, British colonialism and the internal ultra-right forces which placed them in power in 1964. And today, too, one of the reasons why a firm left front is not yet formed is because, in my view, those who claim to uphold social democratic positions are hoping to emerge as a classical compromise as the present struggle for democracy and free and fair elections unfolds.

Abandoning Old Notions

"Human civilisation is encountering crisis-related phenomena and developments — the growing danger of nuclear self-destruction, the hopeless plight of the Third World and the deterioration of the environment. These phenomena and developments are projected onto the main essence of our age, changing the Marxist view of the rates, content, directions and motive forces of the world's revolutionary renewal . . . It is this historical responsibility that prompts the Communists to critically reappraise their past views of themselves as an infallible force which has a monopoly on truth . . . We must dispense with monologues, learn to listen to what others are saying, see the logic of their reasoning, marshal convincing arguments in support of our views and adjust these views as the situation requires . . . The communist movement is working hard to comprehend and analyse today's realities. Many questions are waiting to be answered. At the meeting (in Moscow) Mikhail Gorbachov noted that our party and its theoreticians and scholars have gotten down to studying these questions in earnest, abandoning notions and patterns born of a different period, of different opportunities."

(From the SSI paper)

Stanislaw Wronski. The need to renew our theory raises a number of questions often voiced by those working in ideology and by party activists. What are the specific elements of theory we should abandon in order to be up to the demands of the day? Which principles or doctrines are meant? Which of them are now obsolete? What is it we lack? These questions are usually answered in very general terms — but they must be clear and precise. Without such clear answers, one cannot understand what's new in new thinking and in what direction we should develop our theory.

Ahmed El Tayeb. Our discussion gives us food for thought and orients us on a new vision of the world. The paper maintains that our theory and its system of categories are lagging behind the demands of the times. We would like to know what really new contributions the Soviet scholars have made to our theory since the 27th Congress of the CPSU, what new elements they have added to it and what discoveries they have made. I

cannot see anything of this kind mentioned in the paper. It raises very acute issues, and any ambiguity in their interpretation, any wrong approach to them may give rise to contradictions in the communist movement and lead to a retreat from the principles that shape the struggle waged by our parties.

Bert Ramelson. The only consistent thing about this paper is that its authors express ideas leading away from Marxism. The impression is that for the sake of new thinking, we should renounce the class struggle and that social change in the contemporary world should no longer take the form of revolution. As a Marxist, I cannot accept this interpretation. The struggle will go on, and that should be taken into account when we discuss new thinking. Class struggle cannot be turned on and off like a tap, and that is equally essential to grasp in analysing new problems that have been recently produced by the scientific and technological revolution and by the nuclear threat. These factors, i.e., change as distinguished from rate of change, have been with us for decades. The changes they caused were reflected in Marxist theory, although many Communists could not grasp the serious nature of these changes. The heart of the matter is that the Soviet Union itself has changed its attitude to dogmatism, acknowledged past mistakes and begun to correct them. That is the new element.

Hector Mujica. The paper reflects the spirit of glasnost and perestroika which do not mean a surrender to our class adversary or reconciliation with imperialism. The world is now different from what it was a short while ago. It has become more interdependent, and without the relevant Soviet-US agreements we would now be on the verge of nuclear catastrophe. Open ideological debate, a free exchange of ideas and a critical tone of the press are the fresh wind existing socialism has brought us.

José Lava. We should be more consistent in our Marxist-Leninist analysis of the class struggle at the national and international level, of the values and interests of the working class, of the Communists. I think that the concept of new political thinking implies certain defects and gaps in historical materialism. But if we have identified them is it not enough simply to get rid of them, of a dogmatic attitude to the principles of socialism? Is it not enough to apply the ideas of Marxism-Leninism creatively, constructively and in accordance with the specific conditions of every party? Why talk about something new all the time? A distinction between new and old thinking may result in a prejudiced view of the classical ideas and encourage revisionism.

Solomon Ghililov. New political thinking is new compared to obsolete thinking. The decisions taken at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International are a good example from the past. There was new thinking in the ideas advanced by the 20th Congress of the CPSU — although, unfortunately, they were not implemented adequately later. Such ideas make progress with difficulty because they are always connected with the need to give up what has become habitual in practical action and in thinking. In overcoming stagnation in the social sciences, Soviet scholars have only just begun to examine new problems.

Francisco Gamboa. The new way of thinking and action is taking root in the communist, democratic and anti-imperialist movements. Its foremost

trend stipulates a renunciation of sectarianism, of claims to an exclusive status. It stipulates a search for unprejudiced dialogue, for agreement in the name of human survival. Stretching the point a little, one can say that we Communists no longer confine ourselves to the temple of our truths: we have begun to seek cooperation with other forces and are trying to understand their views. I think that this is what motivated the authors of the paper. However, we should develop our way of thinking and action in greater depth. Hence the need for a thorough analysis of the problems that arise. They should be analysed from positions of a truly collective and creative effort to develop Marxism, not in the monolithic spirit which has done so much harm to our movement.

Sully Saneaux. For a long time, the contribution of Soviet scholars to the extensive debate in the communist movement left much to be desired, although as representatives of Lenin's party, of the first socialist country, they were expected to display a bold attitude to theory and creative courage in the raising and tackling of new issues. Today these expectations are beginning to be fulfilled. The CPSU is again acting as an innovator in the theoretical and political spheres, as a source of novel ideas. Whatever the doubts raised by this or that paragraph in the paper, it is clear that the Soviet comrades initiated a discussion of highly important problems and phenomena which call for a fresh approach.

Gerry van Houten. Our party lays no claim to a monopoly on truth. The paper says that we should dispense with monologues. For us, that is belabouring the obvious. If we Canadian Communists resorted to monologues, we would immediately lose our hard-won positions.

Said Salem. I think that the ideas of perestroika, renewal and new political thinking are topical not only for the CPSU and Soviet Union. The need for change has matured in all spheres of the struggle for peace and social progress. But the problems involved here should be approached with due regard for the distinctive features of individual communist and workers' parties and of the situation in different countries and regions. I believe that the failure to take account of the different conditions existing in our changing world was one of the reasons for the period of stagnation in our theory. One cannot rely on ready-made recipes allegedly applicable to all countries at all times. We should break with all kinds of conformist attitudes. That is the only way of making our thinking flexible again, of closing the gap between theory and practice.

Ali Ileri. I agree that new political thinking is largely connected with the CPSU's renunciation of dogmatic attitudes. But is the task of overcoming dogmatism topical only for the Soviet Communists? Is it not also topical, for instance, for our party? Were not forms of stagnation in our case also the result of a failure to gauge the impact of the world's new realities on mass consciousness fully enough or in time? No idea, however correct or well developed, can free a party from the need to think for itself. The authors of the paper are not trying to impose their concepts on others. It appeals to me because it does not hide behind trite and 'authorised' notions or terms, because it contains novel, fresh ideas.

Ib Nørlund. When the Communists are speaking about new thinking, this does not mean that they are throwing overboard all that used to

motivate them. The point is different: the deeper we delve into the heart of a problem, the greater our conviction that we should rely on Marxist-Leninist methods in our analysis of social development. Marxism is a catalyst of new thinking, and we will not allow ourselves to be led away from it. The Communists need penetrating and sober views free from prejudice and bias, they need the moral strength of Marxism. Above all, they need dialectics. It is only with its help that one can correctly interpret the problems of our complex and contradictory world.

At the November 1987 meeting of parties and movements in Moscow, much attention was paid to the assertion of the Communists' distinctive identity and to the imperative of rallying together the broadest possible social forces. I think it is very important to learn to combine these two objectives, to find a way of attaining them. Fulfilment of these opportunities implies that new thinking should not be confined only to the Communists, that we should help it reach all other strata — even those who see war as a possible scenario of world politics.

Forging Ahead Together

The issues we have been discussing cannot be dismissed even if they irk us, Professor Yuri Krasin said in his concluding remarks. That would be a stand without any prospect: its advocates would risk to be left on the sidelines of contemporary political history. One can, of course, say that there is nothing new in the current situation, that the past record includes both the threat of nuclear catastrophe and technological revolutions and that essentially, we are not dealing with anything fundamentally new. But is that really the case?

The novel aspect of the current situation is that humanity is being drawn into a profound crisis of civilisation. The crisis of capitalism is continuing and becoming more aggravated, but added to it are several problems that are common to both systems. The issue of human survival is the most prominent of these problems. But there is also underdevelopment in the Third World, the danger of an environmental disaster, and several other problems whose solution brooks no delay because it is fraught with grave danger. That is what prompts us to speak about new political thinking.

We are asked whether it may encourage revisionism. But as the Russian proverb has it, "If you fear the wolves, don't venture into the woods." To fear revisionism means to refrain from tackling the issues in a new way. I hold a different view and maintain that it is better to temporarily err in something than to close one's eyes to the new realities the communist movement has encountered. We should cleanse Leninism of the alien impurities and oversimplifications that became attached to it in the past. But that is not all there is to it. We need a breakthrough in theory — comparable, perhaps, to the one Lenin achieved in the early years of the century. Just as the emergence of Leninism did not refute the principles of Marxism, today we seek not to abandon our world view but to raise it to a radically new level.

In this connection I would like to say a few words about perestroika in the USSR, primarily about its international aspect. Perestroika is part of the revolutionary process; some speakers in this hall described it as the

principal factor of the world revolutionary process today. Our party has acknowledged that stagnation in the Soviet Union weakened the international impact of existing socialism and had an adverse effect on the communist movement. Perestroika works in the opposite direction: it enhances the appeal of socialism because it closes the gap between our ideal and reality and supplies arguments that can be marshalled by those forces in the capitalist and developing world that are fighting for a socialist alternative.

At the same time, we are realists, and we are aware that perestroika is proceeding with difficulty and will take considerable time. The USSR will have to travel a long way before it can reach a juncture economically comparable to the positions of developed capitalist countries. If we fully implement the programme outlined by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, by the beginning of the new millennium we will reach the 1985 level of labour productivity in developed capitalist nations. This makes it clear that one cannot expect socialism to triumph worldwide soon.

The socialism that actually exists is by no means a social paradise which has no contact with the capitalist world. We share many concerns with capitalist countries; there are global problems which can only be solved through joint effort. I am not referring only to the issue of human survival, a field in which signs of progress have now appeared, but also to other problems — say, the mastering of new technologies. That is what we mean when speaking about the integral nature of our world, about the interdependence of capitalist and socialist countries.

Some may fear that this course may lead the Soviet comrades away from the communist parties operating in capitalist and developing countries. Absolutely not. In his statements on the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, Mikhail Gorbachov reiterated that the CPSU is an integral part of the communist movement. The objective is to advance together to an understanding of new realities, to ensure the highest possible degree of simultaneity of this advancement, with the task of the world's revolutionary renewal being intertwined organically with the imperative of saving the human race.

That is not an easy undertaking. It is sure to give rise to difficulties and contradictions — such as those that surfaced during our discussion here. For all its possible imperfection, we see our paper as aimed at encouraging a joint examination of the problems the communist movement is facing, so as to find ways of compensating for the losses some of the fraternal parties have incurred, to raise our movement to a level equal to the historical responsibility demanded by the difficult watershed we have reached.

A few more words about new thinking. I think it would be wrong to equate it with creative development of Marxism: in its major components, new thinking is to take root in the ideological precepts of other social forces too. Only then can we really speak about pooling the efforts of all humanity to tackle today's global problems. I think it was aptly noted here that Marxism was a catalyst of new political thinking and that the Communists were its advocates, the vanguard force in its propagation.

Our party has put forward the concept of non-violent world. There are two aspects to this issue. First, it refers to international, intergovernmental

relations. On the domestic plane, as long as the capitalist state exists — and it is a tool in the hands of the exploiters — the breeding ground for violence will persist too. A status quo in the social sphere is unacceptable to Marxists. This objective contradiction raises a problem: how do we advance to a non-violent world without eroding the content of revolutionary struggle? How do we secure opportunities for social change in every country without upsetting the international alignment of forces to a degree where a nuclear conflagration becomes imminent?

We should search together for answers to these questions. I agree that there can be no revolutionary tactics applicable to any and all situations. But there is a strategic system of coordinates within which the world is developing, and in this connection I support the idea of the revolutionary forces acting in a responsible manner in devising their concept of struggle in their countries.

In the course of the discussion, several questions were raised about the assessment of imperialism. Of course its nature does not change, and aggressive trends are innate in it. For example, the signing of the INF Treaty affected the material interests of the military-industrial complex, and an hysterical campaign was launched against its ratification. That is why I think it was quite rightly stressed here that we should always have a definite target in our struggle — the extremist and intransigent part of the monopoly bourgeoisie which is and will be trying to block our progress to a non-violent world. Therefore, it is all the more important for all progressive forces to try and isolate these quarters and to exert pressure on the realistic part of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

A few words about convergence. It has nothing in common with the interaction and interdependence of the two systems in today's world. Interaction and interdependence do not rule out either competition or struggle. We remain convinced that modern productive forces will develop more effectively in socialist forms which, in the final analysis, will become the only ones in existence. However, today we take a more sober view of this competition both in terms of its duration and in terms of its content. We realise that this process is more complicated and will last longer than we would have wished.

Concern was voiced here that the raising of the issue of universal human values implied a rejection of the class-based approach. I am convinced that this is not so: the Communists are assessing and analysing these values from Marxist positions. First, the Communists clearly identify those forces that are ready and able to fight for human survival. Second, they plan their struggle so as to create conditions for the attainment of the immediate and ultimate objectives of the working class. The important thing is not to contrast the class based approach to one based on universal human values. Do we really have to talk to people using political terminology only? After all, there are simple words clear to everyone, such as life, freedom or justice. They reflect concepts which we interpret from our own Marxist viewpoint.

Let me recall that Marx began his quest with reflections on man's emancipation, with the ideas of the French Revolution whose bicentennial will be marked next year. We cannot reject this heritage either: it was the

soil from which Marxism sprang. The question is whether we have lost some elements of the universal humanitarian heritage by sometimes adopting a class-based approach that was too narrow — for example, when the 'class versus class' concept was advanced.

The issue of priorities was raised in the discussion. They have always existed in the political sphere, whether referred to by that name or not. Let me recall Engels' explanation of the law of negation of the negation: a grain of barley planted in the soil germinates and is negated. The stalk produces 10 or 20 grains, dies and is negated in turn. But when a grain gets between the millstone it disappears, and the innately logical dialectical process of negation comes to an end. Speaking about today's world, one can say that the already germinating seed of the new, socialist system is threatened by the millstones of nuclear catastrophe. Here, a question of priorities arises: civilisation must be saved for social development to take its logical course. If there is no civilisation, everything will lose its meaning. Without peace, everything will come to naught.

Let me turn now to the question of hegemony. Here, too, it is important not only to return to Lenin's vision of this concept but also to go further. The time is past when many of us took a kind of condescending view of the experience and concepts of non-communist social forces. We saw them as allies but thought that their own experience would finally lead them to see the fallacy of their views and to adopt ours. The practical record has shown, however, that the activities of these forces — the Socialists, the Social Democrats, the Greens or other mass democratic movements — highlight some very significant aspects of our diverse realities and provides a basis for a broader and more comprehensive examination of today's topical problems.

Marx foresaw that the subject of social production would undergo change. And changing it is. Viewed from this angle, what is the working class like today? Is it the only force capable of fighting for socialist transformations? Could it be that the hegemony of the working class in the revolutionary process is now manifested above all in its and its party's capacity for joint action with broader social strata which in part potentially belong to it and, in part, are an element of the forces awakened by the working class but retaining their autonomy? That is a very serious question which should be thought through.

Allow me to thank the participants in the debate which, we hope, has enriched us all — at least it has given us SSI researchers an impetus to continue our quest.

Closing the meeting on behalf of the WMR Commission on the Exchange of Party Experience, **José Arizala** noted that the discussion covered the main political issues of today and was very useful. We were not overwhelmingly unanimous, he said: on the contrary, it was a polemic in which we spoke openly — also a sign of the times. The SSI paper noted new developments and used a new language which gave rise to some doubts and even objections. But the paper reflects the efforts of Soviet scholars to advance our theory and to find answers to the problems of our age.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he continued, is displaying

initiative the way the Bolsheviks did at the Second Congress of the RSDLP in 1903 and during the October Revolution which gave a new impetus to the world's development. Later, the CPSU acted in the same way at its 20th Congress and, recently, at its 27th Congress. In the current period of perestroika, Lenin's party is in the vanguard of progress, and it contributes substantially and creatively not only to the development of theory but also to the advancement of the world communist movement.

World Marxist Review plans to continue examining and discussing topical issues of concern to the sister parties and to organise similar periodic meetings and discussions.

viewpoints

Accomplishments Unprecedented For The Korean Peasants

Solution Of The Agrarian Question In The DPRK

So Gwang Hi — Central Committee
Secretary, Workers' Party of Korea
(WPK)

THE agrarian question in People's Korea is regarded as comprising two interrelated issues — the peasants' question and the agricultural problem. The former is connected with the emancipation of rural workers from all kinds of exploitation, with the reshaping of the peasantry along the lines of the working class. The essence of the latter concerns the development of the productive forces unhampered by the bonds of old relations of production, and the switching of agriculture over to the track of industrial development. As a whole, the aim is to eliminate social oppression and then to overcome our dependence on the vagaries of the environment and

So Gwang Hi, born into a poor family in 1926, was a factory worker in his youth. After the country's liberation in 1945 he graduated from the National Economy Institute and worked as chairman of the Pyongyang Agricultural Committee, as chairman of the Committee for Agriculture and as Vice-Premier of the DPRK Administration Council. A member of the Supreme People's Assembly (parliament) since 1967, a member of the party's Central Committee since 1970, he is currently a WPK Central Committee Secretary.

create conditions enabling the peasants to work independently and creatively.

We believe that this is a strategic issue of the revolution, of the effort to build socialism and communism. In our view, it is imperative for the party and the working class government to tackle this issue — particularly in developing countries which were previously dependent on imperialism and in which farming is predominantly backward and peasants make up an absolute majority of the population.

We know that at each stage of a revolution, different tasks should be accomplished. The *solution of the agrarian problem* is the principal task of an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic revolution. That is the only way of abolishing feudal relations, delivering peasants from the bondage of the landowners, and effecting progressive changes in rural areas. The solution of this problem destroys the economic base of the reactionary forces and helps in the democratisation of political, economic and cultural rural activities.

After our country's liberation, the party defined land reform as the central task of the revolution and mobilised the entire people to solve it. The WPK advanced the slogan 'Land to those who till it' and took the necessary steps to translate it into reality and make peasants the true masters of land.

Acting in line with the aspirations of rural workers, we confiscated the land owned by the Japanese imperialists and their henchmen, traitors, estate holders and absentee owners. This land was divided free among the landless peasants and those who owned small plots, with due regard for the number of the mouths and the able-bodied members of each family. Maximum plot sizes were established; the sale, lease and mortgage of land was prohibited; and compliance with these regulations was strictly enforced. This ruled out the possibility of turning land into a means of exploitation, created conditions preventing class stratification in rural areas and the emergence of capitalist relations, and generally helped to further the cooperative drive in farming.

During that period the party relied on farm labourers and poor peasants, cooperated with middle peasants and isolated the kulaks. It consolidated people's government at the local level, encouraged revolutionary activity among peasants, and sent the best representatives of the working class to villages. This made it possible to complete the 1946 land reform within less than four weeks, and without any serious resistance on the part of hostile elements.

Subsequently, the government rendered all-round assistance to the countryside, opening good opportunities for farming to gain strength and creating favourable conditions for the country's democratic development.

At the socialist revolution stage, the essence of the agrarian question lies in the *transformation of personal farms based on private property into socialist collective farms*. That is the way of abolishing exploitation and poverty, turning rural workers into true masters of the state and of society and developing this branch of the national economy on a planned basis by consolidating the union of workers and peasants with the former playing

the leading role and by strengthening the positions of the party in rural areas.

The country's distinctive conditions prompted the WPK to advocate the cooperative effort as its policy even before the farms were technologically re-equipped. That course was rooted in the vital requirements of the peasants themselves and in the existence of revolutionary forces able to cope with the task, although the production development level was then relatively low.

In accordance with party guidelines, the cooperative movement developed on a voluntary basis, but not in any random way. We conducted extensive political education work among peasants, convinced them by citing successful examples, made it possible for the workers themselves to choose the specific forms of cooperative organisation and the ways of pooling the means of production with due regard for local conditions. Initially, several cooperatives comprising poor peasants and rural activists were organised by way of experiment in every country. Only after these cooperatives had demonstrated the advantages of the new arrangement did large-scale collectivisation begin.

Three types of cooperatives gained currency. The first was a standing team of mutual labour assistance, with land and farming implements remaining the peasants' property and only their labour pooled. The second pooled the land and the chief means of production, but the income was distributed both according to the labour contributed and in line with the size of one's land. Cooperatives of the third and highest type socialised both land and the principal means of production, and distribution was based exclusively on one's labour contribution. Since we had no experience of that kind before, we oriented peasants on the establishment of small cooperatives which comprised 15 to 20 households and then gradually expanded.

The party stepped up its ideological and political work among the peasants. The government provided the cooperatives with comprehensive assistance. They were the first to receive new equipment, fertilizer, pesticides and other material and technological resources. Competent personnel were trained in the capital and locally. Despite the harsh post-war conditions, all that made it possible to complete the cooperative drive within a very short span of four to five years.¹ That was how our country *forever abolished the sources of exploitation and poverty, and the peasants were transformed into socialist workers*. The productive forces began to grow dynamically, and material and cultural well-being improved in rural areas.

Accelerated development of agriculture based on the strengthening of the new social system and aimed at making rural dwellers prosperous and eliminating the legacy of underdevelopment is a major objective of the socialist creative effort.

Kim Jong Il, Presidium member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the WPK Central Committee, noted that "the elimination of the differences between urban and rural areas and of the class distinctions between the working class and the peasants, as well as the definitive solution of the agrarian question are among the more important tasks

facing the party and the working class state in building socialism and communism".²

The party is vigorously and consistently pursuing its policy of the three revolutions — ideological, technological and cultural.³ The countryside is so far lagging behind urban areas in many respects. The cooperative form of ownership is prevalent in agriculture, while national ownership is dominant in industry. Class differences still exist between industrial workers and peasants, as well as substantial differences between the cities and the countryside. Cardinal transformations are necessary to overcome them.

We place priority emphasis on the *ideological* revolution. Its aim is to eradicate the holdovers of the old worldview among the peasants, arm them with revolutionary, communist ideas, and transform them along the lines of the advanced working class. We refer to this process as that of 'manning the ideological fortress of communism' by educating the people to be masters of our society.

The party has always stressed that rural workers should translate their enthusiasm and creative initiative into practical action, that they should be directly responsible for the tackling of the agrarian question. Drawing on the ideas of Juche,⁴ the party educates the peasants in the spirit of loyalty to revolutionary traditions and party policy, of class consciousness, dedication to communist ideals and socialist patriotism so that everyone works selflessly for the good of society, of the country. We sum up and publicise positive examples of ideological education, and we help the masses to emulate those who have accomplished the best results. This has produced major changes in the intellectual and spiritual make up of rural workers, in their labour and way of life.

We hold that the *technological* revolution in rural areas not only calls for developing the productive forces, for equipping farms with modern machinery and for large-scale application of scientific advances, but also, and primarily, for efforts to accomplish a major socio-economic task — that of freeing peasants from arduous physical work. The party has defined the main content of the technological revolution as irrigation, electrification, mechanisation and chemicalisation.

We have accorded priority to irrigation to guarantee prevention of yearly natural disasters and to ensure good crops. The bigger projects are financed by the government, while the medium-size and smaller ones are built as people's construction projects with technical assistance from the centre.⁵ Before the country was liberated, the irrigated land area totalled only 100,000 hectares; now it has increased to 1,400,000 hectares (87 per cent of all arable land). This makes it possible to harvest stable amounts of rice (the principal crop) both during the harsh spring droughts and during the long rainy periods in summer.

Electrification is essential to irrigation and mechanisation in agriculture, as well as to the cultural revolution. Big, medium and small hydro and thermal power plants have been built throughout the country. As early as 1969, a movement involving the entire people brought electric power to all villages and peasant households and ensured its widespread use in farming.

The importance of mechanisation increased after the establishment of cooperatives. Modern powerful machinery operates side by side with small-scale equipment. Initially, the use of machinery was promoted on the plains, and then it spread to the highlands and mountains. We gradually progressed from the mechanisation of the more arduous jobs to integrated mechanisation, with a view to ensuring the greatest possible efficiency in the use of machinery.

The success has been largely due to the farming machinery stations which exist in every county. They were regarded not simply as an intermediate element of the branch but as an important component of the cooperatives' activities and a major factor in the spread of advanced methods of management and farming.

Deliveries of machinery to rural areas have been growing steadily. Today, there are seven tractors per 100 hectares of arable land on the plains and six in the highlands. Virtually all jobs have been mechanised, including ploughing, the planting out of rice seedlings, harvesting, threshing and transportation. The fleet of tractors will soon increase to 10 to 12 per 100 hectares, and the manufacture of other types of machinery will also grow.

Much has been done to chemicalise agriculture. In line with the slogan 'Fertilizer means rice, and rice means socialism', the party worked to increase the output of chemicals and to ensure their use on a scientifically sound basis. Currently, the average is about two tons of soil-dressing chemicals per hectare, and we plan to raise this figure to 2.5 tons. Besides, we use herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals on a large scale to combat plant diseases and pests.

The rural irrigation and electrification programmes have been completed, and mechanisation and chemicalisation have reached a high level. This brings the labour of peasants closer to that of industrial workers.

The goal of the *cultural* revolution in the countryside is to develop the peasantry intellectually, train skilled personnel, transform the image of rural areas, improve health care and eradicate outdated customs.

A massive drive to eliminate illiteracy was launched in the first years of popular government. The work performed under WPK leadership made it possible to accomplish that task by April 1949. Later, the party adopted a policy aimed at providing all rural dwellers with secondary education combined with training in the operation of farm machinery. Eleven years of school are compulsory for all children everywhere. There are an agriculture college, a teacher's college and a medical school in every province, and in the counties there are vocational training schools for middle-level farming experts. Peasants work hard to improve their knowledge and skills, supporting the party guideline that calls for raising the intellectual level of all society.

Efforts to improve sanitary and hygienic conditions in rural areas are also important. Outpatient medical aid stations have been transformed into clinics and hospitals. Water pipelines have been laid everywhere, and bus services are in operation. In this way, the differences in urban and rural living conditions are gradually disappearing.

In the words of Kim Jong Il, the WPK has been inspired by the following in its successful drive to effect socialist transformations: "The working class guiding the peasants, industry assisting agriculture and the cities aiding the countryside is a major principle underlying the solution of the agrarian question."⁶

The party and the government work tirelessly to promote the development of the cooperative movement and to improve the peasants' living conditions. After all, they, together with the working class, fight for the same goals and ideals, while property of all the people together with cooperative property forms the economic basis of the socialist state.

After the foundations of industry were laid, assistance to rural areas improved comprehensively. The agricultural tax was abolished to strengthen the cooperatives and to raise the rural workers' standard of living. The government began financing the construction of agricultural facilities and of housing with all amenities for peasants. Vigorous and selfless support on the part of the government has secured the creation of a modern material and technological infrastructure and conditions for cultural activities in all villages over a short time.

We believe that central to improvements in the *management of agriculture* are efforts to bring its methods closer to those successfully applied in our industry. The committees established at county level to direct the activities of cooperative farms have emerged as the principal element of the new system of agricultural management. The committees not only directly guide the farms but also extend, on behalf of the state, all necessary assistance to them.

Together with cooperative farm workers, county committee functionaries master agricultural innovations and organise the farmers' work. The committees control government-run auxiliary services (farming machinery stations, the irrigation, maintenance and seed-growing services, and the offices dealing with the supply of material resources and equipment). In other words, management is centralised. This rules out sloppy organisation and the scattering of efforts, ensuring efficient management.

We see the complete solution of the agrarian question under socialism in the transformation of cooperative property into property of all the people.

As General Secretary of the WPK Central Committee and President of the DPRK Kim Il Sung has noted: "The Theses on the Socialist Agrarian Question are our party's militant programme for strengthening and developing cooperative property, transforming it into property of all the people, and in this way solving the agrarian question definitively and attaining the complete victory of socialism."⁷

As noted earlier, progress along this road means, first and foremost, that we vigorously conduct the three revolutions in rural areas and organically combine the two forms of property with property of all the people playing a steadily increasing role.

According to the principles contained in the 'Theses on the Socialist Agrarian Question in Our Country',⁸ the WPK attaches priority attention to the ideological and cultural revolution in the countryside. We are stepping up ideological education of peasants and enhancing their

dedication in the course of joint labour efforts and in the context of their collectives so that they put the interests of the entire people above their personal ones. Simultaneously, adults are studying energetically both within the system of general education and at courses to promote knowledge of science and technology. The aim is to teach all peasants to operate modern machinery and to raise the level of farming. We also strive to accelerate the drive to replace obsolete farming equipment and to effectively introduce new agricultural techniques and advances.

Direct links between the two forms of property are being strengthened *in collaboration with the state-run enterprises* that service agriculture. The active involvement of the county committees and the considerable material and technological assistance rendered by the government have made it possible to equip the cooperatives with various types of machinery that are property of all the people. This leads to its merger with cooperative property, strengthens the ideological and political influence of the working class on the peasants, and promotes the spread of advanced management methods in rural areas.

The issue of merging the forms of property has now matured, and we are drawing up experimental measures to implement this merger in practical terms.

The establishment of what we describe as *territorial bases* to take care of all aspects of work in rural areas is an important landmark on the road to the solution of the agrarian question. The county is the basic territorial party and administrative unit, a central link between urban and rural areas. That is why we are endowing the county with the functions of a territorial base so that all economic tasks could be tackled integrally. Party committees and other agencies at county level have competent staff, and so the county plays an important role as a centre stimulating political, economic and cultural development in the outlying areas.

The years that have elapsed since liberation have produced good results. Grain production has increased 350 to 400 per cent compared to 1944, and per hectare yields have grown substantially — that of rice, from 2.5 to 7.6 tons and that of maize, from 0.73 to 6.5 tons. These have been accomplishments unprecedented for our peasants.

Inspired by the ambitious plans of the third seven-year period (1987-1993), the DPRK is fighting vigorously to bring about a new upsurge in agriculture. Our goal is to produce 15 million tons of grain, 1.7 million tons of meat, 7 billion eggs and 2 million tons of fruit annually.

Under the banner of the three revolutions, we shall meet these targets ahead of schedule and win new victories along the road of agrarian transformations.

¹ The cooperative drive in agriculture was completed in 1958. — *Ed.*

² Kim Jong Il, *The Position and Role of the County in the Effort to Build Socialism*, Pyongyang, 1985, p. 2 (in Korean).

³ For more details, see Young Hyong Muk, 'Three Revolutions' in *WMR*, April 1987. — *Ed.*

⁴ The following definition of this term is given in the DPRK: "The ideas of Juche mean that the popular masses are the masters of the revolution and construction and that they are the motive force of the revolution and construction." — *Ed.*

⁵ There are 1,700 water reservoirs and more than 25,000 pumping plants in the DPRK. — *Ed.*

* Kim Jong Il, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

† Kim Il Sung, *For the Complete Victory of Socialism*, Pyongyang, 1987, p. 13 (in Korean).

‡ Kim Il Sung presented this document at a plenary meeting of the WPK Central Committee in February 1964. — Ed.

Marxism And Religion

Christians In The Social Struggle

Orlando Millas — CC Political
Commission member, Communist Party
of Chile

EARLY last year our country was visited by Pope John Paul II. He displayed a friendly attitude to Pinochet, but also to the popular movement. The tyrant entertained the illusion that the Pontiff's visit would change the stand of the Chilean Catholic Church in his favour, but it attuned its hierarchical dependence on the Vatican with its stand in defence of human rights, denounced the crimes of the regime, and did not refrain from coming out in support of the unity of the anti-fascist forces for the restoration of democracy. This singular case of Chile, where there is a growing urge among members of the Christian grassroots communities,¹ parish priests, members of religious orders and many bishops for joint action in defence of liberty, indicates that their new frame of mind is a matter of more than passing importance.

Developments over the past half century show the reflection in the minds of millions of Christians of the great revolutionary changes of our epoch, of the growing role of socialism as a social system, of the general crisis of capitalism, and of the sharpening historical contradictions in Latin America, a continent which has the majority of the Catholics of the world. This is a wide-ranging development, and one could, perhaps, speak of a *whole range of renovative processes*, of which there are new manifestations every day. The Communist Party of Chile has watched these developments with great interest, and has taken account of them in its theoretical analysis and practical policy.

We are concerned with this matter above all from the standpoint of the struggle against imperialism and reaction. We fully accept Lenin's profound idea, which he expressed when the working class of Russia was faced with totally different conditions, that the Church was one hundred per cent identified with the society "based on the endless oppression and coarsening of the worker masses". We recall that he went on to stress: "No number of pamphlets and no amount of preaching can enlighten the proletariat, if it is not enlightened by its own struggle against the dark forces of capitalism. Unity in this truly revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth is more important to us than unity of proletarian opinion on paradise in heaven."² That was

when Lenin drew a conclusion which remains valid to this day: "That is the reason why we do not and should not set forth our atheism in our Programme."³

That does not signify any concessions in theory or the Marxist view of the world and the society. We are guided by Lenin's firmness and clarity in rejecting any ambiguity in matters of principle. Whenever Lenin attacked bourgeois anti-clericalism, he always deemed it indispensable to reiterate that dialectical materialism, the basis of scientific socialism, is indisputably *atheistic*.

We, Communists, regard with close attention the fact that the old reactionary religious conceptions are being criticised within the Church itself, by the great mass of the faithful in the first place. The rigorously scientific Marxist method helps us to understand in depth the changes under way in contemporary Christianity. In his 'Theses on Feuerbach', Marx formulated the essential point of departure in explaining the religious phenomenon. In Thesis 6, he says: "Feuerbach resolves the religious essence into the *human* essence. But the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations." In Thesis 7, he gives an explanation of the 'religious sentiment'; "Feuerbach, consequently, does not see that the 'religious sentiment' is itself a *social product*, and that the abstract individual whom he analyses belongs in reality to a particular form of society."⁴

In his well-known Section 4 in Chapter One of Volume One of *Capital*, which is entitled 'The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof', Marx speaks of the 'fantastic' form of the relations between things, which human beings believe to be similar to their own social relations, and adds: "In order, therefore, to find an analogy, we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world. In that world the productions of the human brain appear as independent things endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and the human race. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands."⁵ There he obviously has in mind the most traditional, conservative and apparently immutable and timeless products of the human intellect, but these are ultimately the social products of a world in continuous movement, which often tends to be out of joint.

Marx never took the mechanical approach to relations between the economic and social basis and the religious superstructure, and in each of these two great autonomous spheres he found thought-provoking historical parallels, as he went beyond individual phenomena to examine the tendencies over entire periods and epochs.⁶ Nor was he ever in doubt that religious ideas had to be studied in the context of the historical process, the real basis which had to be reckoned with in an analysis. He was quite clear on this point: "Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with Nature, the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, and of the mental conceptions that flow from them. Every history of religion, even, that fails to take account of this material basis, is uncritical. It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion than, conversely, it is to develop from the actual relations of life

the corresponding celestialised forms of those relations. The latter method is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific one."⁷

The contradictions between the immense productive forces of our day and the domination of the imperialist transnational corporations, that is, between production and property relations in the capitalist part of the world, have sprung up under the scientific and technical revolution, which has brought about the greatest technological changes in mankind's history. These contradictions are ever more acute and are most pronounced in the dependent regions, particularly in Latin America. There is every sign that the structural crisis in the countries of the continent is an explosive one. The imperialist plunder has forced the fascist tyranny, set up in Chile by the United States with fire and sword, to resort to state terrorism. The social tensions which have been building up on the continent since the beginning of this century have steadily gained in intensity and have had the most savage effect on the popular masses. This situation tends to work a *change in the mentality of the large part of the population consisting of believers*, who are no longer satisfied with antiquated religious practices: while adhering to their Christian creed, they now express it in a different form.

Marx regarded religious sentiments as a part of the other historically-rooted characteristics of the society which are still of significance in our day. Let us note that when analysing the metamorphoses of the commodity in the process of circulation, he refers to the family Bible, which his weaver wants to buy and does buy on the market as a use-value.⁸ The weaver's religious frame of mind continues to be that of millions of similar working people on our continent, but what is new is that the consequent attitude of believers to the class struggle has now undergone a change, and that is of paramount importance. In Chile, we have watched, with great expectations, hopes and readiness for dialogue, the changing attitudes among ever wider sections of Catholics in the social battles. We could not remain indifferent and responded to their positive actions by holding out a hand for joint action against the common enemy — fascism — and for a dialogue in search of areas of accord.

For centuries — since the Spanish conquest and up until the beginning of the present century — the Catholic Church in Chile was a bulwark of extreme reaction linked to the Spanish crown and involved in the war against the Mapuche Indians, in the establishment of the colonial regime, and the domination of the 'encomenderos' and the latifundists. It openly opposed independence and any manifestations of progress, and campaigned against republican reforms throughout the nineteenth century. But there was always within it an influential progressive minority, and some clergymen shared the views of Father Las Casas.¹⁰ Among the prominent figures of the emerging national culture of Chile in the eighteenth century were the Jesuits Manuel Lacunza and Juan Ignacio Molina. Friar Camilo Henríquez may be considered one of our country's 'fathers' in the fight for independence.¹¹ But it is equally true that these and other illustrious exceptions contrasted with the official ecclesiastical institution, which was solidly identified with colonialism, which was always a sworn enemy of the working class movement, and which gave its

blessings to the sores of latifundism. But later facts are also highly indicative: while proletarian organisations were being cursed from the pulpit, Luis Emilio Recabarren, the founder of the Communist Party of Chile, invited the preachers to a calm and reasonable discussion in public and that in many cases, as a rule, turned out to be useful.

When after the Great October Socialist Revolution and the First World War, Chile entered upon a period of sharp political and social battles, the historian Crescente Errázuriz was archbishop of Santiago. Far from supporting the enemies of change, he agreed to the separation of the Church from the state, and took a favourable view of the ongoing reforms. A little later a similar situation was repeated in an even more accentuated form: when the Popular Front government was in power in the late 1930s, it had very friendly relations with José María Caro, the first Chilean cardinal. I recall the meetings members of the Young Communist leadership had with him; they were held in a spirit of cordiality and trust, although they did not have any significant consequences.

None of these facts were quite accidental. In the early decades of this century, there appeared groups of Catholics in Chile who drew public attention by their non-traditional approach to social problems. New approaches were germinating in the minds of some clergymen who were well aware of the working class movement and Recabarren's activity in the saltpetre mines, and were in evidence in some of the parishes with a deprived labouring population, and also among Catholic students and progressive intellectuals. The fight against the military dictatorship from 1927 to 1931 was carried on together by Communist students from the Avance group and Catholic students from the Renovación group. Masses of Catholics worked together with the Communists, and this helped to destroy many a myth. New ideas were being spread by two outstanding Catholics: the Jesuit Alberto Hurtado and Bishop Manuel Larraín.

The way to mutual understanding was, therefore, a long one. On the one hand, Catholics were always within the ranks of the CP Chile, while the party, making no secret of its atheistic thinking, duly respected their personal religious sentiments. Over the past 20 years, some priests became party activists, and they abided by only this condition: not to carry on purely religious propaganda among their party comrades. From 1958 on, when the party regained its constitutional rights, and up until the fascist coup in 1973, many priests and members of religious orders gave open support to Communist candidates in parliamentary and local elections.

On the other hand, broad masses of Catholics organised in parties accentuating their links to the Church — such as the Christian Democratic Party and the Christian Left — have maintained with the Communists what could be called normal relations (even if with some contradictions) which have now and again allowed for accord and alliance. Those are well-known facts. As for Christian grassroots communities, their friendly contacts with Communist Party cells in areas of joint action have become commonplace.

For all that, the relations between Communists and Christians were put to the test in two highly specific periods of our history. The first was the period of the revolutionary government of President Salvador Allende: the second, the fascist tyranny of Augusto Pinochet. In both cases, their

informal, human, individual ties were much more intimate because of the identity of views on many key issues. Besides, the Catholic Church, as an institution, was given ample proof in the 1,000 days of the popular government and the Chilean Revolution, that the Communists were committed to respecting religious sentiments and to working constructively with the church. When the dictatorship was set up, the Catholic Church on the whole took an anti-fascist stand, which is highly valued by our party.

Consequently, there was a process in Chile that was characterised by Radomiro Tomic, an outstanding Catholic politician and a one-time presidential candidate, as "a crisis of consciousness" which, on the eve of the Second World War, and more especially after it, "prompted (and still prompts) broad Christian groups (at first only the youth and rank-and-file believers) to challenge the alliance of the Church and various Christian trends in Latin America with the capitalist power at home and abroad. These elements began to appreciate the deep antagonism between capitalism with its declared aims, practices and institutional structure, and the liberation movement of the disinherited peoples".¹²

The thousands of events, both positive and negative, which have occurred in the course of this century, and above all the revolution in Russia, the rout of Nazism in the Second World War, the successes of existing socialism, the collapse of the colonial system in the post-war period, and the Cuban revolution in Latin America, all these have left an indelible imprint on the minds of millions of practising Christians. The profound social and psychological changes in various countries of the continent have led to a search for and assertion of new views of the surrounding world.

All of us, Communists and Christians of Latin America, recently received a book which is so rich in reflections, so packed with content and so clear in exposition of great issues. It is *Fidel and Religion*,¹³ which is a record of the conversations the Cuban leader had with the Brazilian Dominican Friar Betto. It is a book which deals with some of the burning problems of our day with remarkable directness and sincerity. The Communist Party of Chile puts on it the value it deserves. Despite the fascist terrorism, the book was also published in our country and it has been read, and will be read, by an ever wider circle of people.

When considering the role of Catholics (and Christians generally) in evaluating the prospects for an alliance for the liberation of the working class and of the Latin American peoples and nations, one should bear yet another point in mind: the changes in the consciousness of broad masses of believers are a relatively new process, but it is very wide, it is confronted with many difficulties and obstacles, and has to run in highly contradictory conditions. It has become a solid and objective factor of growing influence on millions of people. When critically assessing our differences with believers and the invaluable advantages of accord with them for joint action and the establishment of various forms of unity and even of alliance, one should always bear in mind the peculiar problems of Christian thinking.

In the specific case of Catholics, it is preferable to bear in mind the simple and elementary fact of their belonging to an institution, the Church,

which offers them protection. Marx once made an interesting remark concerning the Church. When ridiculing a petty-bourgeois writer intent on "abolishing the 'antagonism' between money and commodities", he said that that would be tantamount to "abolishing money itself, since money exists only by virtue of this antagonism". At this point he added: "We might just as well try to retain Catholicism without the Pope."¹⁴

Three basic and highly contradictory trends, each of which is manifested in a great many variants, now coexist within the Catholic Church. One of the bishops of Santiago, Monsignor Jorge Hourton, has described them as follows: "There are those who have adopted a new and unique 'theory of liberation' and find their theological credo in the ridiculous assertion that the Armed Forces have liberated us from Marxism, and therefore every good Catholic owes them a debt of gratitude and support for the established regime (the conservative position). Others are most concerned with maintaining the equilibrium, balancing, as it were, on a knife-edge, being aware of the problems, but trying to ignore them (the position of the indifferent). Finally, there are those who seek to go deeper, and while they seek to build peace and are pure of heart, they cannot avoid being affected by the problems, by continuous attacks on their Christian conscience, and so taking up more critical and dissident positions."¹⁵

At the risk of oversimplifying, one could state that among those taking the first position, the 'conservative one' are out-and-out fascists, the men from Opus Dei,¹⁶ which enjoys much influence under the present pontificate, reactionaries of the worst sort, and also well-intentioned and ingenuous traditionalists, clergymen of the old stamp and 'God's fools'. The second position is institutionally the predominant one, including most bishops, 'soft' conservatives, some of the renewalists who have yet to shed their ancestral prejudices, and also a mixed bag of reformists who are not so much indifferent to change as taking a middle road. The third position is held by those who are dedicated — often unequivocally — to the social struggle of our day. The mass of believers who incline to the third position in Chile is most impressive. It is true that many of them are also under the influence of Catholic leaders taking the second positions. And all that is in continuous flux, in constant evolution, hopefully, for the better.

The truly important fact is that *more and more believers no longer feel that there is a contradiction between their creed and participation in the political struggle on the side of the left, and even in a revolution*. For some, religion is an additional impetus to revolutionary action.

The magnitude of this phenomenon is evident from the polemics within the Church between the adherents and opponents of 'liberation theology'. The whole point is that the events of our revolutionary epoch have had an impact on large masses of believers, and this has been reflected by some Catholic theologians developing the well-known conception of man as an active being transforming nature and transforming himself in the course of social activity. They take a dialectical view of social processes, criticise the ethics of capitalism, take a stand for the oppressed classes and opt for socialism. That has alarmed some circles in the Vatican, and it has become public knowledge that some cardinals regard the liberation theology as a heresy.

The Pope has also criticised it from the beginning of his pontificate. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (which is heir to the Inquisition and the Holy Office), has staged something like a trial of some of the more progressive theologians. The Brazilian Franciscan Leonardo Boff was chastised for his speeches by the imposition of a year's 'penitential silence'. Well-informed circles in Italy say that the Synod of Bishops convened by Pope John Paul II in 1986 was about to anathematise the liberation theology, when many prominent prelates from Brazil, Peru and other countries came out in its defence. The Synod ended without making a statement on this issue. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith later issued, with the Pope's express approbation, a document entitled 'Instruction on Christian Liberty and Liberation', which was highly ambiguous but contained obvious concessions to some of the formulations most vigorously backed by the liberation theologians.

One has to assume that the liberation theology has so resonated throughout the world that the Vatican was forced to respect it. And that is no small matter. These theologians are engaged in producing more solid works, among them a collective edition of a new theological encyclopedia (*Summa Theologica*) no longer based on Aristotle's teachings, but on dialectical thinking.

Many Catholics find themselves confused and fear that the Vatican merely wants to postpone the confrontation in an effort to strengthen its positions in the various Episcopal Commissions in Latin America by the continued appointment of conservative bishops to most of the vacancies as they occur. There seems to be some ground for such fears, although it is quite evident that the passage of time is now much faster, and that, in the midst of the social upheavals and struggle of the peoples of the continent, it favours not only the liberation theologians, but also those who among the believers want cooperation of all the progressive forces without exception.

The Communist Party of Chile does not interfere in the internal affairs of the Church, but it takes part, with resolve and full clarity, in *searching for ways towards accord, joint action, cooperation, friendship, unity and mutual understanding or alliance* of the revolutionary anti-imperialist movement with Catholics and Christians generally. Meanwhile, US imperialism has stooped to every sort of intrigue, pressure and infiltration of its men into religious organisations to meddle in their affairs and try to divide them. One example will suffice: the lodges of Opus Dei are directly connected with the CIA, and their machinations are seen by the multitude of Catholics as profanation of their faith, are regarded with revulsion and rejected.

There is also the exemplary struggle by broad masses and the whole people of Chile against Pinochet's fascist tyranny, and it is embodied in well-concerted action by the party grassroots, be they Marxists, Christians or adherents of other ideological trends. Chile is a country where communist thinking continues to have deep roots, despite the fascist terrorism. It is, at the same time, a country in which Christianity has much weight, and in which the Catholic Church enjoys indubitable influence. It is a great fiasco for Pinochet that the Christians' religious sentiments did

not prevent them from joining the Communists and other democrats in the fight, and from doing so without any second thoughts and prejudice. Theirs was not an easy choice in any sense, nor was it a unanimous one, but it was made by the *majority of believers*, and joint actions are now increasingly massive and involve the most diverse sections of the population.

We Communists will do our utmost to go on strengthening this militant brotherhood of Chileans, to make it the distinctive feature of our democracy and of our revolution in the battles ahead.

¹ For details, see Alvaro Oviedo, Stepan Mamontov, 'Theology of Liberation: A New Heresy?', *WMR*, No. 3, 1986. — *Ed.*

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, pp. 86-87.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. One, Moscow 1969, p. 14.

⁵ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 72.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 372-73, footnote.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁹ Literally meaning 'guardians', but actually feudal lords who 'took care' of the Indians. — *Ed.*

¹⁰ Bartolome de Las Casas (1474-1566), a Spanish bishop, a humanist who opposed the brutality of the conquistadors and stood up in defence of the Indian population. — *Ed.*

¹¹ Camilo Henríquez (1769-1825), a Chilean public and political leader and the author of Chile's first Constitution. — *Ed.*

¹² See 'The Need and Outlook for United Action', *WMR*, No. 10, 1978, p. 74.

¹³ For details, see Esteban Ona, 'Fidel Castro reflects on Religion', *WMR*, No. 1, 1987.

¹⁴ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 87, footnote.

¹⁵ J. Hourton, "Las 'opciones políticas' del catolicismo", *Revista Chile-América*, Roma, Nos. 80-81, 1982, p. 37.

¹⁶ A political and religious organisation founded in 1928 with the aim of launching 'new crusades against communism'. — *Ed.*

No Peace Without Justice

Bishop Leonidas Proaño —
(Ecuador)

The author is one of the dignitaries of the Catholic Church in Latin America who has 'opted for the poor' and for the liberation theology. He is now 78 years old, and has dedicated his life to defence of human rights, human dignity and the historical cultural identity of the native population of Ecuador and the whole continent, an effort for which he has deservedly come to be known as the 'Bishop of the Indians'. He has been repeatedly subjected to direct attacks by local latifundists and reactionary clericals, who have dubbed him 'Red' and 'Communist'.

Monsignor Leonidas Proaño is now the head of the Ecuadoran Bishopric's Department for Pastoral Work Among the Indians; he is a vice-president of the Latin American Human Rights Association,

and is well known as a consistent champion of peace and general disarmament.

Below is an interview with Monsignor Proaño by the Ecuadoran journalist Lenin Oña at the journal's request.

Please tell us of your experience in working among the Indians.

I HAVE worked for over thirty years in the diocese of Riobamba, and enlightenment of the Indians has always been my prime concern. It would take too much time to tell of what I have experienced in the course of this work. Let me say only a few words about the state in which I found the native inhabitants of the province of Chimborazo at the beginning of my activity. They were severely oppressed people deprived of the capacity to think, to take decisions, to love and to display initiative. Psychologically they suffered from numerous complexes: inferiority, mistrust, passiveness, conformism, fatalism, and so on.

The first few years were hard and difficult. I often returned discouraged to my episcopal palace after futile attempts to establish contacts with the local population.

Later we managed to set up the Popular Radio Schools' for Indians, 90 per cent of whom could neither read nor write.

These schools were started with the help of volunteers who had only a primary education, and we worked hard to give them elementary training in teaching. We started out by opening 11 small and very modest radio schools, and their experience was gradually spread across the country. I believe that was an important contribution to combating illiteracy: it is estimated that we managed to teach almost 19,000 persons to read and write.

We were moved in our efforts to establish contacts with the Indians by our sense of love for them, a feeling which I had had in my heart since childhood. It was a feeling inculcated in me by my parents, who set an example of love for these local people. While I was still at the seminary preparing to take holy orders, I longed to work in a rural parish so as to help them. I felt that my hour had come when I was appointed bishop of Riobamba. I believe that only a great love for human beings can help to overcome the difficulties I spoke of. After all, we were in communication not only with the students of the radio schools, but with entire and highly numerous communities, which displayed an interest in all our programmes, including entertainment programmes. Little by little, the Indians began to regard all our activity as their own, and that is the reason for their awakening.

Then another process got under way: the Indian movement of Chimborazo with explicit political objectives. I believed that it deserved full approval. This movement is now in a state of crisis, but I feel that if it were to become active again it could be an important force in the revival of the Indian people in our country.

When the Holy See accepted my resignation as bishop of Riobamba because of my age, an Ecuadoran Episcopal Conference appointed me —

at the Pope's suggestion, I feel — to head the Department for Pastoral Work Among the Indians of the whole of Ecuador. I have been fulfilling these duties with great hope, because the state of the native population is very different from that at the start of my activity.

There are now objective conditions which give one hope of something very new both in consolidating the organised Indian people in their own development and in establishing a church at their service with their own (Indian) priests, religious orders, liturgy and theology, and — as the Pope said on his visit to Ecuador — with their own bishops. We are now working to bring this about.

What is the role in your work with the population of the pseudo-Christian sects which have multiplied in Ecuador in the past several years?

The activity of these sects is destructive. In the province of Chimborazo, there has been a veritable avalanche of sects whose sole purpose is to destroy the work of long and painful years. A look at the political motives of their activity will, I think, show just how destructive their activity is. We all know that the United States is now the imperial power dominating not only Latin American countries but many other states in the world as well. Hence, it has a great stake in seeing every people divided, as it was, for instance, in South Vietnam, where sect activity was widely used during the war to divide the Vietnamese; in that country there was also a Summer Language Institute like the one operating in Ecuador. It is quite clear to me that the sects are working on the 'divide and rule' principle.

What are the values the liberation theology brings to the Indians?

When speaking of the liberation theology in the Indian context we must bear in mind its distinctive features. It was originally conceived as ministry to the oppressed popular masses, without any consideration of what could be called the Indian cultural identity, and that is the aspect which should be borne in mind.

I think that the first thing to do is to work and live in the midst of the Indians and to help them to discover themselves, to find confidence in themselves and to find the ways to spiritual liberation within themselves. When, as a people, they come to feel that they are capable of contrasting their profound moral values to the anti-values of Western civilisation, and of releasing themselves from their anti-values, it will then be possible to speak of a dialogue with them and of mutual assistance to attain that for which the liberation theology exists: man's integral liberation.

The Indians, I repeat, must liberate their own identity and become conscious of the great values of their own history, whereupon we can advance together towards all-round economic, social, religious, political and psychological liberation, so as to turn the Ecuadorans, and all the peoples of Latin America, into truly free nations. That, I believe, is now the vocation of the various ethnic groups of Latin America.

What significance do you attach to the relation between social justice and peace on the globe, in the region and in each country?

I think that this question is important not only from the theoretical standpoint. As a principle it is enunciated in the Bible. It is possible to talk of peace only when there is justice. If you take a man, to put it crudely, grip him by the throat, throw him down, trample on him and beat him unconscious, he is bound to resist and fight against such oppressive treatment; in such a relation one cannot speak of peace between the oppressor and the oppressed.

Applying this simple simile to what is going on at the national level and on the world level, one will find that there are oppressors and oppressed, those who unjustly exploit and those who are unjustly exploited. So long as this state of things exists, it is impossible to speak of true peace, because, as I see it, peace is harmony of many-sided relations, and harmony in the practice of many values. So, there can be peace only when there is true harmony, and justice is an ingredient of it, because there is no peace where there is injustice.

Taking the pragmatic standpoint, what do you think of current developments in Central America?

Let me start by separating Central American countries like El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala from Nicaragua, although the causes of the situation in these countries are the same. I think that struggle for liberation is the main thing for the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala. It has been going on for many years and to no avail because of the intervention of the United States, which continues to dominate the countries of Latin America. The sufferings and sacrifices of its people are immense.

I had occasion to visit El Salvador and to experience for myself the severity of the situation, and to live, together with the Salvadorans, in fear of one's life every minute of the day, whether in the street, at home, in church or elsewhere. There is no respect for life in that country, and people are in a state of permanent fear and permanent war lurking on every hand. Such is life today in countries like El Salvador and Guatemala. I feel that there is something similar in Honduras, even if not with such intensity. In that country, there is also a surging indignation against the government, which has become an instrument, a puppet of the US administration.

I believe, therefore, that there is a need to promote in every way international solidarity so as to save the Central American peoples who are being bled white in their fight for freedom.

The situation in Nicaragua, I believe, should be considered separately, because it is a particular case. It is aggravating to see the brazenness with which the United States has been helping the local counter-revolutionaries violate the will of the majority of Nicaraguans in a ruthless war. The Nicaraguan people fought to get rid of Somoza's cruel tyranny, and then got down, with the same enthusiasm, to satisfying the people's most basic and urgent needs, such as public health care, literacy, etc. I simply fail to comprehend how the United States President Reagan, could, with the

world looking on, take all these measures against this small and valiant Central American country whose resolution became the hope for all of Latin American and other peoples of the world. How has this brutal aggressiveness and brazenness become possible without any effective sanctions on the part of the governments of the world? Why have all the laws and all international agreements been violated? Where are the principles of non-intervention and self-determination for the peoples?

I want to address myself to all the democratic countries, to all the states which regard themselves as a part of peaceful mankind to raise their voices in defence of the Nicaraguan people. It is necessary to stop the vast flow of US aid and to leave this small people alone to set up its own system and choose the way of life it likes best.

What is your view and that of the Church on the need for peace and general disarmament?

It is inconceivable how one can defend the course taken by the United States over the past several years and aimed to prepare Star Wars. So many lies, so many weapons (including nuclear weapons) have been accumulated in the world, and at the same time, so many people, including US scientists, have raised their voices against the warmongers, against the danger to life itself on earth! Meanwhile, those who are pushing mankind into death and destruction pay no heed. That is why there must be enthusiastic support and approval for any initiative aimed to release us from this nightmare. Concerning the Church, it has advocated peace in general terms for years.

There are the statements by the Popes on this matter. The Church has traditionally addressed itself to the faithful with a message of peace on New Year's Eve. That is what Pope John Paul II had done, but he also preached peace on his tours of many countries. One has to admit, of course, that there may also be differences on issues within the Church such as social justice, attitude to other ideologies, etc., and there may be much confusion even among bishops. It is, for instance, very easy to start condemning some ideology despite the fact that it seeks to establish justice in the world, while we ourselves now and again come out in blind opposition, without ourselves effectively fighting for justice. There is a pack of differences here, and it is our task to overcome them little by little, through dialogue and common reflection.

When replying to this question, I must say what I think about the steps taken by Mikhail Gorbachov, a man who has been winning the sympathies of many people throughout the world. Even those who are in power and authority in the European countries who had once been deeply convinced of the need to build up the forces of warfare, death and destruction in their respective countries have begun to vacillate. I have read with satisfaction press reports about the Soviet leader with his new style of leadership in blazing the trail in the history of his own country and its relations with other countries. After all, he has appealed to the common sense of every inhabitant of the earth . . . If the nuclear arsenals are reduced, we should very much like to see the process go on until their complete abolition.

After all, what kind of peace is it if it is attained at the price of fear and terror? It should be the supreme hope, I believe, that all of these weapons will disappear from the face of the earth. That cannot, of course, be done all at once, and it calls for gradual but precise steps.

Are you an optimist or a pessimist on this score?

The gravity of the situation makes it hard for one to be an optimist without the risk of appearing to be naive, but the events of the past few months give fresh hope that mankind can survive. I should like to be an optimist, and, in any case, to work to transmit one's optimism to others and through them to the great leaders of the world.

¹ Schools with tuition in two languages — Spanish and Kechua — and making wide use of prepared radio programmes. — *Ed.*

The Planet's Flashpoints

Around The Persian Gulf Crisis

The continuation of the Iran-Iraq war and the aggravation of the situation in the Persian Gulf directly affect the neighbouring countries not involved in the hostilities. None of them has benefited from the conflict, none of them has been able to escape the effects of the war or to enhance its own security. The war has already led to an escalation of the imperialist military presence there, an upsurge of reactionary and militarist forces, suppression of democracy and more brutal persecution of the patriotic national opposition. These issues are covered in the articles that follow.

USING THE WAR AS A PRETEXT

Mushin Abdallah (Saudi Arabia)

THE Saudi reactionaries are noticeably stepping up their subversive activities in the Middle East. This subversion is one of the principal factors behind the deterioration of the political situation throughout the region and the weakening of the Arab people's anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist solidarity.

While calling for an immediate end to the Iran-Iraq war, the Saudi authorities in fact *encourage its escalation*. This was highlighted by the Irangate affair which exposed Saudi Arabia's direct and indirect involvement in the financing and management of the deal. On the other hand, the Saudi government has, from the outset, extended considerable support to the Saddam Hussain regime, providing it with sizeable financial assistance, underwriting its arms purchases, supplying it with food,

allowing it to lay an oil pipeline through Saudi territory to Red Sea ports, and remitting part of the oil sales revenue to Baghdad. At the same time, the Saudi regime provided doctored intelligence information to both Iraq and Iran.

In the Persian Gulf area which is central to the foreign policy of my country's authorities, they act chiefly through the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (also known as the Gulf Cooperation Council). Saudi Arabia sponsored its establishment and is in fact its leader. From the outset, the Saudi regime tried to 'infect' the other GCC members with its obsessive commitment to 'stronger security'. Riyadh is doing all it can to promote anti-democratic trends in our region and to encourage an insane arms race. It is working to expand military and police operations within the framework of the GCC which is increasingly resembling a pact linked with the imperialist military structures in the Middle East.

The acute crisis in the international oil market has precipitated a catastrophic drop in oil prices. That was brought about by the operation of several factors, including the negative role played by Saudi Arabia. Aiming to offset the drastic reduction of Iraqi and Iranian oil exports brought on by the war, Saudi Arabia literally flooded the market with its relatively inexpensive oil, and that was the main reason why the prices went down. This policy encountered stiff opposition within OPEC, and its architect — Saudi Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Ahmed Zaki Yamani — had to resign.

The oil market crisis had a direct and painful impact on the entire Saudi socio-economic fabric; it had felt no comparable blow for the past quarter of a century. In 1984, the national income dropped below the 1979 level, and economic growth rates diminished.

The ruling quarters and the government-run mass media are trying to conceal the real scope of the disaster. They keep disseminating inventions about 'economic development returning to normal', or, while acknowledging the slump, they ascribe it to a 'temporary reduction in revenue due to the worldwide economic crisis'. In actual fact, however, the blame should go to the regime's policy which is based on an arms race, thoughtless squandering of resources, further deformation of the economic structures wholly tied to oil, and the country's increasingly dependent status in the world capitalist economic system.

The working class and other sections of the working people are bearing the brunt of the crisis. A continuous and brutal offensive is being conducted to deprive them of their social gains. Using the Gulf war as a pretext for tougher security measures, the authorities have launched a large-scale campaign to persecute the progressive and democratic forces.

The people refuse to accept the policy of terror, the human rights violations and the elimination of democratic freedoms. Champions of democracy in Saudi Arabia are becoming ever more outspoken, and the campaign of solidarity with the political prisoners is expanding. The masses are demanding an end to the torture of detainees. *Indignation at government policies is spreading to cover ever wider sections of the population* — intellectuals, youth, students and women. The regime's social base is contracting. Disaffection has even surfaced within the royal

family: some of its members have voiced indirect criticism of certain aspects of the government's political and economic course, while others resent the fact that King Fahd's faction keeps securing new government posts of key importance. Having reached a dead end and trying to cope with the crisis, the Saudi authorities are forced to manoeuvre constantly, but they remain loyal to repression as their chief weapon.

The aggravation of the crisis is accompanied by an increase in the demagogic aspects of the regime's policy. Religion is increasingly becoming an object of political schemes. The absolutist state gives free rein to its archaic religious institutions such as the Committee to Encourage Virtue and Condemn Sin, dominated by a handful of obscurantists and religious opportunists.

The Saudi government launched a new wave of terror allegedly in connection with the events that occurred in the summer of 1987. They included the tragic incident in Mecca, the consequent political crisis in Saudi-Iranian relations,¹ the abrupt exacerbation of the situation in the Gulf zone resulting from the concentration of large US-NATO forces there, and the dangerous escalation of the Iran-Iraq war.

That was when the regime unleashed a campaign in which numerous arrests were made among all elements of the patriotic opposition — progressive, liberal and religious. Besides, the government adopted emergency security measures in different parts of the country. In the Eastern Province along the Persian Gulf coast, populated mostly by Shi'ites, an undeclared state of emergency was imposed for several months, and National Guard units were stationed there. Urban neighbourhoods and villages were invaded by security agents.

The authorities sought to use the incident in Mecca to foment interdenominational strife, to step up their oppression of the Shi'ites and to force some religious leaders of the Shi'ite community to sign statements condemning what the authorities called 'Iranian-engineered unrest in Mecca'. But there was strong popular opposition to these steps, and the regime had to retreat.

Summing up, one can say that Saudi society is facing *acute socio-economic and political problems*. It is being torn apart by profound contradictions between the country's rapid capitalist development and the powerful influence of feudal and prefeudal holdovers; the social superstructure is particularly affected. The Iran-Iraq war, with the Iranian challenge to Arab nationalism as a new element, is a particularly important factor of the crisis.

Increasing degradation of absolutist rule is the principal salient feature of life in today's Saudi Arabia. It has reached an unprecedented degree due to an abrupt contraction of the regime's financial opportunities which were previously used widely for political and social manoeuvring. Since the government refuses to effect any significant reorganisation of the administrative system, the relative shortage of funds prods it into using violence and arbitrary methods and moving closer to imperialism, primarily US imperialism. Opposing that course, the people are stepping up their struggle for their vital demands and for democracy.

The Communist Party of Saudi Arabia is working to *consolidate and*

rally together the country's progressive forces. It seeks the establishment of a representative patriotic national front capable of involving the broadest possible masses in the struggle to abolish absolutist rule and create a democratic national government. Allied with all who hold the ideals of peace and progress dear, our country's patriots are fighting for the withdrawal of the US-NATO forces from the Gulf area, for an immediate end to the Iran-Iraq war, and for the transformation of the Middle East and the Indian Ocean region into a zone of peace.

¹ On July 31, 1987, more than 150,000 Iranian pilgrims in Mecca staged a demonstration demanding King Fahd's and the ruling Saudi dynasty's ousting for their inability to maintain law and order in the holy places of Islam. In clashes with the Saudi police 402 people were killed, including 275 Iranians. The progressive forces blamed largely the ruling regime, but also expressed their rejection of attempts to 'export the Islamic Revolution' either to Saudi Arabia or to other countries. — *Ed.*

TO SAVE THE NATION FROM DISASTER

Salah Djaber (Kuwait)

CONTRARY to the will and interests of the people, Kuwait's rulers have involved our country — albeit indirectly — into the Iran-Iraq war. That is explained primarily by their close ties with the Saddam Hussain regime to which diverse aid is granted and part of our national wealth is handed over free of charge. In particular, one should mention that export revenues from the sales of 300,000 barrels of oil a day are remitted to Iraq. The Iraqi air force is allowed to take on fuel at Kuwaiti airfields and to have its wounded servicemen treated in our hospitals. The official mass media are involved in anti-Iranian propaganda. They, as well as the mass media of other Arab countries, have succeeded in convincing part of the population that Iraq is defending Kuwait in this war. But many people of Iranian descent in our country support the other side.

The government poses as an innocent lamb drawn into the conflict by the vicissitudes of chance; in actual fact, it is a vigorous participant in the war. Kuwait has already been shelled, not only by Iran but also by Iraq. Under the pretext of the hostilities and of the need to ensure freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf and the safety of Kuwaiti tankers, our authorities seek to justify Kuwait's transformation into a US protectorate.

But safe shipping is only part of the problem. The US press enabled the public to glimpse the real state of affairs, and Kuwaiti officials do not deny that our government has pledged to grant considerable favours to the US naval forces in the Gulf — from free fuelling to more frequent port calls. There is also Kuwait's involvement in the maintenance and repair of US warships, as well as agreement to provide helicopter landing facilities on our territory (explained by the need for minesweeping operations) and to host US military advisers and servicemen.

The ruling regime is acting *to the detriment of the country's independence and national sovereignty*. It did Washington's bidding by first inviting US and NATO forces into the Gulf and then searching for reasons to justify their unprecedented concentration. The US-NATO presence has created the most dangerous hotbed of tensions in the area. It threatens universal peace, the security of the region and the independence of its states.

The secret involvement of the Kuwaiti government in the imperialist conspiracy, its disdain of national sovereignty and rapprochement with the United States were thrown into bold relief after the blow the ruling tribal aristocracy élite and the financial oligarchy dealt to the people's constitutional gains on July 3, 1986. That was when the National Assembly was dissolved, the main constitutional provisions suspended, and censorship of the press introduced. Those moves expressed the interests of the more backward and reactionary quarters of the ruling class which were alarmed at the prospect of possible control exercised by parliament and the popular movement.

Suppression of the trade union and student movements intensified. For the first time in many years, scores of people were arrested or detained on political charges. A reign of terror and intimidation set in.

The popular masses are legitimately concerned not only over the possibility of Kuwait being drawn into the hostilities at any moment but also over the threat to national unity which the authorities have created by fomenting intercommunal strife. The policy of discrimination vis-à-vis the Shi'ite minority has gravely strained Shi'ite-Sunni relations and aroused mutual suspicion between the two communities. The reactionary forces that operate under a religious cover are seeking to compound the problem.

The course pursued by any country in international relations reflects its domestic policies and so, inevitably, the negative elements of the latter have affected the Kuwaiti rulers' foreign policy. No longer paying lip service to 'relative autonomy' and 'equidistance', they switched to collaboration with US imperialism. Ties with the Camp David-oriented government of Egypt and with the regime in Turkey are growing stronger, particularly in the military field.

Over the past five years, Kuwait has been saddled with a budget deficit caused by the government's economic policy which seeks to support and enrich the bourgeoisie at the expense of the masses. In the absence of popular control, the authorities apply different methods to further this objective, including the so-called policy of 'rationalising' expenditures which shifts the onus of the crisis onto the working people. For all its adverse effects on the Kuwaiti economy, the war does not prevent large-scale embezzlement and appropriation of public funds by the financial oligarchy.

The patriotic forces are fighting for the people's fundamental freedoms, for a return to the parliamentary system, restoration of democracy, observance of the main constitutional guarantees, repeal of restrictions on civil rights, and release of political prisoners. They advocate preservation of national sovereignty, abrogation of the agreement with US imperialism on US protection and flagging of Kuwaiti tankers, and cancellation of the privileges granted to the US Navy. Kuwait's patriots are also working to

secure the withdrawal of the US-NATO warships from the Gulf and the immediate ceasefire between Iran and Iraq as a first step to a comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

We hail and support the Soviet peace initiatives on these issues. We also support the proposals aimed at establishing a UN-sponsored international naval force capable of ensuring freedom of navigation in the Gulf and putting an end to the imperialist military presence in the region.

UNDER THE PRETEXT OF DEFENDING SOVEREIGNTY

Saif Ben Ali

Secretary General, National Liberation Front of Bahrain (NLFB)

Youssef al-Hassan

alternate member, NLFB Governing Committee

TWO peoples — the Iranians and the Iraqis — have already made vast human sacrifices to the funeral pyre of the war. It dislocates the economies of the belligerents and non-belligerents and has a crippling effect on the environment. Present and future generations will have to pay dearly for the consequences.

The conflict enables imperialism and reaction to play on the notions of 'security', 'non-interference' and 'defence of sovereignty', while in actual fact *tying Bahrain more securely to the juggernaut of militarism, strengthening the savage regime of the local rulers, using them to strangle democracy and siphoning off our oil resources.*

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) established during the initial period of the war, has not been striving to de-escalate the conflict or to promote economic integration for the benefit of the people. The Council is obviously turning into a repressive military bloc, an appendage of NATO. In the field of foreign policy, the Bahrain authorities stubbornly ignore contemporary realities and refuse to establish diplomatic relations with the USSR or other socialist countries — although this has been done by Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Military expenditures have increased drastically. In 1985 the rulers of our country, the smallest in the Gulf area, purchased 70 million pounds worth of military hardware from Britain. The next year US-manufactured aircraft were delivered, and the regime ordered a squadron of nuclear-capable F-16 fighter-bombers. Washington has recently agreed to supply Bahrain with Stinger missiles.

Such large-scale transactions may feed the egos of the sheikhs and the emirs but objectively, these contracts benefit certain quarters in the United States, generally in the West, in the Persian Gulf countries and in Israel. After all, compared to other goods, military hardware offers a better ratio of returning the petrodollars spent by the imperialist powers.

Besides, while officially protesting about US arms deliveries to the Gulf

states, the Israeli rulers are satisfying their own militarist ambitions because they receive lavish US aid under the pretext of restoring military parity with the Arab countries.

Finally, the huge stockpiles of imported weapons encourage the military to use them in border disputes — for example, between Saudi Arabia and its neighbours, or between Bahrain and Qatar. In turn, this militarises politics and escalates the efforts to terrorise the internal opposition.

In Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain, old military bases are being modernised and new ones are being built. In our country, the United States uses the al-Djufair naval base and the al-Muharraq military airfield. Another base, currently under construction at al-Djezira, will also be handed over to the US.

As the war broke out, our region's countries began to purchase sophisticated military hardware and to build major military bases and other facilities. Naturally, it is difficult for their armies to handle this hardware on their own. That is why these modern weapons are virtually controlled by the US military, and this is confirmed in classified reports and in statements by ranking US officers. We are in fact dealing with an additional form of the already extensive US military presence in the Gulf and in the Indian Ocean.

Growing military spending has frozen many construction projects, led to severe cuts in allocations for development purposes, and resulted in a depression in all sectors of the economy.

However, the deterioration of Bahrain's socio-economic situation is due not only to the drop in oil prices, corruption and numerous bankruptcies, but also to direct consequences of the Iran-Iraq conflict. While the unprecedented unemployment rate at the end of the oil boom forced thousands of foreign migrant workers in poorly paid jobs to leave our country, the escalation of the hostilities prompted many citizens of Bahrain to leave too.

The war has been inflicting heavy damage on the environment. In this way, *opportunities for economic development and even for supporting human life are being curtailed*. Water pollution (seawater is the main source of drinking water) is a major problem because fresh water is scarce. The shelling of oilfields, oil rigs and tankers has led to huge losses of the resources in question. Vast oil slicks which covered the Gulf for a long time have killed off a considerable part of its flora and fauna, particularly fish — the second most important natural resource of Bahrain (after oil).

The war and the negative trends in both Iraq and Iran have undermined the hope the anti-Shah revolution gave us for an improvement in the situation in Bahrain where, back in 1975, parliament was dissolved and parties and civic organisations were banned.

Brutal reprisals have been unleashed against the NLFB and the country's other progressive forces over the past two years. Scores of the nation's sons and daughters are languishing in prison without investigation or trial; for the first time, many women are now in jail. The prisoners are subjected to torture and psychotropic experiments.¹

The explosive situation affects particularly painfully those classes and social strata whose interests are expressed by our Front and by other

progressive organisations. It follows that the working people have a particularly great stake in securing the termination of the conflict and the withdrawal of all US-NATO forces and military bases from the region.

As a party of internationalists, we are aware that the escalation of the war also poses a *threat to international security, universal peace and the forces of social progress*.

On the one hand, the Iraq-Iran war has gravely and adversely affected the Arab struggle for the liberation of the Israeli-occupied territories, for the right of the Palestinian people to recover their homeland and, led by the PLO, to create an independent national state.

On the other hand, the United States has used the conflict to build up its military presence not only in the Gulf but also in the Indian Ocean. Regimes such as ours may help consolidate this US-NATO presence, and Washington is already behaving high-handedly here, moving its bases closer to Soviet territory, destabilising governments it finds objectionable and suppressing liberation processes.

The United States seeks to return Iran into the fold of US influence and to use its territory again for spying and subversive operations against the Soviet Union, for fully controlling the Gulf, for restoring the Pakistan-Turkey-Iran bloc axis which collapsed after the overthrow of the Shah's regime, and for bringing greater pressure to bear on Afghanistan and the PDRY.

Our Front condemns the efforts of some local rulers to add fuel to the fire by openly supporting Iraq. We also oppose Iran's aggressive actions against Kuwait or any other country, as well as its attempts to involve its neighbours in the conflict.

To extinguish the flames of war and to withdraw imperialist troops and naval vessels from the region means *to defuse the situation* in the Gulf. *In turn, this will give a powerful impetus to the struggle of the peoples for democracy, national independence and social progress*. Meanwhile, only imperialism, Israel and the region's reactionaries benefit from the present situation. It is also consonant with the global ambitions of the United States which seeks to poison the international climate, hamper the settlement of regional conflicts, and impede practical steps aimed at establishing a comprehensive system of international security.

Before the war, our party and other patriotic national forces in Bahrain faced a complex dual task — on the one hand, that of securing genuine national independence and, on the other, that of restoring parliamentary democracy. We hold that today, too, opportunities exist for stepping up the struggle of the masses to further these objectives.

Despite the steps taken by the authorities to undermine and weaken the patriotic national movement, the working class and other working strata retain their militant potential. In a difficult situation, workers', youth and women's organisations have emerged and are active. The NLFB is waging a courageous struggle, according priority to the *demand for democratic freedoms as the key to success in other areas*.

Under an authoritarian regime which suppresses all opposition and persecutes patriotic activists and liberal bourgeois figures, *no political force can change the situation single-handed. We need a broad national movement*

and a programme around which all disaffected strata and figures would rally.

With this end in view, we are working to establish cooperation with the People's and the Islamic Fronts for the Liberation of Bahrain. The religious procession of October 22, 1987 developed into a demonstration which demanded an end to the US presence in the region and in our country. There is joint action with some religious forces at the local level. But what has been achieved is clearly not enough for us to speak about an alliance.

The NLFB is aware that the bourgeoisie is not homogeneous. It comprises interests that advocate industrial development and, to varying degrees, possess a democratic potential. We therefore do not rule out possible cooperation in the name of common objectives — primarily, restricting the sway of foreign monopolies and the influence of the big bourgeoisie and restoring democracy. Cooperation along these lines was rather effective during the brief period of parliamentary activity in the 1970s.

Multilateral cooperation involving the region's patriotic national progressive forces is also gaining importance, particularly in combating the concerted moves of the ruling regimes to 'assure security'. A few years ago the NLFB advanced the slogan of unity among peace champions in Bahrain and in the Gulf zone. That is a feasible objective, but it is difficult to attain because the danger of the US military presence is not yet clear to everyone. Another reason is that reprisals prevent many opponents of the imperialist presence from actively joining the struggle for peace. That is why *our platform has established close links between the struggle for democracy and the efforts to invigorate this movement.*

A regional committee of youth, women's, student and trade union organisations in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Iraq was established in 1986. It conducted a series of political education projects aimed against the imperialist military presence in the region. The patriotic national forces of Bahrain and other states have recently called on Arab and international organisations and on the public to bring pressure to bear on governments so as to end the war and secure the withdrawal of the troops of non-littoral states.

We are seriously studying the possibility of uniting all those concerned over the situation in and around the Gulf into an organised movement for the restoration of peace in the region and for its transformation into a zone free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

¹ See: Said Ali, 'Stop the Campaign of Terror in Bahrain', *WMR*, No. 1, 1987. — *Ed.*

25 Years In Racist Prison

Winnie Mandela — (South Africa)

Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, will turn 70 on July 18, 1988. The ANC is calling on the international community to intensify the struggle to liberate Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners and detainees.

Following is an interview of our correspondent with Nelson's wife Winnie Mandela.

You and your husband are marking a bitter anniversary — 25 years of his imprisonment by the racists. You yourself have been jailed, banished and banned. You live under constant surveillance by the police and the security service. What is helping you to withstand this pressure and to be so active?

MY life is dedicated to a constant, unrelenting struggle. Neither surveillance, insults nor arrests can stop me. That's the reason for my existence, the logic of my life. I make no distinction between the struggle for the release of my husband and for the freedom of other political prisoners. I am fighting against national oppression and racial discrimination.

The awareness that I, together with others, am fighting for a democratic South Africa gives me strength. By speaking at rallies and at funerals (and funerals are almost a daily occurrence with us), by taking part in protest demonstrations, working in numerous civic organisations and helping the women's and youth movement, I am bringing closer the day my country, my husband and his comrades will be free.

I constantly feel the powerful support of my people and of many international political and civic organisations. That, too, gives me strength. Like our other leaders, I regard my international awards as awards to my people for their courageous struggle against the criminal policy of apartheid.

You have seen your husband recently. He saw his grandchildren for the first time. Did they know who he was? Has a quarter of a century in prison changed Nelson Mandela?

That was an unforgettable and deeply moving meeting. You should have seen his face when he saw his grandchildren. He treated them all with tender affection and spoke to them seriously, as if they were grown-ups. At first Zodwa, a grandson, said, "Don't touch me. You're a policeman." Nelson talked to him patiently and quietly. By the end of the meeting Zodwa was playing happily on his grandfather's lap.

The terrible years Nelson has spent in prison have not broken him. He hasn't changed. He remains deeply committed to his ideals, and fully resolved to keep fighting for his cause. In his message to the 1985 ANC

Conference in Kabwe he said that he accepted the leadership of the ANC and that if he was released he would join the struggle with renewed vigour.

Botha, the racist chieftain, offered him freedom on several conditions — that he should go to the Transkei (a Bantustan), that he should not engage in political activities, make no public speeches, join no party. They also wanted him to pledge that the ANC would not wage an armed struggle against the government. Nelson refused categorically to accept these conditions.

Govan Mbeki, an ANC and SACP member, has been recently released. What made the racist regime take this step? Could it be that Nelson Mandela will be released soon?

It's hard to say why they set Mbeki free. The racists say it is a trial balloon. They have imposed severe restrictions on him. He has said clearly that he considers himself a member of the ANC and of the SACP. But one thing is obvious: his release is, to a certain degree, a victory for our people and for the international community. It should give a new impetus to our struggle.

I am sure that the racist regime will have to yield because demands for the freedom of Nelson Mandela and other prisoners are raised not only in South Africa but also in many other countries, even by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

I must say that many prisoners are in poor health. For example, Harry Gwala, a prominent leader of the ANC and the SACP, is gravely ill. The authorities were forced to transfer him from Robben Island to another prison in Pietermaritzburg.

What is your most cherished dream as a woman, wife, mother?

To see my country, my people, my children, my husband and his friends free. The day Nelson is released will be a bright day for our whole country and the happiest day in my life. After all, he is a symbol of the people's struggle for freedom. I am waiting for this day; I am dreaming of it. People from all communities, associations, alliances, trade unions, women's and youth organisations will gather to welcome him. The racists realise that that will be the most massive demonstration in South African history. And they fear that by releasing Mandela they will release new and unprecedented forces they will be unable to control. Botha is well aware that Nelson's popularity is great. Streets, squares and schools in many countries have been named after him. You can't really count all the awards he has received. There is the Free Nelson Mandela campaign under way in many countries, and we regard it as proof of the solidarity of the international community with the struggle of the people of South Africa.

Do you believe you will live to see your dream come true?

I do. If the entire people rise to the struggle, nothing can stop it. I don't know when that day will come, but come it will, the sooner the better, as it would enable our children and grandchildren to live and grow up in a

peaceful, non-racial and democratic South Africa. Let me recall that when my house in Brandfort where I had been summarily exiled was raided and a number of people were arrested, Zodwa was very upset and angry. He went missing, and we eventually found him walking by himself in one of the streets of that township. His experience is one that all our children go through every day of their lives. Thousands of our children have been detained and many tortured. But this cannot and will not stop our struggle.

the book scene

Success Without Euphoria

The US Press on Mikhail Gorbachov's Book 'Perestroika. New Thinking for Our Country and the World' and on His Visit to Washington.

NO BOOK in recent times has had such an impact on the United States as Mikhail Gorbachov's *Perestroika. New thinking for our Country and the World*.^{*} Promoted by the publisher as the 'Book of the Year', it quickly made the best-seller list and just as quickly went into a second printing. In explaining the significance of this book, the reviewer for the *Nation* magazine wrote: "Perestroika is valuable because it forces us to ask whether we are prepared to respond to the changes in the Soviet Union we have claimed to want for so many years."¹

No statesman in the post-World War II years has had such an impact on the United States as Mikhail Gorbachov. In deciding to name him 'Man of the Year', the *Time* magazine wrote: "In the world at large, Gorbachov has helped nudge his country and Ronald Reagan's off the path to nuclear destruction . . . In 1987 he became . . . a symbol of hope for a new kind of

^{*}Mikhail Gorbachov, *Perestroika. New Thinking for our Country and the World*, Harper and Row Publishers Inc., New York, 1987, 254 pp.

Soviet Union . . . For fanning that hope, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachov is *Time's* Man of the Year for 1987."²

No event in the post-war years has had such an impact on the United States as the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF) during Gorbachov's visit to Washington. For the first time in history, as Ronald Reagan had to acknowledge, an agreement was signed not just to reduce the number of nuclear weapons, but to eliminate an entire class of such weapons. *The New York Times* assessed its significance in its December 13, 1987 editorial in these words: "They not only signed the treaty eliminating Euromissiles; they had the courage to make the necessary compromises. They made important progress toward a treaty to make drastic cuts in strategic weapons . . . Set against 40 years of cold war that is success. Better still, it is success without euphoria."

Spring-Cleaning Time

The general acclaim for the new thinking, new dynamism and new diplomacy of the Soviet Union is reflected in a number of polls. Changes in mass thinking about the Soviet Union are intimately connected with how its foreign policy is perceived. The Soviet Union's prolonged, unilateral halt in nuclear tests and its dramatic peace initiatives at the Reykjavik summit marked a big turn. In late May 1987, the US Information Bureau found in a survey that "the overwhelming majority in Britain, France and West Germany believe the USSR deserves more credit than the United States for progress in arms control."³

The influential *Foreign Policy* magazine reports a big change in the popular image of Soviet diplomacy: "The British now see the United States as a 'greater threat to world peace' than the Soviet Union by a margin of 37 per cent to 33 per cent . . . Similar attitudes are developing in other key West European countries." In the opinion of the magazine, this augurs a "new chapter in East-West relations". It warns of the danger of "Western governments . . . losing credibility . . . unless they . . . begin to develop an imaginative East-West program of their own to respond to the Gorbachov challenge".⁴ The Atlantic Alliance, the article says, is being divided into two camps over the question of whether perestroika and glasnost represent a danger or an opportunity. In his opinion, the main tendency is to see them as an opportunity.

A similar stand was taken by David Charles in his commentary 'Nuclear Planning in NATO' in the December 10, 1987 issue of *Christian Science Monitor*. He warns that "if US policymakers refuse to explore the implications of this shift in Soviet attitudes and attempt to simply drive ever harder bargains in future negotiations, they may lose an historic opportunity to secure future stability in East-West relations".

There is no question that perestroika, glasnost and new thinking are having widespread repercussions among the various currents that make up the bourgeois political spectrum in the United States — liberals, middle-of-the-roaders, conservatives, extreme right, etc. It is spring-cleaning time and cobwebs are being shaken out of the dark recesses of many minds these days.

Effect of New Thinking

At first, the main tendency among Soviet 'experts' and sundry opinion makers was to dismiss the revolutionary reforms in the Soviet Union as mere 'tinkering' and changing nothing. Seweryn Bialer, director of the Research Institute of International Change and Professor of Political Science at Columbia University, for example, declared that "inertia . . . is inherent in the [Soviet] system" and therefore "no real change" can take place.⁵ In the face of the changing reality taking place before the eyes of the world, the question is, can Bialer overcome the inertia in his thinking?

Evidently, only a return of the Soviet Union to capitalism will satisfy them. Alas, disappointment will dog them the rest of their days on Earth.

But now a more sober assessment has set in. Even such an extreme right ideologist as George Will is compelled to recognise that a new situation exists. He now sets the task of US imperialism as follows: "The fundamental task of United States statecraft is to limit Soviet options, not to change the Soviet system."⁶ This, of course, is not an abandonment of typical imperialist arrogance but it is a recognition that even such arrogance has its limits.

Among extreme conservatives, new thinking has also touched Irving Kristol, senior fellow at the ultra-right American Enterprise Institute. He says: "What encourages me to take glasnost seriously is that it involves *both* domestic and foreign policy . . . If glasnost really does mean economic and social changes . . . there are bound to be repercussions for Soviet foreign policy that the West will greet with relief."⁷

Early in 1987, a special task force was established by the Institute for East-West Security Studies to 'study Soviet new thinking and its impact on the West'. The task force consisted of 40 members, including former Reagan administration officials, leading Sovietologists and business leaders from both the Democratic and Republican parties. After eight months of study, it concluded that it was necessary to have "a more active response to Gorbachov's reforms . . . We should begin by welcoming and encouraging the reformist inclinations that Gorbachov has set in motion and actively engage the Soviet Union in an effort to resolve key points of tension".⁸

What then is the reason for a 'thaw' in the US political climate and for a more sensible approach to American-Soviet relations? The Soviet leader says in his book, *inter alia*: ". . . If the Russian word 'perestroika' has easily entered the international lexicon, this is due to more than just interest in what is going on in the Soviet Union. Now the whole world needs restructuring, i.e., progressive development, a fundamental change" (p.254).

There is growing realisation that the signing of the INF Treaty creates the possibility of strengthening the potential for a 180 degree turn in the USA-USSR relationship away from escalating armed confrontation to nuclear disarmament and peaceful coexistence — an end to the Cold War.

In February, the prestigious Council of Foreign Relations sponsored a trip to the Soviet Union which included, among others, David Jones, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Testifying before the Senate

Armed Services Committee, Jones declared that "substantive changes are taking place in the Soviet Union and there is now an opportunity to reduce tensions and for serious negotiations". He expressed his belief that "agreement to reduce strategic nuclear weapons by 50 per cent was a distinct possibility".⁹

Thus, conservative political commentator Joseph C. Harsch writes: "When Mr Reagan signs the middle-range treaty, he will be abandoning the idea of trying to unseat the Soviet regime. The act of signing . . . will mean that the US; even with a right-wing Republican president, is willing to coexist with it and to continue business with it . . . It amounts to abandoning the cause of 'roll back'."¹⁰ That newspaper said editorially the next day: "The East and West blocs are in the midst of economic and military restructuring . . . Both sides benefit from a reduction in costly and duplicative defense spending, as well as the promise of a more realistic relationship between the two super-powers."

Dreary Apostles of the Past

In the extreme right, the impact of new thinking and corresponding new action has resulted in a sharp split.

Pat Robertson, a high apostle of the religious right who is now seeking the Republican nomination for President of the US, a former enthusiastic supporter of Ronald Reagan, now likens Reagan to Neville Chamberlain for signing the INF Treaty. Incidentally, at this writing (January 1988), four of the six announced candidates for the Republican presidential nomination have come out against the Treaty, while all the Democratic candidates have declared for it.

The bitterness against Reagan which has eaten into the extreme right has been expressed by such devout former supporters of Reagan as ideologue Howard Phillips who called Reagan "a useful idiot for Soviet propaganda", and Richard Viguerie, chief promoter of ultra-right causes, who said, "I'm not going to apologize to a president who is making the world a little safer for the Communists".¹¹ And the extreme right *Insight* magazine, owned by the Rev. Moon, accused Reagan of "ideological capitulation".¹²

Reagan knew whereof he spoke when he responded to these attacks by declaring, "These people have accepted that war is inevitable."¹³

As for the far right supportive of the Treaty, Joshua Kuravchik of the American Enterprise Institute think tank for Public Policy Research thus rationalised in *The New York Times* on December 9, 1987: "Rejection of this treaty would damage America's credibility and standing . . . What could be more self-defeating for us hawks than, by blocking this treaty, to put ourselves and our country in the position of refusing to take yes for an answer?" Even this already represents a different approach to what constitutes 'credibility' for a nation since the extreme right and the military-monopoly complex, as a matter of course, measure a nation's credibility by degree of military superiority over all other nations.

Yet, much of what support there is for the INF Treaty among conservatives and extreme rightists is based on the concept that SDI — Star Wars — will nullify the INF accord. For some, however, this has created a dilemma. Thus, reactionary Republican Congressman Jack

Kemp, who also seeks the nomination for president, calls the INF Treaty the "best arms control deal ever seen", nonetheless wants it rejected because he is afraid it would make it more difficult to get support for SDI, which he wants as soon as possible.

That Star Wars is the ace-in-the-hole that diehard anti-Sovieteers are banking on to overcome the possibility of real détente and nuclear disarmament replacing military confrontation and the accelerating arms race, becomes evident from the Reagan administration's attempts to circumvent compliance with the 1972 ABM Treaty, which would effectively prevent deployment of Star Wars.

Among the strongest supporters of Star Wars is the extreme right wing of the Christian Fundamentalists, who, coming into the homes of millions of TV viewers, propagate a theology of "the survivability of a nuclear Armageddon, Star Wars, which will wipe out the Soviet Union and all Communists and everyone else except those who believe in the ultra-right Fundamentalist gospel".¹⁴ This is their interpretation of the biblical prophesy of the second coming of Christ. Along with the religious right the fevered zealots of the extreme Zionists stand in the front ranks of those fanning the flames of fanatical anti-Sovietism.

Among liberals, there are some who have negative feelings about the improvement in USA-USSR relations. These are the cold war liberals, including some prominent leaders of the peace movement, who always have to balance off any criticism of US foreign (and domestic) policies with craven anti-Sovietism. Because they may yet change under the pressure of events and popular movements, we will not, at this time, name them.

The healthy trend among liberals is expressed by the *Nation* magazine, which, advocating openness in response to perestroika and glasnost, points out that in so doing one is liable to be charged with being a dupe of the Soviet Union. In that case, it said editorially on December 12, 1987, "So be it . . . If the alternative is to join the mounting chorus of Kirkpatricks and Brzezinskis, Kissingers and Eagleburgers, who refuse to shed the ancient, turgid orthodoxies of the cold war."

Indeed, these politicians, whom the *Nation* aptly calls "the dreary apostles of the past", find themselves with a warehouse full of outmoded, shoddy, unwanted cold war goods, for which the market has all but disappeared. That, of course, means bankruptcy.

'Politics Should Be Based on Realities'

A few words must be said about the pseudo-left and their attitude to the Soviet Union in this context; not because they have any mass influence, which they do not, but because these sects are a divisive, disruptive and confusing force in various peace movements; because it takes but a few to destroy the work of millions.

The Trotskyites, by nature incapable of new thinking, still peddle the permanent revolution dogma of a here-and-now military showdown with capitalism. In utter disregard of the overriding nuclear war danger, the US Trotskyites blaze forth in their paper with the headlines: "Gorbachov's Pipe Dream: Peace With Imperialism".

Another such group is the self-styled Marxist-Leninist sect called Line of March. Pretending to be a supporter of the Soviet Union, this group proclaims: "The Soviet Union has an objective class interest in the undermining of the world imperialist system. The political, economic and military strength of the Soviet Union is therefore a crucial part of the arsenal arrayed against imperialism."¹⁵

What the Trotskyites attack the Soviet Union for not being and not doing, Line of March attributes as a given fact to the Soviet Union. Surely, this is Trotskyism turned inside out.

Such misrepresentations buttress those who embrace the two superpower equal responsibility myth. Having the effect of casting doubt on the sincerity of Soviet peace initiatives, this falsehood has a divisive, immobilising effect in the peace movements.

What emerges from all the foregoing and, obviously, we could deal only with a fraction of the various reactions to the three great events of 1987 — the Gorbachov book, his visit to the USA and the signing of the INF Treaty — is that a tremendous impact has been made on thinking in the United States. There is taking place a process of shifting thought patterns which, in many ways, is still in flux as the struggle between new and old thinking spreads and deepens. And, as we see, the ultra-right and the military-monopoly complex have unleashed a counter-offensive.

As the *Nation* said in an editorial, "... the INF Treaty will only become history, will only be a symbolic step to more significant nuclear weapons reductions and greater détente . . . will only help insure that humankind, in the long run, *has* a history, if the fires of public opinion that produced it are kept hot."¹⁶

To keep the peace fires hot, it is necessary to extinguish the fires of anti-Sovietism which darken the skies with blinding smoke that serves to hide US imperialist plans of world domination by means of military superiority and nuclear-Star Wars blackmail. The Communist Party of the USA is in the front ranks of the fight for a world free of nuclear and other mass annihilation weapons, for a world at peace.

It means winning virtually universal acceptance for the concepts contained in these words of Mikhail Gorbachov in his book:

"Politics should be based on realities. And the most formidable reality of the world today is the vast military arsenals, both conventional and nuclear, of the United States and the Soviet Union. This places on our two countries a special responsibility to the whole world. Conscious of this fact, we genuinely seek to improve Soviet-American relations and attain at least that minimum of mutual understanding needed to resolve issues crucial to the world's future" (p. 12).

James West
member, Political Bureau, CPUSA;
Chairman, Central Review Commission, CPUSA

¹ *Nation*, December 1987-January 1988.

² *Time*, January 4, 1988.

³ *Ibid.*, July 13, 1987.

- ⁴ *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1987, pp. 88-89
 - ⁵ Quoted from *Political Affairs*, November 1987, p.11.
 - ⁶ *Wall Street Journal*, December 8, 1987.
 - ⁷ Ibid.
 - ⁸ *The Washington Post*, October 4, 1987
 - ⁹ *Defense News*, April 6, 1987.
 - ¹⁰ *Christian Science Monitor*, December 8, 1987.
 - ¹¹ *Nation*, December 19, 1987
 - ¹² *Insight*, December 28, 1987-January 4, 1988, p. 64.
 - ¹³ *Nation*, December 19, 1987.
 - ¹⁴ CALC Report (organ of Clergy and Laity Concerned), Vol. III, No. 3-4, p. 31.
 - ¹⁵ *Line of March Discussion Bulletin*, Fall 1987, p. 11.
 - ¹⁶ *Nation*, December 19, 1987.
-

Slated For Publication

Stalin: The Triumph And The Tragedy

*Professor Dmitri Volkogonov —
Doctor of Philosophy*

The Triumph and the Tragedy is the title of a book soon to be completed by the author. Its publication is awaited eagerly because it is a political profile of Joseph Stalin. It is being written by a man who has almost thirty books to his credit — mostly on military theory, politics and philosophical questions.

WMR submitted several questions to Dmitri Volkogonov and Sergei Yastrzhembsky, a staff member, recorded the answers.

What has prompted you to tackle this subject? When did you start working on the book and what sources do you use?

STALIN is one of the most controversial figures in Soviet history; I would even say, in world history. Whether we want it or not, the impact such personalities produce is not confined only to the past. This is borne out by the heightened intellectual and emotional interest Soviet public opinion now displays in the man and in the heroic and tragic chapters of our history connected with him. It is precisely with the history of our great country in view that I regarded with surprise — and that is an understatement — the fact that we knew virtually nothing about a man who was on top of the

pyramid of power and led the party for more than 30 years. That was one of the reasons behind my interest in the subject.

There are, of course, other reasons too. Sometimes people try to assess the past in what may be described as an arithmetic way, trying to calculate whether Stalin's accomplishments outweigh his crimes or vice versa. That is a profoundly flawed approach because no achievement can justify inhumanity and brutality. As a philosopher, I see a more profound dimension of this question. I try to comprehend the inner world of that man, to analyse the salient features of his time and to identify the causes and trends that, at a certain juncture, deformed the mechanics of government, Stalin himself and many people around him.

There was also a personal reason why I decided to examine this subject: my father fell victim to the purges of 1937. He was an ordinary man, a peasant — but he was literate and reached eagerly for new knowledge. He had several subscriptions to periodicals and newspapers. Someone thought that his being an avid reader was suspicious. That, I think, was what led to his arrest and death. I was orphaned. My country brought me up, educated me, made me what I am, and I am profoundly grateful for that. At the same time, I wanted very much to find out about my father and, generally, to understand how thousands of innocent people came to share his fate.

To cut a long story short, I made my first note on this subject in 1979, and that was when I realised that the title of my book would be *The Triumph and the Tragedy. A Political Profile of Joseph Stalin*. In the early 1980s I tried to secure what amounted to an official permission to write such a book. I was told that it was not yet time. But the failure did not discourage me, and I continued gathering material. When I heard Mikhail Gorbachov's report marking the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, I realised with profound satisfaction that I had been right, that I had done the right thing.

As far as the sources are concerned, they include Lenin's works, party documents and many unpublished items from the archives. I studied the 13 volumes of Stalin's works very closely, and that gave me much food for thought. I examined what was written by the leading party figures in those years — by Bukharin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov and others.¹ I covered scores of foreign sources. Besides — and that is very important — I met with and interviewed dozens of people (former cabinet ministers, aides, secretaries and security guards) who knew Stalin personally. In other words, my reflections on Stalin's personality are not speculative, but based on authentic documents and accounts of eye-witnesses of and participants in those past events.

After collecting this extensive body of facts, I decided to work on a philosophical and political profile of Stalin. The book is a combination of an essay, a philosophical paper and a documentary study. There is nothing fictional about it. I am striving to present an authentic but not schematic picture of Stalin's life, work and family and to portray the people who worked with him in different periods as living beings, not automatons.

For years, many people not only in the USSR but also abroad saw Stalin not as an 'ordinary mortal' but as a living embodiment of

socialism. This view is assiduously stressed by some Western scholars who believe that the cult of a personality is innate in socialism and regard the tragic chapters of Soviet history as an evil that could not be avoided. How does this problem feature in your book?

Such claims are indeed widespread, particularly because Stalin's personality cult is not a unique case in the history of socialism. Of course I touch upon these questions in my book because I examine the conditions, the genesis and the factors which deformed the mechanics of government after Lenin's death. Let me deal with them briefly here.

First, sufficient attention is not always paid to the fact that after October 1917 we began to build socialism in a country at a quite low level of democratic and legal development. Socialism was emerging in a country which had lived for centuries under conditions of autocracy, of absolute rule of the monarch. Political culture was poorly developed among many party members, let alone among the people at large.

Second — and that is perhaps the main cause of the tragic developments that followed — is that after the Revolution, the foundations of government by the people were only laid but not developed. Lenin felt that the nascent socialist system was likely to encounter grave problems if no powerful impetus was given to the development of socialist democracy connected with extensive popular representation, with popular control over government bodies, with openness. It is no accident that Lenin's last works, collected in the famous 45th volume, sound like a grim warning, an appeal to the coming generations not to ignore issues of democracy.

But Stalin whom, after Lenin's death, circumstances placed at the helm of the party (that is another issue in its own right) can be said to have excluded democracy from the context of socialist construction. Significantly, he saw the dictatorship of the proletariat as containing only one element — that of suppression and coercion. That view alone had a dangerous potential which, unfortunately, was later translated into socialist practice. Thus, the first sprouts of democracy failed to develop properly: they were choked by the virulent weeds of dogmatism, bureaucratic attitudes and administration by decree.

Finally, there is the third factor: at that time, we could not turn to anyone for guidance. We were breaking fresh ground. Stalin believed that, surrounded by capitalist states, our country could succeed only through rigid centralisation and administration by fiat. In the final analysis, these methods did create a socialist state, but many elements of its structure and the mode in which it functioned were flawed when viewed from the angle of genuine democracy. A system of social relations emerged which called for a 'leader' who was not to be criticised. There was no renewal or rotation in the democratic sense.

I would say that if Lenin's behests and ideas had been fully implemented by his comrades and followers, our country's socialist development could have avoided many tragedies and deviations. I am profoundly convinced that tragedy was not inevitable.

That is why I cannot accept the view of the Sovietologists on this matter. And there I should mention that several countries which embarked on the

path of socialist development after us have done without the ugly excesses involving the cult of a personality.

You have mentioned that Stalin was placed at the head of the party by force of circumstance. You must be dealing with these things in your book. In this connection one wonders about your conclusions with regard to an alternative to Stalin after Lenin's death.

Of course, politics always offers a range of possibilities. I deal with that in detail in my book. And I do not think it was accidental that, setting forth his political opinion of the six leading party figures in his famous 'Letter to the Congress' — of Stalin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Piatakov², Zinoviev and Kamenev — Lenin did not directly name anyone he would recommend as a replacement of Stalin as the party's General Secretary. Lenin must have been confident that the Central Committee would do it itself. Incidentally, no political charges against Stalin are contained in the 'Letter to the Congress'. Lenin expressed grave and profound concern with Stalin's morals, with his rudeness and viciousness. By the way, this case shows that morals are always connected with politics. In the final analysis, a leader's moral qualities may decisively influence the essence of his policy, either positively or negatively.

In re-reading everything written by Stalin, I noted the character of the critical remarks he made. At plenary meetings, conferences and congresses he voiced such critical opinions that one wonders how people could stand for that. At one of the congresses held after Lenin's death, Stalin said publicly that Nadezhda Krupskaya's³ speech was patent nonsense, i.e., he failed to show even elementary tact when referring to a woman, a comrade, and Lenin's widow. That alone demonstrates Stalin's disdain of people's dignity, of the views of others. Or take his abusive speeches at numerous conferences to combat the opposition, or his reply to Pokrovsky⁴ which was published in the press and in which Stalin simply insulted a veteran member of the party. Rudeness and ruthlessness were Stalin's hallmark.

Having observed Stalin act as General Secretary for only a few months, Lenin concluded that Stalin's moral qualities could not only adversely affect interpersonal relationships in the party's central bodies but also have a deforming impact on politics. Lenin's worst expectations later came true.

Of course there was an alternative to Stalin. I myself think that the persons of particular prestige who could have followed Lenin's ideas included Bukharin, Rykov, Rudzutak, Frunze, Dzerzhinsky and, later, Kirov.⁵ But all that is conjecture, although logical. In politics and history, it is impossible to change what has already happened. Life is not a motion picture one can 'rewind'.

I think that much is explained by the fact that in the wake of Lenin's death, Bukharin had a tangible chance of leading the party — but so did Trotsky, who was scrambling for power. One cannot denigrate Stalin's contribution to the struggle against Trotsky, the man I would describe as a political gambler and demagogue, as someone who admired not so much

the revolution itself as himself in the revolution. Naturally, Trotsky was not without talent as a journalist, speaker and author (he published 17 volumes of his works by 1927). One must admit that he had certain achievements to his credit too, particularly during the Civil War. But Trotsky had no scientific or clear programme for building socialism in the USSR. And I think — although that, too, is conjecture — that had he secured leadership of the party, it would have been in for even graver ordeals which would have possibly called socialist gains into question.

Bukharin was a mild, highly attractive intellectual. Unlike Trotsky, he had his own view of the party's tasks, his own concept of how socialism should be built — and Bukharin himself admitted that later — he was long unaware of the need for a drastic and rapid build-up of the country's economic potential. Having revised his views, he was ready to work for that build-up — but, tragically, he fell victim to lawlessness.

One could also speculate about Kirov and other leaders, but that — and I would like to stress that — would be pure conjecture. The fact remains that Stalin, while neither a prominent theoretician, nor a brilliant speaker, nor a person of intellectual or moral appeal, emerged on top because he possessed one unquestionable advantage over the rest — an unprecedented commitment to purpose and an iron will. I cannot agree with those who, in describing Stalin, stress only his negative qualities and picture him as a political ignoramus. That is not true. He knew how to attain the objective before him, but at what cost? In the name of ideas, he forged ahead eliminating his comrades and destroying human dignity.

Today, it is very difficult to speak about alternatives. History is written but once, without rough copy to be corrected, and one can only speak in somewhat abstract terms about the various opportunities that presented themselves but were forfeited.

The introduction to your book was published in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, and one is struck by what appears to be a paradoxical observation of yours there. "But did Stalin realise," you say, "that after defeating Trotsky, he would never really part with him" by adopting the many methods of bureaucratic administration by decree and coercion "which were advocated by none other than Trotsky." What do you think linked these two personalities despite the fact that they vied for leadership against each other?

I think that many researchers have long failed to note this very peculiar feature. There was always a field of high tension between these two people. True, there was a time when Stalin tried to establish loyal relations with Trotsky. Later, Trotsky recalled that Stalin showed attention to him and assessed his work positively. But Trotsky never regarded Stalin as a strong personality and called him the "most outstanding mediocrity of our party". That described Trotsky aptly: he considered himself to be an intellectual luminary. He treated Stalin as an uneducated, crude simpleton who knew no foreign languages. As a result, he underrated Stalin who

proved stronger, cleverer and shrewder. Later, Trotsky was forced to admit that.

For his part, Stalin never fought against anyone or saw anyone as posing such a great danger as Trotsky. And, although he never admitted the fact publicly, he obviously saw his rival as a strongman who could well become a dictator. After all, it was Trotsky who, after the Revolution, advocated 'rightening things up', militarising the economy and creating labour armies; during the Civil War, he called for the introduction of capital punishment in the combat zone and showed contempt for the peasants. Stalin was aware of all that, and I think in his heart he was impressed by such views.

Later, with Trotsky out of the way, Stalin — perhaps without realising it — took quite a leaf out of Trotsky's book with regard to bureaucratic administration by decree and to the glorification of violence as a universal method of tackling socio-economic issues. I repeat: one can only guess whether Stalin himself was aware of it. But facts show that he borrowed heavily from Trotsky. Suffice it to recall how widely coercion was used in industrialisation, collectivisation and construction — say, of the White Sea-Baltic Sea Canal. Could this be one of the root causes behind the tragedy of the 1930s?

It is clear from the introduction that preparing to create a philosophical profile of Stalin, you studied the biographies of Alexander the Great, Caesar, Cromwell and Peter I. Did you come across any features common to the psychological make-up of these dictatorial figures?

Obviously, I draw no direct historical parallels. Different eras, different socio-economic systems produce different leaders. But if one considers the moral, the strictly human aspect, some similarities do surface. In reading the works of Cromwell or Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, one realises that at some stage, people wielding unlimited and uncontrolled power come to regard themselves as infallible, to believe that no constraints apply to them and that anything they do is predestined. They need no advice, no one dares to question their actions, and they do not have to justify them to anyone. Any decision taken by such a ruler is glorified. Eventually, a vacuum is created around him. Stalin, too, had no one to discuss things with, no one to justify his actions to. He gradually turned into a 'living god'. The triumph of a single person often meant tragedy for the people.

Nevertheless, Stalin's life offers additional proof — and that is one of the conclusions I draw in my book — that the power of ideas is, in the final analysis, greater than the power of men. Even Stalin's unforgivable excesses failed to destroy the appeal of socialist ideals.

¹ **Nikolai Bukharin** (1888-1938) joined the party in 1906 and was a Central Committee member from 1917 to 1934. He was an alternate member of the Central Committee Political Bureau from 1919 to 1924 and its full member from 1924 to 1929. After the October Revolution he was also editor of *Pravda* and *Izvestia* and a member of the Communist International Executive. Bukharin was shot in 1938.

Lev (Leon) Trotsky (1879-1940) joined the party in August 1917 and was a Central Committee member and chairman of the Petrograd (St Petersburg) Soviet Executive during the October Revolution. After the Revolution he was People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council. Trotsky was expelled from the party for opposition activities in 1927, deported from the USSR in 1929 and assassinated in Mexico in 1940.

Grigori Zinoviev (1883-1936) joined the party in 1901 and its Central Committee in 1917. In October 1917 he opposed the decision to launch an armed uprising. Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet since December 1917; he was a member of the Central Committee Political Bureau and of the Comintern Executive in 1921-1926. Repeatedly expelled from the party for opposition activities; Zinoviev was shot in 1936.

Lev Kamenev (1883-1936) joined the party in 1901. In October 1917 he opposed the decision to launch an armed uprising. After the Revolution he served as Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and member of the party's Central Committee in 1917-1927 and of its Political Bureau in 1919-1926. Repeatedly expelled from the party for opposition activities; Kamenev was shot in 1936.

Alexi Rykov (1881-1938) joined the party in 1899. He served as a member of the party's Central Committee in 1905-1907 and in 1917-1934 and of its Political Bureau in 1923-1930; as Chairman of the Supreme Economical Council in 1918-1920 and 1923-1924. After Lenin's death he was elected Chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars in February 1924 and held that office to 1930. Rykov was shot in 1938. — *Ed.*

² **Grigori Piatakov** (1890-1937) joined the party in 1910. A member of the Soviet Government of the Ukraine after the October Revolution, he was appointed to posts in economic agencies and the Soviets beginning in 1920 — Chairman of the Board of the USSR State Bank and deputy People's Commissar of Heavy Industry — and was elected a Central Committee member at the 12th, 13th, 14th and 16th party congresses. Repeatedly expelled from the party for opposition activities, Piatakov was shot in 1937. — *Ed.*

³ **Nadezhda Krupskaya** (1869-1939) joined the party in 1898 and took part in the Revolution of 1905-1907 and in the October Revolution of 1917. She served as deputy People's Commissar of Education from 1929, a member of the party's Central Control Commission from 1924, a member of the Central Committee from 1927 and a member of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium. Krupskaya wrote books on teaching and on the history of the CPSU. — *Ed.*

⁴ **Mikhail Pokrovsky** (1868-1932), a Soviet historian and a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, joined the party in 1905. A participant of the October Revolution, he served as a deputy People's Commissar of Education, from 1918, chief of the Socialist Academy and a member of the party's Central Control Commission from 1930. Pokrovsky wrote many works on historical subjects. — *Ed.*

⁵ **Jan Rudzutak** (1887-1938) joined the party in 1905, took part in the Revolution of 1905-1907 and in the October Revolution of 1917, and served as General Secretary of the country's trade unions from 1920, a secretary of the party's Central Committee from 1923, People's Commissar of Communications in 1924-1930, deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars from 1926, member of the party's Central Committee from 1920 and Political Bureau member of the Central Committee in 1926-1932 (alternate member in 1923-1924 and in 1934-1937). Rudzutak was shot in 1938.

Mikhail Frunze (1885-1925) joined the party in 1904, took part in the October Revolution and was commander of several fronts during the Civil War. The author of academic papers on military issues, he was deputy People's Commissar and People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs in 1924-1925, member of the party's Central Committee from 1921 and alternate member of the Central Committee Political Bureau from 1924.

Felix Dzerzhinsky (1877-1926) joined the party in 1895. A leader of the 1905 Revolution in Warsaw, he was elected a member of the Central Committee in 1907 and was an active participant in the October Revolution. He was Chairman of the All-Russia Commission to Combat Counter-revolution and Sabotage from 1917, People's Commissar of Communications from 1921, Chairman of the All-Union National Economic Council from 1924, member of the party's Central Committee from 1917 and alternate member of its Political Bureau from 1924.

Sergei Kirov (1886-1934) joined the party in 1904 and its Central Committee in 1923, took part in Russia's three revolutions, and served as First Secretary of the party's Leningrad Regional Committee from 1926, as Secretary of the AUCP(B) Central Committee from 1934 and as member of its Political Bureau from 1930. Kirov was assassinated in 1934. — *Ed.*

WORLD MARXIST REVIEW

brings you each month a rich selection of authoritative material relating to peace, political science, economics, culture, sociology and international relationships written by leaders of the communist and workers' parties of more than 90 countries, embracing all five continents.

World Marxist Review is the North American edition of the monthly journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* published in Prague.

Subscription rates:

Canada and United States: \$25 a year.

Institutions: \$40 a year.

All subscribers receive the monthly *Information Bulletin*.

Subscriptions — available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic — may be obtained through
**Progress Subscription Service,
71 Bathurst Street,
Toronto, Canada M5V 2P6.**

**In the USA from
Imported Publications,
320 West Ohio Street,
Chicago, Illinois 60610.**

**World Marxist Review is published by Progress Books,
71 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 2P6.
Second class mail registration number 2352.**

Printed in Canada.

Copyright ©1968 by Progress Books, Canada.

All Rights Reserved.



Copies of articles from this publication are now available from the UMI Article Clearinghouse.

Mail to: University Microfilms International
300 North Zeeb Road, Box 91 Ann Arbor, MI 48106

This publication is available in microform from University Microfilms International.

Call toll-free 800-521-3044. Or mail inquiry to:
University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.



