

WORLD

Problems of

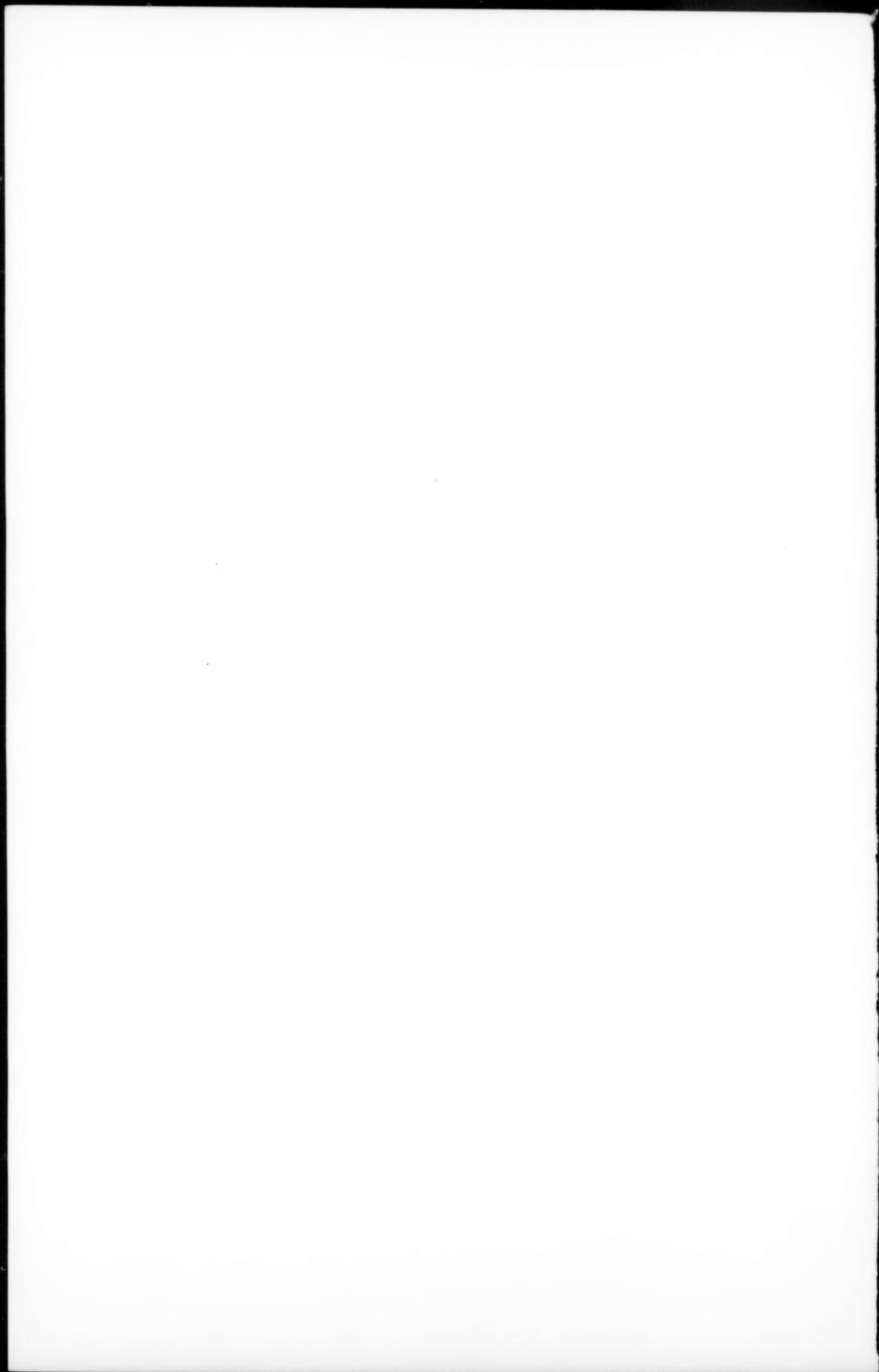
MARXIST

Peace and Socialism

REVIEW

April 1988 Vol. 31, No. 4
\$2.50 ISSN 0043-8642







world marxist review

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 4 APRIL 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

Turning Away From Dogmas, Forging a Closer Link With Reality <i>Harilaos Florakis (Greece)</i>	5
Meetings Are Possible and Necessary <i>Meir Vilner (Israel)</i>	13
As the Class Confrontation Mounts <i>Alvaro Cunhal (Portugal)</i>	19
Central America: Thorny Path to Peace and Liberation <i>Rigoberto Padilla Rush (Honduras)</i>	31
Our View of Europe as One and Undivided <i>Bertil Måbrink (Sweden)</i>	40

for human survival

Peace Alliance in Canada <i>Andre Jacob (Canada)</i>	45
WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE MISSILE BASES	49
And Not a Day Earlier! <i>Wolfgang Bartels (FRG)</i>	50
A History-Making Divide <i>Anatoly Danilevich, Georgi Tsagolov (USSR)</i> ...	55
'The Day Will Come When the People Will Succeed' <i>Sean MacBride (Ireland)</i> ..	59
It Is Not a Question of Claiming Credit. . . <i>Bruce Kent (Great Britain)</i>	60
Keep Going Forward <i>James Leonard (USA)</i>	64

the socialist way

Creative Potential of Ideology <i>Janos Berecz (Hungary)</i>	68
Legality in the Service of Man <i>Gunter Sarge (GDR)</i>	78

the party

COMMUNISTS AND YOUTH

The Roots of Prejudice. Interviews in Copenhagen	85
A Comment by <i>Ole Sohn</i> , Chairman, Communist Party of Denmark	91
To Become a Party of the Masses <i>Valentin Amaro (Brazil)</i>	94
Difficulties in Maintaining Our Positions <i>Claudy Chipotel (Guadeloupe)</i>	97
From the Press. Bringing the Party's Strength to 500,000. <i>Akahata</i> on the 18th Congress of the Japanese CP	101
INFORMATION	
In Brief	103
International Contacts	104

exchange of views, discussion

Unity: What Part of the Past Is Valid?. Dialogue of Communist Movement Veterans <i>Santiago Alvarez (Spain), Hugo Campos (Paraguay)</i>	106
---	-----

viewpoints

Striving for an Alliance of All the Progressive Forces <i>Rene Mauge Mosquera (Ecuador)</i>	115
The Namibia Knot: a Bleeding Wound <i>Aaron Shihepo (SWAPO)</i>	121
Personal Impression. Peace Be to Thee, Afghanistan! <i>Mahmoud Shoukeir (Palestine)</i>	125
Thailand in the 1980s: Hard Times <i>Thongchai Pongsanti (Thailand)</i>	133
OECS Unitary State: Who Benefits? <i>Donald Ramotar (Guyana)</i>	136

surveys, letters and diary

FROM OUR MAILBAG. 'The Only Right Way'. Three Meetings Between Mongolian Revolutionaries and V. I. Lenin <i>Dandaviin Dash (Mongolia)</i> . . .	142
The Stock Market: From Boom to Bust <i>Michael Stanley</i>	145
AGAINST REPRESSION AND PERSECUTION. Stop Victimisation of Patriots! <i>Mahmud Azad (Iran)</i>	149
WMR Ties	150

the book scene

Reaching Out to People <i>Mohamed Magdi Kamel</i>	150
In Search of a Way Out <i>Henry Richards</i>	155
Courage, Willpower and Duty Challenge Separatism <i>Unni Krishnan</i>	157

Turning Away From Dogmas, Forging A Closer Link With Reality

Relevance of Lenin's Teachings

Harilaos Florakis — General
Secretary, CC, Communist Party of
Greece (CPG)

ARE we Communists doing everything we can and must to accomplish our historical mission, to achieve those goals which were the lodestar of generations of revolutionaries? Do we meet the challenge of our time in our actions, in mobilising the mass of people and in expressing and protecting their interests? Are we on the right course?

It is these questions that we ask ourselves as we prepare to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Communist Party of Greece this year. To answer them honestly and responsibly, without any self-delusion, and rationally to assess our achievements and setbacks, which is expected from us by all those who pin their hopes on the CPG for solutions to the pressing problems of the country, we turn again and again to Lenin, to match our activities, strategy and tactics against his teachings.

Road To Lenin

Historical practice and today's realities of struggle show that the entire development of the communist movement, its victories and defeats and its place and role in social progress depend in one way or another on the consistency with which it has carried on Lenin's cause and translated his ideas into practice. It could not have been otherwise because it is Leninism that became an extension and development of Marxism, that articulated the needs of the international working class in new historical circumstances, and that gave an impetus to the formation of its revolutionary vanguard, the communist parties.

Lenin fully preserved in his works the theoretical achievements of Marx and Engels. But he did not just duplicate them, he reproduced them at a

new level of analysis of concrete realities and supplied innovative answers to fundamental problems of the 20th-century social revolution, *thus raising Marxism to a higher level*. He developed the Marxist dialectical method and enriched with postulates of fundamental importance all the components of Marxism, including philosophy, political economy and scientific communism. There can be no Marxism without everything new contributed to its development by Lenin. Leninism is the Marxism of our age, a body of international teachings of the working class. Lenin equipped revolutionaries in all countries with a doctrine of imperialism and socialist revolution, with the concepts of the party of a new type, the class alliances of the proletariat and the relationship between social emancipation and national liberation, and with the theory of building socialism.

These are not abstractions: all the postulates formulated by Lenin stood the test of class battles, the greatest of them being the October 1917 Revolution. In this way the ground was prepared both theoretically and practically for the emergence of revolutionary working class parties, which shortly formed an independent international movement.

Our party, founded in November 1918, became one of its detachments. The Greek Communists tried in the conditions of that period to develop and build up their organisation as a party of a new type in accordance with the principles of Lenin's teachings. On the first anniversary of the death of the leader of world revolution, the CPG Executive Committee addressed workers with an appeal entitled 'Lenin Is Dead. Long Live Leninism!'. The Greek Communists reiterated in that appeal their loyalty to Lenin's ideas. We have held it sacred up to date. *We are Leninists. That is our stand, and we will never relinquish it* whatever the enemies of the Communists do to falsify it and from whatever quarter they attack it. Too heavy a price was paid for it and too great sacrifices involved in every retreat from Leninism.

The path to it was arduous and thorny. It was not overnight that the party realised that the general principles of Leninism in themselves were no magic solutions to the problems of revolutionary struggles. They work only when applied in the frame of a concrete analysis of a specific situation — otherwise they can become dogmas. But there can be no dogmatism, as Lenin noted, where the supreme criterion of a doctrine "is its conformity to the actual process of social and economic development".¹ Initially the Greek Communists often disregarded that criterion, fitting facts to present schemes instead of doing just the reverse, that is, being able, "to adapt schemes to facts".² Party literature of that period swarmed with dogmatic postulates and ready-to-use formulae that were common among Communists.

The party did not study in depth Lenin's ideas on the need for broad alliances in democratic revolution and for long years confined itself to activities among the working class and, in part, among the toiling peasantry. Those mistakes had a negative effect on the growth of the CPG, which was long unable to build a mass base.

Lenin's doctrine of the evolution of a bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution with the leading role of the working class was not studied well in that early period. Meanwhile, it is extremely important to apply that doctrine in the circumstances of such a country as Greece.

Those gaps began to be filled-in consistently in the mid-1930s. *The main factor of that process was reliance on Lenin's heritage and absorption of its creative spirit.*

The international background also deserves mention. Sectarianism and dogmatism were widespread in the international communist movement in the 1920s, promoted to a large extent by the 'class versus class' postulate, formulated by the Ninth Plenary Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (1928). It precluded any compromises or accords with bourgeois-democratic parties or with Social Democracy, which was painted as the chief enemy of the working class.

Those tenets, explained away by the need to guard an independent policy of working class parties, in practice made the latter a 'closed shop' without any political influence whatsoever. Dogmatic errors were a grave obstacle to the consolidation of the working people in the struggle against the impending danger of Nazism. The Seventh Congress of the Communist International in 1935 contributed substantially towards rectifying them; proceeding from Lenin's ideas, it pointed ways of uniting all democratic forces and prepared the communist parties for the decisive battles with Nazism.

Our practice indicates that both left and right opportunism are characterised by dogmatism. Relying on Lenin's works, the party made the right choice in the early period of its existence and rejected right opportunistic concepts which would have supported the liberal bourgeoisie. Following another correct decision, it overcame the trend of 'legalism' (a non-Marxist concept that put the legal status of a party above everything else and demanded that it remain legal 'at all costs'). The CPG also resolutely repulsed the Trotskyites' attempts to distort Leninism after Lenin's death.

Our party was working hard to overcome weaknesses, shortcomings and mistakes, raising its Marxist-Leninist spirit to a new level, and struggling for bread and democratic freedoms for the Greek people and for an independent and thriving homeland. Then came the epic of National Resistance in the Second World War. After it the Greek Communists fought heroically against foreign intervention during the civil war imposed on the country by British and US imperialism. The CPG failed to win in the controversial circumstances of that period.

Looking back at the road travelled by the party, we see that, though controversial and winding, it was and remains the road to Leninism, to the increasing realisation of *the immense revolutionary potential of Leninism* as the inexhaustible creative strength of our movement. It is the road from various dogmas to the facts of life, to an understanding of realities, and to a policy that matches specific circumstances.

'Using One's Own Brains'

Leninism as a reflection of the objective dialectics of world social progress was and remains the foundation for the development of the theory of revolution and an effective factor of its implementation in practice. That is why the question of Lenin's role and place in the history of social thought, and of the importance of his heritage to the present and future generations

of revolutionaries is in the focus of ideological struggle.

Bourgeois ideologists and opportunists of every ilk would like to cut Leninism off from the social movements of our time, to confine Lenin's heritage to the archives of history because it allegedly suits only yesterday's realities and only individual countries and regions. The enemies of Leninism are out to sever its link with the progress of advanced thought and to obscure the international implications of Lenin's ideas by misrepresenting them as an 'occasional phenomenon' of transitory significance.

We resolutely counter such attempts. What makes Leninism important to world history is precisely that *it draws not on the practice of any one country or on the realities of isolated periods of history, but on the lessons of world history, on the experience of many countries, on the practical struggles of various social forces.*

Our theory has always followed the path that combined loyalty to principles of revolutionary theory with the creative development of new ideas and concepts on their basis, and the international experience of class struggle with the experience of every country. Like any other thoroughly scientific theory, Leninism is not an ossified dogma. It is a living, developing, creative teaching. It is being constantly enriched with the collective thought of the communist movement, with general conclusions from revolutionary practice and from the experience of building socialism.

Leninism is not just Lenin's heritage. It is the synthesis of theoretical postulates evolved by many communist and working class parties through the development of Lenin's ideas over the past few decades and the generalisation of the successes and mistakes of the revolutionary movement in various countries and regions. All this adds to the strength of Leninism and to its impact on world development.

We value the experience of all the fraternal parties. In our view, we have something to learn from each of them. Today we are following with special attention what the party of Lenin is doing to restructure in a revolutionary spirit the life of Soviet society. It gives the Greek Communists special satisfaction that the CPSU closely relates that process to the overcoming of dogmatism, outdated thought patterns and stagnation politics and to *the restoration of consistent Leninism in every field of its activity.* The immense work of perestroika that the CPSU is carrying on today is very instructive for us. The CPG is trying to borrow from it what is useful to its own activity.

Mikhail Gorbachov's words that Soviet Communists are constantly turning to Lenin, to his ideas and thoughts, not just in recognition of his authority but also in "a strong desire to revive the spirit of Leninism in the new conditions, and to the fullest possible extent" have deeply moved us. It is our conviction that perestroika in the USSR will give a fresh impetus to the growth of the influence of Lenin's ideas and win over to their side new followers.

I seem to hear malicious voices: 'You, Communists, are incorrigible: first you professed Leninism after Stalin, then after other Soviet leaders, now after Gorbachov'. My answer to them is that we have always sought to follow Leninism after Lenin. That is our principled stand.

Naturally, that formula in itself does not explain all the complexities and controversies of the historical process of the learning and application of Leninism by Communists in Greece or in any other country. We are yet to sort out that process, which will call for a more in-depth study and, perhaps, for a revision of some of its stages and of other aspects of party history. There were times when the CPG mechanically applied experience borrowed from others. We are not afraid to own up to our mistakes. The task is not to repeat them. This means to remain loyal to Lenin's ideas and to remember his words, "One must use one's own brains and be able to find one's bearings in each particular instance."

The Communist Party of Greece orients its activities to the situation in the country at every given moment and reckons with national specific characteristics and traditions. We try to take a sober view of both our errors and our achievements, to be self-critical and fully to take into account the negative effects of the mechanical interpretation of some postulates of Leninism in the past, and interpretation that had nothing to do with its nature. We try to promote in the party an interest in theory so as to search creatively for answers to the outstanding questions of social development in our country. Incidentally, our approaches and our attempts to tackle problems in our own way are often misrepresented by our foes as our desire to distance ourselves from the experience of other parties, specifically, from the current policies of the CPSU. But don't the anti-communists contradict themselves? They certainly do, which is further proof of their unscrupulousness.

For us Lenin is not an icon, nor his doctrines the Bible. To be a firm Leninist does not mean to follow slavishly the letter of Leninism; conversely, this calls for scientific objectivity, for a daring search for innovative solutions and for a resolute revision of outdated stereotypes of political thought and action. Neither is it renunciation of principles. *The theory of revolution can be advanced only on its own foundation*, on the ability to see differences between its essential principles and specific conclusions which are applicable only in specific conditions, may grow outdated and should be replaced in good time.

Our party should act so that the mass of people realise simultaneously that it is a realistic and vigorous force caring for their everyday needs and that it is a revolutionary force which is leading the way to socialism. This makes the problems facing the Communists especially complex.

In this situation left rhetoric, social well-wishing and the placing of interests of the moment, torn out of the context of revolutionary and socialist goals, above everything else are equally dangerous to the Communists. The 12th CPG Congress, held in 1987, pointed to the need to overcome those negative tendencies and to have Communists thoroughly master the dialectics of the general and the specific in the practice of our movement.

The party tried at the Congress to make a more in-depth analysis of the new circumstances of struggles on a national and an international scale. The Greek Communists examined problems related to changes in the economy and social structures of today's capitalism, and also to those changes caused in the working class by the scientific and technological

revolution which, without altering its nature and social role, nevertheless call for new approaches.

Renewal Must Be Continuous

Lenin noted on more than one occasion that the laws of dialectics are universal. They determine the ways of development of the communist movement and its theory and practice as well. There are in our movement, too, contradictions, struggle between the old and the new, and successive periods of slow growth and acceleration and breakdown of stereotypes. To avoid stagnation, it is important to update and improve constantly the policy and programme goals of the party in accordance with the changing circumstances.

The principle of development, of renewal that is inherent in Leninism manifests itself especially forcefully *at the turning points of history*, prompting the Communists to learn from new experience in both theory and practice, readily to part with yesterday's dogmas and schemes, and to think and act as a revolutionary should.

It is such a turning point that Greek society has now reached. It faces alternatives that are decisive to the fate of the nation. Will its life continue to be confined to the two-party system, to the policies of the PASOK and the New Democracy Party, or will the Left and progressive forces break out of that narrow frame and open up a road of change towards socialism? Will the country continue to bow to the spontaneous forces of the capitalist market and obligingly meet the interests of foreign capital and supranational Common Market organs or will it emerge onto the road of development of a new type and put an end to the system of dependence and monopoly arbitrariness?

What lies behind these pointed questions is complex problems of jobs and unemployment, economic stagnation, introduction of new technology, education, health care, environmental protection and many others, which are related to the overall tasks of the economic, social and cultural development of Greece. The gap between the present-day needs of the working people and the interests of social progress, on the one hand, and the inability of dependent state-monopoly capitalism to meet them, on the other, far from diminishing, is widening as a result of exacerbating social contradictions and the aggravating economic crisis.

In trying to meet this challenge, we turn to the mode of creative thought and action that is characteristic of Leninism, to the renovation of the forms and methods of our struggle, and to the very essence of social change taking place in our age, change that demands flexible and precise strategic and tactical decisions. Two of the questions that arise in this context are: how can we balance continuity and innovation in the development of theory and what are the boundaries for the application of specific postulates of Marxism-Leninism?

Lenin himself helps us find correct approaches to these questions because he himself never let his hands be bound by "historical examples"⁴ but thoroughly analysed them to identify what is relevant to practice and at the same time is of lasting significance to theory. He taught Communists

not to succumb to the hypnosis of past experience and at the same time to cherish it as a priceless legacy. Any updating of theory and practice should not cast that experience overboard but be carried out dialectically: "the fundamental task of a politically conscious public man." Lenin stressed, "is clear: he must evaluate these new changes, 'make use' of them, grasp them, if we may use that expression, and at the same time, he must not allow himself to drift helplessly with the stream, he must not throw away the old baggage, he must preserve the essentials in the forms of activity and not merely in theory, in the programme, in the principles of policy."

It is important to know how to *reconcile continuity and innovation*, and to develop creatively the best traditions and everything valuable in the international communist movement.

A major policy line in the CPG's activities is struggle for democratic change towards socialism. Any real democratic progress nowadays is unthinkable without change and socialism. Struggle for the development and broadening of democratic freedoms offers the best way of advancing socialist-oriented change. On the other hand, change will broaden and make real all the democratic freedoms won by the people, advance the rights of the working people to new frontiers, contribute to the democratisation of the state apparatus and all the social institutions and create new, progressive institutions which will effectively promote people's participation in the administration of social affairs.

What is needed to achieve these goals is an alliance of social and political forces that want change and are capable at some point in the future of assuming governmental authority. It is a hard but, in our view, realistic task. The CPG stressed at its latest congress that its accomplishment depends to a large extent on the development of our theory, on cleansing it of dogmatism of every sort, and on the party's ability to analyse the more important problems of society creatively and in depth. We offer all the left forces dialogue on these problems.

Changes in world development are so all-pervading that they call for serious thought, a profound examination of the new factors and trends of that development, a more thorough, theoretical analysis of today's diverse, controversial and integral world.

We are fully aware that *the link between class and common human interests is growing stronger in the nuclear age*. This makes it necessary to develop the humanitarian beginnings of the communist doctrine, which was borne of a desire to make life worthy of man and to elevate man himself in the struggle against all oppression and humiliation. The moral creed of Marxism-Leninism is real humanism.

Lenin's ideas of the relationship of peace and socialism are more relevant today than ever. Relying on them the CPSU formulated principles of new political thinking and a concept of building a nuclear-free world. The prevention of nuclear catastrophe is a condition and prerequisite for the survival of the human race and therefore of the motive forces of social progress. It is a prerequisite for any positive steps in every field of human activity.

Naturally, world peace will not abolish class struggle. It is not equivalent to social reconciliation either on the international scene or in individual

capitalist countries. In the broad sense of the word, it means *peaceful competition between the two systems* in the economic, scientific and cultural fields and at the same time *cooperation* among very diverse forces in tackling global problems.

We think highly of the results of the unprecedented meeting of representatives of parties and movements in Moscow during the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. We expect it to give an impetus towards a more systematic exchange of views and to dialogue and cooperation among political forces which, all their differences notwithstanding, want peace, democracy, national liberation and social emancipation.

Our internationalism is not a fad. It has an objective basis and deep historical roots. It arose out of the internationalisation of capital and the resultant internationalisation of the working class. Capital taught and continues to teach internationalism to workers. Forms of international solidarity may change but its essence remains. History knew three major international revolutionary organisations of the working class which derived their names from 'internationalism'. Their time is long past but internationalism lives on. The urgency and acuteness of the problems facing humanity today demand that the great international movement of Communists, which has played a pioneering role in the progressive transformation of the world, contribute more effectively towards their solution.

We believe that coordination of efforts among the communist and working class parties can ease, broaden and enrich sincere relations with the other Left, progressive and peace forces and help *our international solidarity rise to a new, higher level*, which is vital in our age. That would be an exceptionally important contribution to the unfolding process of renewal in the international communist movement.



The answer to the question formulated at the beginning of this article — if we are doing everything we can to accomplish our goals — seems to be clear. No — we must do more, struggle more energetically and be more daring in our creative quests; in short, we must think and act as Lenin did.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 298.

² Ibid., Vol. 24, p. 46.

³ Ibid., Vol. 31, p. 68.

⁴ Ibid., Vol. 11, p. 345.

⁵ Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 146.

International Communist Movement

Meetings Are Possible And Necessary

Meir Vilner — General Secretary,
Central Committee, Communist Party of
Israel (CPI)

SCEPTICAL attitudes have been recently dominant in reflections on the international communist movement. We noted that for many years it was late in analysing the changes that occurred in the world and in the conditions of our struggle. The necessary theoretical, strategic and tactical conclusions were not drawn from those changes in time. There was sluggishness where there should have been political initiative, development of theory and promotion of the Communist's prestige with the masses.

Against this background, differences and disagreements on a number of key issues became more noticeable among the fraternal parties. There was nothing unusual about the fact that such differences surfaced. Complete unanimity had not been permanent in the communist movement, and it was all the more unlikely in the new and diverse conditions under which revolutionary parties had to operate. Still, we failed to have our relations emphasise that which rallied us together instead of that over which we differed. This was a source of grave concern.

Today I am speaking in the past tense about these alarming developments in the communist movement. This does not mean that we have left all our difficulties behind. Far from it. But I think that now the Communists have reason to believe that our movement is going through changes marking the onset of a radically new stage in its development.

I refer primarily to the positive changes under way in the more important aspects of our sister parties' activities. They are intensifying their international contacts, and the Communists are displaying an increasingly vigorous commitment to a search for the solution of today's principal problems on the basis of an alliance with all forces that have the same interests at heart.

As the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution was commemorated in November 1987, Moscow hosted a meeting attended by representatives of 178 parties and movements which, although differing in their social, ideological and political orientation, agreed to forego the differences that divided them and, for the sake of promoting peace and progress, to hold a friendly, frank and equitable discussion and exchange their views on a wide range of issues of concern to all humanity. It was a serious, earnest and constructive examination of ways of safeguarding peace, furthering social progress and resolving contradictions within our increasingly interdependent and integral world community.

The meeting in Moscow was a major, future-oriented event, and we will have occasion to return many times to its message and to the new ideas

expressed in its course. For that discussion to take place, its participants had to take many steps to accommodate one another, to reappraise many of their views and, most importantly, to realise that meetings are both possible and necessary. Judging by my conversations with representatives of other sister parties, that was the spirit in which the Communists prepared for the Moscow meeting. They were therefore able to address specific proposals to those who were most likely to become their allies.

We hold that this approach was also confirmed at the third conference of communist parties from the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East, and the Red Sea area which was held in Athens in October 1987 and in which the Communist Party of Israel took part.

Whatever angle they are viewed from, the problems of our region are among the gravest and the most tangled. Nevertheless, after a thorough discussion and painstaking preparatory work, we succeeded in formulating and unanimously approving — not only in general outline but also in detail — well-founded proposals concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Iran-Iraq war, the questions of Cyprus, tensions between Turkey and Greece and some other issues.

In this article I will refrain from summarising the documents adopted in Athens: they have been published. But the very fact that Communists from almost 20 countries effectively arrived at a common approach to the fundamental issues discussed at the conference is very important. Back in Israel I could see the favourable impact this had had on sentiments both within and outside our party. Many people welcomed the fact that the CPI position on the extremely important and complex issue of attaining comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East proved to be consonant with the positions held by the other revolutionary parties of the region. *This agreement strengthens the confidence of the Israeli Communists that they have chosen the right path.* I think it was equally important for other parties, too, to feel that they were not alone, that their views were shared and supported by their friends.

Compared to the two previous meetings, the Athens conference was more open, the discussion was frank and public, and the principles of mutual respect and equality were observed strictly. It showed that the Communists of our region were now more mature, more confident and ready to present their political convictions and the objectives of their struggle to public opinion for assessment. Today we approach our allies with an open heart, with ideas and proposals that are geared to the demands of the day and meet the vital interests of our nations.

The question of compliance with the decisions adopted was raised at the Athens conference in what was largely a new way. In the past, there had been no shortage of resolutions, appeals and statements urging mutual solidarity and support. But sometimes these lofty ideas remained on paper and were not translated into specific efforts. This time we returned home fully determined to cement our solidarity with our sister parties not only in statements but above all in practical action.

It is heartening that such concrete, in-depth contacts are also growing ever more numerous in Latin America, South-east Asia, Europe and in our movement as a whole. I attach particular significance to the fact that

cooperation involving ruling communist and workers' parties has reached a higher level over the past two or three years.

Any unbiased observer is sure to conclude that the communist parties of the socialist countries are displaying a greater, businesslike and joint dedication to the development and consolidation of socialism, so that its example would really encourage social progress across the world and promote the struggle for peace and international security. Communist parties in capitalist and developing countries, too, are now more inclined to analyse their activities self-critically, in the light of current world development. All this *has resulted in noticeable improvements in relations within the communist movement, in the overall atmosphere of inter-party contacts.*

I believe that the normalisation of relations with the Communist Party of China offers an example of such improvements. For many years, these relations ranked among the more complicated and painful problems of the international communist movement. Last year, relations between most communist parties of the socialist countries and the CPC were restored. Other parties are joining this process. The Israeli Communists have also taken this step.

I think this is a good sign that also augurs well for the prospects of resolving many other urgent problems of our movement — bilateral, regional and international. But let us not be too hasty in our optimism: we are yet to attain the level of cooperation that is absolutely essential. I am referring to collective discussions of major issues.

It is sometimes maintained that collective forms of cooperation may restrict the independence and the autonomy of our parties and make it more difficult for them to operate as a national political force. One also hears it said that any collective meeting eventually revives the ideas of creating an organisational centre of the international communist movement. I am convinced that these are groundless fears. A return to the past is out of the question. Forty-five years ago the resolution on the dissolution of the Communist International said that the Communists had never sought to retain obsolete forms of organisation and always subordinated them to the salient features of a given historical situation and to the tasks ensuing therefrom.

Maintaining the continuity of its traditions, the communist movement has taken the path of renewal. Apparently, the doubts that surface are fed by psychological inertia in the perception of social development. It takes time to overcome this inertia. Besides, the mistakes that were made in the sphere of inter-party relations have also left their imprint on the political consciousness of Communists. But I think now it is time we rid ourselves of this deadwood. No one has ever succeeded in escaping the demands of the day by making references to the past. The old forms of cooperation as practised in the past are no longer tenable. But *this does not rule out a search for cooperation on a new basis* capable of ensuring solidarity and joint action, including international conferences conducted in the spirit of the times.

The need for collective discussions of political and ideological questions has long been in evidence. Factors of mutual attraction continue to operate

within any large-scale socio-political movement, including the communist movement. For some reason, however, we are in no hurry to respond to objective needs, and we bide our time while others — say, the parties of the Socialist International — meet regularly and discuss various issues. They may agree or disagree with one another, but the important thing is that they exchange their views on a collective basis. We Communists should also meet, conduct discussions and search for ways of strengthening international solidarity.

The diversity of the conditions under which the sister parties operate, their independence and autonomy must not lead to disunity. After all, the world's objectively growing interdependence is a process which is gaining ground in our midst too. I think Mikhail Gorbachov was right when he said at the Moscow meeting of parties and movements that the communist movement was not only a national but also, by its nature, an international force. And it is a force humanity needs.

Nor do I see any credible reasons behind the claim that an emphasis on closer cooperation between communist parties is at odds with the effort to establish a broad alliance comprising all forces of peace and progress. I think that this attitude is patently illogical and does not square with the practical political record.

Consolidation of the international communist movement cannot harm the idea of a broad anti-imperialist alliance. On the contrary, if the Communists again demonstrate their ability to shape their own relations along the lines of equality, mutual respect and strict observance of each party's autonomy and independence, that none of us tries to impose his decisions on others as the only correct approach, and if we demonstrate all this in a new way, that will benefit us in the eyes of international public opinion. Just consider whether a partner who has not yet proved his ability to conduct discussions and reach agreement even with the like-minded can expect to be trusted in serious matters. I think not.

To rule out any possible misunderstanding, let me add that in supporting proposals for promoting collective forms of communist cooperation, our party does not oppose them to broader international action in which representatives of democratic socio-political movements could take part on an equal footing. One does not hamper or exclude the other.

Another point. Lenin always said that one should distinguish between principled agreement and unprincipled appeasement. Sometimes terms unacceptable to Communists are laid down as the price of broader contacts and cooperation — for example, that they abandon the Marxist-Leninist concept of scientific socialism. In such cases, it is *imperative to stand firm and not to fear a sharp debate* because the matter involves a fundamental issue of our movement, the prospects of social progress.

In this connection let me recall the discussion that unfolded in Berlin in 1983, at the international conference to mark the 165th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx. Spokesmen of many socialist and social democratic parties were saying that the Marxist concept of socialism had lost credibility and that it had no future. I challenged them and said, "You say you are after a better, democratic type of socialism. All right. Then why have none of your parties built this kind of society when you were in

power? What stood in your way? You had an absolute majority in government and in parliament, you could have delivered on your promises. But you didn't. Why?" There was no answer. "Let's not force our own opinion on others," I told them. "You are loyal to your ideals, and we are committed to ours. Politics raises questions that can only be settled by history. There are many other issues on which we could cooperate for the benefit of peace and universal prosperity. So let's focus on these problems."

People I meet at home and abroad often ask me how Communists manage to preserve their ideological and political identity and to work for the accomplishment of their historical mission — that of the world's revolutionary renewal. Here, the important thing is to try and find the right way of tackling a dual problem.

First, our work should reflect the *vital interests of all humanity*, primarily the need to assure its survival. This idea, advanced by Marx and Engels, is now particularly topical. Current developments make it incumbent on us to reflect on this idea again and draw the necessary conclusions. If we fail to do that, the communist movement may lose all reason for its existence.

Second, while upholding universal human values, *we should fight for the ideals of social progress*. That is why we propose not only peace instead of war or democracy instead of fascist and racist dictatorship, but also an alternative to class domination and to the exploitation of man by man — socialist society, for it rejects all types of oppression.

That is what I think distinguishes communist parties from all other political forces. If Communists skilfully combine a struggle for universal human interests with promotion of social progress, they are on the right path.

One hears it said that in many countries, cooperation with the Communists is pointless because they are too few and have little electoral support. I would like to recall that by the time of the February 1917 Revolution in the vast Russian Empire, there were only 24,000 Bolsheviks, but by October they grew to 350,000. They led the world's first socialist revolution to victory, and they directed — and still direct — the country's socialist development. So the important thing is not numerical strength but an ability to perceive the interests of the masses and to champion them boldly. It is important for the Communists to *provide the spark which can ignite the flame of popular struggle*.

This is what guides our party in its efforts to create a broad front in our country to defend peace and to combat the aggressive and expansionist policy of Israel's reactionary quarters. We were the ones who launched this struggle. When Lebanon was invaded in 1982, only the Communist-led Democratic Front for Peace and Equality — four out of 120 members of the Knesset — voted against the war. Nine other members abstained. But today, most people admit that we did the right thing. Speaking in parliament, even some members of the ruling Labour Party express regret over their failure to take an anti-war stand. That is a development without precedent in Israeli political history.

Or take another, even more vivid example. Two or three years ago, only the Communist Party and the Democratic Front urged recognition of the

Palestinian people's right to self-determination and a state of their own. Now that the anti-Lebanese gamble has collapsed and our country has gone through a bitter experience, now that new international trends have surfaced, as well as due to our persistent explanatory work and discussions with other parties, a recent opinion poll indicates that almost 20 per cent of the Israeli population favour recognition of and negotiations with the PLO. In recent years, even two Zionist parties have argued in favour of recognising the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination.

All this shows that, first of all, the Communists assess the situation properly and help the masses get their political bearings. If people accept our view of some issues, this does not mean that they become Communists or will vote for us in elections. We simply help them find the right solution to a problem on which their lives and well-being depend. As a result, the prestige of our party is growing.

True, sometimes we are reminded that most supporters of the CPI are Arabs. During one of my trips to Paris I was even asked why, although Jews had been very active in the revolutionary movement in, say, Russia and were still active in France, things were different in Israel. This is what I said in reply: "Imagine for a moment that Jews are the oppressed minority in Israel, that they have changed places with the Arabs. Whom would the Communists support? In my country, Arabs bear a double burden of oppression — as working people, similarly to the Jews who are dispossessed, and as a national minority. Who defends them? Mostly, the Communists. It is therefore perfectly natural for the Arab masses in Israel to back us. But we also have thousands of Jewish supporters. We are Israel's internationalist, Jewish-Arab party."

The question of the *socialist prospect*, our policy goal, is a very acute issue for us — as it is for Communists in other countries too. Today, this issue is indelibly linked with the changes the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are carrying out to perfect socialism and to get rid of everything that hampered its progress and the realisation of its advantages. There is no doubt that this process is helping Communists in the capitalist world to combat the negative image of socialism which bourgeois propaganda has been fostering for decades. Today, everyone sees that perestroika is under way in the USSR, that glasnost and democratisation have aroused the initiative of the masses, and the appeal of socialism is growing.

Paraphrasing John Reed's famous book title, one can say that today, perestroika and glasnost are shaking the world. Even reactionary newspapers and periodicals are saying that the Soviet example should be followed. *Ha'aretz*, a bourgeois Zionist newspaper, has published an article entitled 'We Need Glasnost Too', saying, among other things, that the Israeli mass media should stop disseminating false reports about the Soviet Union.

But for one thing, this appeal would deserve to be welcomed. I am referring to our opponents' attempts at cutting Communists off from the revolutionary transformations now under way in the socialist countries. They blame us for invariably supporting the USSR and closing our eyes to the negative aspects of Soviet realities. I do not deny that there was a time

when Communists saw Soviet society through rose-coloured spectacles. But that was understandable. A desire to see one's ideals translated into reality sometimes did lead to exaggerations. But the charges against us imply a different thing — that Communists approved of the tragic chapters in the history of socialism. That is a lie.

In an article I wrote for our party's theoretical journal about perestroika in the USSR I explained what we had always supported and what we had always rejected. We welcomed the development of socialism, the elimination of exploitation and national discrimination, we welcomed industrialisation, collectivisation, the rout of the Nazis at Stalingrad and the defeat of Nazi Germany. We supported everything we were positive about, everything we could responsibly assess. But some things were a sealed book to us too — and not only to us. In my article I quoted a message sent by Prime Minister Ben Gurion to the Chair of the USSR Council of Ministers on November 6, 1948. The Israeli leader hailed the Soviet Union not only as a friendly country which supported Israeli statehood but also as a democratic society in which human rights were observed.

I am convinced that the future of world socialism, of national liberation and social emancipation and even the survival of the human race depend on the success of the Soviet Union's perestroika, on our ability to master the new way of political thinking and to project it into the minds of the masses and even of our class adversaries.

As The Class Confrontation Mounts

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

This concludes Comrade Cunhal's replies to questions from members of the *WMR* Editorial Council.

The 1974 Revolution and the Defence of Its Gains

It is important for the Communists to draw lessons from both positive and negative experience. Could you say in this connection whether the PCP made any mistakes at the initial stage and at the height of the 1974-1975 Revolution? (Stanislaw Wronski, Polish United Workers' Party)

TO understand the political situation in Portugal, one should remember that in our country, there was no peaceful transition (directed by the ruling classes) from a fascist dictatorship to a bourgeois democratic regime (the

See the March issue of *WMR* for the first part of Alvaro Cunhal's interview in which he replied to questions from members of the *WMR* Editorial Council on international issues. — *Ed.*

way it happened in Spain); what we had was a military and popular uprising which ousted the dictatorship and installed a democratic regime. This occurred in the course of a struggle in which the popular masses and the revolutionary sectors of the military played the key role, overcoming the desperate resistance of the fascist state and of the capitalist quarters that dominated and ruled the country.

After the fascist government was overthrown by the Armed Forces Movement (AFM) on April 25, 1974 and replaced by a provisional government on which many political parties (including the PCP) were represented, the fascists and other reactionaries, supported by imperialism, big capital and the agrarians — forces that had exploited and tyrannised the Portuguese people for the 48 years of the dictatorship — made several attempts to strangle Portugal's nascent democracy. These forces — beginning with General Spínola, President of the Republic — hatched plots, attempted coups and military putschs¹ and launched large-scale economic sabotage operations in banking, at major industrial projects and in agriculture. Therefore, the nationalisation of banking and of the basic sectors of the Portuguese economy, the abolition of monopoly groups, the agrarian reform in areas with big landed estates and the establishment of local democratic government supported by the people were not arbitrary steps taken by the PCP or any vanguard isolated from the masses. These profound reforms of our socio-economic structures were effected by the popular masses themselves in the course of their struggle.

Many of those who did not understand — or did not want to understand — the Portuguese revolution described these reforms as 'PCP mistakes'. But we have every reason to say that without such reforms, Portugal's newborn democracy would have been strangled in its cradle.

One should stress once again that all these reforms form part of the democratic regime as formalised in the Constitution of the Republic which was approved by the Constituent Assembly in 1976 and for which not only the Communist but also the Socialist and Social Democratic members of the Assembly voted.

What factors combined in late 1975 to block the development of the April Revolution and enabled the reactionaries to seize the political initiative? (Aulis Leppanen, Communist Party of Finland)

The main factors were as follows:

First, the conflicts, divisions and even clashes within the AFM² which was the 'armed wing' of the democratic revolution.

Second, the Socialist Party's alliance with the right-wing quarters (against democratic transformations).

Third, the political, economic, financial and military pressure exerted by imperialism, specifically by the United States and by NATO of which Portugal is a member.

Fourth, the premature holding of elections (on April 25, 1975. — *Ed.*) at a time when conditions were still lacking for the electorate to receive adequate information, exercise genuine freedom and understand the options available.

These four factors intertwined and, by the end of 1975, after the country was swept by a great wave of terrorist acts staged by the extreme Right against the PCP and the popular movement, led to the virtual dissolution of the AFM. Power passed to a succession of governments (of the Socialist Party, of the Socialist Party allied with right-wing parties, and of the right-wing parties) whose fundamental objective was to eliminate the principal gains of the revolution.

For the almost 13 years that have elapsed, the PCP and the large-scale social movements of the masses (notably, the trade union movement) have been resolutely rebuffing the counter-revolutionary process and firmly defending the democratic gains of the Portuguese people.

The evolution of the PCP's numerical strength is a clear sign that the policy of the party is supported by vast sections of the Portuguese people. In July 1974, three months after the overthrow of the fascist government, the PCP numbered 15,000 members. On September 28 of the same year, the day the popular masses decisively thwarted an attempted reactionary coup, the party totalled more than 30,000 Communists. In the spring of 1975, with the revolution at its peak, the number increased to 100,000. As the counter-revolutionary process gained ground in the years that followed, the ranks of our party continued to grow; in 1983 we had 200,000 members. Since then, the numerical strength of the PCP has remained about the same.

These figures are among the more reliable indications that firm defence of the revolutionary gains by the Communist Party was one of the prime factors behind the party's influence and the support it enjoys among the working class and other broad social strata.

How important is the defence of the agrarian reform, a major revolutionary gain, for preserving other accomplishments of the April Revolution? (Georg Kwiatowski, German Communist Party)

The revolutionary gains are essential components of the democratic regime established by the April Revolution and formalised in the Constitution of the Republic now in force.

These gains include, first and foremost, the country's economic system under which the monopolies have been abolished, banking and the basic sectors of the economy nationalised, big landed estates eliminated, and an agrarian reform carried out. Then there are the civil rights and freedoms, including such rights of the working people as stress the progressive nature of the democratic regime in Portugal. Finally, the gains in question also feature the organisation of a political system under which an important role is assigned to the interdependence of government bodies, to democratic local government and to the principle of proportionate representation in parliament and in municipal councils. When one of these gains is defended, so are the others. The objective of the counter-revolutionary process is to eliminate them all.

What role are the armed forces playing today in repulsing the reactionary attempts at eliminating the gains of the April Revolution? (Rafic Samhoun, Lebanese Communist Party)

The armed forces are currently playing no role at all in neutralising the reactionary offensive. One can even say that they serve as its support base, although they take no open or covert part in the nation's policies.

Unity of Democratic Forces in Portugal

You have stated repeatedly that unity of all democratic forces is essential to a successful struggle for upholding the social and democratic interests of the working people and rebuffing attacks on the revolution's gains. What experience has the PCP accumulated in fighting for the unity of democratic forces, particularly of the Left? (Georg Kwiatowski). What hampers the establishment of a broad democratic alliance and the elaboration of an alternative based on a policy of peace, freedom and social justice? (Hugo Campos, Paraguayan Communist Party)

The PCP's approach to this issue is different from the way it is raised in the question. First, it is utopian to think about the unity of *all* democratic forces. Second, the struggle of the working class and the popular masses has demonstrated their ability to repulse attacks on revolutionary gains even if there is no unity among the democratic parties (notably, between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party).

Unity of democratic forces should be seen in two contexts — the party context and the social context. On the social plane, the essential thing is to promote mass struggle — waged by workers, peasants, youth, women, intellectuals, small- and medium-scale businessmen and industrialists, pensioners and the disabled — for specific economic, political and cultural objectives. Taking part in these actions, many of them directed at defending the gains of the April Revolution, are men and women representing the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and other political currents.

Unity of democratic forces is a very complex task to accomplish. The PCP insists tirelessly on the need for unity of the democratic parties (primarily of the PCP and the SP, the biggest democratic parties) in defending the interests of the people and the country in consolidating and developing the democratic regime established by the April Revolution. If such unity is lacking, that is due exclusively to the SP refusal of any rapprochement with the PCP, to its blatant anti-communism and frequent alliances with the right-wingers in their onslaught on the democratic gains of the April Revolution. The strategic objective of the Socialist Party is to restore state-monopoly capitalism which the revolution eliminated.³

Although the Socialist Party clings to this position stubbornly, we insist on the need for a rapprochement, for understanding and unity on specific issues in various spheres of the nation's life. In particular, we are working to bring the positions of the two parties closer together so as to prevent the Socialists from providing the Social Democratic Party with the

parliamentary support it needs to undermine the foundations of democracy through a revision of the Constitution of the Republic.

How does the PCP assess the role of the Socialists in the working class movement of Portugal compared to the part played by the Social Democrats in the FRG and the Socialists in France? (Ali Ahmed El Tayeb, Communist Party of the Sudan)

I would refrain from comparing the Portuguese Socialists with the French Socialists or the West German Social Democrats. But I can discuss the role the Socialists play in Portugal.

No doubt, many working people are either members of or vote for the Socialist Party. This, however, does not prevent the Socialist Party from steering an anti-labour and anti-democratic course, a right-wing policy, a policy of alliance with the right-wing parties — especially since April 25, 1974. The steps taken by the various cabinets of which the Socialists were part — on wages, employment, social benefits, social security, housing, health and education — differed little from right-wing policy. That explains why the working people who vote for the SP fight side by side with the Communists against the Socialists' labour policies.

The role of the SP in the working class movement is defined particularly clearly by the Socialists' positions and activities in the trade unions.

Portugal's unitary trade union movement arose during the years of the fascist dictatorship, thanks to the heroic struggle waged by the working people within the fascist labour unions which were an integral part of Salazar's corporative state, modelled after the pattern of Mussolini's Labour Charter. After the April Revolution, the trade union movement, which rallied behind the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers-National Intersindical (GCPW-NI), developed into a broad and powerful current of the working class movement and contributed significantly to the attainment of important democratic revolutionary gains — such as workers' control, workers' rights, nationalisation and the agrarian reform.

The Socialist Party has assumed a stand of violent opposition to the Intersindical (because, thanks to the choice made by the working people, the Communists are recognised as playing the leading role in its governing bodies at all levels) and is doing its utmost to fragment the confederation. The SP and the right-wing parties, effectively supported by the more reactionary employers and receiving direct assistance from the United States and West Germany, have succeeded in setting up a different trade union centre (the General Union of Workers) whose secretary-general serves on the National Leadership of the Socialist Party. The working people regard the GUW as a 'company union' because it serves the interests of big capital and of right-wing governments. The GUW cannot match the strength or the representative scope of the GCPW-NI: the latter numbers 1,600,000 members and the former, only 200,000 to 300,000

The Current Situation in Portugal and PCP Activities

The PCP steadily opposed Portugal's entry into the EEC, but your country is now a member. Has the experience of Portugal's Common

Market membership modified your position in any way? (Mostafa Azzaoui, Party of Progress and Socialism of Morocco)

Our opposition to Portugal's entry into the EEC has a solid foundation in both economic and political terms.

Economically, our relatively backward industry and agriculture and considerably inferior level of labour productivity make it impossible for Portugal to compete with the more developed EEC countries either in the integrated European market or domestically.

Politically, integration into the EEC was seen by the political forces which advocated it as a pretext for eliminating the democratic gains of the April Revolution. It is argued that Portugal's socio-economic structures should be geared to the structures of state-monopoly capitalism which exists in the developed EEC countries but which was eliminated in Portugal by the democratic revolution.

Our analysis, our position, our forecasts and our warnings are daily borne out by facts.

The development of our own resources and the advancement of Portugal's industry, agriculture and fisheries are being sacrificed to the interests of the industrialised EEC member countries.

Although Portugal suffers from a high deficit of the food balance (a large share of the food supply is imported.— *Ed.*), ceilings have been virtually imposed on the production of cereals, tomatoes, oleiferous crops and dairy products. The market has been saturated with imported agricultural produce, and the Portuguese farmers are suffering the consequences. Areas reserved for agricultural crops are being reduced; instead, eucalyptus plantations are being set up everywhere for the production of paper pulp.

Given the imbalances in our trade, it is urgently necessary and perfectly possible to manufacture domestically many industrial goods which are now imported. However, integration into the EEC leads to opposite results: we import many goods that could be produced domestically. Industry is stagnating, and many small- and medium-scale enterprises are closing their doors.

Important national development projects (in steel production, construction of dams, production of sugar, etc.) remain on paper because they clash with the interests of the developed EEC member countries. In the EEC's international division of labour, Portugal is supposed to be a tool of the developed nations, and it cannot develop its economy in accordance with the interests of the Portuguese people.

Integration into the EEC gravely affects Portugal's national interests, sovereignty and independence. That is why we are categorically opposed to the taking of supranational decisions by EEC bodies, to the Single European Act and to the ideas and proposals urging the establishment of a European Political Union.

We are and will be fighting to make Portugal an independent European country, not a poor relation of a rich uncle.

Could you speak about the Portuguese peace movement? What does it represent? What specific objectives does it advocate? What role do the Communists play in the movement (Georg Kwiatowski; Mostafa Azzaoui; Jose Lava, Communist Party of the Philippines)

The peace struggle in Portugal is fought on four major fronts.

First, there is the struggle for general, universal goals — prevention of nuclear war, disarmament, and elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons. In this respect, the principle role in the shaping of public opinion and in the activities of the peace champions is connected with efforts to explain the value of the proposals and initiatives put forward by the USSR and other socialist countries and, since the end of 1987, of the Washington summit and of the Soviet-US Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles.

Second, there is the struggle fought for specific objectives involving Portugal — against the deployment in or transit through our national territory of nuclear weapons, against nuclear-armed submarines calling at Portuguese ports, against the construction of a radar station at Almodovar and the probable attempt to transfer the F-16 fighter-bombers from Spain to Portugal, against the expansion of NATO bases and other military facilities, and against the build-up of NATO's conventional military presence in Portugal to 'offset' the alleged erosion of 'European defence' after the elimination of intermediate and shorter-range nuclear missiles (this 'compensation' is already touted by the more reactionary mass media).

Third, there is the struggle for Portugal to pursue a foreign policy of peace and cooperation. This objective is connected with the fight against the course of the right-wing governments, for a change of national policy and for consolidating the democratic regime.

Fourth, there is vigorous solidarity with peoples who are victims of imperialist aggression (in Southern Africa, Central America and the Middle East); the aim of this solidarity is to assure their right to shape their own future and to find political solutions capable of extinguishing dangerous hotbeds of war.

The struggle along these four fronts is being waged, on the one hand, by the peace movement under the aegis of the Portuguese Council for Peace and Cooperation and, on the other, by the more consistent democratic parties, trade unions, youth and women's organisations and movements, intellectuals, Catholic quarters, etc.

The PCP is in the forefront of the struggle for peace.

What were the causes behind the important success of the right-wing forces in the parliamentary elections of July 1987? (Mostafa Azzaoui). What are the main reasons for the losses incurred by the PCP in these elections? How do you explain the defeat of the party of Ramalho Eanes, former President of the Republic? (Rafic Samhoun). Generally, how can one explain the fact that the considerable influence of the Communists in mass democratic movements has, for so many

years, failed to be reflected in elections, in the number of votes cast for the PCP? (Antonio Granja, Brazilian Communist Party; Satiadjaya Sudiman, Communist Party of Indonesia).

The elections of July 19, 1987 were held in a highly distinctive situation. The previous parliamentary election had taken place only two years before. At that time, the Socialist Party had paid a price for its policy of alliances with right-wing parties, losing 844,000 votes and 44 seats in parliament. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) which, before the elections (of 1985. — *Ed.*) formed a part of the coalition government together with the Socialist Party, launched a major operation to avoid being blamed for the policy of that government, to make the Socialist Party the scapegoat and to pose as an alternative force in the eyes of the electorate. As a result, the SDP managed to win the biggest number of votes and 88 seats in the Assembly of the Republic. Another right-wing party — the Social Democratic Centre (SDC) — received 22 seats. The Democratic Renewal Party (DRP), formed by the supporters of General Eanes, the then President of the Republic, shortly before the elections, was seen by the electorate as offering a democratic alternative and scored an unprecedented success: it won 1,036,000 votes and gained 45 seats, mostly at the expense of the Socialists.

Despite certain gains of the right-wingers, the democratic parties on the whole won a majority of seats in the Assembly of the Republic in 1985 — 140 out of 250. It was possible to form a government supported by a democratic majority. But the Socialist Party, the DRP and the President of the Republic refused to use this opportunity. Instead, these parties agreed on the formation of a minority Social Democratic government.

Subsequently, increased confrontation between the government and the democratic parties led, in 1987, 140 deputies of those parties to approve a vote of no confidence, and the government resigned that same year in April. Again, a tangible opportunity emerged for forming a government supported by a democratic parliamentary majority. The PCP, the SP and the DRP backed the idea. But the President of the Republic (at that time Mário Soares, former Secretary-General of the Socialist Party) did not accept that proposal, dissolved the Assembly of the Republic, announced early elections and, rejecting the democratic proposal for the formation of a caretaker government capable of assuring a democratic electoral process and a democratic voting procedure, kept the minority government in office although it had already resigned.

As a result, the Social Democratic Party won a majority of votes and of seats in parliament in the elections of July 19, 1987.

Three factors were fundamental to its success:

First, there was abuse for electoral purposes of the powers, resources and means of the government and of the state in all spheres of the nations' life; demagoguery; as well as complete control over and scandalous manipulation of television, radio and other mass media.

Second, the world economy developed in a way that favoured Portugal (the drop in the dollar exchange rate and in oil and cereals' prices), and this made it possible to check the growth of the trade and balance-of-payments

deficit and to stabilise the foreign debt (\$16 billion). This enabled the SDP government, unlike the previous governments, to acquire sizeable financial resources (some \$2 billion) and to create an image of 'competence' and 'efficiency'.

Third, there were divisions in the democratic camp: as a result, the electorate did not see a democratic alternative as credible.

The right-wingers lent concentrated support to the SDP, and the SDC, the other right-wing party, retained only four seats out of the 22 it had before the elections.

The results scored by the democratic parties were also significant. Paying a price for its vacillation and low level of political activity, the DPR suffered a heavy defeat, losing 73 per cent of its 1985 vote and winning only seven seats instead of 45. The Socialist Party managed to recover three seats out of the 44 and 59,748 votes out of the 844,000 it had lost two years earlier.

As for the PCP and its allies in the Democratic Unity Coalition (DUC), a close analysis leads one to conclude that the drop in the number of ballots cast for it is explained primarily by the fact that many voters stayed away from the polls. One should note that the SDP's gain of votes matches almost precisely the losses of the SDC and the DRP, while the highest percentage of absence from the polls was recorded in areas of particular PCP influence.

At its plenary meeting of July 22-23, 1987, the PCP Central Committee identified three main causes of this failure to vote: the seasonal summer migration of thousands of workers abroad and to other parts of the country; the period of summer vacations which made it a serious financial problem for working people to return to their electoral districts to vote; as well as a real political factor — no prospects for the formation of a democratic government with PCP participation.

One can therefore assume that the reduction in the number of votes cast for the Communist Party does not imply a rightward shift of its traditional electorate (although some cases of such defection did occur) but is explained mostly by absenteeism. We do not regard this reduction as a trend.

What criteria do you think can be used to identify the degree of influence exerted by communist ideology on society? Are election results the only indication or one of the more important factors? (Bert Ramelson, Communist Party of Great Britain).

Election results are, of course, an important but not the only indication of communist influence. An objective assessment of the significance of election results calls for specific conditions to be taken into account. They include electoral legislation; restrictions and discrimination in the exercise by certain parties of their rights and freedoms; abuse of power and of government resources by the ruling party; the demagoguery, misinformation and ideological subversion to which the powerful mass media (television, radio and the press) resort, the degree of economic, social, moral and religious pressure on the electorate; etc. One should also

see whether the alignment of forces at a given juncture and the absence of the immediate prospect of a certain party forming a government may prompt its traditional supporters to vote 'usefully' for another party.

All this means that, although they are essential to the relative weight of different parties in institutional bodies (parliament, government, municipal councils, etc.), election results do not offer a precise reflection of these parties' true influence.

A party's real influence, particularly among the masses, can be judged by many other indications. It also manifests itself in large-scale unitary social movements (the trade unions and the associations of peasants, intellectuals, women, youth and other social strata) and in the party's ability to mobilise the masses and exert a palpable impact on the nation's social fabric and culture. In this sense, no one in Portugal doubts that in many spheres the influence of the PCP is superior to that of other parties. That is a reliable criterion making it possible to affirm that the Communists have a much greater influence on the nation's life than indicated by election results.

Many communist parties of the non-socialist world regard the drive to ensure a constant influx of young members as a priority task. How is the PCP tackling this issue? Which aspects of your work with youth and with young Communists do you consider particularly important? (Alexander Subbotin, Communist Party of the Soviet Union).

Recruitment of young members is no doubt an important and constantly topical task. Unless we deal with this issue, we are sure to encounter ageing, stagnation and, eventually, loss of influence. However, work among youth cannot be and is not confined to the admission of young people into the PCP.

We in Portugal single out two essential aspects of this issue. The first is to strengthen the organisation of the Portuguese Communist Youth (PCY). It numbers some 30,000 members, but its influence is far short of what is now needed. The second concerns the work performed by the PCP and the PCY among the masses of young people: we defend their interests, promote the activity of unitary organisations (such as student, recreational and athletic associations or youth sections of the trade unions), organise various projects to uphold their fundamental rights, stage cultural events and involve youth in the struggle for peace.

We believe it particularly important to avoid any forms of work in which young people are ordered about, to shun paternalistic attitudes, to encourage initiative, creative thinking and a critical spirit among youth, and to develop those forms of work which are geared to the way the younger generation sees and understands contemporary socio-political phenomena.

How do you assess the prospects of the Portuguese political process in the foreseeable future and what role will the PCP play in this evolution? (Roland Bauer, Socialist Unity Party of Germany).

The advent of the right-wing majority government and the divisions among the democratic forces have seriously aggravated the threat to the democratic regime established by the April Revolution. The right-wingers who are in power can now pursue their policy with parliamentary support and enact legislation institutionalising this policy. The right-wing offensive against the democratic gains of the Portuguese people is intensifying.

At this point I should emphasise that under the Constitution of the Republic, such gains form an integral part of the democratic regime and are irreversible. That is why the new offensive is accompanied by SDP efforts to revise the Constitution; if approved, this project will not change but destroy the regime.

However, any change to be introduced into the Constitution has to be approved by at least a two-thirds majority of the Assembly of the Republic. The SDP does not command this many votes and can secure the required majority only by enlisting the support of Socialist Party deputies. Hence the importance of this year's struggle against the constitutional revision the right-wingers are seeking to institutionalise and complete the counter-revolutionary process.

Stepping up our struggle, we hold that the right-wing forces currently in power are incomparably weaker than the results of the July 19, 1987 elections may indicate.

The SDP's electoral support is far in excess of the actual economic and political support for the programme and the activities of the SDP government. Conversely, the election results scored by the PCP and other democratic parties are far inferior to the social and political support enjoyed by democratic policy.

The government's activities are conditioned by a variety of factors — the unconstitutional and illegal nature of many steps it intends to take; the impossibility of resolving the nation's problems with the help of the policy adopted; the deterioration of the economic and social situation this policy leads to; the inevitable conflict already in evidence between the policy conducted by the government and the vital interests of most people who voted for it; and the contradictions within the right-wing camp which have already resulted in a reorganisation of the SDC and led to infighting within the SDP.

Conversely, democracy still commands a considerable potential for self-defence — the constitutional and legitimate nature of its goals; a vast social base of objective support for a democratic alternative; a powerful popular and democratic movement which includes the trade unions and other mass movements and organisations; strong and democratic local government; in-depth linkages (existing at different factories and in rural areas) that account for the stake the working people and, generally, broad sections of society have in the revolutionary gains; and the actual influence wielded by the democratic forces which, in the July 19 elections, failed for the first time (since April 25, 1975 — *Ed.*) to win an overall majority of votes.

We are therefore fighting on with the hope that the Portuguese people will be able to defend and to ensure the continuation of the democratic regime, an accomplishment of the April Revolution.

There is no doubt that the PCP plays the decisive role in this struggle.

What is the strategy the PCP has adopted amid the mounting reactionary offensive? (Antonio Diaz Ruiz, Communist Party of Cuba).

Right-wing propaganda, with its enormous resources, has launched a vigorous campaign to create the impression that the counter-revolutionary offensive is irreversible and invincible, that the democratic gains of the April Revolution are therefore doomed to disappear soon. 'The April Revolution is finished,' proclaimed the right-wingers after the elections of July 19, 1987.

However, the PCP is not surrendering to the new counter-revolutionary onslaught. It remains a loyal and committed champion of the ideals and gains of the democratic revolution.

The Communist Party is therefore conducting its work along five main fronts:

(a) *representative functions* discharged in the Assembly of the Republic through its 27 deputies, in contacts with the President of the Republic,⁴ in local government bodies (both in the dozens of municipal councils where the PCP has a majority and in those where communist representatives are in a minority), through recourse to the courts, and in preparation for the next elections;

(b) *efforts to reinforce unitary organisations and movements and to enhance their militancy* (the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers; workers' commissions; organisations and movements of farmers, intellectuals, women, youth, small- and medium-scale businessmen and industrialists, pensioners and the disabled; people's associations and groups; cooperatives);

(c) *promotion of struggle by the masses* which is again on the rise, indicating that many of those who voted for the SDP are adversely affected by its policies and therefore oppose it;

(d) *convergence and unity of the democrats* — a task which the PCP furthers steadily and vigorously;

(e) *consolidation of the party itself* (leadership, style of work, cadres, information and propaganda, ideological struggle) as an essential factor in defending the interests of the people, the country, democracy, national independence and peace.

The campaign against the PCP has perhaps never been as massive, intense or vicious as it is today. The reason is clear to us. Invariably expressing and steadily upholding the vital interests of the people and the country, the Communist Party poses the firmest and most reliable obstacle to the advancement of the counter-revolutionary process. It remains a powerful political force defending democratic gains and the democratic regime of which they are part. With PCP participation, the struggle continues.

Bourgeois propaganda is working hard to make the working people in the non-socialist part of the world believe that socialism is receding irretrievably from their prospects. How does the PCP counter this theorising in its political and ideological work? (Alexander Subbotin).

The bourgeoisie is using powerful economic, political, propaganda and psychological means to make the working people accept this idea. The absence of an immediate prospect of a socialist revolution in many countries and the problems, difficulties and mistakes in the socialist nations lends a semblance of credibility to this idea.

Our response includes three major arguments:

First, we refer to the superiority of the socialist system manifested in the impressive accomplishments scored by the USSR and other socialist countries within an historically short period. These advances should be not only remembered but also constantly recalled with appreciation.

Second, we stress that socialism is essential for the tackling of economic, social and cultural problems which capitalism cannot resolve.

Third, we emphasise the feasibility of transformations, which, as history tells us, depend on the organisation, resolve, will and struggle of the revolutionary forces, of working people and of nations.

In Portugal, the struggle is unfolding for a specific immediate objective, that of defending the democratic regime, but the prospect of socialism always remains in sight. If this prospect disappears, so will the reason for the existence of the Communist Party.

As long as there are societies whose salient feature is exploitation of the working people by the owners of capital and of the means of production, socialism and communism will invariably be the beacon of popular struggle.

¹ Comrade Cunhal is referring to the abortive coup attempts of September 28, 1974 and March 11, 1975. In response to the March events, the country launched far-reaching socio-economic transformations. — *Ed.*

² The turbulent and contradictory revolutionary process led to stratification within the AFM and to infighting between rival groups. — *Ed.*

³ The nationalisation of banking, insurance and the basic sectors of the economy changed drastically Portugal's socio-economic structures: the government came to control 60 to 65 per cent of the country's industry. In 1976, nationalised enterprises owned 38 per cent of all stock and accounted for 44 per cent of all investment and for 25 per cent of the gross national income. The nation's monopoly capital lost its economic positions. — *Ed.*

⁴ Regular contacts with the President of the Republic are maintained within the framework of his meetings with political parties. — *Ed.*

Central America: Thorny Path To Peace And Liberation

Rigoberto Padilla Rush — General
Secretary, Communist Party of
Honduras

LIFE is so dynamic that sometimes it is hard to make a true evaluation of developments in due time. The pace of events often invalidates what was

said only yesterday, and makes one take a fresh look at the various political and social phenomena on the national, regional or global scale. When I was writing these lines, I found it hard, for instance, to find an adequate description of the meeting of the Central American presidents held in San José last January, to consider the problems and prospects of implementing the Guatemala Accords.

One would have thought that the intense discussion marked yet another step on the way towards overcoming one of the most dangerous local conflicts, and that one could look to the future with hope. But all is not that simple. It is hard to convert into reality what has been put down on paper, said Alfonso Cabrera¹. That could be done, he said, if there was the political will to do so. That is quite true. But one may well ask whether all of the participants in the initiated process of pacification in Central America have that kind of will. Time alone will tell. One thing is certain: *it is not only up to Nicaragua, but to the other states as well to see that the Guatemala Accords are scrupulously fulfilled. This applies above all to the US administration*, which has paid lip service to the document but has in fact blocked its implementation.

Objective developments have posed this alternative: either the establishment of peace on the isthmus linking the North and the South of America, broad democratisation and a search for optimal ways of our countries' economic and social development, or continued armed confrontation, which is pivoted on the undeclared war by US imperialism and its protégés against the Sandinistas and the other revolutionary-democratic movements. As in the past, this war will have no clearly defined fronts, but it will have a common denominator: CIA subversive activity, the State Department's diplomatic blackmail, and the Pentagon's armed intervention. In short, the situation is a contradictory one.

These Accords could open a new chapter in the political history of the continent, or they could remain an event of little account, an unsuccessful attempt to assert the Central American nations' sovereign right to conduct an independent foreign policy.

We who live in the isthmus are well aware of what is going on in Honduras and in the neighbouring countries, and so are entitled to draw some conclusions. The *first* is that the failure of the Guatemala Accords and the continued confrontation, to say nothing of its deepening, are fraught with grave consequences. Of this the more forward-looking members of the ruling classes are also aware. *Second*, we, Communists, resolutely support political solutions because we believe, realistically, that negotiations are the common sense way of overcoming the conflict. This is an approach which has been winning supporters even in the conservative circles. *Third*, it is our deep conviction that no task is more important or humanistic today than saving mankind from the threat of nuclear suicide. But for the peoples of the Third World and, in particular, for those of Central America, vital issues like getting rid of the imperialist enslavement, assertion of sovereignty, the second liberation and social progress assume truly dramatic proportions. Their solution will, without any doubt, be the best contribution to the attainment of world peace.

That warrants the assertion that the urge for liberation does not run

counter to the struggle for this noble goal, but springs from it. *We regard the problems of peace and liberation, not as being juxtaposed, but with the two aspects of the struggle against imperialism and internal reaction in the specific conditions of the individual countries as being closely interconnected and interdependent.*

Nicaragua: the Revolution Defends Itself

Let us recall that the profound economic, social and political changes in Nicaragua and its people's resolve and heroism have generated a tide of international solidarity. They have, at the same time, led to the emergence of the opposite pole now known in the political lexicon as the *contras*. Imperialism has even found an ideological platform for the mercenary armies, and its main postulate is the fight against the 'Soviet-Cuban and Nicaraguan threat to the security and values of Western civilisation'.

In terms of common sense, this 'threat' appears to be yet another absurdity within the system of stereotypes manipulated by anti-communist propaganda. In actual fact, this small Central American republic, plundered by the Somoza clan, devastated by natural calamities and bled white by decades of popular struggle against the Western Hemisphere's most odious regime, has become the object of an undeclared war since the earliest years of the people's power. Free Nicaragua was attacked by the major capitalist power and its mercenaries.

Imperialism has once again demonstrated its reactionary and aggressive essence, while the young revolution has had to demonstrate, arms in hand, its capacity to stand up for its gains and to inflict a strategic defeat on the counter-revolutionary army.

The experience of this and other anti-imperialist popular revolutions shows that *liberation objectives are best attained under stable international relations, i.e., in the presence of a favourable external factor*. But practice also shows something else: *any revolution tends to produce its own Vendées, the attempts by internal and external reaction to take political and social revanche*. In some cases, it manages to inflict a temporary defeat on the progressive forces, as it did in Guatemala under Jacobo Arbenz, in Chile under Salvador Allende, and in Grenada under Maurice Bishop.

These reverses do not minimise the significance of revolutionary and democratic gains, but if they are to be attained, it is useless to plead with imperialism and reaction to moderate their aggressiveness. We think that it is the task of the Communists and all the other progressive forces to amplify international solidarity with the fighting people by every possible means. *The defence of the Sandinista people's revolution is our bounden duty and obligation*, it was said in the decisions of the Fourth Congress and the Third CC Plenary Meeting of the CP Honduras in 1987.

When I attended the celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, I was put in mind of what Lenin had once said that it was the support, the sympathy of the working people of the whole world, even in countries most hostile to us, that were the ultimate, the most crucial source, the decisive cause of the fiasco of all the invasions directed against us.²

Revolutions, like the Nicaraguan, have more than a high internal

political and moral potential. They rely on the *support and sympathies* of the socialist countries, of the working people and of a wide spectrum of political and social forces *of the whole world*. A characteristic feature of Nicaragua today is the thousands of internationalists — Cubans, Chileans, Canadians, Greeks, Swedes, Russians, people from Central American and other nations — who work voluntarily to harvest the crops, repair and build homes and enterprises, schools and hospitals, cooperatives and roads. Among them are hundreds of US citizens, men and women of that great nation, who have made it clear that, by their work and even at the price of their lives, they want to wash off the disgrace Washington's policy has carried to the people of the United States, which have not yet forgotten the tragic lessons of the imperialist gamble in Vietnam.

Many people are, unfortunately, captive to anti-communist propaganda, and so one has to repeat some home truths: the Sandinistas' activity is based on a yearning for peace, and not on export of revolution. That is the source of their strength, and not of weakness. The policy of doing away with the conflict conducted by the revolutionary governments not only in Nicaragua, but also of Afghanistan, Kampuchea and other countries is not dictated by any internal political crises, but by their yearning for peace. Extinguishing the hotbeds of war means taking a big stride towards the attainment and preservation of world peace and security, towards solving the problems of national development for the benefit of the peoples and with the participation of a wide spectrum of class and political forces.

Since 1981, the Sandinistas have been inviting the US administration to the negotiation table. They have supported the Contadora process and all the initiatives leading to peace, including the Guatemala Accords. *Washington's stubborn refusal, with the servile complicity of Honduran and Salvadoran reaction, to allow a settlement has demonstrated their incapacity to make a realistic assessment of the international situation, and testify that US policy is in deep crisis.*

El Salvador: Napoleón Duarte's Lost War

Since the victory of the Sandinistas in 1979, Washington and its protégés have spared no efforts to prove that Nicaragua is involved in supplying arms to the Salvadoran guerrillas, but up to now neither the CIA nor the Pentagon have come up with anything like hard evidence. Does it exist at all? After all, the two countries have no common border; they are separated by the territory of Honduras and the Gulf of Fonseca on the Pacific seaboard of Central America. This entire zone is under the control of a special US electronic surveillance base on the Tigre Island, not far from the shores of Nicaragua. Any ground, air or marine target will appear on radar screens. The result is that no convoys transporting arms from Nicaragua to El Salvador have been detected.

But where then do the Salvadoran insurgents take their military equipment? As far as one can tell, they capture their weapons in the battles with government troops. As for Sandinista Nicaragua, it has, indeed, markedly enlivened the military operations in El Salvador — by its example, which is an inspiration to the guerrillas fighting the puppet regime.

The continued reverses of the government army is a peculiarity of the revolutionary war in El Salvador, beginning with the successful offensive launched by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) in 1981. Today, the FMLN, together with the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FRD), control one-third of the national territory. They have set up a parallel government with authority in the liberated areas and enjoying the support of the population and the sympathies of other Central American peoples.

The guerrilla detachments, who now have considerable military experience, have evolved into a regular revolutionary army. Following some well-planned major operations, there are signs of a change in favour of the revolutionary forces, and it is this fact — and not President Napoleón Duarte's 'peaceableness' — that has induced him to start talks with the insurgents, and to agree to an open dialogue with the FMLN-FRD after the signing of the Guatemala Accords. For the first time in many years, the banners of the revolution were proudly flown over San Salvador, while millions of TV viewers witnessed some unforgettable scenes: in the streets of the Salvadoran capital, the people welcomed the guerrilla commanders who had come down from the mountain areas.

The way of political settlement is a hard and thorny one. President Duarte is an 'impossible' man to talk to, and one who is prone to go back on agreements or to put forward deliberately unacceptable terms, such as the prior disarmament of the insurgents. In this context, one should also recall his attempts to speculate in the 'symmetrism' conception, which boils down to the claim that there are insurgents in El Salvador, and contras in Nicaragua, so that both governments are under pressure from armed movements. It is our opinion that 'symmetrism' has not a leg to stand on because it is based on an attempt to equate two situations that have nothing in common. After all, the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries are funded by the United States and carry on operations from foreign territory, whereas the armed movement in El Salvador is an internal political one which is strong enough to threaten the regime from the liberated areas of the national territory. *To regard the Salvadoran problem in terms of the peculiarities of the US fight against Nicaragua, as Duarte does, means condemning the negotiations with the FMLN-FRD to failure. The two different problems must be solved in different ways.*

Honduras: the Contras Must Go

Our party has examined on many occasions the 'Honduran knot of contradictions', which originated from the fact that the country has been turned into a regional centre of US militarist activity. The strategic situation of Honduras and the traitorous attitude of the ruling élite have determined its role in implementing interventionist schemes. The almost interminable US army, air force and naval exercises are designed to intimidate the peoples of the isthmus, to create a ramified infrastructure to provide logistic support for military operations, and to train Honduran soldiery in conditions simulating a large-scale armed conflict. *The concentration of counter-revolutionary bands along the borders with*

Nicaragua completed the process of turning Honduras into an occupied country and a hotbed of provocations against its neighbour in the south.

Last year the CIA claimed that the contras army would include 30,000 Nicaraguan peasants. They need this 'peasant garb' to conceal the obvious fact that many members of this host, especially the officers, are former Somoza national guardsmen, bandits and sheer mercenary scum. Some of them are peasants who have been duped or forcibly driven away. But, according to the Sandinistas, this counter-revolutionary army numbers no more than 7,000. The CIA's 'optimism' is based on the vain promises of the contras and springs from their mutual desire to obtain additional appropriations from the US Congress and other sources.

Let us consider the following fact, which is hardly palatable for the US administration: *these subsidies serve not only a means for destabilising the popular power in Nicaragua, but also as a source for the enrichment of top contra leaders.* Reports leaked to the US press indicate that it was discovered in the course of the 'Irangate' hearings that Alfonso Calero, Enrique Bermúdez and other ringleaders of the Nicaraguan counter-revolution have secret bank accounts, and some officers have admitted that, for them, an end to the military operations against Managua would mean an end to a 'lucrative business'. That is also the message of the fictitious character of many operations, as correspondents of *Newsweek* have reported: they began by marching hundreds of kilometres across the interior of Nicaragua, first with a contra detachment, which did not have a single engagement with the Sandinistas, and then marched back towards the Honduran border with the troops of the popular army, which inflicted crushing blows on the enemy.³

Since the funds earmarked for the mercenaries come mainly via Tegucigalpa, some of the top military leaders and government officials of Honduras also have a 'finger in the pie'. This now and again leads to shoot-outs and hot pursuit of the gangsters. The growth of crime, the smuggling of arms and drugs, the spread of prostitution, venereal disease and AIDS, against the background of wild corruption among the occupation and local authorities, have become part and parcel of the Honduran reality.⁴

Only an end to the occupation can do away with this disastrous situation, a legitimate demand which is being ever more loudly voiced at meetings and demonstrations staged by popular organisations, in speeches made by representatives of various political and social circles, including dignitaries of the Catholic Church, many of whom have been threatened by the reactionaries with expulsion and even death. That is why *our party has now put forward slogans for a restoration of national sovereignty, the immediate expulsion of the contras, a review of the military treaties with Washington, 'legitimising' the presence of US troops on our territory, and scrupulous fulfilment by the Azcona Hoyo government of the Guatemala Accords.*

Pacification and the Goals of Liberation

The development of the political situation in Central America brings out at least three of its most prominent peculiarities. *First*, the steady consolidation of the Nicaraguan revolution in the face of all the incredible difficulties, and the positive changes in the correlation of forces in

confrontation in El Salvador. *Second*, the build-up of the US military presence and the illegal US acts, the militarisation of the countries of Central America, the piratical operations by the contras and the death squads, which have, however, not brought any success to the forces of external and internal reaction in their efforts to establish the notorious 'Pax Americana'. On the contrary, they have led to a disastrous aggravation of the crisis in our zone and have generated active protests by the popular masses. *Third*, the emergence of constructive trends in some circles of the Central American bourgeoisie. In the light of their class interests, they have begun to seek a way out of the conflict, putting forward their own projects, which sometimes cut across the Reagan administration's policy, for peace in the subregion and the establishment of stable relations between our countries.

In this context, there is evidence of such continent-wide realities as the gravitation of some governments to the Non-aligned Movement, the participation by Argentina and Mexico in the unprecedented peace trend, such as the Delhi Six, the urge to declare the South Atlantic a nuclear-free zone, and to demilitarise the region. One should also mention the meeting of the eight Latin American presidents at Acapulco, who came out against interventions, for political settlements, ratification of the Guatemala Accords, and coordination of efforts to tackle common problems, such as the external debt.

The activity of the Contadora Group and the Support Group is an important component of the on-going changes. The way to their first few successes was a long one: whenever there was the prospect of a political dialogue, Washington intervened to frustrate the efforts of its participants. Considering the causes of these reverses, the fraternal parties of the region point in their documents not only to the neoglobalist ambitions of the most reactionary circles of imperialism and its accomplices, but also to the lack of decision on the part of some participants in the Contadora Group and their proneness to succumb to pressures from continental reaction. But on the whole, the Communists have given a positive evaluation and have always supported the real attempts to bring about a political settlement of the conflict.

As a result of the Sandinistas' well-considered and firm stand, our peoples' anti-imperialist struggle, wide international solidarity and under the obvious impact of the Contadora process, a major step towards peace was taken last August, when the leaders of all the five countries of the subregion signed the Guatemala Accords. This document and the consequent concrete measures, including multilateral meetings at various levels, have been supported by the revolutionary-democratic and patriotic circles.

Why has Washington stubbornly refused to reckon with the new realities? Why has President Azcona Hoyo and the top Honduran military, in clear collusion with the Reagan administration, failed to take steps to expel the contras and to comply with the Guatemala Accords, and presented various preconditions to the Nicaraguan government? President Reagan has referred to 'US strategic interests'. The point is that a peaceful settlement would be tantamount to demilitarisation of the Central

American republics, withdrawal of all the foreign troops: the contras, the permanently stationed units and the military advisers of the United States. That is something Washington and its hangers-on do not want.

Earlier on, they had clearly expected the Sandinistas to refuse to take part in the peace process. Their hopes were dashed when the Sandinista government took steps to democratise life in the country and accepted the proposal of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias that the opposition-minded Nicaraguan Cardinal Obando y Bravo should be appointed to act as mediator in hammering out the terms for halting the armed conflict. What is more, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega ordered a unilateral ceasefire. This was followed by the lifting of the state of emergency, the announcement of a wide amnesty, and the start of a direct dialogue with the contras. Once again, it is the Sandinistas that have acted as the most committed advocates of peace, and once again the United States has ignored Managua's stand.

We support the Guatemala Accords and are well aware that it is a compromise with the bourgeoisie, with that section of it which, despite pressure from US imperialism, has variously displayed a readiness for dialogue with the revolutionary-democratic forces. The Communists do not shun such accords. Let us recall that Lenin urged the need to comprehend "the true revolutionary aims of the proletariat" and to be able "to pursue them through all and every circumstances, zigzags, and compromises".⁵ Could one put it more clearly than that?

For our country, the Guatemala Accords are especially significant because they provide, as a concrete measure, the establishment of national reconciliation commissions. Such have already been set up in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. As for Honduras, its rulers stubbornly resisted the establishment of such a commission (which is now headed by Monsignor Héctor Enrique Santos) on the pretext that there are no belligerent forces in the country, and, consequently, no political prisoners, no political refugees, no disappeared or assassinated. Our party took the trouble to refresh the memory of the Honduran rulers by recalling that only over the past few years more than 150 popular leaders and Communists have been abducted, have disappeared or have been subjected to torture and killed; dozens of our compatriots have to live in exile without guarantees for a return home, doomed to die at the hands of the death squads; thousands of our compatriots have become refugees in their own country, stripped of their property by the contras and forced to migrate in search of asylum.

For most Hondurans, reconciliation is not a semantic issue. In the broadest sense, as we have kept stressing, it is *restoration of national sovereignty and independence*, release from the occupation and the military bases, and an end to the 'joint' manoeuvres on our territory. It also means *genuine democratisation* guaranteeing rights and freedoms to all citizens without exception, freedom for political prisoners, an end to the institutionalised persecution and terrorism, disbandment of the death squads, and a purge of the so-called state security corps. It also means the *establishment of a law-and-order state* as it is required by the Guatemala Accords.⁶

Are we capable of solving these challenging problems? That is not an easy question, but we feel that, together with all the other revolutionary-democratic and patriotic forces, we can provide a fitting answer. The outcome of the conflict situation in Central America largely depends on how successful the advance is towards the attainment of national goals. But the dialectics of political development also dictate the reverse relation: the destinies of democratisation in the individual countries and the solution of the problems of liberation depend on how soon the flames of war in the subregion can be put out.

Above I indicated the causes of the positive changes in the foreign policy situation, and I should like to pinpoint one of these: *the emergence of elements of new thinking, of the realism which is so vital for statesmen and political leaders in the nuclear age*. More and more people are now coming to realise that it would take only an accidental spark for a local conflict to ignite a thermonuclear war. That is why we urge the need for active support by the progressive forces of the world for our struggle for peace in the subregion, democratisation, and the solution of the external debt and economic and social development problems for the benefit of the popular masses. We do not pin our hopes on international solidarity alone, and are engaged in painstaking, often hardly noticeable work in uniting the revolutionaries, democrats and patriots on a broad anti-imperialist platform. When working for the establishment of peace in Central America, we do not act as romantic-minded pacifists, but strive to make a sober assessment of the situation, primarily of the balance of class and political forces, and to take account of the slightest positive changes. Our point of departure in our efforts to fulfil our patriotic and internationalist tasks is that killing war means getting rid of imperialist oppression.

¹ Alfonso Cabrera is Guatemala's Foreign Minister, and he was reported to have said that last November at a meeting of the International Commission to Verify and Control Compliance with the Guatemala Accords, which was also attended by the secretaries-general of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States and the foreign ministers of the countries of Central America, the Contadora Group and the Support Group. Early this year, the Commission was wound up de jure under pressure from Washington.

² See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 145.

³ See R. Nordland, 'The New Contras?', *Newsweek*, June 1, 1987.

⁴ Progressive opinion throughout the region is seriously alarmed over the presence of the contras. Counter-revolutionary bands are still present in Costa Rica, and have lately become more active in Guatemala, taking part in the establishment of the arms supply route for the counter-revolutionaries entrenched in Honduras. The presence of the contras has become a factor destabilising the internal political situation in the countries of Central America. — *Ed.*

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 23.

⁶ The crimes of the regime have been exposed by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The Honduras government has been accused on various counts, in particular, on its Battalion 3-16, a paramilitary terroristic outfit set up by a group of US advisers for 'counter-insurgency' operations under the control of military counter-intelligence. On the eve of the San José meeting of the Central American presidents, it assassinated Deputy Miguel Angel Pavón and the Christian Democrat Moisés Landaverde. Pavón was the first witness of the prosecution at the Inter-American Court. The wave of crime has continued.

Our View Of Europe As One And Undivided

Bertil Måbrink — Deputy Chair, Left
Party — Communists of Sweden;
Member of Parliament

TALKING of 'Europe', the Swedes and other Westerners usually mean the western part of the continent, or even just the 12 countries of the European Economic Community, but never the continent as a whole. That may be an effect of the vestiges of the cold war and the portrayal of the socialist countries in the East as 'the enemy'. But it also can be a deliberate attempt to cut the socialist part of Europe off from its natural partners in the West.

This approach made itself felt in the autumn 1987 Riksdag debates on Europe. The question was raised by the Left Party — Communists (LPC) and the Riksdag Speaker, symptomatically, consented to the inclusion of that issue in the agenda. Our motivation was that until then the Riksdag had been discussing European problems only in the warped context of Sweden's relations with the Common Market. But, first, there must be clarity as regards the implications of these relations and the impact of their development on our country with its status of neutrality. Second, we would like to promote a correct view of Europe as an integral continent, though made up by states which differ in size, population and political system. In spite of their ideological, political and socio-economic differences, the West and East Europeans consider themselves to be in many ways *a single entity*, especially as regards their common interest in the preservation of European civilisation from the peril of nuclear war or the irreversible deterioration of the environment.

Both the government of our country and the Social Democratic Labour Party of Sweden, it should be noted, mean not just the West when they talk about Europe. This sensible approach is supported by many people in other West European countries, although their attitude rarely has any substantial influence on the official positions. Yet there clearly are *opportunities for joint or parallel efforts* of the communist and social democratic parties, progressive movements and trade unions to propagate a broad internationalist concept of a single and diverse Europe.

The importance attached in Sweden to cooperation with the EEC is understandable and justifiable. It was noted in the course of the above-mentioned Riksdag debates that the Common Market countries absorbed nearly one-half of the Swedish exports and kept half a million Swedish workers in jobs. That was why, speaking for the government, the Foreign Trade Minister said that Sweden would take care to keep Swedish producers competitive on the EEC market and remove various obstacles to trade with the community. The Swedish Right would like the government to do far more; in fact, they are carrying on a 'scare campaign' in which influential forces linked with Big Capital are pressing Sweden into the closest possible rapprochement with the Common Market and acceptance

of its rules to save the country from 'backwardness and misery'. Without such a close relationship, the leader of the Moderate Coalition Party, Carl Bildt, claims, Sweden may become "a stagnant outlying area with growing semicolonial links with the developing central region".

The class and social goals of these assertions hardly need any clarification. Processes of the concentration and monopolisation of capital have now reached such proportions that it would like to break out of the boundaries of national systems. However, the road suitable for Big Capital is not the right road for the people and the country.

We in the LPC are resolutely against 'drawing the devil on the wall', that is, the allegations of all sorts of danger in store for Sweden if she stays out of the Common Market. We stand for a sensible approach to cooperation with the EEC countries. The need for vigorous and diversified trade with them is clear. However, we do not entertain the illusion that close rapprochement with the EEC means Sweden's salvation and prosperity. The Community is known to be saddled with a host of difficulties. Restructuring in industry and agriculture is eliminating jobs. Mass unemployment has reached 17 million, hitting especially hard young people starting their work careers. Conservative financial policies are aimed at restricting public consumption and folding up the social services. The EEC structures are perpetuating the system of exploitation and power inherited from the past. Do we have to tailor Sweden to all those factors with which the Common Market itself is unable to cope?

As for the extensive trade between Sweden and the EEC countries, it is not at all the reason for increasing our dependence on them. Rather, it calls for *diversifying our external economic relations*. The United States, Eastern Europe and major Asian countries are more important partners, at least in the longer term. That course would do far more to secure jobs for Swedish workers.

The debates on European affairs that are being conducted in Sweden and other West European countries revolve all too often around money, customs tariffs, trade quotas and other commercial matters, which is all of a piece with the bourgeois mode of thinking. But the country's prosperity and welfare depend on the ability of the people to decide their destiny independently and to choose their own road of development. That is why the question of Sweden's independence is the key to its relationship with the EEC. It is naive to presume that our country can economically merge with the Common Market without sacrificing the basis for her policy of neutrality. After all, no one has cancelled the Treaty of Rome on the establishment of the Common Market, and it provides for the Community to advance towards an economic, political and military alliance. If Sweden wishes to retain its traditional neutrality, it cannot participate in the EEC, and it is a good thing that the government recognises the fact. But the point is *not to surrender important sovereign rights* to suit supranational bureaucracy but to reserve in full the opportunity to plan the country's policy and actions to further her national interests rather than to add to the profits of transnational corporations.

It should not be overlooked either that the Common Market is an epitome of old thinking, namely, the idea of the regionalisation of the

world economy as a counterbalance to the process of its internationalisation, which is gaining momentum. Regionalisation as embodied in the Common Market encourages protectionist tendencies and raises obstacles to free exchanges, especially with socialist and developing countries. The negative implications of regionalisation, moreover, are making themselves felt in politics as well as in the economy. Influential forces in a number of the EEC countries are opposed to détente and to a search for new ways of ensuring security through the de-escalation of armaments, including nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, if the regional barriers raised by the Common Market were torn down and if *relations between Western and Eastern Europe were expanded, a strong impetus would be given to détente and security on the continent as a whole.*

Europe has accumulated a wealth of experience in equal and mutually beneficial peaceful cooperation among states in very diverse fields, including security. Although there are on the continent countries with different socio-political systems, belonging to the opposite military alliances, the European process kept developing, and culminated in the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. That process is going on despite certain difficulties and obstacles, but it will take the *joint efforts of all the European countries* to raise it to a new level. The idea has now gained currency of building a 'common European home' for all the peoples of the continent to live in peace. The continuation and development of the European process will enable them step by step to develop their neighbourliness into cooperation in the spirit of goodwill. Extending the metaphor, we may say that the foundation of the 'common European home' has several pillars.

One of them is *security*. Today it can only be joint, that is, not at the expense of one's partner but together with him. That concept was formulated by the Palme Commission and it naturally militates against the distorted view of Europe as only the western part of the continent. Joint security effectively presupposes mutual and equal respect for the interests of the countries and peoples of both Western and Eastern Europe. These interests are promoted in the best possible way by the idea of ridding Europe of nuclear weapons altogether, and also by the proposals for establishing nuclear-free zones in different parts of the continent, in the centre, north and south. Practice indicates that progress towards those goals, however difficult, is nevertheless possible. The Soviet-US Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles, concerning first and foremost Europe, has become the first step towards the reduction of nuclear weapons deployed in the Old World.

Sweden undoubtedly has an interest in the establishment of a *nuclear-free zone* in Nordic Europe, which would consolidate the non-nuclear status of all the Nordic countries and contribute to stability in the region. Our party is working vigorously for the idea because we are convinced that it meets the vital interests of our people. Some progress has lately been made towards that objective: a parliamentary commission with the participation of most of the political parties of the Nordic countries has been at work for several years now and an intergovernmental expert committee has been formed to study the question of the establishment of a

nuclear-free zone in Nordic Europe. The Soviet Union has already stated its intention to respect the status of that zone, thus offering substantial backing to the desire of the Nordic people to have it proclaimed. In our view, struggle for a Nordic nuclear-free zone is inseparable in our inter-related and interdependent world from the efforts to have such zones in other regions, which warrants exchanges of practical experience.

New prospects for strengthening security in the North of Europe were opened by the proposals formulated by Mikhail Gorbachov in his speech in Murmansk in October 1987: they include reduction of military activity on the seas, the establishment of confidence-building measures and the promotion of cooperation in the use of natural resources and in environmental protection. Answering a question from the LPC in the Riksdag in December 1987, Foreign Minister Sten Andersson welcomed those proposals as a constructive contribution to the strengthening of Nordic security and stressed Sweden's special interest in scientific explorations and environmental protection in the Arctic. The Soviet proposals, meaningful in themselves, are important also because they tend to detract from all the military factors of security and to promote all its civilian aspects: security, especially joint security, indeed depends not just on military factors but also on the level of peaceful relations and contacts in all the other fields.

That is why *economic cooperation among states regardless of their social systems* is another pillar in the foundation of the 'common European home'. That cooperation, resting on mutual interest and mutual benefit, has already done a good deal for the Europeans both in the East and in the West. The processes of perestroika in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries are opening new broad vistas for trade and technological and scientific exchanges. Joint ventures of socialist and capitalist enterprises are a promising beginning as well, auguring new jobs and higher living standards. There still are quite a few artificial obstacles to this cooperation, such as boycotts, embargoes and sanctions, primarily those posed by the United States. The US uses COCOM¹ to restrict the West European countries' trade with socialist countries by drawing up long lists of bans on what it calls strategic goods. Regrettably, Sweden yielded to Washington's pressure and passed legislation on export control.

Joint or concerted environmental protection measures are a new sphere of cooperation among European countries. Attention to that problem was drawn anew by a report issued in the summer of 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland. Ecological disasters do not stop at national borders and cooperation in environmental protection should be practised across borders as well. We have in our region good experience of cooperation among Baltic states in reducing pollution levels in the Baltic Sea Basin. Ecological measures, along with ameliorating the environment, hold out a good promise of new jobs.

Last but not least, *cultural exchanges and human contacts* are an inalienable pillar of the 'common European home' as well. It is personal contacts and knowledge of the history and culture of other nations that help erase prejudice and bias and establish mutual understanding and

trust. It is extremely important to learn the frame of mind and lifestyles of other people, but the West Europeans still have a vague idea of what their neighbours in the East think and how they live. The East Europeans, too, should know more about life in Sweden, for example. This is how much-needed mutual understanding can be achieved in defiance of hostile propaganda, which is still widespread in the West.

Ideological differences are bound to remain, of course, whatever the level of cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe. But there is no need to try to impose one's own philosophy on others. The most important thing is that *ideological differences should be no obstacle to practical cooperation* in specific fields. This truth seems to be sinking in, as evidenced by such a remarkable document as the joint statement of the programme commission of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and Academy of Social Sciences of the CC of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany on the 'Contest of Ideologies and Joint Security'. The Left Party-Communists shares the idea of that document that different ideologies should not impede cooperation, including cooperation in security matters.

As for integral Europe, we know that it is a hard goal to achieve because there are forces which will spare no effort to make it impossible. They are at work in different countries, including Sweden, and in their view European cooperation should be confined exclusively to the Common Market or to Western Europe. They are backed, moreover, by the forces of US imperialism, which have an interest not in the integration of Europe as a whole but in dividing the continent into the rival East and West so that both should be weaker. To this end Washington is fuelling anti-communism and anti-sovietism and trying to isolate the European socialist countries and thwart European cooperation. The US clearly prefers the 'Atlantic home', in which it has the decisive say, to the 'common European home'.

The interests of the European nations in security, economic development, environmental protection, culture and human contacts are inseparable from the development of cooperation in the whole of Europe and from the extension of mutual understanding regardless of differences between ideologies and social systems. That process, as the events of the past few years show, is gaining ground in spite of natural difficulties and artificial obstacles, with the West and East of the European continent growing closer together.

¹ COCOM — Coordinating Committee exercising multilateral control over exports to socialist countries — was established on US initiative in 1950 and consists of the NATO countries (except Iceland) and Japan — *Ed.*

for human survival

Peace Alliance In Canada

André Jacob — member of the presidential council, Canadian Peace Alliance, President of the Quebec Peace Alliance

THE Soviet-American Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles has inspired fresh hopes. The situation produced by the Washington summit encourages the anti-war forces, which have been fighting over the years to have such accords concluded and to stop the train of the nuclear arms race that is charging full steam towards the precipice.

There are those in NATO, however, who agree to abolish the two classes of missiles only on the condition that the stocks and yields of other deadly weapons are increased. The INF Treaty would then be absolutely meaningless: while the right hand signs the treaty, the left one replaces the abolished weapons with even more formidable ones.

The Canadian government, too, has taken a clear-cut stand under its new policy; it claims: "Our human and material resources will not be sufficient either today or in the foreseeable future to defend the world's second largest country . . . This goal can be achieved only through collective security, which is guaranteed by NATO . . . The gravest threat to Canada is the threat of a Soviet nuclear attack on the USA, on North America . . . The only effective counterweight to that threat is the deterrence strategy, based on the existence of nuclear forces of various types . . ." These views do not at all tally with the officially stated desire to put an end to the arms race.

The elimination of the missiles will be a meaningful step only if the NATO countries give up their nuclear deterrence policy. To achieve that goal in our country, the peace forces should tirelessly popularise the ideas of peace among the public and exert pressure on the government.

The development of the Canadian peace movement is graphic proof that the *survival and security of various nations are interdependent today*. First, we demand the removal of the nuclear threat, which is universal. Second, the source of that threat is next door to Canada; the steps taken by our southern neighbour are fuelling worry and prompting people to formulate more concrete anti-nuke demands. Finally, another source of anxiety for ourselves and others, we think, is the position of our own government, which has abandoned an independent foreign policy and is turning the country into a hostage to the United States.

So what do our anti-war forces want? Most of our organisations are alarmed by the *military and political course of the Canadian government*

itself and most of the demands are addressed to it. I do not think this fact to be a manifestation of national narrow-mindedness or selfishness, especially in view of Canada's place in the US militarist plans and her role in the escalation of the nuclear arms race.

American cruise missiles have been tested over our territory since 1983. The country is being pressed into making a larger contribution to NATO and building up the Canadian troop contingent in Western Europe, into participating in the 'star wars' programme under the renewed agreement on the North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) and building up the system of military facilities and bases in the North. The early warning system with dozens of radars and airfields there can easily fall under full Pentagon control and, moreover, become a component of SDI, while the Arctic areas will be a target for militarisation rather than peaceful cooperation.

Without any discussion, let alone a referendum, the government has drawn up and published a document that has given the Canadians cause for much worry. The *White Papers on Defense* rationalises the deterrence strategy and Canada's involvement in the arms race and shows that the general thrust of the Cabinet's policy is peace through strength and the build-up of military muscle. Plans to buy a dozen atomic-powered submarines at \$500 million apiece, and also frigates, tanks and fighter planes will materialise only if the military budget is substantially increased. But last year it went up by more than ten per cent as it was!

Realities impress upon Canadians the need to revise government policy. Three-fourths of the population believe that Prime Minister Mulroney has surrendered an independent stand on military and political matters. The figure, cited in the results of the latest Gallup poll, explains why the movement for a peace policy is gaining ground in the country.

The Canadian Peace Alliance² unites the overwhelming majority of the Canadian peace forces. The alliance says that the country supports the nuclear arms race by continuing with cruise missile tests, by consenting to the 'star wars' programme, by permitting nuclear-armed ships and planes to use Canadian territory, by being one of the largest exporters of components for nuclear weapons and by refusing to take practical measures against the build-up of the nuclear arms arsenals. We are raising the alarm and keep explaining that in this way our own territory is becoming another component and source of the nuclear escalation.

Acting on the popular will for change in this situation, Canadian peace activists have launched their first campaign or, rather, first phase of struggle, under the keynote of involving Canada in peace efforts and promoting electoral support for a withdrawal from the arms race. The campaign is immediately related to the spring elections to the Federal Parliament. We are urging voters to support those candidates who campaign on a non-nuclear platform. Its goals can be summed up as stopping Canada's involvement in SDI, turning it into a nuclear-free zone and bringing the nuclear powers round to ending nuclear weapon tests.

Carrying on that campaign, the anti-war forces, among them groups of peace activists, trade unions, youth organisations, church groups, etc., criticise in various forms the government's policy. They publish in their

press organs studies of militarism and the operations of the military-industrial complex, print abstracts from the government's *White Paper* and reveal their implications, while one peace organisation has publicly burned a copy of that document. Instead of collecting signatures for appeals and 'Peace Caravans', activists now encourage people to send protest letters and postcards to the Prime Minister's office and to the legislative bodies.

It has now dawned on many Canadians, perhaps for the first time ever, that the platform of peace and survival, which is essential and urgent for the country, only *adds to the prestige of the parties and movements advocating it and secures mass support for them*. It was also for the first time that the issue of a peace policy prevailed in the election campaign over the indubitably important socio-economic demands (although this judgement may be somewhat biased). Lastly, it was for the first time that a candidate's foreign policy stand determined the voter response to him or her. My countrymen have realised that we can actually exert influence on government policy and on parliamentary decisions through the electoral process. This new phenomenon in Canada's socio-political life broadens the scope and increases the impact of the Peace Alliance.

The purpose of another important campaign is *to have Canada become a nuclear weapons-free zone*. The movement has been growing for several years now, with nuclear weapons-free zones being proclaimed across the land by decisions of the population and the local bodies of government. Some 100 communities in Quebec, a total of nearly 300 in Canada as a whole and two provinces, Manitoba and Ontario, today have the status which incorporates a ban on the introduction of those weapons into or their transportation through their territories. In this way ordinary Canadians express their desire for a secure world that would be free from nuclear nightmare.

Our country has a long land border with the US and the expanses of two oceans are a natural frontier with the Soviet Union. Hence the demand to make Canada, a large country which is very sensitive in terms of political geography, a non-nuclear step on the road of the two major powers towards a new world. This seems to us to be an important and realistic task. The establishment of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the country is more than just a symbolic gesture: Canada can play a substantial part in achieving disarmament by promoting cooperation with both the United States and the Soviet Union and by being *an energetic middle-man*. And we are trying to have it play this part in full by becoming a nuclear weapons-free zone.

The Canadian Labour Congress, which unites three million working people, gave support to the Alliance from the start. Those two forces are cooperating on a national scale, in the provinces and in communities. Making preparations for actions in the frame of Peace Week held last October, for instance, we referred people in Quebec either to a special coordinating committee or to the local trade union branch.

The Catholic, Anglican and United churches also have a prominent role to play in the anti-war movement. In addition, there are large organisations of peace campaigners, such as the Canadian Peace Congress, Green Peace, known for its ecological platform, Women's Voice, religious

and ethnic peace groups, groups of scientists and artistic people, and women's and youth organisations. The indigenous peoples — the Amerindians and the Inuit — have lately stepped up their actions as well. Last autumn, for instance, the Inuit put up a tent camp right in the grounds of the Goose Bay air force base to protest against damage to the environment, numerous constraints on their way of life and impingements upon the rights of the indigenous population.

Especially diverse and broad-based are peace actions at the grassroots level, that is, at the workplace, at residences and in educational establishments. For instance, cultural and educational activities and demonstrations for peace are organised at schools: schoolchildren are joined by their parents, and also by municipal officials and clergymen. Peace Day has been marked in Quebec schools for the second time now. The Ministry of Education and the teachers' trade union have put out jointly with PTA's a textbook on peace and disarmament. In some localities the Peace Day activities lasted a whole week, with exhibitions of children's drawings and compositions, film screenings and concerts.

What makes the actions of the peace forces in Quebec especially important is that the province is a major arms-making centre; Montreal, for example, is a leading producer of aerospace technology. That is why the Peace Alliance seeks to demonstrate the negative effects of the militarisation of the economy and the growth of the military-industrial complex on the working people in general, on employment and on the social programmes. The working class movement, too, is worried that the number of socially meaningful jobs which do not depend on the goodwill of the arms merchants is shrinking. Specialist trade unions are not just campaigning for the reduction of military production but also sponsor research into alternatives for the conversion of the war industry.

There is one more factor, which is rooted in history: nationalistic sentiments among the French-speaking Canadians prevent the Quebec Peace Alliance from cooperating efficiently and consistently with the anti-war forces in the other provinces of the country. That is why in launching nationwide campaigns and participating in the actions of the Alliance, we often give a free hand to the local organisations in accordance with the possibilities available to one group of the population or another. What are the practical results of such initiatives?

The monopoly-controlled mass media, for instance, rarely give favourable coverage to the peace movement in the world or in our country. Misinformation and lack of coverage detract from public efforts and mislead people. Hence the importance of the local (municipal or cooperative) press and radio stations as an alternative source of information, as a modest but often efficient way of filling the information gap. Peace groups in Montreal and other cities, for instance, prepare and broadcast on a voluntary basis weekly radio programmes devoted to peace and disarmament. We ourselves have an opportunity at least once a week to discuss in radio broadcasts ways of preventing the arms race and the escalation of the nuclear threat, employment and democracy under conditions of peace and security — in short, those issues that are of interest to all the Canadians. People put more trust in such independent sources,

which offer varied information and put across the views of those living and working next to them.

The desire for lasting peace and free and independent development and manifestations of humanitarian sentiments are demonstrated in a *movement of solidarity* with the peoples fighting for the right to decide their destinies without outside interference. A campaign under the keynote Tools for Peace was launched in the country a few years ago. Its purpose is to give support to the Nicaraguan people in their struggle for the right to follow an independent road of development. It is more than just moral support. We are collecting for them tools and agricultural implements, school stationery, food, medicines and building materials. Teachers' trade unions sell notebooks and pens in schools and donate returns to the relief fund. Volunteer teams of electricians, engineers and builders go to Nicaragua to train people there in the use of tools and farm technology. Even a fisherman's team has been set up and the fishermen's union in British Columbia has raised money to buy a fishing boat.

Canadians also strongly oppose apartheid. By joining numerous groups and coalitions, including anti-racist ones, participating in concerts alongside performers of the African National Congress of South Africa and speaking at protest and solidarity rallies, they contribute to the mobilisation of the Canadian public in condemning the abominable Pretoria regime and put pressure on their own government, by demanding the introduction of comprehensive sanctions against the racists and the release of Nelson Mandela and other fighters for freedom and equality.

The diverse activities of the Canadian peace forces show that it is necessary to take account of and use effectively the regional and national specific circumstances and to create alliances on the broadest possible and at the same time concrete basis. We are seeking to contribute energetically towards an advance to a nuclear-free world and to achieve a policy that would be based on cooperation and dialogue rather than confrontation.

¹ *Défis et engagements: une politique de défense pour le Canada*. Gouvernement du Canada, Ministère de la Défense nationale, Ottawa, 1987, p. 17.

² The Canadian Peace Alliance was formed in November 1985. It is an umbrella organisation for some 350 groups and associations, some of which unite even smaller groups in provinces and communities, which brings the total to around 1,500 units, some of them political. There are about 40 of them in Quebec. Such broad coalitions have been established also in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver.

What's Going On At The Missile Bases

This is another in the series on the Soviet-US Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles.

And Not A Day Earlier!

Wolfgang Bartels — Secretary,
Rheinland-Pfalz District Board, German
Communist Party (FRG)

"IF the Soviets accept the West's 'zero option' I shall walk, candle in hand, in a pilgrimage from Schongau to Altötting," Franz-Josef Strauss, CSU Chairman and Bavarian Prime Minister, promised in February 1983. He was echoed by FRG Defence Minister Manfred Wörner, who declared in the Bundestag in September of the same year: "I shall crawl on my knees from my constituency to Bonn if we manage to attain our goal of getting rid of all medium-range missiles throughout the world."

Mikhail Gorbachov and Ronald Reagan signed the 'zero option' treaty in Washington on December 8, 1987, but neither Strauss nor Wörner have any intention of going on a pilgrimage or crawling some 400 kilometres to the capital. One could well wax ironic at their expense, but we should not want to liken ourselves to the responsible Bonn politicians and military men who but only a few years ago openly ridiculed the peace fighters demanding that they should prevent the deployment of medium- and shorter-range missiles in the FRG. The Soviet-US summit has eventually proved the peace movement to be right, and this means that disarmament is a realistic prospect. If it is possible to eliminate two classes of nuclear weapons, why not all the rest?

NATO started out by proposing the 'zero option' as a propaganda ploy: so long as the Soviet Union refused to accept it, one could very well play up its non-acceptance. That is why no one in NATO considered it in real earnest.

The Soviet Union, however, had good reason to take a sceptical view of the idea. After all, it did not include either the corresponding British and French missiles, or the US forward-based weapons, on warships in the North Atlantic and on F-111 bombers in Great Britain. Gorbachov displayed flexibility at Reykjavik and agreed to the 'zero option'. NATO was taken at its word, and found itself in a quandary.

William Rogers, then Supreme Allied Commander of NATO's armed forces in Europe, complained: "We are trapped in our own line of argument. In 1981, everyone believed that the 'zero option' should be accepted in order to satisfy those who oppose additional armament. We sold us and our peoples the idea that the isolated 'zero option' is the right way. We now realise the stupidity we made in the past. It is now too late."

Indeed, it was too late — for those who wanted an arms build-up. Consequently, the 'zero option' should not be credited to NATO, let alone the FRG government, which opposed it most of all and to the bitter end. No wonder Dr Alfred Mechtersheimer, Bundestag deputy from the Green Party, had good reason to propose that the next Nobel Prize should be awarded to the peace movement and to Gorbachov.

News of the signing of the Soviet-US treaty aroused special interest and great hopes among the inhabitants of Hunsrück, a mountainous and mainly

farming area west of the Rhine in the FRG, for that is where — close to the little town of Kastellaun, between the villages of Bell and Hasselbach — a US cruise missile base has been built up over a period of years: six giant bunkers for missile carriers, a nuclear weapons depot, command centres and various other installations. Here 96 cruise missiles were to be sited: flying at tree-top level they could deliver 'surgical' strikes at military centres in the western part of the Soviet Union. In December 1987, 62 missiles were already on combat alert.²

In the neighbouring farm communities there were protests from the outset against the deployment of the missiles. A peace movement got under way in Hunsrück and spread to the tiniest villages. Even today, the emblem of the blue dove of peace, as a symbol of protest will still be seen on the window panes of many houses and on farm gates.

This kind of eruption of open protest was not to have been blithely expected because in an out-of-the-way place like Hunsrück people put their trust in the authority of the government, but the continued increase in the number of military personnel, the spawning, like a malignant growth, in the number of US army installations, the heightened tension over the exercises, the roar of low-flying planes, and, especially, fear of the new nuclear missiles, whose technical parameters imply their use as first-strike weapons, have made many people think again. Besides, the information policy of the local and military authorities produced a 'crisis of confidence': the arms build-up was shrouded in secrecy. The Federal government denied that cruise missiles would be sited in Hasselbach, even when the ever wider building operations were there for all to see. However, the peace movement repeatedly managed to make public military documents and so to keep the population well informed.

That is why again and again major and minor acts in defence of peace centred at Hasselbach. In October 1984, for instance, a human chain ran from there over 210 kilometres to the labour exchange in Duisburg, when the peace fighters strove to show the connection between the arms build-up and unemployment. Indeed, if the money that went into building the military base had been used to boost the decaying economy of Hunsrück it would probably no longer have any unemployed at all. Let us recall that in the late 1970s the peace movement argued that NATO's missile decision was a sheer waste of huge resources, and offered its concrete proposal for the purposeful use of 1.3 millions marks for economic and social development in the area.

In October 1986, 200,000 citizens from all over the country staged a demonstration against the missile deployment at the base then under construction, the largest action ever organised in Hunsrück. Today, the building of each new military installation in the area at once sparks off resolute protests by the population.

But there was some scepticism in Hunsrück over the medium- and shorter-range missile treaty. Here is what some of its inhabitants said:

Willi Zimmer, Mayor of Bell: "I naturally welcome this step towards disarmament. The question is how this military territory is to be used in the future. I'm afraid that it will be used to store chemical weapons."

Hartmut Pomrehn, Mayor of Hasselbach: "I'm glad to see the missiles go. We were not happy with their deployment. It is true, however, that the place will continue to be used for military purposes. It is there, and we shall hardly get rid of it."

Bell Clergywoman Jutta Dahl: "The cruise missiles will disappear from Hunsrück, and that is good. Although it would be better if they were destroyed on the spot so that we should not have to live with them for another three years. The people of Hunsrück are, on the whole, very happy that such a treaty has been concluded. But it is still not clear how things will proceed. It would be a joy to see all the bunkers blown up and the installations handed over to be used for civilian purposes. We should like, together with our grandchildren, to reforest the area. But we are worried that the installations are being expanded and the construction goes on. I do not believe that the population regards these with resignation, but rather with sadness and anger, because the people feel that this is not in the spirit of the treaty."

Dahl's happiness is tinged with a sense of anxiety. Together with her husband, Clergyman Karl-August Dahl, she has been active in the Hunsrück peace movement. It was she who suggested the idea of placing 96 candles in front of the base — these can be seen from afar, as a warning about the death-dealing cruise missiles sited there. For four years now, they have held Sunday services for peace at the chief command centre of the base, regardless of the weather, sun or frost, rain or snow.

Are the scepticism and anxiety well justified? Does NATO truly want to disarm or only to re-arm? Will the signing of the Treaty lead to its ratification and implementation? After all, SALT-II was also signed by a US president, but it has never been ratified. Even if the opponents of the Treaty in the US Congress fail to muster a majority, they could well delay its ratification or add on riders unacceptable to the Soviet Union. All these issues are now being hotly debated in the peace movement.

The Treaty is being scrutinised by local people. The Americans, for instance, wanted to prevent the publication of the protocol to the treaty on the precise data concerning the numbers and places of missiles deployed on the plea that 'this information could be used by terrorists and other undesirable elements'. Gorbachov saw through this ruse, and so it became known that 120 Pershing II missiles are deployed in the FRG, instead of the 108 given in NATO's official decision, and that 309 cruise missiles, 62 of them in Hasselbach, are deployed in Western Europe, instead of the 256 admitted earlier. By contrast, the figures made public on Soviet missiles turned out to be lower than Western estimates: 405 SS-20s were deployed instead of the 441 claimed by NATO, and only 65 SS-4s, instead of the 112.

It may be an ill omen that just when Gorbachov was going on board his plane in Moscow on the way to Washington, the main gates at the base in Hasselbach were thrown open for the start of the largest-scale missile exercises. They involved eight mobile launchers with 32 cruise missiles. While the summit was under way, there were missile rattling and scenarios for the use of weapons of mass destruction played out over here. As the missile launchers passed, participants in the Hunsrück peace movement met them with streamers saying: 'You call that a summit?'

Anyone passing through Hunsrück and similar places in the country can see for himself that nuclear weapons are still on combat alert. There are 150 nuclear bombs in storage at the US airfield in Hahn, some 12 kilometres from Hasselbach, for arming F-16 planes. Regardless of everything, sites for the deployment of new weapons systems, military camps and mobilisation depots are still being set up in our country. Late last October, for instance, one could see three new strategic B-52 bombers for a fortnight at the US airfield in Ramstein in Pfalz. The US army *Stars and Stripes* newspaper said that was a demonstration of the possibility of using these vehicles for delivering nuclear weapons to the European theatre of military operations. It is not yet clear whether they will be stationed at Ramstein permanently, or whether it is 'only' the build-up of an infrastructure for their rapid transfer to 'areas of crisis'. It is well known, however, that each B-52 is capable of carrying 12 cruise missiles, and the INF Treaty does not apply to air-based cruise missiles.

In other words, even before the signing of the Treaty the United States tried to find out how things would go with rearmament. There is already talk of 'rearmament' in place of the INF and of 'plugging the gaps' in conventional armaments. For its part, the FRG government has been stepping up the development of the Bundeswehr, although even the Defence Minister himself does not know how to fund the inflation-spiralled military expenditures. Meanwhile, it is trying to obtain access to nuclear weapons through the loophole of German-French army 'friendship'.

"If the representatives of the USSR and the United States are meeting in Washington, the Americans and the Germans can meet at Hunsrück." That was said in a letter from the peace movement to Colonel Dennis K. Hummel, who is in command of the Hasselbach cruise missile base. Such letters were ignored in the past, but the signing of the treaty did produce a new situation. The Colonel replied and a conversation with him took place in the conference hall of the Simmern district administration two days before Christmas.

For the first time in the history of the Federal Republic a senior US officer directly responsible for nuclear weapons sat face to face with peace movement activists, who were aware of the danger posed by these weapons. They had also met in the past, and quite often — during demonstrations at the missile base, but then they were on opposite sides of the fence.

The conversation showed that there were insuperable differences on key issues. While both sides welcomed the 'zero option', their appraisal of it was different. Colonel Hummel declared that everyone wanted peace, but the views on the way to it differed. NATO's stand is that peace in freedom must be defended with nuclear weapons. When someone asked what kind of freedom would remain after use of nuclear weapons, the commander became thoughtful, and finally admitted that he could not imagine the use of the weapons. When asked whether he would act on order to launch cruise missiles, he replied: "Yes, I would. That is my duty."

Colonel Hummel said that detailed plans for the withdrawal of the 62 cruise missiles at the base would not be drawn up before the spring. The missiles would be returned to the United States and there dismantled. The

launchers would be taken off the trucks and put out of commission, while the trucks would be used for other purposes. The process of dismantling would go on for three years. Meanwhile, he said, the base would go on fulfilling its tasks. Much attention would still be given to field exercises and manoeuvres with the missile launchers, to works to expand the installations, and the planned construction of new premises for US soldiers. It is up to the Federal government and NATO to decide on the further use of the missile bunkers, which are not about to be removed.

At the end of the conversation, its participants agreed on exchanges of information. The commander gave assurances that he would keep the peace movement informed on the course of the actual works connected with the withdrawal of the missiles.

Meanwhile . . . Another trial, the 29th, of participants in peace action in front of the Hasselbach missile base opened at the Simmern court on Wednesday, January 6, 1988. By then, 110 demonstrators had already been sentenced to the payment of fines, which came to one or two months' wages for each. The total amount of fines was about 125,000 marks. What for? In November 1986, and in May and October 1987, peace fighters blocked the approaches to the missile base, i.e., they blocked the way of incoming and outgoing trucks, sat down in their way to protest against the arms race. They were dragged away by the police to begin the long grind through the judicial mill. They were accused of 'prejudicial and violent acts'. It turned out that those who believed their acts to be absolutely free of violence were accused of resorting to violence, it being argued that the violent action of missile deployment had been sanctioned by a Federal government decision.

That day, for instance, there was the trial of 19-year-old Heike Michel, a student from the village of Külz, which neighbours on Hunsrück. She told the court of why she had taken part in the blockade: "I saw how the number of military men was growing in Hunsrück. I took part in the Easter Marches and peace prayers and tried to break out of the silent majority, which asserted that it had known nothing at all before everything happened. I wanted to assume the responsibility for the preservation of life." She said that the immediate impetus came from a pamphlet of the Federal Defence Minister which said that a possible cruise missile accident was a trifle, so that in the event of an accident (whose probability was very low) the missiles could leak some stuff with a limited capacity for fission (plutonium). The population, it was said, had nothing to fear. Michel protested against this lie and was faced with the charge of 'violent action'.

This trial was not completed because the police were unable to present videofilms showing the accused to be guilty. The date was set for a continuation of the trial, which is to be followed by another 50 trials.

Since the signing of the Treaty such acts have become an anachronism: punishment is being meted out to those who have most resolutely and courageously fought for the elimination of the missiles. The Simmern judges had to hear out what one accused demonstrator declared: "The missiles are finally to be taken away from Hasselbach. How long will you go on handing down your sentences?" The peace movement coordination committee in the FRG has demanded an immediate end to the trials

involving peace action, and an amnesty for all those who have been sentenced.

What is the peace movement to do now? Has its objective been attained? Beate Ronnenfeldt, who works on the Hunsrück peace bureau, is not so sure: "We still have a lot to do. Hunsrück is packed with military men, there are almost 100 military installations, and the cruise missiles have yet to be withdrawn." She said that the peace bureau has not folded up its activity but has, on the contrary, expanded it, mobilising new forces which have understood in the light of the Soviet-US Treaty that success can be achieved. The bureau is keeping a close watch to see that the land-based cruise missiles disappear in due time, and that no rearmament is started. The next task is to eliminate the air-based and sea-based cruise missiles, and then the other classes of weapons. The peace fighters are already demanding an end to any exercises with the use of these weapons. They regard the Treaty as the first step in effective endeavour for peace.

The intermediate-range and shorter-range missile treaty is important because it has paved the way for disarmament. There is a need for vigilance so that the Treaty is consistently implemented, to be followed by the second, third, fourth, and other treaties, until the main goal is attained: a world without nuclear and chemical weapons, and ultimately a world without weapons of any kind. Only then can the peace movement regard that its mission has been fulfilled, and not a day earlier!

¹ *Die Welt*, 2 March, 1987.

² NATO's missile decision, incidentally, cost its member countries some \$10 billion, and that is only the direct outlays on arms. To this should be added the cost of construction and the maintenance of personnel. A total of \$250 million went into the buildings, bunkers and nuclear weapons storage at Hasselbach. One cruise missile costs about \$3 million, and the whole system (together with R & D, auxiliary devices and trucks) roughly \$5 million, which means that the 62 deployed cruise missiles add another \$310 million. Together with the cost of training and maintenance of military personnel the cost adds up to \$700-800 million for the Hasselbach missile base alone, a vast amount of money simply buried in the sand at Hunsrück.

A History-Making Divide

WMR Reports from a Soviet Missile Base in Czechoslovakia

"Would this nuclear disarmament process rank as one of this century's milestones?" Lieutenant-Colonel Vyachelsav Granovsky repeated our question thinking over the answer. "That's quite possible. The treaty recently signed in Washington aims, for the first time yet, to scrap two classes of nuclear weapons at once. Not because they are obsolete and should be replaced — they are simply in the way of world security."

He did not pause to answer our second question about his possible reaction in an emergency: "Carrying out orders and 'pushing the button' is my military and civic duty. But our military doctrine being

essentially a defensive one, I am sure that such orders could come only once enemy missiles came homing in on us. Certainly I would rather have the nuclear weapons destroyed not in war but in peacetime. I am hoping for just such orders soon."

This dialogue took place at a missile base outside the Czech town of Hranice.

... THE primeval silence, the snow-clad hills with the chandeliers of fir-trees, and the air thick with their fragrance seem like an unlikely place to discuss the chances of a nuclear war breaking out and ask questions about nuclear missiles. But this is exactly what we wanted to know as we drove here all through the morning. We first reached a small town of Hranice and then made our way to an until recently top-secret Soviet missile base.

... The missile sat at the edge of the wood. More precisely, it lay atop a huge prime mover, its equally huge springy rubber wheels securely supporting it. Chameleon-coloured, it was no longer a weapon but something monstrous — a paralysis of the world, a non-existence.

There have been claims that specialist reference books detailing the types of nuclear carriers have long run to encyclopedic size. But the officer who showed us round had only a few words for the one we beheld: "... a battlefield missile, with a range between 500 and 1,000 kilometres. Known as the OTR-22 in the USSR and the SS-12 in the US. One of nearly 2,500 medium- and shorter-range missiles, both deployed and in storage, slated for destruction." He then mentioned an unexpected minute detail, to make sure that the parties to the Treaty really mean business: "Both we and the Americans will be allowed to keep fifteen missiles and launchers of both types each. To be shown at exhibitions and in museums. Surely they will be made safe."

We cannot tell now whether there will ever be something like a Peace Museum. That sounds like a very good idea, if only to keep alive the memory of the 3.6 billion human lives claimed by the wars that have happened to date. One of its central halls would apparently feature these missiles, too, as a reminder of the threat of a thermonuclear holocaust which was once close to destroying all living things. It would be very appropriate if the entrance hall had the names, chiselled in rock, of people who stood alone and unsupported by most of their contemporaries, raising their voices for peace and joint action against war. History has kept the names of many of them and their manuscripts. Among them are Marsilius of Padua and his tract *The Advocate of Peace* (1324), Erasmus of Rotterdam and his tract *A Plea for Peace* (1517), and the Czech king George of Podebrady, who initiated a scheme to reorganise Europe, one of the first such ideas of eternal peace ... In fact there were quite a few such people: the historians tell us that as many as 8,000 such tracts were penned between A.D. 1500-1860 alone.

This largely individual protest has now given way to mass peace campaigning. The world's first peace society started by Quaker D. Dodge in New York in 1815 will be entitled to an honorary niche in our museum, too. To be sure, the more spacious halls will provide lots of insight into the peace campaign in the 20th century, especially in its latter half when the

scientific and technological revolution led to a world bristling with sinister weapons. A lot of credit is due to the peace activists for their efforts to make the dream of a nuclear-free world eventually come true. Just remember Geneva, Reykjavik and Washington — the first treaty to eliminate two classes of nuclear weapons, nothing short of a breakthrough in the nuclear field, a triumph for a new political thinking whose imperative had been stressed by Albert Einstein when the nuclear age was only dawning.

Those interested in the further history of the contention between the forces of war and peace will learn why Soviet missiles came to stay in Czechoslovakia, a non-nuclear nation. Some Hranice residents, witnesses to and participants in the events, had these stories to tell:

Václav Donhal, First Secretary of the CPCz town committee:

"The year 1983 was coming to an end on a worrying note. Neither the will of most people in European countries nor an international public outcry could preempt deployment in Europe of US Pershing II and cruise missiles. By agreement with its allies and after signing appropriate treaties with them the USSR was forced to counter by stationing battlefield missiles in the GDR and Czechoslovakia to maintain military parity. When we learned that a Soviet missile unit would be quartered in the Jaslo town barracks we did all we could to help the officers and men of the friendly socialist state to fulfil their internationalist mission."

And how did your townsfolk react to your government's decision on these missiles?

"They felt there was a need for it. There was less than total support for it, though: cashing in on the natural wish of every European to see his country and continent without nuclear weapons, the Western media raised a barrage of all manner of conjecture, giving people a most garbled idea of the Soviet countermeasures. But the dust eventually settled. I vividly remember the many parties and similar things we have held together with the Soviet soldiers: our women's unions are constantly in touch as are the schoolchildren, and there are very good family-to-family contacts. Twice a year we hold ceremonies to register the youngest Soviet citizens born in the Moravian town of Hranice and present their parents with certificates to remember us by. The year before last there were as many as 52 such newborns and another fifty last year . . ."

Josef Král, a metal worker at the Sigma plant, a Hero of Socialist Labour:

"I see no point in debating the moral, social and political merits and demerits of Czechoslovak-Soviet friendship and the forms it takes. Friends have no use for double standards. They stand together, rain or shine. And each has the right to be a hundred per cent sure of the other's help."

Elena Dohnal, a kindergarten manager:

"I have stayed and worked at Hranice for over thirty years now. I have many acquaintances among the local people and know about their concerns. I gave a start in life to many of the kids here as it happens, and many of them have now families of their own. And my big joy is that we

have large families. The whole of Europe is fairly studded with missiles, and we have some here right next door. It certainly makes people less sure of their future — so what's the use of children? . . . And still our belief in common sense is now being sustained by a development which all nations have been looking forward to. Hopefully it will mark a watershed in relations between nations and help usher in a world minus nuclear weapons."

Olga Rybecká, a salesgirl:

"When people ask me what business the Soviet missiles have here in Czechoslovakia I counter with the question, and what about the Americans — do they keep all their missiles at home? And where they have them elsewhere, do all the local people approve of that? I well remember this 'approval' — it actually was a storm of outrage over the US Euromissiles. In Bonn, London, Rome — everywhere the people were against it . . . Surely I applaud the Washington treaty. It's high time we started moving away from the chasm . . ."

There is no other way peace could win through. The pointlessness of nuclear war is self-evident, for it is unwinnable. You can't win in an arms race either. It's a losing game for all of us and for good. The axiom of the immortality of humankind has given way to an imperative for its survival.

The nuclear arsenals, once reduced, could release immense human, material and financial resources. Two examples would suffice: global military spending in 1985 totalled \$800 billion — these would be enough to build 20 million fashionable flats a hundred square metres each. When in the late 1950s the Soviet Union unilaterally scaled down its armed forces by 1,200,000 the measure helped double the rates of housing in this country in a short time and the size of old-age pensions.

Talking to officers and men at the missile base we certainly wondered *whether the military equipment scheduled for destruction could be put to civilian uses.*

"It could and should be done," we were told by Ensign **Oleg Chikmaryov**, chief mechanic-driver of a missile launcher. "The vehicles carrying missiles can travel over very rough terrain; they could be most useful in ferrying various civilian cargoes, say, large-diameter gas pipes."

"Under the Treaty the missiles and all their equipment must be destroyed," Captain **Valery Strelchenko** told us. "The Americans intend to burn out the solid fuel and to press down the rest. What we will do will be to explode clusters of three to four missiles each. As well, the USSR and the US have the right to destroy their missiles by launching or shooting them off (but no more than a hundred each).

"As concerns the nuclear warheads, their fissionable material will be removed and either side will be free to use it as it sees fit. It could be recycled and used by nuclear power plants."

"All the talk so far has been about the weapons, but I want to say something about my fellow soldiers," says Private **Yuri Isakov**. "Once the missiles are on their way out the army will have no further use for us. Well, it's all for the better. Each of us has been taught two or three crafts — you need to know a lot to operate a missile launcher — and there is a huge demand for extra labour at home . . ."

We want to end our story with two official reports. One of them points out that not a single accident involving personnel or combat equipment occurred over the time a Soviet missile base has been in operation outside the town of Hranice in Czechoslovakia. On the strength of an agreement by a May 1987 meeting in Berlin of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee, the Soviet government has decided to pull out, as a goodwill gesture, its OTR-22 (SS-12) missiles, their launchers and back-up equipment from the GDR and Czechoslovakia. This is being done in consultation with the governments of these nations even before the Treaty eliminating medium- and shorter-range missiles has taken effect.

Concerning the base we have been telling you of, the missiles started leaving there on February 25.

WMR Staff members
Anatoly Danilevich
Georgi Tsagolov

"The Day Will Come When The People Will Succeed"

Séan MacBride

Séan MacBride, 83, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and the Lenin Peace Prize and well-known Irish politician and public personality died in Dublin on January 15, 1988. He was Ireland's foreign minister, then headed for a long time the International Commission of Jurists, and from the early 1960s to his death was chairman of the Geneva-based International Peace Bureau. In 1973-1976 he was UN Assistant Secretary General. In the past few years, in spite of his advanced age, he kept working tirelessly.

Shortly before his death Séan MacBride met a *WMR* request and shared his thoughts of the problems of peace efforts.

. . . I SUPPOSE I became active in the peace movement because of the changing nature of war; in olden times, wars were fought with hand-weapons, and the date and place of battles were predetermined. Through the passage of time, however, wars grew more and more dangerous. The Second World War took a toll of more than 50 million lives, half of them civilians. This had never happened before. War had degenerated into one big 'killing field' with no discrimination between combatants and civilians.

Now that the very survival of the human race is at stake, the achievement of lasting world peace is a paramount goal for many people. Also, arms production, fabulously enriching a few, takes bread out of the mouths of starving people in the developing world.

. . . The current peace movement is hampered by the political strengthening of military alliances, which do a lip-service to peace by

concentrating on 'security'. The UN General Assembly Third Special Session on Disarmament will be held in 1988 and it depends on the peoples, especially on the peoples of the great powers, to make their demands for the total abolition of the war danger heard.

I think that today's peace activists should concentrate, East and West, on putting an end to nuclear testing. I think also that all international opinion and efforts should try to seek peace between Iraq and Iran . . .

I attach much importance to the circulation to lawyers throughout the world of a Declaration/Appeal by Lawyers Against Nuclear War. The International Peace Bureau has decided to launch this Appeal to Lawyers to condemn nuclear weapons and wars as illegal under international law. We are seeking the signatures of thousands of lawyers, and we will then present this appeal to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We are trying to secure the agreement of the legal profession that war is illegal, in the same way that medical doctors have got together under the banner of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

. . . Any step which is taken, such as banning the testing of nuclear weapons, the elimination of medium-range missiles or the reduction of personnel engaged in military service, all of these steps are an achievement on a tortuous path. I would like in this context to congratulate Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and to say I agree with him when he says that worldwide common sense, the overwhelming majority of parties and movements, indeed the natural instinct for survival, reject the logic of mankind destroying itself.

The Decree on Peace which was proposed by Lenin and adopted on November 7, 1917, at the Second All-Russia Congress was very significant, and still holds to this day. I am glad to see that the leaders of the Soviet Union today are still making courageous and determined efforts to avert another world war. I would like to see, too, the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the great United States of America work in closer cooperation to rid the world of the nuclear menace, in the way their physicians and scientists collaborated in securing a smallpox-free world . . .

Those who want to rid the world of nuclear weapons and war suffer many disappointments — but the day will come when the people will succeed.

It Is Not A Question Of Claiming Credit . . .

Bruce Kent — Chair of the Campaign
for Nuclear Disarmament (Great Britain)

A prominent anti-nuclear campaigner is talking to *WMR* about the reaction of his fellow peace activists to the Soviet-US INF Treaty and their plans for the future.

How have your anti-missile activists reacted to the Soviet-American treaty scrapping medium-range missiles?

I SUPPOSE the best answer to this question would be that we have all reacted with qualified enthusiasm. This INF Treaty is the first agreement which may, if ratified and put into operation, result in the destruction of a considerable number of nuclear missiles and their warheads. This therefore has to be a moment of enthusiasm and we have celebrated in various ways in many parts of the country. In London we toasted the Treaty in champagne outside the American and Soviet embassies at the time of the signing. In many places around the country bonfires were lit and parties organised.

But I do have to stress the 'qualified' nature of the enthusiasm. Not only are the numbers not very impressive by the size of the arsenals already in existence, but already there is talk of 'modernisations', 'plugging the gaps' and 'improvements'. All of this is language designed to prepare us for yet more missiles and warheads, perhaps on aircraft, perhaps on ships or submarines.

There does not yet seem to be a realisation, at least on the part of government spokespeople in the country, that wars *cannot* be fought with nuclear weapons and that 'flexible response' strategies, which imply that nuclear weapons can be used as a kind of answer to a conventional weapons attack, are dangerous illusions. It is good to hear that, at government level, Norway is now pressing its other NATO partners to give up first use or flexible response strategies. There is every reason to do so. It is being repudiated even by Robert McNamara who played some significant part in the sixties in introducing these ideas to NATO.

Do they all agree that they can claim some credit for the Treaty, too?

I am not sure that I really like this question, to be quite frank! It is not a question of claiming 'some' credit and of claiming it 'too'. A great deal of the credit can quite rightly be claimed by the different peace and disarmament organisations.

This agreement has become possible because worldwide ideas about nuclear weapons and nuclear warfare have changed. Mr Gorbachov, for instance, takes a very different line on these matters from his predecessors. He rightly says that it is not necessary to pursue nuclear parity, that every country can take independent or unilateral steps, that nuclear wars cannot be fought and that the only security worth seeking in an interdependent world is common security. These are most welcome new ideas and it is because they now seem like common sense they have helped to make the INF Treaty possible.

We must not forget, however, the long years in which both major powers endlessly justified their new missile developments by reference to what 'the other' was doing. Thus cruise missiles were supposed to 'answer' SS-20's; and SS-22's and SS-23's were in their turn supposed to 'answer' cruise missiles. Such childish ideas are now seen to be just that.

But these new perceptions did not come about by accident. They have

come from many sources as various as the 1978 UN report on disarmament and the Palme Commission report of 1982. But they have also come regularly from the peace and disarmament organisations. So I do not think it is unreasonable for us to claim a proper and generous share of the credit. Not that the credit matters. What is important is to repudiate the claim of those like Mrs Thatcher and George Younger, our Minister of Defence, that the INF agreement only came about because we, in the West, 'stood up' to the Soviets and deployed cruise and Pershing. They forget that such supposed strength produced in its turn Soviet counter-deployments. That was the old pattern of the arms race.

Have there been plans by peace campaigners to do something in support of the Treaty's ratification?

Here I cannot speak for other organisations in other countries since I do not know what their plans are. I myself visited Washington in February and lobbied in support of INF ratification and did so with the support of the American SANE/Freeze organisation. I met a number of Senators and Congressmen.

Are you keeping track of what is happening now at the bases with the US missiles slated for destruction?

Certainly we are keeping track of activities at our two cruise missiles bases at Greenham Common and Molesworth. There was a cruise convoy exercise from Greenham at exactly the time of the Washington INF meeting and it is very likely that cruise missiles went into Molesworth at that time. There is no sign of any dismantling, nor, according to the Treaty, would one yet expect that. But building of additional facilities at Greenham goes on. There has not been an exercise from these bases since the agreement was signed. If there were it would certainly provoke considerable resentment and not only amongst members of disarmament organisations.

What is the peace activists' general strategy on the 'problem of control' over the elimination of the missiles in terms of public action now that the USSR and US have settled it at government level?

I do not think that we have a special role in the process of dismantling except to make sure that it goes ahead according to the terms of the Treaty. Our task must be to make the public aware of other deployments and in general to keep up the momentum. This will not be easy. Every treaty — for instance the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 — produces a mood of relaxation. People tend to think that all goes well and that 'they' have things in control. But our perspectives are not only those of the INF Treaty. That is only an episode, if an important one, on the way to a different world order. So we are concerned with a wide variety of issues.

One such that takes on a new prominence is the connection between the arms race and world poverty which was the theme of a UN conference in

the summer of 1987. At home our principal problem remains the question of Britain's 'independent' nuclear weapons system — the Trident submarines now being built. Here the INF atmosphere has worked to our disadvantage. Mr Gorbachov has given Mrs Thatcher an enhanced status which in our opinion she does not deserve and he has taken pressure away from the issue of a British deterrent.

Do you know anything at all about how and where the missiles could be destroyed, how much it could cost, and whether it could harm the environment and the people? Will the broad public be informed about all such things and what are your peace activists going to do in that respect?

It is too early for me to make any informed comment about this. Our assumption is that the missiles will be destroyed at their bases under inspection. If an accident took place in the process which involved the release of radioactive material then much harm could be done but I do not think that this is perceived as a major threat.

What the public will be told will partly depend on what information is released by our own Ministry of Defence. I say partly because public information about military matters in this country is much more freely available to us from public sources in the United States. We will be keeping our eyes and ears open.

How are peace activists planning to address other vital disarmament and peace issues, including the proposed 50 per cent cuts in the strategic nuclear arsenals of both the USSR and US? What ideas do they have for their new objectives, slogans and actions?

The short answer to this last question is that we will be urging the USSR and US to get on with it! Now that both agree that nuclear parity is not a prerequisite for deterrence there is no reason whatever why independent cuts should not start now as a sign of goodwill. However, the possibility of 50 per cent cuts is now producing rather more political frankness than was previously available.

I can offer so far no new slogans though time will produce them and also new plans for activity in this post-INF situation. It is now clear that there are many in the West, and perhaps in the East too, who in their heart of hearts do not want a nuclear-free world. There is an honest opinion held by many people in power that without nuclear weapons we would return to nationalistic conflicts with conventional weapons. Lord Carrington has dismissively referred to such ideas as 'nuclear nirvana'.

It seems to me that the process, or at least the language of nuclear disarmament, is now running faster than new ideas about the actual organisation of a world in which common security is accepted as being a reality. In other words we need now to work, not just on the weapons and the perceptions of each side by the other which have produced them, but also on the international structures of our world. The Charter of the United Nations needs to be again a source of inspiration. The world court

must be given real teeth. This is not an unreal objective. Our educational world must work hard to make internationalism and not nationalism the basis of our thinking without disloyalty to love of local tradition, patriotism and culture. The men and women of the Cold War age are growing older and a new generation with different perceptions is on its way.

To conclude, therefore, I end with some very wise words written by Teilhard de Chardin, French philosopher, scholar and priest: "The age of nations is past, the task before us now if we would not perish is to build the earth."

Keep Going Forward

James Leonard — Director,
Committee for National Security (United States)

WE all want to live in a safe world. This can be achieved in several ways, one of which has been suggested by the Palme Commission. In 1982 it put forward the concept of common security¹ which won widespread international recognition and support — and for a very good reason. I think this is a very valuable concept. It is quite close to the positive ideas of the new Soviet leadership whose concept of universal security is in many ways identical with the 'common security' formula of the Palme Commission. Indeed, in both cases the objective is to draw up a *comprehensive program of measures for national and international security*, and in both cases we see a new approach to many acute issues against the background of radical changes on the international scene.

Unfortunately, President Reagan has never accepted the concept of common security, let alone been guided by it. I think this is wrong and I wish the US Administration had agreed to take it up. Then they would surely have responded positively to the Soviet suggestion about stopping tests of nuclear weapons and would not have abandoned the SALT II Treaty. From my point of view, those were very unwise decisions. I am heartened by the promising shifts that have been recently occurring in the attitude of America's leaders to issues of security.

Today, the Soviet attitude to the issues of disarmament and security is based on what is called new political thinking which the USSR has proclaimed under Mikhail Gorbachov. The Soviet Union appears to be very proud of this thinking, and I am very pleased by this because I think it is justified. A new way of political thinking is very necessary for everyone. But this thinking is in its infancy so far, it has not been going on very long,

James Leonard (b. 1920) was in the US Army during World War II and then had a long diplomatic career. He also served as Assistant Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. He became a civic activist after his retirement in the early 1970s. He was President of the US United Nations Association and is now a director of the Committee for National Security which comprises about 150 members — prominent US political, military and civic figures. He is also a scientific adviser to the Palme Commission.

and therefore it is only to be expected that the ideas involved in this new thinking would be in some cases not too well developed and need a lot more work. When this new thinking has grown a little bit older and become, perhaps, a 'middle-aged thinking', it is likely to contain more points with which one could agree. This means that we all should keep 'growing up' and thinking in a new way constantly, not just from time to time.

I believe that some difficulties we had in the past were caused precisely by this lack of concurrence of phases: when we had new thinking in Washington, as we did on several occasions, we had difficulty in communicating with old thinking in Moscow. Now you have new thinking in Moscow and old thinking in Washington. I hope that we can get in step in the near future on this, instead of waiting agonizingly for the other side to move, as was often the case in the past.

The only way to achieve this is for new political thinking to gain ground among America's leaders: this would certainly encourage progress in relations between the two great powers and promote joint efforts to tackle the key issues of mutual security and disarmament. I think it is absolutely necessary for our administration to put away the old ideas about what a terrible threat the Soviet Union poses to the security of the United States and of the world. I disagree with those ideas totally, but I can understand how they developed: there were many events in the post-war years which did little to promote a favorable view of the USSR. I will not list these events because they are well known — although, naturally, not everyone shares our assessments. But the result remains that these events had a very bad effect on public opinion in the United States. It will now take time to change the well-established 'enemy image'.

There are things that hamper this — our propaganda and ridiculous TV fare like the *Amerika* serial. That is not a serious piece of film-making. Incidentally, with a group of colleagues from my Committee which advocates peace, détente and disarmament, I walked from Washington to New York to protest this film.

Obviously, thinking on either side or attitudes to each other cannot be changed overnight: this calls for a great deal of mutual effort. I hope that there will also be some new thinking in the Soviet Union about the character of the United States. I regret that even today I see some examples of old thinking, of misunderstanding of American events and ideas, such as why we place so great an emphasis on human rights or Afghanistan. Unless these matters are understood, real progress will be difficult in US-Soviet relations.

I am happy that vigorous steps are now being taken in the right direction and changes for the better are in the making. Gorbachov's proposals have had a very positive reaction in the United States, both among liberals and among many conservatives. Virtually the entire spectrum of political forces in the United States hailed the tremendously important and unprecedented INF Treaty — with the exception of some extreme rightist factions. I myself am profoundly satisfied with the Treaty and support it fully. Its signing was a major victory for the entire 'disarmament community' which

the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union represented in Washington in December 1987.

The question of ratification is now on top of the agenda. In the United States, that is quite an involved and lengthy procedure. Clashes have already begun. The Treaty is now being examined in three Senate committees — the Foreign Relations Committee, the Armed Services Committee and the Intelligence Committee. Bob Dole, the Republican minority leader in the Senate, is playing the key role in the ratification process. The outcome of the vote in the upper house will largely depend on how vigorous and insistent he is. There are senators who oppose the Treaty, but they are estimated at no more than 20 — out of 100.² So there is every reason to expect it to be ratified in April, although a delay is possible.

It may be delayed until May or June by all sorts of amendments or additional inquiries from the opposition. There is, of course, the danger that the Treaty may be 'buried' under the weight of such amendments as would make its renegotiation necessary. However, the probability of such 'killer' amendments being approved hinges overwhelmingly on the course US-Soviet relations will take. I mean that the voting may be decisively influenced by some unforeseen crisis in these relations, by some major incident capable of impairing them.

The ratification is directly connected with the prospects of a new and very important accord being concluded during the planned reciprocal visit of the US President to Moscow in the first half of 1988 — on a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive armaments. It is clear that in order to take the following major step toward disarmament, the previous agreement should be legally approved. Without it, the accord which is now being drafted will not be signed. So after the INF Treaty is ratified, attention should be focused on the agreement to halve strategic offensive armaments. This reduction will have a still greater positive impact on US-Soviet ties and on the world climate.

Only recently some people said that US-Soviet relations were deadlocked over the central issues of SDI and strategic offensive armaments. I am opposed to SDI, but I do not think it poses a problem that is as serious as some believe it to be. It could be resolved in the context of the ABM Treaty because in spite of what the administration thinks, the Congress has made it very clear that the ABM Treaty is not going to be destroyed or changed and that the old, accepted interpretation is going to remain.

Obviously, the INF Treaty ratification is also linked with the possibility of holding the new summit within the time framework that has been announced. I think Mr Reagan would prefer to go to the Soviet Union with the INF Treaty approved by Congress. This would benefit not only him but also the cause of disarmament as such. But the question of the President's visit to Moscow will be decided by the leaders of our two countries. I believe the visit will take place and pin great hopes on that summit. *We should keep moving ahead, developing our partnership in search of peace and security.*

The Committee for National Security is doing a great deal to further this

advancement. We are working in support of INF ratification and consulting with other civic organizations. Peace activists in the United States are exerting vigorous efforts to secure congressional approval of the Treaty. Specifically, our committee has sent its more prominent members to testify in favor of ratification at the Senate hearings.

We now see real movement in Soviet-American relations. The important thing is to *keep it going forward*. Naturally, there will be difficulties and problems, and so when these problems arise we have to make an effort to *understand* the viewpoint of the other party and, *working together*, to find ways to get around those problems — instead of, as we did in the past, taking pleasure in seeing that the movement has stopped and really enjoying the confrontation, or even aggravating it. All that is old thinking, an old mentality with its belief that a deteriorating position of one side automatically benefits the other.

As far as the role other countries could play in strengthening universal security is concerned, let me recall an instructive simile I heard from a European public figure. When two great ships are in a difficult and narrow passage, they need other, smaller ships to push them and help them move in the right direction, the way tugboats do in a harbor. And I think that the European countries above all (both within and outside the framework of the Helsinki process) could constantly 'push' the Soviet Union and the United States and remind them about the rules of international 'navigation', about the interests of other countries.

There is therefore no need to confine all movement toward peace, disarmament and détente to the channel between Washington and Moscow. A great deal can and must be done through multilateral efforts. I think, for example, that Mrs Thatcher's talks with Mr Gorbachov were important for East-West relations, and contacts between other capitalist and socialist nations are very useful. The broader this exchange of views, the better.

We should constantly take *joint practical steps* — even small ones, but always one after another, so that we have constant forward movement. In this way the United States, the Soviet Union and the entire international community will, in the final analysis, gain a sort of *positive momentum of peace* which will help us ensure security for all. The conclusion of the INF Treaty is a good beginning of this process.

¹ Discussed in greater detail in 'Palme Commission — Security for All' by Mikhail Milstein, WMR, No. 5, 1987. — *Ed.*

² Ratification in the Senate requires a two-thirds majority. — *Ed.*

the socialist way

Creative Potential Of Ideology

János Berecz — Political Bureau
member, CC Secretary, Hungarian
Socialist Workers' Party

OUR party's experience shows that ideology plays an active role in socio-economic development. It becomes a creative force when it encourages action to resolve urgent problems facing society and furthers progress. It can also cause confusion, however, when it disorients, sets forth wrong priorities or leads to faulty conclusions. Then it should be renewed. *The development of ideological thinking is today a key prerequisite of our progress. Loyalty to Marxism-Leninism is expressed precisely in the readiness and ability for continuous renewal.*

We have come to a change of epochs in the continuing development of socialism. Its position in the world has changed. Socialism faces strong ideological and political challenges, first and foremost the influence of the international environment. It has become clear that capitalism has a much more effective ability to renew technical means and organisational forms and above all to deepen integration than it was presumed.

Socialism has made historic accomplishments in several decades by modernising society in backward countries and entire regions and radically improving the conditions of life and work for their people. A political and military counterweight to imperialism was created on an expanding economic base. That was not a simple process but a chain of controversial changes, which had to do with a host of development irregularities and at times profound upheavals.

Alongside world class struggle, *universal concern for the survival of mankind* has become foremost in our world outlook. We believe that, with the threat of nuclear war, it is in everybody's interest to stop the arms race. In this connection we cannot but welcome the Soviet-American Treaty on the elimination of two classes of missiles signed in December 1987.

Economic stagnation, beyond doubt, threatens many regions; extreme backwardness and its social consequences are a source of grave conflicts. Responsible and rational coexistence with Nature is another concern of mankind.

International political, legal and economic imperatives are closely linked with these problems but they also have ideological aspects. To make compromises with the aim of meeting common interests, it is necessary to be more open to ideological trends and tendencies directed at improving the environment, living conditions and social relations, and to cooperate closely with other public forces.

In the past few years the ideas of socialism have become deeply rooted in the minds of the Hungarian people. At the same time there are ideological vacillations and the need for new approaches to the challenges of our time.

The image of socialist society broadly advertised by us has come at odds, in a number of its elements, with reality. Changes in socialism's global prospects, stagnation and at times pronounced crisis tendencies in the economy shatter the credibility of some ideological concepts formerly believed to be axioms.

Socio-economic development is to this day hindered by persistent, to a certain extent, ideological distortions of the first stage of building socialism. Domestic experience has been summarised from Marxist-Leninist positions only in part. The absence of scientific theoretical studies impedes understanding of new phenomena and the broad dissemination of far-reaching and realistic perceptions of society.

The road we have traversed and Hungary's stronger international prestige have enhanced our national self-respect. But the repeated reinterpretation of the historical past to meet actual and imagined interests of current politics has resulted in distortions and confusion in the minds of Hungarian citizens, especially when it is a matter of recognising their national affinity, patriotism and the legitimacy of the socialist system. Our ideological work is, as a rule, helpless in combating the one-sided understanding of the essence of nation, nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

Such problems exacerbate tensions in society, causing ideological wavering, disorientation of some creative workers and figures in the social sciences.

The existence of incompatible elements in ideology — out-dated and yet tenacious views along with modern ideas — lowers the effectiveness of propaganda. All this is reflected in poor ideological and political education.

Though the HSWP's documents reiterate in virtually unchanged form calls for improving and developing this type of work and also general guidelines, our ideology nevertheless does not meet the political imperatives.

Our concept of socialism should be freed of vulgarising oversimplifications and speculative models, dogmas and apologia. One of such oversimplifications is, for instance, the ideal of unceasing harmonious development, constant economic growth and rising living standards (with the latter, as a rule, characterised by stable and even falling prices). We have also discarded today the thesis that the conscious approach characteristic of socialism is manifested in economic planning and management by decree at all the stages of social development. The assumption that the state can equally take care of everybody and egalitarianism of this type is allegedly social equality proved likewise illusory.

Looking for the right interpretation, it is necessary *to go back to the fundamental ideas of Marxism-Leninism and, stepping up critical self-analysis, to focus our ideological activity on studying the real road of socialism, its present and future.*

It seems that the main thing in theoretical work and in influencing the mass of the people is to shift resolutely to the fore a wholesome and substantive demonstration of the essence of socialism. Needless to say, when looking for a sure path forward, especially nowadays, in the period of

transition from one historical stage to another, it is inadmissible to lose sight of the long-term aims of our society, which can be achieved only by overcoming the present stage. We want the main elements of the overall image of socialism, which invariably hold true, to become unequivocal and stable.

To begin with, *socialism is an historic turn from equality de jure to equality de facto and to social relations devoid of exploitation. It creates conditions for the development of the individual and socialist democracy towards public self-government.*

Bearing in mind that the building of a new society is a lengthy process, its tasks and ways of accomplishing them cannot be given once and for all, remaining unchanged. On the contrary, socialism should always be able to surpass itself. Continuity and renewal are linked organically in its development, which means that for evolution it is not enough merely to disown the views and actions of, say, the 1950s. It is a matter of a series of changes, while retaining the socialist values and goals in the process of systematic self-correction. That is why the cause of socialism, growing national well-being and the policy of reforms are inseparable.

Thirty years ago the HSWP was in the front ranks of the advocates of reforms and has since been seeking to renew Hungarian society in this way. After 1956, following the restoration and consolidation of socialist institutions in the country and the provision of steady socio-political conditions, the economic reform was made central to our policy. The party line in the field of science, the arts and culture and the relationship between the State and the Church have also undergone a change.

The experience of the reform carried out since 1968 largely promotes a theory of socialist societal and economic development which would consistently take into account the need for a commodity economy based on planned socialist management.

The reform is not an aim in itself but a means of the self-renewal of socialism. It is important to distinguish between a 'fad for reforms' and substantiated suggestions and alternatives aimed at improving society. Only the reforms that have grown out of political processes on the basis of realistic analysis can lead to success, enjoying support in society and therefore being feasible.

The main question is whether successful reform is substantiated theoretically and whether our thinking is well-attuned ideologically. A reform which is not substantiated theoretically and ideologically is bound to fail. Ideology, which ignores the existing conditions and the feasibility of set goals and which leaves it all outside its theoretical studies, finds itself divorced from the solution of real problems.

In 1987 the HSWP Central Committee passed a resolution on the country's socio-economic development programme and the National Assembly of the Hungarian People's Republic adopted the government's working programme. The gist of these documents is that progress is possible today only provided we pursue the policy of reforms in all spheres of life, proceeding from an objective interpretation of socio-economic processes and acting resolutely. This policy should be connected with concrete measures, relying on the unity of stability and changes, even if the

present-day situation lays emphasis on the need for changes. It is highly important in this respect that the measures taken be coordinated with each other and organically attuned to developmental specificities of the individual fields of social life. Hence the growing importance of political leadership, organising party work in accordance with the new requirements, changing its style and renewing its methods.

Reforms that are pending and necessary cannot be postponed with references to stability. Half-hearted, slow actions or downright retreat may result in a crisis situation. That is why a *policy of reforms is called for, resolute, well thought-out and attuned to the spirit of historical responsibility for the destiny of the people and loyal to socialism.*

It is no secret that the reform and renewal will require sacrifices and willingness to make self-sacrifice and cause undesirable side-effects. Nor can we exclude the possibility of miscalculations and mistakes — referring to objective conditions, we in no way want to shed any responsibility for them. But at the same time we do not hold ourselves responsible for problems arising from the given level of society or from processes taking place in the world, despite our will or influence, rather than from socialism.

Consistent economic reform has become a key element in our country at the present stage. The implementation of programmes is hindered by the fact that we have failed to revise those views of the socialist economy which have not been confirmed by reality. New conclusions stemming from the achievements of the social sciences and the practical experience of our economic policy have not received proper attention in our ideological work. At the same time we are aware of the fact that we have yet no scientifically substantiated answers to all the problems of the socialist economy. Future development may reveal some new aspects that we are as yet unprepared for.

Sometimes demands can be heard that all the specific measures be explained from the point of view of ideology. Needless to say, a strong desire to substantiate theoretically nearly every step in the economic development was prevalent during the first stage of building socialism. After the economic reform was carried out there was also a tendency to support certain decisions ideologically, decisions that could be explained exclusively from the political point of view. The theoretical, ideological and political directives of the past in their turn promoted the desire to deduce every decision in managing and organising the economy from the so-called essential characteristics of socialism.

Past experience warns how cautious one should be in connecting directly specific measures of economic policy with ideological principles. Priority problems pertaining to the regularities of socialist economic development should be clearly distinguished from steps justified by practical economic needs. We are perfectly aware of the fact that economic-political measures at times require no immediate ideological interpretation whatsoever. Concrete conditions of social development and the need to stabilise the economy should also be taken into account. Urgent priority interests of society connected with the latter may call for economic decisions which,

though temporarily conflicting with certain cardinal aspects of our ideals, will in this case still strengthen socialism.

Though declining to explain every practical step from the point of view of theoretical concepts, our policy does not slide to unprincipled pragmatism. On the contrary, it makes it possible for ideological work to retain its present position and to perform real, necessary functions, giving a principled, scientific assessment of the main qualitative features of the socialist economic mechanism. At the same time this policy facilitates joint efforts in comprehending and explaining economic processes with all their contradictions and conflicts, rational management values and the nature of social aims.

Our ideological interpretation of the economy proceeds primarily from the fact that the *socialist economy is a planned economy* with commodity production and market relations. Its planned nature is manifest above all in the formulation of the social aims of social development and the conscious application of economic laws. Objective laws of commodity production and the planned economy presuppose relative autonomy of the economy. When unrealistic socio-political tasks are imposed on it or the specifics of commodity production and exchanges are disregarded, along with the planning system, this may lead to the distortion of the principles of economic growth, social tensions and insoluble contradictions.

An effective socialist economy should have a flexible economic mechanism, while ideological workers should be constantly concerned with the principles and values of that mechanism. *Political priorities are reflected in the economy above all in the definition of social aims and in the guiding and coordinating role of political leadership.*

Hungary has a mixed socialist economy. That is why it is especially necessary in our ideological work to develop the concept of the *socialist relations of ownership* which cannot remain unchanged. The predominance of public ownership under socialism in no way denies the inevitable differentiation and multiplicity of its forms.

Cooperatives have for several decades been the most effective form of public ownership in our country. They enable the owners of collective property to be directly involved in decision-making, to make better use of it and promote the integration of private initiative and the independent labour of workers and families. *Municipal* ownership is also taking shape, with the role of residential communities, villages and towns as owners growing steadily. Such are the new steps in exercising public control over property and in developing production self-management.

Forms of ownership, the structure of the socialist economy and the size of enterprises keep changing in the process of development. For this reason it is hardly right to believe that the falling share of individual sectors, say, mining and the heavy industry, amounts to the renunciation of our values. The decrease in the size of big enterprises and their loss of monopoly do not jeopardise the socialist nature of the economy. Naturally, likewise wrong are those who idealise small enterprises and demagogically underestimate big factories and plants.

Individual labour and private property based on personal labour are also viable. They perform the important function of raising economic efficiency

throughout the long stage of socialist development. True, the question arises how far private property can spread — can it turn into capital, that is, an accumulated value capable of appropriating the results of other people's labour and making personal labour superfluous? So far we have no definite answer to this. But it is clear already now that private enterprise includes private appropriation and expanded reproduction. If these are put under control and operate in keeping with the interests of the socialist economy, they are not 'anti-socialist'. At the same time it is important to see to it that earnings from the use of 'capital' should not become a factor which would make personal labour superfluous and largely determine the social status of future generations, leading to unequal chances in life.

In our opinion, an important task is to provide ideological conditions for the development of a social atmosphere needed for the simultaneous operation of different forms of ownership and also to give a scientific analysis of the alternatives of their development and social inter-relationships.

The structure of Hungarian society has undergone a profound change in the past decades. Alongside the main tendency of classes drawing closer together and the appearance of new social strata and groups, further differentiation is going on. The decisive role is played today by the nature of work, its place in the division of labour system, the level of professional knowledge and culture, income and property status, and living conditions. All this affects social consciousness. Polar differences are observed in the modes of life of those living to a large extent in unfavourable conditions and those who are, on the contrary, well-to-do.

Specific differences characteristic of the generation gap have also moved to the forefront of our social problems. Representatives of different generations at times differ greatly in their assessment of the situation in the country. Tensions are also caused by problems of starting a career, promotion and the evaluation of the results of work depending on age and service record. In view of its demographic structure, Hungarian society embodies different historical experience, which affects the attitude to socialism and the mentality of different generations. The matter is aggravated by lack of fairly constructive exchanges of opinion or understanding between them.

The role and importance of manual and mental labour in creating public wealth have changed significantly. Even in the sphere of material production mental labour is of decisive importance. The nature of manual labour also changed, and it now requires a greater level of education, training and professional know-how. Nevertheless the social significance of and moral and especially material remuneration for mental labour remain so far unsatisfactory in practice. Marx's idea of productive and non-productive work is put into effect in a vulgar and distorted form.

Today's concept of the intelligentsia is a far cry from its 'classic' interpretation. Its make-up is determined by technical, agrarian and worker intelligentsia, which appeared as a result of the wide spread of knowledge and education and which is engaged in the direct production of material wealth. Involved in productive labour, it plays an important role. The concept of 'intelligentsia' is increasingly meaning a state reflecting

people's abilities and lifestyles rather than the nature of work done to procure means of sustenance.

It seems that the incorrect assessment of spiritual, intellectual factors has to do with the fact that, when analysing society and the economy, ideology has failed to discard its ossified interpretation ignoring the real changes of the period of the scientific and technological revolution. The old model, according to which the economy presupposes two active elements — the capitalists and the workers, while the intelligentsia is of secondary importance, was adopted. In Marx's lifetime this corresponded to reality. However, much has changed since then. The intelligentsia has become a key factor of the economy while theory failed to take the change into account. We think it is time to take a new look at the theory which defines the intelligentsia as a secondary stratum compared to the main social classes: after all, the production of spiritual values now plays the key role in social production.

The present stage of the development of Hungary is characterised by stronger socialist relations and the growing popular nature of the government. The HSWP invariably considers the central issue of its policy to ensure the rule of the people. This is guaranteed by the party's leading role and the active participation of the mass of the people in running society. Abiding by the aforementioned principles, we seek to improve the methods of exercising power in the historically formed conditions of one-party rule.

The differentiated social structure of our socialist society presupposes different interests. The HSWP recognised that pluralism in due time, hence the need for taking into consideration the political consequences of that plurality. Nevertheless *the difference of views under socialism in no way excludes the possibility for political unity nor the desire to attain common goals*. First, the fundamental interests of the classes and strata of the population fighting for socialism can be satisfied simultaneously. Second, the goals of the socialist system coincide with the aspirations of all the working people. In the conditions of popular rule and the public ownership of the means of production, when different interests clash, we invariably believe that the guiding principle of coordinating them is to meet genuine (rather than those oft-repeated in the form of hackneyed phrases) social interests.

Social well-being is for us the law of paramount importance. The forums and people's representative bodies which make political decisions have the duty to find points for different interests to be brought together to the benefit of all and everybody. The task of ideological work is *to promote the constructive expression of these interests, to oppose the exaggeration of conflicting views or their presentation in a tragic light, to help reveal the true needs of society, to awaken the need to satisfy them in the minds of the people and to contribute in this way to the strengthening of social unity and security*. This creates opportunities for all the working classes, strata and groups to express their interests more freely, openly and vigorously and for the political system to take them into account to an ever fuller extent.

The party — *the central force of our society* — works out the guidelines of political activity and governs the fundamental processes of building

socialism. But, of course, political life goes beyond the activity of the party. A system can be effective as long as the members of society see in it opportunities for development. This is feasible provided all elements and institutions are independent, active and full of initiative and carry out among themselves a harmonious division of labour on the basis of equality. Only in this way can voluntarism and subjectivism be avoided.

Such is the basis of principle which requires certain flexibility in coping with emerging problems. What elements of spontaneous movements in society can be incorporated in the existing system of political institutions, enriching its content and organisational framework? Representatives of what movements should be attracted, with the help of a patient dialogue, to our side as partners in choosing the ways of building socialism and what movements should be isolated or simply pushed aside?

Public self-government is the key trend in the development of our system. On the one hand, it means the direct participation of the working people in public affairs, and, on the other, the regulation in the people's interests of not only political but all the important problems of concern to them. That is why this programme is much richer than the bourgeois pluralist concept of democracy. Self-government stands for the people's independent activity and the working people's active role in different social processes. The development of the political system today brings about the need to share powers in decision-making with the people's associations and to extend the framework of public control by backing it with legal regulation.

It goes without saying that self-government cannot be introduced by a legal act alone, especially if conditions for it have not matured yet. But the unfavourable experience of hasty attempts made in the course of building socialism will not stop our advance along the chosen road.

At the same time there is the need for a strong and efficient state organisation, the decentralisation of powers in the given sphere and stronger self-governing units. These tasks combine organically. Besides, it is important to enhance the role of public movements and associations expressing the interests of different groups of the working people, adding substance to their work and, possibly, setting up new organisations.

Glasnost is gaining in importance in the country's political and spiritual life. Our experience shows that citizens consider a system to be legal and just if they can publicly express their opinion and interests, participate in discussing and solving social problems, identify themselves with a clearly formulated — on the basis of a stable order of values — system of goals of social policy and control its implementation.

We are convinced that *glasnost* should encompass all existing aspects of life, pervading the activity of all associations, establishments, movements and so on. Under socialism *glasnost* also presupposes a chance to criticise both political and governmental activity. Mutual trust between the leaders and the working people is an indispensable condition for that. It is only on this ground that the different views existing in society can manifest themselves. Reflecting different approaches, they enrich our knowledge and, when dictated by the desire to improve things, facilitate a more precise formulation of the tasks which have a bearing on all citizens.

The correctness of ideas and values worked out by the classics of Marxism-Leninism and those who carried on their spiritual legacy confirms that this ideological treasure can serve as a lodestar for science, the arts and daily thinking. And if our ideas failed to spread far enough and at times, on the contrary, weakened, we should look for causes in the work of theoreticians, politicians, agitators, propagandists and the mass media. It is a matter of indolence, conservatism or passion for superfluous fads, on the one hand, and the already mentioned disregard for the role of ideology, theoretical indiscrimination and the spread of eclecticism and pragmatism, on the other. Nor should we forget that we are working among the people who are more informed and receptive to ideological influences as never before.

Ideology knows no vacuum. Other, primarily bourgeois, views exercise influence alongside Marxism. This is facilitated by tangible neglect in defining and establishing socialist values. We have not taken into consideration and therefore failed to give an adequate explanation to the fact that even values born of socialism can be at variance with each other.

Faith in the ideals proclaimed is especially undermined by gaps between words and deeds. This in part stems from our former, rather illusory, ideas of our aims and the ways of attaining them. We cannot speak, at least today, of having fully translated the socialist ideals into life. Meanwhile we have allowed some concepts to fade, among them knowledge, honour, love for work and one's vocation, sincerity, correctitude, culture, sensitiveness, decency, solidarity, truthfulness, tactfulness, justice and other personal characteristics which have public importance. Qualities associated with the political side of life, such as the sense of belonging to the people, nation, class or the community of socialist states, are sometimes relegated to the background.

The bureaucratic features of government prevented the enterprising spirit, the readiness to assume responsibility or to face risk and the need for self-realisation and healthy competition (the qualities so necessary today) from becoming rooted in the system of our values. Departures from the goals and principles of socialism, the shortcomings of real practice and discrepancies between it and ideals lead to mistakes and offer opportunities for the spread of a lifestyle alien to the new system. Simultaneously society experiences a growing common need for stable morals and values, which would include noble human characteristics and be worthy of emulation.

Owing to its ability to carry through a creative ideological renewal, the HSWP succeeded in providing an ideological platform for solving social, economic and political problems. Three decades ago we coped with adverse circumstances particularly because, facing the truth of life, we gave ideologically correct answers to the emerging questions. *Mass support for the party's policy was formed and consolidated because the party drew on the general principles of socialism, taking into account the national specificity.*

The consistent policy of alliance of classes and social strata was a good example of the fruitful cross-fertilisation of ideological renewal and the new political practice that spread simultaneously. The HSWP found an

original solution to the problems of the peasantry and the socialist restructuring of agriculture. It took considerable theoretical courage and creative quest to introduce the economic reform, to enhance the role of commodity-money relations and personal material incentive and to develop simultaneously different forms of socialist property, combining them flexibly. Possibilities for cooperation of people with different world outlooks, both Marxists, atheists and believers, and for normalising relations between the State and the Church were produced as a result of the ideological studies of the party's attitude to religion, the freedom of conscience and the principles of the dialectical unity of political alliance and ideological dialogue and discussion.

Along with the marked improvement of living conditions, growing well-being and the possibilities for citizens to participate in social affairs, creative ideological and political work also largely contributed to the speedy restoration of the shattered trust between the party and the mass of the people. *The recognition of the party's leading political role on the socialist platform created broad national unity, which was to become an effective force.*

Another stage of epoch-making changes is now observed in the development of Hungarian society. It is therefore all the more important to release the people's creative imagination, to encourage new ideas and to support striving for renewal, fresh views and revival in the spiritual field. All this calls for courage, creative experiments and searches for new paths. We are aware that mistakes are possible here but in the interests of the future we are mustering patience to be able to choose the best and most objective solution.

Our party believes that it, too, has to renew itself. Communist activity and consciousness fortified by our aims and accomplishments made are an indispensable condition for effective and enterprising political work. In our view a prerequisite for this effectiveness consists in ensuring that the real conditions and live practice of inner-party democracy show that, when implementing its socio-economic programme, the leading bodies of the HSWP enjoy the support of the selfless, independent, wise and loyal party members.

The *democratisation of inner-party relations* is a must in developing the party and guaranteeing its leading role. Our worsening difficulties resulted in the split of opinion on certain issues also among the Communists. The party's ideological unity has shown signs of cracking, which undermines its political cohesion and the fulfilment of its leading role. One of the aims of the ideological plenary meeting of the HSWP Central Committee (November 1987) was to restore ideological unity and the unity of action within the party, to strengthen its ranks and to raise the effectiveness of its work. All this can be accomplished only provided the democratic, creative and lively spirit of discussion becomes widespread. The collective experience accumulated by the Communists, their wisdom and readiness to act will find expression in debate.

This is the vital need of today.

Legality In The Service Of Man

Günter Sarge — President of the GDR Supreme Court

THE German Democratic Republic is the first workers' and peasants' state on German soil which emerged in 1949 as a result of the defeat of Hitler's Reich and the subsequent anti-fascist and democratic transformations in the east of the country. Our state best met the hopes of the peoples pinned on the new Germany in the light of historical justice, the international-law mandate¹ after the war, and the policy pursued by our state.

From the very outset, law, legality and justice in the GDR were both the constitutional requirements and the state doctrine. Nor could it have been otherwise, because our state is ruled by the Marxist-Leninist theory of state and law developing the German people's humanistic tradition in law. The Principles and Objectives of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, a document adopted at its Constituent Congress in April 1946,² formulated such fundamental principles as "freedom of creed and conscience; equality of all citizens before the law irrespective of race or sex; equality of women in social life and occupational activity; protection of the individual by the state; and democratic reform in law and judicial procedures".³

An analysis of the GDR's 40-year historical record shows that *these principles have both been written into the basic laws of the state and translated into practice.*

Let us consider, for instance, the reform of law and judicial procedures. Not a single judge or prosecutor who had served the Nazi regime remained in office. The reactionary judiciary, which was alien to the people, was dismantled. Young people from among the workers and peasants (many of whom were trained at special courses) were appointed to the courts and the prosecutor's office: 71 per cent of the prosecutors and 64 per cent of the judges in the GDR are now of working class origin; about one-half of the judges are women.

The courts are an important element of the system of our socialist state power and are truly popular in structure and working methods. We were guided by what Lenin had said about the changes under the Soviet power, which "immediately threw the old court on the scrap-heap, thereby clearing the way for a real people's court, and not so much by the force of repressive measures as by massive example, the authority of the working people, without formalities; we transformed the court from an instrument of exploitation into an instrument of education on the firm foundation of socialist society".⁴

Since the 1970s, the GDR has had a coherent system of laws meeting the requirements of society, among them the Family Code, the Labour Code, the Criminal Code and the Civil Code,⁵ the Law on Public Courts, etc.

The Party Programme, adopted by the Ninth Congress of the SED in 1976, formulated the tasks in further improving socialist legality. The Programme says that the balanced perfection of socialist law and order as our society matures and legality is consolidated is an organic component of

SED policy. Socialist law is an expression of the power of the working class and serves to translate into life the interests of the working people, to protect our system and liberty and human dignity of our citizens. Perfection of juridical norms, especially in the national economy and cooperation between the fraternal countries, acquires great importance.

Education in the spirit of voluntary observance of socialist legal norms, protection of socialist property, including its protection against accidents and fires, conscious discipline and a high state of vigilance are among the key tasks of state agencies and public organisations, and also of each citizen. Undeviating observance of socialist legality requires due penalties for offenders.

After the 10th Congress in 1981, a number of laws crucial to the building of a developed socialist society was approved. We now have a broad system of legislation assuring all citizens equal rights and freedoms, protecting human dignity and inducing citizens to act in the spirit of social progress. It was said at the 11th SED Congress in 1986 that law and order in our state is an essential characteristic of socialism and of the quality of life in the new society.

The state of law in the GDR could be summarised as follows:

There is a reliable and stable law and order system resting on a stable political system.

Internal security and public law and order are ensured everywhere and at all times.

There is a clear-cut system of protection for the individual. The legislation and the judicial practices assure social protection for citizens and security and fully guarantee the basic constitutional rights. The duty of the state to take care of its citizens and the duty of the latter to remain loyal to it constitute a single whole. Injury caused to the victims of crime is compensated by the state in the interests of its citizens.

It is the prime duty of the socialist state power to ensure legality and justice, in accordance with the principle of equality of everyone before the law. No one in our country is persecuted for national, racial, religious or political reasons, or has his or her rights infringed upon in public life or in the exercise of justice.

We have succeeded in tying in more closely our law with the country's principal political tasks, economic strategy in the first place. In every sphere of the national economy, especially in combines which are large economic units, legality, law and order, and discipline are closely coordinated with economic tasks. This is reflected, in particular, in the slogan 'Firm Guarantee of Plan Fulfilment', which has been adopted at all the enterprises in the country.

Our citizens' sense of justice and general legal culture are very pronounced. Not only is the activity of the courts in the country under public scrutiny, but the public is also an active protector of law and order and is directly involved in the exercise of justice, an expression of socialist democracy. That will be seen from the following facts: our people have elected 52,000 people's assessors and 300,000 members of public courts. Representatives of work collectives take part in roughly 70 per cent of trials. The court proceedings are widely reported in the mass media. Press

reports are characteristically correct and objective.

The growth of crime has been checked, and the crime rate in the GDR is now among the lowest in the world.

That is surely an indication that *justice and legality*, which are among our people's natural values, *are manifested in daily life*. All the units of the socialist state ensure internal security and public law and order, peaceful life for the inhabitants of town and country, creation and increase of the national wealth, protection of life and health, property and dignity, and other interests of citizens. Only the hopelessly biased will fail to see that everything is being done in the socialist GDR to assure the people a life in dignity, with a guarantee to everyone that his or her personal goals and plans can be achieved, in consolidating our way of life, under which there is no unemployment or discrimination, ostracism or helplessness, alienation, social insecurity or any of the other vices of the capitalist world.

Practice shows that the basic human rights in the republic are not simply a set of programmatic propositions, let alone propaganda stereotypes: for each of us they are a real embodiment of constitutional provisions.

The image of every state is largely determined by the capacity of the authorities to ensure security, protect property and the citizens' legitimate interests, guarantee public law and order, cope with crime and ensure general discipline. Here the GDR will *stand international comparison*. A UN study shows that our country is among the ten countries with the lowest number of offences (among the European countries Bulgaria, Switzerland, and Ireland are also in this group).

In the mid-1980s, the GDR had the lowest level of crime over the past quarter-century: about 110,000 criminal offences a year, or 670 per 100,000 of the population, and these were mainly not grave breaches of the law, which are very few. Our society is free from terrorism, the taking of hostages, the abduction of children, prostitution, drug addiction and other vices of the Western world.

The crime rate in our republic (per 100,000 of the population) is only a tenth of that in the FRG (these data are not quite precise because, unlike the GDR, cases involving breaches of traffic regulations are not classified as criminal offences in the FRG). In West Berlin, the crime rate is 16 times higher. Let us also note that only 45 per cent of all criminal cases are closed in the FRG, while in the GDR the figure is almost 90 per cent.

In the two states, other trends running in opposite directions, are certainly also of interest. While the wave of violence (murder, robbery, rape, infliction of grave bodily injuries) is on the rise in the FRG, in the GDR such offences make up only 4 per cent of the total. From year to year, the FRG has had a growth of juvenile delinquency, the use of fire arms (about 13,000 cases in 1986), robbery (28,500), illicit drug trafficking (almost 70,000) and various attempts on the liberty of the individual, and the life and health of citizens. Our state has to contend with very few such cases, although after the war the situation was roughly the same in both parts of the country. We have worked hard to prevent the vices of the capitalist world from infiltrating our socialist society.

An analysis of the reasons for these contrasts will make it clear that the GDR's achievements spring primarily from the goals of social

development; the SED's sagacious leadership; the relations of production based on the people's property, which ensure social security for all; consistent exercise of human rights; the competent state power which works in close contact with the people; the population's high sense of law and order and sense of responsibility; and the reliably functioning democracy.

The humanism of socialist society is also manifested in the fact that *we do not lay emphasis on punishment, but on education and correction* (depending on the gravity of the crime). About 25 per cent of persons found guilty of criminal offences are tried by public courts at their places of work or in the neighbourhoods, which are empowered to impose a fine of up to 500 marks. Roughly 60 per cent of the criminal cases tried in court do not carry the punishment of deprivation of liberty, and in most other cases, the sentence is not in excess of two years. More severe penalties are imposed in only 4 per cent of the cases.

Our objective is to have anyone who has gone astray return to normal life (with the exception of those committing grave crimes, such as murder). The socialist society gives everyone who has broken the law a chance to become its full-fledged member once again. Indeed, our punishments are ultimately aimed at preventing crime.

This principled approach, which is one of genuine respect for human beings as active builders of the socialist society, stems from Marx's ideas. In 1842, in connection with the debates in the Rhine Province Assembly over the 'crime' of collecting brushwood by needy persons, he wrote in the *Rheinische Zeitung* that "the wise legislator will prevent crime in order not to have to punish it, but he will do so not by obstructing the sphere of right, but by doing away with the negative aspect of every instinct of right, giving the latter a positive sphere of action".

Last year was a noteworthy one for legal life in the GDR. Its State Council enacted important decrees and framed a number of laws. It announced a general amnesty, the tenth and most significant one since the GDR was founded. All persons convicted of criminal offences, with the exception of war criminals, murderers and spies, were set free.

Almost 29,000 persons were released or did not have to serve their terms at all. In that same year, they were provided with jobs and housing, and were once again integrated in the life of society. In this way, our socialist society once again reasserted its humanity, strength and dynamism and the capacity to turn offenders into its full-fledged members. It goes without saying that when these measures were put through we never lost sight of the requirements of state security, public law and order, and protection of the rights of all citizens and their well-being.

At the instance of the State Council, the People's Chamber, the supreme organ of state power, approved on December 18, 1987, laws abolishing the death penalty in the GDR, and establishing the Grand Senate under the Supreme Court for the examination of criminal cases.

Our country adopted the former law in pursuance of the recommendations of the United Nations, thereby demonstrating the humanistic essence of the socialist system. The need for the death sentence became superfluous after the GDR had meted out severe punishment to

Nazi and war criminals. Over the past ten years, this punishment was not applied in our country, and the number of grave crimes has nonetheless been reduced, as the record shows.

The formation of the Grand Senate will now enable every unit of the judiciary to appeal to the higher instance in case of necessity, so ensuring the possibility of impartial control over judicial decisions and unconditional repeal of those which are illegal or unjust.

Such principles as the right to defence, direct judicial examination, presumption of innocence, the principle of 'in dubio pro reo', objective establishment of the truth, independence of the judges and others are self-evident in our judicial practice. This is visual evidence that the GDR is a socialist rule-of-law state. Article 96 of the GDR Constitution, for instance, says that judges, people's assessors and members of the public courts are independent in their decisions and subordinate to the law alone. The influence of any persons or institutions on the judicial proceedings is not allowed.

In our country the mass media do not, as they do in some Western countries, hand down their own verdict of guilty before the trial runs its course. The presumption of innocence is an indefeasible postulate of juridical life in the GDR.

Our country's law and order system goes well beyond the general legal guarantees existing under bourgeois democracy, and that chiefly because of our social system. That is why the will of the law-maker — the People's Chamber on which all the political forces of the country are represented — is an indisputable reality.

Within just a few months, for instance, we managed to provide jobs — and that without any great problems — for amnestied persons only because the GDR has fully ensured the right to work, an essential human right. No capitalist state could have provided them with decent housing without delay. Especially, when unemployment and lack of shelter are now commonplace for millions of citizens in the capitalist society. In our country, those who were released from penalty received housing, in addition to jobs, for the socialist state does not leave anyone to fend for himself with his concerns and troubles.

Let me also note that some Western mass media have vainly tried to smear the law and order system in the GDR, the correctional labour institutions in the first place, although the conditions in these institutions are very much better than the minimum requirements laid down in international conventions. This applies primarily to the convicts' work, the opportunities for learning a trade and raising skills, respect for personal immunity and dignity, and the whole set of educational measures aimed to prepare a person for a return to society. It is the unity of legal guarantees and the social reality that ensures genuine observance of the provisions of our Constitution.

The further *expansion of socialist democracy* is an important endeavour in our country. At the 11th Congress of the SED, Erich Honecker stressed: "Our workers and peasants' state has continued to develop, and the authority of the socialist state power has grown steadily. The further development and perfection of socialist democracy is the main line of its

progress. Almost one citizen in three now takes part in performing state or social work on a voluntary basis."⁸

The political power of the working class in alliance with the other working classes and strata, and socialist ownership in the key means of production create the prerequisites for every citizen's active exercise of all the democratic rights and liberties and for the citizens consciously arranging their lives with a sense of social protection.

Under our system, the working person is the chief motive force. The exercise of socialist power and the individual's free development are a single process, with the flourishing of everyone's gifts and endowments constituting an objective requirement for the advance along the socialist road.

Judicial practices also reflect the slogan 'Take Part in Planning, Management and Labour!', which is widespread in the GDR. The people's assessors are nominated by the trade unions, the parties and the mass organisations, and are elected by the work collectives. They take part in the judicial proceedings on a par with the professional judges, so realising the participation by the working class and its allies in the exercise of political power.

The public courts, which have a prominent place in our country, also provide confirmation of this fact. They operate on principles written into the Constitution and clearly regulated by the law. At the enterprises and offices there are labour grievance commissions, and comrades' courts in the neighbourhoods. These commissions examine conflicts in production and also petty offences and civil disputes, which are also within the competence of the comrades' courts.

As I have said, we have 300,000 members of public courts, most of whom work in production, and about 47 per cent of them are women. Citizens who work on these public courts are elected for the term of the elective local people's councils, or for a term of two years. They are completely accountable to those who voted for them. The public courts examine a quarter of the criminal and over 10 per cent of the civil cases, and virtually all the labour grievances. In 93 per cent of the cases, they take decisions on their own, and pass on the rest of the cases to the state courts.

The GDR has had public courts for more than a quarter-century. Their origination and activity are closely bound up with the strengthening of socialist democracy in our country.

The authority and educational functions of the democratically-elected courts are exceptionally high. Let us note that all the professional judges (numbering about 1,400) are also democratically elected in the GDR for the term of the corresponding organ of popular representation, to which the judges are accountable in their entire activity.

There is *wide publicity* within the country's judicial system, which means judicial proceedings in open court, participation of citizens in the judicial proceedings, availability of free legal advice, and also public scrutiny and criticism, primarily through the mass media.

Representatives of work collectives appear in court. Another democratic form is the presence in court of public attorneys for the defence and for the prosecution, an arrangement which enables the public to exert a direct

influence on the course of the proceedings and, as a rule, to express the opinion of the work collective where the accused works. Over 5,000 work collectives, for instance, annually file petitions for the commutation of sentences involving deprivation of liberty, and voluntarily undertake to act as surety for offenders. Lenin's idea that "all citizens must take part in the work of the courts and in the government of the country"⁹ has been translated into practice in our republic.

While the administration of law is only a small part of the system of socialist democracy in the GDR, I should like to stress that we intend to go on giving great attention to the participation of citizens and work collectives in the activity of the courts, thereby helping to realise direct exercise of political power and law in all state and social affairs. That, incidentally, is also in complete accord with the UN resolution,¹⁰ which says, in part, that states have the duty to promote the people's participation in all social spheres as the most important contribution to the development and full exercise of all human rights.

¹ The decisions of the heads of government of the USSR, the United States and Great Britain, who met at Potsdam from July 17 to August 2, 1945, on the demilitarisation, de-Nazification and democratisation of Germany. France later subscribed to these decisions with some reservations. That laid the international-law basis for the formation of one democratic German state. These decisions were supported by the bloc of anti-fascist, democratic parties in the eastern part of the country but were rejected by the bourgeois and social-democratic parties in the western occupation zones (US, British and French). It was the policy of the imperialist powers that led to the division of Germany. — *Ed.*

² At this Congress, the Communist Party of Germany and the Social-Democratic Party of Germany united into the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). — *Ed.*

³ *Dokumente der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Bd. 1, Berlin, 1951, S.6.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 464.

⁵ The Civil Code has had an important role in perfecting socialist law; its entry into force in January 1976 led to the annulment of the last bourgeois code of laws then still effective in the country. — *Ed.*

⁶ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 235.

⁷ The Latin for 'In case of doubt — in favour of the accused'. — *Ed.*

⁸ *Bericht des ZK der SED an den XI. Parteitag. Protokoll*, Berlin, 1986, S. 55.

⁹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 135.

¹⁰ Passed on December 4, 1986. — *Ed.*

the party

Communists And Youth: Continuing The Discussion

The Roots Of Prejudice

Interviews in Copenhagen

The communist parties of several industrial developed capitalist countries are facing considerable difficulties in disseminating their ideas among youth. Many parties have been recently conducting in-depth studies into the problems and sentiments of young people. But what is the attitude of young men and women to Communists? To find an answer to this question, *WMR* staff member Alexei Pushkov talked to young people of different political persuasions in the capital of Denmark.

"ONE party is as worthless as another; none can really get things improved." This peremptory verdict pronounced by an 18-year-old I met in a city park was the beginning of my interviews with young people in Copenhagen. Indifference, scepticism and even mistrust of political parties have long become widespread. "We have nothing against the idea of people rallying together in political parties," two friends — Per and Kurt — told me. "But in such cases people often cease to think for themselves. Ask them a question, and they don't know how to answer it. They say they would rather first consult their party." That, of course, is an easy way of justifying one's political indifference. However, the fact remains that young people in Denmark (and in other West European countries) are gravitating more than ever before to extra-party activities and to new, non-traditional movements.

At the same time, the idea of unity still appeals to young people. This explains why Denmark numbers several major political youth leagues, each oriented on a specific party. I met and talked with members of these organisations (all except the young Conservatives whom I failed to contact).

Let me begin by discussing the views of those young people whose positions differ considerably from the Communists' and who even regard themselves their political opponents.

Henrik Christensen, a 24-year-old office worker and International

For previous articles in this series, see: 'How to Recruit, Educate and Retain New Members', *WMR*, No. 1, 1988; **Ginnette Despretz**, 'Who Are They Going to Follow?' *WMR*, No. 2, 1988; **Jean Blume**, **Eric Remacle**, 'Change of Generations: Conflict of Continuity?', *WMR*, No. 3, 1988.

Secretary of the Danish Social-Democratic Youth organisation, the biggest in the country:

"We maintain no official relations with the young Communists but we do cooperate with them in several fields, including the peace movement. This cooperation can be quite close — as one can see from the 1987 campaign against US nuclear tests. At that time, many people realised that young Communists were not Soviet agents or anything of the sort. Those I know personally are open-minded and independent in their views.

"However, we remain mostly rivals in the trade union movement. In some trade unions (actually, in most) the Social Democrats play the leading role while the Communists are in opposition. In other words, the alignment of forces is reversed. I am familiar with the view that unity makes the trade union movement stronger. But the existence of competing currents within it can also help make it more active. I don't think it would be any good if all of Denmark's union members followed the Social Democrats."

Together with his fellow members, Henrik welcomes the Soviet Union's perestroika:

"This policy, together with glasnost, is very popular in Denmark. For many years, Soviet society was too conservative. Perhaps it will now be able to improve its economic mechanism. I also hope that there will be more political freedom in the USSR and that we will be able to follow discussions involving different social groups and sections. As Mikhail Gorbachov once said, your reforms are not designed to please the West: they are effected because Soviet society needs them. I think he's right. Change is indeed necessary, and it will benefit the Soviet people.

"Unlike the Social Democratic Party itself, the young Social Democrats oppose Denmark's membership in NATO and excessive reliance on the United States. We want our country to pursue its own defence and security policy and to be independent of both superpowers. In this context, what is now under way in the Soviet Union deprives the Conservatives of their main arguments in favour of alliance with the United States. Today, we can always say, "Look, Soviet society isn't really as bad as you claim."

Do you expect an improved image of the Soviet Union to change radically the attitude to the Communists in Denmark?

"That's hard to say. Mostly, people see them as a party which fully supports the Soviet government and expresses its views. I personally do not think so. But the attitude to the Communists will hardly change until there is some change in the party itself. Then it may again have a chance to win seats in Parliament."

You say that the Communist Party of Denmark enjoys little popularity. How then do you explain the fact that many people aged 18 to 20 join the Communist Youth League (CYL)?

"Some of those who join the CYL come from communist families. The League's influence has long been quite strong in the trade unions and in the

movements of college and high school students. That is where it recruits many of its members. Finally, young people are often attracted to the CYL precisely because of the negative attitude to the Communist Party widespread in political quarters and in society as a whole. These young people hold that being a Communist means opposing these quarters in a much more resolute and marked way than being, say, a Social Democrat."

Frank Stockholm, a student of economics and member of the Executive Council of the Radical Youth organisation¹:

"We are convinced that broad international cooperation is necessary, and so we try to expand our ties with youth organisations in other countries. The world has grown smaller. For example, the developments currently under way in the Soviet Union are affecting us a lot more than 20 years ago.

"Although I am enthusiastic neither about the United States nor about the Soviet Union, I must admit that in recent years the USSR has been displaying a greater dedication to peace and a readiness to scrap certain types of weapons. That is a good sign. The East and the West can negotiate the elimination of nuclear weapons. But we will keep a very close watch over what is happening in Russia and over its foreign policy. So far, one cannot say that the USSR is better than the United States."

Young Radicals cooperate with CYL members in the anti-war movement, and Frank noted their activity, selflessness and organisation: "We could hardly have done anything without them." However, he added: "The Communists want to run the movement and, generally, they do everything their Russian brother tells them to do." I looked at him in surprise because he was the first person I met who was serious about such charges. Still, he stood his ground: "But for the conviction that the Communist Party fully backs the Soviet Union, many people in Denmark would vote in its favour. Besides, what it offers — Marxism — can now be found elsewhere, and in a Danish not Russian version."

From Henrik's and Frank's words it is clear that the ideological stereotypes persisting in the mass — and consequently, youth — consciousness die hard and unevenly. At the same time, the attitude to the Communists and to the socialist countries is no longer as rigidly negative as it was during the Cold War years. Political prejudice is gradually yielding to the imperatives of the struggle against the dangers the world is facing.

After driving through busy and attractive downtown Copenhagen, **Sven Pedersen**, an activist of a CPD district committee, skirted the railroad terminal and stopped the car in a littered, lack-lustre street whose only claim to distinction was the abundance of pornography in the shop windows. "See that small crowd of youngsters at the corner? They're drug addicts," he told me. "This is where they gather. I worked with them at a rehabilitation centre for a few years. Some of them you can get to quit, but many turn to drugs again. In fact, there's no sense in talking to them. They are outside politics. Let's go, I want you to meet my son Nicolaj."

Unlike his father, **Nicolaj Pedersen**, a tall, blond, bearded young man, is not a Communist. But he votes for the Communist Party in elections, invariably takes part in the festivals of *Land og Folk*, the Communist newspaper, and is involved in various solidarity projects. He has not joined

either the CPD or its youth organisation because "life offers too many interesting things, and I don't want to dedicate myself fully to politics".

Why is it that although more young people are ready to vote for the Left, so few of them support the Communist party?

"The Communists are active, and they do a great deal to strengthen their positions. The *Land og Folk* festival is a unique event in Denmark, it's very popular² and attracts mostly young people. But elections are a different matter. The Communists are regarded as too Red and the Social Democrats, as conservative. As a result, those young voters who sympathise with the Left support the Socialist People's Party which, politically, is halfway between the Communists and the Social Democrats.

"Besides, the Communists are often seen as an 'older generation' party, and it will take a long time to change the attitude to it. Perhaps Ole Sohn, the new CPD Chair who is himself relatively young, will succeed in updating the image of the party. I think the Communists should be very careful in formulating their stand on any issue involving the USSR. It is not that the Soviet Union should be opposed. But our people should be able to see that the CPD is a Danish party. To my mind, not enough has been done on this score so far. But I cannot rule out the possibility of the perestroika and glasnost policies in the Soviet Union helping the resumption of dialogue between our Communist Party and the people."

Nicolaj's 23-year-old girlfriend **Gitte Frederiksen** (she works as a sales clerk in a supermarket and plans to study foreign trade) grew up in a well-to-do and very conservative family and never heard a kind word spoken about the Communists. But then she met many Communists herself and realised that this was a highly biased view.

"I like them," she said, "but I wouldn't vote for them in elections. The Communists are too far on the left, they want to reshape the world. That's what scares me. I don't think we in Denmark want a revolution. We want to live a pleasant, easy life. I sometimes read *Land og Folk*, but all you find there is, 'support the Communist Party'. It would do well to publish politically neutral articles too, about things that don't force the reader to take sides."

Gitte admitted that she was not well versed in the programmes of different parties — but if she had to make a choice, she would rather opt for the People's Socialists. She is by no means the only one of those who, while speaking well of the Communists, prefer to support the SPP.

"This party is gaining influence," says **Ole Nielsen**, a 25-year-old government employee. "The Communists' position on many issues appeals to me, but a powerful social democracy supported by the People's Socialists is the only viable alternative to the conservative government.³ Of course, one should work for a leftward shift among the Social Democrats, but that's a tough challenge."

The reasons behind the popularity of the People's Socialists are obvious.⁴ They have recently advanced the widely supported demand for Denmark's withdrawal from the EEC and NATO. They call for tangible disarmament steps and are highly critical of the socio-economic policy

pursued by the conservative government. On many issues, the People's Socialists hold positions that are close to those of the CPD. But in the eyes of the electorate, they are not committed to the idea of society's radical transformation which is championed by the Communists. This makes the SPP acceptable to the voters who have recently turned away from the Social Democrats. Besides, this party is not affected by the anti-communist prejudice which is deeply imbedded in mass consciousness.

Claus Christoffersen of the SPP youth organisation stressed that the attitudes of his party and of the Communists to the struggle for peace, to environmental protection and to many economic and trade union issues are practically identical.

"Of course, the Communist Party maintains close ties with its Soviet counterpart," he added. "There are also historical bonds that connect them. Perhaps the Danish Communists feel that they owe a certain debt to the USSR. But the claims that they 'toe Moscow's line in everything' or are active in the peace campaign merely to weaken NATO are nonsense. Take the CPD position in favour of a nuclear-free zone in the North of Europe: it is fully consonant with our national interests. I respect the Young Communists too. They are very responsible people. They often volunteer to organise various projects and always seek cooperation with other forces in the movement, not domination over them."

Still, you are an SPP member, not a Communist. Why?

"I think their discipline and structure are too rigid. My party is more democratic, our positions on several issues are more up-to-date, and strictly ideological considerations are not that important. In my opinion, this appeals more to those who want to keep their own counsel instead of adhering to a definite set of views. Besides, I disagree with many theoretical postulates of the Communists.

"For example, the term 'socialism' is present in the SPP programme, but it is interpreted differently. We are committed to the concept of a pluralistic society with many different parties but none of them in a position of leadership. We are working for a fairer distribution of public benefits and public wealth, but we do not think it necessary to nationalise as many industries and services as the socialist countries have. Advocating greater democracy and decentralisation of power, my party wants to take it away from the state and diffuse it among the people so that they would be independent in decision-making."

To sum up, a favourable attitude to the Communists and acceptance of some of their ideas and proposals do not at all automatically imply support for the Communist Party.

I met **Natalia Nielsen** of the CYL's Copenhagen Committee at the headquarters of 'Next Stop', a youth anti-war organisation. It was the nerve centre of the 'Next Stop: Nevada' campaign that swept Denmark in the spring of 1987. The peace initiative of Denmark's youth which decided to stage a protest against nuclear tests near the test range in the Nevada desert generated widespread public support. That was when, for the first time in history, the Folketing approved a resolution in support of a mass grassroots initiative.

"At first no one believed that we would see the campaign through to the end," said Natalie, one of the organisers of the initiative. "But people from all walks of life helped us raise more than a million kroner. The money was used to send a group of 60 to the United States. In New York we were received by the UN Secretary-General. And then we started moving towards the test range, stopping in cities and towns on the way and staging concerts, rallies and discussions together with American peace activists. Virtually all of Denmark's youth organisations took part in the project — the CYL, the People's Socialists, the Social Democrats and even the Radicals.

"Generally, we now enjoy much wider recognition among young people than three or four years ago. In Copenhagen, even anarchists and squatters agree to work together with us.

"But conducting our work is still a challenge, particularly among sections that are new to us. People in Denmark have heard so many inventions about the Communists! Many believe that the ideas we voice are not our own, that they are what we are forced to say or what we have read in books. If you tell these young people that you're a CYL member, they simply won't listen to you. That's why I begin by talking about ordinary things, and only when I see that they like me do I switch to political issues."

My impression is that the Left-leaning young people in Denmark favour the CYL more than they do the Communist Party itself. Is it simply that the CYL is a youth organisation, or are other factors also involved?

"Of course, they are in direct contact with us, while their information about the party is second-hand. But there is also another reason. I think that the party has a backlog of serious problems: it is lagging behind the times, fails to display enough flexibility, and uses almost no new forms of work. Even some CYL members are not ready to join the party. They can't forget the atmosphere of the youth movement. They recall the actions we launched, and they remember how great it all was. But in the party they will have to conduct traditional work which is of little interest to them. I know several very able young activists who have recently joined the CPD but failed to find their proper place in it."

I addressed a similar question to **Mogens Mogensen**, a CYL leader.

"The Communist Youth League is not just a wing of the party but an organisation in its own right," he replied. "Our objective is to involve as many people as possible in progressive movements and, in the process, to persuade them to join the Communists. Organisations of a new type, such as Youth for Peace, are now particularly popular in Denmark. Youth for Peace uses diverse forms of work, often staging concerts and performances instead of political rallies and tedious discussions. We try to take these new aspects into account, to act in non-traditional ways, to advance ideas that can capture the imagination of young people, and to organise more discussions on subjects of concern to youth (say, on love). That, perhaps, creates the impression that the CYL is more dynamic than the party.

"But we have our share of problems too. Some Young Communists —

although they are few — quit the CYL quite soon after they join it. I think the main reason is that we try to do too many things at once and often scatter our efforts, assigning too much work to our activists. One must also say that in terms of numerical strength, the CYL is lagging behind the social democratic and conservative youth associations. At our latest congress we set forth the task of turning our League into a mass organisation. Besides, we are alarmed by the fact that many members who leave the League because they outgrow the CYL age bracket do not join the Communist Party. Apparently they, too, are affected by the image of an unwieldy organisation in which it is hard to change anything. I also think that the party should pay more attention to CYL leaders and involve them more extensively in party activities. And some steps in this direction are already being taken."

One can see that the sentiments of young people in Denmark vary considerably — from active social commitment to political apathy, lack of faith in one's strength, social alienation and often pointless radicalism. But the universal and hopeless conformism the bourgeois press harped on just a few years ago is absent. Nor is there an attitude of instinctive rejection of the Communists — rather, a wish to see them grow more dynamic and 'younger'.

A Comment By Ole Sohn

Chair, Communist Party Of Denmark

Ole Sohn is 34. A former CYL Board member, he has worked extensively in the trade unions and has a good knowledge of young people and their sentiments. I told him about my impressions from meeting and talking with young Danes, and he shared his reflections on this score.

THERE have been changes in the sentiments of Danish youth in recent years. First of all, the interest in global problems has been growing. These are the issues on which young people are particularly active — although a mere ten years ago the emphasis was on social questions and local subjects. In the summer of 1987 the CYL conducted an opinion poll in colleges and universities and discovered that students were especially concerned over disarmament and environmental protection. Many are alarmed by the plight of the Third World. Personal problems and career considerations — the hobbyhorse of the Conservatives — ranked fourth in the list of priorities. I think that this change has been facilitated, among other things, by our work, by the vigorous involvement of the CYL in student, trade union and other youth organisations.

Our party has always sought to promote contacts with youth. However, the fact remains that even among those young people who take a positive view of the Communists, many neither join the party or the CYL nor support us in elections. The CPD badly needs an influx of young members.

Several reasons for this can be cited. Since 1979, when the Communist Party lost its seats in the Folketing, we have been unable to recover them. As a result, many people ceased to regard the CPD as a potential parliamentary force and therefore, to vote for it.

Or take another example. We all know what great interest young people show in environmental problems, and we all know why: this topic combines specific concerns with truly universal human issues. But we neglected environmental problems for a long time. We were accustomed to working in our traditional fields. I must also admit that the social activity of the Communists decreased in recent years. We were little involved in debate which attracted young people. Hence the fall in our influence with them and the weakening of the Communist Party's political and electoral positions.

One can, of course, also mention anti-communist prejudice and the sceptical attitude to the socialist countries still widespread among the Danish people. Still, that does not free us from the need to profoundly analyse and correct our own mistakes.

Let me lay particular stress on a special subject. It is very important for us to hold a serious discussion on our party's internal affairs. The younger generation sometimes asserts that the CPD is 'too rigidly organised' and 'undemocratic'. That is a superficial impression, but not unfounded. Apparently, our internal party affairs can be organised in a better way and, in the eyes of the public, we are not as 'open' as we think. I'd like to make it clear right away that the party has no intention of weakening its political structure or revising the principle of democratic centralism. But people should have a better idea of the discussions, criticism and self-criticism in our ranks and of the objectives we champion.

There are also things we could learn from the CYL. We plan to address young people with specific proposals designed to meet their interests, to be as open towards them as possible, to organise interesting discussions and unusual projects (whether within the framework of the peace struggle or on environmental issues) and to conduct a more dynamic policy in the sphere of culture. In all these actions the CYL and the party's grassroots, district and city organisations would be involved vigorously.

We do have some reasons to feel optimistic. In the parliamentary elections in September 1987, the number of votes cast for the Communists increased for the first time over the past decade. I think that our steady advocacy of peace, disarmament and radical socio-political reform will bear fruit — all the more so because our demands are consonant with the views of most young people in Denmark. Finally, as advocates of socialist ideas and ideals, we can offer certain values, a scientific world view, a vigorous humanism and confidence in the future to the younger generation — things it is looking for but cannot find in a society gripped by a profound ideological crisis.

¹ The Radical Left Party plays a dual role in Danish politics. On the one hand, it supports the socio-economic course of Poul Schlüter's conservative government. On the other, the Radicals, acting jointly with the factions of the Social Democrats and two Left parties, formed an 'anti-missile majority' in the Folketing (against the deployment of US medium-range

missiles in Europe). Today, within the framework of that majority, they are pressuring the ruling coalition into adopting a more vigorous arms reductions policy. — *Ed.*

² The latest such festival, held in Copenhagen in August 1987, was attended by 150,000 visitors within a single weekend (Copenhagen has a population of 1.4 million and Denmark, 5.1 million). — *Ed.*

³ Since 1982 Denmark's government has been formed by a coalition of four right-wing parties under Poul Schlüter, the Conservative leader. — *Ed.*

⁴ In the local elections of 1981 the SPP won 6.7 per cent of the vote: in the parliamentary elections of 1987, 14.6 per cent. — *Ed.*

Are Factories Alone Our Strongholds?

International Symposium in West Germany

THE heading above was the theme of an international symposium held in Ehr-Erkenschwick, Ruhr area, West Germany, last February. It was co-sponsored by *World Marxist Review* and the Board of the German Communist Party, and attended by representatives of the communist and workers' parties of Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey.

The FRG press, including bourgeois publications, gave coverage to the event, and there were allegations as well as objective information. *Die Welt*, for one, claimed that "because of differences among fraternal parties the GCP leaders have decided to see how discussions at the meeting will go before announcing it". It also reported that "The Prague *WMR* editors arrange such brief conferences in Eastern and Western Europe every three years". Actually, it was one of the routine events, of which several are sponsored by *WMR* every year on various subjects, quite openly and publicly, and not just in Europe but also on other continents.

The exchanges of views and experience in Ehr-Erkenschwick demonstrated that socio-economic processes and political shifts in West and South European countries made it imperative for the fraternal parties creatively to develop and apply Lenin's principles of party building, correctly balance their work at industrial plants, in the trade unions and at residence, and intensify their policy of alliances and their activities in the new public movements while preserving their distinctive role of the vanguard of the working class and all the working people. *WMR* will carry an account of the symposium.

To Become A Party Of The Masses

Valentim Amaro — member,
Executive Committee and Secretariat,
National Leadership, Brazilian
Communist Party (BCP)

THE BCP turned 66 in March 1988. Since its creation, it operated in the open only during the revolutionary upsurge which followed the victory over German Nazism and Japanese militarism (that is, in 1945-1947). At that time the BCP quickly became a party of the masses, increasing its membership from 2,000 to 200,000 members. Fearing the growth of its influence, the authorities banned it. For many years, we fought for our right to work in the open, to have facilities and a press of our own. Today we are tackling the strategic task of *again transforming the BCP into a big party of the masses, not only numerically strong but also enjoying prestige in the nation and exerting an impact on its politics.*

With the 20-year period of military rule at an end and in view of the democratisation process under way in many spheres of the nation's life, the BCP appealed, in January 1985, to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, requesting registration as a political force. The Tribunal received a manifesto of our party listing its provisional national leadership and signed by more than 100 founders, as well as copies of the BCP Programme and Rules. These party documents have been published in *Diario Oficial*.¹

That was how we complied with the first part of the requirements contained in the law on political parties. The Tribunal ruled to define the BCP as a *party in the making*. That was not a fully legal status, but the BCP was recognised as a legitimate institution entitled to take part in elections. We also complied with another part of the requirements by establishing regional governing bodies in at least nine states and in some of their municipalities. In December 1987 the Tribunal *registered our party provisionally* and gave it a year to meet other requirements for *definitive registration*.

Under the law, BCP strength should be at least 0.5 per cent of the electorate in nine states and in 20 per cent of their municipalities.² At the Eighth Congress of the BCP in 1987, 10,000 Communists were officially represented. This means that within 1988, we are to *increase our membership 23 times over*. To elect the party's governing bodies at all levels, we are to hold municipal conferences in some 867 cities and regional ones in the nation's 23 states, in the Federal District and in the Territories, and then convene a national forum. Only after we meet these requirements will the Supreme Electoral Tribunal extend *full recognition to the BCP*.³

The manifold increase of BCP ranks is a bold objective calling for enormous dedication and effort. But the political significance of the campaign cannot be doubted. It is a challenge of history, a matter of honour for the Brazilian Communists. The party is duty bound to meet the legal requirements in all states, territories and municipalities. Definitive registration is essential to the future of the BCP: *it is to become a truly influential political force operating in the more important economic,*

political, social and cultural spheres and capable of broad and competent participation in the establishment of a democratic and progressive bloc.

The marginal results so far scored in the drive to recruit new members nevertheless testify that we are regarded positively in broad sections of Brazilian society. In several dozen municipalities we have already attained the minimum quotas of party membership. The campaign is proceeding effectively in six states and in the Federal District.

For example, in Diadema (Greater Sao Paulo municipality) more than 500 new members have joined the party. 400 of them were recruited by Cesar Fantasia, chair of a local civic organisation. The key to his success is simple: he is a sociable man who talks to people openly and speaks competently about the life of working people in the socialist countries. He uses clear arguments and convincing facts to prove the importance of the role a full-blooded communist party can play in social transformations.

Generally, however, the nationwide campaign is so far proceeding slowly. Some party organisations are reluctant to join it, claiming that the party will become 'bloated' and lose its Marxist-Leninist character. Others maintain that a massive recruitment drive runs counter to the Leninist standards under which only those who accept the party Programme and Rules, take part in the activities of a grassroots party organisation and pay party dues can become Communists.

We explain that admission to the BCP was indeed stricter in the past. However, the law has now given us only a year to increase our membership sizeably, convene conferences and elect governing bodies at all levels. If these requirements are not met, the party will not be registered definitively. It will not be able to take part in elections, join coalitions or conclude agreements with other parties — in fact, it will again become illegal. That would be a painful and tragic defeat.

Of course, the party's *fully legal status* and its *transformation into a truly mass organisation* are two different things. We realise that not everyone who wants to join the BCP deserves the honour of being a Communist. We are conducting our campaign in the streets, at market-places, in residential districts, in colleges and at factory gates — in other words, in unusual conditions. But the campaign gives us access to big factories — for example, in the industrial centres of Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte — and makes it possible to reach the bulk of the working class. It would be a serious mistake to deny categorically the possibility of such new recruits developing into real Communists. That attitude would demonstrate a lack of faith in the strength and credibility of our ideas which are transforming the world and creating a new society.

Therefore the National Leadership recommends the following procedure to be adopted in the recruitment drive: at first those who sign up hear a brief explanation of the BCP's strategic and tactical objectives, and then they receive copies of major party documents and a temporary membership card with the address of the nearest party committee where it can later be exchanged for a permanent party card. The person who signs up is invited to study the political resolution of the Eighth Congress, the rules and regulations governing party activities and to attend a basic course of talks explaining the policy, structure and work of the BCP. Such courses

have been organised across the nation. In other words, we try to win as many people as we can over to our side and, in the final analysis, to help new party members become vigorous champions of democracy and social progress.

This objective is furthered by the positive impact developments in the socialist countries have on Brazilian public opinion. Many people are closely following the accomplishments of these nations, the restructuring under way there. The Soviet Union is seen as the standard-bearer of peace defending humanity from nuclear catastrophe.

To be sure the campaign involves numerous difficulties. For example, some veteran party members do not believe in the democratisation of the country's social fabric: anti-communism is in fact endemic in Brazil. The aggravation of the economic, financial and social crisis leads to political instability, while the mass media daily report on the danger of a social rollback and of a military coup. Under these circumstances, a member of a political party is to fill out three registration forms with detailed personal history questions to be able to take part in elections. One copy is sent to the Electoral Tribunal, another is kept by the party and the remaining one, by the voter. Naturally, many Communists and sympathisers of our party regard this procedure with suspicion. We try to overcome these fears by explaining things patiently, holding political discussions in party organisations, and also with the help of publishing statements by our party leaders in the press.

The decades of clandestine struggle have left their legacy, influenced our style of work and gave rise to traditions typical of underground organisations. The political situation in Brazil has now changed, and we must not allow the Communist Party to remain small, inward-oriented and isolated from the masses. *We want to grow, to open the doors of the party to hundreds of thousands of industrial workers, peasants, intellectuals, students, women and young people, to everyone who is ready to fight for democracy, for the people's well-being, for a free, independent and progressive Brazil advancing towards socialism.*

The shortage of money in financing our canvassing activities in the press and in the streets and our canvassing trips to the interior is a particularly serious obstacle which threatens the recruitment drive. The National Leadership of the party has therefore launched a fund-raising campaign. The BCP is counting on effective solidarity on the part of the forces committed to democracy and acknowledging the BCP's positive contribution to its development.

We will also take other urgent steps to guarantee the success of our campaign — persuade all Communists to take an active part in it, to go from house to house and to monitor constantly the qualitative side of the recruitment; break with routine and inaction; promote a spirit of competition, and impart new impetus to all aspects of our work among the masses.

For all the difficulties that exist, we are confident that the BCP will become a party for the millions — a nationwide, democratic, militant and dynamic party capable of leading the masses who want the working people to be in power.

¹ *Diario Oficial*, Brazil's oldest newspaper, is now an official gazette in which documents, resolutions and decrees are published. — *Ed.*

² Brazil is a Federative Republic with a population of 140 million, 70 million of them entitled to vote. The nation comprises 23 states, a Federal District (Brasilia) and three Federal Territories, and totals more than 4,000 municipalities. The BCP has organisations in all states, in the Federal District and in Amapa Territory — in eight per cent of the country's municipalities.

³ Of the 17 political parties currently existing in Brazil, only six have been registered definitively, including the Brazilian Democratic Movement and the Brazilian Trabalhist Party. The rest are working to secure full legal recognition.

Difficulties In Maintaining Our Positions

Claudy Chipotel — Political Bureau member, CC, Secretary, Guadeloupe Communist Party

THIS year the 330,000 inhabitants of Guadeloupe — the country's working class and progressive forces — mark two important events. Slavery was abolished on our islands¹ 140 years ago, putting an end to the most infamous period of colonial history. Thirty years ago (in 1958) the Guadeloupe Communists, after a comparatively short period of work as a federation of the French Communist Party, formed their own organisation.

Our nation is relatively young and has its peculiarities, which the Communists cannot but take into account in their slogans and efforts. To begin with, the Guadeloupe people are a product of colonialism, paradoxically as it may seem. It was not until the end of the First World War that anti-colonial sentiments became manifest, with the chief demand for local residents to have equal rights with the citizens of the mother country.

The Communists and their party should be credited with making it clear that Guadeloupe is not France and that its people have an original history, culture and interests which differ considerably from the concerns of the mother country. We can be proud that already by the early 1980s the work of the party and the selfless efforts of its members have borne fruit — national self-consciousness has obviously grown. This made it possible to speak about the prospects of independence and to set forth the corresponding slogan.

However, it proved no easy matter to fill it with practical content or to inspire the mass of the people. Even earlier, when the nearby British territories raised the question of self-determination and the Guadeloupe Communist Party called for autonomy and later on, many thought that the Guadeloupeans were not ready to embrace the call for independence. That was why the GCP formulated its strategic line as follows: "*People's democratic autonomy is a stage of progress towards independence with a socialist content.*"

The debate on the issue went on. Some wondered whether it was more

appropriate to demand directly independence in the face of the colonialist policy of the right-wing French government. Others argued that the stage of autonomy had been studied and worked out, its every parameter determined, whereas independence spelt a leap into the unknown: it was not clear in particular how viable the country was economically. Nevertheless we firmly adhere to the strategic line, which was worked out by the party and is geared towards future independence and socialism.

The colonial policy consistently pursued with respect to Guadeloupe by every French government since Gen. de Gaulle's time, that is, in the course of thirty years evokes great alarm. As distinct from classical colonialism, it aims not only and not so much at exploiting cheap labour, as at destroying the country's production base and the existing social structure. They want to farm our islands out to the mother country's tourist industry and the French brass, which would like to have a bridgehead in Central America.

The production and export of Guadeloupe's main riches — sugar, bananas and rum — are dwindling with every passing year. Nearly a score of sugar refineries have been closed in the past thirty years. Unemployment is on the upswing. Young Guadeloupeans have to leave for Europe in search of jobs, which drains the country of life-force. We are being invaded in growing numbers by tourist agents not only from France but also from other Common Market countries. They easily oust local entrepreneurs, who have little experience, and take control over the economic area.

In this way the colonialists seek to perpetrate their rule and to hinder the development of the Guadeloupe people as a nation. Suffice it to mention, for instance, the fact that in the past ten years the population of Saint Martin, an island of the archipelago, doubled entirely owing to the inflow of Europeans, which happened against the backdrop of a general demographic stagnation at that. Beginning with the 1960s the Guadeloupe population did not change, even though according to scientific estimates, it was to have already exceeded half a million mark, given the normal development conditions.

Such social processes are directly reflected in the political situation. The reduction of the working class and the outflow of the young weaken above all the positions of the Communists, affecting the composition and orientation of the body of voters. There was a time when nearly half the inhabitants voted for the Communists, whereas today the corresponding figure amounts to a mere 22 per cent. A notorious abettor of the colonial authorities succeeded in being elected the mayor of Saint-François, a commune turned into a tourist centre, the fact which would have been impossible but for the votes of the French who had settled there of late.

Prospects in the ideological field are just as disconcerting for the progressive forces. Regrettably, the winds of revolutionary changes blowing over Central America seem to drift past Guadeloupe. The latter is, as before, dominated by the French radio, television and bourgeois press, whose notorious anti-communism is quadrupled when they address the local audiences. The retreat and losses of the French Communist Party, beginning with the period of its unfortunate alliance with the Socialists, are

being artfully exploited to undermine the prestige of the Communists in our country.

How do the Guadeloupe Communists counteract the unfavourable developments and what do they do to remain an influential national force in the service of freedom, progress and socialism?

First, we are intensifying political work among all strata of the population, primarily among those employed in the sugar industry. We seek to explain that the future of the enterprises built on the cooperative basis largely depends on the discipline and initiative of the working people. It is necessary to ensure that they are profitable to prevent their closure. The country's largest Communist-led trade union organisation — the General Confederation of Labour of Guadeloupe — is engaged in vigorous and purposeful activity. Despite the adventurist calls of the anarcho-syndicalists, it orients class struggle in the right direction.

Second, the Communists skilfully use their positions in the General and Regional Councils of Guadeloupe, the local elective bodies, and the municipal councils, which we head, including in the country's two major towns — Pointe-à-Pitre and Bass-Terre. On some occasions Communist deputies and mayors managed to secure subsidies for sugar refineries in trouble. The Communist Party has its representatives even at the French National Assembly and Senate, where they resolutely uphold the interests of the Guadeloupe people.

Third, in the face of imperialist ideological pressure the Communists wage daily struggle in most diverse forms to win the hearts and minds of the people. Special departments of municipal councils where our influence is especially strong organise mass cultural undertakings for the young people and all the local residents. Enormous personal contribution is made in the development and rehabilitation of national values by well-known writers and historiographers, such as Senator Ali Bangou, member of the Political Bureau of the GCP Central Committee, Ernest Moutoussamy, a GCP deputy of the French National Assembly, poetess Lucie Julia and other progressive representatives of the Guadeloupe intelligentsia.

Our own radio station plays a key role in rebuffing the anti-communist campaign: GCP deputies alone have access to official television, quite infrequently at that. A series of radio programmes entitled 'Truth About the Socialist Countries' enjoys great success. Listeners actively respond with telephone calls, letters, debates and questions. The Guadeloupe people on the whole deeply sympathise with the Soviet Union. Bourgeois propaganda is bending over backwards to uproot this attitude, slandering the socialist countries day in day out, though to no avail so far.

The party weekly, *l'Étincelle*, which has eight pages and a circulation of 5,000 copies, makes its contribution to ideological struggle. Though the figure is quite impressive for a country the size of Guadeloupe, it proves insufficient to satisfy all those who want to buy the publication. Nevertheless we believe that radio and television are the most effective mass media today. For this reason we expand the activity of our radio station and are considering the question of opening, together with the Socialists, a left-wing TV studio.

The *policy of alliances* is a key trend of party work. We have

accumulated a fairly vast experience in the field, both positive and negative.

The political forces active in Guadeloupe are practically the same as those operating in the mother country. The right-wing is represented by the local organisations of the *Rassemblement pour la République* and the *Union pour la Démocratie Française*. There is also the Guadeloupe Socialist Federation, the Departmentalist Socialist Movement of Guadeloupe and a number of small petty-bourgeois groupings, including those with nationalistic aspirations.

As distinct from the March 1986 development in France², the left forces — the Socialists and the Communists — exercise a decisive influence in Guadeloupe and some other overseas departments of France. Till the end of the 1970s the GCP was the country's leading party. The Socialists moved to the forefront after 1981, and we maintain our alliance with them. But we are very vigilant and full of determination not to allow the French situation under the left-wing government to be repeated. The Communists have every reason for such a cautious approach.

When, with our support, François Mitterand received a vast majority of the Guadeloupe votes, we counted if not on an autonomy then at least on certain decentralisation and the transfer of some powers in running our own affairs to our people. Our hopes failed to materialise, however, and the French prefect remains virtually in full control over the country.

As for the local Socialists, they jump at every opportunity to get an edge at the expense of the Communists and to blame us for any setback. This was the case, for example, when the GCP-led trade union action secured subsidies for some floundering enterprises. The Socialists who head the two territorial assemblies immediately ascribed the victory to themselves.

Relations with the nationalist organisations are even more complicated. The latter set forth and uphold the slogan of immediate independence. There is ground to believe that at least some of them have the blessing of the colonial authorities, who stand to gain from their unfeasible demands and provocative actions. Under certain conditions some of the nationalist forces could apprehend Marxist ideas. But in view of the growing US penetration into our country they argue that, with the Communist Party maintaining strong positions, sovereign Guadeloupe is unacceptable not only for France but also for the US, which means that the Communists should be squeezed out in order allegedly not to complicate the attainment of independence.

Under the circumstances the GCP finds it ever more difficult to maintain its positions, to say nothing of expanding them. But we accept the challenge and, when losing in some areas, seek to forge ahead in another area. In view of the attempts to deny our people a say in our own century, the efforts of one party, no matter how influential it may be, are not enough. It is important to establish a dialogue among all the patriots — the Communists, the Socialists, the Nationalists and even part of the right-wing forces, which are least devoted to neocolonialist policy. It is also necessary to have a broad alliance, which the Communist Party promotes

in every way it can. We believe that the establishment of a more or less united front of the Guadeloupeans to avert imminent threat is a feasible task.

¹ Guadeloupe is situated on two large islands and six small ones of the Lesser Antilles archipelago in the Caribbean, occupying a territory of 1,782 sq. km. Discovered by Columbus in 1493, it became a colony in 1635 and beginning with 1946 an overseas department of France. Descendants of slaves brought from Africa form the bulk of the population, whose official language is French.— *Ed.*

² The Parliamentary elections held in the country were won by an alliance of right-wing parties, which formed the French government. — *Ed.*

From The Press

A Review of *Akahata*

BRINGING THE PARTY'S STRENGTH TO 500,000

IN the documents of the 18th Congress of the Japanese Communist Party held in November 1987 and in the articles devoted to the congress and published in the newspaper of the Japanese Communists, much attention is paid to issues involved in the development of the party — specifically, to the question of why the JCP is yet to reach the 500,000 membership mark and what should be done to attain it.

By the time the 18th Congress was convened, the party's numerical strength was the greatest in its history. Today it has 480,000 members representing all social strata. Industrial workers make up a majority — 65.6 per cent — and women account for 38.3 per cent of the membership. This testifies to the importance the JCP has always attached to women's emancipation and equality.

The party achieved record numerical strength when its political positions and mass influence increased considerably. In the latest parliamentary elections (1986) the JCP won 5.43 million votes, that is, 9.5 per cent of the total (the best result in its history), and in local elections held over the past two years, it has secured 188 more seats on local councils, bringing the total to 3,854.

As a result of the drive launched in 1987 to increase the party's ranks and the body of *Akahata's* readers,¹ 19,000 more people joined the JCP from August to November. However, a resolution of the congress stresses that this growth still falls short of the objectives set. The goal of turning the JCP into a party of 500,000 was advanced back in 1977, and it is yet to be achieved. What are the reasons?

On the one hand, the domestic political situation which developed in the mid-1970s has been marked by a right-wing offensive, by reactionary ideological attacks on the Communists and by divisions among the

progressive forces. Under the impact of these factors, some party members no longer had a clear vision of the prospects of their struggle, and the activity of some JCP organisations diminished. To a certain degree, negative phenomena in the socialist countries also affected the Communists' sentiments. On the other hand, there were also shortcomings in the work of the party itself, and not enough effort was invested into a systematic and purposeful membership drive. The ranks of the party were often expected to grow of their own accord. After the 17th Congress of the JCP (1985), the party's numerical strength even declined, and the share of young members dropped.

Tangible opportunities exist for improving the situation and scoring new advances. Working class action shows that the people can resist the reactionary offensive vigorously. In the socialist countries, a reappraisal of past mistakes and negative phenomena is under way, and the reforms that have been undertaken promote the process of renewal. Social progress is irreversible. Proceeding from this obvious conclusion, the congress outlined the main areas in which work to develop the party should be improved:

- enhancing the quality of party ranks and raising the ideological and political level of every JCP member;
- consolidating the grassroots branches as the basis of the party;
- promoting a spirit of comradeship and mutual assistance at the grassroots level;
- stepping up the activities of medium-level party bodies and improving their capacity for leadership;
- instilling a creative approach of every party organisation to its tasks, as well as a spirit of criticism and self-criticism.

The congress attached priority importance to the practice of promptly acquainting party members with the decisions taken by the JCP leadership. Currently, less than 50 per cent of the members read these documents. As the congress stressed in its resolution, every party member should read the decisions adopted by the party leadership immediately upon their publication.

Party organisations have been oriented on paying greater attention to their members and adopting a style of work that would keep new JCP members from leaving the party. New members particularly need comradely assistance in studying the basics of scientific socialism and the party's policy documents. There must be no bureaucratic approach to those Communists who, for various reasons, have ceased to be active: they must never be given up, and everything must be done to restore their involvement in the work of their party organisations.

In the course of the membership drive, JCP organisations have gained a better understanding of what they should focus on in their work. The influx of new members has made the efforts of many organisations more dynamic. Half of these new recruits are under 40, and some have come from the Democratic Youth League of Japan. The doubts many Communists felt about the outcome of the campaign have been overcome. The JCP is advancing palpably in its recruitment drive.

At the same time, the JCP Central Committee says in its report to the

Congress, 56 per cent of the grassroots organisations have not admitted a single new member since 1985. In nine prefectures, Communists account for less than 0.25 per cent of the population; in five of them, there are no JCP organisations in at least 25 per cent of the cities and towns, and the party has no organisations at many industrial enterprises. Earnest, day-to-day work to recruit new members is the only way for the party to reach the half-a-million mark and for every party organisation to advance further, to more important objectives. *Akahata* says that prompt implementation of the decisions taken by the 18th Congress will depend on the growth and improvement of JCP ranks.

¹ Issues involved in *Akahata's* distribution and in winning new readers are covered in the September 1987 issue of *WMR*.

INFORMATION

In Brief

BULGARIA

A national conference of the BCP was held in Sofia in late January 1988, attended by 3,226 delegates and more the 470 guests — among them members of the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union and those unaffiliated to any party. The delegates discussed and approved the report 'Restructuring: A Cause of the Party, a Cause of People', delivered by Todor Zhivkov, General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee, and the progress achieved in implementing the decisions of the 13th BCP Congress.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Neus Deutschland newspaper has published statistics on the numerical strength of the SUPG and on improvement of its ranks. By late 1987, the party numbered 2,264,412 full members and 63,919 candidate members in more than 59,500 grassroots organisations. Compared to 1986, the party has grown by 6,000 members. Industrial workers account for 75 per cent of the candidate members. The average age of SUPG members is 45, while young people under 25 make up almost 75 per cent of the candidate members. More than 4,700 candidate members failed to pass the probation term and 445 announced their withdrawal from the category of candidate members. Besides, 1,401 people with a party record of less than a year have left the SUPG.

SWITZERLAND

Vorwärts, the German-language newspaper of the Swiss Party of Labour, has held its traditional annual festival in Zurich. Taking part were representatives of the country's democratic and anti-war organisations and delegations of communist and workers' sister parties.

VENEZUELA

The Communist Party of Venezuela has called on the nations' political organisations to nominate, for the presidential elections to be held this year, a candidate capable of rallying together, on the basis of a common programme, all those forces that oppose the successive rule of two parties — Democratic Action and the Christian Social Party-COPEI. The proposal has been accepted. The CPV Central Committee has decided to support the candidacy of Edmundo Chirinos of the Moral Movement political organisation.

YUGOSLAVIA

According to *Danas* magazine, the membership of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia has declined by 77,500 since 1983 and is now 2,099,613. For the first time in the past 15 years, the share of industrial workers has fallen below the 30 per cent level. The share of young members under 27 has also diminished — from 33 per cent in 1980 to 20.6 per cent in mid-1987.

ZIMBABWE

About 1,000 district-level functionaries of the Patriotic Front (ZAPU) party have held a meeting in Mbarara, a suburb of Harare. They approved the agreement on ZAPU's merger with the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) signed on December 22, 1987.

International Contacts

For Disarmament and Peace

The French and the German Communist Parties have released a joint document saying that the decision to eliminate the Euro-missiles has opened the way to other specific disarmament accords. However, that will not occur automatically. To secure such accords, large-scale action by all peace forces is needed. The French authorities and the West German ruling circles are now working against time to consolidate their military cooperation and putting forward rearmament initiatives to offset the loss of US weapons slated for elimination. It is an extremely dangerous attempt at sabotaging the disarmament process. This is why the FCP and the GCP say 'no', a thousand times 'no' to militarisation of French-West German relations.

Both parties stress that in the past, they were invariably committed to the idea of jointly resisting Nazism: today, they are ready to do their utmost to save Europe and the world from a new war. The Communists of the two countries are calling on all political forces prepared to work for disarmament, on all people irrespective of their social background or convictions to act jointly and concertedly in the name of that great goal.

A Joint Initiative

The Social Democratic Party of Finland, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the Italian Socialist Party have approved a joint document entitled 'A Three-Party Initiative. Cooperation of Countries Possessing No Nuclear Weapons to Promote Disarmament in Europe'. The document calls on all European countries, particularly those possessing no nuclear weapons, to search for universal security irrespective of political, military or ideological differences.

The three parties regard effective reductions in conventional forces and armaments as a priority task for Europe. Stability could be enhanced by a treaty establishing a new conventional balance at a lower level. In this connection the agenda of the disarmament talks should include an item on reductions of tactical and battlefield nuclear weapons. The establishment of nuclear-free zones, as well as other forms of armed forces' disengagement and withdrawal on the basis of treaties concluded between interested countries can also help in the attainment of the ultimate objective — that of delivering Europe from the threat of nuclear war.

The three parties stress in their document that all European countries, whether those belonging to military alliances, neutral or non-aligned, are equally responsible for further confidence- and security-building measures within the framework of the Helsinki process: all are entitled to take part in talks on the elimination of conventional armaments.

The parties that have launched the initiative suggest that other forces in countries possessing no nuclear weapons join their proposal on cooperation for disarmament in Europe.

A Meeting in Damascus

Delegations of the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) met in Damascus, the Syrian capital, in January 1988. The sides emphasised the importance for Palestinian unity of the action taken by the people living in the occupied Arab territories against the Israeli invaders. Ensuring the right of the Arab people of Palestine to shape their own future and to establish an independent state in their homeland is the only solution to the conflict. The LCP and the PFLP have appealed to progressive forces throughout the world to strengthen their solidarity with the just struggle of the people living on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, and to support the Lebanese patriots who are fighting the Israeli invaders in the south of their country.

The two delegations described restoration of normal relations between the Lebanese and the Palestinian peoples as a priority task of importance to the future of both these two peoples and their patriotic forces. In this connection they stressed the urgent need to put an end to the 'war of the camps' in Lebanon. The LCP and the PFLP leaders noted the importance of cooperation with Syria, Democratic Yemen, Algeria, Libya and other forces of national liberation, progress and socialism in the Arab region and in the world.

New Prospects

Giorgio Napolitano, member of the Leadership and the Secretariat of the Italian Communist Party, who visited Yugoslavia in January 1988 at the invitation of the Presidium of the LCY Central Committee, said at a press conference in Belgrade that during the talks with the League of Communist leaders, both sides fully agreed on a positive assessment of the results achieved at the Soviet-US summit in Washington. History, he said, bears out that periods of détente in relations between the great powers have always influenced positively the activities of Left parties in Europe.

Giorgio Napolitano went on to say that in most West European countries, socialist and social democratic parties are particularly representative. In relations with them, Italy's Communists have always sought to develop special types of cooperation. At the same time, Soviet-American détente can help promote relations between communist parties in the East and in the West without affecting the differences in their positions and viewpoints. He described the November 1987 meeting in Moscow as an example of the way in which different parties and movements can exchange their views in a new, favourable atmosphere.

exchange of views, discussion

History And Our Day

Unity: What Part Of The Past Is Valid?

Dialogue of Communist Movement Veterans

Santiago Alvarez

CC member, CP Spain; CPS member since 1931

Hugo Campos

Political Commission member, Paraguayan CP; PCP member since 1935

As the Communists of various countries seek new forms of internationalist cooperation, they take a growing interest in the

historical experience of cooperation between the communist parties. There is no unequivocal approach to this experience, and various assessments have been made. Many are being reconsidered, and new approaches formulated.

Which of these traditions are still valid, and which have become a part of history? How has the international communist movement evolved from the Comintern to our day? How valid is the view that the relations between the communist parties are in a state of crisis? Those are the key questions which were considered in a dialogue at *WMR* between two veterans of the communist movement.

Historical Record: Light and Shade

Santiago Alvarez. Since each of us joined in the revolutionary struggle, the world has changed out of all recognition, although the domination of capital remains in many countries and its imperialist essence is in a sense even more pronounced. Our movement has also changed. In the 1930s, it acted within the framework of the Communist International and was united, or monolithic, as the old term went. The period of that unity has gone never to return.

Hugo Campos. I would not be all that categorical. The Comintern's activity has to be evaluated from an historical standpoint, with an eye to the objective conditions in which it originated and acted. I believe, on the whole, that the experience of unity then accumulated and the Comintern's internationalist traditions go beyond the time frame and are to a considerable extent meaningful even today, and so are a source of inspiration for the Communists.

S.A. I have no intention at all of minimising the historical importance of the Comintern. As a participant in the Civil War in Spain, I put an especially high value on its role in the political orientation of the Communists, especially through Georgi Dimitrov's articles, in setting up the international brigades, organising the international campaign of solidarity with our struggle, and in training cadres for the anti-fascist Resistance during the Second World War. The solidarity traditions stemming from the period are certainly meaningful. Today they are important above all for support of the peoples of Nicaragua, South Africa and other countries in which the struggle for freedom and independence continues.

H.C. In my opinion, the importance of the internationalist experience of the Comintern is much wider for our day. One of the Communists' living traditions goes back to the facet of this experience which is linked to the process of formation of the fraternal parties. There the Comintern had the decisive role. And this also related to our party, which was founded in 1928, and which received substantial political and theoretical help from the Comintern in the elaboration of its strategic and tactical line. In the mid-1930s, our party was able to overcome with the Comintern's support some grave difficulties which arose from differences within the leadership. The traditions of mutual assistances and internationalist support created by the Comintern are invaluable even today for the Paraguayan Communists.

who have to work in the hard conditions of the underground. It is hard to overestimate the role of these traditions in countries where communist parties are just emerging or are at the initial stages of development.

S.A. The activity of the Comintern and its consequences for the communist movement, while being on the whole positive, are contradictory. On the one hand, it helped to create communist groups and parties in various countries, including Spain, to train party cadres, to develop the Communists' internationalist solidarity, and the working people's solidarity with the USSR, the proletarian state which was born in the October Revolution. Therein undoubtedly lies its positive role. But the Comintern's conception of monolithic unity frequently led to serious errors and excesses. This conception was established after Lenin's death, and through the influence which Stalin exerted on the communist movement. This was expressed in very negative phenomena, such as the unwarranted intervention in the internal affairs of parties, his imposition of a single political line, etc. There was nothing positive about that.

H.C. Mistakes were certainly made. But they do not invalidate the fact that it was the Comintern which worked out the strategy and tactics of the international communist movement. Let us recall that its Seventh Congress in 1935 exposed the class essence of fascism and called for concentration of efforts on the anti-fascist struggle, and especially against the preparation of the imperialist war. The policy of alliances and the unity of all democratic, revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces on the basis of the workers' and popular front worked out by that congress continues to be important to this day.

S.A. I feel that even here there are elements whose assessment must have its nuances. The Comintern's conception of alliances became a positive one only after its Seventh Congress, with the popular front slogan. But in the period before that its policy was a closed one, marked by sectarianism and narrowness, and was prejudicial to the communist movement in the attainment of unity with social democracy and other progressive forces of that period. There naturally arose the need to modify this sectarian doctrine, which was expressed in the 'class against class' slogan. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to set up the popular fronts and create the conditions for resisting Nazism and fascism. One should also note in practice that the policy of alliances worked out by the Seventh Congress was not free of sectarian deviations either. But the conception of unity of the democratic and progressive forces certainly remains significant in our day as well.

H.C. But isn't the Comintern's line of unity of the Communists and all progressive sections in the struggle for peace meaningful even today? Isn't it one of the main expressions of internationalism even now?

S.A. Some aspects of the Comintern's activity, I repeat, are still fully valid, but there are others that require reappraisal and a dialectical and comprehensive analysis. It is obvious, however, that the positive element is predominant in its activity. The Comintern did much to develop the anti-war movement and to consolidate the anti-fascists' internationalist solidarity. But there again there is evidence of the negative aspects of monolithism, when Stalin's errors concerning the intentions of the Nazis

were embodied in the Comintern's directives, which disoriented the anti-fascist struggle of some communist parties on the eve of Hitler's attack on the USSR. The war showed that the role of our Comintern had ended.

H.C. The dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 signified that there was no longer any need for a leading centre of the communist parties, but the principles of the communist movement which it had established remained valid. Indeed, the war provided the most telling confirmation of the idea that attitude to the USSR is the touchstone of proletarian internationalism, of the genuinely revolutionary spirit and of the correct communist stand. I am sure that this idea is still a legitimate one in our day.

S.A. I feel, for my part, that it requires correction. It was correct, a thousand times correct in the 1930s and 1940s, and especially during Hitler's aggression against the USSR. No one in the communist movement casts any doubt on the exceptional role which the Soviet Union continues to have in social development and in the struggle for peace. But as the facts show, the USSR, rather, its leadership, may make mistakes. Well, no one is immune from errors and miscalculations. That is a point Lenin used to make. He himself was also wrong in hoping that revolutions would follow in the most developed countries upon the 1917 revolution. But mistakes of a different kind were also made. Stalin is guilty of using the Comintern's Executive Committee for repression against many leaders of the communist movement and even entire parties. But at that time, the communist parties were required to approve such actions unconditionally, and that was regarded as the criterion of the correctness of their positions. I think that, while upholding the criterion of principles in assessing the USSR and its historical and present role, one should not turn a blind eye to the existing problems, which must be consciously put to objective analysis.

H.C. The Comintern's activity and its traditions should, I agree, be examined with an eye both to its positive and its negative aspects. In this context, I should like to support what Mikhail Gorbachov said in his report on the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution: "For all the shortcomings and miscalculations in its activity, and however bitter the reminder of some pages of history may be, the Comintern is a part of the great past of our movement. It was born in the October Revolution, and it has become not only a school of internationalism and revolutionary brotherhood. It has turned internationalism into a practical weapon of struggle for the interests of the working people, and for the social progress of nations and ethnic groups."

S.A. We must take from the past everything that helps to develop the communist movement, and take a critical view of everything that hampers it. I believe, at any rate, that it would be a mistake to try to revive the monolithism of the international communist movement in any form. In that context how did the Communists benefit from the Cominform, for instance? Nothing, except negative experience. One need merely recall the blanket condemnation of Yugoslavia for disobeying Stalin and refusing to imitate Soviet experience. Incidentally, some of our party's leaders also took part in the anti-Yugoslavia campaign. I myself would probably have also joined in it had I not been incarcerated in a Franco prison.

One has to say that the standard of behaviour in the communist

movement at that time was a kind of tailism, that is, blind obedience to Stalin's instructions. Experience has shown such practice to be wrong. I think that the negative effects of the Cominform's activity continued to make themselves felt for a long time in the parties' theoretical and practical activity. This experience shows that we must think more deeply when analysing both successes and errors, and we should never allow the isolation of some parties from others, or departures from contacts and discussions in seeking to explain new phenomena. But that is precisely what did, regrettably, go on in the communist movement not long ago.

That is why the CP Spain gave enthusiastic support to the meeting of representatives of parties and movements in Moscow on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, to the approach to the problem of unity, and other issues of importance for our movement as formulated at the meeting by Comrade Gorbachov.

Crisis or Growing Pains?

H.C. New approaches to the problem of the communist parties' interaction and of overcoming sectarianism and dogmatism first appeared at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. In the subsequent development of these approaches and in the internationalist orientation of our movement, the crucial role belonged to international meetings of Communists in 1957, 1960 and 1969, which clearly formulated the need to work for unity of action in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism, for gradually eliminating the differences through exchanges of opinion, fraternal discussions and joint quest for constructive solutions to the problems.

S.A. I believe that the errors of the past also had an effect on the results of these meetings. They were unable effectively to counter the phenomena of disintegration in the communist movement. The crisis in the relations between the parties already came to light during the Hungarian events of 1956. It is symptomatic that the attempts to overcome it were marked by the momentum of the past. Let us recall, for instance, that at the Moscow meeting in 1957 Mao Zedong came out in favour of re-establishing a single centre in the communist movement, and proposed that it should be the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Such attempts naturally came to nothing. The crisis grew: relations between the CPSU and the Communist Party of China strained and then relations were ruptured; the state of disunion and division became characteristic of some parties, and different approaches were taken to many questions of principle.

H.C. I would say that these were growing pains relating to the peculiarities of the parties' maturity, the extension of their influence in the masses, and the ever more complicated situation in some countries and in the international arena. Similar processes have continued and they have not been without repercussions for the communist movement. One should also reckon with the pressures from imperialism, and the wild anti-Soviet propaganda. With these are connected such phenomena as the abandonment by some parties of Marxist-Leninist positions, nationalism, revisionism and breaches of the generally accepted rules of contacts between them. Discussions broke out over some questions, such as the

dictatorship of the proletariat. All of that eventually led to a rupture of some links in our movement. It would be advisable to analyse these questions in greater depth to bring out the objective and subjective reasons for the differences and the strained relations between communist parties.

S.A. I agree that these questions are most complicated and call for great efforts in Marxist thinking. I myself have reflected on them for many years. The state of the communist movement cannot, of course, be separated from the objective conditions in which it has to develop, including the processes in the evolution of capitalism, the mounting danger of war, etc. My own view is this: ever since socialism spread beyond the borders of one state and became truly global, the main problem has boiled down to the direction our movement is to take in view of the establishment of the new system and the struggle for it in countries which are highly diverse. This is a multi-faceted problem which has yet to be adequately analysed. The questions it tends to produce have not been adequately answered. There is as yet no sign of a clear horizon, of the prospects for their solution, and this is having an effect on the state of the movement.

H.C. It is my opinion that a principled approach to this problem, the methodology and ways of its solution are indicated by the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and the experience in building the new society in the USSR and other socialist countries. The whole point is to make the correct application of these ideas and to make creative use of well-tested practical experience in accordance with the concrete conditions of the various countries.

S.A. But that is not all . . . Much has to be reappraised and a new look taken at the transition to socialism. We in Spain are now discussing what kind of alternative we should offer the society. For us it is a socialist system with its own characteristics in accordance with Spain's reality and traditions, its culture and history. The problems are many. To a large extent they are common to the communist parties of Western Europe. Eurocommunism is usually mentioned in this context. The term itself was coined by journalists and it has caught on. But what is the implication? It is an attempt to find a specifically European way of transition to socialism in the conditions of our region.

H.C. Let us not lose sight of yet another aspect: Eurocommunism also appeared as an alternative to existing socialism, to the Soviet Union. Some advocates of Eurocommunism argued the need to set up a separate centre within the working class movement, isolated from the socialist countries, and that was, incidentally, an expression of the momentum of the past. In that way, the front of struggle against imperialism was weakened. But it can now be said that that kind of theory and practice have been discredited because they did not accord with the objective realities and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

S.A. I say that instead of accusing those who have been labelled as Eurocommunists, one should try to find the reasons for which the phenomenon appeared. Indeed, some used it for anti-communist attacks, for gratuitous accusations and for rupturing the Communists' relations of internationalist solidarity, but that is not the main thing. The phenomenon originated from efforts to find answers to the necessities produced by life

itself. Our party now no longer speaks of Eurocommunism, but the problem which is common to it and to other communist parties in Western Europe remains, and it is perspective they offer the masses in search of a system going beyond the framework of capitalism, but meeting the peculiarities and historical and cultural traditions of Western Europe.

H.C. How is one to evaluate the fact that parallel parties and groups have been formed in various countries? In my opinion, this painful phenomenon is directly linked to the ideological dissensions which arose in the communist movement for various reasons, not least importantly because of the extremes of Eurocommunism.

S.A. Not only that. The crisis in the movement had a complex character and developed both on the international and national level. Thus, Maoist groups appeared in virtually all the parties in the 1960s as a result of the split between China and the USSR. Developments in China itself led to the disappearance of such groups, but the fact that some communist parties took a critical attitude to some socialist countries likewise often led to the formation of groups. This ultimately leads to a weakening of the communist movement and of the party itself. But experience shows that in such cases it is not right to apply the measures to which Lenin and the Bolsheviks of Russia resorted with respect to social democracy when it supported the militaristic policy of the imperialists and took the way of reformism. The situation is now a totally different one. The Communists have not ceased to be Communists, and it is quite normal for all of us to be in one organisation. The party exists so long as it is united. Deviations from the right course and errors can be corrected because forces will always be found in its ranks to cope with the situation and find the right way. But whenever a party splits up into groups, many Communists find themselves isolated, leave the organisation and stay away from active struggle. In this sense our experience is instructive. If the situation in the communist movement of Spain is now being repaired, this is largely due to the fact that within it have remained those who have been capable of carrying on the struggle for unity.

H.C. At this point in time, generally, I believe, the situation in the international communist movement as a whole and in the parties is moving in a positive direction. Many of the old differences and difficulties have been overcome or are being overcome. Our movement has not ceased to be international, nor is it a mechanical conjunction of parties. The struggle by the Communists of various countries for peace, democracy and national liberation is developing, and the cohesion of the fraternal parties is growing stronger.

What Is Internationalism to Be?

S.A. I, too, do not share the opinion of those who assert that the communist movement has ceased to be international. I believe that it remains such, because it exists on a world scale and because all the Communists are fighting for the same objectives of peace, democracy and socialism, and against imperialism. It is important to develop the interaction of the communist parties, but it would be absurd to seek it in antiquated forms of centralised and organised unity. Forms of cooperation

need to be found to meet modern realities. International ties can be based on cooperation on such global problems of our day as prevention of nuclear war, the Third World countries' external debt, and solidarity with the workers' common demands on the transnational corporations. These problems need to be discussed more often at international meetings of Communists. The present-day conception of internationalism should also take account of regional issues: those facing the communist parties of Western Europe, the Communists of the socialist countries, and of other regions. The problem is to prevent regionalism from acquiring a narrow significance in contrast to internationalism.

H.C. But the serious departures from common internationalist objectives were connected precisely with regionalism. Various interpretations of internationalism appeared. Some of them contrasted solidarity with those who were fighting against capitalist exploitation and against imperialism, and solidarity with the socialist countries, which are also in need of support from the working people of the world. Such support is now and again seen as a species of subordination. There have been many speculations on this score attributing to the CPSU's stand the line of limiting the independence of the other parties. These speculations are refuted by our experience. I think that the experience of other fraternal parties shows the same thing. I know of no single instance in the present situation of a more numerous communist party trying to impose its line on another party. The problem of independence has been solved long ago: all the parties work out and conduct their strategy and tactics independently, without any interference from outside. The problem is now a different one, and it is the development and strengthening of the parties' internationalist traditions of solidarity, mutual assistance and cooperation. That is the approach of the Paraguayan CP, which regards international support as the most important factor in carrying on the struggle against the repressive regime, for democracy, and against US imperialism.

S.A. I think that the problem of independence remains a meaningful one, especially in the light of the historical experience of which we have spoken. Its solution is a constant task. A communist party must always be independent, otherwise it will not be understood or supported by the people. But it cannot afford to isolate itself or to distance itself from what is going on in the other parties and in the international working class movement, or from world developments. And it has, of course, to seek an adequate formula for internationalist solidarity at each historical stage and to make a contribution to the common struggle.

As for the CPSU, for years it provided the communist parties with a point of reference in their internationalism, while the USSR served as the standard of comparison. These functions were subsequently lost. The shortcomings and acute problems in the socialist countries had a negative effect on the communist movement and the situation in individual parties. For a number of years, remaining a Communist and defending the USSR amounted, in a sense, to taking an heroic stand. The situation is now changing. That is due to the perestroika in the Soviet Union, which creates the possibility of restoring confidence that Soviet society is dynamic enough to regenerate itself and to become an attractive example once

again. In this sense, new horizons are opening up for the international working class and the Communists, that is, there is a new atmosphere in which attention is increasingly drawn to the experience of the CPSU.

H.C. I am convinced that the activity of Lenin's party and of the country of the October Revolution has always been and continues to be a factor strengthening the communist movement and increasing its cohesion. The perestroika in the USSR tends to activate this factor and to impart fresh impulses to the international solidarity of the working people. For me, the new conception of internationalism is linked above all to the main task of our day: the preservation of peace. Averting a nuclear catastrophe and ensuring mankind's survival are a goal which unites not only the Communists but also those who love life.

S.A. Here a complicated problem arises. On the one hand, there is proletarian internationalism, the traditional solidarity of the working class. On the other, a more ample internationalism capable of uniting and setting in motion vast masses of people belonging to different classes has been taking shape. At the same time, there is also socialist internationalism, which is no longer proletarian in the classical form, because there is no proletariat in the socialist countries. There the proletariat has become the ruling class, and it holds the state power. What is now the role of these forms of solidarity? How do they interact with each other? These questions need to be analysed from the same angle as one takes in analysing the past of the communist movement, i.e., the critical, revolutionary and Marxist approach. That is the approach which helped our party to overcome its isolation and with it now strives to develop relations with other communist parties, and also with Socialists, Social Democrats, Christians and all the other forces coming out for peace and progress.

H.C. I think that far from contradicting other forms of solidarity, proletarian internationalism, in fact, promotes their development. Similarly, the unity of the communist movement does not impede, but helps the interaction of the left-wing, democratic forces on an international scale. There are now encouraging changes in cooperation between the Communists and other progressive forces. This was demonstrated by the Moscow meeting of representatives of parties and movements. The conditions are being created for the shaping of the broadest united front for a nuclear-free world, and for saving civilisation. I am sure that the stronger the cohesion of the Communists, the more solid will these conditions become.

S.A. Action is now certainly necessary to bring closer together the communist parties which still, I would say, maintain a fairly isolated stand from each other. And that at a time when the productive forces and capital are being internationalised and there is ever greater intensity in international life, while the development of science, technology and trade tends to transcend every national boundary. The spirit of internationalism, whose traditions are rooted in the communist movement of the past, is now a source of inspiration for seeking new forms and new ways of solidarity. This spirit needs to be safeguarded and supported.

H.C. Certainly, and that is what we have been discussing. It is not important that our opinions are not similar on everything. Life will show

who is closer to the truth. The main thing, I think, is that there are ever fewer of us, living participants in the communist movement of the period when its basic principles and traditions were worked out and tested in practice, and without which it is inconceivable even today. Who else, if not we, is capable of showing the coming generations of Communists by our convictions, our memory and our destinies the viability of these principles, which guarantee continuity in the development of our movement? Its unity is realised not only in terms of space: through the strengthening of solidarity and interaction of the Communists of various countries. It is also realised in terms of time: in the process of continuous reproduction of the links between past and present, the renewal of traditions and comprehension of the accumulated experience from the standpoint of our immediate tasks and the perspectives of the struggle. If our dialogue helps to promote the process, I feel that we have not wasted our time.

¹ The Information Bureau of Communist and Workers' Parties, an international centre set up under a decision of a meeting of several parties in September 1947. On it were the representatives of the communist parties of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, USSR, and Yugoslavia (until 1948). Its aim was to organise exchanges of experience between the communist parties and to coordinate their activity whenever the need arose. It was based in Belgrade until 1948, and then in Bucharest. It published a newspaper entitled *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy!* It adopted a number of documents, including two resolutions on the situation in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Its activity and the publication of its newspaper were ended in April 1956, under a joint decision of the central committees of the communist parties involved in it. — *Ed.*

viewpoints

Striving For An Alliance Of All The Progressive Forces

René Maugé Mosquera — General Secretary, Communist Party of Ecuador (CPE)

IN the past several months, Ecuador has been an arena of bitter political battles. The local oligarchy and the imperialist monopolies have watched these developments with obvious alarm, and not only because of the results of the on-going electoral process. Serious changes are afoot in the country.

René Maugé was born in 1938. He received a higher education, and is a lawyer by profession. He joined the CP Ecuador in 1957. For several years he was General Secretary of Ecuador's Young Communist League, and was elected vice-president of the Federation of University Youth. He has been repeatedly arrested for his political activity. He became an alternate member of the CC in 1965, a member of the CC and CC Executive Committee in 1966, and has been CPE General Secretary since November 1981.

and these could determine its future. What is it that makes the present stage of political development noteworthy?

At the end of January, Ecuadorans expressed their preferences for the candidates of a new president and vice-president of the republic in the first round of the elections (the second round is slated for May). They also elected deputies to the Congress and local organs of power. Reaction, which has ruled the country since 1984, suffered a serious defeat. The elections were held against the background of a severe economic crisis. The ideological struggle was exacerbated, and accelerated the growth of political awareness both among the members of patriotic and democratic circles, activists of mass social organisations, left-wing parties and the Communists as well.

Against the will of the ruling classes, the discussion focused on matters like the deteriorating economy, with the external debt being one of the causes: it is now in excess of \$9 billion, which is more than 80 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product. To repay that amount, the country would have to forgo banana export earnings for a period of 28 years.¹ In this connection public attention was drawn to the inequitable character of foreign trade and the demand for a new international economic order.

There was a clash of the stand taken by the various classes on issues like the people's living conditions, which have been worsened to an extreme over the past several years, the absence of genuine democracy, and defence of human rights. The need for a peaceable foreign policy and re-establishment without delay of diplomatic relations with Nicaragua, which had been broken off by the incumbent pro-US regime in Ecuador, was also discussed.

The Communists carried on a struggle along all these lines, with reliance on the trade unions, in parliament and now also in the course of the electoral campaign, breaking through the wall of silence which has surrounded us for long years. The party exposed the gist of the neoliberal policy of President Febres Cordero, who aspired to leadership of the continent. For the sake of his personal ambitions and using the oil revenues, he became an 'exemplary payer', met all the demands of the International Monetary Fund, sacrificed the country's development and doomed the working people to harsh privation. But life drove home the fact that the external debt could not be repaid, and the *soi-disant* 'leader' was obliged to suspend the payment of interest.

The awakening of the anti-imperialist consciousness of the masses was also stirred by the general discontent over the presence in our country of 9,000 US soldiers, who had come to 'help' the Ecuadorans after the earthquake in March of last year. We convinced the people that the imperialists were, in fact, trying to secure a bridgehead in Latin America, to set up training camps in a jungle area similar to that in Central America, to create new colonial enclaves on the continent, and to carry out raids against the freedom-loving peoples from these territories. Our compatriots were able to see for themselves the US neoglobalist policy in action. The National Congress (in which the opposition has a majority), trade unions, mass organisations, wide circles in the Catholic Church and the armed forces came out in defence of national sovereignty and demanded that the

undesirable 'visitors' be sent home. Nevertheless, for months the authoritarian government ignored the will of the population and allowed the GIs to remain on Ecuadoran soil until December of last year.

Through their own experience the masses realised what the absolute power of finance capital allied with imperialism meant. The people have been suffering from the violence of the free enterprise system: unemployment has reached 13.5 per cent, and partial employment 58.5 per cent of the economically active population. Real wages have been shrinking, there is alarm in working people's families, and the young see no prospects before them. Meanwhile, the big bankers holding the instruments of power have been carving up economic legislation to suit themselves, draining the treasury and engaging in all kinds of machinations, without shunning sheer robbery. The government has resorted to state terrorism to suppress protests: paramilitary bands have persecuted democrats, broken into homes, and have committed torture and assassination. According to human rights organisations, more than 100 citizens have already died as a result of such acts. Since his inauguration in August 1984, President Febres Cordero has ignored the decisions of the National Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Constitutional Guarantees Tribunal, and has kept breaking the law. The Ecuadoran people have to live under a dictatorship with a constitutional fig leaf.

We, Communists, have taken every opportunity to show the people who is a true patriot, and who has been selling his country, who has in fact stood up for democracy and human rights, and who has trampled the law and ruled by terroristic methods. The primary task the CP Ecuador has set itself is to rouse the working people to resolute struggle against the corrupt, venal and anti-democratic oligarchy both in the 1988 elections, and after them, so as to *pave the way for democratic and patriotic transformations*.

One of the most important achievements of the past few years is the formation of the Progressive Parliamentary bloc, consisting of a number of left-wing² and reformist³ organisations. They have an agreement on joint defence of the Constitution, resistance to the President's dictatorial moves and his repressive policy, and the drafting of laws for a democratic way out of the crisis, with priority for economic development and social justice. It provides for defence of the public sector against encroachments by the monopolies, and subordination of foreign capital to the needs of the country's independent development. They have also agreed to act in the international arena in defence of human rights, the principles of non-interference, self-determination, equality and pacific settlement of controversial issues, and for continental unity in solving the external debt problem.

The Progressive Parliamentary Bloc has limited the President's authoritarian ambitions, exposed them for the masses to see, and has helped to strengthen the democratic aspirations of broad strata of the working class, the peasantry, young people, the Catholic Church and the patriotic-minded military men.

The prophets of the Right predicted a short life for the Bloc and declared the alliance of Marxists and bourgeois reformists to be 'unnatural'. But our

party and the other forces of the Left have proved that a democratic alliance is possible and necessary on the basis of an agreement, which, while not being either a socialist or a communist programme, has marked a step forward at the present stage in the fight for the interests of the working people and the entire nation. Experience shows that *the line of joint action in parliament on concrete issues is the right one.*

The policy of alliances enabled us to seat five deputies in the National Congress in 1984.⁴ The election of Edgar Ponce, a member of the CPE CC and chair of the Control of the Working People of Ecuador to the post of chair of the Constitutional Guarantees Tribunal was an important success. Today, for the first time in the country's history, Communists are on the Supreme Court and electoral commissions in all the provinces of the country.

The presence of representatives of the proletariat and its party in high-standing elective offices debunks the old reactionary idea that the Ecuadoran workers are 'apolitical'. It is, on the contrary, evidence that the country has a class and a political party capable of creating broad unity of all the patriotic, anti-imperialist forces, an alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and of involving masses of religious-minded people and honest military men in the popular struggle.

Overcoming the Errors of the Past

We would have achieved nothing today if we had allowed ourselves to be carried away in the late 1960s and early 1970s by those who flatly rejected the revolutionaries' participation in elections. "That means adding grist to the rightists' mill", we were accused by comrades from the Socialist Party and the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, who then believed that the only acceptable prospect was armed uprising, proclamation of socialism and immediate popular war. While these ideas were never realised, the left-wing parties kept their distance because of the above differences and divergencies over foreign policy issues. Indeed, there were even clashes between them in the trade unions and academic institutions. The situation was clearly not favourable for the revolutionary movement, and reaction and imperialism were quick to make use of it.

Our achievements would have been more substantial but for the epidemics of sectarianism that tended now and again to break out within the ranks of the Communists. For the sake of truth one has self-critically to admit that it was a gross error to decide to vote against all the candidates in the 1979 presidential elections, when the issue was whether the victory would go to the extreme rightist Sixto Durán or the democrat Jaime Roldós. It did us much political harm. We must not make such mistakes in the future. That is why the political resolution of the 10th Congress of the CPE described the so-called centrist parties as follows: "These reformist forces support some of the vital aspirations of the people, which is why they have points of contact with the truly revolutionary forces of the country."⁵

The Communists' participation in the elections should not be considered outside the context of the constant struggle for our programmatic goals. It is their necessary component because in this way the CPE contends with

the bourgeoisie for political power. For us, the elections are not important in themselves. They are one of the many means of attaining revolutionary objectives. Activity in electoral campaign is of specific significance when it is harmoniously supplemented with economic, political and ideological struggle.

Learning from the Working Class

We shall continue tirelessly to reiterate this call. The workers have given us a valuable lesson by pointing the way to unity. And not just in the establishment of the Unitary Front of Working People (FUT), which emerged in the 1970s, and now includes the three largest trade union centres, but also in uniting their ranks and standing up for their own ideology, so winning authority in various social circles and strengthening their positions in the face of the forces which in the past tried to moderate the class struggle and wanted an accommodation with the employers.

That was, of course, no simple matter. But the Ecuadoran working class displayed inexhaustible patience, achieved unity and was markedly strengthened. While fighting for higher wages, it also carried on the political struggle. The FUT platform formulates the tasks in anti-imperialist, agrarian, and democratic transformations, for which the Communists are now working. This process is now being given a fresh impetus because trade union associations and other bodies not within the FUT, such as the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities, the National Union of Workers in Education, the Popular Front⁶ and the National Coordination Commission of Working People⁷ are now joining in broad actions. We are entitled to say with pride that *the working class, united in the FUT, now enjoys such support that a sizeable part of the Ecuadoran people responds to its calls to take part in protest actions and nationwide strikes.*

The working class has taken the way to revolution. As in the past, the anti-communists, opportunists and sectarians of every stripe rejecting the strategy of alliances, the policy which makes it possible to advance, to overcome the isolation, to consolidate the forces and to win new allies, have remained on the sidelines.

At the 18th Congress of the Confederation of Working People of Ecuador (CTE) last September, we declared that the logic of the working people's struggle dictates to their political vanguard the need for alliances with the middle strata of the population, and blocs with organisations voicing the interests both of the working people and of the non-proletarian action of society.

CTE Chair Edgar Ponce said at this congress: "If we are striving to defeat the oligarchy with its neoliberal economic model and want social emancipation and national liberation, we must not fail to put forward the task of uniting the political and social forces capable of joining in the battle and defeating the right-wing of the bourgeoisie allied with imperialism."⁸

Since 1984, our party has advocated an expansion of the sphere of cooperation of the left-wing and reformist parties within the Progressive Parliamentary Bloc, involvement of the masses in the struggle, and combination of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary action. The

Communists have proposed the creation of a major democratic alliance for nominating common candidates for the post of president, for the Congress and for the local organs of power. The unity of the six parties of the Progressive Parliamentary Bloc would ensure a resolute victory over the rightists who are trying to perpetuate their domination.

But this call met with only partial, even if highly important, success for the cause of the revolution because many obstacles still remained in the way of realising the project of a progressive coalition. There were, in particular, the anti-communist prejudices of the reformists and the factionalism of some left-wing forces. In the ranks of our own party there was the mistaken and leader-dictated line of supporting the candidacy of General Frank Vargas Pazzos, who has no clear-cut political programme. The supporters of this trend rejected left unity as a nucleus of a wider democratic coalition, the basis of a future and mighty coalition of national liberation.

The Front of the United Left (FIU), which included the Broad Front of the Left (FADI), the Popular Democratic Movement (MPD) and eight other revolutionary parties and movements, was set up in August 1987. They all rely on support from the working class, the peasantry, the middle strata, the intelligentsia and the students. The FIU nominated as candidates for the posts of president and vice-president of the republic MPD leader Jaime Hurtado and FADI Chair Efraín Alvarez.

The FIU electoral manifesto stressed that it was not confined to electoral objectives. The FIU wants *to set up a popular, democratic and revolutionary government* for carrying out deep transformations in economic, social and political life, and for paving the way for national liberation and social emancipation so as to establish socialism in our country.

The FIU programme has met with a wide response in every part of the country. That is understandable because it provides for resistance to IMF dictates, refusal to repay the external debt, nationalisation of the banks and natural resources, and annulment of oil contracts with the transnationals; introduction of a state monopoly of foreign trade; prohibition of the siting of foreign military bases in the country; land, credits and technical assistance to the peasants and a write-off of their debts; guarantees for defence of democracy, national culture, and the interests of the ethnic groups; protection of human rights, and repeal of the repressive 'national security' law.

In foreign policy the FIU stands for a sovereign and peaceful policy, struggle against the arms race, and the establishment of a collective security system to guarantee lasting peace. Ecuador must re-establish diplomatic relations with Nicaragua and develop solidarity with all the countries and peoples fighting for freedom, independence, and democracy. Those are the basic objectives which will help to rally the broad masses for defeating imperialism and the oligarchy in the elections and beyond.

The CPE Programme says: "If the Ecuadoran people are to win the struggle for a national liberation revolution and for the people's programme, they must be united. It is indispensable for us to forge the militant arm of this unity, *the national liberation front* . . . an alliance of all

the progressive forces in the struggle for a popular, democratic and patriotic government, for support of its policy and successful completion of the national liberation revolution. The front should not be a bureaucratic alliance of various parties and organisations. It must be a great people's movement, which, far from denying, in effect, implies accords between leaders and parties aimed to enhance the organisation and militancy of the masses."⁹

The assertion of new thinking imparts a powerful impetus to revolutionary processes in Latin America and the establishment of anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic and democratic unity. Joint efforts alone can help to put an end to neocolonial domination, and to establish a popular, revolutionary and patriotic power to lay the foundations of a socialist society as the process of social emancipation and national liberation gains in depth.

¹ Ecuador is the world's leading exporter of bananas. — *Ed.*

² Broad Front of the Left (FADI), which includes the Communists; the Popular Democratic Movement (MPD), which was set up by the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (it had broken away from the CPE in the 1960s); and the Ecuadoran Socialist Party.

³ Democratic Left (Social Democrats), Popular Democracy (Christian Democrats) and the Roldosist Party (populists).

⁴ Among them are René Maugé, who was elected chairman of the Congress Commission on Social and Labour Affairs, and Efraín Alvarez, CP CC Secretary, Chair of FADI, who heads the Congress Commission on Culture. — *Ed.*

⁵ *Resolución política del X Congreso del Partido Comunista del Ecuador. Diciembre del 1981*, Guayaquil, 1982, p. 11.

⁶ An association of some organisations of teachers, students and intellectuals and some workers' trade unions, cooperatives and peasant communities. — *Ed.*

⁷ A trade union centre under the influence of the Christian Democrats. — *Ed.*

⁸ *El Pueblo*, del 4 al 10 de septiembre 1987, p. 7.

⁹ *Programma y estatutos. Partido Comunista del Ecuador*, Guayaquil, 1977, pp. 42-43.

The Namibia Knot: A Bleeding Wound

Aaron Shihepo — SWAPO Central
Committee member

SOUTHERN Africa is in the grip of mounting tensions. Racist South Africa is stepping up its colonial expansionist drive, continuing its illegal occupation of Namibia and intensifying apartheid repression at home. With the active support of its imperialist allies, especially the United States, the United Kingdom and the FRG, the Pretoria regime is pursuing a policy of destabilisation in our region.

The Frontline States have become victims of state-organised terrorism. The South African apartheid regime, through armed bandits and through direct armed aggression resorts to wanton acts of sabotage committed against industrial projects, means of transportation and against the civilian population. The racist regime has a two-pronged strategy of forcing the neighbouring states to depend on South Africa economically while trying

to cow them into abandoning support for and solidarity with, the struggling peoples of Namibia and South Africa.

The imperialist powers — The United States and the United Kingdom — exercise their power of veto in the UN Security Council whenever the international community submits a draft resolution calling for comprehensive mandatory sanctions to be imposed against Pretoria. These actions naturally give succour and sustenance to the racist regime which displays its military arrogance against the independent African states in the region. In the capitalist West, the racist regime acquires military hardware, spare parts, ammunition and even plans for the manufacture of arms locally. Many transnational corporations and their associates and subsidiaries operating in South Africa and Namibia are playing an important role in these deliveries and this transfer.

In July 1986 the president of the apartheid republic unveiled a project for the manufacture of a new jet fighter, the Cheetah, an improved version of the French Mirage III. This new craft will make it possible for South Africa to modernise its air force. Israel has sold military equipment to South Africa, including light weapons, communications and technological data packages containing the designs for several major Israeli weapons later assembled in South Africa's military industry. Israel has helped the racists to develop surveillance aircraft and air-to-air refuelling techniques. These are in addition to the two regimes' cooperation in developing nuclear weapons technology. Pretoria has also been receiving financial and military assistance from the United States.

The policy of militarisation prompts the racist regime to assert its territorial claims to the Caprivi Strip, which stretched out in a 500-kilometre salient near Angola, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, to use it as one of the largest air force bases in the Southern Hemisphere. Hostilities in Angola have been going on since August 1987, when South African troops from Namibia invaded the Angolan provinces of Cunene and Cuando Cubango. Acts of aggression and sabotage are also committed continuously against Mozambique, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

The destabilisation of the Frontline States is coupled with increased repressive measures in the apartheid republic itself. Thousands of opponents of apartheid, especially members and supporters of the African National Congress, have been imprisoned. Hundreds of children are languishing in jail and detention camps, and the regime has embarked upon a programme of brainwashing them and turning them against the liberation struggle.

However, in spite of the intensified campaign of terror and intimidation, *this struggle is being joined by new masses of South Africans* who refuse to languish under the bondage of apartheid oppression. The workers, youth, women and religious institutions continue to challenge the regime and to demand the release of Nelson Mandela and of other ANC leaders.

The South African workers demand the abolition of apartheid, call for improvement of their economic position and display considerable organisational skills. Notably, the struggle now involves intellectuals and some white businessmen, and that is a sure sign that the 'saga' of racism is approaching its inevitable end. Furthermore, the combat operations

conducted by the military wing of the ANC in South Africa's heartland are hastening the demise of the white minority government. It is because of these actions and the political mobilisation being carried out that several prominent whites are more and more forthcoming in challenging apartheid and talking to the ANC.

In a bid to prevent the complete decolonisation of the region, the racist regime is resorting to every means available to it. It continues to sow the seeds of ethnic conflict by creating Bantustan-based tribal armies. The regime is vainly trying to give credence to the so-called South West Africa Territory Force by claiming that it is the one which is fighting SWAPO. The fact of the matter, however, remains that it is the South African army and not the so-called SWATF that is in control of the illegal occupation of Namibia. In Namibia, the racist regime has created special units such as the so-called Reconnaissance Commandos, the South West Africa Specialist Unit, the Parachute Regiment and the Koevoet murder squad which has been recently renamed COIN, or Counter-Insurgency Unit, which is commanded by Brigadier Dreyer of the ex-Rhodesian Special Branch and which is mainly composed of white mercenaries. These squads terrorise, abduct, torture, and murder members and supporters of SWAPO.

There is no doubt that the illegal occupation of Namibia remains militarily and strategically central to the tensions in the region. The North East and much of the North of Namibia have been declared 'security zones' and as such are no-go areas without a permit from the army or the police. Despite the UN General Assembly Resolution of 1977 and UN Security Council Resolution of 1978,¹ the racist regime continues to lay claim to the port of Walvis Bay, to increase the number of its troops and to expand its air and naval base and army training centre there. In Caprivi, the army has carved out a military zone covering 8,000 square kilometres through which the only road connecting the area with the rest of Namibia runs. Dusk-to-dawn curfew is in force in most parts of our country. Some areas are being constantly used as launching pads of aggression against the Frontline States, particularly Angola. Small-size military bases are being constructed every 30 kilometres along the main highways.

The Namibian people continue to live under intensified terror, a direct consequence of the country's illegal occupation. The strength of the army of occupation has long exceeded 100,000 there. These troops are supported by 10,000 police and hordes of mercenaries. The racist regime tries to strengthen its military presence by increasing the occupation army through forcible conscription of Namibians into its ranks, recruitment of mercenaries, and expansion and fortification of the military bases which number about 100.

Furthermore, the militarisation of Namibia has been tied up with the imposition of the so-called interim government composed of puppets in the service of South Africa. It is another ludicrous link in the chain of previous puppet regimes which Pretoria has tried for years to impose on the Namibian people but which have dismally failed. The people of Namibia continue to rally behind SWAPO, their sole authentic representative, for the attainment of total independence, freedom and justice. It is thanks to their resolve to wage the struggle with increased vigour that they have

frustrated the racist efforts to impose a puppet regime on Namibia. The people of Namibia have persevered under intense repression characterised by wholesale arrests, abduction, rape and cold-blooded murder.

Under these very severe conditions, a *consolidation of forces* is under way, especially among industrial workers. They are forging ahead in organising for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435, for independence and for their rights. The Mine Workers' Union of Namibia and the Namibian Food and Allied Workers' Union recently established as affiliates of the National Union of Namibian Workers, have waged several successful strikes. The strikes in Luderitz and at Swavleis plants in Windhoek and Okahandja have resulted in agreements to increase the pay rate and to reinstall the dismissed workers. Furthermore, the strikes at Tsumeb, Otjihase and Kombat copper mines have dealt heavy blows to these enterprises.

Also, youth and women's organisations, as well as religious institutions are growing more active. Rallies have been held in different places, demanding the immediate and unconditional implementation of relevant UN decisions. The People's Liberation Army of Namibia constantly delivers strikes against the enemy forces and bases.

It is crystal-clear that because of the armed aggression, the destabilisation policy and the colonial and apartheid repression, the situation in the Southern African region constitutes a *threat to peace and security*. It is therefore necessary for the peace-loving forces the world over to intensify the campaign of international solidarity with the peoples of South Africa, Namibia and the Frontline States. In this respect, several measures should be taken by the international community as a matter of particular urgency:

- expansion of international solidarity with SWAPO and the ANC;
- resolute condemnation of South Africa's war-mongering policies;
- concrete support of the Frontline States to help them strengthen their defence capabilities in the face of South Africa's armed aggression;
- assistance in strengthening the economies of these states so as to end their economic dependence on racist South Africa;
- an effective campaign for the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the racist regime so as to force it to give up its illegal occupation of Namibia and abandon its pernicious policy of apartheid;
- expansion of the struggle for the immediate implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 435, and condemnation in the strongest possible terms of the Reagan administration's and racist South Africa's efforts to make the withdrawal of the Cuban internationalists from the People's Republic of Angola a precondition for Namibia's decolonisation;
- denial of any semblance of legitimacy to the racist-hired bandits and puppets by depriving them of so-called representation and dissemination of misinformation.

We hold that the struggle for the independence of Namibia, elimination of apartheid in South Africa and support for the Frontline States are an integral part of the overall struggle for universal security, peace and social progress.

¹ In 1978 the UN Security Council approved a plan for the settlement of the problem of Namibia, known as the UN Plan. — *Ed.*

Personal Impression

Peace Be To Thee, Afghanistan!

Mahmoud Shoukeir — CC member,
Palestinian Communist Party; PCP
representative on *WMR*;
Board member, Palestine Writers' Union

I WENT to Kabul, the capital of the Republic of Afghanistan, to take a closer look at the situation in that long-suffering country, which has continued its struggle against backwardness and for progressive economic and social transformations for the benefit of broad popular masses while a sanguinary war is still being fought.

As soon as I arrived I was reminded of the man whose image is forever imprinted on the grateful memory of the Arab peoples: Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, the great religious reformer, who came from that ancient country to the Arab East in the nineteenth century to raise the banner of renewal and renaissance.

And it is renewal and renaissance in an atmosphere of peace that Afghanistan now yearns for.

The Party Holds the Initiative

I felt the breath of war as soon as I landed at Kabul airport. Army helicopters droned over the mountain ridge surrounding the capital, providing security for the Second National Conference of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, on which public attention was then focused at home and even abroad.

Airliners also flew in accordance with the rules of wartime: before proceeding on their course, they spiralled over the city to a definite height, ejecting heat missiles every five or six seconds to divert the heat-seeking US Stingers and British Blowpipes, since over 200 people, including many women and children, have already died as a result of the counter-revolutionary forces' use of these missiles against civilian planes.

In Kabul it does not take long to realise that one is in a country trying to break out of the poverty and backwardness and to keep in step with progress. When driving from the airport one sees growing new blocks of flats, which, I was told, were built with the direct assistance of the Soviet Union, which gave Afghanistan the gift of a complete house-building plant.

One also felt the tense situation in the central thoroughfares, which were patrolled by soldiers of the national army and the *tsarandoi* (people's militia). I was told that shortly before the party conference opened, the

counter-revolutionaries set off a bomb blast in one of Kabul's commercial streets, which killed dozens of innocent people.

But despite this uneasy situation, our Afghan friends helped me learn about many aspects of the party's activity.

Everywhere in Kabul people were discussing the policy of national reconciliation, and the party's Second Conference was, in fact, convened to analyse what the policy of ending the bloodshed and creating a form of coalition government had brought. The party's line of national reconciliation proved that it was capable of taking a revolutionary initiative at a crucial moment, while demonstrating its ability to analyse the main trends in world development, and then to apply the results of the analysis to the concrete situation in Afghanistan. The party's policy is an organic part of the general struggle by the peace forces of the world for settling regional conflicts by non-military means, preserving world peace, and removing the threat of a nuclear catastrophe.

After almost ten years of fratricide, it has become obvious to the overwhelming majority of Afghans at home and abroad that a continuation of the war would inflict even greater calamities and ruin on a tired and wounded people. That is why a convincing alternative must be found to mobilise the broadest masses for ending the bloodshed, so as to ensure Afghanistan's further development in accordance with the hopes and legal aspirations of its sons and daughters.

The party came out with its national reconciliation initiative on January 15, 1987, and announced a unilateral ceasefire by the republic's armed forces. In so doing, said its General Secretary Najibullah, the party relied on "the philosophy of new thinking, which regards the human right to life and peace on the Earth as the supreme values".¹ In his bold report to the conference, he criticised the party for its past tardiness in seeking alternatives to armed confrontation, for the failure to match words with deeds, and for the egotistical neglect of the common interest to suit one's own. The Afghan leader stressed that the national reconciliation policy sets the whole people's interests over and above narrow class interests.

The party called on other class forces to set up their own political parties so as to take a hand in running the country on the basis of a broad national coalition. It has been announced that 27 senior posts, including those of vice-president and prime minister, have been reserved for members of the opposition. The new Constitution, which was approved by the Loya Jirgah on November 30, 1987, carries the country to the next stage of democratic transformations, peaceful construction and economic and social development.

This line of party work includes a series of organisational measures, brings out new problems and requires the ways of their solution to be found as soon as possible. In its efforts to fulfil these tasks successfully, the party has laid emphasis on the unity of its ranks, exposing past errors, shortcomings, negligence, passiveness and bureaucratic practices. The trends of new thinking are clearly discernible in Comrade Najibullah's speeches: he was not afraid his enemies would try to fish in troubled waters, as the saying goes. His report to the conference is bold, frank, critical and self-critical, a frame of mind that is necessary if the party is to

go on fulfilling its revolutionary tasks and act as society's leader, through revolutionary practice and service to the masses, instead of bureaucratic administrative power.

When I met Comrade Abdurrahman Bassam, a member of the PDPA CC and deputy department head at the Foreign Ministry, I asked him to explain the organisational conclusions drawn at the party conference with respect to some CC members.

"The present conditions demand consistent pursuit of the policy of national reconciliation", he said. "That being so, we have had to take some steps to purge our ranks of vacillating and unstable elements."

The PDPA's policy has won the support of the masses and has kept advancing despite all the obstacles being erected in its way. What are these obstacles? Immediately after January 15, 1987, the counter-revolutionary forces stepped up their subversive activity in an effort to strangle the reconciliation process in its cradle. The alliance of the seven extremist parties entrenched on Pakistani territory did not respond to the call for a suspension of military operations. The United States increased its aid to the counter-revolutionaries so as to reduce to a minimum the chances of ending the war and tried to reduce the Afghan refugees' (now estimated at three million) positive attitude to the party's policy and to prevent them from returning home by some partial improvements in their living conditions.

Still, 110,000 Afghans have already returned home. Over the past year, 3,200 villages went over peacefully to the side of the people's power. More than 40,000 rebels have laid down their arms and signed armistice and ceasefire protocols, while 6,000 of them have joined coalition organs of administration. More than 15 per cent of those who work on the local organs of power are now those who but yesterday were members of opposition armed groups. Six political leaders who have held the posts of deputy minister or minister under earlier regimes are now members of Afghanistan's cabinet of ministers.

Help to Returning Refugees

At the Administration of Returning Refugee Affairs, I had a talk with Dr Mohammed Hassan Shark, who heads it, and who, like other independent patriotically-minded leaders, has been taking an active part in putting through the national reconciliation policy. Under the monarchy, Shark was an army doctor. Under Prime Minister Mohammad Daud, Shark became his personal secretary and headed the office of the head of government for ten years. When the king was deposed by the 1973 coup led by Daud, Shark held the post of deputy prime minister and vice-president for four years, and was then appointed ambassador to Japan. He returned to Kabul when the April 1978 revolution triumphed, and there he was soon arrested on orders from the then Prime Minister Amin. He was released from prison early in 1980 and then appointed ambassador to India. He is now a member of the Commission for National Reconciliation, a Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and Minister for Returning Refugee Affairs.

"The policy of national reconciliation," he believes, "has had an influence on all the classes of Afghan society both at home and abroad, and we face the future with optimism. What is it based on? It is based on the fact that, while Iran, Pakistan and the counter-revolutionary forces keep erecting obstacles, the number of our compatriots returning home has been growing from day to day. We are well prepared to meet them: 29 stations have been set up close to the border with Pakistan and Iran as transit points from which the new arrivals are sent on to their places of residence in the interior of the country. Major complexes capable of simultaneously accommodating 2,000 persons have been built in Kabul, Qandahar, Herat and Jalalabad. We help all of them find jobs, while young people are entitled to go back to their schools and institutes, irrespective of the length of the break in their studies. Young men of military service age are given a six-month period of grace before they are recruited. Finally, everyone who returns is given a card entitling him to receive food and other goods.

At a school named after Amina Fidawi, the well-known Afghan woman poet and public figure, I saw the children of those who had but recently lived in poverty abroad. This school, which is situated in the eastern suburb of Kabul, has 3,500 pupils, who study in two shifts.

I was told by school director Anissa Atmar: "We, too, have our own national reconciliation commission. It sends out letters to our compatriots who have gone abroad urging them to return to their homeland. The commission has funds to help the refugees pay their travel expenses and other needs. We now have 100 teenagers who recently returned with their parents from Pakistan and Iran."

Many young people have had the same experience as Fawzia Golomreza, whom I met at the school. This short, slim girl is 21 years old, but she is only just completing her school course, because she has lagged behind the other girls during the four years she spent in Iran with her family. She returned with her parents to Kabul in July 1987, and here is what she told me why they had left for Iran and what happened when they got back:

"One day, several members of a counter-revolutionary band came to our home and, brandishing their weapons, ordered my father not to allow my brothers either to go to school or to join the army. He would have been killed, if he had refused. A little later they demanded that my father take his family abroad. If he refused, they threatened to force my brothers to join their band. So we preferred to go away to Iran. Life there was very hard. My father could not find a job. We then heard of the national reconciliation policy in Afghanistan and began to receive letters inviting us to return. So we returned. We were given back the house in which the family had lived before our flight to Iran. I went back to school. Next year I intend to enrol at the university to train as a teacher. I hope that one day I shall come back to this school to teach here."

The Conspiracy Continues

Comrades from the national edition of *World Marxist Review*, which is published in Afghanistan in three languages — Dari, Pushtu and Baluchi — did much to help me get acquainted with the country and to learn of the

processes under way. There was, first, its managing editor Dr Mohammad Salem Spartak, Mohammad Hashim Alam, a member of the editorial board of the journal and a member of the Revolutionary Council of Afghanistan, and Shukriya Miri, a staff member on the journal. She could be cited as an example of the new Afghan women who have discarded the paranja (veil) and have received an education which enables them to take part in constructive work on a par with men.

I found Mohammad Salem Spartak a well-educated man who speaks several foreign languages and who had once worked in the diplomatic service. In our conversation we discussed various matters, ranging from the problem of women's emancipation and the specific features of Afghan national culture to the country's modern history and the prospects before the national reconciliation policy.

"The policy of peace proclaimed by the PDPA is a logical and correct choice," he told me. "But it requires much effort, work, perseverance and time."

This view is shared by Mohammad Hashim Alam, who has a good knowledge of the situation in the localities, because he had been a secretary of a provincial PDPA committee in the east of the country before his transfer to the capital.

"I come from a tribe which lives close to the Pakistani border and I know for a fact that a large number of Afghan refugees want to come home," he told me. "That is being hindered by the Pakistani authorities. Refugees returning home are known to have been attacked by Pakistan-supported bands, who slaughtered all the men and drove the women into captivity. One could say, nevertheless, that the national reconciliation policy has already yielded fruit. This party initiative must be a success, but one must have patience."

There has, indeed, of late been evidence of some confusion in the counter-revolutionary camp. While many anti-Afghan organisations did not respond to the call for a ceasefire and have rejected dialogue for peace, the 'Peshawar Seven' are alarmed over the growing impact of the ideas of national reconciliation.

In order to undermine the process, the US administration has continued to increase its aid to the Afghan rebels. President Reagan has on several occasions met with the leaders of the counter-revolutionary bands, whom he calls 'defenders of Islam' and 'freedom fighters', although they are those whose involvement in the conspiracy against the Afghan people has helped them to hold huge accounts in foreign banks and engage openly in the sale of US arms and drugs.

Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt have also given utmost material and moral support to the counter-revolutionary forces under the stock pretext of 'defence of Islam'. But who will believe that the United States, which has given its blessings to Israel's occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories and to the annexation of Jerusalem, with its Islamic holy places is concerned about Islam in Afghanistan? The same applies to the rulers of Egypt, who signed the capitulationist agreements with Israel with Saudi Arabia's secret approval. By contrast, the revolutionary government of Afghanistan has supported the Palestinian people's struggle for the

liberation of the occupied territories, for its right to self-determination and the creation of an independent national state under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

What has been going on along the Afghan borders and the gross intervention in the internal affairs of that sovereign country are a manifestation of the neoglobalist policy of the United States, which has masterminded armed conflicts on the borders of countries with a progressive social system so as to overthrow their governments, or to divert them from the struggle against backwardness and from the building of a new society. The developments around Nicaragua, Angola, Kampuchea and Afghanistan are visual evidence of the subversive acts of the US administration.

Within a Short Period

The myth about a 'Soviet occupation of Afghanistan' has become a widespread form of lying to continue the imperialist intervention in the Middle East, to intensify anti-Soviet propaganda, and to justify the crimes against the patriots fighting for freedom.

"Our people know that the USSR has no intention of leaving its internationalist soldiers on Afghan soil. They will return home just as they came here — at our request," Dr Shark emphasised. "Of this the Americans are also aware, but they want the war to continue and the Soviet units to stay on."

At a session of the UN General Assembly, Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Abdol Wakil declared most definitely: "We regard any statement that the return of the Soviet troops is the key to the solution of the problem as an attempt to mislead public opinion. The main issue is an end to the intervention in Afghanistan's affairs." The Soviet Union, he stressed, will withdraw its troops in the shortest possible period, provided the external intervention is ended with firm international guarantees on the issue.

Not long ago, the date for the return home of the Soviet internationalist troops was concretely stated. On February 8, 1988, CPSU CC General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov issued a statement saying that the governments of the USSR and the Republic of Afghanistan, seeking to promote the early and successful completion of the Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva, had agreed on a concrete date for the start of the withdrawal of the Soviet troops — May 15, 1988 — and to complete it within 10 months. The date was set on the assumption that the settlement agreement would be signed not later than March 15.

A similar statement was made on Afghan television by President Najibullah: "We believe that after the return of the Soviet units home, the military confrontation in our country will not increase. It is our view that the armed conflict can be prevented from growing, provided all the opponents of the government of the Republic of Afghanistan, who in the present situation have continued to fan the flames of war, demonstrate a responsible approach and make a conscious contribution to the peace activity aimed to assure our people of a life in tranquillity."

I went to a cemetery which lies on a high hill not far from the centre of

Kabul where Afghan soldiers who died in defence of the gains of the April Revolution are buried. How many budding young lives the undeclared war has taken! Regardless of whether they were members of the PDPA or not, they were moved by love for their homeland and the resolve not to spare their very life for its future. The inscriptions on their tombstones are eloquent: the people will always remember their heroes who paid such a high price in defending Afghanistan's freedom in the fight against despots and their mercenaries.

A young officer took me round the Museum of the National Armed Forces, explained the exhibits and told me of some events in the country's history. I saw photographs from the 1920s which testify to the traditional relations of friendship and good neighbourhood between the USSR and Afghanistan that originated in the early years of the Soviet state. Since then, thousands of Afghans have graduated from higher schools in the Soviet Union. They have been trained in various fields and have returned home to take part in building the new life. A special section tells of the friendship between Afghan and Soviet soldiers.

There are also exhibits at the Museum which give a good idea of the crimes of the counter-revolution: specimens of the US-made weapons captured in battles against the bandits (there is also a special museum of captured weapons in the city); lists of the members of armed bands and pay-rolls for subversive operations; photographs of spies of various nationalities who had penetrated into the country with counter-revolutionary forces and who had been caught, tried and sentenced; miniature mines in the form of water flasks, marker pens, etc., which had been scattered around schools and in crowded places. I also remember an edition of the Koran, which a killer had used to hide his gun in.

No Retreat From the Goals of the Revolution

Many PDPA documents clearly and openly declare that the party continues to be the guiding force in society for objective reasons stemming from its historical role in fulfilling revolutionary tasks and implementing the Afghan people's vital aspirations. At the same time it has renounced monopoly of political power and has lately taken serious steps to induce other social forces to set up their own political parties and join in the process of national reconciliation. But for at least two reasons the process has been a slow one. First, the fear by those who could set up such parties that the enemies of the revolution would accuse them of supporting the government and would kill them; second, the fear that the authorities could later on take repressive measures against the new parties if they should oppose the revolutionary policy.

For its part, the PDPA seeks to use political, instead of military, means to solve the problems, and the new Constitution contains enough guarantees for doing so. But that does not at all mean that it is necessary to wait until the new parties are formed before getting down to putting the national reconciliation policy into practice, and normalising the situation in the country.

Several independent political parties have already been registered: the Revolutionary Organisation of Working People of Afghanistan, the

Organisation of Working People of Afghanistan, the People's Islamic Party of Afghanistan, and the Peasant Justice Party of Afghanistan. With the first of these, a left-democratic party, an agreement has been reached on two of its representatives taking part in the government: one has taken up the post of deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and chairman of the State Planning Committee of Afghanistan, and the other, the post of Minister of Mining and Industry.

Even in the conditions of the war, which is inflicting vast damage on the economy (with 60 per cent of the budget going into defence), Afghanistan has managed to achieve a great deal of success in the economic and social sphere. Only over the past year, new enterprises have been opened and 30 industrial plants have resumed operations, mainly in the private and the mixed sectors. Industrial output has gone up by 3.7 per cent. More than 700,000 working people have had their wages raised.

The country has 504 agricultural cooperatives, which provide various services to the peasants, especially in marketing their produce. Almost 300 consumer cooperatives have been set up to provide goods to the population at low prices; 55 handicraft cooperatives have been organised, and their members are supplied with raw materials at accessible prices and enjoy other services.

Mass political rallies have been held in various parts of the country since the PDPA conference to implement its decision: 'Accelerate the process of national reconciliation', which, Comrade Najibullah said at the Moscow meeting of representatives of parties and movements in November 1987, means:

- resolute struggle for peace;
- bold review of old methods to bring them into accord with the new conditions; and
- economic development, solution of social problems, and increase of material production.

The new Afghanistan is making its way into the future. The transformations on its soil make it impossible even to consider the idea of the country's return to the past: the backwardness, oppression and dependence. This runs counter to the course of history. That is why the Afghan people, patiently bearing the hardships of the present stage, seek to advance along the way of national reconciliation so as to stop the bloodshed and to return all its sons and daughters to the homeland, over which the banner of peace is now flying.

Kabul — Prague

¹ See also his article 'The Humane Idea of Reconciliation', *WMR*, No. 1, 1988.

² The traditional forum for the free democratic expression of the people's will, a forum on which all the tribes and ethnic and social groups of the country are represented. — *Ed.*

Thailand In The 1980s: Hard Times

Thongchai Pongsanti — Thai
sociologist

THE post-World War II years have witnessed the collapse of classical colonialism and semi-colonialism. The colonialist-slaveowner of the old type was replaced by the new, 'nobler' one: everything possible was done to build up the image of a 'benefactor', a selfless 'patron', a 'senior partner' . . . The new tactic of adaptation is practised first and foremost by the United States, which is bent on perpetuating the exploitation of some nations by others in the world. How has Thailand fared in this situation?

The US-Thai official relations can be traced back to the latter half of the 19th century, when the United States and Siam (Thailand's old name) first signed an unequal treaty in 1856. But it was not until almost a century later that US imperialism gained decisive influence over our country.

How did the United States succeed? First, making deals with Thai collaborators from among the domestic reactionary forces, it integrated them into a strong and aggressive dictatorial clique under its close military, economic and political control. Second, it had a measure of success in imposing its ideology through 'Americanisation' of the Thai government, the administrative and business systems, and the Thai intelligentsia and military. Third, jointly with its 'minor partners' it suppressed the Thai progressive elements under the pretext of fighting 'communist threats'. And fourth, it created overnight a ready-made Thai monopolist class of a newly emerged financial oligarchy, newly rich corrupt government officials, specifically the militarists and feudalists turned monopolists.

They became a caste of compradores providing conditions for the influx of foreign capital and the infiltration of transnational corporations into the country. The integration of Thailand into the world capitalist system thus became a reality in the 1950s-mid-1970s. A strong neocolonialist influence was established in the country and the interests of US imperialism and its hangers-on were dependably protected.

But these interests should not be confused with those of the broad Thai masses or with national interests. They are incompatible and oppose each other since one sector stands for the exploiters and the other for the exploited. To be more concrete, let us cast a look at some key issues of the development of Thailand today.

Government Revenues and Expenditures. Government budgets have been run deficiently for more than 30 consecutive years, with increasing deficit rates. During the 1980-1984 fiscal years the accumulated government budget deficits totalled about 143,500 million baht.¹

Public Debts. In 1980 the public debt-GNP ratio was 28.9 per cent. But in 1985 and 1986 it rose to 50 and 53.6 per cent, respectively. At the end of 1986 the total accumulated foreign debt was about 289,300 million baht, while the average public foreign debt increase per annum is about 26,000 million baht, or US\$1,000 million.

The Thai government had to allocate a large part of its budget annually

for debt servicing: 44,400 million baht (some 20 per cent of its annual budget) in 1985 and 56,150 million baht (24.7 per cent of the total budget expenditure) in 1987.

The steadily deteriorating financial situation of the country causes grave concern among all the fair-minded people. As Nukool Prachuabmoh, a former president of the Central Bank of Thailand, once observed, "Since 1976 the Thai government has been borrowing more from the private sources of loans. Some years the loans increased to 55.3-60 per cent . . . And if we go self-indulging all the more, it is possible that we shall be, within about three years, arriving at an irrecoverable brinkmanship . . ."

Foreign Trade. Foreign trade is the principal source for any country to earn hard currency as the necessary means for international transactions as well as for backing its own reserve funds. Thailand's foreign trade deficit keeps growing from year to year: it jumped from 4.1 billion baht in later 1959 to 379.4 billion baht in 1985.

Employment and Labour Distribution. One of the avowed objectives of the development programmes is to provide full employment through industrialisation and urbanisation. Yet very little has changed in the employment patterns over the past 40 years.

Trends in Labour Distribution in Thailand from 1947 to 1987

(per cent of total employment)*

Years	Agriculture	Industry	Services
1947	85	3	12
1960	84	4	12
1965	82	5	13
1970	80	6	14
1975	78	7.5	14.5
1980	76	9	15
1987	72	8	20

*World Bank, *the Council of Economic Development of Thailand*. Data collected and tabulated by the author.

Manpower planning as an important aspect of every development project had not been well carried out. Planning miscalculations as regards the job creation and population growth rates as well as the relations between labour demand and supply have led to employment crises: full unemployment, underemployment, seasonal unemployment and disguised unemployment. Prof. Nikom Chandravitoon, a noted labour expert, estimates that in 1987 the number of unemployed kept increasing, with about 2.5 million fully unemployed.

Rural Working People. The Thai peasants are labouring under a heavy burden of problems, such as land shortages, backward farming implements, severe malnutrition, poor sanitation and bad health services. They are less protected than the urban population from the elements and

suffer more from the vagaries of nature. Their production costs are relatively high but the cost of their products on the market is low and unpredictable. The farming cost of production is about 3,000 baht for one *kwien* of paddy (about 1 ton) but one *kwien* of paddy can be sold for about only 2,000 to 2,500 baht on the market.

One of the urgent growing concerns of the rural working people is the rising deficits and accumulating debts: as Mr Ubolsak Bualuang-ngarm, Vice-Chair of the Federation of Peasants of Thailand, recently revealed, in the past few years the total accumulative debt of the Thai peasants reached about 18,000 million baht.³

According to the World Bank, very recently about 11 million Thai people were living under the poverty line, but at present the figure has climbed to 14 million.⁴

The most evident results of Thailand's development along the neocolonial capitalist way are as follows: the ever growing unemployment becomes the order of the day, and the aggravating deficits and debts of the government and the toiling masses are irreversible. These undesirable results inevitably lead to aggravating social disorders and to sporadic and then chronic political upheavals.

The current changes in the country are explained by objective world processes and the contention of various forces in Thai society itself, whose various strata are increasingly discontented with the state of affairs and with the dominance of US imperialism.

Never before has Thailand seen such ever growing and complicated conflicts among the Thai ruling circles as it does nowadays. They have become the order of the day in the coalition government, in the military circles, in political parties and even in the royal court. During the seven years of Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda's government two abortive coups were instigated and many others are rumoured every now and then.

All this shows that there is growing discontent in the ruling élite as well. Members of the Thai élite were relatively silent in the past. But at present, unusual as it seems, more and more members of the Thai élite are impatiently voicing their discontent with the deterioration of the situation in the country. Former Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj, the most well-known royalist and a veteran politician, observed in this context: "Thailand nowadays, with its government system, is like a decaying wall and a very old banyan tree leaning against each other for support. So, the collapse of one will precipitate the collapse of the other, and vice versa."⁵

Faced with the economic aggressiveness of US imperialism (protectionism, the blocking of the access of Thai commodities to the markets of third countries, etc.) that is harmful to Thai national interests, some of the fair-minded statesmen, intellectuals and, more recently, army officers, formerly silent, are coming out more and more against US imperialism. This is an uncommon phenomenon for Thailand, especially since some of those persons were very close friends of US imperialism.

But we must not underestimate the strength of the Thai reactionaries and their solid class affiliation with imperialism. Faced with uncertainty and insecurity, the Thai reactionary elements always turn to imperialism as

their last resort. Speaking in New York late last year, Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda, Prime Minister of Thailand, appealed a great deal for US help. He said: "South East Asia remains just as important to the United States as it ever was — and more. For if, to quote President Reagan, 'the next century is the Pacific century', then even South East Asia, which is located on the western rim of the Pacific Ocean, will constitute part of the development of the Pacific which bonds the United States to that region."

This being so, the regular presence of the American navy in the Gulf of Thailand, the new dimensions of the Cobra Gold-87 US-Thai military manoeuvres, which are moving from the Gulf onto the north east provinces around the Thai-Laotian and Thai-Kampuchean borders, and the newly established US war arms reserve stock in Thailand are small wonder.

Thailand has also seen the steady growth of the working class in a new quality. It has gained new experiences and is becoming more mature. In spite of its being relatively weak and disunited for the time being, new intrinsic changes are taking place. After a long period of trial and error, the Thai working class is now reorienting itself. More and more labour leaders grow aware of their real mission and become more critical of the ruling elements and imperialism. Bureaucratic labour leaders and secret agents of reactionary elements are expelled from labour organisations.

There is reason to hope that in the foreseeable future the Thai working class will join forces with all the other progressive elements and wage on with redoubled energies the struggle against imperialism and neocolonialism.

¹ *Wiwat* (Thai weekly), Bangkok, February 2-8, 1985, p. 25 (25 baht roughly equals US \$1. — Ed.).

² *Thairath*, Bangkok, July 5, 1984.

³ Television Channel 7, Bangkok, September 18, 1987.

⁴ See: Prof. Nikom Chandravitoon, 'We Have Lost Golden Age for Our Economy', *Kaowpiset* (Thai weekly), Bangkok, November 4-10, 1987, pp. 6-8.

⁵ *Siammai* (Thai monthly), Bangkok, August 1986.

OECS Unitary State: Who Benefits?

Who Stands To Gain From East Caribbean Countries Forming A Unitary State — And Why The Scheme Is Tenuous

Donald Ramotar — member of the CC Executive
Committee, People's Progressive Party of Guyana

LAST May Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Mr James Mitchell, dropped a virtual bombshell when he declared that the East Caribbean islands will form themselves into a single, unitary state within

two years. He made this disclosure while delivering a speech in Tortola, one of the British Virgin Islands. This was indeed a great surprise and it caught the vast majority of people totally unawares.

Since then quite a lot of discussions have been going on in the region on the merits and demerits of the proposed integration. The question of regional integration itself is not exactly a new one. Even during the colonial period Britain was, from time to time, putting forward this idea. Her wish for integration stemmed from a desire to cheapen the administrative costs involved in ruling the colonies and to make the whole region a glorified crown colony. Those early suggestions were rejected by the planter class that were operating in the various colonies.

Shortly before the attainment of independence by most of the English-speaking countries in the Caribbean, a British-supported West Indies Federation¹ was set up in 1958, but it did not last long and was dissolved in the early 1960s. What caused the uproar which followed the latest announcement was its suddenness, coming like a bolt from the blue.

Indeed there are many factors which favour the union of the Anglophone countries. We have a common language and in general a similar history. People in the region easily identify with each other and one can say that among the masses there is no hostility to integration. That is why it is impossible to find any serious politician from the Right or Left who will be unconditionally opposed to merger.

There is also an obvious need for integration in those countries, particularly in the Eastern Caribbean. The states are small both geographically and with regard to population. So clearly, merging these small states will, in theory, be beneficial to them. The merits of integration were fully expounded by those who are supporting this latest initiative announced by Prime Minister Mitchell. Mr William Demas, a prominent Caribbean economist and president of the Caribbean Development Bank (CBD), is emerging as the leading intellectual supporter of Mr Mitchell's proposal. He has, on more than one occasion, pointed to the benefits that can be gained from such a merger. In his opinion, it is not necessary to have economic integration before political union (that for him is an idea from outside the region). On the contrary, he feels that a political union will facilitate the growth of the economy by pooling the financial and human resources. He also argues that such a unitary state will increase the countries' influence in foreign affairs, etc.

One can hardly disagree with much of the points made by Mr Demas, although his position on political union before economic integration is debatable. One must, however, take note of a serious omission in his evaluation, that is the role of the United States and, to a lesser but growing extent, Venezuela in the area. Did one or both of them have anything to do with the most recent proposal?

One cannot deny that a political union is not above class for in fact classes do have various interests. This point was not touched on by many of the supporters of a single state, and it is in this context that we must look into US 'interests' in the region. Fortunately, Mr Mitchell himself did not miss that point. In his speech the Prime Minister argued that such a union will be in the interest of US security and it will facilitate loans to the region

from the United States. As the discussion continues Mr Mitchell has been throwing more 'light' on this matter. Nowadays he is talking in the all-too-familiar stereotypes of the 'threats' from the 'extreme left' and of 'communists' who would like to 'pick off the islands one by one'. He has started to parrot US spokesmen by holding forth on 'defending democracy' and on 'security', etc.

It is therefore relevant to look at what interests the US has in the region, and how it sees the Caribbean as a whole.

Since the time of the Monroe Doctrine² the US ruling class has viewed the whole continent south of its border as a natural sphere of its influence and expansion. It is this conception that led it at one time to oppose Spanish colonialism, not by any means for the freedom of the peoples, but to replace Spain and turn the countries of the region into US colonial and semi-colonial possessions.

This expansionist trend has marked all the US administrations since that doctrine was expounded. However, the Reagan regime has arguably been the most aggressive of all. On coming to power it has been carrying out the recommendations of the Sante Fé group³ which, in the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine, elaborated the course of the US towards the region. It stated, "... Even the Caribbean, America's maritime crossroads and petroleum refining centre, is becoming a Marxist-Leninist lake . . . Never before has the Republic been in such jeopardy from its exposed southern flank . . . It is time to seize the initiative . . . The hour of decision can no longer be postponed."⁴

Of course no government in the region is threatening the security of the US and the term 'Marxist-Leninist' used in that document refers not only to Communists but to any government which rejects US dictation and seeks to uphold its independence.

The US is particularly concerned with the region because of the huge investments which it has there, and because it wants to keep the area perpetually under its thumb to exploit its rich natural resources and cheap labour. America imports as much as 80 per cent of its bauxite and 60 per cent of its alumina needs from the Caribbean. It also takes away huge quantities of oil, nickel, zinc, silver, gold and other important raw materials. Many of the United States transnational oil corporations have set up refineries on various islands. Texaco operates in Trinidad and Tobago with a refining capacity of 356,000 barrels per day. Exxon in Aruba with a capacity of 420,000 barrels per day and Amerada Hess in Saint Croix (Virgin Islands) with a capacity of 700,000 barrels per day. Along with US ones, other imperialist companies from Western Europe, have over the years been setting up drugs, perfumery, electronics and other different assembly plants in the region. This is done because of the 'good investment climate' prevailing in the region, such as a relatively skilled workforce, cheap labour,⁵ very advantageous terms for foreign investors, e.g. tax holidays, etc., and a convenient geographical location.

It is not surprising therefore that by the early 1980s US direct investment in the Caribbean, excluding Puerto Rico, was some US\$22,500 million, or 65 per cent of its total investments in Latin America.

It should also be noted that in the past few years Venezuela has begun to

export a considerable amount of capital into the economies of the Caribbean islands. The ruling class there has found common interest with the US and in fact has started to speak in similar tones as their senior partner. During a recent tour of some Caribbean islands, Mr Jaime Lusinchi, President of Venezuela, is on record as saying that the economic aid which his country gives to the region is "... in part because of self-defence. We realise that whatever happens in the Caribbean affects us as well..." Just in case anyone missed the point the head of that country's aid programme, Mr Hector Hurtado, said, "We don't want a little Cuba appearing on one island and a little Cuba on another. This would affect our stability..."

From the economic point of view integration can also help the US and its imperialist allies. It offers them a united market and allows them to set up their assembly plants in one or two of the islands and export their products duty-free to the whole region. In this way also they can make some of the islands the backward appendages of the more developed ones.

This was in fact the experience with the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA)^o. In the late 1960s, the US placed some of its assembly plants in Trinidad and Tobago and in Jamaica, the two largest islands with a bigger skilled workforce, and increased its trade greatly in the region. Within two years it was able to replace Britain as the region's number one trading partner. While the two above-mentioned countries were artificially industrialised, Guyana and the small islands were drained by the transnational corporations.

Finally on this score, regional integration can give the already entrenched transnationals possibilities to keep out other foreign competitors from the region while turning local industries into dependent appendages.

Politically, too, the US has reasons to want a unitary state in the region. Since independence in the 1960s and 1970s there has been a rise in the amount of democratic and progressive parties on the Caribbean. This is natural since new tasks were arising before the people of the region. The main objective which most of them set themselves was and is to make independence really meaningful. This entailed struggling against the neocolonial regimes which Britain had left in its wake and which are today supported by US imperialism.

Many of these post-independence parties have grown in strength and have accumulated much experience. Most of their programmes call for more economic freedom and for improved social conditions for the vast majority of people. Indeed, the people of the Anglophone Caribbean do face formidable social problems, such as high unemployment, ranging from 15 to 50 per cent of the able-bodied population, poor health services, education and housing conditions, etc.

Almost all the progressive parties in these countries have been able to place their representatives in parliament and their prestige keeps growing. No doubt the highest point of this struggle was during 1979-1983, when the New Jewel Movement, headed by Maurice Bishop, took power from the corrupt neocolonial regime of Eric Gairy and steered Grenada on an independent course, which earned it the wrath of US imperialism.

In the other islands the parties have made many gains and in some cases they have become the alternative to the old regimes. In Saint Lucia, for example, the Compton government is ruling with a majority of one seat in the parliament.

The United States is not sure it can bend these parties to its liking and is therefore anxious to avoid another Grenada. In this regard a political union will help it to contain, restrict and frustrate the programme of any of these parties should they win the elections in their respective islands.

Even from the very little that was said about the form of such a union one can gather that *the old, pro-US regimes are not ready to make way*. In another speech, Mr Mitchell dwelt briefly on the form the fusion will take. His scenario provides for an elected head of state who shall appoint governors to represent him in the various islands. Obviously, the hope is that with US dollars and with the state machinery in their hands they can manipulate the elections and determine their outcome, thereby leaving out the true people's representatives from any power in the state apparatus.

Imperialism's strategic objectives in its dealings with the newly independent Caribbean states is designed *to keep them in the imperialist orbit and to preserve the capitalist system throughout the region*. For this purpose it uses not only economic and political but also military pressure. In pursuit of this goal the US has actually used its armed forces several times against the Caribbean peoples. The most recent was the wanton invasion of tiny Grenada.

For quite some time the US has been militarising the Caribbean. Puerto Rico has a very big concentration of US military forces and in fact is the headquarters of its Naval Command of the Caribbean. In 1982, the US formed a Regional Security and Defense System to exercise control over the eastern Caribbean islands. This bloc included Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados and Saint Lucia. US military advisors began training the armies of these islands in combating 'subversives' and 'international terrorism' that in fact meant the progressive and democratic forces in the region.

In militarising the region and whipping up war hysteria, Washington is seeking to accomplish several objectives. First, learning from the experience of Grenada, the US would like to avoid the condemnation of the world public, should it have to directly invade any of the islands in the future. A political unitary state will allow it to intervene militarily under the cover of it being an internal matter. Second, it is an open military threat in the hope of frightening Cuba and Nicaragua. Third, it is a way of preventing those governments which want to pursue an independent path from spending money on development because they must take account of their security and spend instead on arms. And last, but certainly not least, the US wants to justify its military presence in the region and to acquire more bases in Caribbean countries.

Another relevant matter, which is also a cause for concern, is the ideological offensive of the US in the Caribbean. Most of the news on world affairs which the people receive comes mainly from imperialist news agencies. Further, the Voice of America (VOA) radio has relay stations in the area; one such station is found in Antigua. It is possible to tune in on

medium waves to programmes from the VOA. With television the situation is the same. About 90 per cent of the TV programmes to the area come from the United States. In Guyana the situation is even worse. The country has no TV station of its own but Guyanese viewers can tune in two US stations directly via privately owned dishes which retransmit to local TV owners. There are approximately 100,000 viewers from a population of less than 800,000.

As if this is not enough, the US has intensified its work with the region's journalists, particularly since 1983. Tours to the USA are organised for the media personnel and many courses are held for various levels of journalists in the region. Addressing participants in a training course in Barbados, the director of the United States Agency for Development (USAID), Mr James Holtaway, said the following, "We would prefer to provide Caribbean citizens with training opportunities as an alternative to what Cuba might offer or the Soviet bloc might offer."

There is absolutely no doubt of the great clout which the United States wields in the region. That fact, coupled with the sudden way in which Mr Mitchell made the announcement in Tortola, without consulting even the official opposition party in his country, naturally fuelled legitimate suspicions as to who is the real sponsor of this political union proposal. *The evidence indicates that the US*, knowing of the sentiments of the people for unity, decided to take advantage of it for its own interests. The question that naturally arises is what then is the prospect for Caribbean integration and for an eventual common state?

To answer this question it is necessary to understand why the past attempts at political union and economic integration ran into trouble. It is important also to take stock of the gains we have made over the years towards this most desirable goal.

The failure of the West Indies Federation, which officially collapsed in 1962, was in essence due to the fact that it did not arise from within the region, that the steps towards it were not prepared. It was promoted mainly by the British. The Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM), which was formed in 1973 and replaced the former Caribbean Free Trade Association, is in continuous crisis. Whenever there is a meeting of the heads of state of the countries that make up this body, journalists of various shades write reams of paper on the 'health' of CARICOM, on whether it will survive. The perpetual crisis has its roots in the transnational control of the region's economy, which causes uneven development and even perpetuates the backwardness of some of these states.

It seems to me therefore that unity, which is promoted in the interest of US 'security', or on the spurious charge of a non-existent 'Cuban or Soviet bloc threat', or for the purpose of getting 'aid' from the transnational banks, is already preparing the conditions for failure.

Have all the conditions for a single Caribbean state, or even for a single state in part of the region, such as the East Caribbean islands, matured? It does not seem so. *An indispensable condition for regional unity on the level of a political union is the internal cohesion of each of its components.* A glance at the situation in these islands clearly shows that a fierce political

battle is going on; as was mentioned above, Saint Lucia is being ruled with a majority of one. If those leaders in the region were really serious about unity then one would expect them to work vigorously for a political settlement inside each island. There are unfortunately no signs that they intend to pursue such a course.

Further, *a successful and viable unity can only come about with the full involvement of the peoples in the area.* The matter must be fully discussed with them and they should be convinced of the benefits which a unified state can bring to their own lives. Doing otherwise is courting disaster.

The desire for total integration will turn into a reality when all our peoples are involved, when it becomes a movement, not only from the top but from the bottom also, with the objective of making people's lives richer in every sense of the word rather than of maintaining the stranglehold of US imperialism on the region or of preserving the status quo.

¹ It consisted of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Antigua, Montserrat, Saint Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent. — *Ed.*

² A foreign policy concept advanced by US President Monroe in a message to Congress on December 2, 1823, which related directly US growth and might to expansion in the Western Hemisphere and the conquest and annexation of new lands. — *Ed.*

³ See for details Rodney Arismendi, 'Global Madness Once More', *WMR*, No. 7, 1981; Narciso Isa Conde, 'The Decline of the Santa Fé Policy', *WMR*, No. 3, 1988.

⁴ *Estudios*, March 1981, p. 22.

⁵ A US businessman pays only one-tenth of the wages of a worker in the United States to his employee in the Caribbean.

⁶ The Caribbean Free Trade Association was set up in 1968 under a treaty signed in Saint John, Antigua, and united independent states, British possessions and British-controlled 'associated countries' of the region. — *Ed.*

surveys, letters, and diary

From Our Mailbag

'The Only Right Way'

Three Meetings Between Mongolian Revolutionaries and V. I. Lenin

I WOULD like to recount events of milestone significance for the course of the Mongolian revolution. Many *WMR* readers in other countries would

probably be interested to learn about several occasions on which representatives of the Mongolian people and our party met V.I. Lenin between 1920 and 1922.

It is well known that a major credit due to Lenin is that he devised and projected policies which might bring progressive changes to countries with pre-capitalist economic and social conditions. He is also responsible for the idea of solidarity between a victorious proletariat and oppressed nations; he stressed that "... a policy must be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements".¹

In penetratingly researching the national-colonial issue and the possibility of underdeveloped nations changing over to socialism bypassing capitalism, the great thinker wrote on more than ten occasions on problems of freedom and social progress in Mongolia, even before the October Revolution in Russia. In 1912, for instance, he listed Mongolia among countries "which are waging a revolutionary struggle for freedom".² Later, in 1916, he stressed: "We shall exert every effort to foster association and merger with the Mongolians, Persians, Indians, Egyptians . . . We shall endeavour to render these nations, more backward and oppressed than we are, 'disinterested cultural assistance' . . . we will help them pass to the use of machinery, to the lightening of labour, to democracy, to socialism."³

Meeting Lenin for the first time yet in September 1920, members of a delegation of Mongolia's revolutionary organisations asked him: "Comrade Lenin, what do you think about the establishment of a People's Revolutionary Party in our country and what is most important for us?" . . . Lenin said the only right way for every working person in your country was to fight for state and economic independence in alliance with the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia. This fight could not be carried on isolatedly, therefore the establishment of a party of Mongolian arats (herdsmen) was a pledge of success in their struggle.⁴

Lenin also emphasised that a party leading the way in a social revolution should follow class-conscious and internationalist policies and embrace the idea of solidarity with the working people of oppressor nations rather than one of hatred towards those nations. Mongolian revolutionaries used this advice to build up the ideological and organisational foundations of the MPRP, formulate its strategy and tactics in a forthcoming revolution, and bring the liberation drive of the Mongolian people in close touch with the revolutionary movement by the international working class.

On November 5, 1921, after a popular revolution won through in Mongolia, Lenin played host at the Kremlin to Mongolian plenipotentiaries Damdingiin Sukhe-Bator, Balingiin Tserendorzh, and other members of a delegation which came to Moscow to promote friendly relations between Mongolia and Soviet Russia. Asked whether the national liberation struggle in Mongolia could hold its own, the leader of the October Revolution had this to say: "I have been in the revolutionary movement myself for thirty years and I know by experience how difficult it is for any people to liberate themselves from their external and internal enslavers. Although Mongolia is a cattle-breeding country and the bulk of

her population are nomad herdsmen, she has achieved great progress in her revolution, and more important of all, has made good these successes by creating a People's Revolutionary Party of her own, whose aim is to become a mass party uncluttered by alien elements."⁵

According to Balingiin Tserendorzh, Lenin had this advice for the Mongolian comrades: "You should not be taking it easy now that you've scored a critical success. What you should do is to build up the people's party and the people's army and do all you can to secure your signal accomplishments for all time. The present situation in the world is in stark contrast to what used to be in the long-passed dark ages; the civilised nations are now seen as strong powers and the non-civilised ones as backward and weak. Our Russia has appreciably fallen behind many European nations and your Mongolia even more so, therefore you should set immense store by education, culture and industrial advancement . . . Soviet Russia has been helping Mongolia and will continue to do so in various areas. In doing so we will not be after your lands or try to infringe on your legitimate interests as the tsarist government did. Our principal goal is to aid small and backward countries and peoples under the rule of international imperialism and capitalists . . . "⁶

Later in the talk the Mongolians asked about a thing they regarded as very important for them: would it make sense for their people's revolutionary party to become a communist one? Lenin answered them in no uncertain terms: "I should not recommend it, because one party cannot be 'transformed' into another . . . The revolutionaries will have to put in a good deal of work in developing state, economic and cultural activities before the herdsman elements become a proletarian mass, which may eventually help to 'transform' the People's Revolutionary Party into a Communist Party. A mere change of signboards is harmful and dangerous."⁷

Lenin further listed things crucial for Mongolia to develop in a non-capitalist fashion: " . . . there should be stronger efforts by the people's revolutionary party and government to build up their authority and help introduce cooperative associations and new economic and national cultural forms, and to rally the herdsmen around the party and government in an economic and cultural drive. Only islets of a new economic system shaped under party and government influence could forge a new non-capitalist economic system in cattle-raising Mongolia."⁸

In early 1922 Lenin met a delegation of the MPRP and the Mongolian Revolutionary Youth League led by Baataryn Danzan and Sodnombalzhiryn Buyannemeh, who came over for a congress of Far Eastern revolutionary organisations.

Lenin's ideas helped build the scientific and political foundations of our party's strategy and use our country's endemic features to help it leapfrog a capitalist stage in its social development. Once emerging as a peasants' party, the MPRP progressively assimilated Marxism-Leninism, keeping in touch with the Russian Bolsheviks and the international communist

movement; it further used it to consolidate its ideological and organisational principles and make revolutionary changes which brought Mongolia from feudalism to socialism.

Dandaviin Dash
Cand. Sc. (Hist.)

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 146.

² Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 456.

³ Ibid., Vol. 23, p. 67.

⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 360.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See the magazine *Mongolyn Khuvsgalt zaluuchuudyn evlel*, No. 4, Ulan Bator, 1925.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, p. 361.

⁸ Ibid.

Echo Of An Event

The Stock Market: From Boom To Bust

THE stock market crash in the capitalist world at the end of 1987 was the worst in fifty years. In absolute terms, the plunges in share prices in October and November of last year were much deeper than those in the autumn of 1929. The relative figures are also formidable: 25-30 per cent in New York, and 20 per cent in Tokyo.

What is the connection between a stock market panic and the processes in production? It is mostly a reflection of general economic upheavels, but it does not have to be linked directly to them, and there are any number of examples of both cases in history. The fact is that the stock market is no more than a secondary, derivative market of securities on which there is an exchange of existing stocks and bonds, without any new money capital going into production. But the stock market manipulations can divert capital from productive use, and interact with the existing economy indirectly, through the sphere of credit and finance.

Marx says that securities are fictitious capital which has no value. Share prices fluctuate under the impact of supply and demand, and their equilibrium price is directly proportional to dividends, and inversely proportional to interest rate. The higher the income on shares and the lower the interest rate, the higher their prices, and vice versa.

From 1982 to 1987, dividends in the United States went up by 35 per cent, and the cost of credit was almost halved, while average share prices at the peak of the boom (last summer) were three times higher than those in 1982. The movement of stock market prices was in sharp contrast to the production indicators. In that same period, the Gross National Product (GNP) grew by only 19 per cent, with the growth of share prices accelerating from 1985 to 1987, that is, just when the growth of production took a sharp downturn. The contradiction between the stock market boom

and the stagnation in the economy eventually made the drop in share prices inevitable.

The stock market crash was triggered directly by the poor state of the financial and monetary spheres. Most industrialised capitalist countries have state budget deficits ranging from 2 to 11 per cent of their GNP. In the USA, the budget deficits in 1985 and 1986 rose to over \$200 billion, forcing the state to borrow vast amounts of money by selling its bonds on the money markets. That tends to raise the interest rate, and so has a negative effect on the stock market. There was good reason, therefore, why there were growing demands on the US administration to act resolutely to cut the budget deficit after the 1987 stock market crash. By agreement with the Congress, the administration announced its intention to cut its spending, including military spending, in fiscal 1988 by tens of billions of dollars. The future will show whether these promises are fulfilled.

The negative effect of the budget deficit was eased by the large influx into the USA of foreign capital, mainly from Japan and the West European countries. Much of it went to buy Federal bonds and corporate equities. This helped to cover the US balance-of-payments deficit, which last year came to \$160 billion. Within a matter of years, the USA has ceased to be an international creditor and has become a major net debtor. Up to a point, this tended to postpone the decline on the stock market. But there has been a sharp slowdown in the influx of foreign capital since last summer, and this splintered one of the props of the boom. There were also the dramatic developments on the monetary fund.

The Reagan administration decided to devalue the dollar back in the autumn of 1985, when it was assumed that the dollar was overvalued by 25-30 per cent against the West German mark and the yen. Since then, the exchange rate of the dollar has been halved, i.e., it has dropped below its purchasing power. Fearful of US dumping, competitors demanded a stabilisation of the currencies. In February 1987, the leading capitalist countries concluded the so-called Louvre Accord to maintain the dollar on the level of about 1.80 marks. However, while the quantum of US trade markedly increased the US balance-of-payments deficit continued to grow. In order to shore up the dollar's exchange rate, the central banks bought up tens of billions of US dollars. The US Federal Reserve System was forced once again to raise the prime rate. All of that caused much disturbance on the stock market.

So long as the dollar fell, foreign investors found it profitable to purchase US securities. But when interest rates began to go up once again, their mood worsened. Every fresh report of the record trade deficit was seen as the omen of yet another rise in interest rate and, consequently, of a decline in share prices. The panic on the stock market in October 1987 occurred just after one such report. In an effort to calm investors, the US authorities stopped propping up the dollar, its exchange rate dropped sharply once again, and the Louvre Accord was in shreds.

The unprecedented proportions of security speculation were also instrumental in the stock market crash. These speculations were focused on corporations in stagnant industries: steel, oil and a section of

engineering. Groups of buccaneers bought up their shares at a low price and then engaged in what came to be known as 'greenmail': they demanded a ransom of corporate boards, and whenever that was not forthcoming, they made a killing by selling off the shares at the artificially inflated prices. 'Insider dealers' were a new brand of speculator at investment banks, who made use of the confidential information available to them on corporate plans and business to create a bull market in their shares. Several such business men who had made huge fortunes through 'insider dealing' were arrested in New York and London, but got off with short prison terms.

Was the stock market panic deliberately provoked by the speculators? According to press reports, some of the big capitalists, including billionaires and some financial institutions, had sold off their shareholdings well in advance of the panic and so avoided any heavy losses. That did, of course, have an influence on the market and made it more unstable, but the objective difficulties in the financial, credit and monetary spheres were still the main causes.

The panic selling of shares instantly became worldwide, since the stock market has been globalised over the past several years, so that the securities of many leading corporations are now traded in several financial centres at the same time. Brokers specialising in share dealing have opened branches in many foreign countries. The stock market is now operating virtually round the clock: in Tokyo, it opens just after it has closed on Wall Street; then it opens in Hongkong and Singapore, and then in Zurich, Frankfurt, Paris, London, and then in New York once again. Wherever a panic starts, there is at once a chain reaction to the other centres.

The turnover on the stock market has grown so rapidly that decisions to buy or sell securities are in many cases no longer taken by people but by specially programmed computers. With computer-programmed trading (CPT) any price differential is at once spotted and converted into profit. This at once brings out the slightest differential in the prices of shares, bonds and currencies in various countries, and orders are given to buy or sell securities worth hundreds of millions and even billions of dollars. CPT has also amplified the boom and increased the proportions of the panic when share prices began to plummet.

Many specialists believe that the stock market crash will result in a slowdown in the growth of production. Some \$1 trillion of paper value has been lost by shareholders in the United States alone. For individual shareholders — and they number tens of millions — this means a reduction in money savings, and for corporations, a shrinkage of investment funds. Hence the depression of demand for consumer and producer goods. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development expects GNP growth in Western Europe and Japan to slow down, and to stop in the United States in the latter half of 1988. Project LINK prognosticators say that the next general economic downturn, which was expected in 1989, may be on this year.

Analogies have naturally been drawn with the Great Depression of 1929, which was also preceded by exceptional speculation and major disbalances in international trade and payments. There is also some similarity in the

movement of share prices. Following the sharp drop in September and October 1929, they grew once again — up until April 1930, when prices bottomed out for an even longer period. Share prices, which plunged in October and November 1987, have now also stabilised. Will they plummet once again?

There are many and basically different elements in the present situation as compared with that of 60 years ago. The stock market crash of 1929 occurred after the onset of a general decline in industrial output. Today, production is still growing, even if slowly, in all the industrialised capitalist countries, with the exception of the FRG. In the past, the credit system was more fragile and did not rely on the resources of the state. Nowadays, government agencies will throw in large amounts of money to support beleaguered big banks. Indeed, the whole system of state-monopoly regulation of the economy is far from being dismantled, although it has gone through some grave upheavels in the 1970s and 1980s.

The stability of the international financial and credit system is being undermined by the vast external debt of the less developed countries (LDC). The leading capitalist banks have recently started discreetly to write off some 'bad debts' on their balance-sheets, and that applies to loans not only to Third World countries, but also to enterprises in sectors hit by the structural crisis. The written-off losses are partially passed on to the treasury, since they are deducted from taxable profit. There are also schemes for a partial swapping of LDC debts for the equities of enterprises in debtor countries. All of that is an indication that the banks are in a hurry to hedge their positions against another bout of the stock market crisis.

The stock market crash has dealt a heavy blow at the prestige of the neoconservative governments and their economic policies. Reaganomics, Thatcherism and other versions of the 'new liberalism' have proved to be incapable of averting the crisis; indeed, they have deepened it by their large-scale military spending and state-budget deficits.

A heavy defeat has been inflicted on the idea of 'people's capitalism' which but recently appeared to be revitalised by the transfer of public-sector enterprises into private hands, including small investors, in Great Britain, France and other countries. The scheme to spread 'people's shares' among the working people was designed in expectation of a sustained stock market boom, when share values — and so the personal savings invested in them — stand to grow. Whenever share prices are stable or in decline, the small investor tends to pull in his horns.

Relatively few working people are shareholders, most of whom will be found among the opulent, in the banks, the insurance companies, investment trusts and other financial institutions. But the workers suffer sizable indirect losses from the stock market collapse because it tends to wipe out the value of the pension funds, which are invested in the securities of private corporations.

The stock market crash has dispelled the illusion that a booming financial market has a beneficial effect on the economy. It has lifted the curtain on the parasitic profiteering of the masterminds of financial swindles. It has shown that the Communists are right in demanding stringent control of speculative operations, so that the main flow of funds

should be directed into productive and social use. It was emphasised at the recent congress of the French Communist Party, for instance, that the government funds now being wasted on stabilising the franc and the stock market could be used for a substantial increase in social benefits for six million working people, and also to eliminate the deficit in the social security system.

The stock market perturbations do not directly affect the economy of the socialist countries, which take no part in the security price game, but the instability of exchange rates and the zigzags of world prices as a whole have a negative effect on their foreign trade and introduce an element of uncertainty and risk into their planned settlements in East-West trade. The socialist countries are an organic part of the world economy, and that is why they want to see it stable and developing in a balanced manner.

Michael Stanley

Against Repression And Persecution!

Stop Victimisation Of Patriots!

THE regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran is about to commit another crime: the High Council of the Judiciary has sentenced 70 patriots to die. There are several members of the Tudeh Party in the death row.

Distressing news of ever new executions, cases of torture, arrests and dismissals in our country has been pouring in without letup in the past few years. The authorities deny every right to freedom fighters and try to stamp out every seedling of dissent. Patriots are exposed to harsh repression.

When political prisoners protest against their gaolers' ruthless arbitrariness, torture becomes even more sophisticated and many die in prison. The forces of reaction are out to break the patriots' resistance. Anushrivan Ibrahimi, a member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Tudeh Central Committee, was executed after four years in prison because he had been among the organisers of actions of protest against appalling prison conditions. That was not an isolated instance: members of other progressive organisations, including the Organisation of Fedayeen of the Iranian People (Majority), die at the hands of their goalers.

The mediaeval regime without any chance of survival would like to disguise and conceal from the public its grave breaches of law. The secret service forces people doomed to die to appear on television publicly to renounce their principles and ideals. The ploys, falsification and hypocritical practices of the authorities no longer surprise anyone in our country or outside it. They use fascist methods in their bid to put down the heroic resistance of political prisoners. But all their attempts are in vain: the patriots are not broken. It has recently leaked out from behind the

prison walls that our party members, going to their deaths, cried out, "Long live the people!" and "Long live the Tudeh Party!"

Not just the 70 patriots recently sentenced to die but thousands of other freedom fighters are constantly facing mortal danger.

The Tudeh Party of Iran appeals to the world community, to all people of goodwill to raise their voices against flagrant lawlessness and in defence of the lives of political prisoners pining in Iranian jails.

Mahmud Azad

Tudeh's representative on *WMR*

***WMR* Ties**

A *WMR* delegation has attended the 12th CPS Congress in Madrid at the invitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain.

★ ★ ★

On his recent visit to *WMR* Vasil Bilak, member of the Presidium and Secretary of the CPCz Central Committee, talked to the Editorial Council staff about the problems facing the Czechoslovak Communists and answered many questions on home affairs and the latest developments in world politics and within the international communist movement.

the book scene

Reaching Out To People

A Survey of Books Published in the 'People's Library' Series in Egypt

STARTED over two decades ago, the Al-Saqafa al-Guedida (New Culture) is Egypt's only publishing house specialising in Marxist-Leninist literature. It furthers patriotic and democratic goals and promotes the ideas of scientific socialism.

The chief concern of its editors is to give Egyptian, and generally Arab readers, a clearer idea of the knotty problems of our day, unmask intrigues by imperialism, Zionism and local reactionaries, and resist exploitation and violence.

In bourgeois society progressive political books have a hard time reaching the general public. The most sought-after books in Arab countries are those on religion. Their largest readership is in Saudi Arabia. One private publisher once admitted that if some book on Islamic issues has a print-run of 5,000 copies, 2,000 of them, sumptuously designed, are normally paid for by the Saudis in advance, which is more than enough to meet the printing expenses for the whole edition.

The obsession with religious subjects is not enough proof for the self-professed singular piety and asceticism of Arab society. Characteristically enough, erotic books sell only a little less briskly.

We have referred to some of the features of the Arab book market to emphasise the difficulties the Al-Saqafa al-Guedida publishers have to cope with. Under the Sadat regime they saw no end of persecution. Their leading staff members were thrice arrested and twice prosecuted in connection with what is known as the affair of the Egyptian Communist Party.

And still the publishing house had been carrying on. It has put out fundamental works like *A History of the Egyptian Trade Union Movement* by A. M. al-Gazali, *Big Landownership in Egypt* by A. al Dassouka, *The Evolution of Landownership in Egypt* by Abdel Fattah, *A History of the Egyptian Communist Movement* by R. Al-Said (in several parts) and *A History of Socialist Ideas in Egypt*, also penned by him. Other major works feature *A Dictionary of Philosophy* by M. Wahb and *Consciousness and False Consciousness* by M. Amin el-Alem.

Recently the publishers launched a non-periodical journal *Qadaya Fikriya* (Ideological Problems). Even a cursory examination of its first five issues helps one appreciate the urgency of the subjects it deals with. Among its articles were, 'Who Is in Charge in Egypt?', 'Dependence and the Socialist Choice', 'The Crisis of the Capitalist Regime in Egypt', and 'The Egyptian Working Class'.

Beginning in February 1986, a new thematic series, 'People's Library', has come to supplement the earlier ones like 'Problems of Islam', 'Teacher Copybooks', and 'Stories'. Books in this series aim at a broad readership, have a simple language, and are readily accessible for people with very modest incomes. Their pocket size runs to between 40 and 60 pages, to be read at a sitting as it were. They examine acute social problems and the recipes offered by the left parties and organisations to deal with them. Among the contributors are normally people with left-wing views.

'People's Library' has already brought out seven books. The first of them, *February 21: Relevance for the National Movement Today*, was authored by progressive publicist **Mohammed Youssef al-Gundi**. Understanding the name of the book requires a trip back in history.

The end of World War II caused a surge of national liberation struggle in our country. In February 1946 a National Committee of Workers and Students (NCWS) was formed by the Communists, the left wing of the

Wafd Party, and patriots without any political affiliation. On February 21, several days after it came on the scene, it sponsored a nationwide strike supportive of the NCWS programme and demanding political, economic, and cultural independence for Egypt, and abrogation of the unfair Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, and an immediate withdrawal of British troops.

A fusion of national and democratic concerns, the programme was also explicitly internationalist, portraying the Egyptians' drive as part of an overall campaign by the nations for emancipation and progress. A seamen's uprising which erupted at the time in India was backed by the workers of Bombay and was against British rule. The author singles out both these events as a watershed for the Egyptian national liberation movement, which influenced its development and contributed a lot to the progressive outlook of members of the 'Free Officers' organisation, which later led to the July revolution of 1952.

The book goes on to describe the big part the Communists had in the February events of 1946 in Egypt. They found themselves well prepared for an immensely taxing agitation and organisation work. Their crowning achievement was a grouping of the democratic trade unions together in May 1946 in a Congress of Workers' Trade Unions of Egypt (CWTUE). Due to the Communists' hard work in the high and higher schools the left won an election to the students' executive committee.

The author further concedes that the work of the National Committee of Workers and Students had some shortcomings. Less than adequate attention to the concerns of the peasants, the majority of the country's population, and insufficient agitation among them helped the government ban the Committee and other progressive organisations and their publications. The mass repression started in July 1946 came to be known as a 'campaign to fight communism'.

The author lays bare the reactionary role of the Moslem Brotherhood and its links with the government and the British embassy; he strongly supports the argument that it sought to erode and break up the national liberation movement.

The book by novelist and journalist **Amina Shafiq**, *The Strike. Marking the Centenary of May 1 Celebrations*, is, as the title shows, about a great holiday of proletarian solidarity. In this context she examines why the Egyptian working class is deprived of the right to strike won by the world proletariat in a long gruelling fight. The point is that the authorities not just dismiss this right but actually equate strike action with a criminal offence. A law introduced under Sadat even prescribes life hard labour for any striker. Even though a strong outcry led to its abolition the government still considers striking a criminal offence. Railwaymen who stayed away from work to protest over the management's arbitrariness were arrested. They had spent several months in prison before being cleared of their charges, but the president of the republic overruled the decision and ordered a retrial.

The book shows that strikes are just one element of organised struggle, with workers resorting to them only in extreme cases, when all other attempts at compromise with the management come to nothing. One instance of it, the author stresses, were strikes in factories at Al Mahallah

al Kubra in 1976 and in the ISKO textile mills in 1986, which the authorities put down with a heavy hand. The problem of the right to strike to advance the working people's concerns is still a major political focus in Egypt.

Another reputed publicist, **Gamal al-Sharqawi**, made a further addition to 'People's Library' with his book, *Egypt Can Export Wheat*. In it he belies claims by some authorities that inasmuch as Egypt is buying 80 per cent of the grain it needs from the US it should necessarily submit to US political, economic, and military leverage.

The author's message is: our country could grow enough wheat for home use and for export. He cites prominent specialists who contend that this would primarily require changes to the purchase prices. They are truly negligible — the government simply is ruining the peasants, forcing them to abandon growing wheat while paying a lot for its exports. Big landowners prefer to produce and export more lucrative crops.

The Peres-Khalil Project by **Fouad Moursi**, who is prominent in the National Progressive (Left) Party of Egypt, unmasks the reactionary rationale behind a plan for a common Arab-Israeli market with the US financial backing.

Dubbed after Shimon Peres, current Israeli foreign minister, and M. Khalil, a former Egyptian prime minister, the project is to 'boost' economic development in the Middle East. It is planned ten years ahead and should build up an economic development basis in some Middle East states, among them oil producers recently hard hit by plummeting oil prices. A special fund of \$30 billion has been set up for it. Donations of \$3 billion a year are to come from the seven leading capitalist nations led by the US. This money will help build projects approved by the fund founders.

What this plan aims at the book emphasises, is to make things easier for the Israeli economy, now heavily intertwined with various transnationals, to become predominant throughout the Arab region. As early as the 1970s this expansionist idea was rejected out of hand by the Arabs and seemed to have faded into oblivion. But Egypt's escalating foreign debt and its search to end the economic doldrums have prompted certain quarters in Cairo to get it off the shelf. As the author sees it, it will prove a non-starter anew.

April 1987 saw the appearance of *Electoral Laws in the Balance*, a book by **Ahmed Taher**, a trained lawyer. In it he looks at three basic state documents regulating the nation's electoral system (on elections to the People's Assembly, the Consultative Council, and local authorities). His conclusion is that they guarantee political predominance to only one, currently ruling party, while banning some other parties, say, the Communist Party, from launching their candidates. The citizens are in fact denied the possibility to elect, nominate their candidates, and air their views, which contradicts both the country's Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The author supports moves enabling national elements to form their own parties and organisations and securing basic constitutional freedoms for all citizens.

Women Will Not Be Household Slaves is **Amina Shafiq's** latest contribution to 'People's Library'. Chair of the Alliance of Progressive

Women, she defends the Egyptian women's right to education and work and ridicules the reactionaries' attempts to blame women's flagging attention to their homes for many social ills like unemployment, corruption, drug addiction, an overloaded public transport, etc. What is actually at the root of these troubles, the author explains, is the country's present system, urging the women to fight still more forcefully for their emancipation.

Egypt and the Arabs by prominent writer **Mahmoud Amin al-Alem** came out in early 1988. In it he gives the lie to the people speculating on Egypt's historical and cultural identity. They are out to prove, he notes, that our country's interests have nothing to do with those of other Arabs and urge stronger ties not with the latter but with 'civilised European states and Israel'. The author leaves no doubt as to who these quasi-historians are taking their cue from.

Originally the plans were for regular 'People's Library' publications. Their editions (or at least the greater part of them) were to be sold on the home market. But owing to the immense working strains faced by the publishers, financial barriers, inadequate advertising, and various harassment, only seven books have come out yet. It is gratifying, though, that the 5,000 copies of each edition have sold out, even though partly in other Arab states.

'People's Library' is a fresh departure and requires innovative policies. It should be guarded against the pervasive laws of the book market. The Al-Saqafa al-Guedida publishers are doing their best to help their readers and activists not only to distribute the books but to come up with their own contributions to this truly popular venture.

Mohamed Magdi Kamel
member of the CC Political Bureau,
Egyptian Communist Party

In Search Of A Way Out

Robert S. McNamara, *Blundering into Disaster, Surviving the First Century of the Nuclear Age*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1986, 212 pp.

WHAT seemed a utopia not so long ago is beginning to materialise. Of course, no drastic turn has been accomplished as yet in working towards a nuclear-free world. The dogmas of the past are still far too strong and the idea of nuclear weapons as a guaranty of stability is still viable. However, progress is indisputable. The treaty on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles signed during Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to the USA is an important step in this direction: it meets the interests of all nations, as it raises the level of security on a global scale.

Small wonder therefore that the Soviet-American Summit has evoked broad response and approval in the world. For Moscow its results are a logical consequence of the new world outlook characteristic of Soviet foreign policy, whereas for Washington they have been brought about by the influence of the realistically-minded forces in the country. Among them is Robert McNamara, the author of the book *Blundering into Disaster. Surviving the First Century of the Nuclear Age* and a leading authority in US nuclear policy. He has the experience of heading the Pentagon, under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. As US Defense Secretary from 1961 to 1968, he was directly involved in working out and implementing the course that has brought mankind to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe.

He frankly admits in his book that the past decisions that seemed 'rational or inescapable' to him proved faulty (see p.5) and calls on the current Administration cardinally to revise its nuclear policy. Describing the baneful stake on short-term technological superiority and on 'absolute' weapons, he concludes: "But the US advantage has been temporary . . . The US innovations have been matched quickly by the Soviet Union and the arms race has escalated to yet a higher level" (pp. 60-61).

It is indicative that important decisions on developing the US strategic potential "were speculative, based on incomplete, often contradictory, and constantly changing information" (p.53). For instance, John Kennedy made the so-called missile gap central to his election campaign. McNamara admits that there was no such gap whatsoever; on the contrary, the US had at the time an unquestioned advantage: it had 68 intercontinental ballistic missiles (IBMs) in 1961, while the USSR had only a few. The missile lag hullabaloo was the outcome of a deliberate distortion of facts by the intelligence estimates from the US Air Force aiming to justify new arms race programmes. "We misjudged Soviet intentions," the author writes (p. 54).

There have been many such misjudgements when the US was leaning 'toward worst-case assumption'. The former Pentagon chief is now forced to deplore their high cost — "the development of ridiculously large arsenals and missed opportunities to negotiate agreements to reduce them" (p. 59).

McNamara has been able to look at the past experience critically, while the Washington powers that be continue to hatch plans in a bid to gain nuclear superiority. Administration leaders make groundless claims that the Soviet Union has achieved an edge in strategic armaments and continues building up its nuclear potential, while the USA is trying to 'contain' the development of that of its own. This spurious postulate leads to the conclusion that any arms control agreement with Moscow is pointless. Citing concrete figures, the author shows that there is rough parity between the two countries in the number of warheads, both strategic and tactical. He draws on the testimony of three former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US Armed Forces, including the current JCS chairman, Admiral William Crowe, that there is parity in the field of strategic forces. Even the special commission set up on President Reagan's instructions in 1983 failed to find any 'window of vulnerability', that is, the danger that American land-based ballistic missiles could be destroyed in their silos by a surprise enemy attack. "Clearly, the military experts do not concur in the Administration's warnings of American inferiority," the author concludes (p. 43).

At the same time the author admits that the Soviet Union has every ground for concern, taking into consideration the structure of the US strategic forces, the trends of the US military technological development, plans to build up a first-strike capability worked out by the US Air Force command way back in 1962 and the ensuing manufacture of MX missiles in accordance with those plans.

Washington's current nuclear weapons programme, the biggest in the past twenty years, also causes concern in the Soviet Union. "We are," McNamara warns, "on the verge of a dramatic escalation of the arms race — an escalation to levels that will be more and more difficult, if not impossible, to control" (p. 79).

The former Pentagon chief sees a way out of the existing situation in the resolute reduction of the US and Soviet nuclear potentials and the change of course by the two countries towards ensuring mutual security. He is critical of President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), advertised by its supporters as a means of deterring a nuclear war. According to him, the SDI will merely open new channels for the arms race and lead to the militarisation of outer space. The SALT I and SALT II accords will become the first victim of that programme, while any new agreement will be altogether unthinkable. Arms control and the Star Wars programme are absolutely incompatible.

The conclusions are indeed convincing. Washington's intention to continue developing the SDI programme remains the chief obstacle to reaching an agreement on major strategic nuclear force reductions.

And yet McNamara was unable fully to overcome the constraints of the ideas of the past. While sharing the Soviet conviction of the need to eliminate nuclear weapons, expressed in Mikhail Gorbachov's statement of January 15, 1986 (see p. 86), he deems it desirable, though hardly possible because the danger of concealing weapons and of cheating and hence the danger of nuclear blackmail remains.

The book prompts the conclusion that only new political thinking resting on the principle of trust among states and the recognition of the impossibility of resolving political problems by military means will ensure mankind a stable peace on Earth.

Henry Richards

Courage, Willpower And Duty Challenge Separatism

Darshan Singh 'Canadian', *Terrorism in Punjab. Selected Articles and Speeches*, Edited by Satyapal Dang. Patriot Publisher, New Delhi, 1987, 110 pp.

THE appearance of this book and its contents are inseparable from the situation in India's Punjab State on the Pakistani border. Gangs of Sikh terrorists operating in that state with broad outside support are seeking the secession of Punjab from India and the establishment of a separate state, 'Khalistan'.

Much more than anybody else, Punjab's Communists have stood up to the Khalistani terrorists over several years now. They have combated the cult of secessionism and the inhuman killings of innocent people of all communities. They have exposed the evil designs of the terrorists, the anti-national essence of their activities and their links with the imperialists and the Pakistani military dictatorship.

It is the Communist Party on its own, in cooperation with the CPI(M) and in some later instances with some of the Naxalite¹ groups, that has held state and district level mass rallies, public meetings and peace marches. The working class and the trade unions have been vigorously rallied into these mass actions. Both Hindus and Sikhs have unitedly participated in them. This campaign began even at a time when no other party dared to hold a public meeting in Punjab due to terrorist intimidation. Because of the persistent efforts of the CPI — as it was quite clear that Communists' efforts alone would not turn the tide in the near future — later some all-party mass rallies with the Congress(I) also participating were held.

No wonder the Communists have become the special targets of terrorists. At the time of writing fifty-three Communist leaders and functionaries have fallen victims to the separatist assassins' bullets. Thirty-eight of these martyrs belonged to the CPI. Twelve were members of the

CPI(M). Three came from Naxalites. A number of secular-minded leaders and functionaries of some other parties were also victims of terrorist murder in these years. But the Communists' toll is the heaviest.

CPI leader Darshan Singh Canadian, author of the present volume, was the tallest of those who fell martyrs. He was in the thick of the intense struggle Punjab's Communists have been waging to politically mobilise the masses, particularly the rural Sikh masses, and to isolate the terrorists. He was therefore high on their hit list. He was gunned down on September 25, 1986, while returning to his native village after addressing a mass rally in Amritsar, one of the storm centres of the terrorists.

The book was published after his death. Its first part contains major speeches and articles by Darshan Singh and the second, recollections of him by his friends and fellow communists. There are also a few verses devoted to his memory in the book.

Darshan Singh went to Canada at the early age of seventeen and worked there as a lumberman (hence 'Canadian' attached to his name). He soon became an active trade unionist and then a Communist. He held leading positions in the Communist Party of Canada. On his return to India in 1948, he plunged into the activities of the then underground CPI. In later decades he rose in the party to be a member of the National Council and was the secretary of the Punjab State Council for four years. During the last few years he was extremely ill. Yet when the Punjab crisis aggravated, he plunged into the political campaign.

What was unique about Darshan Singh's campaign speeches? A perusal of the book gives the answer. They were a telling exposure of both Sikh and Hindu communalists. As a Marxist, he was fully aware that all religions ultimately became a tool in the hands of the exploiter. At this moment a real attempt is being made to turn Sikhism into a tool in the hands of pro-imperialist and reactionary separatist forces. Darshan Singh confronted such efforts by invoking the progressive, humanistic origins and traditions of the Sikh religion. And that message reached the very hearts of the vast Sikh masses who listened to him. It was beginning to have some impact on their consciousness.

The Sikh movement which arose in the 15th and 16th centuries was an inseparable part of the *Bhakti* movement of the renaissance (p.42). It was a progressive movement against caste oppression of the Hindu society and the fanatic despotism of the feudal Muslim kings and nobility. It was a powerful protest movement in a religious form. It did not differentiate between Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims. Tracing this origin of Sikh religion, Darshan Singh underlines that the basic principle of Sikhism is equality and mutual love of humankind. He notes that in the entire teaching of Sikh Gurus, there is not the slightest hint of any ill feeling against any religion, community or caste, that the *Guru Granth* (Sikh scriptures) contain verses composed by Muslim and Hindu saints. He reminds his audience: Sikh religious ideology is based on equality of and justice for all people. The holiest of Sikh shrines, the Golden Temple, was welcome to all irrespective of caste and religion.

As against this what are Khalistanis offering in the name of Sikh religion? The extremist Sikh organisations have declared that Hindus,

Communists, such Sikh sects as Nirankaris, Namdharis and so on (they believe in living Guru, which is forbidden to orthodox Sikhs) are enemies and those among Sikhs who oppose Khalistan are traitors. And "the terrorists track down each individual opponent of Khalistan, try to kill him and, if possible, his family even. The readers should judge for themselves whether these Sikhs are those of the Gurus or they belong to Aurangzeb",² poses Darshan Singh (p. 49).

The author evokes the glorious revolutionary traditions of Punjab with its legendary heroes of the Ghadar Party like Baba Wasakha Singh, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna and a host of others. They were Sikhs. But they fought against British imperialists for the country's freedom. Several of them went to the gallows, others suffered very long prison terms in the Andaman islands penitentiary. These patriots were ostracised by the Khalistani Sikhs of those days who controlled the Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple). The present-day Khalistanis follow them, do the bidding of the imperialists and their hangers-on, the rich and reactionary Sikh gentry settled in the US, UK and Canada. Darshan Singh convincingly presents his case.

The Khalistanis and unfortunately even the moderate Akali Party mix religious matters and politics. Besides, the Golden Temple and Gurudwaras (Sikh places of worship) have been converted into armed camps. They have become shelters for all sorts of scoundrels, terrorists and smugglers. This uneasy and disastrous mix of religion and politics has drenched the soil of Punjab in innocent blood. Politics has degenerated into senseless sectarian frenzy and murder. Hence the Communists insist on separation of religion and politics. This is a key focus in their mass campaign in Punjab. Here Darshan Singh points out that founders of Sikh religion and of the Golden Temple never used these holy places as bases even when they had to fight with arms against the Moghul power.

Canadian concedes that Sikh psyche has been hurt by the entry of the army into the Golden Temple, the Delhi riots of 1984, the non-implementation of the Rajiv Gandhi-Longowal Punjab Accord and several other things. However, he urges the Sikh masses to calmly ponder over how things came to such a pass. Again he reminds them quoting solid facts that the Sikhs are not a persecuted minority in the country. They form just 1.5 per cent of the population. But they are 8 per cent of the Indian Administrative Service officers, 22 per cent of the Army officers. In some of the technical services in the Defence their share is as high as 45 per cent (p. 56).

Well, despite all this, if they persist, can the Khalistanis succeed in dividing the country? Canadian answers the question with the emphatic no: India is facing many acute problems of poverty, unemployment, corruption, communalism and so on. At the same time it has consolidated as a strong state with solid achievements in the fields of the economy and politics since independence. As a result of capitalist development it has become one unified market. Its people have a clear political and anti-imperialist consciousness. "In this situation no separatist terrorism can defeat the strength of the Indian people" (p. 57). Besides, the majority of the Sikhs themselves also do not stand for separation. Nor do they support

the terrorists' killings. No wonder more Sikhs have become victims of their attacks of late. In sum Darshan Singh convincingly exposes the slogan of Khalistan for which inspiration comes from the imperialists and their hangers-on about whom, he says, "it must be accepted that the US and Pakistan are no friends of the Sikh masses" (p. 57).

What emerges out of the volume is the many facets of the Communists' sustained struggle in Punjab. In it the Communists have also begun performing the ideological task of critically reinterpreting the past, as is reflected in some of the author's articles in the book.

In a brilliant introduction to both the book and its legendary author, Satyapal Dang, a member of the National Council of the CPI and another leader high on the terrorist hit list, painstakingly traces and analyses the development of the Punjab problem and the role of the Communists in it. Analysing the Anandpur Sahib resolution of the Akali Party, which served as an inspiration to the separatists, he says that "the essence of this resolution is a theocratic Punjab within India with a very weak centre and with no common economy . . . It is a demand for a virtual Khalistan, in which the rural vested interests, grown economically powerful as a result of the Green Revolution, would rule the roost" (p. 5).

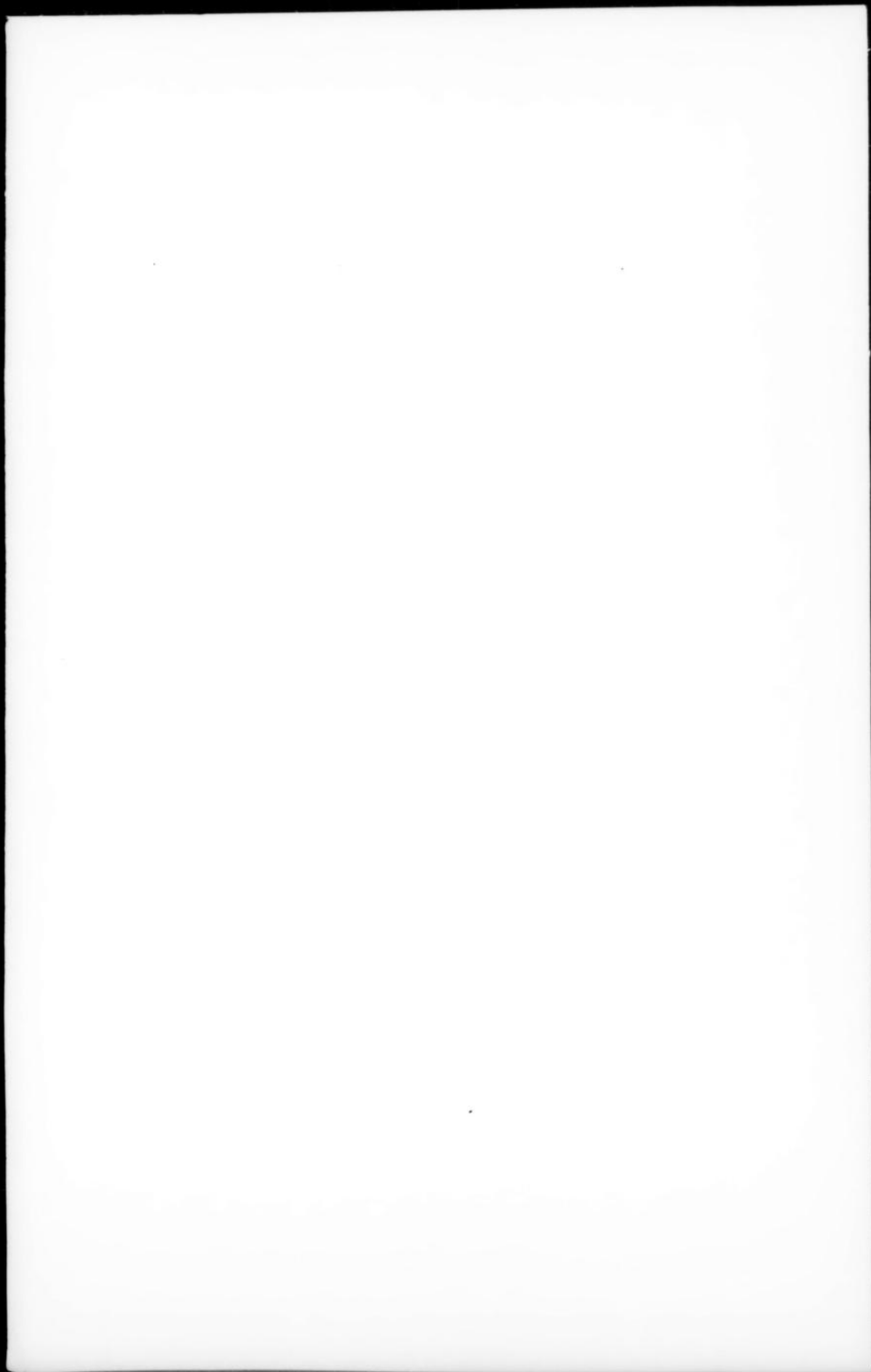
There is a very moving human document in this volume. This is the letter written by Baldev Singh Mann, a CPI (M-L or Naxalite) leader, to his baby girl on hearing about her birth. He was gunned down by the terrorists within a week of his writing the letter and barely thirty hours after the murder of Darshan Singh. The letter reveals the fine Communist and human qualities of the fighter and martyr, Baldev Singh. The Communist in him revolts and fights against the prejudices nursed in Indian (Punjabi) society against the arrival of a female child in the family and stands four-square for women's equality. In the midst of the intense struggle, he writes: "If we fail to win this struggle in my lifetime, then, my daughter, endeavour hard to join the ranks of our fighting people for truth and justice. I do not want you to be a Sikh, a Hindu, or a Muslim. Try first and foremost to be and INSAAN. Let not these divisions divide your human qualities, your human virtues" (p. 109).

All told, this book serves as a powerful weapon in the struggle against Khalistani terrorism. It also gives the reader a deeper insight into what is at stake in Punjab and how Indian Communists are tackling it.

Unni Krishnan
member, National Council,
Communist Party of India

¹ 'Naxalites' is the general term by which CPI (Marxist-Leninist) groups (there are several of them) are known in India. The name derives from the Bengal village of Naxalbari, the scene of a peasant revolt in 1969, led by an extremist Communist group which split off the CPI(M).

² Aurangzeb, a ruler of the Moghul Empire (1658-1707) who was intolerant of non-Muslims.



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.



