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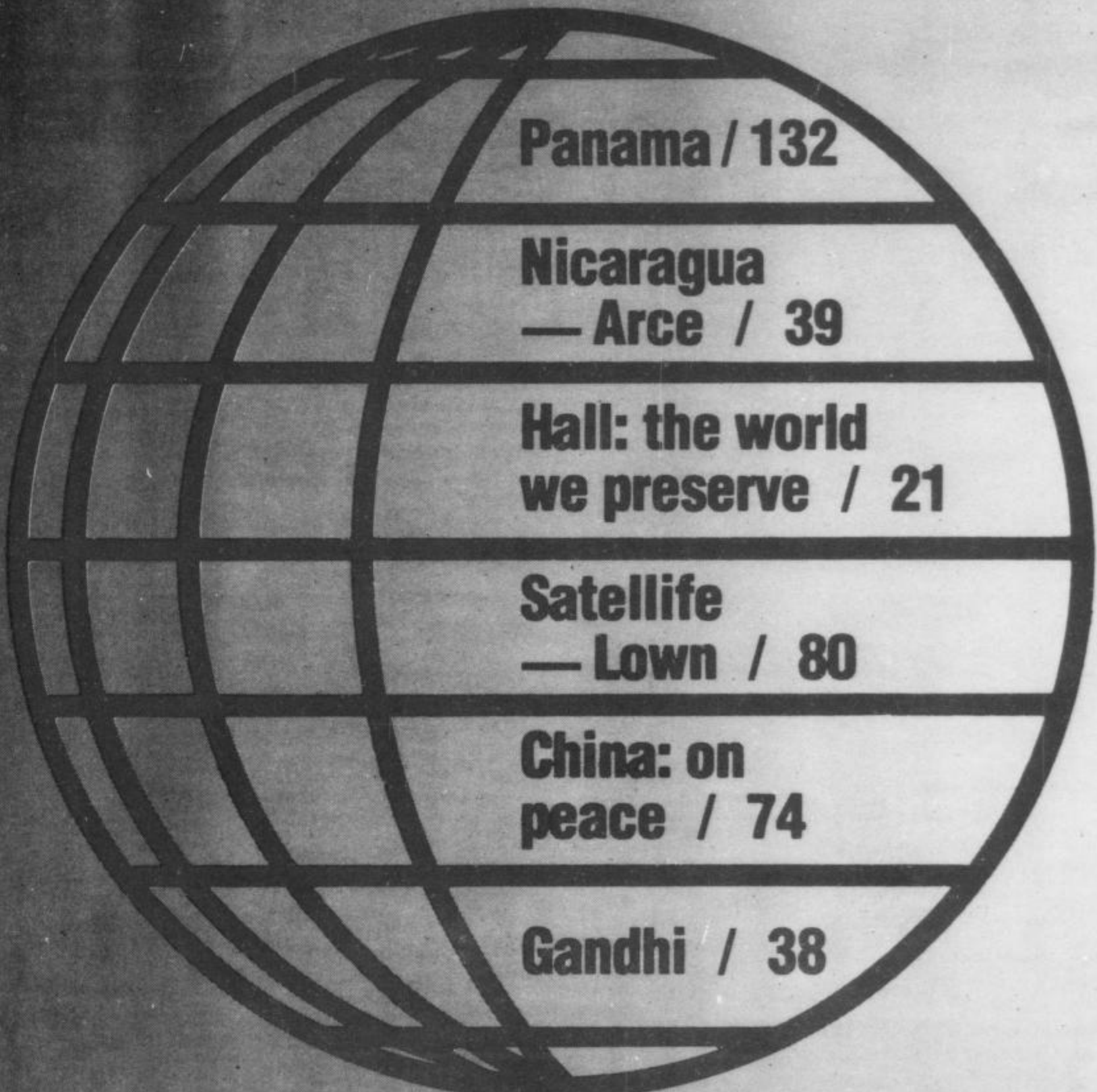
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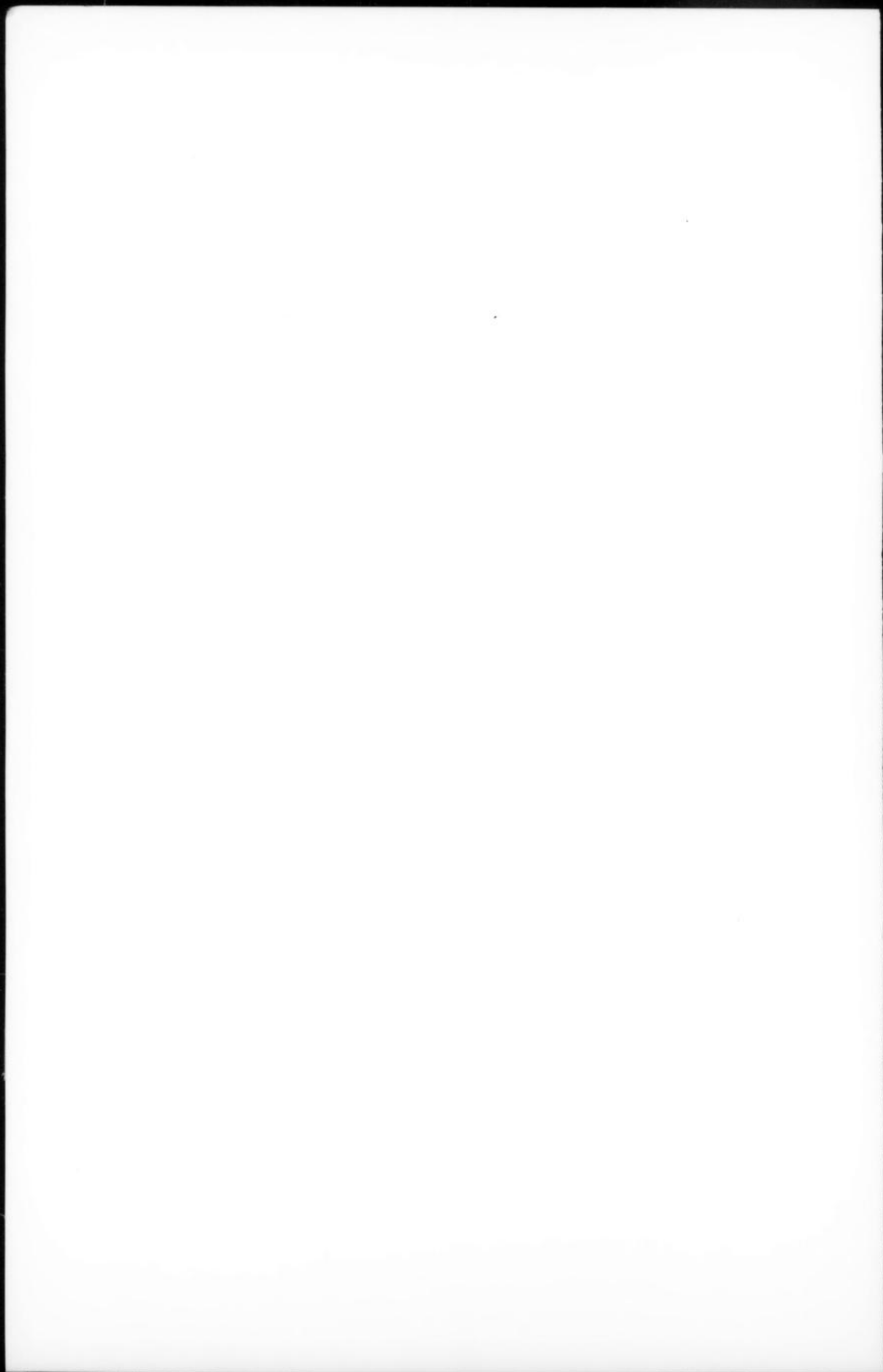
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Internationalism According To Marx: Traditions And Our Day

Ezekias Papaioannou — CC
General Secretary, Progressive Party of
the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL)

KARL MARX was born 170 years ago, and he had only a handful of men and women around him when he enunciated the ideas of proletarian internationalism in the middle of the nineteenth century. Nowadays, immense masses of men and women all over the world respond on May Day to his call: "Workers of All Lands, Unite!", and that is only one eloquent indication of the truly universal spree of the ideas of the working people's international solidarity since they were first formulated by the founder of scientific socialism. Internationalism has won the hearts and minds of hundreds of millions and has become a mighty driving force of social progress, the struggle for peace, and the national liberation movement.

It is of especial significance for us, Communists of a small country which gained its sovereignty a relatively short time ago, a sovereignty still markedly limited by foreign occupation and dependence on imperialism. The international support of the socialist countries, the Communist and democratic movements has been and continues to be an exceptionally important factor of the Cypriot people's liberation struggle, in which it is confronted by internationally organised circles of imperialist reaction. Indeed does any country or people now lie outside the dense network of international economic, political, military, ideological and cultural ties pervading the relations between states, the interdependent and contradictory world of ours?

What is the place of proletarian internationalism within the structure of these ties? How does it relate to other internationalist views? Is it the same as it was in Marx's lifetime? Or has it, perhaps, changed substantially, and

The author died on April 10, when this article was at the printers. — *Ed.*

if it has, in what way? These are more than doctrinal questions: we believe that they have a direct bearing on the social struggle in practice. On the answers to these questions largely depend the formulation and pursuit by the Communists of their political line, and the nature of their relations with actual and potential allies at home and abroad.

Dialectical Development: From Utopia to Science

Proletarian internationalism has gone through a long and intricate evolution: from the workers' vague notions of their place in the world to a coherent system of ideological principles from a 'romantic sense of belonging to the worldwide brotherhood of men of labour to a scientific theory, a clear awareness of the unity of interests and goals of the working people of different countries. And here *Marx's creative activity marked an epoch*. On his own, and together with Frederick Engels, he formulated the whole set of fundamental principles of proletarian solidarity, which remain meaningful for the revolutionary forces to this day.

The evolution of proletarian internationalism bears the imprint of the historical conditions in which the working class movement has developed. Class action by the working people in the first half of the nineteenth century already showed that the proletarians' struggle was internationalist, but in that period the working class of the various countries — small in numbers, nationally divided and politically unorganised — did not yet have a clear awareness of its common goals and interests regardless of national distinctions.

The ideas of international solidarity, like those of socialism as a whole, were pervaded with utopianism. They were expressed in cosmopolitan projects for a World Republic, a Confederation of Nations, etc., which were not addressed to the oppressed classes but to the whole of bourgeois society, and did nothing to imply struggle by the internationally united working people but activity by reformists proclaiming "All Men Are Brothers!"

In contrast to "such chimerical sentimentalities"¹, Marxism put forward *an internationalist conception in the light of its analysis of the actual relations between classes under capitalism* Marx demonstrated that internationalism, an historical and social trait of the proletariat, implied the need for the workers' international cohesion, which was dictated by objective factors determining the development of society. What are these factors? Are they still there?

Marx held that proletarian internationalism was determined by the common economic and social condition of the workers in various countries within the system of bourgeois social relations; the existence of a common class adversary, a fact which called for joint action by the national contingents of the working class; the unity of their vital interests and goals, and their international mission of liberating mankind from every form of exploitation and of building a society based on social justice. Have these factors remained unchanged? Of course not.

The working people and their working conditions have changed. A worker in, say, Great Britain, the classical country of capitalism in the mid-nineteenth century where Marx got the basic facts for his social studies,

would have regarded as fantastic the changes that have taken place in the condition of his descendants today. Indeed, what would he, socially downtrodden and without any rights at all, have had in common with the modern British worker, who often has a car, a colour TV set, and other fantastic consumer goods, a worker with then inconceivable civil rights, with the protection of his political and trade union organisations, and so on? Perhaps the only thing the two have in common is that the worker was then and remains today an object of capitalist exploitation, a person who is socially and, in effect, politically unfree. That is something capitalism hands on to the worker intact both in time over many generations, and in space, wherever it remains dominant in society.

The workers' class adversary has also changed, having become stronger, more united and subtle. But has his social nature changed at all? Not in the least. The bourgeoisie was then, and is now, a class of exploiters, and the changes that have occurred in its condition have merely increased the need for the working people's international cohesion because of the internationalisation of capital, the emergence of transnational corporations, imperialist integration, and the coordination by the reactionary forces of their acts in the world arena. The relations between the working class and capital continue to be *antagonistic*, and the ongoing changes merely make their struggle more acute, compelling either side to strengthen their international class solidarity to the utmost.

The historical mission of the working class also remains international, although its various contingents are at different stages in realising it. This mission is indivisible: there are no different missions of the working class, say, for the working people of the socialist countries and for the working people of the capitalist countries. The differences spring only from the time sequence in transition from capitalism to socialism and do not in any way erode the community of interests and goals of the working class of all the countries.

Summing Up Experience, Synthesizing the New

Indeed, the world has changed beyond recognition. The working class movement and mankind as a whole are faced with new problems, and the concrete forms and perspectives of the revolutionary renewal of society now appear in a different light to that in which nineteenth-century Marxists saw them. But none of these changes mean a departure from proletarian internationalism. On the contrary, *the need for the unity of the Communists and all the other progressive and peace forces*, and for deepening and developing the internationalist traditions of the working class movement is even more pronounced. There is more meaning today in these words of Marx's: "Disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts".²

As a man whose adult life — and it spans several decades — has been closely bound up with the working class, anti-fascist and national liberation movements, I have seen for myself how right Marx is.

To this day, we, fighters of the international brigades who are still alive, continue to feel the bitterness of defeat in the Civil War in Spain. The main reason was, of course, the lack of unity among the anti-fascist and democratic forces within the country. But there is more to it than that. It was a war which undoubtedly showed the loftiest specimens of internationalist solidarity and its tremendous potentialities. Still, the scale of the international support of the Spanish anti-fascists was inadequate. If the Social Democrats, all the workers and all the democratic parties and organisations had displayed the profound and effective solidarity of the Soviet Union and the Communists of many countries, the Spanish Republic would surely have scored a victory.

The example of Cyprus is instructive in this context. It clearly shows how closely the interests of reactionary circles in various countries are intertwined, and how intensely they coordinate their policies in the international arena. The Cyprus problem originated from an extremely intricate interaction of factors: reckless action by Cypriot and Greek reactionaries, the Turkish occupation, the intrigues of Great Britain, which has military bases on the island, and scheming by the United States and NATO. The concrete political objectives of these forces are far from being identical in every respect, but they have a common denominator: the interests of international imperialism, which regards a militarised Cyprus as an important element of its regional and global strategy. The military bases on the island are a threat to the Arab and the socialist countries and serve the neoglobalist urges of imperialism in a vast region. That is why our struggle for the demilitarisation of Cyprus is of international significance. That is why there is a spreading international movement of solidarity with this struggle.

There are a great many similar cases today and throughout history, and they show very well that, the importance of internationalism for social progress has, in fact, steadily grown since Marx's time, and that is quite natural, for proletarian internationalism is not a pipe dream. It is more than an element or aspect of the theory of socialism: it pervades the whole revolutionary activity of the working class, both theoretical and practical. That is how Marx saw it, and his doctrine originated and has developed as a summing-up of the international experience of the working class movement and an expression of its international interests. In this sense, the whole history of Marxism is the history of the origination and development of proletarian internationalism, which has incorporated all the new elements of social practice.

Connection of the International and the National

For the first time in the history of socialist thought, Marx formulated the problem of the correlation between the national and the international in the working class movement, and showed the scientific approach to its solution. The relevance of the problem was determined by the developing internationalisation of the peoples' economic and social life, on the one hand, and by the rise of their struggle for freedom and independence, on the other.

The tradition in which the Communists regard national and international

tasks in close connection with each other stems from Marx, and it is an approach which reflects the objective dialectics* of the international working class movement which has one social substance and a great many diverse forms. The blend of the international and the national in this development is not given once and for all to suit all nations and periods. It depends on the historical epochs, the character of the social system in a country, the level of economic and social development, and other concrete conditions and specific features.

Marxism implies the creative application of the general principles of revolutionary theory in each concrete historical situation, painstaking consideration of the national specifics of individual countries and peoples, and the search for new methods of struggle and new forms of international cooperation of the working class and its political and trade union organisations.

According to Marx, the working people's solidarity is inseparable from their patriotism. He rejected bourgeois nationalism as an ideology hostile not only to proletarian internationalism but also to the people's patriotism. He kept stressing that *the working class is the true spokesman for the national interest and the people's patriotic feelings*, and that after its victory the unity of the nation is not to be abolished, but, on the contrary, organised and consolidated on new political and social principles.

Marx and Engels took a consistent stand for the principles of international solidarity of the working people and showed that these were incompatible with nationalism and chauvinism. They also attacked various attempts to substitute national nihilism for proletarian internationalism. Their idea that a people oppressing other peoples cannot be free is still meaningful to this day. They assessed the internationalism of various socialist trends according to their deeds, to the extent to which they took part in the revolutionary struggle, and took a critical view of loud declarations. As the ideological and political leaders of the First International Marx and Engels noted that one of its great goals was "to make the workmen of different countries not only *feel* but *act* as brethren and comrades in the army of emancipation".³

Lenin did much to develop Marx's internationalist ideas. He not only worked out the coherent doctrine of proletarian internationalism, which he organically linked to all the component parts of Marxism, but also successfully translated the doctrine into the political organisation and revolutionary activity of the working class. He applied Marx's ideas of proletarian internationalism to the formulation of the basic policies of social democracy in Russia, to the building of a new type of party with its own strategy and tactics; he formulated the programme and policy of the working class on the nationalities question and the principles and norms of relations between the proletarian parties and their international cooperation.

When considering the international and national factors as a dialectical unity, Lenin said that revolutionary practice was the supreme touchstone of their correct blend in the policy of the Marxist party in various historical situations. This idea, far from reducing, enhances the significance of the working people's international solidarity, while increasing the role of the

national factor in the working class movement, and sets before the Communists the need to intensify the struggle for winning over the majority of the people. A working class party fighting for decisive influence on the nation's political and social life naturally attaches great importance to national problems. We reject as absurd the attempt by leftist elements to present AKEL's fulfilment of its patriotic duty as a manifestation of nationalistic trends.

Experience shows that in a country like ours any political organisation which fails to fully reckon with the national factor is doomed to social isolation as a sectarian group. That is why from the very outset AKEL has led the struggle for our people's liberation from the colonial yoke, for political rights and liberties, for economic and social progress, and for the interests of the workers, employees, peasants and all the other working people. Since it was formed and to this very day our party has worked hard to unite the people and has acted as tireless and consistent defender of the independence of a united Cyprus and as the standard-bearer of anti-imperialist patriotic unity, which meets the needs of social progress.

AKEL's activity has helped to rid the workers, peasants and other working people of intolerable poverty and privation and raise them to the level of conscious fighters and active participants in political life. AKEL has become an organisation with thousands of members and a strong political party thanks to the profound loyalty to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism and the selfless dedication of the Communists, who are in the front ranks of the struggle by the working people. We seek to improve our activity and to take due account of changes at home and abroad by adapting to these the forms, methods and style of our work, the language and quality of our propaganda, the approaches to various social strata, especially to the working people, the young, women and the working intelligentsia.

Consistent Patriotic Stand

The Communists have brought a great deal to the general democratic movement: the strength of their organisation, their scientific world outlook and their ties with the international working class movement. But they have also gained a great deal: the motivations for their arguments and policy, the experience of struggle for democracy, and new forms of action produced by the masses in the course of social struggle.

AKEL is now fighting for a withdrawal from Cyprus of the occupation troops of Turkey and of other foreign troops, the elimination of all foreign bases, for a rapprochement between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and a peaceful, just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus issue without any imperialist interference, i.e., for a truly independent, non-aligned and demilitarised Cyprus.

The party's consistent patriotic stand and its efforts to defend the interests of the people made a decisive contribution to the victory of the democratic, patriotic forces in last February's presidential elections. Life has shown the correctness of the decision taken by AKEL's 16th Congress in November 1986 to achieve the broadest possible unity of these forces and to nominate from among them a common candidate who could stand

up for the people's interests and take the Cyprus problem out of the impasse. The election of Georgios Vassiliou as president signifies a defeat for reaction and opens the possibility for a government policy meeting the vital needs of the society.

Our party has been working for the solution of our national problems in the context of the general tasks of the international working class movement. We believe that the Communists' line of struggle is determined not only by the internal alignment of political forces, but also by due account of the balance of forces in the international arena and consideration of the interests of the entire worldwide anti-imperialist movement. The historical record shows that the people's supreme national interests are most fully and profoundly satisfied when the struggle for them goes hand in hand with the struggle for the interests of the working people of other countries and solidarity with them. Our party, true to the internationalist traditions, has continuously strengthened international cooperation with the progressive forces of the world in order to avert a nuclear catastrophe and assure all the peoples freedom and independence. We also regard this as our patriotic duty. It should be especially said that AKEL was, is and will continue to be a consistent friend of the CPSU and the Soviet Union, and also of the other countries of the socialist community. It supports the historical decisions of the 27th Congress of Lenin's party, which illumine the way not only for the Soviet people, but also for the whole of mankind.

We put a high value on the USSR's major political initiative — the January 21, 1986 Statement, which set forth the principles for a just settlement of the Cyprus problem. The fact that both the government and the parliament of Cyprus unanimously welcomed the Statement shows its importance and positive character. It stresses that a just solution must ensure the independence, sovereignty, unity and non-alignment of Cyprus, withdrawal of all the foreign troops, elimination of the bases, and the country's complete demilitarisation, and expresses support for the solution of the internal aspect of the problem by the Cypriots themselves with the mediation of the United Nations, and of the external aspect at an international conference within the UN framework. The solution of the Cyprus problem is also promoted by the new Soviet proposal for improving the situation in the Mediterranean area which Mikhail Gorbachov put forward in the course of his visit to Yugoslavia last March.

AKEL attaches much importance to all acts of solidarity with the Cypriots' struggle, such as the International Conference of Solidarity with Cyprus which was held in Sofia in 1987. For our part, we support the struggle by the peoples of the Middle East, the South of Africa, Latin America and other regions against the aggressive policy of imperialism, neocolonialism, racism, and Zionism.

In this epoch of ours, internationalist relations between the working people have become much more ramified and diverse than they were in Marx's lifetime. But their connection with these long-standing traditions has not weakened; indeed, it has grown stronger, and that is in line with the requirements of social progress and the interests of the working people of all countries.

Way to Unity

We believe that internationalist traditions continue to be a vivifying source of the unity of *the international communist movement*, which originated and evolved on the basis of proletarian internationalism; it is inseparable from the communist parties' struggle, and is a specific quality and necessary prerequisite for its steady advance.

The conception of this unity and its forms are, of course, always concrete and historically determined, a fact that was already evident in Marx's lifetime. Whereas the programmatic documents of the League of Communists and the First International oriented the revolutionary workers towards the formation of a single international association with one set of statutes and a common leading centre, with the passage of time and in accordance with the changing conditions, Marx and Engels began to orient the proletariat towards the formation of national workers' parties in each country acting in the light of specific local conditions.

The quantitative and qualitative growth of the working class movement and the changes in the overall political and social situation in the world called for the development of new forms of the proletariat's organisation and new modes of international contacts between workers. The First International fulfilled its historic tasks by creating the conditions for combining scientific communism with the working class movement and by laying the basis of the international proletariat's political and ideological unity.

Its dissolution marked the passage of only one of the organisational forms uniting the workers of various countries, while the international working class movement has gone on "in a much mightier alliance of unity and solidarity, in a community of action and policy", says Engels.⁴

At a higher stage of the movement's maturity there was an in-depth restructuring of relations between the Communist and workers' parties, and the renewal of the forms of unity has continued. It has already produced meaningful results, as will be seen from the working out and successful application in practice of such forms of international ties as regional communist party meetings, bilateral and multilateral consultations on various problems of strategy and tactics in the anti-imperialist struggle, joint foreign policy acts, international campaigns of solidarity with the fighting peoples, and creative cooperation between Marxist scientists from various countries.

These democratic forms, and the fraternal parties' independence and equality meet the diversity of conditions and experience in their struggle and their efforts to gain solid positions in the revolutionary and democratic movement which do not in any way cut across the norms of proletarian internationalism. The atmosphere of comradely discussion taking shape in the international communist movement, in which no one lays claim to having a monopoly on the truth, objectively helps the communist parties to move closer to each other and to have unity in diversity. AKEL believes that the prerequisites are now ripe for an international meeting of communist and workers' parties to discuss the key problems facing mankind and have an exchange of views on developing their relations.

In the world today, the task of the Communists' international cohesion is

actualised in the emergence of new economic, social and political factors under whose impact our movement has been developing. Among these factors are, primarily, the nuclear threat, the unprecedented social and international consequences of the scientific and technological revolution, the common ecological danger, the basically new situation in the sphere of information and every other type of communication, the widening gap between the industrially developed and the less developed countries, which are burdened with a huge debt.

That being the situation, and the need for global solutions and mankind's unity for survival, is there any place for proletarian internationalism with its class content? Let us consult with Marx once again. The *humanism* of his doctrine is now especially manifest, for it is, in effect, dedicated to man's liberation, which is possible "from the standpoint of the theory which proclaims man to be the highest being for man".⁵ The ultimate goal of revolution, says Marx, is free man and liberated mankind. That is the goal which makes proletarian internationalism humanistic, helps it to interact with other humanistic world outlooks, and ensures the possibility of the Communists' international cooperation with all the other forces committed to keeping human civilisation alive.

We think that it was the CPSU's consistent internationalism that mainly enabled the Soviet Communists to formulate the principles of the new political thinking, which is a dialectical blend of general human and social-class values, with the former having the priority. For its part, the development of the new thinking paves the way for the Communists' stronger international unity, helps to enrich the content and forms of our international cohesion, and to bring out its place and role in the worldwide liberation struggle and in the solution of problems common to all mankind. It is noteworthy that one of the stimulating factors behind this evolution is the growing community of views of an ever greater number of communist parties concerning the need to increase cooperation with all the peace and democratic forces. Eloquent evidence of this was provided by the meeting of representatives of parties and movements which was held in Moscow on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

One could be well justified in saying, therefore, that the traditions of the working people's international solidarity, founded by Marx, are alive, developing and still fulfilling their great humanistic mission.

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

² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, Vol. Two, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, p. 17.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. Two, p. 78.

⁴ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 19, S. 124.

⁵ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 187.

Impulses For Renewal

Gordon McLennan — General
Secretary, Communist Party of Great
Britain

THE British people are well aware of the dramatic changes now under way in the Soviet Union. Hardly a day passes without Britain's television or a major newspaper reporting, reflecting or commenting on developments there. It is now said amongst politicians and political activists that 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' are part of our language.

The comments and reportage of these developments are, on the whole, inclined to be favourable. Glasnost and perestroika are very much identified with Mikhail Gorbachov and the period he has been General Secretary, and both are welcomed for a number of reasons.

For a very long time there has been a view amongst the majority of the British people that a greater development of democracy was necessary in the Soviet Union. It has also been clear that the USSR was lagging behind the advanced capitalist countries in the development and application of advanced technology and in the quality of consumer goods. But a main reason, in my view, for the welcome for the radical changes associated with Mr Gorbachov is because there is basically a feeling of friendship in Britain for the Soviet people, a recollection of British-Soviet friendship in the struggle against fascism, and a desire that one of the results of glasnost and perestroika will be increased British-Soviet friendship, trade and cooperation.

Those sections of the British people who support socialist ideas — Labour Party members, active trade unionists, other Socialists, Communists and others — see glasnost and perestroika as an enrichment of socialism in the Soviet Union. And, since the Soviet Union is recognised as representing an image of socialism, this enrichment assists Socialists and Communists throughout the world. We welcome these processes. There is no question that the deformations of socialism, the crimes committed, corruption, backwardness due to stagnation in the economy, all this has been an impediment to the advocacy of socialist ideas. So glasnost and perestroika, though particularly important for the people of the Soviet Union, are essential to the image and impact of socialism on a world scale.

The British mass media's presentation of events in the Soviet Union in terms of the extended and more balanced coverage they are now giving, does not mean that they have abandoned the 'enemy image'. It is true that this is less prominent, less sharp and vindictive. But the basic assumption continues in government circles and in sections of the media that the Soviet

Gordon McLennan (born in Glasgow in 1924) joined the Young Communist League in 1940, and served on its Executive and on the youth advisory committee of the Scottish Trades Union Congress. A member of the CPGB since 1943, he was a section chief, secretary of the CPGB organisation in Glasgow and secretary of the Scottish organisation of the party. Gordon McLennan has been a member of the CPGB Executive and of its Political Committee. After working as the party's national organiser from 1966 to 1975 he was elected General Secretary of the CPGB in March 1975.

Union remains the enemy and that socialism has not succeeded in the Soviet Union or anywhere else. Capitalism, they argue, is by far the superior system and must be defended militarily from positions of strength, including maintenance of Britain's so-called 'independent' nuclear deterrent.

The main political parties in Britain and the alliance parties — the SDP and the Liberals — continue to advocate the strengthening of NATO. Should there be a breakdown in the US-Soviet negotiations for a 50 per cent reduction in strategic missiles and a worsening of US-Soviet relations, the media would reflect this and could return to presenting a Cold War image of the Soviet Union.

But the world is moving on, and there is greater difficulty today for those who deal in anti-Soviet mythology and who wish to present prejudiced news about the Soviet Union. The more news that is available of the reality of the lives of the Soviet people increases these difficulties. This is why, internationally, glasnost is so important.

The developments of glasnost and perestroika within the Soviet Union have heightened the impact of initiatives for peace and disarmament of which Mr Gorbachov has been such a brilliant advocate. The 18-month test moratoria, the vision of a world without nuclear weapons and the preparedness of the Soviet Union to break the Reykjavik deadlock by saying that the INF question could come out of the Reykjavik package for separate negotiations, were all exciting indicators of new political thinking in this sphere. Preparedness to make major concessions in order to get the INF agreement, with the Soviet Union giving up more nuclear missiles than the United States of America did, and even to find some agreement in relation to the research in the SDI realm (not the development of the 'star wars' programme) — is a further indication of the constructive approach that is dominant in the Soviet leadership.

In terms of how British public opinion, personalities, individuals, as well as political parties regard these questions, it is interesting to note the following. The *Daily Telegraph* which, in general, is seen as a main daily paper expressing the views of the establishment and of the Conservative Party, elected Mr Gorbachov 'man of the year' in a poll of its readers at the end of 1987. Since then the INF agreement has been very widely welcomed here. In the first place, it can mean the removal of American Cruise missiles from our country. But it goes wider than that. Millions see it as integrally related to the whole question of the possibilities of moving forward to destruction of many more nuclear missiles and making a nuclear weapon-free world a reality.

According to the 1987 edition of the prestigious 'British Social Attitudes Report', British public opinion, even before the recent Summit talks in Washington, had shown a steady drift away from a Cold War fear of the Soviet Union. Asked about which country was the greater threat to world peace, those surveyed said: The United States — 17 per cent; the USSR — 18 per cent; both — 54 per cent. In 1984, replies to the same question were: The United States — 11 per cent; the USSR — 26 per cent; both — 54 per cent.

In other words, between 1984 and 1987 those who saw the US as a threat

to peace grew by 6 per cent, and those who saw the USSR as not a threat to peace grew by 8 per cent. No doubt, the same questions, asked today, after the Washington summit, would show a further development of that trend. Further interesting information from the same survey was that 60 per cent of those interviewed felt that Britain was less safe as a result of having US missiles stationed in our country.

The reaction of our peace movement to recent developments and summit negotiations is a very positive one. However, there is a strong view in the peace movement in Britain, and I think in other capitalist countries, that that movement responds better to moments of crisis, moments of danger, to peace — than it does to moments of opportunity for disarmament. There is justification for this view when one recalls the response of the peace movement to the development of some new type of weapon, e.g. the neutron bomb, or more recently the siting of Cruise and Pershing missiles in Western Europe. It was therefore good to see that the main slogan of the recent CND conference in London (the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) was 'We have achieved something'. That is, CND feels it has made a contribution to making the INF agreement possible and feels part of and welcomes that process. Now CND is campaigning to carry it forward: one, against Trident and the escalation of Britain's nuclear arms; two, for a comprehensive test ban treaty; and three, in general support for the process of disarmament following on the Washington summit.

In a new Campaign Broadsheet produced for the 30th Anniversary of CND on 17th February and for its Easter March to Aldermaston — the research centre at the heart of Britain's Trident programme — Meg Beresford, General Secretary of CND, says: "Our birthday is marked by the success of INF and comes at a time when we can hope for further reductions in strategic weapons and another superpower summit. But it is not a time for complacency or resting on our laurels." In the same broadsheet CND groups throughout Britain are urged to win mass signing of a letter to Britain's Defence Secretary, George Younger, prior to the NATO Nuclear Planning Group meeting in Kolding, Denmark, on 26-27th April. The draft text of the letter states:

"We call on you to continue the process of disarmament started by the INF Treaty signed by Reagan and Gorbachov, by:

1. Making no further nuclear or nuclear-capable deployments of any kind in the NATO area, including at sea;

2. Continuing negotiations to secure further zero-zero options covering other classes of weapons both nuclear and conventional, and troops and equipment (e.g. tanks, submarines).

3. Opening up the political frameworks and discussions to move towards a new common security for the whole of Europe based on demilitarisation and the dissolution of the bloc system that separates Europe into East and West alliances.

"In particular, Britain should contribute in the short term by immediately scrapping the Trident programme, and by refusing to permit any new deployments of nuclear weapons or nuclear-capable vessels or aircraft in Britain.

"We pledge to resist the remaining nuclear weapons in Europe, and any new deployments, with the same spirit of protest with which we confronted the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles."

Our Party is very much associated with this process in the peace movement and sees the campaign and the conduct of the struggle for peace and disarmament as a major and essential expression of communist international solidarity. We share Mikhail Gorbachov's view that the world stands on the brink of cataclysmic disaster as long as nuclear weapons exist.

At our Executive Committee meeting on 9-10th January, 1988 Comrade Gerry Pocock, International Secretary of the Party, made a report on 'The INF agreement and perspectives for the peace movement'. In this report he declared: "Our Party will continue to strengthen the peace movement and our own activity for disarmament".

The new situation, argued Comrade Pocock, is characterised by much greater prospects for drawing broader sections of the population into activity for new peace policies. He indicated six features of the new situation:

1. The curbing of the arms race and to win measures of real disarmament are now more widely accepted as desirable and possible.

2. Negotiations and discussion between the USSR and the US have been put on a more stable basis compared to the 1984-1985 period.

3. The United Nations Conference on Disarmament and Development indicated a new level of understanding between the waste of resources on war and weapons and the severe problems of poverty and underdevelopment affecting many countries.

4. An extension of independent peace initiatives by governments in different parts of the world.

5. The initiatives and proposals from the socialist countries and the new thinking and flexibility that characterised the Soviet Union's peace initiatives.

6. The role played by mass peace movements which have reached a new level of activity and influence.

"Let us be clear," said Comrade Pocock, "there will be no removal of Trident even following a US-Soviet agreement unless there is a massive campaign to win public understanding and support for cancellation. Far from nuclear weapons giving Britain a voice in disarmament — they make Britain an obstacle to agreement."

The Executive Committee then endorsed the following proposals:

1. To campaign for speedy ratification and full implementation of the INF Agreement.

2. To support campaigns to ensure the removal of Cruise and against the relocation of Cruise to air and sea bases.

3. To support campaigns against nuclearisation of the Third World, such as the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

4. To support CND's Easter activities.

5. To continue to play a part in the END (European Nuclear Disarmament) movement.

This is the position of the Communist Party on these great issues. What is the position of the wider labour movement? Tribute has been paid to the

British labour movement — I think correctly so — for its clear stand over many years on eliminating the danger of war and the struggle for peace and disarmament. For a very long time Britain's TUC and individual trade unions have supported unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain and international initiatives to end the arms race. In the recent general election the Labour Party advocated a non-nuclear defence policy which envisaged the scrapping of Britain's nuclear weapons and the removal of Cruise missiles and the closing down of all US nuclear bases.

I would not want to compare that stand with that of trade unions and social democratic parties in other advanced capitalist countries, but I am convinced that the position of British trade unions and the Labour Party compares favourably with the platform of many trade unions and labour movements in the West. This is not unconnected with the activities of the Communist Party and individual Communists in trade unions and of the continuous activity of the peace movement as a whole.

The Labour Party is a social democratic party, the mass party of the British working class. We take the view that closer relations between the Labour Party and the Communist Parties and governments in the socialist countries is a very positive element in British-Soviet relations and in relations between Britain and other socialist countries. Similarly with our respective trade-union movements.

Today, international solidarity involves trying to create conditions in which people of all countries, of all continents, of all political and other views are able to contest for these views and work for their fruition in a world of peace, without war, without a threat to their conditions of life and to life itself. Therefore we British Communists consider that the outstanding question facing the British people and the people of the world is to rule out the possibility of a nuclear war. That question, of course, cannot be solved in Britain alone. Therefore, while supporting our own peace movement, we consider activity in association with others who feel the same way in other parts of the world, an essential element of international action for peace. We are together with those who are for removing nuclear weapons from Western Europe, and we cooperate with other peace movements and activists to achieve this aim. Within the international communist movement, in every speech we have made at international communist gatherings, we have always emphasised this question. Of course, we have a very high appreciation of the Soviet Union's stand in these matters. That is a major expression of the internationalism of the CPSU and the government of the Soviet Union.

British Communists have always been conscious of the fact that ours is one of the major countries of imperialism, and concerned to act in cooperation with the victims of British imperialism. Therefore our solidarity with our Irish comrades, with the trade union movement and other democratic movements in Ireland is a natural part of our activities. Similarly, solidarity with the liberation movements of southern Africa has always been very high on our agenda of political priorities. Comrade Joe Slovo, National Chairman of the South African Communist Party, has expressed the estimate that the anti-apartheid movement in Britain is an example of important solidarity action, of enormous help to the movement

in South Africa. Solidarity with the people of Nicaragua is also an important part of our activity, as is our support for the people of Chile in their struggle against the Pinochet dictatorship. We stand four-square with the PLO in its efforts for a just settlement in the Middle East and as a matter of principle, we express our solidarity with our comrades in Turkey, and protest against the repression to which the leaders of the Communist Party of Turkey have been subjected.

During the historic strike of British miners in 1984-1985 we witnessed marvellous solidarity from Communists and other sections of the working class movement in other capitalist countries. We are always ready to repay that solidarity when working people in the mining, steel, automobile and other industries and services in these countries develop militant struggle in defence of their jobs and conditions and ask for support from Britain. We do so not only because of our traditional class alignment with these workers, but also because today British workers and workers in other capitalist countries are often locked in struggle with the same adversary — powerful capitalist multinational corporations whose operations straddle many countries in different continents.

The developments in the world in the direction of more durable peace, of disarmament, democracy and national liberation are of great importance for Socialists and Communists. Ever better conditions are being created for them to come together to discuss questions and to act jointly. There is no better example of the possibilities of this process and the portent for the future than the Conference held in Moscow during the week of the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. There we had 178 political parties and organisations coming from all over the world — Communists, Social Democrats, Socialists, Greens and members of national liberation movements getting together in a free and open way to discuss questions of mutual concern. It was a gathering that, probably, has no comparison in the history of relations between these progressive forces in the world. There were some proposals at that Conference as to how to carry forward this cooperation and discussion. We British Communists hope that this will be acted on in Europe and elsewhere.

But the question arises: if such a conference can be held internationally and discussions of this nature take place between Socialists and Communists and others in the left and democratic movement at that level — why can't this happen in individual countries, or, indeed, on a regional basis, for example in Western Europe? An example has been set by the Socialist Unity Party of the GDR and the Social Democratic Party of FRG. From their recent discussions they produced a joint document on 'The Struggle of Ideologies and Common Security' which is of interest to all Socialists and Communists. The possibility for the future in this area is tremendously encouraging and exciting. And the way the Conference in Moscow was conducted, the atmosphere that was generated, is a very important lesson for all of us. Unity of the working class movement, unity of Socialists and Communists and wider left and democratic unity in the struggle for the causes and aims which we all have in common is possible

even though our views of how to achieve them might differ both practically and philosophically.

A basic test of internationalism is the degree to which you are able to win your own working class movement to progressive international positions. By that test, British Communists and others on the left have scored very important results since the end of the Second World War and the defeat of fascism. But these years have been dominated in a very considerable degree by the Cold War and by anti-Soviet activities, which are synonymous with anti-communism here in Britain. British Communists have always been friends of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and advocated the achievements of socialism in the Soviet Union. We have, as is well known, found it necessary and correct on important issues to have a critical stance in relation to some developments inside the Soviet Union, or in relation to some of its actions on the international scene. But the perception of the British people — a correct perception — is that the Communists are allies and friends of socialism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. Decades of Cold War propaganda against the Soviet Union, of misrepresentation of the Soviet Union, and of the creation of the myth that Britain and Western Europe stand in some danger of Soviet aggression understandably promoted hostility, prejudice and antagonism to Communists and to the Communist Party.

We attach great importance to the development of a new atmosphere, of a situation where the Prime Minister of Britain says she can deal with the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Margaret Thatcher visited the Soviet Union last year and had unprecedented mass media coverage. More recently, there was her meeting with Mikhail Gorbachov at Brize Norton, a stopover visit to Britain on his way to the Washington Summit meeting. The whole atmosphere and attitude of these visits, of these discussions, and the consequent development of trade and cultural relations, create better conditions for the activity of British Communists, the peace movement, and the democratic and labour movement forces of our country.

So we welcome international developments of the past few years because they are making the world a place in which all of us can live with better and better prospects for the future and for our children and for all humanity. But we also welcome other important results of that process, namely the improvement of conditions in which we can — without previous levels of prejudice and hostility and antagonism — get rational consideration of our views as to what should happen in our country.

From what I have said it is clear that the development of good relations between Britain and the Soviet Union is important for the work of British Communists. But the essential test by the British people of our work will be what we do about their conditions in Britain. What, they ask, are Communists doing, not only about peace and disarmament but also about mass unemployment, the closing down of the manufacturing industry, and the deprivation of millions of people in Britain in relation to housing, education and health. How the Communists react to these other circumstances and concerns of the British people and give leadership in assisting especially the working class movement to rebuff the Thatcher

government attacks, is the test as far as the British working people are concerned. In our everyday work we strive to meet that test and in so doing create conditions for a fundamental change in Britain's political course.

In British conditions — where the Communist Party has always seen itself as an integral part of the labour movement, as its Marxist contingent — a challenge is facing not just the Communists but also the entire labour, trade union and democratic movement. How to meet that challenge was central to the 40th National Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, held in November 1987. The political developments of the last decade in Britain have been against the main trend and thrust of international developments. Internationally there have been new successes in the struggle for peace and disarmament, in the struggle of the national liberation movement, particularly in southern Africa and Latin America, and in the consolidation of the democratic forces in a number of countries. But Britain has moved in the same period in the opposite direction. (This is true of other major capitalist countries in Western Europe.) In Britain there have not only been attacks on the social and economic conditions of our people but on long-standing democratic and trade union rights — attacks that have given cause for concern among wide sections of the people who see strong and increasing tendencies towards authoritarian governments. Under Mrs Thatcher, Britain has also been one of the major forces in helping to sustain apartheid in South Africa. Similarly, the reactionary actions of the British government in relation to Nicaragua are second only to those of the United States of America, and the same is true in relation to the democratic forces in Chile and elsewhere.

Therefore, our contribution in the last decade of this century to the progressive hopeful developments internationally is to change the political stance of the British Government on these and other issues. Britain needs a government that will play a more positive role on the world scene, and it is our job to try and secure the election of such a government in Britain in the late 1980s or early 1990s. That is necessary not only internationally but vital to the interests of the British people.

The World We Preserve Must Be Livable

Gus Hall — General Secretary,
Communist Party of USA (CPUSA)

THE all-embracing fear of nuclear confrontation by the great majority of the world's people, and their determination to preserve humanity on our precious Planet Earth, have added a new dimension to the framework in which all questions must be dealt with. For humanity, the choice is literally, 'To be or not to be.'

There are new intertwining, interlinked, overlapping and even contradictory developments that greatly complicate the burning issues of our day.

Over a century ago, Karl Marx said: "In our days everything seems pregnant with its contrary."¹

If this was true in Marx's days, it is many times more true in ours.

In our day it is especially true that all things are pregnant with their contrary because all developments have reached a point of profound qualitative change. We are living at a moment when the objective conditions are explosive and thus carry within them a much greater spontaneous force. The challenge for our day is how to harness and exploit this great force for human progress.

What Is New and Developing

It is all the more true in our day because what is new and developing is taking on a new and higher dimension. Whether in the field of natural or social sciences, in politics, ideology or culture, to be a leading force means to be up to date with what is new and developing. Without the *new*, the old becomes stale and petrified. It is the *new* that gives direction to both the present and the future.

In our day, the new is more complicated and interrelated. Frederick Engels put it all together when he said: "So long as we consider things as at rest and lifeless, each one by itself, alongside and after each other, we do not come up against any contradictions in them . . .

"But the position is quite different as soon as we consider things in their motion, their change, their life, their reciprocal influence on one another. Then we immediately become involved in contradictions. Motion itself is a contradiction . . . that a being is at each moment itself and yet something else."²

'Being itself' and yet 'something else' at each moment is a basic law of motion in general. And it is a guiding principle for the examination of all developments — economic, political and ideological.

The new 'something else' is not born in a vacuum. It is a further development of what is and has been. In nature as well as in the political and ideological arena, if one tries to separate the 'being itself' from the 'something else,' this will lead to political and ideological swings from one side to the other. The tactical challenge is how to deal with these phenomena as features of an ongoing process.

In moments of explosive changes it is imperative to keep one's mind open to the new and developing, and to foresee what the 'something else' will be like. In studying the new, one must have an approach of boldness and experimentation.

However, when considering the new, especially in the political arena, it is important to keep in mind that most errors, most of history's opportunistic attempts at revising the science of Marxism-Leninism, and most of the policies and acts of capitulation to the pressures of the exploiting class, have been justified with arguments about the 'new.'

Attempts to Bypass Class Struggle

Throughout the history of the working class movement, the 'something new' concepts have always been used to bypass, cover up or eliminate the concept of the class struggle.

To eliminate the idea of the class struggle one has to accept that somehow the capitalist class is changing its inherent nature, giving up its drive for maximum profits. To eliminate the idea of the class struggle one has to explain how the basic laws of capitalist development have somehow changed. This is impossible.

Capitalism has gone through several stages — monopoly, imperialism, and state monopoly capitalism. But the changes have always been in keeping with the basic nature of capitalism; the changes have always preserved the basic nature of capitalism under new conditions.

US capitalism joined the war against Hitler fascism. But it never for a moment gave up its basic nature — exploitation, oppression and its drive for maximum corporate profits.

The war production itself was a most profitable business. US imperialism joined the armed struggle, but it used the anti-fascist alliance to take over and prepare for the post-war 'American century.'

The basic laws of capitalism make it impossible for the capitalist system to change its inner nature. It is true that capitalism is sometimes compelled to behave differently, but this does not mean it has gone through a metamorphosis into something else. Objective factors and changes in the balance of class forces push capitalism to react differently, to change its tactics. But its primary, intrinsic nature, based on the laws of class exploitation and the class struggle, remain intact.

In today's world, capitalism is forced to take into consideration the existence of the socialist world. It is forced to make adjustments, to establish diplomatic and trade relations. It is forced to compete with socialism. And it is forced to take into consideration the military power of the socialist countries.

However, capitalism makes these adjustments as a maneuver. It does not give up its class aims which make the class struggle inevitable.

Wrong Conclusions About Capitalism

Any idea that the nature of capitalism is changing will lead to wrong conclusions, including reliance on spontaneity and policies of class collaboration. Such concepts are always related to ideas that the changes of capitalism make it more responsive to human needs.

As long as there is capitalism, the new will never be able to develop outside of the class reality. The new will not be able to exist alone or bypass the system of class exploitation and the irreconcilable class antagonisms. The new will always develop within the general arena of the class struggle.

The *Communist Manifesto* put it clearly and precisely: "The written history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."³

Since then life has changed. Socialism is a part of world reality. The sun is setting on the last of the colonial empires. High technology has taken over the production process. But the center of gravity of the history being

written today is still the class struggle.

These truths are reflections of the laws of motion of the real world. They are not negotiable. They cannot be changed or molded to fit anyone's subjective concepts of reality.

Attempting to bypass, ignore or retreat from the objective truth that the class struggle is the very inner nature, the primary inner essence of capitalism, is to take the path of opportunism. There are other contradictions. But the class struggle reflects the main, the irreconcilable contradiction.

Opportunism is a negation of working class partisanship, replacing it with concepts of class collaboration and class partnership. Opportunism is a negation of the objective laws that sustain the class struggle on center stage and the special advanced role history assigns to the working class.

New Thinking on Global Issues

Today the world faces some new, most serious global problems that cut across national and class lines, such as land, water and air pollution, the depletion of the ozone layer, poverty, famine, disease and of course the preservation of all living things and prevention of a nuclear confrontation. These have become historic necessities.

These are new points on the agenda of the human race. And they are pressing for solutions. They are qualitatively new because they are related to the most fundamental of all questions: will our good Earth continue as a habitat for living things, or will it be exploded into a pile of nuclear ashes forever floating in the stratosphere?

There is a need for some new thinking on these global issues because they are challenges to all peoples, nations and classes. They add a new dimension to the concepts of détente and peaceful coexistence.

Also new is the fact that the forces seeking solutions to these serious global problems are a growing new factor on the world political scene. There is an all-inclusive mass concern about saving the human race. These forces have become an important new mass base in the struggle for human progress in general.

These new developments raise some important questions about political priorities, about tactical and strategic concepts. These changes have created some new contradictions. The question is how should Communists, the working class and progressive movements, deal with these new factors and contradictions that cast their shadow across national boundaries and class lines and that carry within them the potential of putting an end to all living things, at least on this planet.

Thus, the main questions are:

— Should all struggles for a better life, including the class struggle and the national liberation struggles, be subordinated to the struggle to preserve humanity?

— Should they be toned down so they will not interfere with or disrupt the unity within the struggle to preserve humanity?

— Should this approach of toning down the major class and liberation struggles dictate the essence of the new policies of peaceful coexistence between capitalist and socialist societies?

— Are the struggles for national liberation, for economic and political freedom, the struggle against the multinational corporations and the class struggle in general — are these struggles obstacles to the broadest all-class movements for a nuclear-free world?

The Answer Is No

The answer to all these questions is no. Such subordination is not possible and not necessary. That approach would be counterproductive to all the struggles. It is not possible because capitalism in its basic, inherent essence has not changed. And it is not necessary because the contradictions between the two are not insoluble. In fact, in everyday affairs the two are intertwined.

The tactical questions are:

— Will people fight to preserve life on our planet if the movement does not include the struggle for the stuff of life — food, shelter and clothing?

— Can the trade unions mobilize their members to fight to eliminate nuclear weapons if they do not lead in the struggle for a living wage?

The answer is no. In the minds of the hungry and homeless, the racially oppressed and victims of neocolonialism, the idea of preserving humanity is worthwhile and makes sense only if it is linked to the struggles that make their lives more worth living.

The other side of the story is that the great majority of the world's people are seriously concerned about the danger of nuclear war. Thus, they respond to and take part in peace actions, including in the electoral arena. The people respond to tactics that do both — preserve the world and make it more livable. In everyday life there is no contradiction between the two.

There is no way the world can ask the people of Nicaragua to lay down their arms so long as the United States continues its military aggression, or ask the Black people of South Africa to give up their liberation struggle while the brutal racist oppression of the apartheid regime continues, or ask the Palestinian people to give up their fight for a homeland as long as the murderous occupation policies of Israel exist.

And there is no way to ask the millions of workers who face union busting, lay-offs, unemployment and plant closings by the multinational corporations to give up their fight for a decent living, or ask the homeless and hungry to give up their struggle against capitalist greed, or ask the victims of racism to stop fighting corporate-sponsored and promoted racism for profit.

It is not possible, nor is it necessary. It is not possible because monopoly capital, even those capitalists who support the idea of peaceful coexistence and putting an end to the nuclear arms race, do not link their support for peace to their policies of exploitation and maximum profits. Thus, the class struggle goes on.

There are corporate heads who speak for ending the nuclear arms race but are making big bucks from military contracts, including the production of nuclear weapons. There are no examples where capitalism has given up its exploitation and profits in order to adapt itself to the overall interest of saving humanity from the nuclear brink.

For workers in the class struggle and for victims of imperialist oppression, the question of whether to take part in the class struggle is not a purely subjective, abstract one. It is the exploitation, the oppression that creates the conditions that compel the victims of monopoly rule and imperialism to fight back.

Forced to Retreat

Capitalism and capitalist countries can be forced to retreat and maneuver. This is very important. The Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) treaty was such an important retreat, a step towards cutting back and even eliminating nuclear arms. The Reagan Administration was a very reluctant participant. It was literally forced to the negotiating table and to the summit.

However, the signing of the treaty does not change the dominant policies of the Reagan Administration or of US monopoly capital. The US-based multinational corporations continue their policies of maximum profits throughout the non-socialist world.

Some ask the question: how do the struggles around the life-and-death issues that cut across class lines affect the struggle in the ideological arena?

Lenin, in his great wisdom, had the answer.

"The only choice is: either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course, for mankind has not created a 'third' ideology, and moreover in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology. Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree means to strengthen bourgeois ideology."⁴

Lenin was correct in his time, and he is on target today. Bourgeois ideologues change their tactics, but not their basic purpose or goal. At times they purr like kittens and snarl less. At times they soften their frontal attack and use more flank, sneak attacks. But the basic fact about bourgeois ideology is that monopoly capital does not and in fact cannot act out of anything but its own selfish class interest.

Distortions of Reality

Overall human and working class interests versus corporate monopoly interests is the most basic of all contradictions.

Any distortion of this reality leads to distortions in other areas, such as the following which appeared in some recent theoretical writings:

"I do not rule out a negative reaction . . . particularly among those who continue to take a fetishistic view of the class struggle although Lenin, as we all know, put the interests of social development, as a whole, above the class interests of the proletariat. The entire world has today found itself in a situation in which precisely human interests must be given priority. In this lies the essence of our new way of thinking."⁵

The question is: should there be an overall human interest priority at the expense of the oppressed, while permitting the monopoly corporations to continue their brutal exploitation and oppression? That is not the new way of thinking.

Lenin never placed the interests of social development against the interests of the working class. He saw the interests of social development increasingly dependent on the fate of the proletariat.

Lenin never placed anything above class interests. He clearly understood the dialectical relationship between the two. To speak about 'priority of human interest' places the working class and class struggle as an appendix.

Taking another step along the same path, Alexander Bovin in his recent pamphlet proclaims, "But politically capitalism has every right to existence. And we recognize this right."⁶

Maybe Bovin does. But history, justice, human interests and the class struggle do not.

Yet another step even further along the same path was taken by Dmitri Likhachev, when he postulated that:

"In Nature, everything is arranged in a way proving beyond doubt that there exists an extraordinary intelligence which has been working for millions of years . . .

"I think that many people are concluding that such a reason exists . . ."

Words have universally accepted meanings. There is no way words like 'extraordinary intelligence' and 'reason' ascribed to nature can be misinterpreted. These ideas are either playing irresponsibly with words or reflect a real belief in a mystical, supernatural or supreme being, above man and nature.

Another detour veering from the path of science is the following from the same article: ". . . the ethical properties distinctive to the intelligentsia are not only a question of upbringing and education but also a question of genetic heredity."⁸

This comes dangerously close to the concept of a 'super race,' and at the very least to extreme intellectual elitism. People are not born cultured. They become so through a process of upbringing and education.

Anchored in the Class Struggle

A suspension bridge buffeted by a storm sways in the wind, but the reason it is not destroyed is that its steel cables are firmly anchored to the abutment. The cables are flexible because they are firmly anchored. In politics, parties and movements can and should pursue flexible tactics, can and should probe the new without fear of becoming disconnected from reality if their 'cable' remain firmly anchored to the basics of Marxism-Leninism, to the basics of the class struggle.

Parties and movements must pursue flexible tactics, firmly anchored to the universal and timeless truth that monopoly capital cannot be convinced by arguments about human interest or being humane. It can be moved only by maximum pressure, through the balance of forces and when corporate interests for a moment coincide and are parallel with human interests.

It is important to understand that both of these factors — the new balance of forces and the parallel interests — are present in the struggle to save humanity from a nuclear death. In formulating tactics of mass struggle, this is a most important factor.

The contradiction between preserving humanity and the struggle for a

livable world is not as sharp when these struggles are non-violent, when the process is more evolutionary.

However, as history is witness, not all struggles remain on a peaceful path. Violence is the tool of the exploiters and oppressors. When they lose their influence and power, when they can no longer rule by demagoguery and lies, they resort to violence against the working class and people.

Lenin said: "When the bourgeois ideological influence on the working class declines, is undermined or weakened, the bourgeoisie everywhere and always resorts to the most outrageous lies and slander."⁹ And when that fails, they resort to violence and brute force. Then the working class and people have two options: either respond to the violence by defending themselves, or lie down and give up.

The People Won't Lie Down

The people of Nicaragua do not want violence. They are longing for peace. But they will only settle for peace with liberation. They will not give up their sovereignty and their revolution for the sake of a false and temporary peace.

As long as US imperialism pursues its policy of working to overthrow the elected government of Nicaragua, the people have no choice but to arm themselves and fight back. And, likewise, as long as the fascist, racist minority in South Africa continues its violent oppression and exploitation of the Black majority, the oppressed have no choice but to fight back. So long as Israeli occupation and barbarism continue, the Palestinian uprising will continue and spread.

The liberation movements need not in any way become an obstacle to the struggle to preserve humanity. This is clearly illustrated in the concept of 'disarmament and development,' which simply means that the struggle for disarmament is directly linked to cutting the military budgets and using the funds saved for peaceful purposes and improving the quality of life.

But in the capitalist world, without a struggle, the money saved will be transferred into the coffers of the very rich.

The fact is that the bigger the stake the people have in the struggle for a more livable world, the better fighters they are in the fight to save humanity from extinction. The challenge is to formulate the tactics of unity in struggle that can be molded into an unbeatable fighting force for human progress and human preservation.

The challenge to all progressive leading forces is to seek out the issues and forms that unite the maximum numbers.

No matter how classes and class relations may change, as long as there exist exploiters and exploited, there will always be class struggle between them. That is a scientific law.

As long as there are imperialist powers, imperialist exploiters and plunderers — as in Africa, Asia, Central and South America — there will be anti-imperialist struggles against them. That is a law.

The greatest challenge is how to conduct the class struggle and the struggles for national liberation, against imperialism, oppression and exploitation in ways that interlock with the greatest universal imperative of a world at peace, a world free from the fear of nuclear extinction.

- ¹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 655.
- ² *Marxist-Leninist Philosophy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987, p. 50.
- ³ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 482.
- ⁴ *Marxist-Leninist Philosophy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987, p. 171.
- ⁵ Yevgeni Ambartsumov on the Likhachev article, 'Become a Citizen of the World,' *World Marxist Review*, No. 10, 1987, p. 152.
- ⁶ A. Bovin, *The Imperative of the Nuclear Age*, Moscow, 1986, p. 39.
- ⁷ Dmitri Likhachev, 'Become a Citizen of the World,' *World Marxist Review*, No. 5, 1987, p. 68.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- ⁹ *Marxist-Leninist Philosophy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987, p. 173.

Socialist Cooperation: New Stage

Vadim Medvedyev — Secretary,
CPSU CC

WORLD socialism is going through the most responsible period of its history, and the extent of this responsibility is determined by what happens to socialism itself, by the response to the challenge of the times on the part of each socialist country and all of them together, and by how fully the vast potentialities of our social system are eventually brought out. The extent of this responsibility is also determined by the scale and significance of the general human problems: the need to safeguard civilisation, secure a future without wars and weapons, build a new and just world order, and solve global problems in a joint effort.

The perestroika under way in the Soviet Union — the renewal of every aspect of life in society — has a bearing not only on the internal processes of development. It also determines the CPSU's activity on the international scene, including such a priority line as cooperation with the other socialist countries. Here the extent and quality of cooperation depend, of course, not only on us, but also on our partners, on their view of present-day problems and trends, and ways of improving socialism. We note with satisfaction that such a quest is now being carried on by many socialist countries, and it has a high degree of similarity, for all the difference in conditions and development levels, and natural disparities in the cycles. The similarity lies in the comprehension of the need to accelerate economic and social progress at home, while markedly enhancing the efficiency of the fraternal countries' cooperation, which has the effect not just of adding but of multiplying our potentials, as Mikhail Gorbachov put it.

Dialectics of Renewal

The world socialist system is entering upon the fifth decade of its existence as a powerful international formation and an important driving force of civilisation. Socialism has given a telling demonstration of its capacity to

effect major historical transformations, to do away with exploitation, to ensure the equality of men and nations, and give the working people social protection.

Let us recall that the formation of the world socialist system was no simple process, but its results, which are of great historical proportions, are there for all to see. Solid economic foundations for the new system have been built up in most countries, with basically stable political systems, and an established socialist way of life. Their socialist gains are irreversible.

But it would be an over-simplification to regard the movement of world socialism as a straightforward ascent along the stages of growth. Practice has borne out Lenin's idea that "socialism is not a ready-made system"¹, and that the laying of its foundations does not automatically provide rapid and undiluted progress of society. Development is inconceivable without imaginative effort, wide comparison of views, and active and conscious work of which the socialist countries' cooperation is equally in need.

This conclusion appears to be most meaningful at the present stage in the development of world socialism. Our view is that the present period has a number of basic peculiarities requiring joint analysis of the trends emerging in the socialist community, collective discussions and unbiased assessment of various aspects of this cooperation, and a search for optimal ways to solve the existing problems.

What, in our view, are the prerequisites and the substance of the new stage of cooperation between the socialist countries?

These prerequisites stem, *first, from an analysis of the internal processes of development in the fraternal countries*. Let us recall that various difficulties of varying degree in the economy and in the political, social and ideological spheres began to grow in the life of the USSR and a number of other socialist countries in the second half of the 1970s. There emerged the paramount problem of cutting short these trends and of rising to a new level, something that can be markedly promoted by our more vigorous cooperation on a qualitatively new level.

There is the need to renew the forms and methods of relations between the socialist countries. Mikhail Gorbachov says that the period in which world socialism was formed has, in the main, worked itself out, while we have continued to apply the forms of relations that took shape at its initial stage.

In the economy, the exchange of manufactured products continues to be the dominant tradition, and from the Soviet side it has mainly had the form of a flow of fuel, energy and raw material resources.

The aggregate experience of world socialism and the vast potentialities of joint quest, and of addition and multiplication of the intellectual types of labour were less than fully used in the ideology, science and culture.

But perhaps the main thing was that the system of relations operating in the political sphere had its beginnings in the period when the Soviet Union was the only country with experience in building socialism, so that its experience was seen as the standard. This tended to constrain our partners' initiative, to lower attention to the specifics of each individual country, and to hamper the expression of the diversity and wealth of forms of social organisation.

Finally, yet another factor: *the global conditions for the development of*

socialism have undergone a radical change, and there is the acute question of thoroughly considering the new realities characterising civilisation at its turning-point. It has become clear that the long-standing traditions of autarky and alienation are irrelevant; they originated at a time when it was assumed that the general crisis of capitalism leaves that system no scope for the future; it was a time when the two systems were in sharp confrontation with each other, and there was a feeling that socialism was under constant siege.

All of that required the formulation of a strategy based on the new political thinking, a fresh comprehension of the interdependence of all the states and of the need for active participation in world economic ties, and priority development of socialist cooperation.

The meeting of the CMEA fraternal party leaders in Moscow in November 1986 marked the turning-point in determining the collective course in this respect. It formulated the principles of cooperation between the socialist countries in the new conditions and mapped out its main lines. It reaffirmed the need consistently to base the entire system of political relations between the socialist countries on equality, complete independence, responsibility and collective concern for our shared interests; unflagging observance of the principles of mutual benefit and mutual assistance in economic ties; and an organic combination of individual initiatives and the common agreed course in international affairs.

The whole of ideological cooperation is focused on *exchanges of experience in socialist construction* and its summing up in a common effort in accordance with Lenin's dictum that "only by a series of attempts — each of which, taken by itself, will be one-sided and will suffer from certain inconsistencies — will complete socialism be created by the revolutionary co-operation of the proletariat of all countries".² Here it is political and social practice or, more concretely, acceleration of economic and social development and the actual strengthening of socialism, that is the supreme arbiter and criterion, and that is the approach, incidentally, which our party has actively applied: virtually all the major decisions taken by the CPSU in the recent period — from the economic reform to changes in electoral practices — were worked out and adopted following a comprehensive study of the experience of our friends.

There is, of course, a big difference between the principles of cooperation and actual cooperation, but there is good ground to note the important shifts on the way to implementing these goals.

The collective element in cooperation between the socialist countries within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance has markedly increased, with new forms and new institutions, above all the Working Meetings of the CMEA countries' ruling-party leaders becoming common practice. The atmosphere at the sessions of the Warsaw Treaty's Political Consultative Committee and the meetings of CC secretaries on international, ideological, party-organisational and economic matters has become more open and more vigorous.

The work of the Committees of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of

Defence within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty is more coordinated and efficient; a multilateral group for exchanges of current information and a special commission on disarmament matters have been set up and are working well. Every member of the alliance has displayed more initiative, as one will see from the fraternal countries' foreign policy proposals with their strong international resonance.

The content and character of bilateral and multilateral meetings have changed: they are focused on key major problems in socialist construction, coordination of actions, and collective formulation of common positions. They are characterised by wide-ranging comradely discussions, comparison of standpoints, and exchanges of experience.

New elements have also appeared in ideological cooperation, and some idea of the lines of the perestroika in this area is provided by the Declaration on Cooperation in Ideology, Science and Culture, which was signed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Polish United Workers' Party. Indeed, it has not only invigorated ties in these spheres, but has also helped us to tackle such hard tasks as writing up the 'blank pages' in the history of our relations.

Virtually all the socialist countries have been developing their ties with each other successfully. We do not feel that those of them which are not members of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation or of the CMEA are separated by some kind of barriers from other socialist countries. The CPSU wants honest and above-board relations with all the communist parties and comradely exchanges of opinion with them. And we are glad that what may be called the distance between them is getting shorter and that relations between the USSR and its allies, and Yugoslavia, China and People's Korea are becoming fuller and more diverse, a basic line we intend to go on pursuing.

All in all, under the active impact of the new approaches in socialist cooperation, it has ever more widely revealed its vast potential, with a renewal of the entire spectrum of political, economic and humanitarian ties.

For Deeper Economic Integration

The restructuring of economic relations between the socialist states is of especial importance, and we have also taken the broad historical view in assessing them. The forthcoming 40th anniversary of the CMEA provides additional reasons for analysing the results of collective cooperation and making an objective evaluation both of its achievements and its failings.

A look at the quantitative aspect of cooperation shows it to be impressive: the CMEA countries' trade with each other is valued at more than 200 billion roubles a year; over the past 40 years it has multiplied 40-fold. Major programmes for joint production and use of computers and nuclear-power plant equipment, and the building and remodelling of economic facilities are being realised on the basis of a common technical policy. The infrastructure of socialist integration has taken years to build up. There are many coordinating and mediating agencies, international banks and institutions, and an integrated transport and communications network. The main goods deliveries and prices and charges are regulated in

concert. In other words, *a sufficiently solid foundation for developing the integration process has been put in place.*

Regrettably, unfavourable trends have also appeared in this highly important sphere. The CMEA's economic cooperation has often been presented as a totally positive one, and much has been said, and books, articles and dissertations have been written in this vein, while the level of scientific comprehension of the socialist integration process remained low. Theory tended to lag behind life, instead of outpacing it.

Let us recall, for instance, the initial stage in shaping the international socialist division of labour. In the USSR there appeared the theory of two world markets — the capitalist and the socialist — developing parallel to each other; these allegedly had to develop autonomously on the basis of diametrically opposite principles. There also appeared the idea of some kind of 'own-price base', with the suggestion that wholesale prices in the USSR should be taken as such a base. In the early 1960s, there was a discussion, among others, of the idea of planning the world socialist economy from a single centre. Such notions merely confused the course of economic cooperation and helped spread false rumours.

While recognising the major integration successes in the fraternal countries' community, we should evidently not ignore the experience of West European integration, in which we have for years laid emphasis on its social contradictions, and competitive infighting, that is, the negative aspects alone. But the fact is that, while the CMEA and the EEC have comparable economic potentials, the CMEA's total trade turnover is much smaller than that of the EEC, and it even shrank a little in 1987. The most noticeable lag is in the export of engineering products within our community and the low level of producer cooperation in this field. Against the EEC background, the CMEA's division-of-labour structure clearly looks outdated. The mutual trade of most socialist countries began to lag behind the growth of output, although the latter has likewise slowed down³ because of inadequate intra-sectoral specialisation and cooperation of production. There has been evidence of attempts in some countries to make even component-packed products on their own, an approach that inevitably leads to a scientific, technological and economic lag and low competitiveness on the world markets.

Another trend is to try to solve most of the scientific and technical problems by buying Western technology under Western credits. That is, of course, necessary and well-justified in some cases, but one should not underestimate the dangers of credit and technological dependence on the West and its possible economic and social consequences.

Generally speaking, then, *there is every reason for the socialist countries to develop intra-sectoral specialisation and cooperation of production more rapidly, in 'seven-league strides', on the basis of high technology and to remodel the old economic mechanism of integration.*

The Comprehensive Programme for Scientific and Technical Progress of the CMEA Member Countries through the Year 2000 has become pivotal to the work along these lines; it is a reflection both of the internal requirements of the socialist countries and of the global processes in the world economy. There are difficulties in implementing the Programme,

but we are sure that these will be surmounted as we gain greater experience in cooperation.

A good impetus to integration cooperation was given by the decisions of the 43rd (Extraordinary) Session of the CMEA in October 1987, an important step towards a qualitatively new level of socialist economic integration. The practical urgent tasks have also been formulated, among them, for instance, the elaboration of a collective conception of the international socialist division of labour for the 1991-2005 period, and a special comprehensive programme for multilateral cooperation between the European CMEA countries and Vietnam, Cuba and Mongolia.

The approval in principle of the approach to organising economic relations on three inter-connected levels: between states, between sectors, and between enterprises (associations) was a major result of the CMEA's 43rd Session. We believe that *direct economic ties between enterprises* should be the main instrument if producer specialisation and cooperation are to be a success.

In this context, interest attaches to the proposals that a group of socialist countries should, as a pilot scheme, make use of national currencies for settling accounts with each other, contractual prices, freedom of operation on the national markets, and so on.

It is safe to say that *a start has been made on the most profound restructuring of the economic-relations mechanism* since the CMEA's establishment, but there is no implication here that we are perfectly clear on every point and that all that remains to be done is to implement the programme. We shall have to start joint theoretical and practical work.

Consider, for instance, the question of shaping a common socialist market. It will evidently take some time before we get to it, and it will require a serious development of the commodity-money mechanism, within domestic circulation in the first place. The switch to economic methods of administration and management implies active use of the financial and credit system, of prices and economic normals. On the basis of the principles of mutual-involvement interests we shall have to tackle a wide range of monetary and financial problems to pave the way for flexible contractual prices, and to prepare the conditions for a transition to mutual convertibility of currencies. Many other problems will require joint thinking and reciprocal efforts.

Major measures are being effected along these lines in the USSR. The political decisions for improving the administration of external economic ties were taken in August 1986, and they are an organic part of the economic reform under way in our country; they help to create altogether new potentialities for developing direct producer ties on the basis of full cost accounting, and compel a review of the long-established concept and practice of the principle of the state monopoly of foreign trade. Some ministries, enterprises and associations have been given broad rights in external economic activity. Customs regulations have been simplified and frontier and barter trade is being expanded. The formalities for business and individual trips by citizens abroad have been substantially simplified.

The CPSU is aware that not everything has run smoothly in the improvement of external economic relations. The internal and external

economic mechanisms and price-formation principles have not yet been dovetailed. Economic management personnel are still beset by the great force of momentum, and have yet to develop a taste for external economic activity or the pertinent skills. In short, considerable efforts will be required to raise this work to the level of present-day tasks.

Theory as a Guide to Action

When assessing the new stage of cooperation one could, apparently, say that it is going through a peculiar transition period. Important political decisions have been adopted, the first few steps have been taken, and there is advance in practical terms, but while the old approaches have been repudiated, we have not moved forward to the new ones in anything like a solid front or with equal speed along every direction.

The reasons are, of course, many, among them the lag of science and the sluggishness of theoretical thinking. Many assessments and conclusions of our social science regrettably bear the imprint of the past, remain at the tail-end of the public movement, and fall short of current tasks. The scientific elaboration of the problem of the new thinking is at the initial stage, it was said at the February 1988 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC. The notions and schemes of an earlier day need to be resolutely shed, the theoretical legacy of the Marxist-Leninist classics read through in a new light, and research invigorated along the high roads.

There is the inescapable task not only of returning theory to its rightful place, but also of making a genuine *theoretical breakthrough*, and that requires joint action and international efforts by the scientists of the socialist countries. In this age of informatics, when knowledge becomes the measure of one's strength, it is necessary to make a bold comparison of views and standpoints and a study and use of advanced experience. It is perfectly obvious that no theoretical breakthrough can be expected of someone who has confined himself to the national quarters. The new stage of socialist cooperation opens up favourable conditions and multiplies the potentialities for business contacts, and for communication with each other's scientific potentials, and broadens the field for joint activity.

Lenin used to say that one cannot hope to solve concrete and particular practical problems, without having first solved the general problems of principle. With such an approach to the socialist countries' cooperation, one should, evidently, take a fresh look at the central problems of world socialism, and renew our concepts of social progress.

Lenin's view of the competition of the two systems as a *process running over an entire historical period of development*, an entire epoch, has been borne out by the whole development of the modern interrelated world, and by the contradictory changes proceeding both within the old and the new social systems under the impact of the scientific and technological revolution. The notions of a kind of mechanical and sudden ousting of capitalism by socialism certainly does not seem to fit into the living practice of the modern world. Nor will the notion of peaceful coexistence being a parallel development of the two systems fit into the realities. History is not at all divided into two isolated streams and does not flow along two different channels, as one might assume now and again. The two systems,

which are opposite in social terms, and the countries within each inevitably interact with each other. Strictly speaking, this is a process that began just after the Great October Revolution, and it has grown from decade to decade.

This poses some major questions: how is this interaction to be made invariably constructive, so that it should serve to consolidate the foundations of human civilisation? How is one to decide on the forms of interaction under which socialism would be most actively involved in the international division of labour, while retaining its own socialist origins and intensifying the influence of its humanistic ideals on the world?

From that same angle we intend to rethink the sequence of theoretical propositions used to describe development processes in the modern world and its prospects.

For a long time our social scientists, when speaking of social progress, mainly had in mind the sphere of political, revolutionary, and class struggle. However, *revolutionary changes in the modern world have been building up along many interrelated dimensions*. There is the political, revolutionary, class struggle; rivalry, competition and interaction between the two systems; profound contradictions between the developed capitalist countries and the less developed world. There is also the revolutionising of hardware, technology and knowledge, which are echoed in the organisation of economic life, of the social structure of society, and of man's condition within it. In this context there arise the questions of the substance and social content of progress, its price and possible alternatives, and the dialectics of advance to the new society, when the realisation of one potentiality now and again tends to block another.

Our point of departure is that there is also a need to specify our concepts of the basic law-governed uniformities of socialist construction as the basis for shedding light on the dialectics of the universal and the unique. For the time being, only a general answer is clear: *the diversity of the forms of socialism is just as natural as the natural movement of life in the full spectrum of its colours*. Any form of socialism is good, so long as it helps to get rid of exploitation and lack of rights, to improve living conditions, to deepen democracy and social equality, to enhance the status of human beings, so long as it provides examples of rational economic management and high labour productivity.

The theoretical problems of *the economics of world socialism* deserve special attention. We have to admit that our notions of the socialist mode of production, of its inherent laws and categories and their interaction were to a large extent shaped one-sidedly, without due consideration of the actual experience of the socialist countries, the diverse ways of economic development, and the whole spectrum of attempts and methods to implement the basic principle of socialism.

We shall have to look in greater depth at the character of socialist property and its forms, to determine the true place of cooperation and the diversity of the forms of individual labour activity. Here we intend to rely on the theoretical studies and practical experience in other fraternal countries.

The whole point of the perestroika is ultimately to reckon with interests,

to influence these interests, and to regulate them and through them, it was stressed at the June 1987 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC. A lot is being written in our country about the interests of the individual, the collective, the social groups and society, but no real solution to it has yet been found, which means that we have yet to discover the methods for stimulating highly productive labour, methods which are proper to socialism.

There are a number of major theoretical problems in the sphere of ideology. I have already mentioned one of them: the need for more serious and profound comprehension of the intricate and at times tragic twists and turns of history, and the writing up of its 'blank pages'. As a reflection of the general spirit of the perestroika, a discussion on *the socialist statehood* has now begun among Soviet social scientists. The conception of developing socialist democracy as transition from the working people's participation in management to self-governance has been formulated. Research into the social roots of bureaucracy and ways to overcome it is most pressing. The finishing touches must be put to the methodology for the study of inter-ethnic relations, public opinion, the sociology of work collectives, and the problems of the young, the family, and religion. Theoretical elaboration of these and other pressing matters helps us gain a deeper insight into the perestroika and to become more aware of the limitations of our old concepts of socialist society, and of the need to go on to new and modern forms of its organisation.

There is here certainly a virtually unlimited sphere for joint quest, for pooling the efforts of social scientists of the socialist countries. There are many untapped reserves for making joint research and cooperation between our scientific institutions more effective. The CPSU has taken the first step along this line by setting up an Institute for Exchange of Experience in Socialist Construction at the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU CC. We shall strive to involve the best scientific minds from the fraternal countries for work at the institute. The time also seems to be ripe to hold a wide-ranging and circumstantial exchange of opinion among social scientists from our countries on the basic problems of socialist development in present-day conditions.

Our party has been steadily pursuing its course of perestroika and believes that the potential of socialism, as a social system and world system, is vast. The CPSU is now looking towards the All-Union Party Conference, which is to be an important event in the life of the party and the country, and in the socialist renewal of the Soviet society. We are fully resolved to join our friends and allies in doing our utmost to bring out the potentialities of socialism to the fullest extent, to strengthen the community of the socialist states, and to enhance its beneficial influence on world affairs.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 43.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 346.

³ Over the past five-year period, the CMEA countries' quantum of national income and trade grew at 3 per cent a year. — *Ed.*

A Nuclear Weapon-Free And Non-Violent World Is Attainable

Rajiv Gandhi — Prime Minister of the Republic of India

Rajiv Gandhi, a well-known statesman and international figure and Prime Minister of India, a member of the Delhi Six, kindly agreed to answer a few questions put by *WMR*. His answers are given below.

What do you think should be done to maintain and speed up progress towards a nuclear weapon-free world?

FIRST of all we must promote universal acceptance of the goal of a nuclear weapon-free world. There are many who still argue that nuclear weapons are necessary for keeping peace. This is a dangerous delusion, given the very real possibility of a nuclear holocaust by accident or design as long as nuclear weapons exist.

At the same time, negotiations are necessary to achieve reductions of nuclear weapons in a time-bound and phased manner. Discussions so far have been limited to the two main nuclear powers. Other nuclear powers must be brought into the process so that, eventually, all nuclear weapons can be eliminated. Nuclear weapons will spare nobody. Their elimination, therefore, is the concern of all nations and individuals. We have to work together to mobilise public opinion in favour of nuclear disarmament.

The Delhi Six are becoming increasingly instrumental in the growing internationalisation of the peace efforts. What is their view of the results of the Soviet-American summit?

The agreement signed by General Secretary Gorbachov and President Reagan has been welcomed by the Six, who view it as the first genuine measure of nuclear arms reduction. At the same time, the Six have pointed out that there should be no complacency, as the treaty covers only three to four per cent of the nuclear arsenals of the two major powers. The momentum must be maintained and rapid progress made in achieving further substantial reduction in strategic nuclear weapons and tactical weapons so that we can eventually achieve our objective of creating a world free of the menace of nuclear weapons. At the same time it is important to ensure that the arms race does not spread to new areas. The Six, therefore, have urged that outer space should be preserved as a frontier of peace. They specifically suggested an early agreement to ban anti-satellite weapons.

What is your view of the interdependence of disarmament and development?

The arms race has been a principal factor in siphoning precious resources away from development. Disarmament will not only release resources for addressing major problems of development but would also create a climate conducive to the establishment of a more democratic and equitable economic order.

More than a year has passed since the Delhi Declaration of Principles for a Nuclear Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World was signed. What do you think of that document now?

The Delhi Declaration embodies the vision of a nuclear weapon-free and non-violent world. The vision is not romantic or impractical. It is based on the hard reality of ensuring our collective survival. The task during the remaining part of the century and beyond is to try to realise it.

The Planet's Flashpoints

We Shall Do Without Outside Promptings

For almost nine years now US imperialism has been waging an 'undeclared war' against Nicaragua. It has carried off thousands of lives and played havoc with the economy. Revolutionary commander **Bayardo Arce**, National Leadership Executive Commission vice-coordinator for Nicaragua's Sandinista NLF, tells about his government's rehabilitation and national reconciliation effort and the importance of international solidarity for the embattled republic.

THE people and Sandinista government want to see 1988 as the decisive year for peace in Central America and the cessation of bloodshed in Nicaragua. Today this is the main aim of our diplomatic offensive. But there is one more front of struggle, the economy. And here, we believe, the time has come for a few important measures which will help to quicken the defeat of aggression.

In February we started currency and economic reforms. They are to increase production, especially farm exports, and improve life for the working class and all working people.

The currency reform is not a devaluation or merely a change of money. It aims to fix a single rate of exchange for export and import settlements. Our producers will be able to sell their goods at world market prices. This, naturally, will induce them to work more and better.

As the reform means higher prices for a number of earlier-subsidised goods, the state has sharply increased wages, by an average of 500 per cent. This will help honest workers bear the higher cost of living more easily.

A structural clean-up of the government machinery attends the economic changes. The pruning will save us a lot of funds and help curb

inflation. We shall be able to direct the personnel thus released into production or defence. They will certainly be more useful there.

Diplomacy is another important front of struggle. The Guatemalan accords, signed by the presidents of the five Central American republics, have opened up the way to national reconciliation. Their clear message to the world, and the United States in particular, is that we can solve our problems ourselves, without any outside promptings. But the US will not hear of the agreement and ignores it, continuing to meddle in our affairs and trying to torpedo the collective peace effort.

The White House instigates the contras, who loyally serve their bosses and take any orders from them. There have been many attempts to derail the Guatemalan accords, and hinder the end-of-hostilities talks,¹ the surrender of arms by anti-government forces, and their reintegration in peaceful life with full guarantees from our leadership.

Inside Nicaragua, a would-be civilian opposition, composed of small political groups, also dances to the US tune. As decided by the Central American presidents' meeting, we invited them to a dialogue, ready to listen to their views on the nation's common problems. But they refused, or more precisely — first agreed and then backed out.

Whichever way you look, a peacefully developing Nicaragua does not suit the US. Yet we are confident: if the heads of the Central American states firmly insist on fulfilment of the decisions taken, the vicious anti-Nicaraguan policy of the US leadership is doomed.

It is not only thanks to popular courage and heroism that our revolution successfully resists the aggression of the world's most powerful imperialist state. We owe much to the broad international solidarity that helps us rebuff enemy designs, militarily, politically, economically and diplomatically. Nicaragua appreciates all of it: the position of Social Democracy, the invariable many-sided backing of the socialist community, and the solidarity of the Latin American states and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The US policy is incompatible with the principles of today's interdependent world where cooperation and coexistence should prevail.

¹ At the end of March the Nicaraguan Government and the leaders of the counter-revolutionary forces signed a ceasefire agreement, under which hostilities are to be halted on April 1 for 60 days. — *Ed.*

the party

Meetings In Havana And Ulan-Bator

A CONFERENCE on international issues of central committee secretaries from communist and workers' parties of socialist countries took place in Havana on February 29-March 3. They represented the BCP, CPCz, the Communist Party of Cuba, SED, HSWP, WPK, LPRP, MPRP, PUWP, RCP, CPSU, and CPV.

In a broad exchange of opinions on the international situation, which remains involved and contradictory, the conference unanimously noted the growth of positive tendencies thanks to action of all the forces of socialism, peace and reason. The importance of the Soviet-US INF Treaty was stressed in this context.

The conference participants reaffirmed their parties' resolve to use these favourable opportunities for continued progress in disarmament, especially a gradual reduction and the eventual scrapping of all nuclear weapons, along with the creation of nuclear-free zones, an end to nuclear tests, the non-militarisation of space, an early ban on and the destruction of chemical weapons, and substantive cuts in conventional military forces and arms. The socialist countries, they stressed, will be working to make irreversible the process of arms reduction, the diminution of the war threat, and the strengthening of international confidence and peace. It was unanimously noted that action by the broad anti-war forces has an added significance in present-day conditions.

As well as showing a high sense of responsibility for the fate of mankind, the socialist countries' numerous initiatives to promote disarmament, a nuclear-free world and stronger world and regional security demonstrate that socialism and peace are inseparable. This goes hand in hand with their restated preparedness for a constructive study of the peace proposals from other states and political forces, such as the Stockholm Declaration of the Group of Six and the initiatives of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Socialist International. The conference, however, voiced anxiety over the attempts by certain NATO circles to hinder the disarmament process by compensating for the arms to be reduced with modernised and newly-developed types of weapons.

The dramatic economic situation in the developing countries, made still worse by their foreign debt, and its political, social and cultural implications were also discussed. In this context, the conference noted the close inter-relationship between the cardinal issues of peace, disarmament and development. It envisaged an important role for the huge funds to be released as the mad arms race and military expenditures are wound down in resolving the tragic problems that beset a large part of mankind and are a source of conflicts. In examining ways to strengthen world peace, set up a comprehensive system of international security and restructure international relations on a fair and democratic basis, the conference

stressed the need to overcome underdevelopment and establish a new international economic order as this ultimately will benefit all nations. It gave full support to the activity of the non-aligned countries in this direction.

The Havana meeting provided a favourable opportunity for an exchange of information on the situation in Central America in the context of the struggle of the Latin American peoples for the consolidation of their national independence and for social and economic progress. Its participants reiterated their support for efforts to establish peace in Central America on the basis of respect for the sovereign will of each nation, which will enable the countries of the region to focus on meeting their formidable social and economic challenges. They also noted the dangers inherent in the aggressive policy of US imperialism there, in the attempts being made to strangle the Sandinista popular revolution, and identified themselves once more with the heroic struggle of the Nicaraguan people. They voiced concern over the attempts at destabilisation, particularly through military coups, which the democratic processes in South America are being subjected to in the acute economic conditions, and reaffirmed their solidarity with the peoples of the continent who oppose the fascist-like dictatorships there and are fighting for freedom, democracy and in defence of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The meeting participants also pledged once again their firm solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of Asia and Africa against neocolonialism, for an independent development geared to economic and social progress, as well as with the communists and all the fighters for national and social liberation suffering from persecution and repression on the part of the forces of reaction, racism, and apartheid.

Proceeding from the assumption that peace is indivisible, the fraternal parties represented at this conference spoke out decisively for a political, negotiated settlement of the conflicts in different parts of the world which are dangerous hotbeds of international tension, including those in Southern Africa, the Middle East and Southwest and Southeast Asia, and backed up the initiatives aimed at reducing the tension due primarily to imperialist actions. In particular, they gave support to the proposals of the DPRK for a sharp reduction in the armed forces of North and South Korea and to make the Korean Peninsula a non-nuclear peace zone.

The conference participants highly assessed the International Meeting of Representatives of Parties and Movements that took place in Moscow on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, and noted that such initiatives meet the requirements of our time and help establish a constructive dialogue and cooperation between all the political forces working for stronger peace, disarmament, development, environmental protection, and a solution to the other vital problems facing mankind.

They also discussed cooperation and international solidarity among the communist and workers' parties in their campaign for peace and socialism on the basis of the principles of independence, equality, and respect for the right of each party to decide its own political line, strategy and tactics in accordance with the specific conditions of its country.

The participants in the conference expressed gratitude to the Communist

Party of Cuba for its thorough preparation and organisation, solidarity with the Cuban revolution and warm wishes of success to the Cuban people in the construction and defence of socialism.

The conference took place in an atmosphere of brotherly mutual understanding and a free, businesslike exchange of opinions. Its participants agreed to hold the next such conference in Sofia.



A meeting of central committee secretaries of communist and workers' parties of socialist countries responsible for ideological affairs took place in Ulan-Bator on March 16-17, 1988. It was attended by representatives of the BCP, CPCz, the Communist Party of Cuba, SED, HSWP, WPK, LPRP, MPRP, PUWP, RCP, CPSU, and CPV.

The meeting participants exchanged their opinions and experience on the problems relating to new political thinking and the ideological work of the parties at this stage. It was noted that the implementation of the decisions of the fraternal parties' congresses and the search on their basis for the most effective approaches to today's problems of socialist development confirm the timeliness of the basic understanding reached by leaders of the CMEA member-countries at the Moscow working meeting (November 1986) on the need for more productive cooperation in the ideological sphere, and also in the other fields of socialist construction. Such cooperation is particularly imperative now that under the leadership of the communist and workers' parties acting in accordance with the specific conditions and features of their countries, profound social and economic transformations and processes of restructuring are taking place and measures are being implemented to broaden democracy, streamline and renovate socialist social relations and develop the spiritual world of the individual.

The meeting stressed the importance of a large-scale explanation of the constructive efforts of the Soviet Union and all socialist states which are coming out for the removal of nuclear threat and military-political confrontation; for an expansion of the dialogue and cooperation with all anti-war forces in the interests of lasting peace, disarmament, especially in the nuclear field, international security and cooperation; for the establishment of a new world economic order; and for respect of the right of each people to free, independent development along the road of economic and social progress.

With an ongoing ideological struggle the affirmation of new political thinking also presupposes normal state-to-state relations without regard to ideological differences and calls for the search of mutually acceptable solutions of mankind's global problems in the interests of every nation. In this connection the meeting pointed out the importance of a well-argued exposure of the forces that are trying under various pretexts, including the allegations about the so-called threat from the socialist countries, to hold back and reverse the process of disarmament and prevent an invigoration of the international climate.

The meeting put forward proposals for intensified research on

socialism's current theoretical and practical issues and the topical problems of world development on the basis of a creative enrichment of Marxism-Leninism and scientific socialism. Of special interest is the exchange of the experience in providing ideological support for such important and largely similar processes in the life of the socialist countries as the perfecting of the methods of social leadership on the part of communist and workers' parties, the intensification of the economy, the development of the political system of the working masses and the individual.

An exchange of the experience in mass media coverage of the daily life of the socialist states, the constructive effort of their peoples in implementing economic and social programmes and both their achievements and problems took place. The meeting noted that the press, radio and television must assist in every way the all-round cooperation of the socialist states, enrichment of the content and forms of international ties between their party, state, economic and public organisations, the unfolding and augmentation of the creative potential of socialism, and the exchange of the advanced experience in socialist construction, ensuring a full, objective reflection of the processes and events now taking place in the countries of socialism. The participants agreed that there are considerable reserves in this field.

A pressing task now is to give thorough coverage of the real achievements and prospects in the development of human rights under socialism and to expose the groundless claims of its opponents to the role of champions of human rights which are being constantly trampled on in capitalist society.

The meeting also discussed the main questions of further expanding cooperation among the socialist countries in the field of culture.

The participants expressed their cordial gratitude to the MPRP for the good organisation of the meeting.

The meeting took place in a businesslike, comradely manner. It was agreed that Berlin would be the site for the next meeting of CC secretaries of fraternal parties responsible for ideological affairs.

Pravda, March 19, 1988

Nostalgia For The Future

Julio Anguita — General Secretary,
Communist Party of Spain (CPS)

'The Left Response: A Strong Communist Party' was the theme of the 12th Congress the Communist Party of Spain held in Madrid from February 19 to 21, 1988. The 619 delegates who represented the party's 62,000 members discussed the Central Committee's report, approved the political documents defining the tasks of the party in

For a biographical note on Julio Anguita, see p. 63.

the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress, and elected a new Central Committee. At their first meeting, its members voted to make Julio Anguita CPS General Secretary.

A few hours after the congress closed, Comrade Anguita gave his first exclusive interview as the CPS leader — to *World Marxist Review*.

Overcoming Symptoms of Crisis

IN the report it submitted to the 12th Congress, the Central Committee notes that since its previous congress, the CPS has gone through the greatest ordeal in its history and averted a very 'real threat of disintegration'. Could you outline the causes of these crisis developments. Have they become overcome fully?

I CHAIRED the meetings of the 11th CPS Congress (in December 1983 — *Ed.*), and so I could take an inside look at the problems which arose between the party and the group of comrades in opposition. It was not the kind of opposition usually associated with ideological conflicts within a party but rather a parliamentary sort of opposition, comprising primarily the CPS apparatus and part of our cadre. At that time, clashes between different groups were quite acute and sometimes resembled a civil war.

Naturally, many problems arose long before the 11th Congress. This was connected above all with the fact that during the post-Franco period of 'civil society', the CPS failed to revive. We were weak in theoretical matters, and so we had no social alternatives we could offer to society. The then leaders were obsessed with elections and devised various tactical stratagems. The CPS was dominated by the ideas of Santiago Carrillo, its former General Secretary, who held that the Communist Party was something closed in on itself. Generally, although the ideas then current among us did contain some critical conclusions which were later borne out by, say Soviet perestroika, they stemmed from a superficial look at problems rather than from their in-depth analysis.

Moreover, some people were in fact considering the establishment, on the basis of the CPS and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (SSWP), of what theoreticians described as a 'social progress bloc'. The supporters of the former General Secretary maintained that the Communist Party would form the backbone of this bloc. Then they even began talking about the need to heal the rift of 1920¹ — essentially implying that the Communist Party would cease to exist.

That was when many comrades left the CPS, particularly in Catalonia where the party was dealt a very painful blow. We failed to find answers to many questions of social development. Eventually, the following thing happened: part of the CPS turned to a completely ritualised and distorted past, clinging to a carbon copy of guidelines developed abroad; others anchored their attention on the future but lacked the necessary theoretical impulse; and still others shut themselves in fully.

Besides, there emerged a practice that doomed the party to a highly personified understanding of politics. A kind of submission to the leader

developed. Those were the circumstances under which the 11th Congress was convened and, inevitably, it all ended with the expulsion of Santiago Carrillo's faction from the CPS.²

Unfortunately, some of those who remained party members were also contaminated with elements of Carrillism which had become habitual and ingrained. Obviously, it is not enough to expel a person to put an end to all he symbolised. We should admit self-critically that certain deviations still exist in our party. But as our policy of alliances develops, they recede increasingly into the background.

I am referring to the still persistent fear of elections and the feeling that electoral victories must be achieved at any cost. There is still prejudice which holds us back from boldly tackling society's problems and becoming its vigorous part for fear of 'contagion', as some put it. There is still reluctance to turn the Communist Party into a force that transforms reality and is capable of intervening forcefully in public affairs — naturally, without losing its identity. This is borne out by our hesitant approach to the implementation of our own plan for the creation of a Left Unity coalition (LU)³ — out of fear that our party may become 'absorbed and dissolved' in it.

The problem lies in the concept of the party as a closed entity resembling a church in which the principle of faith and excommunication operates. I think that this is the key to many issues including those concerning the intellectuals who held progressive positions which, however, did not coincide with our party policy. But industrial workers also left the CPS, thus confirming that the model it then offered was no longer tenable.

We are now working to revive the classical concept of the party — at least I am. (At this point I am speaking on my own behalf only because I have just become General Secretary and I cannot yet speak in the name of others.) My objective is a party which will enter society, grasp its demands and return them to it in the form of a theory, a party acting along the lines of 'reflection leading to action'. That is the principle we must restore.

Key Aspects of Our Policy

The 12th Congress of the CPS is now over. Has it justified the hopes of the Communists? Has the party enhanced its unity? Has it become more mature politically? Has it developed a better understanding of its role and place in society?

It has. A democratic, profound and frank discussion enabled the congress to outline a clear-cut policy based on three major imperatives. The first is to strengthen the CPS contrary to the views of those who question the viability and the reason for the existence of communist parties. The second is to devise a Left Unity strategy geared to the rules of the electoral process in which the Communist Party is to take part together with other Left forces, as well as to delineate the sphere of joint institutional activities for the next few years. The third is to promote communist unity.

Judging by the order in which you have listed these objectives, priority is accorded to the strengthening of the CPS. How do you interpret this effort? Generally, what is your formula or model for a modern communist party operating in a developed capitalist country?

I believe we should proceed from the obvious basic premise that a communist party differs from any other organisation. To me, the party above all represents a political theory which promotes unity and is mastered by those who strive for society's revolutionary transformation. As a first step leading to joint and concerted efforts, they rally together on the basis of their political views in order to ensure a single policy, a single organisation and joint specific action.

I hold that open and honest debate without any 'taboo' subjects is the foremost salient feature of a modern communist party: anything can be debated and discussed. To elaborate its policy, the party should not only discuss any problem openly but also look for its own, distinctive way of self-expression. This means that in our dialogue with society, we should abandon our jargon which is often unclear to others.

Finally, the matter of organisation. Organisation is necessary above all because the party is not only a forum for debate: it also has its day-to-day work. Debate does not mean that we are giving up party work — specifically, maintaining ties among comrades, celebrating anniversaries, issuing membership cards, etc. I think that these elements should also be present within the organisational structure of modern communist parties in capitalist countries.

How do we strengthen the party? To begin with, together with our entire leadership I would want the CPS to continue developing in the democratic spirit so prominent at the 12th Congress. But we also want commitment to the cause, competent and vigorous work and discipline to be valued too. Discipline should not be promoted by administrative measures; it should be seen the way the Communists interpret it — as free and willing observance of majority decisions taken on the basis of democratic centralism.

One cannot consolidate the party without a constant examination of realities. This means that an analysis and discussion of the economic basis and the model distinctive to contemporary Spanish society, of social stratification and of industrial and social relations should be the objective of all grassroots organisations, of all CPS members. That is how the party can secure its place in society.

Furthermore, our party will never give up its ideological hegemony as it was interpreted by Antonio Gramsci — implying that it should find clear-cut and accurate answers to current political questions so that these answers could be accepted by other political forces, civic movements and individuals.

Confidence that the existence of the communist party is historically necessary — particularly now that this issue is being debated — is also important for the party's consolidation. We proclaim it in no uncertain terms that the activities of a communist party are topical and necessary in Spain — as they are in Europe and in the world.

Today, after the 12th CPS Congress, strengthening the party means making every party member a fighter for the cause of world communism. In other words, every Communist should conduct work in his or her neighbourhood, group or factory and in the Left Unity coalition under the banner of the Communist Party of Spain.

In short, the CPS should actually become a true vanguard in analysing economic, political, ideological and cultural problems and in day-to-day struggle, a vanguard helping us forge ahead to the society which is our goal and the source of what I often describe as 'nostalgia for the future'.

Could you deal briefly with the question of restoring communist unity — judging by what transpired at the congress, a key issue of Spain's communist movement? Apparently, there are different views of how it should be tackled. How do you understand restoration of communist unity?

That is indeed a 'hot' and highly important subject. As far as I could see from Andalusia,⁴ it is still being debated and we have not yet come to grips with it in earnest. The things that stand in the way include the consequences of 'bowing to the leader's authority', something that results in many issues being overshadowed by the personal characteristics of certain individuals. Personal likes and dislikes play a prominent role, and clashes ensue. That is what makes it so important to get rid of this 'submission to the leader' complex.

Immediate restoration of communist unity was urged at the congress. I am convinced that we need it to elaborate and act upon political concepts and to conduct joint organisational and practical work. Should any of these elements be called into question, communist unity will cease to exist. Instead, a political conglomerate of different currents will emerge again, resembling the SSWP rather than a communist organisation.

How do we restore this unity? To me, the effort implies at least — and I want to underscore this point — the return to the Communist Party of the comrades who have left it. This return does not signify any integration or absorption.

We have reached a fundamentally novel juncture. Projects are being replaced with joint action. A debate has been held, and I am gratified to say that in its course, everyone agreed that unity should be enhanced and that we should further this cause. We also intend to continue discussing this subject with the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain. Naturally, this involves the question of Left Unity activities.

Having preserved our communist identity, we should now distance ourselves from certain mystical, 'religious' concepts and formulae which are widespread among us. A return to a disorganised state is something we cannot accept. One cannot allow a situation to recur in which, as we say, 'three enter by one door and seven leave by another'. Very careful treatment should be applied to heal the wound inflicted on the party.

At any rate, I believe that there is an effective formula for ensuring unity: the Communist Party of Spain should begin to assert its role in society.

Could you dwell on the third aspect of CPS activities as outlined at the congress — promoting Left Unity? How closely is this task connected with the issue of communist unity?

As I said, communist unity above all stipulates a shared policy and joint practical action. But this can be achieved through the strategy of the LU coalition. Beyond its framework, unity is very difficult.

Today, Left Unity represents both a body of joint experience and a strategic project. When a project of this kind is being developed and two communist entities have a common view of the society they want to build and of the policy they need, that is a major cementing factor in itself. The rest depends on tactics adopted on the basis of theory and can be resolved as alternative programmes are being drawn up.

To our party and to me, Left Unity is a catalyst which makes it possible to rally the Communists together swiftly and effectively because we deal with joint action on specific issues.

But since the LU coalition is not yet sufficiently developed, debate over the way it should be organised continues. I do not think the coalition can be very open. If we want to transform society and if our coalition comprises many components, obviously its structure should not be as rigid as that of a party. But there must be a common organisation and a common discipline for high-, medium- and low-level cadres, as well as a common rhythm of work because otherwise — I don't know whether this metaphor will serve — we will confront an army of fanatics with an unruly horde.

In the 1986 elections to the provincial parliament, LU won 18 per cent of the vote in Andalusia — much more than in other regions of Spain. How do you explain this? Do you intend to 'export' the Andalusian experience so that the coalition could use it?

The process of unification started in Andalusia back in 1984. It involved a lot of painstaking work. I got down to it while dealing with specific plans. They were connected with our strategic goal, at that time expressed in a call for a 'society of full employment'. We took the idea to the masses, and it grew, acquired a political thrust and won grassroots support. But in other regions of Spain, no thorough explanatory work was conducted during the election campaign. That made the difference. Naturally, it produced different election results.

As far as 'exporting' the Andalusian experience is concerned, we debated this issue before I became CPS General Secretary. I think this expertise can be used in general LU context when the task is to jointly develop a programme, define the strategic goal and work to promote unity.

Foreign delegations present at the 12th Congress noted the heightened interest the Spanish media showed in it: there were some 300 accredited journalists, live radio and television broadcasts from the floor and extensive coverage in leading newspapers and periodicals. How do you explain that? After all, Communists are not exactly the darlings of the press in non-socialist countries.

There were different reasons for this interest. First, journalists have a good nose for possible scandal. Second — I don't know if this is a general rule or perhaps something typically Spanish — the press shares the weakness of politicians. I am referring to demagoguery. The foremost objective of the press is to sell its news — at any cost. Newspaper headlines do not reflect reality. They cater to the reader and say what he wants to hear. This demand is shaped by the social environment. Much of what the press wrote about our party was lies. Everything that occurred at the 12th Congress was traditionally presented as a clash of 'personalities', of 'leaders'. This attitude stems from metaphysical and idealistic notions which interpret history as a duel of personalities and ignore the fact that the struggle of the masses is its motive force. That is the crux of the matter. Naturally, this coverage of our congress carries a powerful ideological charge. We've got to combat such attitudes, and that is what the party is doing already: we are now speaking clearly and in a collectivist spirit.

Do the Communists Need a New International?

The Central Committee said in its report to the congress that during its crisis years the CPS distanced itself from other communist parties and ended up in isolation. Has this trend been reversed? Generally, how do you assess the priorities of your party's international activities?

Indeed, we have a considerable backlog of problems in this sphere. But even prior to the 12th Congress we began to reappraise our positions. We abandoned empty political rhetoric. Let me illustrate my point. Now that perestroika offers a critical evaluation of some aspects of Soviet policy, one cannot be misled because the source of this critique is socialism. But many of our earlier mistakes were made because we borrowed arguments from our adversaries.

This has changed in recent years. A rapprochement has begun in our relations with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and they are becoming more cordial. The freeze on relations with the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has been lifted. Earlier, we established fraternal relations with the Communist Party of China. I have travelled little abroad, but I have spoken to many comrades and I believe that our party has advanced significantly in international politics.

I have not yet discussed this matter with the party's leadership, but I would venture a personal assessment. I think there is a great deal yet to be done in this field — if only because capital is getting internationalised fast, and transnational corporations are active everywhere. But this internationalisation of the power of capital should be countered by our international solidarity. All of us Communists may commit a grave mistake if we refuse to go beyond mere declarations and relations of a purely diplomatic kind. I am convinced that in launching a new drive or at least activating the existing policy of the CPS in the sphere of international contacts, we should conduct a dialogue with other communist parties on a wide range of issues. This will also help us in our effort to devise domestic alternatives.

In short, it is time we got down to earnest joint work. I would venture to voice a suggestion: could it be that communist parties are in need of some connecting link? If not a new International (that may evoke certain memories, and I believe that there should be no closed subjects in history), then at least a kind of coordinating body that would be polycentric and free from the negative stereotypes left to us by history. There is now an acute need for concerted action by communist parties.

You mentioned perestroika in the Soviet Union. What is your assessment of its impact on the international communist movement?

I will refrain from discussing the influence of this change on the Soviet Union's domestic affairs, but it is obvious that Mikhail Gorbachov has scored a series of major international victories which demonstrate the viability of the CPSU's foreign policy. Besides, the fact that, speaking on behalf of his party's leadership, the General Secretary frankly and openly discusses drawbacks and the problems of bureaucracy, corruption and the like testifies to the strength of socialism. Only the strong can criticise themselves. To me, this self-criticism reflects the strength of the system itself, although many deviations occurred as it was being built. All that is very important to us.

We can also note that the historically motivated and very harmful attitude to the Soviet Union as a 'sacred cow', widespread among Communists in many countries, is disappearing. The obsession with creating a pantheon of the revolution and of idealised revolutionaries is becoming a thing of the past. And so, we are beginning to see what they have left us against the background of today's theoretical and practical issues. That makes it necessary to take a hard look at realities.

One more point. If we idealise the image of Lenin or, say, Bukharin, they will remain 'gods' to us. But people cannot hope to equal gods, and they dare not question myths. This makes it imperative to demythologize some phenomena.

Many people should now understand that the most important thing about our attitude to Lenin is not to preserve his legacy as an embalmed mummy or cling to what he once said. His ideas, his work, his method and the global results which were achieved are what is important.

¹ The CPS was founded on April 15, 1920 as a result of a crisis in the SSWP. — *Ed.*

² In February 1987 this group founded the Workers' Party of Spain-Communist Unity. — *Ed.*

³ Aside from the CPS, the Left Unity coalition comprises the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain, the Socialist Action Party and the Republican Left organisation. In the 1986 elections LU won seven parliamentary seats. In the June 1987 elections to the Europarlament, to the government bodies of autonomous regions and to municipal councils, LU received almost 1.3 million votes. — *Ed.*

⁴ Prior to his election as CPS General Secretary, Julio Anguita was chairman of the LU coalition in the autonomous region of Andalusia. — *Ed.*

Communists And Elections

After A Long Decline Of The Popular Movement

Hector Mujica — CC member,
Communist Party of Venezuela

THERE are a number of common factors which are decisive for the Communists' electoral prospects in countries of the world capitalist system.

The past few years have seen several major communist parties with a strong electoral base, among them the French, the Italian, and the Portuguese ones, suffer setbacks at the polls. We view such events in the context of not just internal but of broader, international processes. The positions of the Left almost everywhere have been weakened in the 1980s by the formidable onslaught of imperialism and reaction. It has been backed up with an anti-communist campaign, continuously fuelled in the capitalist world by the press, radio and television. It has also become perfectly clear in the 1970s and 1980s that any blunder committed by the ruling parties of socialist countries in their economic policies and any violation of democratic freedoms there badly affects the Communists' positions in those lands where they are not in government.

Complex problems are posed for us also by the emergence in capitalist society of new movements, such as trade unions which resist the political domination of any party, ecological groups, which have become quite influential, for instance, in the FRG, mass Christian movements and various youth and feminist groups which, mostly out of prejudice, look askance at the Communists.

Persisting weaknesses in the work of the communist parties themselves, too, contribute to their electoral setbacks. A number of parties in Latin America are known to be still afflicted with sectarianism and dogmatism, which narrows the Communists' room for manoeuvre and makes their election campaigns sound feeble and dull.

Political structures in many Latin American countries have been modelled after the Anglo-Saxon two-party system. Under the pattern which prevailed in Venezuela almost three decades ago, the Democratic Action Party, a member of the Socialist International, and the Christian Socialist Party (COPEI)¹ rotate in government. Both are linked to

This contribution continues a series of publications on the subject. See *WMR*, Nos. 1 and 3, 1988.

Hector Mujica, b. 1927, joined the Communist Party of Venezuela at the age of 17. In 1961 he became a CC member and from 1978 to 1986 was a member of the CC Political Commission. One of the founders of the party's leading newspaper *Tribuna Popular*, an MP in 1962-1964 and 1969-1974 and the Communists' presidential candidate in 1978, he was jailed seven times. Mujica is Doctor of Philosophy, Professor of Venezuela's Central University, a diplomaed journalist and the author of some 25 books which have been translated into many languages.

transnational corporations, the local financial oligarchy and the armed forces.

The communist party began participating in the electoral process in 1936, while still a clandestine organisation. Participating in elections, the Communists could build a base among the working people, strengthen links with them and expose the ills of the existing system, which was not being done by the other parties.

In 1946, already legalised, the CPV won two seats in the National Congress. Trying to assert itself on the national scene, it put forward a candidate in the very first presidential election in 1947; he was Gustavo Machado,² the legendary man who had been Augusto Cesar Sandino's companion during the latter's stay in Las Segovias, Nicaragua. Then the Communists along with the Social Democrats spearheaded the struggle against the military dictatorship which had come to power in Venezuela. By the time it collapsed in 1958, the CPV had gained considerable prestige and polled in the December 1958 elections more than 160,000 votes, half of them in the capital, which was then called 'Red Caracas'. We won two seats in the Senate and seven in the Chamber of Deputies — the best showing in the party's history.

However, a decline in the popular movement, which started roughly in 1963, affected the Communists' positions. The party split up due to several reasons and decided to boycott the next elections under a policy of 'militant absenteeism'. That call, however, went unheeded and more than 90 per cent of the electorate turned up at the polling stations. The Communists, meanwhile, had no deputies in Parliament till 1969.

The decline lasted some 20 years. That period saw important qualitative shifts in the social structure, in the mentality of the working people and in that of the middle strata which had once been radical but then became integrated into the social system. The character of change was determined in many ways by the oil boom, when unemployment was low and when the huge mass of money in circulation 'cushioned' social conflicts.

The living standards of the working people were rapidly approximating those of the middle strata thanks to high wages and large social subsidies in the oil and metal-producing industries and also in some of the major private enterprises with advanced technology. The mass media, especially TV, played up the negative aspects of life in socialist countries and exaggerated their difficulties and setbacks out of all proportion. Free enterprise was lauded to the skies as the prime mover of progress and the source of all well-being.

The fascist coup in Chile in September 1973 depressed and scared the progressive forces. People feared that if too many votes were cast for the Left, there would emerge, as in Chile, a threat to 'democratic stability' and civil liberties. The CPV and other democratic forces tried to reassure people that Venezuela was not Chile and that our armed forces were nothing like the Chilean ones. But the effect of the media, which scared people with what was happening in Chile, could not be neutralised.

The financial oligarchy and transnationals effectively dominate the mentality of the bulk of the population, including young people. For example, oil workers, for the most part people in the 20 to 30 age bracket,

have a poor idea of the Communists' fight for the working people's demands, democratic freedoms, and human rights. In the campuses the rebellious mood of the 1960s has given way to technocratism and opportunism.

All these factors, characteristic to a varying degree of other countries of Latin America as well, have had a considerable impact on the electorate and boosted the vote for the two dominant parties. Meanwhile, all the left forces put together, including even the most reform-minded ones, could count on the support of at best 10 per cent of the electorate.

In the early 1980s, our party believes, Venezuela entered a qualitatively new period of development. The voters' mentality has remained generally what it was but there are new aspects to their mood. The runaway build-up of foreign debts (currently standing at around \$35 billion) along with a drop in the oil prices has caused a grave socio-economic crisis. More than one-fourth of the economically active population are out of work and incomes have taken a bad plunge. Broad sections of the working people are growing dissatisfied as a result and the prestige of the country's two major parties is going down.

The CPV with its wealth of experience of political and electoral struggle had a quite definite attitude to bourgeois elections in the face of new realities. Just as Lenin did in his '*Left-Wing Communism*' — *An Infantile Disorder*, we reject the view that the Communists' participation in them is a concession to the dominant system. On the contrary, *it makes it possible to bring our ideas to broad strata of people who usually are out of our reach*. Virtually all the party members come into contact with the mass of people during election campaigns. The party finds new recruits with an eye to making them real activists and rebuilds its cells wherever they have been weakened. It seeks to make elections themselves a battlefield of class struggle in order to expose the hypocrisy of the reformists who today command a large following both in a number of West European countries and in Latin America.

Our party strengthened its positions considerably in 1983. The Communists won 120,000 votes, which gave them three seats in the National Congress and six vice-deputy mandates. In 1978, meanwhile, just 50,000 voters cast their ballots for the communist party and it won only one seat. The more than doubling of the Communist vote shows that *the decision to contest the elections was correct and productive*.

Venezuela's electoral legislation is rather advanced and progressive. It has had proportional representation for over 40 years now. As a result, since 1969 the communist party has always had a parliamentary group and deputies in provincial legislative assemblies and in municipal councils in spite of ballot rigging by the authorities.³ Unlike Communists in many other countries, we do not have to fight against unfair electoral laws.

The CPV, however, is at a disadvantage as compared with the major parties. While in the provinces we are usually given access to local radio stations, in Caracas there are serious restrictions on national radio and especially on television. Air time is very costly. But even if we are ready to pay, it is hard to secure an appearance, first and foremost because of a TV policy that is being shaped up in many ways by Big Business. There are

hundreds of TV appearances by leaders of the two-party system for every interview with a communist leader.

At the same time we should be self-critical: by and large, our propaganda has yet to master modern methods of influencing public opinion. Communists are working at all levels, from the Central Committee to grassroots party cells, to improve it. We issue and distribute offset leaflets and posters, place contributions in bourgeois dailies and use our own weekly, *Tribuna Popular*, which has a press run of over 35,000 copies. Our current aim is to start a daily newspaper.

We are trying to broaden our election campaigns to cover more issues. In the past we used to concentrate on the socio-economic situation of the mass of people but today we also stress the need to broaden democracy and strictly to respect the Constitution (which is on the whole progressive) and its guarantees of civil rights. We raise more often than before questions of safeguarding peace and link them to problems of the foreign debt, poverty and the existence of large groups of the population, such as vagrant children and single mothers, who have no adequate social protection.

But however hard we try to organise our election campaigns better, it is extremely difficult to overcome the entrenched practice (a product of the two-party system) whereby voters choose the candidate of either of the leading parties. Many sincere sympathisers of the Left think that they have no chance anyway to win, say, a presidential election. What is worse, people treat elections as if they were making bets on a racehorse or on a baseball team: political emotions often prevail over a reasonable attitude to the voting.

Having analysed the situation, the CPV has drawn the conclusion that *the two-party system cannot be dismantled until the progressive forces have forged close unity*. We have had some experience of making political alliances. Since 1968, for instance, we have had good relations with the People's Electoral Movement⁴ and backed its candidates in the 1968 and 1973 presidential elections. In parliament we usually form an alliance with all the left forces, including the Movement to Socialism.⁵

Relying on its experience, the CPV has drawn up a *common minimum programme as a platform for the development of cooperation*.⁶ If we successfully rally around it the broad public sections with an interest in the dismantling of the two-party system, a democratic and truly independent government can succeed the present administration.

Communists are now working more vigorously with the electorate and have resumed their activities among intellectuals. We regularly hold meetings with party sympathisers from various walks of life to explain our policies to them and to solicit their support. This work among medical people, writers and cultural figures is beginning to pay back. We try also to promote links with priests professing liberation theology and with progressive army circles.

In December 1988 the country will elect the president and deputies to the National Congress and to the legislative assemblies of 20 states. The communist party has reached agreement with the Popular Electoral Movement and with the recently formed Moral Movement; the latter organisation, which unites many leading men of science and culture,

nominated for president Edmundo Chirinoz, Rector of Central University of Venezuela, and the CPV has decided to support him.

The party hopes to use the elections to make progress toward *the broadest possible alliance of democratic and revolutionary forces*. Politically, the aim is to unite all the circles, civic and popular organisations, the mass of non-party people, Marxists and Christians, believers and atheists and progressive and revolutionary-minded independents and patriots into a movement with a single goal. *In class terms*, it should embrace all the strata, from the working class, peasants and progressive intellectuals to the bourgeoisie with no links to monopoly capital. Acting according to a common programme, such a movement will enable us to work towards the establishment of people's rule in Venezuela.

¹ The Spanish abbreviation stands for the electoral alliance Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente, established in 1946, the forerunner of that party. — *Ed.*

² Gustavo Machado (1898-1983), a founder and leader of the Communist Party of Venezuela, became active in the progressive student movement when a young man. Persecuted for his revolutionary work and forced to emigrate, he was one of the founders of the first communist party on Cuba and contributed to the communist movement in Mexico and to the national liberal struggle of the Nicaraguan people. In 1929 he came to Venezuela from Curaçao, where he had arrested the governor of the island and seized the vessel *Maracaibo* with a shipment of arms in an abortive bid to overthrow the dictatorial regime there. In the 1930s he worked in the revolutionary émigré community in Paris and headed the Union of Latin American Revolutionaries in Exile in Mexico. In 1946 he became a member of the Political Bureau, in 1958-1970 served as National Secretary and in 1971-1983 was chair of the Communist Party of Venezuela.

³ When there are no Communists in the electoral commission of a constituency, the votes cast for the CPV are distributed between other parties — and we are physically unable to have Communists monitor all the 30,000-odd polling stations.

⁴ *Movimiento Electoral del Pueblo* (MEP), the Socialist Party of Venezuela, was formed in December 1967 by a breakaway group of the Democratic Action Party. It is a member of the Socialist International. — *Ed.*

⁵ A political party, formed in 1971, which advocates a 'Venezuelan road to socialism' and relies on the petty bourgeoisie, intellectuals and students. — *Ed.*

⁶ See for details: Alonso Ojeda Olaechea, 'For Broad Interaction Among Democratic Forces', *WMR*, No. 1, 1987.

Discussion Of The Problem Of Communists And The Youth

Let Miklos' Dream Come True

Interviews Taken In Budapest

The young are not only the future of every nation but also the most sensitive barometer of the latest mood in society. **Aris Papantimos**, a member of the Communist Party of Greece working in the *WMR* editorial office, visited Budapest at the invitation of the Central

Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP). He met young people, both party members and non-affiliated with the party, representatives of the Communist Youth Union, of public and state organisations concerned with youth problems, and also the head of the Youth Commission under the HSWP Central Committee and CC secretary Janos Lukacs.

YOUNG Hungarians, like all of the country's citizens, have many cares and worries. The country is going through a difficult period of economic stabilisation: this year prices have risen by some 15 per cent and a new taxation system has come into force. As a result, the working people's living standards have fallen somewhat and public discontent is growing.

An outsider, especially one coming from the 'other world', notices straight away that these phenomena are totally new to the Hungarians. In the forty years of people's rule they have forgotten all about high prices, inflation, unemployment and social insecurity. In this sense the year 1988 has indeed become for them, especially for the twenty-year-olds, a leap year, that is, a year of bitter surprises.

What is the matter? Who is to blame? And what will happen next? What is the attitude of the party and the Communist Youth Union working under its ideological guidance to the problems arising and how do they intend to solve them?

Different answers are being given. Hungarians — be they party, Communist Youth Union, or state officials, or just ordinary people — are not afraid to argue and to air their opinions openly. Much has been achieved there in developing democracy, including the freedom of speech.

My first meeting was with a group of young artists at Budapest's Central House of Culture. Below are excerpts from some of my conversations there.

What do you expect from the party's cultural policy? How can Western ideological and cultural influences be countered?

Andras. The economy is always in the focus of attention, whereas culture is relegated to the background. Appropriations for the arts are being cut because of economic difficulties, which is certainly detrimental to our work.

Gyorgy. It is hard to say to what extent our youth is influenced by Western culture. But this influence is, of course, felt — through video, magazines, films, and so on. Satellite TV will also have consequences that are as yet hard to foresee.

Peter. I don't see any need for countermeasures. Now, is it bad to have freedom of choice? But people with low cultural standards tend to prefer what is easy to comprehend.

Andras. As for satellite TV, we should adopt a national approach to this problem: the message coming from the screen should be addressed to Hungarians specifically. Our cultural standards, I am proud to say, are far from the lowest in Europe.

Janos. They should be raised even higher so that the youth could indeed choose the very best, and there is a lot the party, the Communist Youth Union and the creative intelligentsia can do in this respect.

What do you Hungarians dream about today?

Gyorgy. I think most of the young people dream of having a flat of their own. After all, decent living conditions are important to both creative efforts and the growth of cultural and intellectual standards.

Peter. In the past they sought to get a good education; now everything centres on material interests. In this sense, there is nothing prestigious about being an intellectual.

Frankly, the young artists' answers bothered me. Could it be, I reasoned, that with all the concern shown by the HSWP and the socialist state for the younger generation, its life is so hard that money and housing should become all but a chief ideal in life? I discussed the matter with **Anita Soltesz**, a party member and head of a sociological research team:

It has become more difficult for young people to adjust themselves at work. The value of knowledge is being eroded. This is explained in part by the fact that it is not until he is 35 that a graduate of a higher educational establishment attains the living standards of a vocational or technical school graduate.

In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, during the economic resurgence period, professional growth ranked highest in the hierarchy of goals in the life of young Hungarians, independence came second, followed by personal happiness. Sociological studies show that in the late 1970s the three wishes transformed in the following way — personal happiness (1), a flat of one's own (2) and a lot of money (3). Professional advance has disappeared altogether.

How can you explain such a shift in ideals towards consumerism? Can it be a result of the spread of the 'go-getting' spirit or an effect of bourgeois propaganda? Isn't there any danger of a revival of the 'capitalist dream' among certain strata of the young people?

A. Soltesz. The 'go-getting' boom has hardly anything to do with consumerist sentiments. Young people do not identify personal happiness with wealth. As for the 'capitalist dream', it is unrealistic in a society which has put an end to exploitation of man by man. For that matter, the opportunities for accumulation are not limitless either. The party and the state seek with their policy to regulate incomes.

Through the Communist Youth Union, the mass media and other channels the Hungarian Communists are carrying out vigorous ideological work among the young people to overcome the truly alarming pessimistic sentiments. We try to demonstrate the experience of the older generations, to picture truthfully the difficulties experienced by the party and the country in the past and to give a realistic perspective for a way out of the present complicated situation.

A somewhat different approach to this problem was voiced by **Ervin Szucs**, another member of the Communist Youth Union Central Committee. In his opinion, the mistakes of the past should not be repeated: all troubles should not be ascribed to shortcomings in the field of propaganda. It is natural, he opines, that the young people should want to enjoy the boons of life. The task of the ruling party is therefore to show in practice that these can be provided by socialism and that it is the most developed, humane, and democratic society.

Ignorant of what we had to begin with, said **Robert Ribanszky**, secretary of the All-Hungarian Council of the Patriotic People's Front and HSWP member, as he joined the conversation, some young people compare the living standards in the highly developed capitalist countries with the Hungarian ones. When travelling, they see only the glamorous shop windows and give little thought to the cost and labour involved in producing these boons and to who can afford them. Suppose they went to Western Europe as 'guest workers' rather than as tourists. I wonder what they would say of capitalism and socialism a year later.

In a Budapest café I introduced myself as a tourist from Greece to a 25-year-old young man and had a talk with him. I asked him if he would vote for socialism at a referendum today. He answered in the negative but added that he was in the minority. This is the rule of contraries of sorts. Most of the Hungarian young people are in favour of socialism — the question is what sort of socialism. Forty years after the victory of people's power the Communists in Hungary are still asked that question.

Today, **Robert Ribanszky** says, we are analysing and reassessing some of the old approaches. New problems also arise. It was supposed in the past that much could be accomplished quite soon. Reality disproved it. What I mean here, first and foremost, is production. It is necessary to have a precise and clear-cut idea of where society is heading. It is impossible to squander the national wealth indefinitely, that is, to consume more than we produce. Unprofitable enterprises will be closed.

This presupposes unemployment. And what about social security, the chief advantage of the new system? Can the Communists retreat on this issue?

According to our forecasts, this year, **Ferenc Solyom**, secretary of the All-Hungarian Trade Union Council and HSWP member, answers, about 150,000 will become temporarily jobless. This is indispensable for ensuring genuinely effective employment. Regrettably, it is young people who will suffer most. School and university graduates are to face problems in finding jobs. Nevertheless, the party and the trade unions will never renounce the principle that under socialism the right to work is guaranteed to one and all. There will be jobs, though many will find them not where they want but where society needs them. The state will help those looking for jobs: during six months they will be getting allowances the size of average wages, then somewhat smaller. The long-term solution lies in the purposeful training of specialists and the cadres of workers for the sectors

which need them most and in the renunciation of an overly narrow professional specialisation.

One of my last meetings was at the State Committee for Youth Affairs and Sports, which was set up not so long ago and has the powers of a ministry.

Formerly, **Laszlo Varga Sabjan**, deputy chairman of the Committee, said, all problems pertaining to youth were tackled by the Communist Youth Union. Today we have come to the conclusion that it is necessary, on the one hand, to heighten the role and responsibility of state bodies and, on the other, to create a youth structure that would incorporate many elements. We are encouraging the appearance of informal associations in all the cities and towns.

We deem it important to pay more attention to the cultural needs and material requirements of every young man and woman in order to steer the young people's energy towards socially useful work. This would create an atmosphere precluding different negative phenomena, such as social apathy and sometimes even graver troubles, including drug addiction. The Hungarian Communists understand today that all these are a result of internal contradictions, of which socialist society is not free either, rather than of some evil plotting from the outside.

What is then the main impression of my trip to Hungary in the present, critical period? The pessimistic mood is quite pronounced among the population as a whole and the young people in particular. Some speak of just 'difficulties', others of the 'coming crisis'. At the same time there is hope that Hungary will be able again to advance resolutely, provided the economic stabilisation programme worked out by the 13th (1985) Party Congress and the subsequent HSWP Central Committee plenary meetings is fulfilled. The young people hope that a qualitatively new socialism will be born out of the present processes. "We'll do everything possible for our children to live in a better, more perfect and humane world," **Simon Miklos**, a Communist Youth Union activist, told me in Budapest. I hope his dream comes true.

For many years now the youth commission headed by Janos Lukacs, Secretary of the HSWP Central Committee, has been active under the HSWP Central Committee. The commission outlines basic party policy towards the youth and ensures ideological guidance and political coordination of various state and public organisations in this field.

Comments by Janos Lukacs, CC Secretary, HSWP

The pessimistic mood and negative phenomena among young people are, to my mind, determined above all by problems in their everyday life, or to put it in a wider perspective, by the socio-economic difficulties experienced by Hungary today. One result of the latter is that for several years now the people's living standards have not grown and are even falling at present. The losses suffered by the people are not fully compensated either by slightly rising earnings or by growing social aid.

Such a situation also makes it difficult to satisfy one of the young

people's major desires, namely, to have a flat of their own. The Hungarians build 90 per cent of their housing with their own money and the state just puts up the remaining 10 per cent. Now, where can a young family get the money if their parents are not quite so well-off? But even if they are and give support, there is the moral problem of being dependent on them. When I was young (I am 53 now), the situation was different. We accomplished everything on our own and more often than not received flats from the state.

Another problem of special concern to the young people is that our society has so far failed to implement consistently the principle of fair payment for the results of one's work. Hence the falling interest in professional growth and in improving one's knowledge and scientific and technical training. We will not be able to cope with these phenomena unless we speed up the country's transition to intensive economic development.

A paradoxical situation arises. On the one hand, lack of material well-being and inconsistent adherence to the principles of social justice result in the disillusionment of part of the young people and in the spread of socio-political passivity in their midst. On the other hand, the ambitious tasks set by the HSWP within the framework of the profound economic reform can hardly be resolved without the active participation of the young people and their growing role in society.

A way out is, first and foremost, in persistent quest for new approaches to the young people, studies of their mood and requirements, and an objective assessment of the potentialities of the existing organisational structures. Hungarian party, state and Communist Youth Union leaders meet regularly to discuss these problems and look for solutions.

We have, for instance, stated that it is becoming ever more difficult for the Communist Youth Union to expand its ranks: its membership has fallen and at the moment makes up a minority of the young people. That is why the party is encouraging the establishment of youth sections in all the mass organisations. These special sections have appeared in the trade unions, the Patriotic People's Front structures and the scientific and technical society.

It became clear that it was not enough to defend the working people's rights or to develop the political system or technological progress in general: young workers, students and young people engaged in creative activity have their own interests and aspirations in all these fields and are willing and capable of upholding them.

The younger generation of today is not at all a 'lost' generation. Along with passive people, indifferent to all and everything, there are quite a few who scathingly criticise the existing state of affairs and certain aspects of our policy. Nevertheless, we believe that it is on them that the party can rely in its efforts for the renewal of society. This is not merely a contemplative generation with an opinion of its own but one seeking changes and willing to make its tangible contribution.

The young people have become more active socially and politically of late. We see them, as a rule, as competent, well-educated, and professionally trained people, who are working for the benefit of the

country shoulder to shoulder with the older generation and who have a correct idea of their duty to society. The nationwide youth action under the slogan 'Our Future Is at Stake' is quite characteristic in this respect. It is increasingly involving young people in tackling the economic tasks of Hungary today and has launched a discussion on what sort of socialism we want to build.

A noteworthy fact is that ever more independent youth groups are being formed at schools and residential areas, that is, informal collectives of sorts, which set themselves concrete aims in developing culture and sports, organising their leisure, social mutual assistance, environmental protection, and scientific and technological creative work.

The State Committee for Youth Affairs and Sports acts as a partner of sorts of the Communist Youth Union at the governmental level. We believe that on the whole trust is growing in relations between the young people and the country's political leadership. The efforts of the party to form a stable alliance with the younger generation and to involve it ever more intensively in building socialism are bearing certain fruits.

As for the party itself, we have no serious concern about its composition from the point of view of age: 60 per cent of the new recruits are people under 30. They come from the Communist Youth Union, primarily from among the workers. We could do with more students and young intellectuals, especially from among those in culture and the arts. But we do not strive to force the growth of our party ranks. Today 10 per cent of the entire adult population are members of the HSWP and there is no need to raise this ratio.

We are renewing party cards this year and those who disagree with party policy and the methods of its work and those who just feel tired can leave the party of their own accord without any political consequences. On the other hand, party organisations will free themselves of the people not quite up to the mark today — we have no use for those who do not go beyond formally registering as Communists. It is a positive development that self-seekers now show no inclination to join the party: it attracts people firmly determined to help actively improve the situation in the country. By purging its ranks, the party is becoming more integral and capable of accomplishing its responsible tasks.

The attitude of the young people to the party and, in a broader plane, to the Communist ideal will depend on our readiness to pursue consistently a policy that would attract the minds and the hearts of the people.

The pessimistic mood in Hungarian society, to my mind, has to do not only with domestic problems but also with the general state of socialism. After all, for a number of years development was hamstrung in nearly all the socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, with serious difficulties piling up as a result. The time for renewal has now come. Perestroika in the USSR shows graphically that nothing will be accomplished with the help of old methods. We, too, expect much from this process.

A certain loss of attraction by socialism, especially among the young people, is also explained by the fact that, compared with us, the industrially developed capitalist countries have proved more efficient in organising social production and in introducing the achievements of

scientific and technological progress. But the people see that there is less justice in the field of distribution in the capitalist world. We should guarantee justice in full, however, and this, together with the intensification of the entire economy, will enable socialism and the ruling Communist and workers' parties to prove the historic advantages of the new system.

The young people are not blind. They see what has been accomplished in building socialism and also the difficulties experienced by the country. The correct understanding of the reasons behind these difficulties and confidence that the party and the state are choosing the right paths to remedy the situation and sincerely seek to make progress enhance the prestige of our policy and give strength to those who want to work for a better future. This is above all the cause of the young people who will live in Hungary in the twenty-first century.

Information

WMR Introduces

Julio Anguita — General Secretary,
Communist Party of Spain

AT its meeting held in February 1988, the Central Committee formed at the 12th Congress of the Communist Party of Spain elected Julio Anguita General Secretary of the CPS.

Julio Anguita was born into a serviceman's family in Fuengirola (Malaga Province) in November 1941. After graduating as a teacher, he taught and then continued his education at the Modern and Recent History Department of Barcelona University. He worked as a teacher in Cordoba.

Since his youth, Julio Anguita engaged in clandestine political activities and joined the CPS in 1972. In 1975 he was elected to serve on the CPI municipal committee of Cordoba and four years later he became the first Communist mayor of this major Spanish city. Known nationally as the 'Red Caliph', he served in this capacity until 1986. He was also chair of the United Left electoral coalition in the autonomous region of Andalusia. In the 1986 elections to the provincial parliament the coalition won 18 per cent of the vote, reaffirming its role as Andalusia's leading Left force.

At the 11th Congress of the CPS (December 1983) Julio Anguita was elected member of the party's Central Committee and of its Executive.

In Brief

CHINA

THE 13th CPC Congress (1987) urged a further succession of generations and the promotion of younger people to central leading bodies on the basis of 'cooperation of the young and the veterans'. *Renmin ribao* reported that more than 1,300,000 veterans who took part in revolutionary work even before the foundation of the PRC had already resigned from their leading posts. Over 500,000 middle aged and young cadre workers have assumed various posts of responsibility.

CYPRUS

The February presidential elections on the island were won by independent candidate Georgios Vassiliou, who was supported by the Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus (AKEL), the left and democratic forces and some trade unions.

FRENCH OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS

A new organisation formed at a meeting of representatives of the Communist parties of Guadeloupe, Martinique and Réunion, the Socialist Party of Guiana, the Martinique Progressive Party and also the Guadeloupe and Martinique federations of the Socialist parties was called the Alliance of the Forces of Progress of the Antilles, Guiana and Réunion. Its aim is to coordinate the actions of the democratic movements in the overseas departments of France in the struggle for genuine decolonisation and development.

ITALY

The Italian Communist newspaper *l'Unita* has published a series of articles about the campaign of renewing party cards. By January 18, 1988, party cards had been renewed by 751,091 party members, in other words 49.8 per cent of the ICP membership, as registered last year when the party numbered 1,508,117. Out of the total number of those registered 12,000 are new recruits to the party.

POLAND

The Polish United Workers' Party plans to hold a national party conference on 'The Main Theoretical Problems of Socialist Renewal' in late 1988. The agenda will include prospects for developing the socialist political system, especially self-government, national concord and socialist pluralism; the conditions, forms and methods of effecting the party's guiding role; the ideological situation inside the PUWP and the nature of the changes in the world today.

PORTUGAL

The February 1988 plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Portuguese Communist Party decided to hold the next, 12th PCP Congress on December 1-4, 1988. The traditional festival of the Portuguese Communist newspaper *Avante!* is to take place on September 9-11 as part of the preparations for the Portuguese communists' forum.

SRI LANKA

The leaders of the country's four left-wing parties have signed a 'Declaration of Tasks and Prospects of Activity' of the United Socialist Alliance, which comprises the Sri Lanka People's Party, the Communist, Lanka Equal Society and New Equal Society parties.

VENEZUELA

This year marks 40 years since the foundation of *Tribuna popular*, a paper published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Venezuela. The Communists did not stop its publication even in the most difficult period of their clandestine struggle, and *Tribuna popular* was the only opposition paper to come out in the period of the military dictatorship (1948-1959). Today the weekly has a circulation of about 35,000 and it is planned to make it a daily in the future.

VIETNAM

At a meeting with representatives of ethnic Chinese, staff workers of the department for mass activities of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam pointed to the need for party and state bodies at all levels to take measures to stabilise the life of the *huaqiao* and to strengthen the community of the country's nationalities. It was stressed that in 1987 dozens of ethnic Chinese joined the Communist Party of Vietnam, and their number among the deputies to the people's councils had also grown.

YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslav Communists working in the mass media have held a conference in Belgrade attended by 133 delegates representing 8,000 journalists who are members of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, and also senior officials of the League's Central Committee and of other departments and organisations. The conferees pointed out that it was not enough to compete in scathing criticism: joint efforts were needed to change the situation for the better, to oppose resolutely the forces pulling society backwards and to combat oversimplification, provincialism and incompetence in publications and radio and TV programmes, and also attempts to discredit the party and its role in society. Communist journalists, who account for 80 per cent of the mass media workers, are called upon to play an important role in accomplishing these tasks.

International Contacts

Universal Importance Of Democratic Principles

THE results of the official friendly visit made by General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachov to Yugoslavia in March 1988 were summarised in the Soviet-Yugoslav Declaration. The two parties reiterated in it their readiness to continue developing and enriching their mutual relations on the basis of the principle of independence, equality and non-interference, the responsibility of each party to the working class and the people of its country, and mutual respect for the different ways of building socialism.

Consistent respect for the independence of the parties and the socialist countries in determining the road of their own development made it possible to eliminate the causes of the 1948 conflict between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, on the one hand, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) and the Information Bureau, on the other. This is of paramount importance not only for mutual relations between the CPSU and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia but also for the development and affirmation of socialism as a world process.

The two parties will seek to enrich cooperation and constantly to pay attention to political dialogue aiming at an in-depth exchange of opinion and experience. The sides deem it of prime importance to improve socialist self-government with due account for the peculiarities of each country. It guarantees the genuine power of the people and the freedom of the individual, safely precluding administrative-bureaucratic distortions of socialism, as well as dogmatism and voluntarism.

The CPSU and the LCY reiterate the universal importance of democratic principles in the relations between the Communist, workers', Socialist, Social Democratic, revolutionary democratic and other progressive parties and movements on the basis of their inalienable right to independent choice of the road of social development. The Declaration states that the sides favour equal cooperation on the broadest possible basis among parties and movements irrespective of their ideological differences.

Initiative Supported

The implementation of the Soviet initiatives made in Murmansk on October 1, 1987 would make it possible dramatically to lower the level of military confrontation and to turn northern Europe into a zone of peace and cooperation, Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chair of the GDR

State Council, and Arvo Aalto, Chair of the Communist Party of Finland, stated at their Berlin meeting. They stressed that the international meeting to be held in Berlin in June on setting up nuclear-free zones to which representatives of governments, parliaments, parties and public organisations were invited, would promote a broad movement for the accomplishment of that topical task and for the full elimination of nuclear weapons. The two party leaders emphasised the need for joint actions by the peace-loving forces to make further progress in disarmament and in banning nuclear tests and chemical weapons.

For Dynamic Disarmament

The participants in the third conference of the representatives of the Socialist Party — Flemish Wing (Belgium), the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party of Denmark, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Labour Party of the Netherlands and the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (Copenhagen, February 1988) spoke out in favour of eliminating nuclear systems (with a range of up to 500km) in Europe along with attaining stability in conventional armaments at the lowest possible level. After stressing the importance of the problem of a nuclear-free corridor in Central Europe, they welcomed efforts to establish nuclear-free zones on the continent. In their view, the appearance of zones free of chemical weapons would be the first step towards the full elimination of this type of armaments. The representatives of the six parties advocated cooperation between East and West in the field of European security, which could be strengthened only through a new policy rather than by developing sophisticated weapons.

for human survival

The Turn In World Politics And The Regional Problems Of East And Southeast Asia

Is the INF Treaty of importance only to the nuclear powers? The authors of the articles that follow reflect on the ways in which this historic international instrument can contribute to the settlement of regional issues in Asia and the Pacific.

A Step Without Precedent In History

Trần Xuân Bach — Political Bureau member and secretary, Central Committee, Communist Party of Vietnam

THE Soviet-American treaty on the elimination of medium and shorter-range missiles signed in Washington is a symbol of hope. It has strengthened mankind's confidence in a future of peace. It is a reflection of humanism, goodwill and dedication to human survival — the ideals championed by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. It is an instrument heralding the creation of a world free from nuclear weapons.

The threat of a nuclear war which may extinguish all life on Earth is still a palpable reality. At the same time, the objectives of a joint struggle to remove this threat are also becoming feasible. The world's nations hope that the treaty will be ratified and will come into force; they are confident that the Soviet Union will observe it scrupulously, and they expect the same from the United States.

If the United States acts in a spirit of goodwill and, together with the USSR, abides by the accord to eliminate medium- and shorter-range missiles and complies with the verification arrangements, the treaty will become an historic landmark of our age, a transition to a radical reduction of strategic offensive weapons, with the ABM Treaty remaining in force. These steps will make it possible to avert the threat of a world war.

The INF Treaty is already exerting a positive influence which promotes dialogue, negotiated settlement of disputes, peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems, respect for the right of nations to choose their own path of development without outside pressure or interference, and non-use of force in international relations. This influence is like a fresh wind, gradually scattering the clouds on the political horizon of Southeast Asia and of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. A 'stick and carrot' policy and attempts to 'sit on top of a mountain watching two tigers fight each other' can only undermine stability in the southeastern part of our continent. Meanwhile, wars fought by proxy disrupt the peaceful life of nations. We believe that it is imperative to cease all interference in the affairs of other countries and to end all arms deliveries and material assistance to extremist groups which have grown used to plunder and assassinations and which disrupt peace and stability in the countries of the region. That is a just and resolute demand of Southeast Asia's nations which want to live in peace.

The initiatives put forward by Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, as well as by Indonesia in order to expand the sphere of dialogue are hopeful signs of a new turn in the development of the situation in our zone.

The nations of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea have a genuine stake in peace and stability in Indo-China because they suffered from war for long decades. They want durable peace based on independence and freedom —

something their enemies are fighting against. The three countries of Indo-China seek to act together with other nations in a spirit of goodwill and, through dialogue, implement the principles of peaceful coexistence, non-interference in the internal affairs of others, mutual respect, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the right of all nations to freely choose their path of development. This is clearly a promising policy, and the extremists bent on subverting it will end up isolated and, in the final analysis, defeated.

The solidarity and struggle of nations will prevail over the forces that try to swim against the current and defy the imperatives of our age. We are confident that Southeast Asia will live in tranquillity and stability, that it will become a region of cooperation free from nuclear weapons and international power politics. The countries of our zone will contribute vigorously to the strengthening of universal peace and security.

To Ease Regional Tensions

Satiadjaya Sudiman — member of leadership, Communist Party of Indonesia

FOCUSES of regional tensions and conflicts have been shifting from Europe to Asia and the Pacific in recent years, and universal security will, in the final analysis, depend on the way each country of the region chooses to act. Making it possible to implement the programme of building a nuclear-free world for the benefit of the entire international community, the Washington Treaty also reflects today's political realism in the tackling of regional problems. In other words, it highlights the need to shape international relations on the basis of new concepts and new thinking in our region.

In South-east Asia, the nuclear threat comes from the US military bases in the Philippines and in Diego Garcia. The United States is pushing the countries of our zone, above all the ASEAN states, into joining the arms race. Militarisation creates dangerous hotbeds of tensions and, aside from aggravating the international situation in general, also assumes a specific socio-economic aspect. An awareness is growing in the Third World that there is no alternative to the policy of peaceful coexistence and cooperation of states, whatever their social systems. One can hardly deny the dialectical interconnection of categories such as disarmament, peace, independence and development. Today, one is particularly aware of the *interconnection between steps to consolidate peace and curb the arms race and the possibility of ensuring the right of nations to freedom, independence and social progress.*

The rivalry of imperialist transnational corporations in areas where raw materials are concentrated is a potential source of war and a factor leading to the erosion of national, economic and political independence.

The ASEAN nations, including Indonesia, are no exception. Their geographic location is important not only in commercial but also in strategic terms. The natural riches of Southeast Asia, its cheap labour, its sizeable market for imported goods, its historical dependence on foreign monopoly capital and the openly anti-communist ideology and policy of the region's governments attract predatory foreign interests. The monopolies are reaping fantastic profits, while a large-scale military presence keeps our people cowed and intimidated.

Indonesia, an island state with a population of 170 million, many of them subsisting below the poverty line, has long become dependent mostly on oil and gas sales. Local industry is underdeveloped. The drop in oil prices has reduced the country's earnings by 30 per cent. The government has devalued the national currency, cut its social spending and has been constantly seeking foreign loans. The Indonesian people have had to pay a stiff price for this 'assistance'. The country's foreign debt, the sixth largest in the Third World, totals some \$40 billion. Such is the bitter fruit of the 'open door' policy pursued since the latter half of the 1960s.

There is, however, resistance to the desire of the transnationals and their sponsors to strengthen their grip on our economy, influence Indonesia's policy and involve it in militarist schemes. Local commercial and economic interests object to the sway of foreign monopolies and to protectionist policies. This discontent has even spread to cover figures close to the government. For example, deputy chairman Probosutedjo of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, took to task the government's economic agencies in a speech at Bengkulu University.

Dissatisfaction with Western domination of the Indonesian economy is beginning to grow among the national bourgeoisie. The working people, too, are increasingly resisting the government's pro-Western course. Businesses are closing down, unable to withstand the competition of foreign companies. Thousands of people are losing their jobs. The workers of Java's PTGI Tangerang factory launched an organised action in October 1987 against ruthless exploitation and the sway of foreigners. These are no longer isolated cases of the working class putting forward such demands. The government is forced to acknowledge the realities it encounters. We hold that national protest is gaining strength. And the new positive development within the mainstream of international détente will be reflected in what is happening in Indonesia.

Many ASEAN countries are reshaping the philosophy underlying their foreign policy. Significantly, their economic and trade ties with the socialist nations are expanding and becoming more vigorous. The recent talks between M. Kusumaatmadja, Indonesia's foreign minister, and Mikhail Gorbachov and Eduard Shevardnadze have shown that new opportunities have emerged for broadening bilateral relations. Besides, the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia — an issue that grew particularly topical with the adoption of the Manila Declaration — was also discussed. Therefore, one can see that trade and other economic contacts are being coupled organically with issues of peace, of international and regional security.

The Communist Party of Indonesia favours consistent observance of the

principles inherent in peaceful coexistence and cooperation of countries with different social systems. The signing of the Washington Treaty is an additional and tangible sign that these principles are viable.

However, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that relations between the socialist countries and the ASEAN states still remain quite low: the latter are tied closely with the capitalist West, and they are economically dependent on transnational corporations and creditor nations. There is also their biased, conservative attitude to the socialist world. The fear of the 'red peril' is quite widespread in my country. Communists and progressives are persecuted in Indonesia. After serving long prison terms, two more CPI leaders, this time from Eastern Java — Swandi and Sukarman — were executed in November 1987. Will the governments of the region's countries be able and ready to throw off not only the economic and political but also the psychological yoke in order to pursue a consistent and independent foreign policy? A great deal hinges on how this question will be answered.

Whatever the subjective wishes of our countries' ruling quarters, the development of relations between the nations of our region and the socialist world objectively *assists in the normalisation of the overall political situation in Southeast Asia*. It is fully consonant with the laws governing international affairs in our nuclear age which offers no alternative to mutually beneficial cooperation.

Nevertheless, we maintain that this fact cannot be interpreted to mean a possible end to the class struggle. As long as there is exploitation of man by man, as long as there are exploiters and exploited, the class struggle will continue — and, consequently, so will the struggle for democracy as an integral part of the effort to defend peace if democratic rights are suppressed. Such is the view of the Indonesian Communists. They are convinced that their cause of freedom, democracy, peace and social progress is just.

Time For A New Logic

José Lava — Political Bureau member, Central Committee, Communist Party of the Philippines (PKP)

IN the past, it was widely believed that European affairs had little impact in Asia. But the world is rapidly changing and becoming increasingly interdependent, even if still basically contradictory. Today, in assessing the INF treaty recently signed in Washington, we cannot fail to note that its significance goes beyond the reductions of two classes of missiles. It also has an impact on political developments in Asia and the Pacific because nuclear capabilities are expected to be reduced here too. True, the reduction is so far modest, but it is just the beginning of a process which is

bound to expand. In a unilateral move, Soviet SS-20 missiles in the Asian part of the USSR are to be scrapped.

The situation in our region is, of course, influenced by the very fact that the treaty has been signed. This proves that given a sense of responsibility, goodwill, a novel and realistic attitude to current developments, and mutual accommodation, dialogue between equals emerges as a way of negotiating agreements and assumes a radically new dimension. It can also be an effective tool in the settlement of many Asian and Pacific problems and conflicts.

The Soviet-American INF Treaty gives a political and psychological impetus to the creation of a new political climate, an atmosphere of trust and reconciliation in Asia and the Pacific. This is a new departure, a beginning which calls for considerable creativity, flexibility and effort. We are dealing with a new logic of international relations, with new trends. The awareness that a fresh process is in the making has a long way to go before it becomes universal. Naturally, mobilisation is needed to keep it developing and advancing. Promising signs are already in evidence.

The nations of our region encounter huge economic difficulties, and they are coming to realise that their problems are rooted not only in neocolonialism but also in the arms race initiated by US imperialism. But that understanding is not general either. Some see the arms race as a source of immediate benefits (people have jobs doing maintenance work at military bases, governments earn foreign exchange by leasing base sites, etc.). Still, there is now in Asia a clearer realisation of the direct threat posed by the nuclear-armed missiles, planes and warships based in the countries of our region. The Third ASEAN Summit was held in Manila on December 14 and 15, 1987 in full awareness of the circumstances which led to the signing of the INF accord. The atmosphere of realism, mutual accommodation and diminution of mutual distrust which preceded the Washington Summit was also dominant in Manila. Positive trends of this kind had surfaced in Asia earlier, and the INF Treaty bolstered them.

Meeting in Indonesia, the ASEAN foreign ministers prepared an agreed Manila Declaration reiterating the association's 1967 aims and adding new, 1987 aims. The Declaration mentions ASEAN's initial aims — to make Southeast Asia a 'zone of peace, freedom and neutrality' and to achieve economic and political sovereignty for the ASEAN states through increased economic cooperation among them.

An increasing awareness of the nuclear threat prompted the ASEAN countries to add a new aim to the Declaration — a provision for *making the entire Southeast Asia region a 'nuclear weapons-free zone'*. ASEAN is to step up efforts for the soonest possible creation of this zone and to continue analysing all aspects involved in its establishment. The six ASEAN countries have demonstrated their consciousness of the fact that they, too, are responsible for the world's future.

For the region to become a 'zone of peace', it must be freed from military bases, including those in the Philippines. However, there was no unanimity on this question among the participants in the conference. The US-Philippine agreement on military bases expires in 1991, and this year talks will begin between Manila and Washington. Significantly, a

Philippine attempt to sound ASEAN views on the continued presence of US bases in my country was coolly received by Indonesia and was not included in the Declaration. But then, in a Manila press conference, the Foreign Minister of the Philippines admitted that the presence of US bases conflicts with the government's stated policy of neutrality. That is a sign of a new and realistic trend.

Conference participants linked the implementation of the 'zone of peace' concept with the settlement of regional problems. The situation in and around Kampuchea is one of them. It is significant that many interested countries have expressed support for the dialogue launched by Norodom Sihanouk and PRK Prime Minister Hun Sen to reach agreement on a coalition government for an independent, democratic and non-aligned Kampuchea.

The ASEAN states also came out in favour of a dialogue with the countries of Indo-China.

Discussion of regional issues is an imperative, as are negotiations on interconnected problems — the elimination of foreign bases in the region, as well as multilateral and bilateral economic cooperation. Given a policy of non-alignment, good-neighbour relations and mutual arms reductions, the concept of national reconciliation which has already proved effective — for example, in the settlement of the Afghan crisis — could also be usefully pursued in tackling the Kampuchea-related problem.

In tackling the subject of the nuclear threat, it is important not only to identify its source but also the stress that it is global, that it affects everyone, and that efforts to avert it are imperative throughout the world. For example, the removal of nuclear weapons and US military bases from the Korean Peninsula would be not only a logical continuation of international détente but also a step closer to the elimination of the nuclear threat. The Soviet-American treaty proves that in the final analysis, this is possible too.

The leaders of many Asian and Pacific countries realise that the Washington summit has opened up new opportunities. Broad and integrated proposals are put forward increasingly often to tackle national problems.

Back in 1986 Comrade Kim Il Sung called on South Korea to start a dialogue for tripartite talks involving the two countries of the Korean Peninsula and the United States. In his New Year Address (1988) he set forth 'New Proposals for the Reunification of Korea' in which he stressed that the most pressing task for all Korean people was to achieve the country's independent and peaceful reunification based on a mutual recognition of the social systems existing in North and South Korea. With due regard for the mounting tensions in the Korean Peninsula, where the USA has a substantial nuclear arsenal, the DPRK leader has imparted a sense of urgency to his old proposals and expressed optimism about the gradual relaxation of tensions on the international scene.

An analysis of recent developments in Asia and the Pacific in the light of the Washington INF accord shows that the countries of our region are acting more vigorously for disarmament and for the removal of military

bases. These efforts are dialectically connected with the popular struggle for economic and political independence.

The Soviet-American treaty has helped us in our region to take a fresh look at the international situation, become increasingly aware of the nuclear threat, and better understand that regional problems can be settled through negotiation, helping to dispel the nuclear thunderheads.

From The Press

PEACE, DISARMAMENT, SECURITY: VIEW FROM BEIJING

What is the stand of the Communist Party of China on the most pressing problems of world politics? What is the state of China's relations with individual countries? The documents of the 13th Congress of the CPC¹ set forth only the general principles of its foreign policy. The CC Report, for instance, stresses: "China will continue unwaveringly to pursue a peaceful and independent foreign policy of its own, and establish relations of friendship and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence." The Congress welcomed the Soviet-US treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles and the softening of the climate in East-West relations. It noted, at the same time, that only the first step towards arms reduction has been taken, that not a single 'hot spot' has been eliminated, and that "a long, hard and even tortuous way will have to be travelled" to attain genuine détente.

Below is a survey of items from the Chinese press on the problems of peace and disarmament which may provide answers to these questions and which may be of interest to our readers. The survey is based on statements by leaders of the CPC and the Chinese Government, and items from the *Renmin ribao* and other national publications.

THE easing of tensions in the world is the question that is now of the greatest concern to the country, says China's leader **Deng Xiaoping**. China is ever more vigorously involved in the processes of disarmament and détente, and the untying of regional knots of conflict, displaying a will for improving relations with other states. China's urge to play a positive role in international affairs and to support the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America in their struggle for their rights is most manifest, in particular, in the activity of the Chinese delegation at the United Nations. The Chinese press gave fairly wide coverage to the work of the 42nd Session of the UN General Assembly in the autumn of 1987, at which China voted identically on most issues with the young states and other socialist countries².

Calls for Advance

China's Foreign Minister **Wu Xueqian** reaffirmed from the UN rostrum that his country wants to see a considerable reduction in conventional armaments, and an all-round prohibition and complete elimination of every type of nuclear, space, chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction. It has been stressed in Beijing that checking the arms race is the universal demand of the peoples of the world, and that effective disarmament will become "an important element in easing the international situation and defending peace throughout the world".

From the Chinese leadership's standpoint, which is shared in Moscow and Washington, the Soviet Union and the United States, which have the largest arsenals, bear a special responsibility for disarmament and must be the first to start large-scale cuts in nuclear and conventional weapons. China has declared its readiness to join in the disarmament process after the USSR and the United States "first halt the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and considerably reduce and destroy all their types." For the time being, China reserves the right to build up the country's military potential, including the nuclear component. It has given support to the Soviet-US negotiations on the nuclear round of issues. CPC CC General Secretary **Zhao Ziyang**, setting forth China's position on these problems, welcomed the Soviet-US Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. He voiced the hope that even greater progress would be attained in disarmament this year in the course of the next summit meeting. It has issued calls for "further advance, faster Soviet-US negotiations, and an end to the rivalry in developing new and ever more perfect types of weapons".

While advocating primary efforts by the USSR and the United States in disarmament, China has itself taken a number of practical steps. Back in 1964, China undertook the obligation "never to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances". It also promised, says *Renmin ribao*, "to refrain from the threat or use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries and regions". China has expressed its adherence to the principles of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, although it has refused to sign the relevant treaty, which it regards as 'discriminatory'. Reaffirming China's commitments, **Wu Xueqian** recently declared that, as a nuclear power, China has no intention of shunning responsibility in achieving disarmament. China's principled stand on disarmament issues consists in promoting a complete ban on nuclear weapons and their destruction, and in promoting both nuclear and conventional disarmament. There is also another important fact: the Chinese leadership has taken a decision to reduce the country's armed forces by one million men, and it has been carrying out this decision step by step: defence budget appropriations have been cut, a part of the arms industry has been switched to civilian production, and more and more installations earlier belonging to the army are being used for peaceful purposes.

The Chinese government has adhered to the treaties on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America (Tlatelolco Treaty) and on the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the southern part of the Pacific

(Rarotonga Treaty). Beijing has supported the proposals to turn the Korean Peninsula into a nuclear-free zone, and to create similar zones in Nordic Europe and the Balkans. It has also displayed an interest in the idea of a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia.

Judging from items in the Chinese press, China's positions have been evolving on a number of regional conflicts. Its Middle East policy is flexible and displays an urge to reckon with the interests of the peoples of the region; hence its good relations with most countries of the Middle East, both left, radical and right, conservative regimes. In the Arab world, says *Renmin ribao* there is recognition of China's important role in a settlement of the Middle East conflict and hopes for its further activation.

China's stand on a settlement of the situation in the Middle East is largely identical with the Arab view. China approves the idea of convening an international conference under UN auspices, which it has described as "an acceptable way in search of a peaceful settlement of the Middle East issue", and supports the corresponding efforts of the UN Secretary-General. China regards the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the legitimate representative of its people and believes that the PLO is entitled to take part in the work of such a conference on a par with the others. China wants to see Israel withdraw from all the occupied Arab lands and the restoration of the Palestinian people's rights.

It recognises Israel's right to exist and to ensure its legitimate state interest, but at the same time, it has subjected the Israeli authorities to sharp criticism. In his talks with the President of the Yemeni Arab Republic, Ali Abdullah Saleh, in December 1987, **Li Xiannian** declared that China "resolutely opposes Israel's policy of aggression and expansion and condemns its brutal massacre of the Palestinian people". The Chinese press has emphasised that "the Israeli aggressors ignore international opinion and perpetrate arbitrary acts and terrorism . . . , with thousands of innocent Arabs falling victim to Israel." China has refused to re-establish diplomatic relations with Israel until the latter changes its present course.

The Chinese leadership has urged the Arabs to overcome their differences and to strengthen their unity. In October 1987 **Li Xiannian** stressed: "We want the Arab world to be truly united and to speak in one voice." According to **Deng Xiaoping**, whatever the changes that may occur in the international situation, there will be no change in China's position of supporting the Arab cause and the Palestinian people's just struggle.

Beijing has also criticised the United States for "aiding and abetting" Tel Aviv and for its "unwillingness to reckon with the interests of the Arab peoples". Its acts in the region have been qualified as being downright imperialist. But one will also find in the Chinese press claims that there is a clash between "two superpowers" in the Middle East, that, like the United States, the Soviet Union is also pursuing a hegemonistic policy.

A commentary released by *Xinhua* news agency said that it is the opinion of the Chinese leadership that the Persian Gulf is "the hottest of the hot spots at the present time". The Chinese approach to the situation in the region was concisely expressed by **Deng Xiaoping**, when he said at a meeting with representatives of the Arab world: "We take a strictly neutral stand on the question of the war between Iraq and Iran, and will go on

actively persuading them to agree to reconciliation." Together with the other members of the UN Security Council, China has been working for the implementation of Resolution No. 598, which it regards as "an excellent basis for a peaceful settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict". Opposition to the presence of foreign armed forces in the Gulf area is an important element of Chinese policy.

Jointly Untying Other Knots

More and more is being said in Beijing on the problems of the Central American region in the belief that peace in Central America must be re-established by political efforts, without external interference, on the basis of respect for the sovereign rights of each state. Beijing has given a high assessment to the activity of the Contadora and Lima groups, and to the document on the establishment of a stable and lasting peace formulated by the five Central American heads of state. *Renmin ribao*, in particular, has emphasised that all the countries involved in the settlement process "have made a positive contribution and have helped to avoid a spread of the conflict." Along with its general support of the Central American countries' peace efforts, the Chinese leadership has expressed sympathies for Nicaragua, the victim of aggression.³ When receiving President Daniel Ortega in 1986, CPC CC General Secretary **Zhao Ziyang** declared support for the Nicaraguan people's struggle "in defence of its state sovereignty, and against foreign interference".

Chinese press criticism of White House policy in Central America is ever more critical. Thus, *Xinhua* recently said: "In defiance of the hopes of the peoples of the region and the whole world for peace and stability in the area, the United States has stubbornly supported the anti-government military formations in Nicaragua and has fanned the war there." Washington has been accused of erecting obstacles to the restoration of peaceful life and of attempting to "establish its domination in Central America".

Like most other countries, China has voiced solidarity with the fighting peoples of the south of Africa. Addressing the latest session of the UN General Assembly, **Wu Xueqian** said: "The Chinese government sternly condemns the glaringly provocative acts of the South African authorities. As in the past, we shall give unflagging support to the just struggle of the peoples of the Republic of South Africa, Namibia, and other countries of Southern Africa. We call on the international community, and especially on the countries which have influence on the Republic of South Africa, to support the struggle of the peoples in the South African region, to put even stronger pressure on the South African authorities, to subject them to effective sanctions, and to force them to abandon the policy of apartheid and undermining of stability in the neighbouring countries, and unconditionally implement Security Council Resolution No. 435, so as to let Namibia have independence as soon as possible."

Items in the Chinese press make it clear that China rejects the attempts to tie in the question of Namibia with the presence of Cuban troops in Angola, and has given assistance, including military assistance, to the frontline states, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO)

and the African National Congress (ANC). In this context, Li Xiannian has declared that China's policy will not change until the Pretoria authorities "abandon racial segregation, the erection of obstacles in the way of Namibia's independence, and intervention in the internal affairs of other countries."

Dangerous 'Security Arc'

Peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region are an exceptionally important element of China's foreign policy. Chinese leaders have urged the dismantling of all foreign bases, complete elimination of nuclear weapons and an end to the arms race in the region.

China has expressed surprise over Tokyo's decision to increase military spending over and above the limit of one per cent of the GNP. The Chinese press has pointed out that "a tendency to revive militarism has continuously manifested itself" in post-war Japan, and that one should not rule out the possibility of Japan's becoming a militaristic state. The Beijing journal *Shijie zhishi* says that the United States in making an "historical blunder" in helping to build up the Japanese war machine.

Renmin ribao has repeatedly drawn attention to the Pentagon's ever greater activity in the Pacific and its build-up of a 'security arc', a chain of military bases stretching from Japan to Australia. It also noted the US attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of the Philippines to prevent the dismantling of its masses on the territory of that country, and the 'gross pressure' of the White House on the New Zealand government, which has prohibited US nuclear-armed warships from entering the country's ports.

The Chinese leadership has reacted positively to Phyongyang's proposal for a phased reduction in the armaments of the North and the South on the Korean Peninsula, the withdrawal of US troops and the holding of a trilateral conference of the foreign ministers of People's Korea, South Korea and the United States. It is being stressed in Beijing that tensions can be relaxed only through a lowering of the confrontation between the two parts of Korea, and more active contacts and dialogue. China has deplored the annual US-South Korean exercises known as Team Spirit.

US militaristic activity in Korea and in the whole of Asia and the Pacific area is regarded by Chinese scientists and journalists as being aimed to gain military superiority and perpetuate US control of other peoples. The journal *Liaowang* says that the Reagan administration's neoglobalist doctrine is the most aggressive and adventurist, even when compared with the doctrines of earlier US presidents, like Harry Truman.

One will also find items of criticism in the Chinese press addressed to the Soviet Union and some other socialist countries. China does not recognise the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea and has been giving moral and material support to the forces opposing People's Kampuchea. In the course of a meeting with Prince Norodom Sihanouk in February 1988, Zhao Ziyang reaffirmed that Beijing wants to see a complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, and the creation of a four-party government following the dissolution of the one now legitimately functioning in the country.

The Chinese government issued this commentary on Mikhail

Gorbachov's statement of Afghanistan: "The earliest and complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan is the key to solving the Afghan problem. We hope that the Soviet Union will take practical action without delay for the earliest re-establishment of Afghanistan's status as an independent, neutral and non-aligned state".

Different Assessments

Judging from items in the press, Soviet foreign policy is on the whole being viewed in China from different angles. The Peking journal *Shijie zhishi* says that "there are different views of whether the perestroika of Soviet foreign policy is strategic or tactical". In some items the Soviet Union is accused of 'hegemonism'. Some writers express mistrust of Soviet peace initiatives and continue to use the concept of the 'two superpowers'. The fact that the atmosphere in international relations has become warmer is said to be the result of a weakening of the 'superpowers' and a strengthening of the 'forces of peace', to which virtually all the other states of the world are said to belong.

At the same time, the Soviet leadership's efforts in restructuring international relations are being watched by many with interest in China, and the USSR's constructive and flexible initiatives in various areas have been noted. The politologist **Huan Xiang** says that the Soviet leadership's current course is "an important new factor affecting China's foreign policy". One will find statements in the Chinese press to the effect that the CPSU "has fairly realistically and soberly analysed the international situation," and that the Soviet leadership has "markedly advanced in the all-round correction of foreign policy". It is said that the Soviet Union's objectives on the world scene are "to develop dialogue, reduce confrontation, and have stability and an atmosphere of détente". The well-known diplomat **Gong Dabai**, writing in *Shijie zhishi*, has reached the conclusion that the Soviet leadership's foreign and domestic policy is going through "a sort of new revolution" whose global significance "should not be underestimated". Liaowang says in the context of the ongoing Soviet-US dialogue: "The Soviet leader yearns to reach an agreement on arms control, to ease the burden of the arms race so as to concentrate efforts on boosting the country's economy, science and technology." The newspaper *Jiefangjun bao* says that Mikhail Gorbachov's proposals set forth in Murmansk in October 1987 are an expression of the new thinking in the Soviet Union's military policy. Last year, *Shijie zhishi* analysed the course of Soviet-US negotiations over the previous several years and said: "Following the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the Soviet leadership put forward the conception of a 'new thinking' in foreign policy . . . But the United States kept rejecting all of the USSR's peace proposals . . . Positive changes have come to light only this year." The Soviet initiative on reducing Soviet troops in Mongolia was said by a Chinese scientist to be "a step showing the sincerity of the new thinking". The fact that the Soviet Union announced in the summer of 1987 its readiness to eliminate all its medium-range missiles in Asia has not gone unnoticed in China either.

Such are the basic elements of the CPC's stand on the key international problems, and these add up to a fairly coherent picture of China's foreign policy at the present stage.

Eugene Pillsbury

¹ For details see *WMR*, No. 2, 1988 — *Ed.*

² China's stand coincided with that of the USA on a few items of the agenda (4.2 per cent). It is indicative that the Chinese delegate voted 'for' on 145 of the 165 draft resolutions motioned and not once 'against'. — *Ed.*

³ China has been developing its ties with Nicaragua: diplomatic relations were established in 1985, and inter-party ties in 1987. It has begun to give Nicaragua economic assistance. — *Ed.*

The Objectives Of The Satelife Program

Bernard Lown — Co-President,
International Physicians for the
Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)

MUCH is being said and written about the way the present and future generations will use outer space. The aim of my brief comments is to consider the future of Earth. The two are now indissolubly linked. Space is tomorrow's boundless frontier for humankind. But there can be no future for us in Space if there is no future for us here on Earth. We are at a crossroad of momentous significance. The question can be simply framed: will we be gazing heavenward in dread of extinction or with hope, excitement, and wonder?

We are now witnessing the early stages of an information revolution fueled by ever more powerful computers. Both the opening of the frontier of space and the information revolution are eliminating psychologic boundaries, creating new neighborhoods, and erecting the scaffolding for a common world culture conducive to increasing global solidarity. I shall address these issues from my perspective, that is, a medical one.

Medical Dilemmas

Today in medicine we face important challenges. Inadequate resources are being allocated for pressing health problems. Impending breakthroughs in health are not being expedited. Discoveries are not being widely applied. We confront, in addition, two even more serious issues.

First, the emergence of new diseases and the aggravation of old ones; for example the spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and drug resistant malaria, to name just two. If these diseases are to be effectively controlled, we require a truly global data base of shared information.

Second, a still more serious problem, is the growing disparity in health services between North and South.

The distinguished Egyptian physicist, Abdus Salam, recently remarked that nine hundred years ago, Al Asuli, the great physician of Islam living in Bokhara, wrote a medical pharmacopoeia² which he divided into two parts: 'Diseases of the Rich' and 'Diseases of the Poor'. The passage of these many centuries has not made obsolete this dichotomy. A few facts will suffice:

— One person in five, living in developing countries, is chronically malnourished.

— Two billion people do not have access to a dependable supply of safe drinking water, which may still account for a majority of illnesses in the world.

— One adult in three cannot read or write. More than one billion people will enter the 21st century without being able either to sign their names or to read a road sign.

The disparities between the rich and the poor are enormous and growing. From 1960 to 1983 the average gain in real per capita income was 12 times greater in developed than in developing countries. In 1985, in Bangladesh only one dollar per person per year was spent on health; while in the United States, health care consumed \$1,721 per person annually. The gulf continues to widen, and it is children who are hit hardest.

Every three days, 120,000 children die and as many are crippled as a result of disease, illnesses that are quite readily curable and could have been prevented by immunization, safe drinking water, and adequate food. James P. Grant, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has asked whether the world would tolerate a Hiroshima every three days. This is the toll now being claimed in the lives of children. Faced with these grave inequities, what is being done?

World Military Expenditures

The world seems unable to mobilize fiscal and intellectual resources to address human health problems, yet the outlays for the military are bountiful and seemingly unrestrained. The world is now expending \$30,000 per second on armaments. And here are a few more figures:

— While we currently spend globally \$500 per student per year, the equivalent expenditure per soldier is \$30,000.

— Whereas there is one soldier per 200 people, there is one physician per 1,670 people, and in some areas like Angola and other parts of the Third World, there is one doctor per 100,000.

Furthermore, military expenditures keep growing. Since 1960 they have increased 600%, now approximating one trillion dollars annually. One does not have to be imaginative to sense the magnitude of the human misery that these cold-blooded statistics convey.

What is so painful for us in medicine is to consider how picayune diversions of these resources would solve significant health problems. Let me cite two examples. Three hours' expenditures on the arms race is all that was required in a ten-year program to eliminate the global scourge of

smallpox. Less than eight hours of military spending would control malaria which afflicts one billion people with 200 million cases annually.

The arms race is therefore a very real cause of disease. It deprives people of health and human services in both the affluent world and developing world alike. It also increases the gap between the rich and poor.

Will we transfer these warped priorities to space?

The Physicians' View

We in the IPPNW have another vision for the uses of space. We aim to contribute to a new world order for the third millennium by helping develop institutions that use technology to bring people together rather than to blow them apart.

At the Fifth Congress of the IPPNW in Budapest, held more than two years ago, an international initiative was launched to stimulate development of satellite telecommunications dedicated to medical needs. The aim was to link health professionals into a global community united by the exchange of information for the cause of promoting health.

We have designated this program Satellife. It was conceived as a program of East-West collaboration to mitigate North-South disparities in health services and information access.

For the physicians' movement, with members from all over the world and a growing number of affiliates in developing countries, it was not difficult to diagnose the health problems of the world. It was far more difficult to know how modern space and communications technology would help solve these problems.

How could we manage surveillance of disease, endemic and epidemic? How could we get the right health information to the right health professionals at just the right time? How could we teach and consult with colleagues in need? And how can we increase public knowledge of health and disease? These questions arose at different stages of the project.

The World Health Organization is working with us on the medical content of Satellife, and we expect space scientists to help us bring the space and telecommunications elements of our program to fruition.

I believe that the knowledge to do this exists. I believe that the resources for it exist. I believe that the technology exists. Needed was the political will. In early 1986, Academicians Velikhov and Sagdeyev indicated that the USSR was ready to cooperate in programs addressing these objectives. The Space-for-Health Program received significant encouragement from General Secretary Gorbachov.

Satellife

In June 1987, Academician Velikhov signed a memorandum of understanding with the co-presidents of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) on behalf of the USSR Academy of Sciences. It was agreed that Satellife should be established as an international non-profit organization with the mission: to serve the health needs of developing countries by using satellites to link health workers around the world with one another and with information sources. The

Soviet Union has offered to contribute a satellite for this purpose.

The most clearly defined urgent need was articulated in our recent discussions with officials at the World Health Organization who are responsible for the AIDS Program and the Child Immunization Program. They said their work would be greatly enhanced by an inexpensive global electronic mail system, especially if it served rural areas.

The technology for this now exists. In the past few years, radio transmission of electronic mail between simple ground stations and inexpensive low-orbit satellites has been demonstrated to be feasible.

This is just an initial element of our program. It would constitute one small step for Satelife, but would truly be a giant leap for human health along the road toward a global health communication system. Increasingly, we realize the Earth is a fragile space-station whose life-support systems are endangered. A global health communication network will ultimately be a necessity for our increasingly crowded planet.

Why do we ask the world's leading space scientists to help us promote health? Because we believe that in every phase of human endeavor we must choose a course that avoids confrontation and is more than mere competition. The two greatest threats to the world come from the arms race and the vast gap that separates healthy people from the people who do not have the benefits of our knowledge of medicine and health.

The distinguished Indian scientist Pal has recently commented that "on a global scale distance stands abolished". Let us now begin to abolish distance in the human heart. Space provides a unique challenge to join the human family together or to rend it asunder. Satellites, traversing the heavens and as yet posing no danger to humans, ignore boundaries. Each time they circumnavigate the planet Earth, they proclaim the principle of indivisibility of our security. Without words but with powerful image, they announce that humanity shares one home, it has no other. Let us then have space proclaim human wisdom rather than human folly.

From an IPPNW Document:

"The arms race is about to catapult over yet another boundary and go into space where the sky sets no limits. A trillion-dollar mirage is being pursued — a Maginot line in the sky to address our common vulnerability (*SDI*. — *Ed.*), a program that cannot be tested and must work without flaw and even perfectly the first time. A perpetual motion machine is to be launched defying the laws of physics. The aim of this intricate and fallible technology is no secret: its goal is to upset decisively the present military stalemate, in an illusory search for nuclear advantage."

¹ Established in 1980, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War unites more than 150,000 medical researchers, physicians and other medical personnel in many countries. The IPPNW was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. — *Ed.*

² A pharmacopoeia is a book of standards for medicinal preparations. — *Ed.*

exchange of views, discussion

The Working Class
Against Social Injustice

International Symposium In Prague

The question of social injustice, which is inherent in bourgeois society, has been given an edge by aggravating contradictions in the evolution of today's capitalism, by the rapid growth of the productive forces under the impact of scientific and technological progress which provides objective conditions for better meeting the people's vital needs. Today's injustices, at a time when capitalism has acquired a number of new features and ways of struggle for genuine social justice, were discussed at an international symposium sponsored in Prague by *World Marxist Review* jointly with the World Federation of Trade Unions.

The participants in the symposium included **Antoine Herrero**, chief of the WFTU socio-economic section; **Roland Guyvarch**, secretary of the WFTU Commission on Transnational Corporations; **Turo Bergman**, member of the European Commission of the WFTU Secretariat; **Dimitris Stratulis**, representative of the 'Cooperative' United Trade Union Movement (ESAK-C) of Greece; **Encarnao Rui**, representative of the Intersyndical (Portugal); **Nicole Reynal**, representative of the General Confederation of Labour (France); **Tom Schmid**, representative of the left alliance in the Austrian Trade Union Confederation; **Paul Marcus**, CC member, Communist Party of Belgium; **Bert Ramelson**, representative of the Communist Party of Great Britain on *WMR*; **Gerry van Houten**, CC member and representative of the Communist Party of Canada on *WMR*; **Ib Nørlund**, member of the Executive Committee and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Denmark and the CPD's representative on *WMR*; **Aulis Leppanen**, representative of the Communist Party of Finland on *WMR*; **Jochen Mandel**, staff member of the Board of the German Communist Party, and **Georg Kwiatowski**, representative of the German Communist Party on *WMR*; **Zenon Zorzovilis**, CC member, Communist Party of Greece, and the CPG's representative on *WMR*; **William Somerset**, CC member, Communist Party of Ireland, and the CPI's representative on *WMR*; **Rafic Samhoun**, CC Political Bureau member, Communist

Party of Lebanon, and the CPL's representative on *WMR*; **Gunnar Wahl**, member of the Central Directorate and CC Secretary, Communist Party of Norway, and **Hans Petter Hansen**, member of the CPN National Directorate; **Alice Almeida**, staff member, CC of the Portuguese Communist Party; **Francisco Frutos**, member of the CC Secretariat, Communist Party of Spain; Riksdag member **Hans Petersson**, representative of the Left Party — Communists of Sweden; **Ali Ileri**, CC member, Communist Party of Turkey, and the CPT's representative on *WMR*; **Carl Bloice**, CC member, Communist Party USA; **Sergei Tsukasov**, Dr Sc. (History), *WMR* Managing Editor; Prof. **Gennady Chernikov**, Dr Sc. (Econ.), *WMR* staff member.

The discussion at the symposium is summarised below.

WHAT approach to the very idea of social justice is valid today? That question was addressed by many participants in the symposium, who agreed that such an approach should not be uniform at all times, in all countries or for all peoples.

Ever since its inception the working class movement has been protecting social justice and opposing class oppression and the exploitation of the working people. In his opening address **Sergei Tsukasov** said that the world's first communist organisation, the Communist League, founded by Marx and Engels more than 140 years ago, sprang from an alliance of German revolutionaries calling itself the *League of the Just*. In explaining the reason for renaming the organisation, the participants in its 1847 Congress noted: "How many there are who want justice, that is, what they call justice . . . We are not distinguished by wanting justice in general — anyone can claim that for himself — but by our attack on the existing social order and on private property."¹

Having linked the struggle for justice with the task of reorganising society on new principles, the founders of scientific communism pointed a realistic way towards the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery and towards ridding it of oppression and exploitation. The Communists have been loyal to that goal ever since. The concrete demands of the working people, however, change along with the changes in their living and working conditions.

Who Reaps the Fruit

Clearly, in our time the working and living conditions of the working class in the industrialised capitalist countries are different from what they were not just at the writing of the *Communist Manifesto* but before World War II or even in the 1950s. Economic growth, rising labour productivity and increasing social wealth have improved the living standards of large strata of the population over the past decades. The national per capita income in those countries, for instance, rose almost three-fold from \$2,000 in 1938 (in 1980 prices) to \$5,600 in 1987. Although most of the fruit of that growth was appropriated by capitalists, the working strata of the population also shared in it. Personal consumption increased, the services were expanded,

and a number of countries established and broadened their social security systems.

Those processes went on by fits and starts in various countries and regions and at various times depending on their economic and socio-political development, the militancy of the working class movement and its ability to wrench concessions from the ruling classes. It was likewise important that the scientific and technological revolution made new demands on the reproduction of labour. Today's industry requires higher educational and general cultural standards and occupational skills, better health and an increased efficiency. The exploitation of the Third World countries by the imperialism of the industrialised capitalist states and growing social stratification in those countries themselves also have an important role to play.

That is why many participants in the symposium noted the historically conditioned character of the criteria by which the nature and forms of social injustice are judged. "Social injustice as an intrinsic feature of any society based on exploitation of man by man, such as capitalism, manifests itself in different forms depending on the development level of the productive forces and the historical evolution of every state," **Alice Almeida** said.

Therefore the very demands of the working class for the eventual abolition of social injustice and for the mitigation of the specific injustices of today's bourgeois social relations, on the one hand, are directed towards the same goal and, on the other, differ in form from one country to another. Many factors of the national life impact on those demands. Speakers noted that not just one indicator but the totality of conditions which determine the situation of the working people today are important. "The workers' way of life nowadays depends not only on wages but also on other circumstances," **Dimitris Stratulis** said. "Access to health care, education and culture, the housing conditions, the use of leisure time, etc., have an important role to play."

A country's possibilities to meet its citizens' needs are determined in large measure by its economic development level and by the size of its public wealth. The 'quality of life' of broad sections of the population in many industrialised capitalist states could be improved substantially thanks to the potential of the productive forces created by the working class. But is this really being done?

"While admitting that the Spanish working people today have on the whole higher living standards than in the past, we cannot view these improvements out of the context of historical development," **Francisco Frutos** said. "Social progress should be collated with the indicators of today's minimally sufficient standard of living . . . Paradoxically, the present-day scientific, technical and production resources could help build a totally different and better world, but irrationality and chaos that are intrinsic in the unjust social system are aggravating processes that have an adverse effect on the whole of society."

Even if the incomes of part of the working people rise at some point, this does not yet mean that the social wealth is distributed fairly and that those who create and replenish it are adequately remunerated. "All the way till

the early 1980s, reformists from the Socialist Party of Austria were fond of saying, 'Frankly, today we live better than ever', **Tom Schmid** said. "That was true of the real situation of most of the working class and those of the middle strata who were employed as wage labour. At the same time, however, it disguised the gap between what had been achieved and the potentialities. The machinery of distributing social wealth was obscured from the view of the working class."

Meanwhile, the 'distribution machinery' in industrialised capitalist countries always worked only one way, to increase the share of the social wealth appropriated by capital and to reduce that handed out to wage labour. "The unfairness of class oppression and property inequality are both the cause and the expression of social injustice," **Carl Bloice** stressed.

Speakers at the symposium cited numerous examples of the growing disparity in the ownership and control of wealth in capitalist countries.

The richest families in the USA — just one per cent of the population — according to the *New York Times*, have increased their share of the national wealth from 27 per cent 15 years ago to 36 per cent. In the same period the incomes of the 20 per cent of the poorest Americans have dropped by one-third.

The West German economy is dominated by 200 multimillionaire families, with 1.7 per cent of the population controlling three-fourths of the country's productive capital.

The picture is much the same in other capitalist countries. In Sweden, for instance, 3.8 per cent of the richest families owned 67.5 per cent of all wealth in 1975 and as much as 78 per cent in 1985. In Turkey, the share of wages in the gross social product dropped from 27 per cent in 1980 to 18 per cent in 1986, while that of profits, interest and rent grew in the same period from 49 to 65 per cent. Norway's national income rose by 46 per cent between 1972 and 1986 and the working people's consumption by only 22 per cent, which means that capital appropriated most of that growth.

In Denmark, 20 per cent of the population owned 70 per cent of all property in 1976, 85.4 per cent in 1980 and as much as 86.7 per cent in 1984.

What we see therefore is a clear and definite tendency that is common to all the capitalist states regardless of their economic development levels, geographic location, or the degree to which the social needs are met: while contributing more and more to production, wage labour is getting a consistently declining share of created social wealth.

"... And Do It on the Quiet"

Speakers at the symposium cited examples showing that the working people's wages are exposed not only to the continuous pressure of proprietors but also to erosion caused by inflation and various austerity policies. All sorts of 'stabilisation' and 'revitalisation' programmes formulated by the ruling classes in industrialised capitalist countries to cure the economy have as their starting point wage freezes and rigorous 'austerity' measures. As a result, the growth of prices far outpaces nominal pay rises, if any.

Between 1982 and 1985, the French workers employed in the private

sector had their wages raised by 8.4 per cent and the French public employees by 7.3 per cent a year. Meanwhile, prices were growing by 11.2 per cent a year, according to the General Confederation of Labour. Small wonder that the share of wages in the country's national income dropped from 57.4 per cent in 1980 to 53.9 per cent in 1986.

The buying power of the Belgian workers fell by 13 to 18 per cent between 1981 and 1985.

Real wages in Greece in 1986 were slashed by price rises by 6.4 per cent; the buying power of the family of three has dropped by 16 per cent in two years.

Price rises cut by half the real incomes of the Turkish people from 1980 to 1986.

Hans Petersson noted the approximation of the incomes of the better paid strata of the working class and the middle strata. This, however, is no proof of any levelling of the basic class contradictions, or of the gradual 'merger' of all the categories of the population in industrialised capitalist countries into a 'middle class', as some of the bourgeois sociologists claim. "Application of the achievements of scientific and technological progress under conditions of the state-monopoly economy and higher labour productivity give the bourgeoisie fresh opportunities to appropriate surplus value — and to do it on the quiet," **Ib Nørlund** said.

But the gap between myths created by the advocates of capital and realities is hard to disguise. Take, for example, 'people capitalism', which allegedly helps most of the population become 'property owners' and turn any worker into a 'capitalist' as soon as he buys a share. Altogether, 99 per cent of the more than 30 million shareholders in the USA have just 8.4 per cent of the shares, while 0.5 per cent of the largest stockholders control 85 per cent. In Sweden, 3 per cent of the stockholders have amassed 66 per cent of the stocks.

The degree of exploitation is increasing in large measure because capital uses scientific and technological progress to an ever growing extent in a bid to appropriate the fruits not just of physical labour but also of the inputs of intellectual and nervous energies. Herein lie the origins of many new processes involved in relations between labour and capital, and also of the rise of new forms of exploitation of the working class. As the skills of a part of the workforce improve, it is possible to achieve higher labour productivity and to boost profits. Proprietors are then in a position to bribe top-skilled specialists, thus creating a 'worker aristocracy'. At the same time another part of the workforce are reassigned to simple jobs at lower wages.

The new tactic of the bourgeoisie is to increase labour intensity in every way and to squeeze out of people every ounce of energy for profit. It strengthens monopoly rule while giving wage labour the illusion of being involved in running production.

Proprietors encourage various forms of worker 'self-exploitation', which were analysed at some length at the symposium. This practice, **Gennady Chernikov** observed, is known under different names. In France it is called 'active participation policy'; in Finland the confederation of proprietors' organisations, *Eva*, has named it 'market anthropocentrism'; proprietors in

West Germany, Austria, Norway and some other countries talk of the 'humanisation of labour', and in Greece they conclude 'productivity contracts' with workers. The association of Japanese proprietors, Nikeiron, touts 'worker-manager control': that system includes team control, promotion of innovation proposals, the establishment of 'quality teams', etc. In the early 1980s such teams totalled one million people, while the figure today is 10 million.

Such systems are especially widespread in those industries which are controlled by transnationals. New forms of exploitation growing alongside the old ones are becoming universal and all-embracing, spreading across the borders, **Antoine Herrero** stressed. Now that production and capital are becoming increasingly internationalised and the transnationals' sway keeps growing, **Rafic Samhoun** added, the point is not the situation of the working people in just one country or one region: the struggle against social injustice is relevant to the international working class, which is exposed to ever harsher exploitation by the conglomerate proprietor. That fact calls for the working people's coordinated efforts on a global scale.

Tenuous Well-Being

Although the term 'welfare state' went out of fashion with bourgeois politologists because it obviously clashes with realities, many of them continue to claim that 'welfare', albeit not universal, has nevertheless become a fact of life for most people in the industrialised countries. According to them, a high economic development level offers people broad opportunities in life and gives everyone his or her chance to succeed. Participants in the symposium, however, drew a different picture.

Instability, vulnerability and insecurity, they said, constitute a new and ever more significant aspect of the way of life of large sections of the population. "In the name of what they call 'flexibility', proprietors in all capitalist countries try in various ways to make instability and all-embracing insecurity a 'normal' way of life for the working people," **Ronald Guyvarch** said. Capitalism is making employment more and more insecure and temporary. We are witnessing "a huge growth in the number of jobs without a guaranteed status," **Nicole Reynal** noted. "Workers are more and more exposed to employment and pay instability, which makes their life unbearable and causes personal and professional strains both in family life and in society as a whole . . ."

Unemployment, that worst ill of the capitalist world, is the primary cause of instability in the position of the working people. According to official figures, the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have more than 30 million unemployed. Commenting on them, however, **Bert Ramelson** aptly observed that they were best described by the saying, "There are lies, big lies and statistics": the official figures do not include those unemployed who are not registered, those who are looking for their first employment and those desperates who have lost all hope of finding work. Indeed, during the past few years the government has changed the method of calculating unemployed 18 times, each time reducing the real totals.

"The Hamburg Congress of the German Communist Party stated that

one-third of the country's working class was immediately affected by unemployment or its ramifications in the past 10-12 years," **Jochen Mandel** said. It was once believed that high skills were a guarantee of continued employment — but structural economic changes, which fold up whole industries and abolish many traditional occupations, may make any skills, any expertise gained over the years redundant.

The threat of lay-offs is becoming the most potent means of social pressure on the working people. Fear of losing one's job makes workers more pliant in their relations with proprietors and they agree to any working conditions. This is a manifestation of "the inhuman nature of capitalism, which only drives for profit while ignoring the interest of the working people," **Aulis Leppanen** said. Workers in some countries would go to all lengths to keep their jobs. Portuguese workers, **Encarnao Rui** noted, sometimes toil on for months without getting any pay, and if they protest the proprietors threaten to close down their factories. More than 100,000 workers were exposed to such arbitrariness last year.

By denying millions of employable people any opportunity to earn their living and making them subsist on social alms in various forms, if any, unemployment, like a sudden disease or a natural disaster, shatters the fragile world of relative well-being that many a family built in sunnier days.

Participants in the symposium noted as an important new feature of labour relations in industrialised capitalist countries the rapidly growing numerical strength of marginal groups between the workforce and the unemployed. Part-time, temporary and casual employment and sliding-schedule and 'flexible' working are spreading to ever new sections of the population and types of labour, eroding many of the social rights won by the working class.

In France special legislation on the 'flexibility' (officially 'adjustment of working time') has provided the basis for an assault on labour legislation and on the collective bargaining system. Now labour relations may be established for a limited period of time, sometimes just for a few months. This practice is found in other countries as well. In the past two to three years more than 90 per cent of the newly-employed in Spain signed work contracts for a mere three to six months. Only 11 per cent of the Portuguese workers employed in 1986 were given permanent work contracts.

When leaders of ruling bourgeois parties boast of their achievements in creating new jobs, they do not say that most of them are insecure, temporary, lower paid and not backed with social guarantees.

Carl Bloice cited the following figures. Since 1979, a total of 14 million workers in the United States have lost employment as a result of technological rationalisation and the closure of manufacturing operations. In the same period, 12 million new jobs have been created, 10 million of them in the service industries. Only about half of those re-employed there receive wages equal to those of their former employment. Many have lost on fringe benefits, such as health, insurance and retirement insurance plans. In most cases, those jobs are non-union and offer no protection against arbitrary firings.

Insecure labour relations and fragmentation of employment cause

growing divisions and deep-going stratification and differences in the workforce itself, such as those between the employed and unemployed, between higher- and lower-paid workers, between workers of the traditional industries and those of the new ones, or between specialists in booming and dead-end occupations. Discrimination against women, minorities, and large categories of young people is growing harsher, and differences in the situation of wage workers and competition between them are sharpening as a result. "Capitalism is out to divide working people by breaking their solidarity and involving them in competitive struggle everywhere, be it at the workplace, between manufacturers in the same industry, between industries and between countries," **Antoine Herrero** observed.

The stratification of the working class has an effect on the political mood of individual categories of workers, conditioning their electoral choices and attitudes to many national problems. One of the ways the British Conservatives win votes of a part of the skilled workforce is by scaring them with the prospect of having to pay out of their pockets for any improvement in the lot of their lower-paid fellow-workers, **Bert Ramelson** said. This is one way of setting workers against one another and distracting them from struggle against the Big Bourgeoisie. Regrettably, a part of the Left is not immune to this propaganda either.

Bourgeois advocates would like to disguise the chief divides between the privileged strata of the population and others, to conceal the main social and class barriers by drawing boundaries not between labour and capital but across the workforce. Hypocritically calling for 'justice' and 'solidarity', they make the working people themselves pay for social security and bear those social costs which are shunned by monopolies.

Pensions to Millionaires

The social security systems in a number of industrialised capitalist countries are an important gain of the working people. Some of the bourgeois and reformist politologists, however, try to pass off state spending on social needs as a major means of rectifying property inequalities and redistributing incomes. What is the actual situation?

"At the present appropriations for social needs amount to some 28 per cent of Austria's GDP," **Tom Schmid** said. "Strictly speaking, they are not government expenditures, and are called such only in political debates. In fact, that money is taken through the budget from some and handed to others. There is redistribution, but within the working class and the marginal strata rather than between classes."

Following long years of struggle, the working people made the bourgeoisie contribute to the social budgets. However, the latter is constantly trying to minimise that contribution, and these attempts have grown stronger in the past few years. It is spending on public health, education, pensions, unemployment benefits, aid to children, etc., rather than military budgets and administrative expenditures that is the first to be axed under this policy, carried on by the conservative forces under the slogan of 'less state intervention'. The 'red pencil' policy, as it is called in Austria, helped cut spending on social needs in the 12 most industrialised

capitalist countries by roughly \$200 billion between 1981 and 1986. The living standards of the working people are thus exposed to heavy blows because social benefits constitute a substantial part of their incomes.

Under state-monopoly capitalism, participants noted, the cost of labour force has long been determined not only by wages but also, and to an increasing extent, by state appropriations for social needs. The lifetime incomes of wage workers in Austria are one-third social benefits, from child allowances to pensions.

In this way capital can cut the cost of labour power even without reducing nominal wages, speakers stressed. In Britain, for instance, **Bert Ramelson** observed, the average wages (after inflation) increased by around three per cent a year over the past five years. But the part of incomes that consists of social payments and benefits, which is called the 'social wage', has drastically shrunk.

The bourgeoisie often finds the diminution of the cost of labour power in this way more convenient than an outright attack on wages. "Workers have a different attitude to appropriations for social needs than to wages," **Tom Schmid** explained. "Protection of wages is a cause for the entire workforce and any cut in pay causes spontaneous protests. But social spending is not viewed as a target for joint struggle. People are divided on that matter. Ordinary people do not see how the social security system is being dismantled, and it takes a high level of political awareness effectively to resist that process."

The bourgeois mass media, participants noted, brand those who live on welfare as 'social parasites', thus fostering in the victims of the crisis a sense of their own uselessness and redundancy. Attacks on state aid to citizens and on the social role of the state pave the way for the ideas of reprivatisation and expansion of the private sector. Many public services, such as health care and education, are denationalised and become costlier and less affordable for the broad strata of the population, which aggravates inequalities in those fields as well.

Attempts to pare down state-run social services are often rationalised by the need to relieve the tax burden so as to release money for capital investment. 'Fair' taxation is a key theme in election campaigns and in major political battles. But who bears the brunt of taxes and how are they distributed between various groups of the population? Speakers at the symposium dwelt at length on that matter.

Almost 93 per cent of all taxes in Greece, **Zenon Zorzovillis** said, are levied on earned incomes. More than two-thirds of the total sum are indirect taxes, which are included in the prices of goods and services and push them up. Direct taxes on the 'lower' strata of the population keep growing as well. Meanwhile, financial and industrial tycoons try in every way to evade taxation.

Vardinoyanis, one of the richest men in the country, has stated in his tax declaration that he is a pensioner and has not paid a drachma. Christina Onassis, one of the world's largest shipowners, did not pay any tax in 1986 either. Proprietors, meanwhile, also get large subsidies from the government for capital investment — but use them for speculative deals. Huge sums are concealed from taxation through various export-import

swindles. Big Capital thus withholds from the treasury over one-third of the total tax revenue.

The picture is much the same in other capitalist countries. A characteristic example was cited by **Paul Marcus**. In 1982, the Groupe Bruxelles Lambert declared a profit of 3.27 billion Belgian francs and paid 1.87 billion francs in taxes. In 1985 it increased its profits to almost 8 billion francs — but paid no taxes at all. The Société Générale more than quadrupled its profits from 1982 to 1985, bringing them to well over 6 billion francs, but its taxes even dropped from one billion to 800 million francs.

The Portuguese employers virtually stopped paying taxes to the social security fund; their aggregate debt to the fund is around 150 billion escudos, or almost one-third of the state social security budget.

The other side of governments' 'tax gifts' to monopolies is reduced state revenue and lack of funds to meet state spending. While cutting social spending, the ruling quarters avoid reducing defence appropriations, which are a source of profit for the war business. The 'redistribution of incomes' thus works only one way, draining money from the ordinary taxpayer into the coffers of major military-industrial companies. Apart from posing a threat to peace by undermining universal security, the militarisation of the economy exacerbates exploitation and social injustice.

The 'Fourth World'

The French welfare organisation 'Aid to the Destitute — the Fourth World' marked its 30th anniversary last October. Andre Lajoinie, a Political Bureau member and CC secretary and the presidential candidate from the French Communist Party, said in a message of greetings to that organisation: "The work of your association, and of others like you, is needed by millions who do not have the bare minimum to sustain their lives."

How many destitute are there in such a rich country as France? Eight million, exposed to cold, hunger, homelessness and other hardships. Poverty has become so widespread that President Mitterand has had to admit: "Nothing can justify . . . the existence of a fourth world, that is, poverty and ignorance."

Many participants in the discussion noted the rapid growth of the number of outcasts who are denied basic means of subsistence in industrialised capitalist countries. The 'new poor', they said, are becoming a chronic social ill in those countries.

Just as in France, 8 million people in Spain — 22 per cent of the population — were social outcasts in the mid-1980s. More than one-third of the Portuguese families, according to the Catholic association Caritas, are living in absolute poverty and around 50 per cent below the relative poverty level. Even the Turkish right-wing organisation 'True Road Party' admits that 10 million people in Turkey are undernourished and 30 per cent of all families live in poverty. In the early 1980s, the incomes of 55 per cent of the Greek working-class families were below the subsistence level.

The 'new poor' phenomenon affects large sections of the population even in the healthier market economy countries, such as West Germany

and Britain, Sweden and Denmark, Belgium and Finland. A total of 40 million people in the EEC countries, according to official figures, are living below the poverty line. Taking a serious view of the growth of poverty, the Commission of European Communities has drawn up special 'study programmes' to work out methods of controlling that social ill. In 1987 the US bishops noted in their pastoral on economic justice for all that there was rampant poverty in the country: in spite of the US immense wealth more than 33 million Americans live in poverty and, by any reasonable standard, another 20 to 30 million are needy. Moreover, they added, far from diminishing, poverty keeps growing.

Gerry van Houten concentrated in his presentation on the housing problem and drew attention to growing homelessness. According to the Canadian Council of Social Development, in 1986 the country had some 100,000 homeless without any shelter except for a bed at night, and more than one million applied for free meals from 300 shelters and soup kitchens. Officially, the 'poor' category numbers more than four million. Homelessness and hunger go hand in hand: according to the director of Toronto's hostel operations, the number of homeless families grew by 77 per cent in 1986 compared to 1985. "We're having more people at food banks and more people who have no permanent homes of their own than we have had in history," the official said.

Bourgeois sociologists are fond of claiming that poverty is the lot of the 'weaker' groups of the population who are slow on the uptake, those who have had 'bad luck', while others are free to enjoy the boons of social progress. It is along these lines, they hold, that social boundaries pass which make for a 'two-tier society', a 'two-thirds society', or a 'society of several streams'. On the one end of the scale is a prosperous 'majority' and on the other a suffering 'minority', those who have been handicapped by lack of abilities, poor education, disease, personal problems and sheer bad luck.

These views, speakers noted, are far removed from reality: even when personal qualities, such as the educational level, have a role to play in the making of a person, they are predetermined to a decisive extent by social and class-related factors. The 'new poor' are not an isolated phenomenon but an organic aspect of wage labour and a direct consequence of capitalist exploitation. Poverty is not the fault of those destitute folks but the ill fortune of people caught between the mills of an unfair societal mechanism. These facts are noted even by those who can hardly be suspected of Marxist sympathies. The insecurity of so many people and so many families calls for a look at the economic foundations of life in the USA, the American bishops said in their pastoral.

The ruling class uses the 'new poor' as an important means of asserting its dominance. Fearful of losing their jobs, going under and becoming social outcasts, people become more pliant and submissive and less demanding. The existence of the 'new poor' offers others a glimpse of the abyss and makes them accept any terms offered by the employers.

Many people feel in their everyday life a sense of insecurity, the fear of losing their livelihood through loss of job, wage cuts, illness, market upheavals, currency fluctuations, inflation, the collapse of their bank,

overdue debts and a host of other reasons. Describing the fate of people who lose jobs and have to leave their homes, **William Somerset** said: "The people to whom this happens are usually from a totally stable background. They have worked all their lives, had found optimum jobs, were buying their homes, maybe had a car. The new assault of capitalism ends all that at a stroke by unemploying them and forcing the disposal of these luxuries in the eking out of resources just to live."

Participants in the symposium noted that the social protest born of insecurity and privations is often exploited by the right and political forces to the far right with their populist phraseology to divert the wrath of the destitute from the real causes of their ill fortune and to canalise it so as to suit the big bourgeoisie. It is those desperate people who have nothing to lose that are frequently recruited by neo-fascist and other extremist organisations.

Is There an Alternative?

Virtually all the political forces in capitalist countries today say they are against social injustice. But unlike bourgeois parties and movements, the Communists formulate programmes for change that truly meet the vital interests of the working people. Trade unions, too, are struggling perseveringly for the working people's rights.

Can the causes of social injustice under capitalism be uprooted without changing the nature of that system? It is only under socialism that a state policy proceeding entirely from the aspirations of the working people is possible, the participants concluded. However, we should not view as futile the desire to mitigate specific social injustices in the given circumstances. What is at stake is improvement in the day-to-day life of the mass of people. Moreover, **Alice Almeida** observed, resistance to the effects of capitalist exploitation helps develop awareness of its causes and lead to struggle against its very foundations.

The weapons with which the working class fights social injustice, **Antoine Herrero** said, are forged in fierce clashes with the bourgeoisie, which is bent on exacting social vengeance. The democratic forces proceed from the assumption that a rebuff to the counter-offensive of capital will help launch a movement for fundamental change, for building a society of social justice, for socialism.

In the course of the discussion speakers highlighted various aspects of alternative economic and social policies that are vital to the working class movement.

The major practical task on the agenda today is struggle against mass unemployment and its effects. Communist parties and trade unions have drawn up programmes for expanding employment and creating new jobs. The West German Communists, for example, call for special measures to be taken both by federal and by land and communal authorities. By no means opposing the introduction of technical innovations and labour-saving technologies, or more flexible organisation of labour, the GCP pins on qualitative economic growth its hopes that reasonable social and personal needs will be met to a larger extent. Hence its demand that the

economy be structured and related to the social and ecological needs of the people.

Drastic arms reductions and the conversion of military production would open broad prospects for the expansion of employment: state allocations could be used efficiently to develop civilian manufacturing sectors. Similar ideas are put forward by Communists and trade unions in many capitalist countries.

One of the chief demands of the working people in the industrialised capitalist countries is shorter working hours without any pay cuts. Are massive lay-offs and intensification of labour the inevitable companions of the scientific and technological revolution and the labour-saving technologies it produced? No, they are not, say the communist parties and progressive trade unions: it should help reduce working hours and create job openings for other working people. There are demands for a 35-hour working week in some countries and for a 6-hour working day in others. The participants in the symposium were unanimous that that demand was born of the very nature of socio-economic progress and that it was quite realistic.

Struggle against unemployment and for broader employment opportunities is related by the communist parties, trade unions and other progressive forces in their alternative programmes to the solution of other social problems, such as winning higher wages. Clearly, these gains will not come of their own accord, without persevering efforts, and the experience of struggles in France, Britain, Greece, Portugal, West Germany and other countries that were mentioned by speakers shows that industrial action remains an efficient means of protecting the interests of the working people.

The communist parties' alternative policies and trade union demands also aim at developing systems of social security and services. Their programmes call for higher pensions, for fixing the minimum pension levels, for automatic pegging of rises in pensions to price rises, for proprietors' contributions to pension funds, etc. There is a need for more aid to various groups of the population, including young people, women, large families and invalids. As **Zenon Zorzovilis** noted, aid is not alms from society but just a refund of part of what is created by the labour of millions and appropriated by the capitalists.

The problem of housing, especially for the poorer sections of the population, is very acute in the capitalist countries. Neither is it fair that the health care systems are maintained to a large extent by the social security payments made by the working people themselves. The Communists believe that the state and proprietors should bear the brunt of spending for those purposes and what is most important, housing and medical services should be within the reach of everyone regardless of income. Knowledge and education should be likewise made accessible to everyone, especially now, in the age of the scientific and technological revolution.

Demands for environmental protection have been figuring more and more prominently in the communist parties' programmes and in trade union actions in the past few years. The path to equal conditions for all

here goes through the development and introduction of wasteless technologies, larger spending by the state and proprietors on environmental protection and the creation of a clean and healthy environment for all.

The participants also discussed the extent to which the capitalist state could be used in a war on social injustice. They noted that it was quite realistic to press for specific measures through legislative acts, including labour legislation, and through tax, budgetary and social policies. The Communist Party, USA, believes, **Carl Bloice** said, that the working people can win legal or constitutional guarantees of such things as useful and remunerative employment, compensation for labour sufficient for a societally-determined adequate standard of living, the right to decent, affordable housing, the right to effective protection from the economic fears of old age or ill health, and the right to education. It is on that ground that battle should be joined with bourgeois propaganda on 'human rights', suppressed so ruthlessly in capitalist countries.

As regards funding for social programmes, participants in the symposium pointed, first and foremost, to growing monopoly profits. What has to be done is to raise taxes on profits, deduct part of it to the social funds and thus secure resources to meet the needs of the working people. Cuts in military budgets can provide another major source of financing social programmes.

Nowadays the fight for social justice is inseparable from the efforts to give the working people guarantees for a life of peace. Trade unions in many countries have raised aloft the working people's demand, 'Jobs Not Missiles!' They perceive the scrapping of huge arms arsenals and the conversion of the funds thus saved to civilian production as a realistic way of creating new jobs and improving social conditions for broad strata of the population, including aid to those who are thrown out of the mainstream of society by the capitalist system. This interdependence between efforts for peace and disarmament and problems of economic growth and social progress is always present in the alternative programmes of communist parties and in the trade unions' demands.

Speakers stressed that the struggle for alternative economic and social policies was opening broad vistas for unity of action among the working people because their class interests stand above all group or occupational differences. It is very important vigorously to press for solutions to the concrete problems of wages, housing, social security, health care and education because in this way an objective base is provided for cooperation with the social democrats and other democratic movements and groups, said **Gunnar Wahl**.

There are both gains and setbacks in that respect. It is difficult to achieve cooperation between the political forces of the working class movements when the ideology of 'social partnership' has a strong influence or when the potential for alliances is still weighed down by the burden of anti-communism. The growing role of the mass of people in social and class battles and in anti-war actions, however, is fuelling anti-monopoly sentiments and helping to launch coordinated actions. The Communists, the Socialists and the Christian Workers' Movement of Belgium, for

instance, **Paul Marcus** recounted, launched simultaneously in early 1987 broad campaigns against the growth of poverty in the country. Pursuing its policy of united actions, **Georg Kwiatowski** added, the GCP on several occasions succeeded in involving in them social democrats, members of CDU/CSU social committees, Greens and non-party Germans. Another challenge is to unite the unemployed and to mobilise all wage workers for a joint struggle for the right to work.

Speakers stressed the growing need for solidarity among the working people at the international as well as the national level: it is called for especially, as **Rafic Samhoun** observed, by the actions of transnational corporations, which not just plunder developing countries but also rob workers in the industrialised capitalist world by cutting their wages or by laying them off. A WFTU analysis of mass actions in different regions indicates, **Roland Guyvarch** said, that the main targets of struggle are higher pay (46 per cent of all actions) and continued employment (30 per cent). Those two offer especially broad room for coordinated action on an international scale. The working people and their unions are still clearly inferior to capital in this respect — but the importance of joint action is bound to grow.

The movement of international solidarity is a major condition of success in the struggle for social justice and for the interests and rights of the working people.

¹Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol 6, p. 595.

Latin America: New Thinking, New Potentialities

What is new in the analysis and action by the peace forces in Latin America today? What are the aspects here of the realities of the nuclear-space age? How do revolutionaries view them, and how do they carry on the struggle for a secure world and social progress in the present conditions? Below are the views of a study group which included: **David Moraes** (Bolivia), **Antonio R. Granja** (Brazil), **Donald Ramotar** (Guyana), **Randolfo Banegas** (Honduras), **Sully Saneaux** (Dominican Republic), **José Arisala** (Colombia), **Antonio Diaz Ruiz** (Cuba), **Ornell Urriola** (Panama), **Hugo Campos** (Paraguay), **Jaime Barrios** (El Salvador), **Orel Viciani** (Chile) and **José Regato** (Ecuador).

The report was compiled by **Francisco Gamboa** (Costa Rica), the coordinator of the group.

THE Soviet Communists said at their 27th Congress two years ago that in the period ahead the struggle would be focused on a policy capable of preserving peace, a matter which, of course, is of concern both to the great

powers and to all the peoples, parties, and governments: peace, after all, can be preserved only by a common effort.

That is a conclusion which has been borne out with the passage of time, but what does it mean in the Latin American context? It is most important to answer the question, because it is all too easy to go to extremes: either to fail to reckon with the global nature of the nuclear threat, an approach which produces the urge to evade responsibility for preserving peace, or, on the contrary, to give up the revolutionary struggle for the peoples' interests, against the aggressions and oppression by imperialism and its local servitors on the plea that in any form it could cause tensions and jeopardise world peace. A corollary of that approach is acceptance of the 'Pax Americana' (or 'peace in the spirit of Camp David', in its Middle East version); it facilitates imperialist exploitation and intervention and eventually leads to an erosion of the revolutionary character of the communist parties and weakens their influences in the masses.

A common-sense balance between the struggle for peace and the struggle for social progress, and against imperialist domination is a necessary condition for the success of both lines, because in Latin America and the Caribbean this imperialist domination has assumed the most aggressive forms. The Communists and members of other democratic and revolutionary movements striving for world peace have to face these problems from day to day.

The economic and political relations between the countries of the continent and imperialism — relations of dependence and domination — are in a state of crisis which has diverse manifestations. Imperialism has been trying to get out of the crisis through its conception of neoglobalism, intervention in the economic, political, cultural and military spheres, and desperate efforts to get the submissive governments to apply the notorious 'national security' doctrine, as the rule.¹ That was borne out once again by the course and outcome of the 17th Continental Armed Forces Conference, which was held at Mar del Plata in Argentina in November 1987.

Evidence of the extreme aggressiveness of US policy has come from the criminal attack against tiny Grenada, the constant pressures and threats against Cuba, the invasion of Nicaragua by mercenary forces and economic pressures on the country, and the barbarous intervention in El Salvador. The 13 military bases on the territory of Panama are a springboard for intervention in the internal affairs of the peoples of that and other countries, while efforts are being made to frustrate fulfilment of the Torrijos-Carter treaties.² US warships have been plying the waters of the Caribbean and the Pacific. The fact that Honduras has been turned into a mammoth military base signals the preparation of subsequent acts of intervention. The same purpose was served by the dispatch of US troops to Bolivia on the pretext of combating the drugs traffic, and to Ecuador and Costa Rica, allegedly for building civilian installations. (It is true that under powerful pressure from the popular movement the troops had to withdraw from Bolivia and Ecuador.)

At the same time, however, new lines of resistance by the people to the existing system of relations have been emerging and growing in scope on

the subcontinent. The resistance to the economic measures of the US-controlled international financial institutions is ever more pronounced. The IMF and the World Bank have been trying to get the Latin American countries to repay their debt (and its repayment is simply unrealistic) by pressuring the ruling circles of countries in our region and forcing them to take steps the working people reject. The ever more vigorous struggle by the popular masses has increased the sense of alarm among influential bourgeois circles and even in the governments representing their interests. This will be seen from the growing contradictions between imperialism and the countries it dominates.

Those are the realities in the light of which the Communists have been carrying on the struggle for peace and explaining the concrete significance of the new thinking in the context of Latin America. Here are a few examples.

Fidel Castro made an important contribution to the cause of peace when he put forward his bold initiatives for solving *the external debt problem*. He raised the banner not only of the workers', peasants' and revolutionary movements, but also of a section of the bourgeoisie and many governments. He proposed that the creditor countries should finance the repayment of the external debt through a 10-12 per cent reduction of their military expenditures. That links up disarmament and the solution of the Third World countries' economic problems, a reasonable and practical way out of the highly explosive situation.

The leaders of the five Central American countries met in August 1987 on the initiative of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, and signed the *Guatemala Accords on peace in Central America*.³ That was their response to the concern of the peace-loving peoples of Latin America and the whole world, which is expressed in many forms, including the efforts of the Contadora Group (Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela) and the Support Group (Peru, Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina), which seek to have the regional conflict settled by negotiation.

The communist parties and other democratic and revolutionary forces in the region voice solidarity with them. First, we see that the formation and activity of these groups is a reflection of the grave contradictions between the peoples and President Reagan's policy in Central America. Second, it is becoming clear that many governments and bourgeois circles fear the emergence of a new 'Vietnam' of even larger proportions in the very heart of Latin America.

The leaders of the *Sandinista revolution*, together with the people of Nicaragua resisting the imperialist intervention, have displayed political maturity and flexibility, that which Latin Americans regard as the 'new thinking'. The Sandinistas have boldly and effectively stood up for the sovereign right to development and the building of a society of freedom and justice, while clearly and invariably demonstrating their striving for peace. Their policy has won the sympathies and even greater solidarity on the part of the people, many governments and political parties. Even the US campaign of slander has proved incapable of splitting the broad front of the forces demanding a settlement of the conflict by negotiation and self-determination for the Nicaraguan people. The Sandinistas' will for peace

has promoted the shaping of such a front, while the US rulers have merely heightened their own political isolation.

The *Salvadoran revolutionaries*, united in the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Democratic Front, have also taken the way of national peace and have been working hard to develop a political dialogue and carry on negotiations with the Duarte dictatorship. They have now been fighting in the field for seven years, and want a dialogue for a just settlement of the conflict. The revolutionaries are aware of the dialectics of their main objectives; the representative of the CP El Salvador in the study group said: "From our standpoint, there is an organic connection between democracy and revolution, between revolution and anti-imperialism, and between the revolutionary people's war and the peace we want . . . The attainment of peace will have a most favourable effect on détente in the region and the formulation of the principles and practice of peaceful coexistence of the Central American countries".

The *Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union* (URNG), which has carried on the fight against the military regime for years, takes a similar stand. The URNG's statements since 1986, when Vinicio Cerezo became president, testify to its responsible policy with respect to the possibilities of a dialogue. They, naturally, also call for 'minimum demands and steps to start on the road to genuine democracy'.

There are, however, some countries on the continent where the will to peace displayed by the Communists and other democratic circles is being put to a severe test. Colombia is one of these. Since the 1984 armistice, which was concluded between the majority of insurgent organisations and the government, hundreds of Communists and other progressive political leaders have been killed in the country. The popular movement suffered a great loss at the end of 1987 with the brutal murder of Jaime Pardo Leal, a former member of the Supreme Court and chair of the Patriotic Alliance of left forces. The acts of the militarists, together with the paramilitary ultra-rightist groupings, including those involved in the narco-business, have developed into downright barbarous provocations.

In their fight for the right to life, for an end to the violence, for stronger democracy, and for deep economic, social, and political changes in the country, the Colombian Communists and their political allies have declared their firm intention to defend the people's sacred interests and their determination to do everything to attain this goal in an atmosphere of peace.

The Communist Party of Chile, which has to act under the fascist dictatorship, has taken a well-considered approach to the use of force to remove the Pinochet clique. The CP Chile says: "It is often suggested that we have been trying hard to militarise policy and defeat the dictatorship by force of arms, that we have allegedly worked to spread general armed struggle and oppose a political way out of the situation. If that were so, we would have frankly said as much. We favour a political settlement, which we have tried to reach on the only possible basis: unity and mass struggle to scrap the fascist institutional system. The violence in its actual forms originates in the acts of the dictatorship and can end only in its downfall."

There has been evidence in recent years of a growing anti-militaristic

trend in popular mass action. In the early period of President Raul Alfonsin's constitutional government in Argentina, for instance, protest campaigners against the reactionary militarists led to the trial and sentencing of some senior officers responsible for grave crimes. This growing trend has helped to strengthen the peace movement in our region.⁴

The emergence two years ago of the Organisation of Military Men for Democracy, Integration and Liberation of Latin America and the Caribbean was a reflection of the comprehension of the realities of our epoch by another section of the military, and it appears to synthesize a sense of responsibility for the destinies of mankind with the traditions of patriotism and the spirit of national independence. They want a world free from nuclear weapons, and oppose involvement in any military blocs, but as the documents of their organisation show, they have gone beyond that to condemn the military and political intervention by imperialism, and have called for the establishment of genuine popular democracy in their countries, and relations of confidence and solidarity between the peoples. We feel that the elements of the new mentality and action among these military men, some members of parliament, scientists, workers in culture and members of the church amplify the peace movement south of the Rio Grande.

What has been said does not imply any minimisation of the traditional participants in the process, who have also been altering the objectives and forms of activity of their broad democratic associations: trade union, women's, youth, student, and, of course, organisations of peace fighters.

A conference of Latin American committees in defence of peace met in Ecuador in May 1987 to examine the present state of the peace movement and the problems faced by the peoples: the aggressive policy with respect to Nicaragua, with all its consequences for Central America; the imperialist military presence in various countries; the tragedy of the external debt and the disastrous dictates of the IMF; and violations of human rights. It took a special decision to strengthen the movement of solidarity with the patriots and democrats of Chile and Paraguay.

Here is another aspect of the new thinking: the defence of national interests and the ideals of world peace, the principles of sovereignty and good neighbourhood now, as never before in the past, reveal *the connection between the national and the regional, between the security of this or that country and the indivisibility of the system of international peace and security*. This is why the Argentinian people's struggle to restore full sovereignty over the Malvinas has also become a battle to turn the islands, where Britain has set up a nuclear base, and the whole of the South Atlantic into a zone of peace. The leadership and people of Brazil have also been working in the same direction; their desire to see the South Atlantic a demilitarised zone has become the will of the world community, as set forth in the resolution of the latest 42nd Session of the UN General Assembly.

It is sometimes said that action for peace in Latin America is not as potent as it is in Europe. But that is a wrong comparison: the struggle for peace and the peace movements in various parts of the world have their specific features. The peace forces acting on our continent are undoubtedly

making a valuable contribution to the preservation of peace, in accordance with their own historical potentialities.

The communist parties and other revolutionary movements are prominent among the peace fighters and enjoy authority, because they have long carried on the anti-imperialist struggle and are in its front ranks, refusing to retreat in the face of pressures and threats by the reactionary forces. For the Cuban Communists, for instance, the struggle for peace does not mean any concessions to imperialism or slackened resistance to its aggressions and dictate, said the CP Cuba representative: "On the contrary, consolidation of our positions and progress of the revolutionary movement on the continent are a brake on the imperialist claims and simultaneously a contribution to the cause of peace. We are convinced that Cuba's political, economic and ideological strengthening and, above all, the strengthening of its defence capability with the help of the socialist community has helped to avert direct armed aggression by US imperialism, which could have had unpredictable consequences."

The CP Bolivia representative said that the communist parties' propaganda should give a more precise reflection of the fact that in Latin America, action for peace and against wars and aggression are simultaneously a front of struggle against poverty, economic backwardness, hunger and other social sores. It is also a struggle for democracy and social justice, national liberation and an end to exploitation, and for the right to live in dignity. Finally, survival and security are also ensured by resistance to the repayment of the external debt, and the demands for the establishment of a new international economic order.

This is an expression and a strengthening of the trend in Latin America to establish a dialectic link between the task of preserving peace and the tasks of social progress. The revolutionaries have increasingly turned to elaborating a conception of a world without wars, even when they have been on the field of battle.

The historical record shows that economic and social upheavals and other objective factors do not of themselves produce either revolutionary transformations or stronger peace. It is *subjective factors* that have an active, dynamic, and ultimately crucial role to play in carrying the masses from discontent to a readiness to fight for their true interests. Unfortunately, subjective factors, i.e., the activity of the revolutionary-democratic forces, have tended to lag in many countries of the continent and especially in the Caribbean. Lack of unity on the Left is yet another negative factor: it has impeded the development of many progressive processes. That is why the Communists' spread of the ideas of the movement against repayment of the external debt and for a new international economic order serves both the cause of peace and the creation of a mighty anti-imperialist front in that part of the world.

More and more governments and social forces on our continent are aware that peace is asserted through the peoples' right to their own choice and to development without threats or dictate. It was long believed (in Europe, for instance) that Latin Americans are only worried about the military-political aspects of security and sovereignty, but over ten years

ago, Fidel Castro raised the question of economic progress in conditions ruling out pressures and intimidation, which meant considering the problem as a whole, with all the aspects of international security tied in. The substance and sagacity of this analysis are now obvious both to revolutionaries and to realistically-minded politicians and leaders of many Latin American countries.

The struggle against the irreparable harm being done to the environment by the activity of the transnationals has also been of growing significance in the defence of our countries' independence and security, and the preservation of life. The present ecological situation calls for more vigorous efforts by revolutionary and democratic organisations in this area.

The peace forces' potential has been growing from day to day. The aggressiveness and plunderous policy of imperialism, which has affected ever wider strata of the population, has induced various groups of peace fighters to unite. The crisis of the domination system has opened up new ways and prospects for unity in the struggle for democracy, and restructuring of international economic relations, against intervention, financial oppression, discrimination in trade, and for independence and peace. The Communists temper their revolutionary élan with a sense of political responsibility, so that the conception of universal security should be combined with consistent defence of the peoples' free development, and that the use of peaceful means for settling conflicts and methods of dialogue should not cut across the readiness to use force in resisting the aggression of imperialism and the oligarchy.

We are conscious that the struggle for a world without nuclear and other weapons will come up against many difficulties. This puts the duty on us to be self-critical and to identify the many untapped potentialities for expanding and deepening the peace movement. That is why *the spread of the new political thinking and new action in Latin America is now itself a most responsible mission of the Communists and other revolutionary and democratic movements.*

¹ Imperialism's political and military doctrine compelling the armed forces to fight the 'internal enemy' (meaning the revolutionary, democratic movements and working class action), instead of defending the country's sovereignty against external aggression.

² Concluded in 1977 and providing for Panama's full jurisdiction over the Canal Zone by the end of 1999. — *Ed.*

³ These are known as the 'Esquipulas-2' and, among other things, provide for an end to military operations after a 90-day period, an end of aid to irregular forces by the governments of neighbouring and other states, a dialogue for national reconciliation in each country, an amnesty and a lifting of the state of emergency (or martial law), assertion of civic liberties, establishment of commissions to monitor compliance with the accords, and free elections and democratic reforms.

⁴ Following recent negotiations with top army men, the Argentinian authorities have approved laws exonerating hundreds of officers accused of brutal crimes. That is one of the reasons for the growing political instability in the country.

Tackling The Crisis Through Self-Management

A Dialogue Of Yugoslav Journalists

Yugoslavia is looking forward to important events — a conference of the League of Communists and the 14th Party Congress slated for 1990. *World Marxist Review* has asked **Borislav Vucetic**, deputy editor-in-chief of the *Komunist* weekly, and **Dragan Vukcevic**, foreign policy columnist of the newspaper *Borba*, to speak about the atmosphere in which preparations for these forums are being conducted and about the role of the press in Yugoslavia.

The Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia held its 13th Plenary Meeting in Belgrade from February 29 to March 1. What issues did it discuss and how was it covered in the press?

BORISLAV VUCETIC. Let me begin by noting that the plenary meeting was conducted openly, and the public could follow all its deliberations because they were televised. Both the participants and the party press were quite critical in their discussion of major aspects in the work of the Central Committee, including steps to make its performance more effective. I think that the previous practice of talking at length about existing problems but not naming those responsible for their solution has now been abandoned at meetings of party bodies. The time has come to speak openly about those who stand in the way of prompt solutions to urgent issues.

Dragan Vukcevic. We live in a dynamic and changing society, and so we can no longer tolerate things that hamper our progress. A large-scale programme of social and economic change is now under way in Yugoslavia. But we admit that in working to attain our objectives we have to fight a pitched battle against crisis developments which are typical of the situation in our country.

B.V. As regards the coverage of the plenary meeting in the press, many novel approaches were applied. For example, after consulting with comrades from the LCY Central Committee staff, we agreed that it was not at all necessary for *Komunist* to publish verbatim reports of the meeting. We were to provide our own, critical assessment of the problems discussed and to single out what was particularly important and significant so that our readers could receive information which would be fuller and to the point. Here 'fuller' does not mean 'long-winded'. Today, tediously long articles are an anachronism. They are counterproductive because they use up too much time and space and result in a loss of popularity. Readers want their periodical to supply them with prompt, accurate, truthful, and exhaustive information, with clear and concise articles so that after reading them, anyone could form an opinion about this or that question.

D.V. Journalists in Yugoslavia — and in other socialist countries — still suffer from many holdovers of professional dogmatism. This dogmatism

was fostered by the previously widespread practice of the press publishing ready-made releases about meetings and decisions of party bodies. Opportunities for stating one's own views were limited. But a journalist is not a technician who simply passes on the information he receives. He is a creative professional with his own views and outlook. He can contribute his own proposals and criticism.

Of course, political decisions are very important, but that does not mean that we should regard them as the ultimate truth or that they are valid once and for all. One could cite numerous examples to show that decisions have had to be rescinded and mistakes corrected. I think that if we had adopted a constructive yet critical approach from the start, it would have been to our benefit.

B.V. Let me emphasise that the LCY Central Committee shows understanding and support for a committed and critical approach to the coverage of the party's work. It is a matter of principle with the party's governing bodies that no individual, no matter what his or her position, be protected from criticism. As long as a journalist proceeds from incontrovertible facts and convincing arguments, he can act boldly — the way our colleagues from *Borba* act. They were the first to move quite resolutely against Hamdija Pozderac, Vice-President of the SFRY who, as it later transpired, was implicated in a major financial scandal involving the Agrocommerce company.¹

D.V. Yes, that was a hard fight. It was not simply a case of corruption involving a high-level government official. Let me remind you that under our rules, Pozderac was to become President of the Collective Presidency this May. But it was not a matter of attacking a particular individual. We were not fighting against him personally. We were fighting against conditions under which certain ranking officials abused their position and privileges to grow rich at the expense of society and the state.

We Need New Ideas and New People to Lead the Country Onward

How did the new approach which is now gaining ground in the Yugoslav press influence the coverage of the plenary meeting? Which of the issues raised at it did *Komunist* and *Borba* focus on?

B.V. A critical tone was predominant both in the coverage of statements made by participants and in our author's comments on the work of the party forum. For example, *Komunist* carried the statement of Vinko Hafner, member of the LCY Central Committee, in which he spoke about the need for changes in the composition of the Central Committee Presidium which, in his view, was not up to the demands of the day. This was also echoed by Marko Orlandic, member of the LCY Central Committee Presidium, who noted that the issue of personnel, of cadres was now the key problem for the League of Communists and for all its bodies.

As to the overall assessments of the plenary meeting contained in editorial comments, I would mention primarily those that expressed dissatisfaction with the overly general and non-specific character of the debate and with attempts to dodge acute and topical issues.

D.V. Let me dwell in somewhat greater detail on the questions my

colleague has raised. From the outset, let me stress that Yugoslavia's healthy, progressive forces do not question either the party's leading role in society or our revolutionary gains. That is what underlies the party's prestige and influence. At the same time, the view is widespread that if the League of Communists is to continue leading the country, it should undergo a change in matters of personnel policy.

Frankly, like many other people, I take a dim view of high-level functionaries remaining in their posts for 20 or even 30 years. I hold that people who have long been used to old attitudes and old thinking cannot be equal to the new demands. It is hard for them to respond to and adopt new ideas, new principles of work.

A great deal is being done now in Yugoslavia to reduce the administrative personnel — from the LCY Central Committee staff to the lowest elements in the party and government structure. The national economy of our small country — and other, much more advanced and stronger economies — cannot and must not breed and feed bureaucrats, people who perform no useful function. At our *Borba* office, we have conducted a certification campaign, and the journalists who failed to meet the requirements were advised to switch to some other occupation.

Another important point. I think Yugoslavia would not be in such difficult straits and could tackle its problems much faster if there were greater ideological and political unity in the League of Communists and particularly within its leadership. After Josip Broz Tito's death we pledged to remain true to his ideas in our work. However, side by side with honest, hard-working and principled Communists, the system of party leadership at different levels also includes people who do not share these ideas. We are having a hard time getting rid of this deadwood, of opportunists and self-serving bureaucrats. They do not want to look for solutions, to help the LCY lead the country out of the crisis.

Unity of Political Leadership Is the Only Thing that Can Resolve the Issue

Could you be more specific about the salient features of this crisis? How do you cover it as journalists? Which aspects of the current situation do you regard as particularly grave?

B.V. Our country's problems are largely compounded by the inadequate way economic issues are tackled not only in Yugoslavia proper but also in the world — particularly in those regions where development poses a serious challenge. The non-aligned movement, in which Yugoslavia features prominently, acts with due regard for this reality. The non-aligned countries are working vigorously to establish a new and equitable economic order and to attain equality. Developed nations should stop exploiting developing countries and contribute effectively to their economic progress. An equitable economic order should respond as much as possible to the interests and to the way of thinking of the countries comprising the non-aligned movement. I think that this is also an objective for the international socialist and workers' movement as a whole.

I am not speaking about global problems to dodge your specific question. Far from it. The fact is that Yugoslavia's difficulties are essentially a scaled-down replica of those that are plaguing the world economy — a shortage of raw materials and of energy sources, indebtedness, inflation, unemployment, and labour conflicts. Complex socio-economic problems have been brought into sharp focus in Yugoslavia, especially because there is in fact no nationwide domestic economic market in our country. We live within different, isolated, compartmentalised areas divided by administrative, territorial and ethnic boundaries existing within the federation.

D.V. The problem Borislav Vucetic is referring to is extremely complicated indeed. Each of the six republics that, together with two autonomous provinces, constitute the federation resembles a state within a state. This has long been the subject of jokes and cartoons. But it is a serious matter. It is common, say, for a cigarette manufacturer in Slovenia to seek to market his brand throughout the federation — but also to do everything to prevent similar products of an outside manufacturer from entering the Slovenian market. The result is a vicious circle.

Purely economic decisions are not enough to break it. For the country to become a single economic entity, there must be common political leadership. To put it simply, if our government and party bodies arrive at a decision, it should be implemented throughout the nation. Instead, what we have is the Central Committee of the party adopting a decision while the comrades who voted unanimously in its favour returning to their respective republics and either doing nothing to implement it or even steering an opposite course. In short, as long as party activists fail to abide by the principles of democratic centralism, we cannot expect good economic results.

Another point is that, as the record of socialist development shows, the functions of political leadership and economic management should be strictly delineated. Overlapping functions of the party and of the government hinder progress. The same questions are mulled over at numerous conferences, meetings and sessions and, when, at long last, conclusions are drawn and decisions are adopted and transmitted to those directly in charge of their implementation, it turns out that time has run out. The party should be above the economy, it should direct economic policy, not tackle technological questions or issues of individual industrial projects, procurement of materials and supplies, capital construction and the like.

Strikes Occur Where a Technocratic Managerial Apparatus Has Suppressed Workers' Management

These problems are indeed complicated, and they relate to the basic functions of the party and the government. But apparently, they do not divert your attention from specific manifestations of the crisis situation — say, unemployment or strikes. How do you respond to them in your press organs?

B.V. We at *Komunist* discuss quite openly both unemployment and strikes, although the latter are more often referred to as 'work stoppages'. I could cite many examples of this. But I don't think this or that case could explain everything. As I understand it, the question is about the individuals or the phenomena against which strikes are called by our workers who control the means of production, receive profits, and take part in their distribution. In this sense, the situation at socialist enterprises is different from that at capitalist factories. Nevertheless, workers do strike. Why? Please note that strikes occur primarily in those cases where the managerial technocratic and bureaucratic apparatus has become bloated and entrenched and ignores the mechanics of workers' self-management.

Let me recall a highly instructive story. It happened at the Pobeda factory in Novy Sad. The factory manager nominated by the workers was for some reason viewed with disfavour by his bureaucratic superiors, and the city LCY committee did not support him either. It looked like he would have to be dismissed. But the workers rose to defend him and his position. The manager proved quite competent and made the factory one of the best in Yugoslavia in terms of economic performance. There are no strikes at that factory.

Examples like this not only highlight what workers' self-management is all about but also shows how the word 'worker' is regaining its genuine meaning and the respect due to it.

Then what about the unemployed? They do not work, and so they cannot be considered real masters?

B.V. Yes, that is a problem. More than one million people in Yugoslavia have no jobs, and most of them go abroad to earn money. But they do not leave their country never to return. Both they and the government see this as a forced and temporary solution. Today, it benefits the country: money remitted from abroad means additional foreign exchange both for the state and for the workers themselves. They can assure higher living standards for their families. I repeat, there are more than one million people without jobs in Yugoslavia, but the situation is not as terrible as one may think. For example, 200,000 people, often with higher education, are unemployed in Belgrade. But the reason is not that jobs are unavailable: these people refuse to look for employment outside Belgrade — although there are job opportunities elsewhere, say in Kosovo. Besides, there are many people who own plots of land but refuse to farm them.

D.V. I would only add a few words to follow up on what Borislav Vucetic said about why and against what Yugoslav workers call strikes. One such strike, covered in *Borba*, was called by mineworkers in Kosovo. The strikers set forth their demands at a meeting with members of the Federal Assembly. "We don't complain about working much but earning little," they said. "Our grievance is that our manager pays no attention to workers' management. We don't like it that there are 1,000 engineers and administrators to 360 miners."

Socialism Must Be Both Defended and Perfected

As journalists, you obviously have had occasion to reflect on the moral and political state of Yugoslav society and on the processes under way in it. How do they relate to the prospects of the country's socialist development and which aspects do you consider to be more important than others?

B.V. Yugoslavia has chosen a socialist path of development and it cannot and does not wish to go back on this choice. The advantages of socialism are unquestionable. We embarked upon our new road with a meagre economic potential. As the popular saying goes, we jumped out of clodhoppers right into dress shoes and even automobiles. If one recalls what we started with, one can say that we have advanced farther in socialist development than other socialist countries.

As far as the prospects of socialism are concerned, I think it should be built up by drawing on people's creative initiative. The human factor is very important. Only by relying on it can Yugoslavia surmount the obstacles it encounters on its socialist path. Here I think I must mention the events in the autonomous province of Kosovo where we had to combat counter-revolutionary forays.² This question was discussed in great detail at the plenary meeting. Among other things, it was noted that the results of the normalisation drive augured well for the future. But problems persist, and they should be tackled with the help of the masses.

D.V. Yugoslavia is a socialist country, and we will not allow anyone to destroy our social system. But attempts of this sort, both internal and external, are in evidence. We also often hear advice to choose a different path — to move in a social democratic direction or to adopt some other Western model. But we hold the capitalist social system to be historically outdated as applied to Yugoslavia. Socialism is a younger, and above all, more progressive, more efficient, and more promising system; the opportunities it offers are yet to be fully realised. Therefore, one cannot allow socialism and its democratic principles (workers' self-management being perhaps the most important of them all) to be replaced with something long obsolete.

The question of whether Yugoslavia should be a socialist country or not has never been seriously raised. The dilemma we are facing is different. It is whether our social system should develop swiftly or slowly. We advocate a rapid rate of development, and we will work to achieve that objective. Socialism based on self-management should advance towards greater democracy, so that every worker could contribute as much as possible to the building of a new life. The better everyone works, the easier it will be to meet our growing demands more fully and to attain higher living standards. That is the essence of self-management in Yugoslavia.

We are gratified to see these ideas applied in other socialist countries too. At the 27th Congress of the CPSU which I covered as *Borba's* special correspondent, Comrades Gorbachov and Ryzhkov spoke at length and with commitment about self-management based on Lenin's ideas. I think that Yugoslavia has accumulated a certain body of experience in these matters, both positive and negative.

I have recently seen a television rerun of a satellite hookup between Soviet and Japanese women. When a Japanese participant asked what perestroika meant, a Soviet woman said, "I think, first and foremost it means the courage to admit that we did make mistakes." To my mind, that is a highly valid and even revolutionary idea. After all, you cannot move ahead without admitting and correcting past mistakes.

B.V. May I say in this connection that after 1948, Yugoslavia and other socialist countries took a more or less detached view of each other. This situation is now changing. Contacts between parties, governments and peoples in the socialist world are becoming more lively and meaningful. I believe Mikhail Gorbachov's visit to Yugoslavia will give an additional impetus to this process.

¹ According to a report submitted by the Federal Executive Council to the Federal Assembly, Agrocommerce was engaged in illegal financial machinations, including the issue of promissory notes without security. Those involved in the affair used this for personal gain. As a result, Agrocommerce economic activities were blocked, all creditors suffered losses, and Yugoslavia's international prestige was damaged. — *Ed.*

² Kosovo is one of Serbia's two big autonomous provinces, populated mostly by Albanians. The indigenous population also includes Serbians, Montenegrans and members of other ethnic groups. An extremely tense political situation developed in the province, and conflicts repeatedly flared up between different population groups. In recent months, three clandestine organisations of nationalists and separatists have been exposed and neutralised there. — *Ed.*

viewpoints

Reviving The Leninist Values Of Socialism

Yevgeny Ambartsumov — Cand.
Sc.(Hist.), USSR

LENIN's last works — which we have every reason to regard as his testament — are now attracting particular public attention, both in the Soviet Union and abroad. That is natural above all because our perestroika is motivated by a desire to revive the original, Leninist values of socialism which, not too long ago, were formalised, depreciated and eroded. Today, we are working in earnest — not ritually, as before — to check our progress against Lenin's behests, to restore historical truth and justice.

In his speech marking the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution, Mikhail Gorbachov said that "there are still attempts to turn away from

painful matters in our history, to hush them up, to make believe that nothing special happened. We cannot agree to this. This would be disregard for the historical truth, disrespect for the memory of those who were innocent victims of lawless and arbitrary actions. Another reason why we cannot agree to this is that a truthful analysis must help us tackle today's problems of democratisation, legality, openness, overcoming bureaucracy, in short, the vital problems of perestroika".¹ Hence the indispensable value, both methodological and practical, of Lenin's last works.

The historical fate of these works was as dramatic as the atmosphere in which they were created. Some of them were kept under wraps for more than 30 years, up to the late 1950s. Under pressure from Nikita Khrushchev, the then leader of the CPSU, they began to be published in *Kommunist*, the Central Committee fortnightly. But later, when democratisation and de-Stalinisation slowed down and eventually ground to a halt, important ideas and recommendations expressed by Lenin were interpreted inaccurately and sometimes distorted. This was in fact a denigration of the overall significance inherent in all of Lenin's last works — a passionate appeal to the Communists, to all working people of Soviet Russia to reflect on some of the key issues which remained acute and unresolved, on the 'pain spots' in the development of socialism, the party and the country. In short, these works were not a didactic treatise but a series of innermost thoughts and warnings Lenin wanted to share with his comrades in parting. It would be useful to single out the more important of these ideas.

The cooperative movement as a form of socialism. The article 'On Cooperation', dictated on January 4 and 6, 1923, when the illness temporarily loosened its grip, appears as the conceptual core of Lenin's testament. "We have to admit," he says, "that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism." He specifies this point: "Now we are entitled to say that for us the mere growth of cooperation . . . is identical with the growth of socialism."²

As the country switched from 'wartime communism' to the New Economic Policy (NEP), cooperatives changed their status from mandatory to volunteer and, as such, were accepted by Russia's peasants who joined them. In 1927 all types of cooperatives — consumer, credit, procurement, marketing and, to a lesser degree, producer cooperatives — covered almost 50 per cent of the Soviet economy. These were associations of peasants who were linked among themselves and with society as such through economic, market relations. These associations were independent of the state but received assistance from it. Previously, Lenin had been wary of the free play of the market forces institutionalised by NEP, but now he was confident that, with political power remaining in the hands of the working class and its party and with the socialist state controlling the principal means of production, a cooperative movement of small peasants assured a transition to socialism "by means that are the *simplest, easiest and most acceptable to the peasant*". (Vol. 33, p. 468).

In the wake of the October Revolution and at the beginning of NEP, Communists still retained, and tried to act on, the hope of building a socialist economy according to an *a priori* plan 'from above', as a hierarchic

pyramid, with all economic units, both industrial and agricultural, meticulously carrying out the orders of a central authority. That was why all urban population was arbitrarily assigned to cooperatives during the Civil War; the cooperative effort came under government control and replaced trade. The expectation was that these cooperative components would make up a communist economy. But small farms refused to operate within the mainstream of communist, extra-market relations imposed on them. Therefore, Lenin rejected the *a priori* constructs that had proved utopian in favour of genuine cooperation of peasants, even though it was not communist.

Lenin warned that "we must base ourselves on the individual peasant; we must take him as he is, and he will remain what he is for some time to come, and so it is no use dreaming about going over to socialism and collectivisation at present" (Vol. 31, p. 528). Logically, in his article 'On Cooperation', Lenin did not suggest that the effort be developed in the form of collective farms (that was seen as a remote prospect). He spoke about the simple kind of cooperatives which would deal with trade, crediting, procurement and marketing. That was why he said that the "cooperative system is the social system we must now give more than ordinary assistance", a system based on 'cooperative trade' involving large masses of the population (see Vol. 33, p. 469). Note that there is no reference here to social production or social property.

When in the late 1920s, Joseph Stalin launched an accelerated collectivisation drive, he ignored the wishes of the peasants and sought to back his policy of 'implanting' collective and state farms by citing Lenin's works (not the article 'On Cooperation' but those written during the Civil War, when Lenin had not yet arrived at an adequate view of the cooperative movement). Stalin referred to Lenin's cooperative plan which allegedly "covered all forms of a cooperative effort in agriculture, from the lowest (procurement and marketing) to the highest (collective farms)"³ — obviously misrepresenting Lenin's idea. Nevertheless, this interpretation was incorporated in virtually all textbooks and manuals on the history of the party, on Marxism-Leninism and on political economy, published not only in the 1930s-1950s but also later.

Accelerated collectivisation was conducted mostly through administration by decree. A "transformation of fundamental importance",⁴ it involved grave privations for the peasants and for the country as a whole, a sharp drop of agricultural output (the level of 1928, the last precollectivisation year, was attained only in 1956) and millions of deaths resulting from hunger, the 'dispossess the kulaks' drive and forced resettlement. Collective farms were in fact controlled by the state, and some of them were simply transformed into state farms. The ensuing long-term slump in farming remains one of the USSR's more acute unresolved problems to this day. Meanwhile, a relatively slow and gradual transition from lower to higher forms of cooperation and an orientation primarily on cooperatives, not on state farms enabled socialist countries such as the GDR, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to improve and increase their agricultural output smoothly and to solve the food problem on their own.

The prestige of a genuine cooperative movement as substantiated by

Lenin and the demonstration of its socialist nature are now used in the Soviet Union as arguments in favour of different forms of the cooperative effort to be introduced in various spheres of social activity, against the policy of making everything state-owned.

"We have adopted NEP in earnest and for a long time". Lenin did not arrive at this idea at once. Initially, he regarded NEP as a tactical move, as a forced retreat, and many of our historians reduce its meaning to tactical considerations. Lenin came to dismiss the administration-by-decree system of 'wartime communism' as unacceptable because, seemingly motivated by a lofty social goal (the soonest possible translation of the communist ideal into reality), it ignored and suppressed private (even though egocentric) interests of people, particularly of the country's peasant majority. What was known as the 'surplus-appropriation system' was forced confiscation by the state of the peasants' surplus food — and sometimes of part of their essential food supply. In Lenin's words, "this direct communist approach to the problem of urban development hindered the growth of the productive forces." (Vol. 33, p. 64). Under this system, "the petty farmer loses interest in consolidating and developing his activity and in increasing his output, all of which leaves us without an economic basis" (Vol. 32, p. 411).

NEP replaced the surplus-appropriation system with a 'tax in kind' and relations that had no basis and therefore could not work with market relations. This led, to use a later vogue word, to the Russian 'economic miracle' — a country devastated by war and bled white by famine regaining the pre-war economic parameters and exceeding them noticeably in living standards within less than five years. That was why Lenin said forcefully that "all we actually need under NEP is to organise the population of Russia in cooperative societies on a sufficiently large scale, for we have now found that degree of combination of private interest, of private commercial interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the common interests which was formerly the stumbling block for many socialists" (Vol. 33, p. 468).

Lenin noted that NEP "will take a whole historical epoch . . . At best we can achieve this in one or two decades" (Vol. 33, p. 470). Aware that nostalgia for the system and methods of 'wartime communism' still persisted in the party, he warned that "such a policy would be foolish and suicidal for the party that tried to apply it. It would be foolish because it is economically impossible. It would be suicidal because the party that tried to apply it would meet with inevitable disaster. Let us admit it: some Communists have sinned 'in thought, word and deed' by adopting just *such* a policy. We shall try to rectify these mistakes, and this must be done without fail, otherwise things will come to a very sorry state" (Vol. 32, p. 344).

Stalin refused to heed these warnings and, in 1928-29, put an end to NEP, in fact reviving the rigid, administration-by-decree system of 'wartime communism'. By pursuing this policy, he seemingly overcame this 'economic impossibility' — but at what price! True, with due regard for the prevailing situation, Stalin paid lip service to NEP and even pretended to continue it. Unfortunately, many historians take these assurances

seriously. But the abolition of NEP indeed put the peasants and the people as a whole into a 'very sorry state' for a long time to come. Even our current problems stem from the administration system which replaced NEP and developed into a braking mechanism.

Obviously, today one cannot even consider a return to NEP. The classical adage about the impossibility of stepping into the same river twice holds true. But we can and must revive the philosophy which accords priority to the economic interests of independent producers. No wonder that other socialist countries, from Hungary to China, are guided by this philosophy and draw directly on the experience of NEP in conducting economic and political reforms.

"How do we reach socialism?" asked Lenin, at that time gravely ill, in his notes for a speech he, unfortunately, did not make at the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets. His answer was, "not otherwise than through NEP" (Vol. 36, p. 588). This bequest Lenin left remains topical for countries that are embarking on a socialist path.

This idea is central to Lenin's strategy for carrying out a socialist revolution and building socialism. But one is struck by the fact that as he tackled and developed the concept of NEP, Lenin paid increasing attention to the peasant component of Soviet society and the Soviet state. Back in late 1920 he said that "ours is not actually a workers' state but a workers' and peasants' state" (Vol. 32, p. 24). And in his last works he warned insistently against divisions appearing within the party and within society "if serious class disagreements arise" between industrial workers and peasants (Vol. 33, p. 485).

This threat, Lenin said, could come from an attempt to "immediately propagate purely and strictly communist ideas in the countryside. As long as our countryside lacks the material basis for communism it will be, I should say harmful, in fact, I should say fatal, for communism to do so" (Vol. 33, p. 465). In another article, aptly entitled 'Better Fewer, But Better', he demanded that we "display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers' government and to retain our small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority" (Vol. 33, p. 499).

But Stalin's essentially forced collectivisation methods had nothing in common with such caution. The collective farm was seen as a 'form of transition to the commune' and, in obvious conflict with Lenin's recommendation, the "need to fight resolutely against all attempts at restraining the development of the collective movement due to a shortage of tractors and sophisticated equipment" was proclaimed.⁵ It is only when the peasants' growing dissatisfaction with these excesses became evident that the party's Central Committee condemned "light-headed leaps from the cooperative to the commune".⁶ In describing the methods practised during that period, Mikhail Gorbachov stressed that they showed "a deficit of the Leninist considerate attitude to the interests of the working peasantry".⁷ He also added that "in a tremendous undertaking which affected the fate of the majority of the country's population, there was a departure from Lenin's policy towards the peasantry".⁸

The importance of a cultural revolution. In his brilliant article 'Our Revolution', which he wrote after reading the Menshevik Sukhanov's

memoirs about the October Revolution (Sukhanov was one of those who held that Russia was economically unprepared for a transition to socialism), Lenin subjected that scholastic view to devastating criticism. "If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism," he argued, "why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?" (Vol. 33, pp. 478-479).

That was but one aspect of Lenin's dialectical idea. The other was that, having taken power and having defended it, the need was to focus on overcoming cultural backwardness. Culture was seen in its broad sense and included the development of the productive forces.

Lenin advised against entertaining illusions about some kind of new, 'proletarian culture' and said soberingly that "for a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of prebourgeois culture, i.e. bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc." and added: "What a vast amount of urgent spade-work we still have to do to reach the standard of an ordinary West European civilized country" (Vol. 33, pp. 487, 462). Unfortunately, we cannot yet say that we have implemented these behests fully.

Dismissing all attempts at ostentation and luxury, Lenin stressed that it was imperative to "adjust our state budget to satisfy, as a first measure, the requirements of elementary public education" (Vol. 33, p. 463). Now that our perestroika is advancing and the neglected, backward state of elementary, basic education has been identified as a prime factor impeding this progress, we can see that this point Lenin made is more profound than we previously thought.

The Soviet Union is justly proud of the accomplishments scored in the cultural revolution which was launched in the wake of the socialist revolution — the elimination of illiteracy, the renaissance of national cultures, and the rise of the general level of education. But it is clear from what transpired at the February 1988 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, which discussed perestroika in secondary and higher education, that Lenin's ideas remain topical and in fact form the conceptual basis for tackling today's problems.

Defect bureaucratisation through democratisation. Although these terms are recent, I think the formula does express the gist of the point Lenin made.

By the time he wrote his last works, Lenin dismissed the illusions he had entertained in *The State and Revolution* (a book written before the October Revolution) about the possibility of a rapid and almost automatic demise of bureaucracy and red tape. The fact that the two flourished and spread under 'wartime communism' was only superficially paradoxical: all social links were either managed or fully controlled by the state. An additional argument in favour of NEP was that it cut the ground from under the feet of the bureaucracy and exposed it as parasitic. Facts showed that reliance on the power of the state was gradually losing its blanket effectiveness, and Lenin was becoming increasingly aware of the shortcomings inherent in government monopoly. He kept attaching ever more significance to the

study and encouragement of local experience, of non-governmental forms of economic management. He was obviously leaning to decentralised management and, furthermore, to the creation of what we would describe today as a socialist civil society, although he did not use the term (it had been used by Marx and Engels in their early works which were unknown in Lenin's time). Lenin urged the establishment of "all sorts of workers' organisations — doing everything to prevent them from becoming bureaucratic" (Vol. 33, p. 466). He called for 'contacts' (a significant choice of word) between workers and rural peasants (*ibid.*) and reflected on the forms these contacts and ties should take — not through the state but directly between producer units, between people.

Simultaneously, Lenin lashed out increasingly against bureaucratic attitudes which he regarded as the worst internal enemy (see Vol. 33, pp. 224-225). He noted that "we have bureaucrats in our party offices as well as in Soviet offices" (Vol. 33, p. 494) and that "we must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine" (Vol. 33, p. 501).

To this day, one is struck by the scathing quality of Lenin's anti-bureaucratic criticism and self-criticism: "All of us are sunk in the rotten bureaucratic swamp of 'departments'" (Vol. 36, p. 566). In denouncing the bureaucracy, he stressed the need for a special managerial apparatus — on one condition: "An apparatus *for* policy . . . , and not a policy for the apparatus! (A good) bureaucracy in the service of policy, and not a policy in the service of (a good) bureaucracy" (Vol. 36, p. 537).

In his last years, Lenin acknowledged that overcoming bureaucratic attitudes would take a long time. He held that this could be accomplished through raising the cultural level, promoting the consciousness and the initiative of the masses and involving them directly in the exercise of state power, in government.

In the wake of the stroke which paralysed his right arm and leg in the early hours of December 23, 1922, Lenin dictated a letter to the party congress. He began it by urging that "a number of changes be made in our political structure" (Vol. 36, p. 593). He was actually suggesting a reform of the political system, of the power mechanism, and this reform was based on two principles.

First, several dozen rank-and-file workers and peasants were to be put on the Central Committee which in fact played the leading role in the party and in the state — but, Lenin specified, "preferably not from among those who have had long service in Soviet bodies (in this part of my letter the term workers everywhere includes peasants), because those workers have already acquired the very traditions and the very prejudices which it is desirable to combat". He argued that this step would "considerably increase the stability of our party" and the "stability of our CC" by allaying the severity of possible conflicts within it (see Vol. 36, pp. 597, 594).

Although the composition of the Central Committee was enlarged noticeably at the 12th Congress of the party in 1923, rank-and-file workers were not elected to serve on it. But the other part of Lenin's plan was implemented: workers and peasants were promoted to serve on inner-

party and state control bodies, and the latter merged together to ensure "contacts with the broad masses through the medium of the best of our workers and peasants" (Vol. 33, p. 482).

During the 1930s, however, party and state control bodies were divided on Stalin's proposal and acquired a professional — in a sense technocratic — character. "Aimed against the wilfulness of any individuals, Lenin's system of integral control could not please Stalin, and it was abolished during the period of his personality cult," said Lenin's secretary.⁹ One might note that his article-proposal 'How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection' was in fact a critique of Stalin who had long been in charge of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. Significantly, Stalin used his influence as General Secretary of the party's Central Committee in an attempt to delay the publication of this article in *Pravda*. But even when it was published, an important phrase was deleted, namely, Lenin's words to the effect that one "should not allow anybody's authority without exception, neither that of the General Secretary nor of any other member of the Central Committee" (Vol. 33, p. 485) to prevent their activities from being monitored and controlled. This passage was only restored more than 40 years later, in the Fifth Edition of Lenin's *Collected Works*.

The second principle of Lenin's reform plan was that management, above all economic management, be put on a scientific basis — among other things, by having the State Planning Commission set up a group "of permanent specialists who . . . could solve the whole range of problems within its [the State Planning Commission's — *Ed.*] ambit" (Vol. 36, pp. 601-602). Moreover, Lenin suggested "granting legislative functions to the State Planning Commission" (the title of another of his memos), arguing that "as a body of experienced people, experts, representatives of science and technology", the State Planning Commission "is actually in a better position to form a correct judgement of affairs" (Vol. 36, p. 598). In other words, the objective was to involve prerevolutionary intellectuals — they were the experts in question and members of the State Planning Commission — in economic management and in the exercise of state power, although Lenin did note the need to keep their activities under political control by the party. As he cut NEP short a few years later, Stalin persecuted these experts, and many of them were posthumously rehabilitated only in recent decades.

One can see that Lenin's plan of political reform, an important part of his testament, contains a number of ideas which remain useful and topical to this day. "With due regard for the experience we have accumulated and for the new tasks facing us," Mikhail Gorbachov said, "we should again delve thoroughly into the legacy of Lenin's ideas about the development of the Soviet state system and use it in tackling the tasks our society is facing today."¹⁰ One can well expect the forthcoming All-Union Party Conference to offer the best possible opportunity for following this up.

The need to consider the personal qualities of leaders. In 'Left Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder, an earlier book, Lenin devoted a special chapter to an analysis of the 'leaders — party — class — masses' correlation; in his testament he attached unprecedented importance to this

idea. During his illness which forced him to 'step aside', he became more acutely aware of his comrades' personal qualities. He grasped more profoundly the degree to which the fate of the great cause he was leaving to them depended on their traits as individuals. "It is not a detail," he said in his letter to the congress, "or it is a detail which can assume decisive importance" (Vol. 36, p. 596).

This warning was connected with the way he described Stalin in the letter: "Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealings among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General." Therefore Lenin suggested removing Stalin from that post "and appointing another man in his stead who [is] more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more considerate to his comrades, less capricious, etc." (Ibid.).

It is true that Lenin himself helped promote Stalin to the post of Secretary-General as proposed by Kamenev. But at that time it was a technical and administrative rather than a political post. However, Stalin, "having become Secretary-General, has concentrated unlimited authority in his hands and," as Lenin put it in his letter to the congress, "I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution" (Vol. 36, pp. 594-595).

Obviously, the objective of Lenin's frank remarks about Stalin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and Pyatakov was for the party to remember and note the shortcomings of its leaders.

Lenin's testament was made available to party members — but in what way and how fully? His articles were published in *Pravda*, but with deletions, not at once, and in instalments. Therefore, those who read them at that time may not have formed an integral impression. Some of Lenin's notes were made public at the 12th Congress, but his letter to the 12th Congress with brief personal profiles was read out to delegations only at the 13th Congress, held eighteen months after it was written and almost six months after Lenin's death. Despite the impact generated by these critical remarks (which were focused on Stalin) Kamenev and Zinoviev insisted on retaining him as the General Secretary, and Trotsky, Stalin's rival, agreed with them. Lenin's letter was consigned to oblivion and, towards the end of Stalin's lifetime, references to it invited harsh reprisals.

The departure from Lenin's behests played a sinister role in the future of the country and in the fate of those who fell victim to the repression — including all those mentioned in the letter to the congress, with the exception of Stalin himself.

Lenin oriented the party on collective leadership, and he was highly apprehensive of a rift between leaders — which did materialise.

The inevitability of the eventual victory of socialism. We know that Lenin developed this idea in virtually all of his basic works, with regard to both his country and the world as a whole. I would only like to note his remark that "while the development of world history follows general laws, it is by no means precluded but, on the contrary, presumed that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development" (Vol. 33, p. 477). Lenin drew this conclusion from the very fact of the revolution which triumphed in a country which was by no

means one of the more advanced, although as far as the events comprising the Russian Revolution were concerned, "from the standpoint of world history they were certainly details" (Vol. 33, p. 480).

Today we can also apply this conclusion of Lenin's to Stalinism — a regrettable but, I think, not at all inevitable zigzag of world and Soviet history, all the more so because socialist values and goals still prevailed and the people, led by the party, built and developed socialism enthusiastically and victoriously.

Now that we are freeing ourselves from the legacy of Stalinism, now that perestroika and new political thinking are advancing, new, previously impossible opportunities are opening up before the idea of socialism and before the Soviet Union. And Lenin's works, particularly those written last, will help us enormously.

¹ Mikhail Gorbachov, *October and Perestroika: the Revolution Continues*, Novosti Press Agency, Moscow, 1987, p. 27.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 474. Further references in the text. — Ed.

³ Joseph Stalin, *Questions of Leninism*, 11th Edition, Moscow, 1953, p. 320 (in Russian).

⁴ Mikhail Gorbachov, op. cit., p. 25.

⁵ *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Its Congresses, Conferences and Plenary Meetings*, Ninth Edition, Vol. 5, p. 75 (in Russian).

⁶ Ibid., p. 75 (in Russian).

⁷ Mikhail Gorbachov, op. cit., p. 24.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ L. Fotiyeva, *Remembering Lenin*, Moscow, 1964, p. 62 (in Russian).

¹⁰ *Materials of the Plenary Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee held on January 27-28, 1987*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1987, p. 30 (in Russian).

History And Our Day

Four Anniversaries In Our History

Jaroslav Kojzar — Czechoslovak
journalist

EVERY historical event has its own lessons for eye-witnesses and for those who come after them, and this year's Czechoslovak anniversaries are no exception: the 70th anniversary of the founding of the first independent Czech and Slovak state; the 50th anniversary of the dismemberment and subsequent Nazi occupation of the republic in consequence of the ignominious Munich deal; the 40th anniversary of the socialist revolution, when the working people triumphed over reaction; and the 20th anniversary of the deep crisis in the party and the society, out of which the country emerged through an intense effort and with international assistance.

Some of these events carry a positive charge and others a negative one, and they differ in significance, scale and place in the record of international

development. Each, in a sense, marked a turning-point not only in the destinies of the Czechs and Slovaks, but also partly in the political process of the day. But all these events have this in common that the enemies of socialism now try to use them for the purposes of ideological confrontation.

The Year of 1918

Bourgeois propaganda has presented the formation of the independent Czechoslovak state in 1918 as having been the result of US President Woodrow Wilson's support for resistance to the Hapsburg monarchy, and most of the credit there allegedly goes to him. If we are to believe the Voice of America, but for Wilson's efforts, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy would be still going strong and dominating the Czech lands and Slovakia to this day.

But what are the actual facts?

From the very start of the 1914-1918 war, an imperialist war which was fought for the occupation of territories or for the economic weakening of the adversary, Czech and Slovak soldiers, who had been impressed into the Hapsburg army, went over to the other side of the front: 50,000 of them found themselves in Russia, and thousands went over to the Italians and the French. The Entente used them to defeat Wilhelm Germany and its Austro-Hungarian ally.

One cannot deny the efforts of bourgeois political leaders, among them Tomas Masaryk and his followers, who had emigrated to the West, in the struggle for the national interests of the Czechs and the Slovaks, but their efforts would not have drawn the attention of the US President and the leaders of the other European powers but for the radical change in the situation on the banks of the Vltava and the Vah. What was the cause of the new approach? The root cause was the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, with its Decree on Peace, its impact on the powerful January 1918 strike in Austria, the strikes in Prague, Kladno, and in Brno, Ostrava and Most areas. In Prague alone, up to 150,000 were on strike.

The events in Soviet Russia made Wilson include in his Fourteen Points' non-committal and vague promises of "autonomy for the peoples of Austria-Hungary", and political independence for big and small nations.

In exchange, the powers of the Entente demanded that the Czechoslovak legion, formed in Russia, should take part in the civil war on the side of the counter-revolution. Use was made of the soldiers' urge to fight for their country's independence — they were duped. But a large part of the legionnaires saw through the bourgeoisie's ruse. Almost 10,000 Czechoslovak Red Army men fought in defence of the October Revolution. As time went on, awareness came to the others as well. After the legion refused to take part in further anti-Soviet plans, it was returned home, where a revolutionary situation had then come to a head.

The events in the Czech lands on October 14, 1918, barred the way to the US scheme of preserving the old Austria, be it in the form of a federation. The general strike and demonstrations developed into a major action by the people inspired by the ideas of the Great October Revolution. A leaflet of the period says: "Men and women workers!

Comrades in the struggle and sufferings! We have in our hands a formidable force which defies the prison cell and hangman's noose. It is the general strike . . . Stop work everywhere, come out of the pits and workshops, leave the railways! Stop working for our oppressors!"

The bourgeoisie was terrified, and at its insistence the National Committee in Prague, headed by representatives of big capital and the reformists, took the initiative and on October 28, 1918 proclaimed the formation of the Czechoslovak state. There was boundless joy in the streets of Prague, Brno and the Slovak city of Martin: the age-old shackles had been shed. Social objectives were proclaimed alongside the national objectives. But step by step, the National Committee channelled the energies of the popular masses to suit itself. The bourgeoisie managed to do that because the country had no truly revolutionary vanguard, a communist party. The people were kept away from power.

An analysis of these events shows, nonetheless, that it was the struggle by the popular masses, and not the political game with the powers of the Entente or the 'patronage' of the US President, that had the crucial role to play in the founding of an independent Czechoslovakia.

The Year of 1938

Only a part of the national interests were realised in the 20 years of the pre-Munich Republic. Masaryk's theory of 'Czechoslovakism' unfortunately even denied that the Slovaks had any national interests. Social justice remained a dream. And what about democracy and humanism? The situation in the country was better than it was in some of the neighbouring countries. The state leadership of the time did not succumb to pressure from the leaders of the Agrarian and the National-Democratic parties and the ultra-rightists, and preserved the basic civil liberties even if these were curbed by the bourgeois system. But even in that 'model' republic, some died of hunger, while others lived in palaces. Workers' demonstrations were met with fire. Left-wing papers were discreetly closed down. Communists were sacked from their jobs, and people were thrown into prison for saying: "Long live the Soviet Union!"

The country found itself in a dead end. Within a mere 20 years the cornerstones of the system were so shattered that they failed to stand the test.

That is the state in which we arrived at Munich in the bitter autumn of 1938. For decades bourgeois propaganda has been trying to find excuses for the betrayal of the Czech and Slovak peoples committed by the rulers of Britain and France, with the active participation of the United States. *Le Monde* suggests, for instance, that the deal with Hitler at Czechoslovakia's expense was due to 'underestimation of the schemes' he had put in black and white in his *Mein Kampf*. It was allegedly because of 'diplomatic naivete' that France and Britain believed the Munich deal to be a 'guarantee of peace.'

But could they really have been so 'naive'?

Let us recall some of the facts to show the actual truth.

The British and French governments were not ruffled by the fascists' territorial demands on Czechoslovakia: they hankered after all the parts of

the country inhabited by ethnic Germans. Britain and France, which had a mutual assistance treaty with Czechoslovakia, merely egged on the government in Prague and President Eduard Benes to make concessions.

British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain paid two visits to Hitler's Alpine retreats and accepted his ultimatums. Benes was awakened by the British and French envoys in Prague on the night of September 21, and the Frenchman spoke for the two of them: "If we refuse . . ., we shall accept the risk of war. In these circumstances, the French government would be unable to enter the war." They urged Czechoslovakia to surrender.

Then came Munich, which was stage-managed by Chamberlain as an act in defence of peace. Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and French Prime Minister Edouard Daladier, without participation of Czechoslovakia's representatives — the doors had been closed to them — took a decision on September 30 under which our republic was to lose hundreds of square kilometres of territory; it was to lose hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of Czech and Slovak nationality; it was to lose industrial centres, transport junctions, frontier fortifications with vast stocks of weapons and ammunition.

It is symbolic that news of the deal was released in Prague by the German chargé d'affaires, and within a few hours came the ultimatum: accept Hitler's demands, or face a war. Britain and France would not help.

Let us recall in this context a claim made by one US radio station and often repeated by other bourgeois mass media. Western propagandists wax ironic over our view of the Munich deal: "In September 1938 the West simply committed a betrayal, whereas the Soviet Union, allegedly, took a firm stand on the side of Czechoslovakia. There is nothing to bear out this fairytale."

But is it a fairytale? The hard facts are there. Back in April 1938, the Soviet Union firmly declared its readiness to stand shoulder to shoulder with Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovak Ambassador in Moscow Zdenek Fierlinger then informed Prague: "If asked, the USSR is prepared, with the consent of France (as determined by the allied treaties. — *Ed.*) and Czechoslovakia, to take every measure pertaining to Czechoslovakia's security. The state of the army and the air force makes this possible." The same message was confirmed to President Benes by the Soviet envoy S. S. Aleksandrovsky in Prague.

And what happened in the days of crisis? Replying to a direct question from Benes, Aleksandrovsky declared on September 19: the Soviet Union would come to Czechoslovakia's assistance. Fierlinger reported from Moscow that the USSR would provide the assistance even in the event of France's refusal. The Soviet leadership had taken all the necessary steps: 60 infantry, 16 cavalry and 24 tank divisions, three motorised infantry brigades, and large numbers of aircraft had been put on a state of combat alert.² Is that a fairytale?

However, Benes and the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie as a whole preferred to cede to the fascist diktat.

The Nazis began to occupy our territory on October 1, 1938. The crippled republic was presented to Hitler on a platter. The occupation, the

concentration camps and prisons, the Gestapo, the gas chambers and the gallows were not far off.

"Don't call it peace! Peace has nothing in common with this triumph of class egoism!", Gabriel Pery, a Communist and French journalist, wrote at the time. Munich was followed by the downfall of the Spanish Republic. Czechoslovakia was carved up on March 15, 1939, into a protectorate in Czechia and a clerical fascist state in Slovakia. World War II began on September 1, 1939. And on June 22, 1941, Hitler attacked the USSR.

Human blood was shed not only in Czechoslovakia because of the anti-Sovietism and the Munich policy of 'appeasing' the aggressor, which was actively backed by the United States. The Soviet people lost 20 million lives, Poland over 6 million, Yugoslavia 1.7 million, France almost 620,000, Greece 400,000, the United States almost as many. Great Britain lost about 360,000, Czechoslovakia as many, and Holland more than 200,000.

The banner of freedom was raised over Prague on May 9, 1945, thanks to the Soviet Union and its army, which bore the brunt of the fight against fascism. The tasks set by the Kosice Government Programme (1945) and the other objectives of the national democratic revolution were gradually fulfilled throughout the territory of Czechoslovakia. The people's aspirations were embodied in the decrees on nationalisation, the next stage in the land reform and other democratic measures the bourgeois republic could not and would not carry out.

The Year of 1948

The event which paved the way for our present day occurred in February 1948, when the Czechoslovak people made their final choice in favour of socialism, and it is this decision that has been exercising Western propagandists to this day in their efforts to distort the truth.

First of all, the manifestations of the people's will is branded as a 'communist putsch', and the Voice of America and other like-minded media keep saying this again and again. They may have managed to deceive those who have little knowledge of history.

But the truth is that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia won 38 per cent of the votes in the elections to the Constituent National Assembly (1946), and consolidated its positions as the country's strongest political party. When preparing for the next election to parliament slated for 1948, the CPCz CC openly set the goal of winning over the majority of the people, and that was a realistic prospect.

In other words, if there had been a putsch in 1948, it was staged by the reactionaries who were scared of the forthcoming election. They were losing ground, and so in February they made a move involving the resignation of several ministers in order to cause a political crisis and bring down the Klement Gottwald government. The popular masses responded with demonstrations in support of the CPCz, a one-hour general strike, the establishment of National Front action committees, and the formation of a People's Militia. Reaction was forced to retreat. Gottwald formed the new government enlarged with the appointment of true representatives of the people.

For this, the Communists got their mandate from a Congress of delegates from factory committees, which met in Prague on February 22. It was attended by representatives of all the political parties. The 8,000 delegates from the enterprises (with a few exceptions) voted for continued nationalisation, adoption of a social security law, and a people's democratic constitution. They also demanded that Benes should accept the resignation of the bourgeois ministers. The same demands were made by many thousands of Prague working people at a rally in Staromestska Square.

The February events proved that the CPCz succeeded in winning — in political struggle — the trust of the majority of the people in convincing the masses that its policy was the right one.³

Today, the West German Deutschlandfunk says nothing about the existence of an actual anti-people's conspiracy in Czechoslovakia in 1948, and asserts that the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie "virtually put up no resistance" to the people's urge for socialist change. How true is that? The reactionary National-Socialist Party set up 'combat commissions' for conspiratorial preparation of a putsch in the army and the state security organs. Secret arms caches were built up. The reactionaries got down to acts of sabotage and subversion, as they did at the Kohinoor pit at Most where 54 miners lost their lives. They sabotaged nationalised enterprises, tried to destabilise the economy, smuggled goods to the West worth billions of korunas, and hoarded even more in secret warehouses.

The conclusion drawn by Deutschlandfunk is obviously at variance with the facts. The bankrupt bourgeoisie did resist, but it got beaten the constitutional way.

The Year of 1968

That which reaction failed to do in Czechoslovakia in 1948 it tried to carry out 20 years later. The enemies of socialism relied on help from rightists within the CPCz and strove to stage an anti-February, a counter-revolutionary coup.

Let us see how the capitalist mass media now present 1968. A commentator on the West German ZDF television network said those events were an expression of 'hopes of democracy'. The BBC and Radio Free Europe, Agence France Presse and Die Welt are now trying to put a halo on the 'men of 1968' under the false motto 'For a Better and More Effective Socialism'.

One may well ask why the West now harangues for 'new socialist ideas' and glorifies the ostensible urge of the rightists, revisionists and anti-socialist forces to effect the 'further development of socialism'? The answer is a simple one: the 'men of 1968' did not want to strengthen socialism, but to destroy it.

Years later, that has been confirmed by Sik, Goldstuecker and other sponsors of the 'Prague Spring' themselves. At that time, for instance, they spoke of forming "an independent, efficiently functioning entrepreneurial sphere separated from the state and free from its interference", as Kren wrote in the draft of the 'Programmatic Declaration of the Constituent Congress' of some kind of 'Czech Communist Party'.

That was only a short cry from the self-styled 'Memorandum of the Czechoslovak People' which was mentioned publicly by the newspaper *Mlada Fronta* on June 14, 1968. It contained this demand: "The law we are to enact must prohibit any communist activity in Czechoslovakia. We shall ban the activity of the CPCz and shall disband it." That is also a very short cry from the counter-revolutionary call supported by the writer Vaculik: "The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia must be regarded as a criminal organisation, which it in fact has been, and it must be eliminated from public life."

That is the reason for the interest displayed by bourgeois propaganda in the 'Prague Spring', in the 'ideas' then expressed, and the reason for playing them up. Its heart would not have bled if it were truly a matter of socialism. But it is not socialism, but the destruction of socialism that is important for our enemies.

For some time in 1968 the rightists in Czechoslovakia wore a mask. Their Western friends, like Zbigniew Brzezinski, advised them to advance gradually. In a speech before a select audience in Prague in June, he recommended precisely that kind of tactic. Associations of revanchists became more active in the FRG. West German concerns were hastily preparing statements with a proposal that eight Czechoslovak plants should be 'returned' to them, and they had already established contacts with some leaders in Czechoslovakia.

The CIA station in Vienna, which dealt with Czechoslovakia, increased its personnel to dozens of 'specialists'. Interest in our country was suddenly displayed by 735 Western journalists. The Prague journal *Student* actually established contacts with Radio Free Europe; a number of leading rightist Czechoslovak journalists went one by one to take advice from the US attaché in Prague.

The most malicious anti-socialist forces stepped up their activity from May to August. Hand in hand with the rightists in the party, they were drawing up proscription lists of the Communists and non-party people who were loyal to the cause of socialism, and gathered information about the security organs and the armed forces. The thrust of these developments was the same as that in Hungary in 1956: "Settle scores with them when the time comes."

Osvald, a member of the leadership of the anti-socialist Club-231, gave this advice in instructing its activists: "We must adapt our tactics to a takeover of power by using the mass media and other forms." The possibility both of killings and of beatings were openly mooted. Secretary of the Club Brodsky publicly declared: "The best Communist is a dead Communist."

Former criminals, murderers and saboteurs were given the 'right' to act in the open. Cerny, then the leading anti-communist ideologue in the 'Club of Active Non-Party People', has confirmed that the gallows would have been the outcome of all these developments.

Reaction still lacked the strength to do everything it wanted. But the counter-revolution was already striding over the bodies of CPCz members, those who succumbed to the savage pressure, the spiritual terrorism: enterprise director Jaroslav Holub, Lieut.-Col. Jiri Pocepicky, the

physician Josef Sommer, deputy chairman of the Supreme Court Josef Brestansky, first deputy minister of defence Vladimir Janko. The 99 workers of the Praha Motor Works already had to go through hell for openly voicing commitment to friendship with the Soviet Union. The same had to be gone through by thousands of other courageous people throughout the republic.

And what was the party leadership, taken over by the rightists, then doing about it? They gave assurances that they were well informed: they made promises to improve the situation, to take steps, and undertook all kinds of obligations. But the rightists were retreating step by step in the face of reaction. Socialism in the country faced a real and acute threat. That is why the internationalist assistance came just in time. Otherwise, the streets of our cities would have been drenched in blood to a chorus of praise from bourgeois propaganda. That would have sounded the death knell for socialism in this country.

The CPCz leadership today gives a reminder of the main conclusion to be drawn from the lessons of our recent history. It is that the Communist Party was and continues to be the vanguard force in the working people's struggle for social progress and national independence. Its leading role in the society, its loyalty to the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism, its close ties with the people, its solid friendship and alliance with the USSR and the other fraternal countries on the principles of proletarian internationalism are the essential conditions for the successful course of socialist construction. Any departure from these principles leads to stagnation in society's development and could cause a crisis and jeopardise the foundations of socialism. That is what our own experience drove home to us two decades ago.

Each historical anniversary has its lessons for eye-witnesses and for those who come after them. These lessons show that the way we took is the right one. The programme for the further development of socialism in our country, adopted by the 17th Congress of the CPCz, is an expression of the revolutionary continuity of the policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. It is the vehicle of our people's progressive traditions, and it has been developing the gains we made in sharp class and national-liberation struggle. We remain true to the revolutionary behests by consistently implementing this programme, which meets the vital interests of the working people, and we draw our strength from our past experience.

¹ A peace programme put forward by the United States in 1918 to assert its domination of international affairs. — Ed.

² Václav Král, *Dni které otřásly Československem*, Prague, 1975. p. 179.

³ For details on the significance of these events see the articles by Alois Indra in *WMR*, No. 2, 1988. — Ed.

Who Is Setting The Militaristic Pace?

George Toubi — Secretary, CC,
Communist Party of Israel

ISRAEL is among the most militarised countries in the world. The extensive socio-economic crisis gripping our society is an outgrowth of the escalating arms race: Israeli per capita weapons production is four times that of France. This only forces Israel into greater dependence on US imperialism, particularly its military-industrial complex.

The growing militarisation is siphoning off ever more financial, production, and research resources from civilian sectors into the military ones and bolstering the positions of the domestic military-industrial complex, now a critical factor in the economy and politics. The economic outlook is far from bright, with scientific and technological progress in the civilian sector being held back.

About 60 per cent of Israeli research and development allocations are taken over by the military. The war industry employs roughly 300,000 people, nearly a quarter of the national workforce.

A Source of Tension in the Middle East

The munitions factories are owned by the state, companies within the Histadrut trade union association, as well as foreign, mixed and private capital. Prominent among the latter are US, French, West German, and Belgian companies.

The sector's leading enterprise is the Israel Aircraft Industries owned by the state and manufacturing Arava and Kfir warplanes. Its workforce tops 22,000. The 1987 sales totalled over \$1 billion, with exports accounting for 60 per cent. Two-thirds of the company's output are military items. Other major companies include the Israel Military Industries, Tadiran, Elop, and Soltam. A total of 112 corporations are making weapons, with 12 of them, or one-tenth, accounting for over four-fifths of the lethal output and revealing a high degree of concentration of production.

The military-industrial complex incorporates many other enterprises related to it. Top defence ministry officials and the army command are closely connected with corporation and bank chief executives and the political establishment. Many former high-ranking officers become managers to join boards of directors in the factories. Over the years there has emerged a coterie of the leading military, industrialists, bankers and politicians. *This coalition is a militaristic lobby of sorts, whose elements have like economic concerns and identical political ideas.*

The Israeli complex operates as a junior partner to the US military-industrial complex; the latter works to boost the military industries and swell the Israeli state budget to secure a further increase of its own fabulous profits.

George Toubi, b. 1929, an activist of the youth movement, was elected to the Secretariat of the Young Communist League of Israel. He became a candidate member of the CC of the Communist Party of Israel in 1969 and a full member in 1972; head of the CC CPI's Foreign Liaison Section since 1979 and a CC Secretary since 1981.

The militaristic lobby has a critical part in the Zionist establishment. The abortive attempts at a political settlement of the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict only serve to bolster up the military-industrial complex; for its part, it uses all the influence it has to pursue the policy of occupation, colonisation, and aggression and forward US strategic objectives in the Middle East and worldwide.

The major elements of this complex are giving increasing aid and support to domestic ultra-right and fascist organisations to whip up anti-Arab and anti-Soviet sentiment. The ruling circles continue their policy of expansion and hang on to the territory captured from the neighbouring Arab states. Israel sees the armed forces as the chief tool to settle conflicts.

The aggressive policy of Israeli rulers projecting the ideologies of the military-industrial complex is making the country increasingly isolated internationally. World press reports often describe Israel as a 'source of tension' fuelling the arms race across the region and beyond.

One argument the military-industrial complex uses while stepping up the arms race is that Israel should not depend entirely on foreign suppliers. Surely, this argument holds no water, since militarisation leads to quite the opposite, to making the country still more dependent on US imperialism.

This was emphasised particularly strongly in the case of the Lavi warplane developed in 1983 under pressure from the US and the Israeli military. The initial cost was set at \$2 billion but successive estimates boosted the figure to a whopping \$9 billion; billions have already been drained by this most costly militaristic venture, to the detriment of civilian research and development. Characteristically, under the terms of the project, the engine, wings and some other major components are being developed and manufactured in the USA.

More recently, the Pentagon, anxious to have Israel buy its F-16 fighters, demanded a halt to the Lavi project, with our pro-militaristic publications reacting to it in a swift and servile manner. The *Ha'arets* newspaper had this comment to make: "For a state like Israel, with an annual gross national product of \$24 billion, it is impossible to shoulder such a burden . . ." The Lavi project was mothballed. In addition to the vast resources already spent, three thousand workers joined the already swollen army of unemployed.

Israel did not think twice in agreeing to join President Reagan's notorious Star Wars programme. Defence minister Itzhak Rabin stressed on the subject that various areas were under consideration, particularly computer and laser production. "We have submitted to the Americans a list of sixty items on which we might help one another . . . Taking part will be universities, research centres and military factories," he pointed out.

Inevitably, *both countries' military-industrial complexes are being further integrated*. Israel's political establishment, for its part, is becoming an ever more disciplined and obedient satellite of Washington.

The Vanunu case has shed new light on Israel's nuclear plans and work. Foreign sources estimate that it now has over 150 nuclear warheads developed jointly with the USA and South Africa.

A Supplier of World Reaction

Israeli arms exports jumped from \$50 million in 1972 to nearly \$1.1 billion in 1984. The 1987 figure was projected to reach \$1.3 billion, or about seven per cent of the total arms exports in the capitalist world. Israel is now the seventh largest arms exporter, its shipments abroad accounting for about one-quarter of its industrial sales. Over 600 travelling salesmen, many of them former Israeli army officers, are footloose abroad promoting such products.

Israel exports a variety of arms to fascist, dictatorial, and reactionary regimes in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The shipments are coordinated with the US administration and made under a bilateral strategic cooperation agreement. More specifically, whenever the Reagan administration finds itself unable, for home policy considerations, to deliver arms to fascist dictatorships or bands of rebels like the Contras, our ruling circles undertake this dirty job.

Sometime ago South Africa bought Israeli licenses for the manufacture of submachine-guns, rifles and guided-missile boats. Under a 1984 agreement, Israel is to deliver 36 Kfir planes to South Africa, and talks are under way on licensing the manufacture of these aircraft. The air force of the apartheid regime makes extensive use of Israeli-produced hardware in its acts of aggression against Angola.

Abetted by Washington, Israel has taken the lead in supplying weapons to Latin America. Among its clients are Chile, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica; in the past it filled most of the fascist Somoza regime's needs for military hardware. There have been reports that Tel Aviv has armed a quarter of the total force of the Contras. The 'Irangate' helped reveal that some of the revenues from secret arms exports to Iran were being funnelled via Israel to the Contras.

What are the main objectives of this extensive arms trade?

First, to aid the Reagan administration's efforts to prop up and perpetuate fascist dictatorships and other reactionary regimes, or to establish such regimes and quell or undermine the national liberation drive worldwide.

Second, to further build up the economic and military muscle of the military-industrial complex.

Third, to improve the balance of payments and reduce its growing deficit.

Fourth, to gain political influence and backing in the fight against the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Arab nations like Syria which pursue an anti-imperialist course.

Fifth, to buttress other sub-imperialist centres, bulwarks of extreme reaction in the present world.

At the Working People's Expense

The growing militarisation of the Israeli economy is doing immense social harm, since vast resources are being squandered for military purposes, never to be recovered. The colossal military spending weighs ever more heavily on the Israeli citizens, primarily the working class and other working people.

Between 1973 and 1984 alone, the government spent close on \$60 billion for military ends. These official figures should be supplemented by arms spending listed in the budgets of various ministries. Furthermore, repayment of debts and interest on loans (for military purposes and chiefly from the US) has recently totalled \$10 billion a year. This means that *military spending gobbles up about two-thirds of the gross national product*, which is a global record.

Israel has found itself no longer able to repay its debts, even with extra borrowing. This is why US imperialism, at whose beck and call the Zionist leaders are, decided to provide Israel from 1984 with over \$3 billion worth of annual military and economic aid. But even that was not enough to keep the regime afloat. From mid-1985, the Reagan administration began, with Congressional approval, to provide its strategic ally with special emergency aid funds, which added up to \$1.5 billion in 1986. This 'magnanimity' is little help to our economy but rather a partial repayment of military and other favours Israel has been doing Washington in the Middle East and elsewhere. This is the crux of the matter. For each dollar we get from the USA in military loans we have to spend an extra two. *The more weapons Israel produces the greater its economic and political dependence*. Its current military budget amounts to over 70 per cent of the total national budget.

The annual balance of payments deficit has reached \$2 billion. Of the \$15 billion it spends on its imports Israel recovers only \$10 billion with its exports, while another \$3 billion are paid for with Washington's gifts and from other sources. The country's foreign debt is going up and up — from \$10 billion in 1975 to \$30 billion now. The rates of inflation are among the world's highest.

The militarisation of the Israeli economy and the stupendous military spending forced on the nation by its political leaders under pressure from the military-industrial complex are eating away working people's wages and incomes.

Unemployment is rampant. In 1983 it affected 4.5 per cent of the workforce, doubled within a year, and continued to mount in subsequent years. Construction, textiles, agriculture and the services are the hardest hit by lay-offs; roughly a third of recent immigrants are unemployed. The redundancies are on the rise because the tide has hit the military factories, too. The government and employers are using the scourge of unemployment in a bid to cut back real wages.

Poverty is a real blight. One out of every seven Israelis lives below the poverty line, and incomes are being increasingly polarised. Over the past few years university education fees have doubled. Drastic cuts in health care allocations are making the situation critical in hospitals and other health care facilities. In 1987, the food, public transportation, electricity and water subsidies plunged by over 60 per cent.

Increasingly factory and office workers and college students are not only becoming aware of the link between the escalating militarisation and the national socio-economic crisis but are taking an active stand against the arms race.

The Histadrut, the General Federation of Labour in Israel, could

become a crucial factor in this struggle, but its bosses betray the workers' interests by usually siding with the government and employers. Characteristically, too, the Federation, aside from its trade union functions, owns a variety of enterprises making up an important segment of the military-industrial complex and the state-monopoly and the banking sectors. About one-fourth of the industrial workforce is employed at Histadrut-owned factories. This partly explains the position of the trade union leadership.

The Communist Party is pressing for radical changes within the Federation through shifts in the balance of power and election of new leaders to make the Federation advance working class interests. It fights consistently against the aggressive expansionist policy of the Zionist ruling circles, calls for the abrogation of US-Israeli strategic cooperation agreement, demands an end to Israeli participation in the Star Wars project, calls for scrapping the nuclear bombs in Israel, and in general, for stopping the development of nuclear arms, and urges substantial reductions in military spending.

Israeli Communists and their allies in the democratic Front for Peace and Equality are actively struggling for a reasonable and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict, for a just solution to the Palestinian problem which has become still more acute since the end of last year, and against the onslaught of the government and the employers on the people's living standards.

The Communist Party of Israel is exerting every effort for establishing the broadest possible unity against the policy of the military-industrial complex, and for a just peace and social progress.

Israeli citizen Mordechai Vanunu, a former employee at an atomic plant in the Negev desert, told the London *Sunday Times* about Israeli nuclear projects. He was kidnapped in Europe by Mossad intelligence agents; he has been sentenced to 18 years in prison for passing state secrets.

Panama: Is The Day Of Freedom To Come?

Ornel Urriola — CC member,
People's Party of Panama (PPP),
representative on WMR

FOR already a year now the country has been like a seething cauldron: undisguised US interference has exacerbated the situation, tense as it was. Without trying to foresee further developments (it does not seem possible to keep track of all the details), let us go to the sources, which will help us understand what may happen in my country tomorrow.

The Danger of Being Over-Triumphant

September in Panama is the time of torrential rains when thick clouds let the sun in for only brief periods. The temperature reaches 30° Celcius and a warm mist rises from the ground and the pavement even at night, as if you were in a steam bath. Nevertheless, on September 7, 1977, few people noticed the rain or the heat. That day the governments of Panama and the United States signed a treaty on the Panama Canal, which came to be known in the political vocabulary as the Torrijos-Carter treaty. The Panamanians seemed to have awakened from a long nightmare, feeling that what their national anthem proclaimed, "And we finally won a victory in the happy land of the union," had become a reality.

The treaty was the result of the 13 years of negotiations which had begun in January 1964 after US troops opened fire at unarmed Panamanian demonstrators. That massacre radicalised national consciousness and triggered contradictions between our nation and US imperialism, which had turned the zone of the Canal into its colonial enclave. The treaty became a programme of decolonisation to culminate on December 13, 1999 at noon. The long-awaited day of national renaissance! The administration of the Canal is to be totally transferred to Panama and US troops will have to leave the country, handing the functions of defence over to the Panamanian armed forces.

General enthusiasm temporarily let a powerful minority tightly linked with the interests of transnational, primarily US, capital remain in the shadow. It took us some time to understand the schemes behind their declarations that the treaty amounted to 'betrayal of the homeland' and that Omar Torrijos¹ had 'sold out'. Under a pseudopatriotic slogan they demanded 'all or nothing', that is, the immediate granting of sovereignty over the Canal Zone or else the renunciation of the treaty. That reactionary chorus was formed of the voices of the Authentic Panamanian Party of thrice overthrown President Arnulfo Arias², the Christian Democrats, the MOLIRENA Party, the Republican and the Liberal Party and the Socialist Workers' Party of Trotskyite orientation.

When evaluating the treaty, the People's Party of Panama thought that it signified *an important step towards decolonisation but it was in no way the culmination of the national liberation struggle* which aims at the elimination of not only colonialism but also neocolonialist and other forms of oppression and exploitation. Under the slogan 'We Have Advanced, the Struggle Goes On', the Communists called upon the people to vote in favour of the treaty during the plebiscite. The party urged all the patriotic forces to be vigilant, to defend the agreements and to attain the aims of national liberation.

Nevertheless, triumphant sentiments persisted, especially in the ruling Torrijist sector. They seemed not to notice the fact that the day the US Congress ratified the treaty by a majority of one vote a mechanism was set into motion to emasculate its content.

Assessing the period since the signing of the treaty, General Manuel A. Noriega, who has become a target for attacks by US and Panamanian reaction, admitted on February 5, 1988: "It was an historical mistake for us

to believe that the signing of the treaty will lift all the problems and we can go home. Our inactivity since 1977 to this day has led to the debt that we now have to pay to our patriotism."³

New Protagonists

The Santa Fé Doctrine and the coming to power of Ronald Reagan in Washington, who promised during his election campaign to restore the 'rights' of the United States in the Canal Zone, marked the beginning of a counter-offensive by external and internal reaction. On July 31, 1981, Omar Torrijos, who turned the struggle for the liberation from the US yoke into a governmental doctrine, perished under mysterious circumstances. The Panamanian people have been waging that struggle since 1848 when the early gold-diggers heading for California came to the isthmus. They were accompanied by US frigates and marines that have never left since then.

A year after the death of Torrijos, Col. Rubén Darío Paredes, notorious for his pro-Yankee sentiments, overthrew President Aristides Royo, assumed generalship and ordered the officers who showed no personal loyalty to him to retire. He declared that the Torrijos doctrine died together with Torrijos. Unleashing ruthless persecution of outstanding followers of the late national leader, the newly proclaimed caudillo initiated a rapprochement with the economic and political forces which had opposed Torrijos, in a bid to secure their support for his candidature in the presidential elections.

As Paredes aimed at renegotiating the Torrijos-Carter agreements, we were not surprised at his attempts to revive the policy pursued by Col. Remón Cantera since 1952. The National Patriotic Coalition which the latter formed at the time sought to stamp out the popular struggle and to sign a new treaty with President Eisenhower on the military bases whose closure was demanded by the Legislative Assembly under pressure from the people as early as 1947.

Nevertheless, neither Paredes nor his associate Col. Roberto Díaz managed to neutralise the Torrijos legacy in the people's minds or to disarm ideologically the Panamanian National Guard. They also underestimated General Noriega's prestige and organisational skills. Before he saw his plans fulfilled, Paredes unexpectedly found himself retired in 1983 and his candidature was withdrawn for lack of official support.

In view of the fiasco suffered by Paredes, Washington supported Col. Díaz and slightly modified its tactics. Renouncing its intention to install a National Unity government in Panama, the Reagan administration decided to divide its Panamanian advocates into two formally antagonistic groupings. First making sure that both were under its control, Washington hoped to rely, when need be, on the one capable of rallying the Torrijos followers around itself, which in its turn was to facilitate the renegotiation of the treaties and the restoration of the US 'rights' in Panama.

Washington blackmailed Panama with threats to use force and stop financial and other aid, and promoted the association of the weakened Torrijist forces with Social Democratic leaning with the Republican Party

led by Eric Delvalle and the Liberal Party of Roderick Esquivel. That was how the National Democratic Union (UNADE) emerged and came to power in 1984 — a strange alliance which sought to bury all the popular gains that Paredes had failed to eliminate for lack of time or by oversight. It was strange because Nicolas Ardito Barletta, who renounced World Bank vice-presidency to become the President of the Republic, joined the Revolutionary Democratic Party⁴ after it had nominated him as its presidential candidate, and also because Delvalle and Esquivel, who received a very modest number of votes, were named vice-presidents.

The Price We Have To Pay

A retrospective look will help the reader to see the roots of the present crisis. In 1904 on the basis of Article 1 of the Convention on the Canal that empowered the United States "to guarantee and maintain the independence of Panama", the US demanded that the Panamanian army be disbanded. In 1915, under Article 7 of the same document, it had the National Guards disarmed and all heavy weapons confiscated.

In 1984, seeking to eliminate from the Torrijos-Carter treaty the clause assigning Panama a growing role in the defence of the Canal until taking it over completely in the year 2000, Washington argued that the National Guard was unable to assume that responsibility. Then General Noriega decided to secure the adoption of a law on the establishment of the National Defence Force capable of performing the task. In the eyes of the Reagan administration and local reaction what General Noriega did amounted to a 'crime'. He banned the use of the Howard air base in Panama for training the Nicaraguan 'Contras', refused to bring back to life the Central American Defence Council (CONDECA) and insisted on settling the crisis in the area through political means, causing the Reagan administration to mount attacks against the 'rebellious' general.

The developments took a tempestuous course with the US demanding that Col. Roberto Díaz should replace General Noriega. In a bid to carry out the order without informing the National Defence Force, President Barletta lost the support of the parties which had brought him to the presidential post and himself had to resign instead of General Noriega.

Even before Delvalle came to power there existed some alienation between the armed forces, on the one hand, and the working people and broad sections of the population, on the other: the institution of the National Democratic Union was seen by the people as abandonment by the military of the role they used to play in the struggle for national liberation under Torrijos. The US Department of State assigned President Delvalle the simple tactic of provoking clashes between the army, the working people, the students and other strata of the population, making contradictions between them irreconcilable, a sine qua non for creating an atmosphere conducive to a renegotiation of the Torrijos-Carter agreements.

To accomplish the task, the political strategists deemed it sufficient to have the IMF and the World Bank bring pressure to bear on Panama and then have the armed forces suppress popular protests and actions.

The Trojan Horse of the Conspiracy

Before June 1987 various US departments took turns in attacking General Noriega and the National Defence Force. The US armed forces for the most part assumed an attitude of 'discreet neutrality', from time to time insinuating their disapproval of the policy pursued by the Panamanian authorities.

That same year the National Democratic Union exhausted its potentialities. It began to disintegrate, without having approached significantly its aim of burying Torrijism, dividing and corrupting the working class, isolating the Communists, and creating conditions for bringing to power in the May 1989 elections a government capable of renegotiating the Canal treaty. On the other hand, the Democratic Opposition Alliance⁵ failed to consolidate its positions and found itself in isolation. It, too, no longer satisfied imperialism and the oligarchy, which sought to control the situation in the country through a 'reliable' government.

Meanwhile, under PPP guidance United Fronts began to be formed in residential areas, at enterprises, offices and cooperatives. A search for an alternative to the political crisis brought together the powerful National Federation of Public Servants, the National Council of the Working People, the National Confederation of Peasant Asentamientos and associations of professionals, students and so on.

Under the circumstances, Washington decided to speed up the developments by creating the conditions for the establishment of a transition government and the realignment of forces in Panama, perhaps, even before the elections in the US. As Roberto Díaz, Chief of Staff of the Armed Force, had had to resign after his subversive activity had become known, the US administration, all of Washington's departments without exception, hand in hand with the local reactionaries, speculated on the ambitions and Napoleonic complex of the ex-colonel and unleashed a war against General Noriega with the aim of changing the government. Vice-President Esquivel supported the US, while Delvalle stayed aloof because he did not want to relinquish the post of head of state and sought to do everything on his own to get the corresponding credit.

Disillusioned with their 'friends' at the Pentagon and aware that the top of the Panamanian government was a 'Trojan horse' of the conspiracy against the nation, General Noriega and other senior officers decided to expose the President, obliging him to define his position. In particular, the officers' assembly, supported by the General Headquarters and General Noriega, asked the President to order the US South Command out of the Quarry High base.

President Delvalle immediately travelled to Miami supposedly for a medical consultation. He had a meeting with Elliot Abrams, assistant Secretary of State for inter-American affairs and one of the organisers of the conspiracy, and upon return to Panama announced that General Noriega was stripped of his post. Then relying on its constitutional powers, the Legislative National Assembly ousted the President. Persisting in his desire to play a key role in overcoming the crisis, Delvalle took refuge at

the US Howard base, pretending to govern from there. Paradoxically enough, the Department of State and other US government organisations that until quite recently condemned him as a 'bastard' and product of an electoral fraud now demanded that Delvalle be universally recognised as Panama's constitutional President.

In this welter of circumstances, events and names the main thing is that *at stake is the future of the independence and sovereignty of the Panamanian state and of national liberation*. The Torrijos-Carter treaty as a path towards decolonisation, which we embarked upon in 1977, do not entirely satisfy us. "It will take too much time, while its social value is too low," Torrijos himself recognised. Nevertheless we support them, believing that any modification of the treaty, which would obstruct decolonisation, constitute an aggression against the Panamanian nation and the state and is flagrantly at odds with our epoch called upon to bury the last vestiges of colonial oppression and domination.

In June 1987 the PPP suggested that the above-mentioned United Popular Front be formed to overcome the internal crisis. In the present conditions, when the important task is to ensure the implementation of the Torrijos-Carter treaty and to do away with the amendments introduced unilaterally by Washington, a front that would unite representatives of different social classes and strata is a growing necessity. It may be called the United Decolonisation Front, as some groupings suggest, or whatever. The name is not important.

The hard struggle for liberation will have to be waged every day till the year 2000. Developments in Panama serve as a grave warning to peoples and governments, democrats and patriots, the Communists and all the revolutionaries in the region. They call for vigilance.

¹ Omar Torrijos Herrera (1929-1981), a prominent statesman and military leader, was born into a teacher's family, graduated from a military school in El Salvador in 1951 and served in the National Guard of Panama since 1952. In 1968 he led a military coup organised by a group of patriotically-minded officers, becoming a brigadier-general and the National Guard Commander since 1969. Under the 1972 Constitution he was 'supreme leader of the Panamanian revolution'. In 1977 he succeeded in cancelling the fettering accords and signing a new treaty on the Panama Canal. He played an outstanding role in the development of the anti-imperialist struggle in Panama and other countries of the region. He died in an air crash in 1981. — *Ed.*

² This party was the only reactionary organisation to have any social base.

³ *Unidad*, February 11/17, 1988.

⁴ The Revolutionary Democratic Party was set up in 1978 on the initiative of Omar Torrijos as the ruling party uniting people from various strata of Panamanian society. — *Ed.*

⁵ A right-wing coalition comprising the Authentic Panamanian Party, the Christian Democrats and some other political circles.

Race And Culture In Jamaica

Barry Chevannes — Jamaican anthropologist, member of the Political Bureau, CC WPJ

JAMAICA'S population of 2.3 million is 96 per cent of African ancestry. We are, as in all other islands of the Caribbean, North, Central and South America, the descendants of West and Central African slaves. Our Black hands built the 'new world' for the Europeans, following their genocide of the native Americans. The colonial exploitation of African labour first under slavery and then under freedom was realised not only by force but also by the ideological weapon of racism.

There are two important consequences of this historical fact. First, *Jamaican culture is essentially African culture adapted to New World conditions*. The long years under the heel of the English, for example (1665-1962), have meant that Jamaica's language consists of 80 per cent English-derived words in an African syntactical structure, with the other 20 per cent African-derived. The family structure has remained stubbornly matriarchal or mother-centred, a condition which finds it quite natural for women to play leadership roles in the society despite the deeply entrenched male chauvinism in both family and society. One of the country's seven national heroes is a woman, Nanny, a maroon leader.

Jamaica's religious life, also, is fundamentally African in derivation. Our indigenous Revivalism,¹ which many scholars have studied for its syncretism of African and European elements, is underlaid by a worldview of God, spirits, man and nature that is African. So that even while Revivalism as a cult has almost disappeared, and the religions that flourish originated in Europe and North America, life-cycle rituals and many aspects of day-to-day living are influenced by an African worldview. Lastly, African culture is strongest in expressive life, in music, dance and the plastic arts. Central to music and dance is the drum, from which emanate a variety of rhythms. Africa has made an important contribution to world culture in the form of modern pop music, via the Caribbean and North America. To the jazz and calypso must be added the Reggae. Reggae is Jamaican in origin, but it has swept the world of popular music over the last ten to fifteen years.

At the same time it would be erroneous to argue that Jamaican culture is merely a transplantation of Africa to the Caribbean. It is not. It is the creation by African men and women of a new way of life under new and very difficult conditions. The very close contact with the Europeans, the forced detribalisation of our ancestors and violation of their kinship and family structure, even the ecology and physical contours of the island, have all had a hand in the shaping of this new way of life, a new tradition. The eminent poet and historian Edward Kamau Brathwaite² has called this

Barry Chevannes, b. 1940, is a Jamaican anthropologist, who has carried out research into Jamaican culture. He has several publications on the religions of the Jamaican masses. A former Jesuit seminarian, Mr Chevannes has also made a practical contribution to Jamaican popular culture. He is a member of the Political Bureau of the CC, WPJ.

process 'creolisation', arguing that even the Europeans who lived here were themselves similarly affected.

Secondly, *the struggle against slavery and colonialism was at the same time the struggle against racism, against the idea that Blacks are inferior to whites, Africans to Europeans.* European racism, to be sure, was directed against all the non-white peoples of the world, but Africans, whether in Africa, in the New World or in Europe itself, were its special target. No other people have suffered more from racism.

Racism preached that the black skin colour was an attribute of the Devil and of hell itself, or that it was a curse by God; that Blacks were a species close to other hominids, so close that mating with the orang-outang was possible; that Africa was a backward, 'dark' continent, devoid of culture and civilisation, bestial and primitive. Along with the denigration of Africa, her children and all things black, racism preached the exaltation of Europe, its peoples and culture. White skin and body attributes were idealised as the norms for purity, innocence and beauty. Europe's civilisation became the model for Blacks.

A feature of white racism was its pervasive character. So pervasive that *all* Europeans have come to hold these views about Black people to varying degrees, even those who had no colonial contact with Africans. So pervasive, also, that many Blacks themselves, at various times in our history, internalised these stereotypes. For example, many physiological and cultural attributes assume ethical values: the hair of whites and their language (English in our case) were, and to some extent still are valued as 'good', while the same for Blacks are valued 'bad'. At times, it is not uncommon to hear a frustrated Black man curse or speak pejoratively of his own race, as if our inability so far to end all forms of colonial and neocolonial oppression is the effect of being Black.

To summarise, colonial oppression in Jamaica determined that the struggle against it be at the same time a struggle for the assertion of Afro-Jamaican culture and values, a struggle, in other words, for cultural identity. In that struggle, *culture itself became a powerful weapon in its own right.*

Jamaica became an independent nation in 1962, at the end of a twenty-four year process set in motion by a nationwide upheaval, but a process in which the British ensured the preservation of structures that allowed for neocolonial domination of the country. To a large extent, therefore, the independence period has left unresolved many of the antagonisms of colonialism. Thus, the struggle for our identity has remained very much alive in the post-1962 Jamaica. The Programme of the Workers' Party of Jamaica recognises this when it states: "Deriving from slave society and reinforced by imperialism and neocolonialism, racial prejudice and discrimination, especially against the black majority as well as other minority ethnic groups, have constantly plagued our socio-economic and cultural life and retarded the formation of a Jamaican nation. The Programme of our party abolishes the economic basis of racism, the Constitution would outlaw it and the cultural and educational programme would strive to eliminate it by developing and promoting the cultural heritage of the people on a broad and equal basis."³

From the foregoing one ought not to be surprised to find that in all the major social upheavals and popular movements from the end of slavery in 1838 to the present period the factors of race and colour have found significant expression. One historian notes that whereas in the United States race is at the root of the many socio-economic problems facing Black people in that country, in Jamaica it is the opposite: race finds its way to the fore in every socially and economically rooted issue.⁴

The 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion⁵ had as its cause the cruel oppression by the landlords. But the rallying cry of the rebels was 'Colour for Colour'. They even executed a black collaborator for 'having a black skin but a white heart'. Thirty years after Morant Bay the Revivalist prophet Alexander Bedward, who led a nationwide religious movement, was arrested and tried for sedition, for preaching that 'a white wall' had surrounded and was oppressing 'the black wall' and that the latter must rise up and crush the former.

No other historical figure in Jamaica's history has had as great an impact on popular consciousness as the national hero Marcus Mosiah Garvey. Born in 1887, Marcus Garvey formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), an international organisation whose main aim was the upliftment of Black people everywhere. For, in his travels throughout the new world, Garvey found the condition of Blacks to be the same everywhere. Journeying to the United States in 1914, he remained there to build the UNIA into a powerful international force numbering some six million members in the USA, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and Africa. The notorious FBI never stopped harassing Garvey until they framed, arrested and convicted him for allegedly using the mail to defraud. After two years in an Atlanta prison, he was deported in 1927. Over the next eight years, and without abandoning his UNIA, Garvey formed Jamaica's first modern political party, through which he advocated a wide programme of national democratic reforms, some of which were attempted only in the 1970s under the Michael Manley government. He died in exile, in London, in 1940.

What was the significance of Garvey? Garvey's main significance lay in arousing national consciousness and restoring the self-esteem of a downtrodden people. This represented an invaluable heritage, for without it the will to struggle for liberation remains dissipated and lacking in unity: without it no respect is forthcoming from others. He was the first person in modern times to bring to the attention of Blacks, and hence to a racially prejudiced world, the glorious accomplishments of the African peoples, from their historic contribution to the founding of the Egyptian civilisation to the flourishing of sub-Saharan empires before and after the sixteenth century European contact. Pride in our heritage was the precondition for our liberation. The noted Garvey scholar, Dr Rupert Lewis, observed that Garvey's writings on the anti-colonial movement in China, India, Ireland and Egypt "are today the precious heritage of the anti-imperialist movement in Jamaica for they explicitly denounce the reactionary, narrow and pro-imperialist nationalism which forms the ideological basis of neocolonial rule in Jamaica".⁶

Garvey had tremendous impact on the Black peoples the world over. His

newspapers and writings were banned from the colonies. In French West Africa, one could be sentenced to death for possessing them. Naturally, his ideas spread, nevertheless, influencing generations of freedom fighters, which included the African Kwame Nkrumah, the American Martin Luther King, and the West Indian Aime Cesaire.

It is now recognised that many Communists misunderstood the Garvey movement in the United States, mechanically treating it not as a problem in its own right but as an adjunct of capitalism which will disappear after the triumph of the working class. Many failed to see the national democratic essence of Garveyism. But Garvey was a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and of the Bolshevik Revolution. In a cable to Lenin he expressed the hope of accomplishing for Black people what the Bolsheviks had accomplished for the Russian people.

In 1938, British colonialism in Jamaica underwent a political crisis, from which it never fully recovered. The entire working class (agricultural, light manufacture, and port services), up to then un-unionised, revolted against poor wages and working conditions. The general strike swept up in its thrall the peasantry and marginalised strata. Out of the general upheaval emerged the country's trade union movement and the formation of the People's National Party, whose main aim was independence and 'democratic socialism'. Many of those associated with this turning point in our history were Garveyites or people influenced by Garvey's ideas. They included the man credited with being Jamaica's first Marxist, Hugh Buchanan.

The main bearers of the Garvey heritage right into independence in 1962 and after were, curiously, not the political movement, which was dominated by an ambivalent middle class still somewhat embarrassed by its colour, but the adherents of the Rastafari religion.⁷

Rastafari is a religion originating in Jamaica in the 1930s, whose adherents believe in the divinity of the late Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I. They perceive Blacks as the true Israelites, the enslavement of Africans in Jamaica as the Babylonian captivity, and liberation as repatriation to Africa. Under the dialectics of Jamaican conditions, the Rastafari, drawn mainly from the marginalised urban population, have had a progressive impact on the national democratic stage of the country's revolutionary process. For decades the Rastafari were the main reminders of Garvey's teachings, the main witnesses to the liberation struggles of Africa, and the main denunciators of racial oppression under colonialism and neocolonialism. Three incidents bring out the impact which Rastafari have had.

The first was an attempt at revolution associated with the leader of a group of Rastafari, Reverend Claudius Henry, and his son, Ronald. The latter led a guerrilla band, whose capture followed a skirmish in which two British soldiers had been killed, in 1960. The former, in the same year, was about to force his way back to Africa when he was arrested for treason and felony, that is for conspiring to overthrow the State. The episode gave the complacent coloured or *mulatto* middle class a profound sense of shock and shame, but, coming as it did on the very eve of independence, it forced

them to begin a process of redefining the nation's cultural heritage and identity.

The second incident was the visit of the Emperor to Jamaica in 1966. Popular enthusiasm for Haile Selassie betrayed what some saw as a weakness in our nationalism, betrayed in fact that the anti-Jamaican and *deep pro-African* orientation of the Rastafari had some sympathy among the Jamaican masses.⁸

The third was an incident which became known as the Rodney Riots (1968). A lecturer in African History, Guyanese Walter Rodney, tried to pass on his knowledge to the masses by teaching small groups of Rastafari, only to be banned from the country by the government. This act sparked a demonstration by university students, which ended in rioting by the marginalised youths. Out of this grew a Black Power movement, representing an alliance between the radical intelligentsia and the radical marginalised, including many Rastafari. Called the *Abeng* movement (from the horn which the maroon rebels used to communicate the movements of the British troops), this alliance was to signal the flow in the political movement of the masses; it led in straight lines to the upsurge of the 1970s when, under Michael Manley, the People's National Party was swept to power, and a Marxist-Leninist organisation, the Workers Liberation League, was launched in 1974. The overall effect of these and other Rastafari interactions with the wider society was to raise the level of consciousness of the people and to pave the way for progressive ideas.

The growth in nationalism found expression in popular culture. Jamaican popular music, with its unmistakably African roots, forced its way on to the consciousness of society. Once regarded in certain quarters of the ruling circles as 'primitive', 'monotonous and vulgar', Jamaican popular music over the short period of a decade, starting from the late 1950s to the early 1960s, conquered this opposition by sheer force of creativity. Reggae music has now been universalised as a genre of pop, but not before serving as a channel for expressing ideas of black consciousness, Rastafari beliefs and anti-establishment sentiments. The late Bob Marley, the most internationally acclaimed Jamaican Reggae star, once reacted to a critical remark in the organ of the Workers' Party which lent itself to the interpretation that he was not progressive by personally visiting the university campus to find the Editor or General Secretary, both lecturers, to protest.⁹ This attitude would be true of all the prominent Reggae artistes, although they assiduously maintain respectful distance from the political parties.

Dancing also, with its origins deep in Afro-Jamaican religious traditions, has overcome the prejudices which once led the colonial ruling class to describe it as a sign of bestiality and depravity. Armed with the legacy of Garvey and influenced by other waves of national consciousness, the black intelligentsia began to discover and to promote the traditional rhythms and dances of such Afro-Jamaican cults as Etu, Revival, Pukumina and Kumina. A key role in institutionalising the dance has been played by the National Dance Theatre Company, led by the Black intellectual professor, the Honourable Rex Nettleford. The annual National Festival of the Arts commemorating Political Independence from British Colonialism provides

an occasion for hundreds of groups, mainly of school students, to present choreographed pieces based on the Afro-Jamaican cults and on secular traditions.

A third area of cultural life touched by the developing national consciousness is what poet and historian, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, calls 'nation language'. "Nation language is language that is influenced very strongly by the African model, the African aspect of our New World Caribbean language. English it may be in terms of its lexicon, but it is not English in terms of its syntax. And English it certainly is not in terms of its rhythm and timbre, its own sound exposition."¹⁰ The Honourable Louise Bennett-Coverly, poet and actress, was for over thirty years the only Jamaican who, respecting this rich heritage, consistently used the medium of the Jamaican nation language to express artistic feelings. This selfless example paid dividends when in the 1970s the democratic upsurge among the people, into which had flowed the tributary of Black consciousness, allowed the blossoming of a movement called 'dub poetry'. Dub poetry is the poetry of the Jamaican nation language, and for this reason it is able to fuse the words with the rhythms that make a Reggae melody progress.

The significance of this cultural development cannot be overstated. It was Brathwaite, again, who correctly singled out Dante Alighieri as the forerunner of a movement that established national language and literatures. Says Brathwaite: "But these very successful national languages then proceeded to ignore local European colonial languages such as Basque and Gaelic, and to suppress overseas colonial languages."¹¹ As I have mentioned once before, to talk the Jamaican patois is to talk 'bad', notwithstanding the fact that it is the only speech known to the majority of the population.

'Good' speech refers to Standard English, which Jamaicans understand but do not really think in. Suppression of the nation language is a part of the colonial legacy, just as the confident use of it is all a part of that struggle, as Bob Marley put it, to "emancipate yourself from mental slavery".

In 1972 Jamaican writers Perry Henzel and Trevor Rhone made the country's first full length feature film, *The Harder They Come*. The star was Jimmy Cliff, the acclaimed Reggae artiste. At the premiere showing, Brathwaite recalls, it was the masses, not the élite, who took over.

"For the first time at last it was the people (the raw material), not the critics, who decided the criteria of praise, the measure and grounds of qualification: for the first time at last a local face, a native icon, a nation language voice was hero. In this small corner of our world, a *revolution was as significant as emancipation*".¹²

Conclusion

The question of race in Jamaica cannot be viewed merely as a political one. It is cultural as well. As such the struggle for social emancipation expresses itself in both national and artistic consciousness in ways that affirm the racial/colour factor. Such affirmation, in the Jamaican context, represents a precondition for liberation. The liberation process is thus enriched by these features which are the creation of a people manifesting their spiritual potential.

¹ Revivalism, a religion which synthesizes African beliefs and practices, was brought by West and Central African slaves to Jamaica, with certain Christian doctrines introduced by Protestant missionaries in the last decades of the eighteenth century. It acted as a strong ideological force in resistance to the orthodoxy of the Churches; stimulated the Great Rebellion of the slaves in 1831; and at the close of the nineteenth century posed enough of a threat to the colonial powers for its then leader, Alexander Bedward, to be tried for sedition. See below.

² Edward Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica: 1770-1820*, Oxford University Press, 1971. Born in Barbados, Brathwaite is a Professor of History at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Kingston. Among his most recent awards is the 1986 *Casa de las Americas* prize for a collection of essays entitled *Roots*.

³ *First Programme of the Workers' Party of Jamaica*, Vanguard Publishers, Kingston 1978, paragraphs 236-7.

⁴ Philip Curtin, *Two Jamaicas: The Role of Ideas in a Tropical Colony, 1830-1865*, Harvard University Press, 1955.

⁵ The 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion was an uprising of peasants in the eastern parishes of the country, led by Paul Bogle. Thirteen whites were killed, and 439 Blacks perished in bloody reprisals. Bogle was hanged, along with George William Gordon, a coloured man of substance alleged to have had influence among the rebels. Both martyrs are national heroes in Jamaica.

⁶ Rupert Lewis and Maureen Warner-Lewis, *Garvey: Africa, Europe, the Americas*, University of the West Indies, 1986. See also Rupert Lewis, *Marcus Garvey: Anti-Colonial Champion*, Karia Press, London, 1987.

⁷ The name is derived from Ras (meaning Prince) and Tafari, the name of the Emperor before his coronation. In addition to the divinity of Selassie, Rastafari believe that God is black, and that the Black man shares in the divinity of God. Today most Rastafari are visible by their uncombed and untensored locks, which they regard as sacred. Most Reggae artistes are Rastafari.

⁸ See Rex M. Nettleford, *Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica*, William Morrow, New York, 1972, p. 62 ff.

⁹ Personal Communication by Rupert Lewis, the then editor of *Struggle*.

¹⁰ Brathwaite, *Roots*, Casa de las Americas, Havana, 1986.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 267.

¹² Ibid., p. 296.

surveys, letters, and diary

Scenes Of Class Battles

This Flame Will Never Be Put Out!

May Day is a special holiday commemorating the workers who shed their blood defending their vital interests. It embodies the ideals of justice and social equality and the belief in attaining peace, freedom

and happiness for all the people. And yet every time we mark the workers' international solidarity day we recall its prime force — the working people's common class interests and the importance of their international cohesion.

On May 1, 1890, that is, 98 years ago when the world saw the first May Day demonstrations, Engels wrote a new preface to the *Communist Manifesto*. "Today's spectacle," he said, "will open the eyes of the capitalists and landlords of all countries to the fact that today the working men of all countries are united indeed. If only Marx were still by my side to see this with his own eyes!"

The international working class movement has had its ups and downs; what it has never had is despair and despondency. As long as May Day is with us, the hope for the victory of the workers' just cause will never fade, as is attested by the survey we publish below.

'UNITED WE STAND' A Survey of Strike Action

WE decided to begin our survey of the situation on the class battlefields with *Great Britain*. The choice was prompted by objective logic rather than by some predilection or whim. Nearly 150 years ago Engels wrote that the working class movement in that country had the most consummate classical form and that everything that had taken or was yet to take place in Great Britain would be of vital importance to the working people in all other countries.

As can be expected, in the past decade Great Britain was cited as a textbook example of the working class movement being swept by a wave of conservatism, the weakening of the trade unions and waning of strike action. The picture looked quite realistic: it seemed that the working people were yielding the positions gained in the past, that the trade unions were disintegrating and that mass strikes were futile. Developments followed a similar course in some other capitalist countries, too, primarily in the USA, France and West Germany.

But it turned out that storm-clouds were gathering in the sky which the monopolies thought to be clear. In 1986 Great Britain had 2 million strike man-days, in 1987 the figure grew to 3.5 million and in all certainty it will be much higher this year. In the early months of 1988 the entire country was swept by a veritable storm of strikes involving nurses, miners, ferrymen and automobile industry workers.

The Ford Motor Company strike was the biggest and most instructive. More than 30,000 stayed away from work and succeeded in having their demands met — higher wages and some changes in labour contracts. It was the first such victory for British workers in nearly ten years.

The strikers cite three major reasons for their present success — first, a firm stand adopted by the trade unions; second, the strikers' forces were multiplied through cohesion as workers of all the twenty Ford factories in the British Isles formed a single front; third, solidarity strikes at the company's enterprises in other countries were of paramount importance. In Britain the corporation daily lost about £17 million plus £8.5 million lost through strikes at its West European factories. Even workers of the Ford

Motor Company branch in Taiwan, another island state, gave support to their British fellow workers. Solidarity strikes are banned at the Taiwan factories but nobody could prevent the workers from demanding higher traditional New Year payment. A strike was called on the occasion. When the corporation's Detroit headquarters estimated losses as amounting to £200 million, ways had to be sought quickly to settle the labour conflict which had been initiated by British automobile workers and spread far beyond the country's borders.

Analysis of last year's major strikes in other countries, undertaken by the socio-economic department of the World Federation of Trade Unions in connection with the 40th Session of the WFTU General Council, provides figures complementing the picture. Of the 258 strikes summed up in the analysis 93 took place in the countries of *America and the Caribbean* (The USA, Canada, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela), 86 in *Europe* (Greece, Turkey, Belgium, Sweden, Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Yugoslavia, Denmark, West Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland, Ireland, Cyprus and France), 46 in the countries of *Asia And Oceania* (Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, Japan, Pakistan, the Pacific Island States, India, New Zealand, Australia and South Korea), and 33 in *Africa* (Kenya, Liberia, Ghana, Zambia, Sudan, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt). For lack of sufficient information about strike action in the Middle East (only Lebanon and Israel issued relevant data), the situation in the countries of that region has not been analysed.

Strikers' Demands Are Summarised in the Following Table

	Number of strikes	Wages	Jobs	Trade union freedoms	Working condi- tions	Austerity meas- ures	Collective agree- ments	Working hours	Privat- isation
Africa	33	15	13	11	6	1	—	2	—
Asia & Oceania	46	26	12	6	2	—	2	2	8
Europe	86	36	29	7	9	6	7	3	—
America and the Caribbean	93	41	23	6	5	16	8	4	3
Total	258	118	77	30	22	23	17	11	11
per cent of the total		45.7	29.8	11.6	8.5	8.9	6.6	4.3	4.3

The biggest number of strikes occurred in the following three leading sectors:

America and the Caribbean — 1. Metallurgy, 2. Education, 3. Services.

Europe — 1. Metallurgy, 2. Services, 3. Transportation.

Asia and Oceania — 1. Food industry, 2. Textile industry, 3. Metallurgy, transportation.

Africa — 1. Transportation, 2. Coal mining, education, 3. Metallurgy.

From the point of view of whether labour conflicts occurred at enterprises in the state or in the private sector (including transnational corporations) a noticeable distinction was observed between only two regions. Out of the total number of strikes in the *countries of America and the Caribbean*, 38 took place at state enterprises and 52 at private ones. In the *countries of Asia and Oceania* the corresponding figures were 14 and 37, in *Europe* 47 and 50, and in *Africa* 19 and 17.

The analysis carried out by the WFTU experts also pointed out that the biggest number of successful strikes in all the regions aimed at higher wages and continued employment. Many countries again saw trade unions play a growing role in organising strikes. This was especially true of the United States. In 13 out of the 58 countries covered by the study, specifically in *France, Lebanon, Greece, Spain, India, El Salvador, Ecuador, Haiti, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Peru*, trade unions urged general strikes and in practice showed their ability to mobilise the working people for such mass action.

In the course of research special interest was evoked by the data on strikes at transnational enterprises. Workers of enterprises belonging to transnational corporations, such as USX, Boise Cascade, General Electric, International Paper and General Motors, went on strike in the *USA* in 1987. Industrial action affected Caterpillar, Massey-Ferguson and General Motors in *Britain*; Renault, Bata and Unilever in *France*, General Motors and Renault in *Spain*, Packard in *Ireland*, Coca Cola in *Greece*, Unilever in *Turkey*, Volkswagen in *West Germany*, General Motors, Renault, Nestlé, Coca Cola and Unilever in *Colombia*, Ford and Volkswagen in *Mexico*, Rhone-Poulenc in *Brazil*, Coca Cola in the *Dominican Republic*, Nestlé in *Japan*, and Unilever in the *Philippines*. The WFTU experts pointed out that strikes at transnational enterprises were becoming ever more frequent, acute and prolonged. For instance, the Ford personnel in Mexico and that of Renault and Nestlé in Colombia were on strike for more than three weeks, the Volkswagen works in Colombia stayed idle for 49 days, and those of Coca Cola for 76 days.

Ties of international solidarity and mutual support are taking shape between workers of different countries in the course of strikes at enterprises of transnational corporations. The WFTU commission on transnational corporations took an active part in organising international interaction during strikes at Volkswagen enterprises in Mexico, at those of Renault, Nestlé and Coca Cola in Colombia and those of Coca Cola in the Dominican Republic. The strike at the Caterpillar works in Great Britain was supported by workers at related enterprises in France, Belgium and Greece. Volkswagen workers decided to go on strike in response to the owners' plan to boost output so as to offset the losses incurred by the automobile workers' strike in Mexico. The IG Metal trade union of West Germany and the General Confederation of Labour of France voiced their solidarity with the strikers. The General Confederation of Labour gave similar support to the striking Renault workers in Colombia. Though graphically illustrating the effectiveness of concerted actions by workers, the above examples are as yet an exception rather than the rule. The

analysis shows that in most cases, even within the framework of one transnational corporation and even when strikes were held simultaneously and similar demands were made, they occurred in isolation from one another, without any coordination of actions or exchange of information. That is why strikes at the transnational corporations have so far had poor results.

This fact pointed out by the WFTU experts brings to mind the Ford Motor Company strike in Great Britain. British automobile workers began their strike under the slogan: 'United we stand, divided we fall.' They did hold out because they were firm and united and because they got the support of their fellow workers abroad. The country of 'classical examples' has again set an example to the working people of how to fight for their rights and interests. Hopefully, this example will be followed by the entire international working class movement. United we stand!

Wiktor Schott
Jagdish Ramayan

Labour And Law

Mario Ramos — Executive Secretary,
International Centre for Trade Union
Rights

A new autonomous organisation, the International Centre for Trade Union Rights, was established on November 16, 1987. The Centre's Executive Secretary kindly agreed to outline its tasks, areas of activity and first results.

Your Centre was opened just a few months ago but has already made its existence felt by concrete actions, such as defence of the trade union activists dismissed by the management of the Renault car-making plants and an effort to have the court ban on a strike by Air-Inter pilots reversed. Will your Centre concentrate on such actions?

IN addition, we have taken a series of practical steps over violations of trade union rights in Bolivia, Colombia, Turkey, Portugal, Chile, Venezuela, El Salvador, South Africa, on the occupied Palestinian lands, in Nigeria and Japan. *The Centre's major task is to counter any violation of trade union rights and any act of repression against the trade unions and to give support and legal aid to workers and trade unionists.*

It is, of course, just one area of our activities. We also concern ourselves with studying the evolution of methods of restricting trade union rights and with collecting and making public information on all violations of trade union freedoms. *The Centre will promote international solidarity, support actions in defence of those rights and freedoms and seek to have them respected and broadened.*

These tasks seem to be as difficult as they are urgent now that there is talk of a crisis in the trade union movement in many capitalist and developing countries.

It would be more correct, I think, to say that the effects of structural changes caused by the present-day economic and social processes are making themselves felt and not that the trade unions have been hit by a crisis. The current economic situation is characterised by production and financial upheavals with all the speculative stock market and currency aspects they involve and by imbalances and inequalities in international relations. The transnational corporations and private entrepreneurs would like to avoid the worst by making their production profitable as soon as possible. They introduce new technologies and the 'flexible' organisation of labour and resort to social deregulation and to the privatisation of the public sector.

To carry through its plans at the expense of the working people, Big Business needs new labour legislation, which would allow dismissals and the use of anti-labour measures, deny the workers the right to strike and collective bargaining, and help crush the more militant unions and make the others an obedient tool of the monopolies.

One characteristic example is Britain's anti-labour legislation, which enables the government to take any union to court, to impound its assets or to fine it heavily for a strike. New tough measures are known to be in the making under the Employment Act. The laws of some countries empower the administration to disband the unions.

There is every reason to state, therefore, that the 'crusade' against the unions is an aspect of a broad assault on the social gains that have been won in struggle over the decades. The overall goal is to prevent the working people from finding fair and progressive solutions to socio-economic problems and to deny them any opportunity to state their collective demands and make their voice heard on the shopfloor and in society in general.

That massive onslaught naturally affects the trade unions. Tens of thousands of trade unionists have been dismissed and hundreds of thousands of rank-and-file union members have been laid off and are out of touch with the rest of the workforce. Some centres of the labour movement have shifted and others are about to shift because of the redeployment of industry and the closure of many plants in the traditional industries.

But there appear new enterprises in the microelectronics, telecommunications and microbiological industries and in the services, and the unions have been growing more and more active there. It should be stressed that unions are banned or severely restricted in the public services of many countries, which has provoked mass labour action for the ratification of ILO's Convention 151 on the protection of the right to organise and employment regulation procedure in public service.

The structural changes have contributed also to the growing awareness and education of the working people: they act ever more resolutely to have a say in the affairs of their enterprises, to protect jobs and social security systems, and to achieve decent living conditions. At least 340 protracted

strikes are known to have taken place in 1987; they are forceful proof that union activities are on the rise in most of the capitalist countries.

So I repeat that there is hardly any reason today to speak about a crisis of the trade unions. But what is perfectly clear is that *the trade union freedoms are being curtailed*. Big Business and the ruling classes in many countries use an array of methods to the point of imprisonment and killing of trade union leaders and activists, and not only under fascist dictatorship but also in many countries which call themselves democratic but in which trade union rights are either fully suppressed or severely restricted, or else subordinated to corporate structures.

The trial of the Billancourt Ten in France is a good example. The Renault management, having sued ten trade union activists, hoped not just to have the ten put behind bars for a long time but also to pre-empt workers' action against mass lay-offs that were planned at the company's plants. But the trial fizzled out, thanks in large measure to the actions of solidarity mounted by the French workers.

More sophisticated techniques are used, too, such as the redeployment of enterprises at which the unions have a strong base, or 'flexible' organisation of labour.

Our Centre therefore gears its activities to the present-day situation with freedoms. Recently, for instance, we released information about violations of trade union rights in the health service, on transport, in the metallurgical, chemical and textile industries in France, and published a booklet about the ruthless suppression of the trade union freedoms and human rights in Colombia. Studies of relevant problems are under way in other countries.

What possibilities and facilities does the Centre have to do all that work, and how is it organised?

The Centre was set up by eleven international organisations in response to an appeal of the 11th World Congress of Trade Unions. We conduct our work in the spirit of the UN Charter and the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in accordance with international treaties and agreements and ILO conventions and recommendations. *The Centre is open to all international, regional and national trade union organisations regardless of their orientation or international affiliations.* It is likewise open to all other organisations and movements, and also to individuals who would like to contribute to the protection and development of trade union rights.

That answers the question about the possibilities available to the Centre. They are objectively large and may keep growing along with the growth of the working people's awareness of the need to act together and to help one another. It is vitally important for all the working people today, whatever their occupation, nationality, or trade union affiliation, staunchly to defend trade union rights. That is why *the fundamental principle of the Centre is to promote cooperation and dialogue at national and international levels between trade unions, mass movements and inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations.*

The Centre's representative sponsoring committee includes leaders and activists of trade unions of various orientations and international affiliation, well-known scientists and academics, and prominent lawyers, senators and members of parliament from 26 countries. Among them are Peruvian Senator Rolando Ames Cobian; Joe Nordmann, President of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers; Wajih Taha, Secretary of the General Federation of Workers' Trade Unions of Syria; Prof. Noboru Kataoka of the University of Kyoto (Japan); Manuel Sanhueza Crus, former justice minister in the Allende government (Chile); and Vassil Mratchkov, Dr. Sc. (Law), member of the UN Human Rights Commission.

Work is now going ahead to build a network of correspondents and the Centre's structures (branches) in various countries; they have already been opened in Portugal, Egypt and Costa Rica. We are organising a regular publication of surveys of the situation with trade union rights all over the world.

Clearly, when it comes to measures in defence of trade union rights, they cannot be separated from the broader issue of human rights, can they?

Of course not. It is perfectly obvious that violations or restriction of trade union rights constitute an encroachment upon human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which, incidentally, will be forty years old next December stresses that political and economic rights are indivisible. The trade union rights, including the right to strike, are written into the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, one of a series of international documents on human rights, and also into the relevant ILO conventions and even into the Social European Charter, approved by the EEC.

We believe that all these international legal documents are instruments of protecting human rights, such as the right to live in peace, the right to work, the right to decent wages, to cultural activity, to education and occupational training, to housing, to a paid holiday, to rest and leisure, etc. The trade unions, meant to protect the interests of the working people, have proved their ability to work vigorously and independently towards these goals by participating in the socio-economic life of society. What they do therefore is protect human rights.

That is why our International Centre wants cooperation with inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations and joint actions with the ILO, the UN and national and regional organisations of diverse orientation.

The Reader Wants To Know

Shackled By Antiquated Dogmas

DEAR COMRADES,

For several years now I've been an enthusiastic reader of your journal, which keeps me well-informed about the struggle of the world communist movement. I would like to thank you for the job you are doing. Your journal has come to occupy a firm place in my life which would be incomplete without it.

I am especially interested in publications about the communist movement in Latin America. For instance, an article by Salomao Malina, chair of the Brazilian Communist Party, carried by the January issue has caught my attention. Among other things, it criticises Luis Carlos Prestes for his stand in the period from 1976 to 1979, which seemed leftist and led to a conflict between him and the majority of the party leadership. I can hardly believe that this Knight of Hope who had for decades been loyal to Marxism-Leninism and the revolutionary movement could have adopted petty-bourgeois positions and contracted the infantile disorder of 'left-wing' communism.

To my mind, his life attests to the opposite.

During the initial stages of building socialism on Cuba 'elements of leftist deviation' (as manifested in his special attention to the human factor) were also ascribed to Ernesto Che Guevara, the man I try to emulate in many respects. Nevertheless, it became clear later on that he had anticipated, in theory and practice, a new phase in the development of socialism in the scientific and ethical plane.

In my view, Prestes is for Brazil what Ho Chi Minh was for Vietnam . . . If you read books written by Jorge Amado or the book *Olga Benario* by Ruth Werner, you will understand what he is and what his importance is not only for the Brazilian workers' movement but also for the world communist movement. After all, it was not for nothing that in the time of the Communist International he was referred to as 'one of our ablest and best comrades'.

Jens Koch, GDR

Dear Comrade Jens Koch,
To begin with, I would like to thank you for your letter in which you speak warmly of the *World Marxist Review* journal and raise, from my point of view, an opportune question of the role and the personality of Luis Carlos Prestes in the Communist movement of Brazil.

I have known Luis Carlos Prestes for several decades now; we fought shoulder to shoulder in the grim years when our party worked in clandestine conditions and fell victim to severe persecution by the authorities. For this reason, believe me, I understand your admiration for the Knight of Hope perfectly well and deeply deplore the stand taken by

him today. Nevertheless, painful as it may be, we should face the truth squarely.

Indisputably Luis Carlos Prestes is an outstanding figure in the history of our country and the Brazilian Communist Party. And this is something nobody denies nor wants to refute. Today we are not speaking of his past merits but of his present mistakes. In the changing political situation characteristic of present-day Brazil Prestes failed to understand the need to renounce the old outdated schemes and opposed the new strategy of the party and the thesis of the priority importance of the problems of democracy. The BCP's current policy line is based on the premise that the core of the revolutionary process in Brazil is the expansion, deepening and strengthening of democracy as a stepping stone to socialism. But Prestes has always argued that the establishment of a new social system should precede the broadening of democracy. Consciously, he has cut all ties with our organisation and accused us of 'having lost the revolutionary spirit'.

I recall how, in 1979, after returning from exile, he publicly announced that he "returned as an independent citizen". His words gave me profound pain. "No it can't be true." I thought and decided to meet him personally and talk to him frankly as a Communist to Communist. Instead I heard his blunt reply: "I'll never reunite with your Central Committee."

He also turned a deaf ear to the later exhortations by the Communist Party leadership to analyse the differences that had sprung between us and the moot questions honestly and in an atmosphere of comradely criticism and self-criticism.

I hope that I will express the feelings and opinion of all the Brazilian Communists if I say that we deeply regret the fact that Prestes is not with us today. But such was the decision made by Prestes himself and not by the party which, incidentally, has not expelled him from its ranks.

Respectfully yours,

Antonio Ribeiro Granja

member of the national leadership of the Brazilian Communist Party, BCP
representative on the *WMR* Editorial Board, BCP member since 1934.

The Party Has No Secrets

I have heard that the Italian Communist Party has announced its decision to open its party archives to historians, political scientists and even the general public. Is that true?

Jirina Kopecka

Prague, Czechoslovakia

THE decision to open the Party's secret archives to the public was taken by the ICP leadership two years ago but was not carried through because of the adverse domestic political situation at the time and some other factors.

Today there is no obstacle to the opening of the archives, Giuseppe Chiarante, Department of Culture of the Italian Communist Party, told a news conference on the occasion. Anyone can now read the minutes of the meetings of the party leadership, the Secretariat, the Central Committee, and the texts of statements by party leaders in 1944-1958.

By doing so, the ICP would like to clear up some of the issues involved in the ongoing debates over party history, first and foremost the Italian Communists' attitude to the Soviet Union before and just after Stalin's death and the impact of Stalin's policy on the ICP and its General Secretary Palmiro Togliatti. Archive documents will also help check the veracity of the Socialists' assertion that when in jail, Antonio Gramsci called himself a member of now the Communist and now the Socialist Party. They will show, too, who initiated the idea of a joint state of Communist and Socialist candidates in the 1948 elections which they unexpectedly lost.

The record will be set straight with regard to other aspects of the history of our party as well.

Antonio Boffi
Italian journalist

WMR Ties

A *WMR* delegation attended a meeting of democratic press workers which was hosted in Prague by *Rude pravo*, the newspaper of the CPCz Central Committee.

★ ★ ★

The editors-in-chief of the theoretical journals of the communist and workers' parties of socialist and socialist-oriented countries held in Berlin a conference sponsored by the journal *Einheit*, published by the SED Central Committee. The editor-in-chief of *World Marxist Review* was among the conferees, who discussed 'Socialism and the new stage of the scientific and technological revolution'.

★ ★ ★

Choudhuri Aslam, Chair of the Socialist Party of Pakistan, visiting Prague, called at the *WMR* offices and described in a conversation with staff members the history and activities of his party and the domestic political situation in Pakistan. The sides also discussed possibilities for cooperation between the Socialist Party and *WMR*.

★ ★ ★

Khaled Mohieddin, General Secretary of the National Progressive (left wing) Party of Egypt, called at the WMR offices. Addressing an expanded meeting of the Commission on Problems of the National Liberation Movements in Asian and African countries, he outlined the situation in his country and the struggle waged by the progressive forces of Egypt for stronger national independence, and answered questions from the audience.

the book scene

Following The Events

G. L. Smirnov, *The Revolutionary Essence of Perestroika*. A Socio-Philosophical Essay, Politizdat, Moscow, 1987, 223 pp.

SOVIET scholars are just coming to grips with a theoretical interpretation of the current reforms, and the book by Academician Georgi Smirnov, director of the CPSU CC Institute of Marxism-Leninism, is one of the first to meet this task. It has indeed come hard on the heels of perestroika.

The author looks at the pre-crisis situation that developed in the USSR at the turn of the 1980s. He bases his analysis on the documents of the CPSU Central Committee's April 1985 Plenum, of the party's 27th Congress and especially of the January and June 1987 Plenums. He also relies on the speeches of Mikhail Gorbachov.

There were many objective and subjective causes, he finds, but the root cause is the deceleration mechanism. The book shows the antecedents and the social nature of this mechanism, and describes its forms. Its growth, Smirnov stresses, was fed by the surrogates for economic methods — "administrative pressure and the cult style in thinking and leadership" — as well as by "a retreat from Lenin's ideas" (p. 16).

No less important is another question raised in the book: Why a revolutionary perestroika? The targeted changes are not just profound and drastic, but cut across the entire spectrum of national life. From economics and social relations to political arrangement, they leave no structure untouched, including the society's culture, ethics and psychology. Ultimately, they aim to give it a new, higher quality. Therefore, although not a 'traditional' revolution (the system and class rule stay unchanged), the CPSU-launched renewal is a direct continuation of the October Revolution.

Perestroika is impossible without a major theoretical breakthrough. Says the author: "At this new historical phase, socialism requires a new system

of theoretical views which, on the solid basis of Marxism-Leninism, would give a contemporary perception of where it moves to and how" (p. 37). A just criticism of the theory-practice gap prompts this, as does a recognition of the tremendous changes in the world, fuelled by social progress, by science and technology and by the threat to life on earth.

Anti-communists argue that Marxism both underrates the individual and ignores his freedom. In actual fact, as the book correctly points out, the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolutionary social change is nothing else than a scientific case for the emancipation of the working people and for human self-fulfilment. Socialism, by implication, depends on active mass/citizen involvement for its successful functioning and advance. The experience of the USSR and the other socialist states is unambiguous in this respect. We must constantly look after a blend of the interests of society and the individual. Every pattern of social relationships calls for steady improvement.

In examining the conditions of acceleration, the 27th CPSU Congress made the human factor paramount. As stressed by the Central Committee's Political Report, the unity of socialist society by no means implies a levelling of public life. Socialism fosters the diversity of people's interests, requirements and abilities, and vigorously supports the initiative of social organisations that express this variety.

Democratisation and glasnost as the inherent elements of perestroika, the author notes, keep on improving the moral atmosphere in the USSR and ever more fully reveal the humaneness of socialism. But life is diverse and contradictory. It is underpinned by a struggle which, though not class-antagonistic, is very keen and tense. While most of the Soviet people support perestroika, quite a few show doubt and uncertainty or even oppose it, out of their own economic interests. Some purport to criticise the shortcomings of socialism, only to negate its basic principles. Does this threaten ideological unity and conviction? Yes, the danger exists, Georgi Smirnov believes, but "why should we fear those demagogues? What do we have a strong party for then? What are we all for?" (p. 211).

Soviet reforms evoke a tremendous interest in the world, leaving nobody indifferent. Mikhail Gorbachov, at his recent talk in Moscow with Austrian Communist Party Chairman Franz Muhri, commented: "We see that enemies have been taking advantage of our self-criticism, that it fails to be appreciated by those who refuse or are unable to understand the socialist essence of our perestroika. But the main thing for us is that socialism — through new thinking, fresh approaches and self-criticism — secures a dynamic growth and realises its humaneness. Therefore we shall stick to our policy."¹

With theoretical interpretation of perestroika so wide a subject, this book by the Soviet scholar does not claim full coverage. One may challenge the scope of its treatment of certain questions and complain of insufficient attention to the party issue. The phenomenon of bureaucracy also deserves a most profound analysis. But for all that, this socio-philosophical study is thought-provoking and invites discussion on the issues of life now facing the Communists.

Pravda, March 5, 1988.

Jiri Vrba

Laughing At The Ridiculous

Rene Urbany, *Dem Här an de Frack gegraff* (Grab Them by the Lapels), Cooperative Ouvriere de Presse at d'Editions, Luxembourg, 1987, 206 pp.

ALAS, a sense of humour is not the forte of many communist journalists. Even when the adversary acts or speaks in a way that invites a satirical riposte, they usually react too seriously.

Rene Urbany, Chair of the Communist Party of Luxembourg, is clearly one of the rare exceptions. He has a journalistic background: before his election as leader of the CPL, he worked for many years for the party newspaper *Zeitung vum Letzeburger Vollek*, at first a staff member and then as editor-in-chief. Urbany has remained a journalist to this day, and has preserved his refined intellectual approach, coupled with a fondness for humour and satire, in all his jobs and activities — as Chair of the CPL, as its member of parliament, as its spokesman at international forums, and as a member of the WMR Editorial Council and regular contributor to our international communist journal.

To mark the 40th anniversary of his journalistic career, a collection of his articles from the party press has been recently published in Luxembourg. It is, of course, only a small fraction of his prolific output: over these past four decades he has written thousands of editorials, feature, satirical and other articles — enough to fill many volumes.

The title of the collection is very apt — *Grab Them by the Lapels*. That is what you do if you want to demand an explanation or tell someone off, or let someone know what you really think about him. Urbany is a past master at that. He subtly ridicules his political opponents from the Christian Social and Social Democratic parties of Luxembourg and their client press, and he wins over readers who enjoy a good joke — but never lapses into comedy for comedy's sake.

For Urbany, journalism is not just a profession but, as he himself has admitted, a passion which has consumed him since his youth. The desire to commit his ideas and emotions to paper came to him early on. The collection I am reviewing includes 'The Copper Boy', one of his first short stories published in *Volksstimme*, the then newspaper of the CPL, on April 13, 1946. 'The Copper Boy' was a mascot of the Spanish Republicans during the Civil War: it was the figure of a boy marching with a flag in his left hand and a Catalan peasant cap on his head.

Many of those who fought against Franco kept these popular souvenirs. One of them passed from a Spanish soldier killed at the end of the war to his comrade. The mascot changed hands many times and finally ended up on the desk of young Rene Urbany.

During the Nazi occupation of Luxembourg, Urbany's house was once raided by the Gestapo. "What's this?" one of the officers asked. "It's a copper boy", Rene answered. The Nazi laughed and knocked the figure off the desk. "You'll return to Spain," the boy said when they were gone, and he put the mascot back on the desk. That is where it remains to this day, "as though the boy is listening to the roar of gunfire in Bilbao, Toledo and

Salamanca, as though the troops have again rallied at the Seguro River and are marching on Madrid, as though he hears bearded soldiers chanting, 'Long live the Spanish Republic! No pasaran! They shall not pass!' " (pp. 191-192).

Other stories, too, prove that the young man was highly sensitive to the realities around him and that he was weaned on communist humanism — a quality he inherited from his father, long-time leader of the Communist Party of Luxembourg.

It is, I think, this keen awareness that enables the author to see through enemy stratagems and to hit out at his opponents not only with clearly and precisely expressed ideas but also with the weapon of irony, humour and satire. Examples of this abound in the 'Repartee from the Left' chapter. It is full of clever and witty stories which lash out unerringly at philistine bigotry and hypocrisy.

One of them, dated September 2, 1961 (pp. 25-26), was in response to a 112-line article that appeared in *Luxemburger Wort*, the newspaper of Christian Social Party. Its author was furious about a trip 39 tourists from Luxembourg made to the Soviet Union and he even advised them not to come back.

But what would happen if everyone going abroad were barred from returning home, wonders Urbany. Luxembourg, he says, would very soon lose its Christian Social élite and its luminaries. "His Grace the Bishop and his coterie would surely settle in Rome, while not so eminent clergymen and the ladies from 'Catholic Action' would make a permanent home near the Lourdes grotto.' The country would reel under the impact of the government and most members of parliament emigrating to become cowboys in Texas — or, perhaps, they would rather opt for Bonn where they could apply to be hired as clerks with Adenauer, Globke, Speidel, Heusinger and Co. As anti-communists, they would feel fine on the other side of the Moselle."

Urbany turns the tables on his opponents. "We infamous Communists," he says, "want to save our country from such terrible losses, and so we suggest to *Luxemburger Wort* that the good old custom of providing tourists with return tickets be, for the time being, preserved. Goethe once said that travel is the best kind of education for an intelligent person. This means that those who go to Lourdes will return and tell people about what they saw there. Those who go to Moscow will also share their impressions. Someone who fails to witness a miracle in Lourdes may become wiser after a visit to Moscow. *Luxemburger Wort's* 112 furious lines about 39 tourists can well be explained by the adage that goes, 'you are angry because you are wrong.'"

Here is another, more recent example. On February 12, 1986 *Luxemburger Wort* racked its brains over "what Gorbachov is after." The newspaper could not understand the motives behind the Soviet proposal for ridding the world of nuclear weapons by the year 2000. The purpose, Urbany wrote in an editorial, is to prevent a global catastrophe "which could instantaneously kill both the editoris of *Luxemburger Wort* and the Political Bureau of the CPSU." Recalling Gorbachov's words to the effect that one should choose between surviving together and perishing together,

the author adds: "In a nuclear war, nobody would have a chance — neither those who stroll in Gorky Park nor those who sing hallelujah in the Luxembourg Cathedral." (p. 109).

The article recalls the provision of the programme proposed by the Soviet leader for the complete elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass annihilation by the end of the century. "But what is he after?" What does he want to accomplish by proposing meticulous verification of a step-by-step disarmament process? That could well be beyond the readers of *Luxemburger Wort* because the paper kept telling them that the Russians did not want any genuine disarmament, let alone verification. Its readers *are* in a fix." Urbany advises them to think for themselves and to read some other newspapers and magazines, not necessarily communist. As an illustration, he quotes Rolf Winter, editor-in-chief of *Stern* magazine: "The man in the Kremlin deserves a big hand. Over the past decades of an idiotic arms race, no responsible statesman has made such a comprehensive and radical proposal to secure a future of peace for the human race . . . One cannot forgive those who let slip this chance which may not present itself again." Urbany concludes with the following words: "Today, many people throughout the world know what Gorbachov is after. He is after peace." (p. 110).

Today, two years later, one can well wonder about the motives of those who, now that the first steps have been taken to implement the Soviet proposals, still refuse to understand their thrust — although it should be clear even to them that the objective is human survival.

Rene Urbany is particularly incensed by obscurantism, reactionary attitudes, prejudice, religious bigotry, pigheaded anti-communism, and by the narrow-minded conformism of the 'bicycle riders' — those who bow and scrape before the powers that be and trample people who are below them. He backs his devastating satirical lunges with clear and convincing arguments, but he never stoops to an insulting tone. His witty and prompt reaction and his ability to analyse in depth the problems he tackles prompt his readers not only to smile but also to think.

Bruno Furch
Communist Party of Austria
representative on *WMR*

¹ A Catholic shrine in southern France where the sick and the crippled are said to be healed miraculously. — *Ed.*

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