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Workers of all countries, unite!

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Sixty years of struggle for the peace and happiness of mankind

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I

Peace and happiness. These ideals have stirred humanity from time immemorial, for history has granted man comparatively few years of peaceful life in his time on earth. The two world wars unleashed by the imperialists in our century were particularly destructive. It has become increasingly obvious that the questions of war and peace and the roads to their solution are intimately linked with the existence, interests and struggle of classes.

A new epoch in the fight for peace and indeed in the history of mankind as a whole began with the Great October Socialist Revolution. It marked 'the first victory in the struggle to abolish war' (V.I. Lenin, *Coll. Works,* Vol. 33, p. 56). By overthrowing the bourgeois-landowner system and setting up Soviet power over one-sixth of the planet the workers and peasants of Russia drove a huge breach in the world system of imperialism. The homeland of the October Revolution has set the peoples an example of how to put an end to imperialist war. This can be done through the revolutionary struggle of the masses led by the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class.

Red October and the consolidation of socialism's power in the world set in motion a social conflict of huge dimensions; a process of radical change had begun indicating that the peoples were more and more confidently taking the helm of history in their own hands. Imperialism irrevocably lost its previous dominant position in the world, although today it still commands a considerable potential and uses it to oppose progress. The strengthening of the forces of socialism and the upswing of the peoples' movement for national and social liberation are bringing about a further change in the international situation. This is highlighted by the growth of the peace forces and their successes.

People will never forget that from the very first day of the Soviet state's existence the maintenance of peace has been the chief objective of its foreign policy, a policy that runs straight from the first

legislative act of Soviet power — Lenin's Decree on Peace — to the extensive programs of struggle for peace, security and cooperation adopted by the 24th and 25th Congresses of the CPSU.

The Decree on Peace made the idea of a lasting and democratic peace a basis for state policy for the first time in human history. Lenin argued the need for peaceful coexistence of countries with differing social systems while the young Soviet state was still fighting against imperialist intervention. He advocated the only correct, realistic and esstentially socialist policy, a policy that creates the stable, long-term foreign-policy factors conducive to peace that are vital for the building of the new society and at the same time ensures constant readiness to repel any imperialist aggression. Lenin's policy combined active support for the peoples fighting for their liberation with readiness for businesslike cooperation with the capitalist countries. This was quite logical because in conditions of peace socialism can reveal its advantages to the full and thus exert a profound influence on the course of world development.

The Soviet state continued to steer this course in its foreign policy when it was fighting for international recognition. At the Genoa Conference (1922) G.V. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR, stated that in the Soviet delegation's view in the present age, which offers the opportunity of coexistence of the old and the emerging new social systems, economic cooperation between the states representing these systems was a matter of urgent necessity.

In 1922 the USSR and Germany concluded the Treaty of Rapallo, the first example of realization of the ideas of good-neighbor, mutually advantageous cooperation between socialist and capitalist countries. In the same year the Soviet state proposed a program for a general reduction of armaments.

In the 30s the USSR was the only country in the world that advocated the idea of collective security. This was a foreign-policy conception that accorded with the vital interests of all peoples and was designed to prevent the threat of war emanating from German fascism. The international alignment of forces at the time, however, did not permit the realization of collective security. As everyone knows today, the peoples of the world would not have had to endure the immense sufferings that fell to their lot if other states had supported these Soviet proposals.

It was not until the fascist aggressors had enslaved nearly all Western Europe that the capitalist powers were forced to admit that fascism could be defeated only through concerted action with the Soviet Union. Thus there arose the anti-Hitler coalition, which rep-

resented cooperation between countries with differing social systems based on this common interest.

The Soviet Union's struggle and the peoples' resistance to the fascist aggressors lent the Second World war the character of an anti-fascist war of liberation. A tremendous struggle for peace and national independence the like of which history had never known before unfolded across the world. 'Eternal glory to the fighting men of the Soviet Army who gave their lives in the struggle for the liberation of mankind from fascist slavery' — these are the words engraved on the memorial in Treptow park in Berlin, the capital of the GDR. The Soviet Union's decisive contribution to the defeat of fascism, the valor displayed in this struggle, won world popularity for the Soviets. At the same time the victory over fascism laid the foundations for the emergence of the world socialist system and thus created the preconditions for the conversion of Europe from a continent of wars into a continent of peace.

Imperialism's postwar policy of cold war and 'rolling back' socialism have, as we know, ended in failure. Experience shows that a policy of confrontation does no one any good. It can only plunge the world into a new military disaster and thus directly contradicts the interests of the peoples. The turn from cold war to relaxation of tension, achieved primarily thanks to the efforts of the countries of the socialist community, is of crucial significance for Europe's present and future. Their outstanding achievement is that the principles of peaceful coexistence are, in practice, to an ever greater extent becoming the norm of relations between states with differing social systems.

These successes are to a decisive degree the result of the Soviet Union's consistent peace policy, of the activity of the CPSU Central Committee and Comrade Leonid Brezhnev personally. In its approach to international problems that are of vital importance to humanity the Soviet Union combines precise analysis of world developments with skill in expressing the fundamental interests of the socialist countries, of all progressive and peace forces and in fighting for their realization. The peoples are more and more coming to understand that the further prospects of peace are indissolubly linked with the growth of the influence and active policy of the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community.

The events of today increasingly confirm the profound social implications of the struggle for peace, for the establishment of peaceful coexistence in relations between countries with differing social systems. With closer cooperation between the main revolutionary streams of our time — socialism, the international working-class

movement and the national-liberation struggle — the advances on this front will be all the more impressive.

II

The defeat of fascism by the glorious Soviet Army led to the liberation of our people too, thus opening the road to a new life. The German Democratic Republic today is a sovereign, independent socialist state that has gained international recognition. Our country is conducting the struggle for peace and social progress on the basis of the Leninist principles of socialist foreign policy, thus making its contribution in accordance with the decisions of the Ninth SUPG Congress to the realization of the principles of peaceful coexistence. Relations between states belonging to different social systems, relations built on acknowledgement of the international-law principles of inviolability of frontiers, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs, can and should be normal relations promoting the development of mutually advantageous cooperation. The successes achieved in implementing such a policy not only promote the cause of building socialism and communism in the fraternal countries. They also advance the national-liberation movement and the peoples' anti-imperialist struggle.

The results of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, in which 35 countries participated, have created a broad platform for solving the problems that international politics faces at present in building a lasting peace in Europe. Together with the Soviet Union and the other fraternal socialist countries, the GDR dedicates its efforts to fulfilling the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference as a whole, to continuing the process of détente in the spirit of the agreements achieved, to consolidating and developing what has already been accomplished. Of great importance here is the supplementing of the political détente with détente in the military sphere. The GDR has taken all this into consideration in making its contribution to preparations for the conference in Belgrade, where it will continue to pursue its present policy.

The principles of peaceful coexistence also lie at the root of the actions taken by our socialist state to normalize relations with the Federal Republic of Germany. The set of European treaties, of which both the treaties and agreements with the FRG and the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin are solid component parts, offers a basis for achieving substantial results in accord with the interests of peace and security. We shall continue as before to strive for the realization of new constructive measures to normalize relations. At the same time this presupposes a reasonable approach and good will from the other side. The fact cannot be ignored, however, that particularly of

late the FRG has with increasing frequency acted in ways contradicting both the letter and spirit of the above-mentioned treaties and also the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference. Such actions hinder the development of relations between the two German states in the direction envisaged by the agreements. No one who thinks realistically and values the strengthening of peace and détente can be interested in this.

The further improvement of the political climate in Europe demands unfailing respect for sovereignty, state frontiers, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs. The fiction of the so-called German unity persistently proposed by the FRG is utterly unrealistic, and in the final analysis casts doubt on all that has been achieved in improving relations between the GDR and the FRG. International law cannot be replaced by the internal state law of the FRG. The above-mentioned fiction is damaging to détente. The same may be said of the continuing efforts of the FRG and its allies to ignore the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin, as is shown, for example, by the recent London statement on Berlin.

Our foreign policy is very closely linked with the social policy evolved by the Ninth Congress of the SUPG. The further building of developed socialist society in the GDR and the creation of substantial preconditions for the gradual transition to communism constitute a great program of peaceful creative labor in the name of the people's well-being and happiness. We are building up our country's economic might with the long term in view. This is the guarantee of our socio-political plans for improving the working people's conditions of life and the further development of socialist democracy. All our plans serve this aim.

Creation of the best possible conditions for the development of socialism and securing world peace and progress is the supreme objective of our foreign policy. In this respect we attach decisive importance to the constant strengthening of our fraternal alliance with the USSR and other states of the socialist community. Acting with them in the closest cooperation, we confidently follow a policy of peaceful coexistence between countries with differing social systems.

The realization of the great prospects offered by the current struggle for peace, progress and happiness of the peoples demands broad-based cooperation between all the forces subscribing to this goal. Who else but the communist and workers' parties can and should be first to undertake this task? They are the vanguard of the working class, the most consistent supporters of mankind's progressive interests and goals, the most influential revolutionary force of our time. The significance of the Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe in Berlin, and of other international gatherings of

the fraternal parties, consists largely in the fact that they have extended the opportunities for such joint action.

Today, a year after the Berlin conference, the timeliness and importance of the evaluations and conclusions worked out by the communists of Europe and set forth in its document stand out even more graphically. The advance of the revolutionary forces, the intensification of the class battles, of the political and ideological contest on the international scene emphasize the growing role of international solidarity, of the interaction of all the anti-imperialist forces.

The source of this solidarity is the increasingly broad internationalization of the setting in which the struggle for solution of mankind's fundamental problems is proceeding. Suffice it to mention such global issues as the overcoming of economic backwardness, from which, because of imperialism, the majority of humanity is still suffering; the abolition of starvation and mass poverty among a large part of the world's population; and the protection and improvement of the environment. But joint effort is needed, above all, for the preservation of world peace.

Another major issue is the campaign to stop the arms race imposed by NATO and to implement specific measures for disarmament. This is undoubtedly the key problem of modern times, a problem crucial to the securing of lasting and universl peace. Its solution would free the enormous financial resources which are today spent on the arms race unleashed by monopoly capital, but which could be used to raise the peoples' material living standards and stimulate progress, particularly in the former colonial and oppressed countries.

A mere tenth of the funds spent by NATO on armaments would be enough to provide the 250 million undernourished children of our planet with everything they need. A significant step in this direction would be the realization of the proposal submitted by the USSR for a 10 per cent cut in the military budgets of the countries that are permanent members of the UN Security Council, and for use of part of the funds thus saved to help the developing countries.

As for the socialist countries, they are to this day compelled to spend substantial sums to safeguard what has been achieved by the peaceful labor of their peoples. It is our countries that are most consistent in their campaign for agreement on disarmament.

In recent years the NATO countries have steadily increased their military expenditure. Because the cost of weapons is extremely high there are always less funds left for the needs of other branches of their economies. According to *Economic Notes,* a bulletin published in New York, $1,000 million saved by cutting arms expenditure would make available 50,000 jobs through school-building, 76,000 jobs through the construction of public works, and 132,000 jobs through

expansion of the service industry. Instead, there is an unprecedented increase in the burden of military spending, which enriches the arms manufacturers and brings greater insecurity for the workers in the world of monopoly capital.

The USSR and the other socialist countries have submitted, and continue to submit, specific proposals for negotiations to safeguard peace and stabilize political détente by taking effective measures to curtail armaments and to disarm. We cannot close our eyes to the fact that the United States and other NATO members, particularly the FRG, have year after year been increasing their military expenditures and building up their military potential both in quantity and quality. The FRG is second in military spending only to the U.S., where the budget commission recently passed a record government arms budget of $118,500 million. In the current year the FRG will spend DM 50,000 million on armaments. Furthermore, it has the highest per capita military expenditure of all the European countries belonging to NATO. The FRG arms bill since 1956 adds up to 48,000 marks per working family.

At the latest meeting of the NATO Council in London a decision was passed to boost arms growth in the Western alliance. Anyone who gives priority to armaments in his foreign policy-making aggravates the international situation and acts in blatant contradiction to the interests of the peoples. We regard it as the essential objective of any reasonable policy to take steps that lead to reduction of the danger of nuclear war and advance the cause of disarmament in accordance with the principle of equal security for all sides and consideration of the interests of all the European countries. The GDR will continue to make an active contribution to solving this problem.

Disarmament would yield new safeguards for the defense and strengthening of the national independence of the former colonies and countries dependent on imperialism. For the anti-monopoly, progressive forces in the capitalist countries this would open up new opportunities in their drive for satisfaction of democratic and socio-political demands, for curtailment of the omnipotence of the monopolies, and for democratic transformations. Without exaggeration one can say that it is precisely the campaign for disarmament that shows up how radically the interests of the military-industrial complex contradict those of humanity as a whole.

The declaration of the Warsaw Treaty countries passed by the Political Consultative Committee in November 1976, in Bucharest, states, 'Our countries are convinced opponents of the arms race and hereby declare their desire and readiness to cooperate actively and constructively with all countries in achieving a solution to this vital problem confronting humanity.' The proposals made by the Warsaw

Treaty countries, specifically, the Memorandum on Questions of Halting the Arms Race and on Disarmament, which is based on the peace program adopted by the 24th Congress of the CPSU, are in full accord with this declaration. Of great importance is the draft of a World Treaty on the Non-Use of Force in International Relations submitted by the Soviet Union at the recent UN General Assembly.

III

Much has been done, enormous sacrifices have been made to bring mankind's dream of lasting peace to fruition. But today we cannot say that the process of normalizing international relations has become irreversible. There are still seats of tension that could explode. The danger of a new world war has not been eliminated. Forces hostile to détente and peace are stepping up their opposition to the policies of peaceful coexistence and disarmament. They are trying to sabotage détente and bring back the cold war. So it is still necessary to exert persistent efforts to make peace, at long last, the natural way of life of the peoples.

The policy of peaceful coexistence, its substance, content and prospects, has aroused fierce controversy. At this very time opposition to détente on the part of the most aggressive forces is mounting in the capitalist countries. Some wavering and inconsistency are to be observed even among realistic-minded circles. In all probability certain forces expected something quite different from the ending of the cold war and from détente. They have been obliged to realize that socialism is flourishing, that its international influence is growing, that the communist and working-class movement, the national-liberation forces and the campaigners for world peace are going forward from strength to strength.

It is not accidental that the wave of anti-communism, directed mainly against the Soviet Union, should be whipped up just at the moment when the ideal of détente and disarmament, generated and inspired by socialism, is gaining an increasing response among the peoples. Imperialism has suffered several defeats with consequences that are of strategic importance. In their own countries the capitalists are confronted with the anti-monopoly movement whose supporters in the context of the present crisis are more and more persistently demanding fundamental social changes. All this is evidence of the futility of imperialism's attempts to extricate itself from the historically defensive position that it occupies.

The relaxation of tension does not, and cannot, abolish the objective laws of the class struggle. This is a factor we take into consideration in building our constructive policy. Indeed relaxation — and in this we are completely in agreement with Leonid Brezhnev — con-

sists mainly in overcoming the cold war, in going over to normal, equal relations between states. It implies a readiness to settle disagreements and differences not by force, not by threats and sabre-rattling, but by peaceful negotiation. Détente also implies a certain degree of trust and the ability to take into account each other's legitimate interests.

Soviet-American relations are of decisive significance for all international development and particularly for solution of the problems of disarmament. The negotiations on strategic arms limitation are naturally in the focus of world attention. We warmly approve the Soviet Union's efforts to bring about a further normalization of relations with the United States and to conclude a new agreement based on the Vladivostok accords. We are convinced also that in proceeding from the interests of world peace it is possible to achieve positive results if the other side forgoes its unrealistic attempts to obtain unilateral advantages.

The six decades that have passed since Lenin's Decree on Peace have proved that peace and the happiness of mankind are closely interlinked with the successes of socialism, with the peoples' struggle for national and social liberation. In the future, too, it will be possible to win success for these great and noble goals only through anti-imperialist struggle. Our century is brightened by the Red Star of the Great October Socialist Revolution; the strength of its victory is transforming the world. In the process of the masses' revolutionary activity, led by the working class and its Marxist-Leninist parties, the noble aims and ideals that were once but a dream are today becoming more and more a reality.

Communist solidarity is the true road to success for the cause of peace and socialism

Boris Ponomaryov
Alternate BP member,
CC Secretary, CPSU

The communist movement is going through a very important and responsible period in its history.

The present stage in its development is distinguished, above all, by the qualitative change that has taken place in the actual role that the communists play today in determining human destiny. The ranks of the communist movement have expanded, its positions are growing stronger and its influence on the course and character of world events is increasing. In our time not a single vital question of international politics can be solved without taking into account the positions of the communist movement.

This is closely connected with yet another factor. Many international events affect not only the prospects of our movement as a whole, but also have a direct impact on the activity of individual fraternal parties. International problems occupy an ever larger place in the struggle and work of all communist parties without exception, influencing, among other things, the definition of their national tactics and strategy. This is a practical expression of the constantly growing significance of the communists' ability to combine their international and national responsibilities.

Lastly, yet another aspect of the question. Today when such a deep, qualitative shift has taken place on the international scene, life convincingly shows that the level of political interaction between the communist and workers' parties is becoming an integral and extremely important element for change in the balance of forces in favor of peace and socialism. The communists' international solidarity is an important political factor for restraining the aggressive circles of imperialism, for preserving and multiplying the great achievements of the working class, the working people, and one of the basic prerequisites for the further development of positive processes in the world.

In recent years the links and cooperation between the fraternal parties have become notably more active and more varied; they are cooperating closely in the international field. The general characteristic feature of inter-party contacts has been a concrete political approach to the consideration of current tasks. The aims and directions of joint struggle that have emerged in the course of the regional and multilateral international meetings held during these years have, as recent experience has particularly shown, helped the communists to make better, more effective use in the interests of the working people both of their own potential and the favorable international conditions.

I

The most important and significant outcome of the struggle that the forces of peace and socialism have been waging on the international scene in the three decades since the Second World War is that it has been possible to achieve a turn from 'cold war' to relaxation of tention, to affirmation of the principles of peaceful coexistence in international life. This turn is the result of the qualitative shift in the balance of class forces in the world, of the peace policy of the fraternal countries of socialism.

In what specific ways has this shift manifested itself?

First, in a steady consolidation of the positions of world socialism. Socialism as a reality has always been, and remains, a support for the international working class. Its existence and consolidation creates great opportunities for transforming society in ways which will probably in many cases be easier than those that the peoples of the socialist countries had to take. Socialism as a reality has played an outstanding role in ensuring the success of the national-liberation movement. Its existence, aid and support are today helping countries that have won political sovereignty to achieve economic independence. Lastly, socialism as a reality has put the task of safeguarding mankind from world war on a practical basis. More, it has already decisively promoted the reshaping of international relations to suit the interests of all peoples, of all democratic forces.

The socialist countries hold the initiative in world affairs and are defending peace and international security. The new factor here is that in taking their stand on the qualitative shifts in the balance of world forces the socialist countries today are successfully moving toward a solution of international problems that is in the interests of peace and international security, of the working-class movement and all working people, the interests of national independence.

Second, in recent years the working class in the non-socialist part of the world has gained a still firmer footing as the leading force for social progress.

The working class of today plays a far more prominent role than it did before the two world wars and in the first years after the Second World War. It has real opportunities for exerting an ever more effective influence on the solution of questions of war and peace. In this connection it must be observed that even some social-democratic parties are moving away from some of their previous tenets and showing a willingness to cooperate with the socialist countries, with communists, on problems mainly connected with the preservation of peace and the struggle against reaction.

Many communist parties have built up their positions in their countries. The new factor here is that in recent years some of them have gained positions that confront them with the practical problems of the possibility of their participation in governments. In a number of cases this enables them even now to exert pressure on the bourgeoisie that the ruling circles in these countries are compelled to reckon with in evolving and conducting not only their home, but also their foreign policy.

Third, fundamental changes have occurred in the zone of the national-liberation movement.

The new factor here is that colonialism in its old forms is quitting the stage. However, international imperialism is stubbornly trying to check this process, as witnessed by the artificial maintenance of tension in the Middle East, the developments in Southern Africa, and also the events in Zaire. But imperialism, as experience has shown, is no longer capable of rolling back the national-liberation movement, although in certain areas it can still counter-attack.

The countries that have won political independence are striving actively for a just order of international relations free of discrimination and imperialist plunder. The new factor here is that the leaders of a number of newly-free countries that have chosen the socialist road are taking steps to set up vanguard revolutionary parties and are advocating the development of cooperation and interaction with the communist movement.

It will be understood, of course, that while noting the substantial successes achieved through concerted action by the communists and all forces opposing war and working for peace and social progress, one cannot fail to see that by no means all the obstacles on this road have been overcome, not all the problems solved, and that, although the threat of a new war has diminished, it has not been eliminated altogether. Nor can one fail to see that imperialism, although compelled to reckon with the changed situation, is still trying to prevent further consolidation of the positions of the forces of peace, democracy and socialism and, wherever possible, to take its revenge and reverse the trend of international events.

This has prompted the imperialists of various countries to coordinate their efforts on an international scale. Despite the fact that the intensification of the crisis of imperialism leads inevitably to sharper competition, friction and contradictions between the capitalist countries, between the major monopolies or monopoly groups, including the multinationals, international imperialism seeks to achieve concerted action when it comes to combating the revolutionary, liberation forces and opposing policies designed to curb the arms race and promote real international security.

Recent years have yielded considerable convincing confirmation of the fact that our class adversary attaches increasing importance to the coordination of its anti-communist strategy on a world scale. This implies increased activity on the part of such mechanisms as NATO and the EEC; it also means regular conferences of heads of governments and foreign ministers to protect the positions of international capital and evolve a common policy toward the socialist and developing countries; it means more frequent meetings between politicians at various levels for discussing and amending the common strategy and tactics in the struggle against the working class and the working people of all countries. Under such conditions the building up of international solidarity, of collective action by the communist and workers' parties, whose very nature, world outlook and position in the political structure of contemporary society make them carriers of the ideas of internationalism and solidarity, acquires special importance.

This has all the more significance precisely because the tasks that the communists have to accomplish in the international field in the coming years are assuming a substantially new character. The present stage in the struggle for the realization, consolidation and deepening of international détente is distinguished by the fact that it is now a matter of achieving increasingly specific agreements on the vitally important issues between countries belonging to the opposed socio-economic systems. This in itself gives rise to complications.

But the main difficulties stem from another source. That source is imperialism's increased resistance to the process of détente, particularly in the military field, its desire not to allow any curbing of the arms race, which is, in fact, nothing else but material preparation for war.

As never before, imperialism is stepping up the arms race, putting it on a scale that has never been seen before. Two of its aspects have no precedent in the modern world. One of them is the colossal build-up of firepower and the development of new types and systems of mass destruction weapons, the other is the huge economic burden that this places on society even in time of peace.

Yet another fundamental factor should be stressed. By stepping up the arms race imperialism hopes not only to reverse the trend toward the realignment of world forces in favor of peace and socialism and regain its military superiority. It also regards the arms race as a means of exerting military-political pressure on the socialist and developing countries. It uses it in an attempt to slow down the development of the socialist economy and consequently the pace of the fraternal countries' advance along the socialist road. Lastly, the arms race is one of the chief manifestations of imperialism's characteristic tendency toward the militarization of economic and socio-political life, a means of strengthening the social and political positions of the reactionary, aggressive forces, a means of squeezing superprofits out of the working class and other working strata of society, a factor that aggravates the crisis of capitalism.

In contrast, consistent opposition to all forms of militarism is an indispensable part of the historic mission of the working class. Nearly 70 years ago Lenin actively supported the following thesis in the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International on the struggle against militarism: 'The working class, which is the main supplier of soldiers and which makes the main material sacrifices, is particularly a natural enemy of wars, because wars are contrary to its aim of creating an economic system based on the socialist principle, which will in practice secure the solidarity of the peoples' *(Coll. Works,* Vol. 15, p. 192).

The struggle against the arms race and for the deepening of détente is one of the central problems of the contest not only in the sphere of politics, but in ideology as well. Its basic goal, as we see it, is that the great mass of the people should:

— realize the growing danger of the arms race (appreciation of this danger has become blunted in some quarters lately);

— learn to detect the subterfuges of imperialist policy, to see through its maneuvers on this question;

— fully understand that imperialism is the real cause of the arms race and militarization.

This is all the more necessary because the class adversary is doing all it can to place the blame for such developments on the socialist countries.

The CPSU has always regarded the safeguarding of peace, preventing atomic war and combating the arms race as a task for which it bears internationalist responsibility. The arms race imposed by imperialism naturally compels the Soviet Union to spend considerable funds on strengthening its defenses. But the CPSU and the Soviet state have unfailingly advocated, and are still advocating, limitation of the arms race on a just and reciprocal basis.

As Leonid Brezhnev has emphasized, if the efforts of the most aggressive imperialist circles to whip up the arms race are not given a proper rebuff, 'the threat of war will again grow. Such a line is equally dangerous for the peoples of both East and West. The Soviet Union will make every effort to counteract it, to expose its dangerous implications.'

II

The intensification of the crisis of capitalism which, as is now widely acknowledged, has become in many respects more serious and more dangerous for the capitalist system than previous crises, also raises a number of general international problems. Today there is evidence enough to speak of a crisis of the world capitalist system of economy and a crisis of neo-colonialist policy. A striking feature of the present period of crisis shocks is their international character.

A certain revival of the market is to be observed at present in a number of countries, but this does not mean that the capitalist economy has surmounted the crisis. The continuing growth of unemployment, inflation and other crisis processes provide evidence to the contrary. The gap between mass needs and their satisfaction is constantly widening, the inability and lack of desire on the part of the ruling classes to reckon with the needs of ordinary people is becoming more and more obvious, social contrasts are growing even more glaring. So not only the socio-political but also the economic reasons that drive the masses to defend their interests with growing determination still operate, with the result that new social strata are being drawn into the active movement. The forms of the class struggle are being enriched and, above all, the economic struggle is becoming more and more closely and specifically merged with the political.

The fraternal parties in the capitalist world have set themselves the task of not allowing the working people to be deprived of the gains made in the stubborn class struggle of the postwar years. They are striving to dovetail the struggle against the crisis with the struggle against the omnipotence of the monopolies and for deep-going socio-economic changes, for the democratic renewal of the life of society in all spheres, for the interests of the working class, for socialist goals. The attention of the communist parties is also concentrated on linking the struggle against the crisis phenomena and their consequences for the working people with the struggle for détente, which has revealed the possibility of broad development of economic cooperation between countries with different social systems.

The main ideological and political result of the present sharpening of the crisis of capitalism is that it is becoming increasingly discredited as a social system in the eyes of the broad masses. It is

impossible not to see this, too, as one of the chief reasons for the broad, all-embracing ideological and political struggle between the forces of peace and socialism and the forces of imperialism, aggression and reaction that is flaring up ever more strongly in the world. Huge masses of people in the non-socialist zone have swung into action. Their radicalization is an obvious fact. The working people's vital interests demand an answer to the burning questions of our time:

— how, by what means that would suit the economic and political interests of the working masses can there be found a way out of this crisis gripping the entire capitalist system, its economy, politics, ideology and morals;

— how to remove the direct danger of war and build a truly durable, truly democratic and just peace, and how to halt the arms race, which is consuming colossal resources that could be used to make life easier for the working people;

— how to use the advantages of the new society, now confirmed by the whole practice of socialism, to ensure further victories of socialist ideas, how to realize the objective opportunities created for the working-class and liberation movement by the might and prestige of present-day socialism.

Small wonder that the politicians, ideologues and imperialism's ruling circles in general seek by any and every means to prevent the masses from becoming aware that the only realistic and long-term solution for the working people lies in the socialist transformation of society. It is precisely the fact that the socialist alternative may attract new sections of the working people that frightens capitalism today.

All this has prompted imperialism's ruling circles to concentrate especially on the propaganda and psychological brainwashing of the broad masses in the non-socialist world, and particularly the working people, in a spirit of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. The main thrust is aimed at discrediting the great ideals of socialism, at sowing distrust of the countries where they have been put into practice. For this purpose the imperialists have of late mounted a massive anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign. Imperialism has set up an ideological subversion apparatus against the socialist countries that is truly unprecedented in scale. Characteristically, one of the first moves of the new U.S. administration was to demand appropriations for 11 new powerful radio transmitters to be used for subversive propaganda against existing socialism.

Anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaigns, which have assumed unparalleled dimensions, strike one as an outrage on common sense. Capitalism, a system which in the past 60 years has done all in its power to eliminate socialism, poses now as an advocate of improving it. In reality capitalism is against socialism, of course, not in favor of

improving it. How laughable that it should have chosen, of all things, human rights as an export item. For it is precisely capitalism that denies rights to millions.

Significantly, the propaganda campaigns launched in the recent period are boomeranging. The working people and their progressive organizations take the rulers of the capitalist world at their word and present their bill, with the result that the rulers are forced to twist and turn, and even to tone down their campaigns for awhile. The CPSU thinks highly of the work which our fellow communists are daily carrying on abroad in complicated conditions to expose bourgeois propaganda and bring the truth about human rights in the socialist countries home to the masses.

The monopoly press refuses to notice that every day dozens and hundreds of perfectly innocent people are jailed in countries of the so-called 'free world' and that demonstrators and strikers are shot down in many of these countries. Yet they shout from the rooftops when the Soviet Union or some other socialist country punishes this or that individual — in strict conformity with its laws — for his anti-socialist activity injuring the people's interests.

Why are the current campaigns against the socialist countries being conducted under the spurious slogan of defending human rights?

First of all, because an extensive and, if we may say so, frontal comparison of the state of affairs in the capitalist world with the progress made by the socialist countries in the economy, science, technology, culture and the standard of living today would put imperialism at a disadvantage. The bourgeoisie has less room now for ideological maneuver. The advantages of socialism as a whole are so obvious, especially against the background of the crisis that has hit the capitalist world, that such a comparison would enhance the socialist system's appeal to the mass of the people.

Secondly, because the problem of human rights is a real problem in the bourgeois world, a problem affecting the interests and sentiments of people whose rights are curtailed and suppressed by capital. So bourgeois propaganda tries to shift the blame, and by playing up the cases of individuals, it is able to influence people's emotions, arouse public opinion and divert the attention of the masses from the social meaning of negative processes going on in the imperialist camp, from its evils and maladies.

In this connection, I would like to stress the utter falsity and hypocrisy of bourgeois propaganda playing up the story of the so-called dissidents in the socialist countries. The principal means chosen by the 'dissidents' to combat the socialist system is direct appeals to imperialist powers to bring greater economic or even military pressure to bear on the socialist countries. That insignificant handful

of despicable individuals who represent nobody and have severed all links with their people is not in the least concerned about the destiny of socialism, as the imperialist press maintains. The 'dissidents'' criticism of socialism is utterly negative and hostile. In fact, it is a form of struggle against the socialist system, against communism. And it is perfectly logical that on finding themselves outside the socialist countries, the 'dissidents' jettison their demagogical slogans in defense of freedom and frankly voice their sympathy for their peoples' sworn enemies, for the most outspoken of international reactionaries.

There is nothing new about imperialism's use of emigré scum for anti-communist, anti-Soviet purposes. When, more than half a century ago, the imperialist invaders and white guards were defeated in the Civil War many of the white guards fled to the West. In 1921 and 1922, one million and a half to two million active counter-revolutionaries flooded Paris, Berlin, Istanbul and the capitals of other bourgeois countries and continued their fight against the land of Soviets from there. But our party and, for their part, the young communist parties of the capitalist countries effectively withstood the onslaught, and the white guards' malicious campaign petered out. The situation now is entirely different, of course. Today's 'dissidents' are just a few individuals. But in creating propaganda myths about the existence of opposition in our country, the imperialists count on people's ignorance and advertise these few individuals.

There is yet another aspect to the anti-Soviet, anti-socialist campaigns. We refer to the attempts of Western statesmen to interfere in the Soviet Union's internal affairs. To be sure, these attempts cannot influence our home policy but they certainly poison the international atmosphere. The CPSU and the Soviet state have firmly rejected them and always will.

The point and purpose of today's anti-socialist campaigns is evident to every politically mature person. As usual, imperialism spearheads its struggle against the parties of the socialist countries and the socialist community as a whole. Behind these campaigns are elements who would like to impose fundamental political changes on the socialist countries as a condition for continued détente. Renegades from the socialist countries and the problem of 'dissidents' are frankly used as a means of delaying further steps toward détente and of mining the road to international relations based on peaceful coexistence.

Analysis of Western propaganda reveals that is adaptation to the changed situation has given rise to new elements in its ways and means of influencing public opinion. Bourgeois propaganda has become more concentrated; it aims its blows at fewer targets but makes

them more massive to achieve a greater effect. It is worthy of special note that this propaganda is carefully planned and coordinated at both national and international level.

In these circumstances, the CPSU attaches particular importance to intensifying resistance to the ideological and political campaigns unleashed by imperialism against world socialism, the international communist movement and individual parties. Our party considers it important, therefore, to coordinate its work still more closely with the work of other fraternal parties in the ideological offensive against imperialism, in laying bare its anti-popular, parasitical nature and in revealing the advantages of the socialist system.

III

The experience of the 60 years which have passed since the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia furnishes incontrovertible evidence that imperialism always uses anti-Sovietism as its main weapon against the communist movement and all progressive forces. Imperialist attacks on the socialist countries are intended to disguise the anti-democratic character of the capitalist system itself. Anti-socialist campaigns are a facade for activity aimed at strengthening reaction in various respects. It is a question of directly assailing fraternal communist parties, stepping up the fight against the trade union movement, using the repressive machinery against strikers and demonstrators, barring leftists from the exercise of definite professions, subjecting civil servants to 'security tests,' and practising racial and other kinds of discrimination. A number of capitalist countries, primarily those where the crisis has gone very deep, show alarming signs of a growing fascist danger. The fight against democracy and freedom includes attempts to intimidate the population with talk about a Soviet and, in general, a communist 'threat.'

In smearing socialist reality and trying to discredit our achievements, the imperialists also go out of their way to distort the socialist perspective and defame the socialist ideals, so as to turn the masses away from them and erode the ideological basis of the communist movement.

Anti-socialist campaigns are invariably designed to undermine the prestige of the communists in capitalist countries, to weaken their links with other social and political forces. Each of these campaigns encourages forces hostile to the communists and hinders the fight for support among the masses.

Existing socialism is not only a great material, political and moral asset of a working class which in its country has become the political leader of society. It is also a great asset of the international working class as a whole.

Both in theory and practice, existing socialism has provided freedom from capitalist power and from the exploitation of man by man, freedom from the use of people in destructive wars of aggression waged in the interests of imperialism, freedom from social and national oppression and racial discrimination.

Socialism has provided such dependably guaranteed human rights as the right to work, education, social security, free medical care and rest and recreation. It has abolished class antagonisms in our country and significantly raised the people's educational and cultural standards, which enables them to participate ever more competently and hence more effectively in the management of all public affairs. It has assured real freedom of speech and the press, which millions upon millions of Soviet citizens effectively use.

To strengthen and carry forward socialist democracy in every field — political, social and economic alike — is one of the main lines of party work. This was vividly expressed at the latest plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in May 1977, at which the draft of the new Constitution of the USSR was discussed and in all fundamental respects approved. Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CC, CPSU, explained in scientific terms the need for the new Constitution, its major internal political and international significance. He gave a detailed summary of this draft of the Fundamental Law of our state, noting in particular that its generalizes the whole constitutional experience of the Soviet Union and also draws on the experience of constitutional development accumulated by other countries of the socialist community. 'The main new elements in the draft,' Comrade Brezhnev emphasized, 'are aimed at expanding and deepening socialist democracy.' The nationwide, free and businesslike discussion of the draft that is now taking place in the Soviet Union with the participation of tens of millions of people offers the world a graphic demonstration of the genuine democracy of a developed socialist society in action.

This is the 60th anniversary year of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The Central Committee of the CPSU has adopted a special decision defining the main lines of ideological and political work in our country on the occasion of this anniversary and the practical measures connected with it. Soviet communists note with satisfaction that many fraternal parties, too, have taken special decisions and begun preparations on a large scale. We see this as an expression of the world communist movement's recognition of the connection between their national interests and the ideas whose materialization was initiated by October, and also as an expression of their traditional solidarity with our people's struggle for socialism and communism.

Imperialist propaganda makes increasing efforts as the years go by to 'Russify' the October Revolution, so to speak, by denying the universally valid aspects of its experience and claiming that this experience is limited to distinctively Russian conditions. It does not require much insight to see that the aim is to discredit the ideals of the communist movement in general, ideals which are inseparable from October and whose translation into reality is the common internationalist task of all communist and workers' parties.

The present stage of the world revolutionary process is characterized by the vast variety of forms of struggle used by the working class and the communist and workers' parties in the non-socialist part of the world. Class and liberation struggles surge high, now in one corner of the planet, now in another. In the past few years the revolutionary forces of all countries have gained new and varied experience. This experience is closely studied in theoretical terms by the communist parties, which evolve new strategic and tactical guidelines applicable to the current stage of the revolutionary movement and to the national realities of their countries.

Our party appreciates this vast and important work. This is why it considers it essential to publicize the gains of the communist parties of other countries, stressing that they make an important contribution to our common cause — a cause to which the Soviet people are likewise committed — to the struggle against war and the imperialist policy of aggression and diktat, for durable peace and security and the social progress of peoples. In turn, our party takes an active part in collective exchanges of experience and contributes to its study from an internationalist point of view.

Many political and ideological problems face the communists of various countries today. They include the mastering of all forms of struggle, both those tested before and new ones, with a view to advancing the cause of the revolution and safeguarding its gains; the need to take careful account of the interaction of external and internal factors in the development of the revolutionary process, and to seek the most effective means of harmonizing the immediate objectives of the class struggle with the struggle for the socialist future. The communist parties are also faced with the problem of how to reinforce their ranks on Marxist-Leninist principles, how to build up their influence among the working class and combine this work with the promotion of broad-based class alliances, how to combine their growing political responsibility at national level with the exercise of their role as a contingent of the world communist movement, whose role and responsibility in the world of today continue to increase. There are also many questions relating to generalization of the experience of socialist-oriented countries.

It is no secret that there are different views among the communist parties regarding certain political and ideological questions. Nor is it a secret that the imperialists count on deeper divergences of opinion in the communist movement. They are doing all they can to play up these differences and to exploit them for their class ends. In doing so, they count on shaking the unity of the communist movement and counterposing the fraternal parties of the capitalist countries to their counterparts in the socialist countries.

With the same objectives in view, efforts are made to counterpose the concept of the socialist future of their countries which the communist parties develop to suit their specific national conditions, to socialism as a reality. Our party has never considered that existing socialism has already scaled all the heights of our social ideal, otherwise there would be no reason for us to put forward a program of transition to communism. So criticism of existing socialism from an abstract standpoint is unwarranted. On the other hand, the socialist countries' indisputable historic achievements can serve as a dependable factor in the struggle for social progress and for socialism in various parts of the globe.

The vital necessity for internationalist cooperation on the basis of the great ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin is universally recognized in the communist movement. The CPSU position on this matter remains unchanged. It was fully stated by Comrade Leonid Brezhnev in his speech to the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe held in Berlin a year ago.

'Every communist party.' Leonid Brezhnev said, 'has sprung from the working-class movement of the country where it is operating. It also accounts for its activity primarily to the working people of its own country, whose interests it expresses and upholds. And this is what provides the basis for the communists' international solidarity ... As for proletarian internationalism, that is, solidarity of the working class and the communists of all countries in the struggle for common goals, their solidarity with the peoples' struggle for national liberation and social progress, and voluntary cooperation between fraternal parties strictly respecting the equality and independence of each, we consider that such comradely solidarity, whose standard-bearers the communists have been for more than a hundred years, fully retains its great significance to this day. It has been and remains a powerful and tested weapon of the communist parties and the working-class movement generally.'

This is forcefully confirmed by the experience which each communist party and our movement as a whole have gained. Their experience teaches us that the success of the cause of peace and

socialism and the progress of all communist parties in general and each of them in particular are inseparable from the communists' unity and the degree of interaction they achieve in accomplishing internationalist tasks. It also teaches us that slackening of this interaction may greatly prejudice the very progress of détente and the struggle against the war danger, as well as the class interests of the revolutionary working-class movement.

Our party, which proceeds from the decisions of its 25th Congress, will continue to work steadfastly for closer fraternal interaction and cooperation of the communist and workers' parties on the international scene, for still closer cohesion of the world communist movement on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

Land of Soviets — 60th year

Survey Three

SOCIALISM ON THE FARM

Zahi Karkabi, CC Secretary, Communist Party of Israel
Jeronimo Carrera, CC member, Communist Party of Venezuela

To see life in the USSR as it is in the 60th year of Soviet rule, we decided on a study tour of the Soviet countryside.

Our route led us to the Ukraine and the Russian Federation, where we visited farms and land-reclamation installations, met collective farmers and state farm workers and acquainted ourselves with the organization of modern agro-industrial enterprises and industrial-type complexes. We observed everyday life in villages and in farmers' homes, visited hospitals, schools, cultural and sports institutions, kindergartens and nurseries. We interviewed farm experts and executives, as well as party workers at district, regional and territorial level. During our stay in Moscow we were received at the CC CPSU, USSR Ministry of Agriculture, All-Union Council of Collective Farms and All-Russia Agricultural Labor and Management Research Institute. We viewed the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievement and were able to gather a fair amount of documentary evidence.

The trip gave us our first comprehensive view of the dynamics of socialist construction in the countryside, its achievements, problems

and prospects. We also saw many things in close-up. The overall impression was a strong one. Not that life in the countryside struck us as an idyll, as something complete and perfect — of course not. We have no intention of idealizing things, any more than those who showed us around did. What impressed us above all is the socialist system's policy in the countryside, its vigor as a driving force.

It is is no secret that the enemies of socialism who in the past expected the system to 'burst at the seams' had to revise their tactics. They cannot deny the progress made by the Soviet Union in science, industry and culture over the past 60 years. Neither can they ignore the might and prestige of the great socialist power in the international scene. So those who specialize in anti-Soviet propaganda use what may be called selective methods of misinformation. They pick on agriculture, capitalizing on its historical difficulties and the exacting nature of its problems, which could not be solved overnight under any circumstances. This device of the 'Sovietologists' is in the same vein as the bourgeois, reformist and revisionist allegations that the peasants are and always will be an 'individualistic' class and hence a class shunning the socialist road.

Marx, Engels and Lenin showed that these allegations are scientifically indefensible. The bourgeois ideologists' recurrent attacks on the Marxist-Leninist approach to the agrarian problem betray their fear of the truth, which makes them eager to discredit the truly great achievements of real socialism in the countryside and the policies of the communist parties fighting for the transition to socialism in the countries of the non-socialist part of the world.

It is our aim to give an impartial account of what we have seen in the Soviet Union. We will not deny that we are proud of our friends' achievements, and have learned from the Soviet experience lessons useful to the revolutionary struggle in our own countries, but nor will we pretend we have seen no deficiencies or unsolved problems. We believe the most important of the lessons we have in mind was aptly described by Leonid Brezhnev, when he said that '. . . building socialism in the countryside is the peasants' only road to a happiness based on the well-being of all working people.'

An epoch capsuled into one life-span

On the Krasnoarmeisky state farm in the Kuban, we were welcomed by a sturdy grizzled man, who immediately reminded us of the Cossacks' legendary bravery. He has a catching zest for life and a genial temper to match. Yet he is 73 years old, a living witness of the entire period of Soviet rule and the period immediately preceding it.

He became a farmhand at 11. The landlord paid him a niggardly three roubles a month and caned him more than once. He could not

read until he was 23 and another seven years passed before he began to study in a real way. Then came the Great Patriotic War. He lost his wife and as for his four children, he only found them in a children's home after the war. His name is A.I. Maistrenko and he is a grandfather now, bearer of the titles of Merited Agronomist of the Republic and Hero of Socialist Labor. The Krasnoarmeisky state farm he heads is one of the country's biggest rice-growing farms with an overall output with more than 15 million roubles and making a profit of over 5 million a year.

His life story is at once astonishing and typical. We spent a whole day with him, listening to his recollections, and we couldn't help thinking that his life was a condensation of a whole epoch, that it bore the imprint of events long past, of strenuous effort to rebuild the peasants' life and its results, the imprint of what the changes that have taken place mean to people.

We saw at a museum wooden ploughs used in the Kuban area before the revolution — there were 340,000 of them at the time. Three-quarters of the territory's population were illiterate and there were only 47 agronomists. The 1913 crop yield, which was high by the standards of the time, was 12.1 centners per hectare. Even so, the Kuban was considered a land of plenty in comparison with other parts of the country.

The exploited peasants of tsarist Russia fought in alliance with the workers for freedom and land. The October Revolution crowned their fight with success. A few hours after the assumption of power, on the night of November 8, 1917, the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets passed its famous Decree on Peace and Decree on Land. The latter abolished landlord property throughout the country without compensating the landlords. Land became the property of the state, which passed it over to those who tilled it, the peasants. Thus the foundations were laid for the socialist transformation of the countryside.

We think it would be hard to overestimate the importance of that really fair and radical settlement — the first ever — of the agrarian question, a question which still reflects the peasants' most vital interests in many countries of the world. It is particularly important in the developing countries striving to remove the aftermath of foreign monopoly dominance and carrying out agrarian reforms, or faced with the need to do so. In Venezuela, an agrarian reform was launched more than 15 years ago. It was supported by the notorious Alliance for Progress and has by now fallen through due to its bourgeois character. At least $10,000 million, or about 40,000 million bolivars, were spent on the reform but the result was that, to quote the daily *Nacional,* 'we fell back on primitive farming by allotting the

peasant five hectares of land, a few cows and a small house on lands many of which turned out to be uncultivatable.' At the latest CC Plenum of the Communist Party of Venezuela it was noted that output had shrunk in more than 40 items of agricultural produce.

International agricultural monopolies and big landed proprietors belonging to the national bourgeoisie do their utmost to delay agrarian changes or to keep them within narrow bounds. To the communist parties of our countries, which are fighting for the peasants' genuine interests in difficult conditions, the example of the Great October is a fundamental model. a source of strength and inspiration.

Soviet experience shows that giving land to the peasant is only a first condition for setting out to build socialism in the countryside, and that only large-scale social production can provide the long-range basis for socialism. Transforming fragmented peasant farming into this type of production is, in effect, what the program of building socialism in the countryside implies.

Once the people's rule had been established the CPSU gave priority in its agrarian program, drawn up by Lenin, to the famous cooperation plan for the collectivization of individual peasant farms.

We had read much and during the trip heard much about collectivization in the Soviet Union. We know that it was not easy. The Soviet people were the first to blaze the trail, to rid the countryside of its age-long lag, and they had to do it as the only socialist country surrounded by a hostile capitalist world. They had to break the class enemy's bitter resistance, beat off the attacks of opportunists and correct mistakes. At every stage of this effort, the CPSU operated as its organizer and source of inspiration. Well aware that the socialist reorganization and advancement of agriculture required great perseverance and immense energies, it invariably sought support among the masses to solve the problems that arose.

After various forms of cooperation had been tested, the agricultural artel, or collective farm, became the accepted form everywhere in the years of collectivization. By the mid-30s the new system, collective farming, had triumphed all over the country. Agriculture became much more of a public undertaking than before and was practised in two forms, by state-farms and collective-farm cooperatives.

In our view, cooperative farming as a means of putting agriculture on a socialist basis is still valid. This form was not a Bolshevik invention. When the October Revolution came the cooperative system already had a record that included both exaggerated expectations and dispelled illusions. Summing up past experience, Lenin wrote: 'In the capitalist state, cooperatives are no doubt collective capitalist institutions' (*Coll. Works,* Vol. 33, p. 472), they cannot resist the system of exploitation, let alone go beyond it. Lenin's in-depth analysis also

indicated that the situation would change fundamentally with the establishment of people's rule. In that case, he wrote: 'if the whole of peasantry had been organized in cooperatives, we would by now have been standing with both feet on the soil of socialism' (*Ibid.*, p. 474). The present day proves this concept right.

Let us take a country where one of us lives, bourgeois Israel. The kibbutzim, or agricultural cooperatives, have become widespread there. Aid from international Zionist quarters played a notable part in their formation, with the result that output is very high today. Yet the kibbutzim are exploited by finance capital, and they themselves exploit wage labor. Their socio-economic character is contradictory and their role dual. Israel's communists justly consider that the kibbitzim could become genuine and consistent exponents of the farmers' interests only with the victory of a democratic, progressive socio-political system paving the country's way to socialism.

To be quite fair, the Soviet state has had very little time for its task in the countryside, much less than the 60 years of its existence, because these years include periods of devastating wars — in World War II, the Soviet Union lost 20 million lives, one-third of its national wealth and 70,000 villages, which were completely destroyed. For decades, from the very first years after the revolution, in fact, agriculture was one of the main, if not the main, source of accumulation and manpower for the industrial development of the Soviet state. Over a prolonged period the historical situation made speedy industrialization a matter of vital importance to the USSR, and the Soviet people, including the peasantry subordinated everything to this goal. All the more credit, then, to the progress made by Soviet farming in the span of one life.

Here are some figures. From 1913 to 1974, gross agricultural output in the USSR grew roughly by 240 per cent; this includes increases of 1,130 per cent in cotton, 350 in vegetables, 190 in meat, 210 in milk and 370 in eggs. In 1976 the Kuban farms reaped 4.4 million tons of grain, or about 50 centners per hectare. Each farm has more experts than there were agronomists in the whole area before the revolution. And whereas power available per worker in those days was 0.5 h.p., it has increased 34 fold in the Soviet period.

High growth rates are enabling the Soviet Union to overtake the more developed capitalist countries. While Soviet agricultural output in 1949-1953 was 55 per cent compared with U.S. output, in 1955-1960 it rose to 70 per cent and in 1971-1975, to about 85 per cent. The upturn in Soviet agricultural development is well illustrated by the data on average annual grain harvesting in each of the six postwar five-year plan periods: 64.8 million tons in 1946-1950, 88.5 m in

1951-1955, 121.5 m in 1956-1960, 130.3 m in 1961-1965, 167.6 m in 1966-1970, and 181.5 m in 1971-1975.

Years of experience have revealed the vitality of collective farming, which accounts for a good half of the country's gross agricultural output.

What is a typical Soviet collective farm?

According to statistical averages obtained from Soviet sources, it now has slightly more tha 500 workers, 3,400 hectares of collectively owned sown area, 37 tractors, about 1,700 head of cattle and 781,000 roubles of gross income. The land, which is state property, has been made available to the collective farms for use in perpetuity while the installations, machinery and fruits of labor are the farm members' collective property. Each farm's output is purchased by the state under long-term contracts and at fixed, guaranteed prices.

We were deeply interested in the democratic peinciples of life on the collective farm. The Rules of the Collective Farm stress that it is set up and functions on a voluntary basis. Every collective farmer reserves the right to withdraw from the farm. This right is inviolable and is exercised in practice, when, say, a farmer wants to move to another part of the country. While safeguarding the interests of collective, social property, the rules do not deny the peasant's right to personal property. Every farmer is entitled to a household plot. Peasants not only grow vegetables on their plots but keep cattle and other livestock, as well as poultry. The farmers are free to sell this output to the state or directly to the public at collective-farm markets.

The highest authority of the collective farm is the general meeting of its members. It elects the farm board and its chairman, hears their reports and makes decisions on production plans and the distribution of resources and incomes. It settles all questions relating to tenure on the lands allotted to the farm. When, for instance, plans are made for an industrial project on land held by the farm, construction can only start with the farm's authorization.

The elected authority above the collective farm is the district, regional, republican or all-Union council of collective farms. 'This system,' I.P. Gaivorontsev, Executive Secretary of the All-Union Council of Collective Farms, told us, 'was set up by the decision of the Third All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers in 1969 and is evidence of further progress in collective-farm democracy. Originally the functions of these bodies were defined as cunsultative. Their efficiency is growing as they gain experience. In Moldavia, the collective farm councils have for several years been functioning experimentally as full-fledged executive bodies. Moldavia's experience is being carefully studied and all that is best in it will be widely used.'

We saw for ourselves how much attention the CPSU and state

devote to the rural areas. When we arrived in the Crimea rice-growers were holding a regional conference. When we reached Kuban, the Territorial Party Committee was in session discussing agricultural problems.

This attention is exacting and businesslike. What party Secretary I.P. Kikilo stressed in an interview with us was not so much the undeniable achievements of the territory, one of the country's foremost farming areas, as the problems, difficulties and deficiencies.

We could list a number of documents in which the party emphasizes that the increasing requirements of Soviet society do not allow to be satisfied with what has been achieved and call for accelerated expansion in agriculture.

'Developed socialism,' we were told at the CC CPSU, 'confronts this branch with new and difficult tasks which require sustained effort and a lot of organizing. Not all agricultural products are in full supply. Demand is determined by both the country's own needs and its commitments to friendly countries. Some of the collective and state farms, which operate in different climatic belts and hence in dissimilar conditions, are lagging behind. The scientific and technological revolution makes it imperative to re-equip agriculture, raise labor productivity, advance intensive farming and increase overall efficiency. Lastly, we maintain that it is our job to see that the modernization of the countryside, of tens of thousands of rural communities, keeps abreast of growing production.' It follows that the CPSU's agrarian policy today provides for steps to develop agriculture with due regard to its manifold interconnections, on a comprehensive basis. This approach is in keeping with the country's fundamental task, which is to achieve a steady rise in the standard of living, as the 25th Party Congress re-emphasized.

Updating the farm

Our trip gave us an insight into something which is generally overlooked, and which bourgeois commentators deliberately ignore. Soviet farmers have a hard furrow to plough.

Statistics on natural fertility of the soil indicate that farming conditions in the United States, for example, are three or more times more favorable than in the USSR. Whereas in the U.S. over 50 per cent of the sown areas lies in regions favorable to farming (with 700 mm of annual precipitation), the percentage of such land in the Soviet Union is only 1.1. A Soviet farm expert told us how genuinely surprised he was when he saw in California ripe sorghum ('its humidity could not have been more than 12 per cent') which the farmers were in no hurry to harvest — they were calmly waiting for it to dry out a bit more. 'In Kazakhstan and Siberia,' the expert said, 'you have about ten days to

gather in the harvest before the snow comes. We have to cart half of the country's grain crop to dryers.'

Soviet experts use terms that hardly belong in a farmer's vocabulary, such as 'desert farming' or 'arctic farming.' Up to 60 per cent of the food grains, we were told, is grown in what are called 'hazardous farming' belts. Then there is the permafrost* lying under more than half the territory of the USSR plus the famous 'Russian' winter, which makes it necessary for six or seven months a year to keep livestock in warm housing on two-thirds of the country's territory. Even in the most favorable southern areas we visited, stock farms are housed in cost-intensive buildings.

Last but not least, severe droughts are a recurrent calamity. In the 40 years during which the country was free from the burden of war and postwar reconstruction it was hit by drought 14 times, or every three years. There were two droughts in the ninth five-year plan period.

The capitalist press mentions the Soviet Union's harsh climate, if ever, for the sole purpose of putting the blame on the Soviet system for the damage caused by it. The USSR is carrying out an immense program aimed at stabilizing agricultural production and guaranteeing steady output in defiance of natural conditions.

'Previously,' Y.V. Sedykh, deputy head of the CC CPSU Agricultural Department, told us, 'we didn't have the means for a radical solution of the problem. Our economic potential reached the required level only in the mid-60s. In March 1965 the Central Committee's agrarian policy entered a new stage, which is a logical continuation of Lenin's policy.'

We were told how the party had solved its present policy, giving special attention to science and combining realism with bold action. Records of the March 1965 meeting of the CC show how it carefully examined the condition and problems of agriculture before deciding on specific measures to further its growth. Agriculture was also scrutinized at subsequent CC meetings and party congresses. The 25th CPSU Congress made an important contribution by translating its agrarian policy into a long-range and comprehensive action program.

What is this program?

Its purpose, we were told, is to make agriculture a branch using intensive industrial methods and safeguarded against the freaks of nature. This cannot be done without major investments and so we asked whether they would be adequate. Investment in farming over the past ten years has amounted to 213,000 million roubles, which is

*Permanently frozen subsoil. — *Ed.*

twice as much as was spent in all the previous years of Soviet rule. How are the funds spent?

There are three main lines, all designed to re-equip agriculture.

One of them provides for new technical facilities to mechanize, electrify and automate production. Three million tractors and one million combines have been delivered to collective and state farms over the past ten years. The current five-year plan provides for spending another 42,000 million roubles on the technical equipment of farming or 50 per cent more than in the previous period. Farm machinery plants are being geared to the manufacture of new machinery meeting world standards. By decision of the CC CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers, a centralized agency is being set up to speed scientific and technological progress in farming.

Of course, front-rank farms in capitalist countries, are also using more and more machinery, This equipment is normally designed for individual use and includes numerous small tools that are ingeniously made and handy. The same cannot be said, however, of the systems or sets of machines intended for mass use. The framework of the traditional farm is too narrow for it. By contrast, mechanization of farming in the Soviet Union is extensive and is intended for group use, for large-scale production yielding the optimal economic results.

Another line is chemicalization. In 1970 the Soviet Union produced 45.6 million tons of mineral fertilizer. In 1975 the output rose to 75.2 million tons and in 1980 it will rise to 115 million. We asked our hosts whether there was no danger of chemicals affecting the environment as is the case in numerous developed capitalist countries. They replied that the state adopts stringent measures to prevent ecological damage. Production of over 100 dangerous and 'suspect' chemicals has been stopped and they have been replaced by usable ones. The state has established strict rules and standards for the use of chemicals. The environment is under continuous observation and water, for instance, is tested every 24 hours.

The third line — land reclamation — is probably the most graphic indication of regulated agricultural production. Investments in reclamation from 1976 to 1980 will add up to more than 40,000 million roubles, as much as under the two earlier five-year plans put together. The present targets demand another 10 million hectares of new irrigated and drained lands, of which 1.4 million hectares was brought under the plough last year.

The Soviet Union is in the lead on all these key lines. It ranks first in the world as a producer of tractors, combine harvesters and mineral fertilizer, as well as for land improvement. We saw in the Crimea and in Kuban what this actually means.

Too much water, or too little

Tourist booklets often describe the Black Sea coast with its famous health resorts as the pearl of the Crimea. The peninsula itself — we mean the ash-grey Crimean steppes which few people know — is very like a dry, rough sea-shell.

When crossing it, we stopped near an empty concrete canal bed whose bottom was heaped with tumbleweed — the Russians call it, even more expressively, perekati-pole (roll-across-the-field). When autumn comes and nothing is left in the Crimean steppe of the 300 mm of precipitation, the wind sends tufts of tunbleweed about, as if looking for shelter. 'Pity you didn't arrive a couple of days later,' our companion said. 'You would have seen something different on March 15.' This is the day when water comes to the Crimea, as it has for 11 years now, sweeping the canals clean.

In the last century there was a project to channel Dnieper water to the Crimea but the tsar's government refused to finance it. Under Soviet rule, construction started in 1940 but the war forced people to dig trenches, not canals. The Crimea became an immense battlefield and two of its cities, Sevastopol and Kerch, were awarded the title of hero cities. The North Crimea Canal, which fills with water on March 15, is one of the early results of the CPSU's current agrarian policy intended to ensure steadily growing production. The canal stretching 400 kilometres from the Kakhovka storage lake to Kerch, is the biggest water-works in Europe.

'Farming on irrigated land,' N.K. Kirichenko, First Secretary of the Crimean Regional Committee, CP of the Ukraine, told us, 'is our region's main asset. The canal supplies water for 176,000 out of a total of 275,000 hectares of irrigated land. These are the lands where we raise bumper crops.' How very effective reclamation has proved is seen in the fact that the canal cost the state 555 million roubles but was paid for in increased output within a year. A second section of the canal is under construction. In his speech at the 25th Party Congress, Comrade Brezhnev called the project one of the country's most important.

We visited the Slavnoye state farm in north-western Crimea, a few kilometres from the coast. We talked to its director, A.G. Gavrilov, and others and were shown around. The farm specializes in cattle but it also grows a substantial amount of grain and has vineyards and orchards. Its annual income is two million roubles and the farm has for years been represented at the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievement in Moscow. Dnieper water has also come to Slavnoye, where it irrigates 800 hectares of land, greatly benefiting production.

Grape yields, for instance, have risen to 250 centners per hectare against 20 to 25 centners in the past.

'I wonder if you know,' Gavrilov said, 'that irrigation systems in our country are built at government expense. They don't cost state or collective farms a single kopek and what is more, the farms get their water free.' We learned that in terms of productivity, one hectare of irrigated land in the Crimean steppe equals three hectares of non-irrigated land when sown to wheat and five hectares in the case of vegetables or maize.

From the Crimea we flew to Krasnodar. Not far from the airport we saw another water-works, on the River Kuban — the Krasnodar storage lake. This reservoir, as the figure painted red on the breakwater shows, holds 3,000 million cu.m. of water. It was completed in 1975.

Not only has the area under regulated farming increased. The country's greater experience and strength have enabled it to start on major programs involving special reclamation systems.

The solution of the cotton problem is the first instance of this approach and the first successful experiment widely used in present-day plans. Cotton production has been guaranteed for years now and never falls short of seven or eight million tons irrespective of weather. The key to success was planned development of irrigation systems in the cotton-growing areas of the Central Asian republics.

The country's present economic potential, said Y.V. Sedykh, makes it possible to work simultaneously on a series of special programs, all on a similarly large scale. We shall name some of them when we come to the story of how the grain problem was solved. At this point we wish to mention by way of an example a program for dealing with conditions in which agriculture suffers from an overabundance of moisture and not from a lack of it.

Incidentally, it is nothing exceptional for agriculture to have to fight in a rather small area on two fronts, both for and against water. The peasants of, say, Venezuela suffer serious loss through both droughts and floods, which recur virtually every year. The trouble is that hardly anything is being done in the country to eliminate these evils while the socialist countries combat them according to plan and on a scale commanding admiration.

And now for another special program, one that is being carried out in the north of the Soviet Union's European territory, in what is known as the Non-Black Earth Belt. This is a vast area comprising 29 administrative regions and autonomous republics with a population of 59 million, such notable centers as Moscow and Leningrad and the famous old Russian cities of Arkhangelsk, Vologda, Novgorod, Kostroma and Pskov.

We were told quite frankly that in the earlier period the agriculture of these lands developed slowly. In the preceding period and after the war Central Russia had to yield priority to the formerly backward borderlands over use of resources; a great effort was needed also to restore the war-ravaged economies of Byelorussia and the Baltic countries, and to put to use the virgin lands of Kazakhstan and the industrial resources of Siberia. Now the Non-Black Earth Belt is being recompensed with a development program with 35,000 million roubles.

The program is both goal-oriented and comprehensive. It is not confined to drainage and soil improvement or the provision of new machinery. It does seek to achieve a definite effect on production (farm output is to be doubled), but it also includes a series of measures for changing the present pattern of life in these rural areas.

The Non-Black Earth country had, for example, been losing people and the reasons for this exodus were not so easy to trace. Some said it was due to the magnetic attraction of the big industrial and cultural centers; others claimed that the young people no longer felt their ties with the soil so strongly; others attributed it to the outmoded type of population distribution with its innumerable scattered villages and hamlets (there are 12,000 in Vologda Region alone). To clear up the picture, the All-Russia Agricultural Labor and Management Research Institute conducted a thorough sociological survey. 'To start with,' the institute's director Y.T. Buzilov, a corresponding member of the All-Union Agricultural Academy, told us, 'we investigated the actual scale of values among the country people in this area and found that top priority was given to recommendations for improving working and production conditions.'

The Non-Black Earth Program, Buzilov went on, drew on numerous surveys and studies of this kind that have been well enough researched to make sure that resources are used to maximum effect.

The three years that the program has been in operation is not a very long period, of course. But it has brought about significant changes. They are to be seen in the growth of agricultural production, in the fact that the Moscow Region, for instance, is now self-supporting in milk, eggs and poultry meat and almost self-supporting in vegetables, whereas previously it had to draw on the output of more than 30 other regions. Entirely new housing developments are being built in state and collective farms right across the Non-Balck Earth Belt, the whole system of roads and transport is being expanded and new cultural and everyday amenities laid on. The Non-Black Earth Belt is speeding up its development so that it can make a worthy contribution to the general agricultural advance as well as provide for its own internal needs.

Bread and meat

Examining the agricultural targets for the current five-year plan we noted that grain production comes first. The state plan envisages bringing it up to between 240 and 245 million tons by 1980 and achieving a stable average grain yield of 215 to 220 million tons per year. Considering that last year's harvest of 224 million tons was an all-time high, this is an ambitious target for stable grain production. It is only a short step away from a ton of grain per head of the population which in economics literature is considered the guarantee of abundance.

The Soviet Union has several well known grain-growing regions. The Kuban, which we mentioned above, is famous for its abundance of wheat, but few people, particularly abroad know that the Kuban has also become a rich producer of another valuable grain crop — rice. As recently as 1965 the Soviet Union was producing only half a million tons of rice. Today it has a stable annual yield of two million tons, which makes it self-supporting in this crop. The Kuban produces one-quarter of the rice harvest.

At the Krasnoarmeisky State Farm the area under rice is 7,000 hectares, and for six years it has been producing an average yield of not less than 60 centners per hectare. The state farm's top growers raise up to 100 centners. Production is based on new, advanced technology. While four-fifths of the world rice is cultivated by hand and each hectare consumes 200 man-days, labor productivity here is 20 times higher. The rice is sown 'dry,' the fields are then irrigated, and in autumn, when the water has been drained off, the harvesting is done by combines. Ninety-nine per cent of the work is mechanized.

The solution of the 'rice problem,' which took only ten years, is an example of yet another fulfilled program for achieving stable food production. Similarly the 10th Five-Year Plan provides for the creation on the territory of the Russian Federation of a zone of guaranteed grain production on the basis of irrigation in the Astrakhan, Saratov, Volgograd. Kuibyshev and other regions. A similar scheme is afoot in the Ukraine. A 'soy' program based on irrigation is being drawn up for Moldavia, the Crimea and the North Caucasus.

The Soviet Union's concern for developing its grain production is quite often badly misinterpreted by bourgeois 'sovietologists,' who try to present it as evidence of 'failures,' of food shortages and so on. The truth is that the need for some foreign purchases does not arise from the 'inherent faults' that Soviet farming is supposed to suffer from. They were made necessary by extremely unfavorable weather conditions, from whose effects Soviet agriculture (like that of other countries, incidentally) is not yet fully safeguarded. It is a fact that the

lowest grain harvests in the past five years came in 1972 and 1975, when the USSR was hit by two of the severest droughts in its history. But it is also a fact that the average grain harvest over the five-year period was, as we have already noted, the highest compared with any of the postwar five-year plan periods, and in 1976 the grain harvest beat all records. That is the stable dynamic pattern of this vital branch of agriculture in true USSR.

The allegations of bourgeois propagandists that without these purchases of grain from abroad the Soviet Union would be faced with famine are also a long way from the truth.

What is the actual situation? Our Soviet friends told us that the per capita production of grain and of legume crops is considerably higher than that of, say, Britain or France. Long-term experience shows that not more than 70 million tons of grain are needed to satisfy the Soviet population's bread requirements. So any shortage of bread is quite out of the question.

Then why such stress on the further development of grain-growing capacity? The reason is to achieve a more satisfactory solution of the fodder problem to meet the needs of stock-breeding, which demands not less than 100 million tons. In other words, more grain is needed to produce more meat.

The times when crop failures caused by drought did indeed leave people without bread, as in 1921, for example, when many international organizations took part in famine relief on the Volga, have passed for ever. Crop failures today have a different effect. They interrupt the stable development of stock-breeding, they affect the supply of meat and dairy produce. 'The party sees these difficulties,' Leonid Brezhnev said in a speech a Tula, 'and is doing the maximum to overcome them.

'In this connection I want to stress that the CPSU Central Committee has outlined a number of measures designed to improve the situation in livestock farming. These measures are already being carried out.'

After the drought ravages of 1975 many bourgeois observers warned of disastrous consequences. It was said that a good half of the country's cattle would have to be slaughtered and that the losses would take five or six years to make up. But the 'prophets' were wrong. In March, when we made our trip, the number of pigs had increased by 7.5. million and poultry was up by 50 million compared with the previous year. Collective and state farm stocks of fodder were double what they had been in March 1976.

The Soviet people we talked to did not hide the fact that the development of stock-breeding is regarded as a priority task. In fact,

they emphasized it. The level of per capita meat consumption so far achieved — 57 kg. per annum — is regarded as insufficient and the aim is to raise it to 89-90 kg. A level of 63 kg. is to be reached within the current five-year plan period.

Stock-breeding is being energetically industrialized. We shall describe one of the new highly productive stock-breeding complexes later in this article, but first a few closing remarks on the food problem in general.

Normal nutrition obviously involves more than two kinds of food. There must be variety. Soviet statistics show that the consumption of various foods — vegetables, fish, milk, sugar, eggs, and so on — is growing. The Soviet people's milk consumption, for instance, is now 357 kg. per capita (245 kg. in the U.S., 250 in Britain). Between 1966 and 1975 Soviet overall per capita food consumption increased by 25 per cent.

During this trip we became more than ever aware that the development of agriculture and the food industry in the USSR not only contributes directly to the growth of the Soviet people's well-being, but also has wider implications.

The world we live in is today still very far from solving the fundamental problem of man's daily bread. Hundreds of millions of people are either starving or living very near the starvation line. In a number of countries whose development was delayed and distorted by imperialism, food shortages are growing and this leads to new forms of dependence on imperialism.

About 40 years ago Venezuela could feed itself. Now it imports many types of farm produce, including even tropical foods. In 1966 these imports were valued at $100 million (471 million bolivars) and by 1975 the cost of such imports had risen to $800 million (3,500 million bolivars). And this is in a country that, as a British newspaper, *The Guardian,* has rightly observed, 'should be a veritable farming paradise!' Its main food supplier now is the U.S. and this is not at all in the interests of Venezuela.

Imperialism's plans go even further. Its ideologists have recently proclaimed food to be a 'strategic weapon.' And it is being used to strengthen the positions of capital, prevent countries from developing independently, and stifle their peoples' fight for freedom and social progress. So it is natural enough that the successes of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, particularly their achievements in food and agricultural production, should give us new hope and strength and reinforce our confidence that the achievements of our friends, who have always been true to their internationalist duty, will help us in our struggle.

Cooperating the cooperators

Historically the Soviet collective farms, and quite often the state farms, went in for mixed farming. This was a quite natural and expedient structure for the period when the collective farm system was taking shape and establishing itself. Mixed farming provided a safeguard against failure in an any one branch and offered opportunities for the flexible use of resources. On the other hand, the need for bigger units remained and tended to increase as time went on. This was part of the general pattern of development. Modern machinery and technology demand 'elbow room.' Soviet experts consider, for example, that in modern conditions the optimal parameters (allowing for certain variations depending on local conditions) should be as follows: 3,000 to 6,000, hectares for fruit growing, herds of 15,000 to 30,000 head of cattle for stock-breeding, and 2,000 to 4,000 cows for dairy factories. All of which is a far cry from the traditional agricultural unit.

For the new farms being built in the state sector this was not really a problem. A start was made with big specialized farms (such as the grain-growing state farms on the virgin lands) and the agro-industrial amalgamations and industrial-type stock-breeding complexes. But in the collective-farm sector it was a different matter.

If the reader remembers the figures we cited for the average Soviet collective farm, he will realize that the physical framework is simply too small for what is now considered optimal. This called for deep-going structural reorganization.

The party, having tried various approaches, came to the conclusion that inter-farm cooperation should play the main role in increasing the scale and intensifying agricultural production.

L.F. Matveyev, secretary of the Timashevsky District party committee, invited us to visit a cattle feeding amalgamation. Its 24 buildings house 15,000 animals, which are putting on weight at an average rate of 700 grams a day resulting in an annual overall increase of 23,500 tons. Such industrial complexes have mechanization and productivity that are well up to world standards. In the U.S., for instance, it takes 2.4 hours to produce a centner of pork, while at the pig-breeding complexes in the USSR the same result is achieved in not more than 2 hours; the world standard of 2 hours for a ton of milk holds good for Soviet industrialized complexes too.

What interested us at the Timashevsky interfarm complex, however, was not the technology, but the social and economic aspect.

In the boardroom we met the people who run the complex, the chairmen of the collective farms and directors of the state farms in the district. The 27 farms that make up this complex, we were told,

contributed 9 million roubles to the building of it on a share basis. Now the buildings belong to them and so do the profits from its operation, which run to 35.5 million roubles a year.

In the boardroom we also had a talk with the chairman of one of the participating farms, A.A. Bagmut, chairman of the Kalinin Collective Farm, who holds a Master's degree in economics. The complex gives his farm a return of 270,000 to 320,000 roubles a year and fully covers the farm's commitments for sale of meat to the state. 'In addition,' the chairman told us, 'our collective farm is joint owner of a hothouse complex, a cement factory, construction and power amalgamations, and a Young Pioneer camp and health resort on the Black Sea. In all, this amounts to one-sixth of our production assets.'

The case is typical. We were told that there are 287 inter-farm enterprises operating in the Kuban area and 6,300 in the country as a whole. Their contribution to the economy is growing dynamically. In Moldavia, for example, inter-farm output in 1975 accounted for nearly a third of the total production of the collective farm sector, including more than 40 per cent of the animal produce.

Most of the early enterprises of this kind were either for stock-breeding or construction. Today inter-farm cooperation extends to all spheres, including the use of machinery and soil cultivation. 'Cooperating the cooperators' is being developed on such a scale and causing such profound socio-economic changes that it marks, as the people we talked to repeatedly emphasized, a new stage in the unfolding of Lenin's cooperative plan, a stage well suited to the conditions of developed socialism, a stage in which collective-farm property acquires a new quality and approaches the level of state property.

This is how it works. Originally, the collective farms were amalgamations formed by individual peasant farmers pooling their property. Nowadays it is these amalgamations that are being amalgamated. So the level of actual socialization is of a new order altogether. And another point. The state farms, which, as we know, are wholly owned by the state, are taking an increasing part in these inter-farm amalgamations side by side with the collective farms. This indicates the emergence of a form of cooperative-state property which is yet another step higher on the ladder of socialization.

This gives rise to new conditions of labor and everyday life. The people who work at such complexes should be ragarded more as workers than peasants in the traditional sense.

But the changes in the life and labor of the countryside form a subject in themselves.

Village life today

The central area of the Rossiya Collective Farm in the Crimea has a

very uncountrified look about it. The buildings are three or four storys high and interspersed with neat lawns, asphalt paths, and children's playgrounds. We visited some of the thousand flats in these blocks. They have central heating, gas, telephone, and running hot water. It is all built to city standards.

V.I. Krivorotov, the farm's chairman, also showed us the traditional part of the farm with its houses for one or two families, household plots and out-buildings.

A great deal of discussion is going on across the country about the best type of housing for the countryside and how it should look. Should there be purely urban blocks of flats or should the stress be laid on installing urban amenities in low-profile dwellings of the traditional type? Is it wise to concentrate life in large centers or do scattered villages have certain advantages if the transport and road system is satisfactory? No one, of course, demands that the upshot of these discussions is to be some uniform standardized type of housing. The aim is to find solutions suited to the special features of the given locality, while providing people with convenience and comfort.

'I won't hide the fact,' V.I. Krivorotov says, 'that when the experimental construction started some people wondered whether they would like it. They had grown up and lived in such close contact with the soil. But we didn't have to persuade anybody. Country life has changed a lot, and so have people.' This was our impression too.

We started by looking at the foundations, the material logistics. Last year the Rossiya Collective Farm paid its members 6 roubles 62 kopeks per work day. This is more than the national average for state and collective farmers. Nevertheless, as official statistics show, there has been a general increase in earnings in all rural areas. In 1965 the collective farmer received an average of 2r, 68k. per workday, and the state farm worker, 3r. 21k. In 1975 the corresponding figures were 4r. 60k. and 5r. 51k., which is an increase of approximately 70 per cent.

In addition, the people's standard of living under socialism is notably increased by what they receive in various forms from the social consumption funds and social security, such as pensions and disability allowances, which the people in rural areas enjoy on an equal basis with town dwellers. These benefits also include the health and education services, which cost the citizen nothing, although the cost to the state for every pupil at a village school, for instance, is 153 roubles a year, while the technical school pupil costs 617 roubles, and the student at an institute, 977 roubles. Every child at a rural kindergarten costs the state 454 roubles, and in a creche, 503 roubles. The parents reimburse only 20 per cent of these amounts.

One also has to take into account the effect of the socio-economic measures launched by enterprises with their own material resources

and funds. In the Rossiya Collective Farm, for instance, the members pay 20 per cent less than the standard retail prices for milk and vegetables produced by the farm. They pay only a quarter of the actual cost of any meals they take in the canteens, the rest being paid for by the collective farm. The dinners that are brought out to workers in the fields are supplied for the purely nominal sum of 20 kopeks, less than the cost of a cup of coffee in most European countries. The farms usually bear the main burden of house maintenace costs. Rents at the Krasnoarmeisky State Farm do not exceed 7 roubles a month and the farm spends 100,000 roubles a year on maintenance.

The pattern and way of life, its quality, do not depend only on the material living standard. They also depend on its sources, on all the conditions of a person's environment. Here is a comparison. In 1940, half the total income of a collective farm family came from its earnings on the farm and the social funds, while the other half was made by selling produce grown on the family's household plot. Nowadays the income from these plots accounts for no more than a quarter of the family budget. That is a big difference. Today people have more time for other things.

The march of culture has also brought changes. This village now has 1,200 specialists with higher or secondary education. But what about the average collective farmer? In 1940, 18 per thousand collective farmers had a secondary or higher (complete or incomplete) education; by 1975 the figure had risen to 537 per thousand.

Childhood. We went quietly through the Rossiya's kindergarten during the children's afternoon nap, which was the time we happened to arrive. We saw the rows of little faces puffing peacefully in their sleep, the special children's furniture, the mass of toys, the walls handpainted by professional artists in fairy-tale style. In the rural areas almost 2,500,000 children attend pre-school establishments of this kind; they are all staffed by qualified personnel.

Education. Half the country's school-children live in villages, which account for two-thirds of the total number of schools. More and more of the schools are becoming specialized. At the Slavnoye State Farm we saw a ballet studio and attended a concert given by the dance ensemble and chorus. At the Krasnoarmeisky we inspected a seven-year music school. The rural vocational schools (there are more than 1,500) train workers in a hundred trades.

Work. We particularly recall the dairy farm we visited in Slavnoye. Right near by it has a cultural center with a library, reading rooms and a health protection department. The industrialization of agriculture not only increases the productivity of labor, it also refines labor itself and calls for a stricter program of work and rest, the introduction of shifts, a proper system of days-off and holidays, which is something

that in capitalist countries remains out of reach of even quite prosperous farmers. High honors are granted for farm work in the USSR. Many of the people we met were wearing government decorations. In the Kuban area alone 470 workers hold the title of Hero of Socialist Labor and 110,000 have been awarded Orders and Medals.

The farmer — a national hero, decorated for his work. Where would you see that in a capitalist country?

Services, leisure. A present nearly all the villages across the land have electricity. A half of the rural population cook on gas, a third use centralized water supply. The value of purchasable every day services (tailoring, repairs, etc.) has increased from 311 million roubles in 1965 to 1,798 million in 1975. Last year 5 million farmers spent their holidays at health centers. The number of such centers and holiday homes is being increased so that in the new five-year plan period every rural worker will be able to take a holiday in one such center at least every two years.

Does this require any further comment? We saw the reality of the processes that in the USSR are described as elimination of the differences between town and country, the establishment of a unified way of life for the whole country.

All the enterprises that we visited — collective and state farms, inter-farm complexes — are in areas far from the capital, a thousand kilometres or more. We saw no signs of 'window-dressing.' These establishments are solid, but otherwise ordinary production centers. And yet they are totally different from the counterparts we know in the capitalist countries. And the main achievement — particularly impressive for those who are accustomed to people in rural areas looking poor and backward compared with townspeople — is in our opinion the type of countryman that is characteristic of the USSR today. The men and women we met in the villages, people of different nationalities and ethnic groups, are no different from townspeople in the material standard of life they enjoy, in matters of culture, or in the maturity of their political and ideological views. This is the great service performed by Soviet power, one of the proud achievements of its 60-year history.

The development of agriculture in the USSR inspires a sense of the vital power of socialism, the creative force of the Marxist-Leninist approach to the agrarian problem. In the context of a socialist society this sphere is revealing more and more new potentials and reserves for the ascent to economic and social maturity. We are sure that in the very near future we shall hear of further major successes that will both increase the Soviet people's well-being and serve the internationalist interests of the struggle for socialism of the working people of all countries.

Party experience

A fundamental internal political change is needed

Gerhardt Danelius
Chairman, Socialist Unity Party, West Berlin

Capitalism's economic crisis has come to West Berlin. Its full blast is felt in the economy, education, culture, in all spheres of social life. Evidence enough is to be found in the regrettable fact that 120,000 jobs have been eliminated in the city over the past six years. Despite certain signs of revival in some branches of the economy there is still an officially registered total of 38,000 unemployed. To these should be added the women and young people in need of work who are not covered by statistics. Unemployment has today become the number one social and political problem, affecting blue- and white-collar workers, young and old, students and teachers alike.

Things have come to such a pass that for the 20,000 pupils who leave school every year only 10,000 places are available at colleges and professional training centers. It is not hard to imagine what the picture will be in a few years' time when the children of the high birth rate generation start leaving school.

Even today teachers, doctors and scientists are being forced to quit the city for lack of work. So what will be the effect of the policy of cutting allocations to the health and social services, education and science?

As inflation continues money loses its value and prices go on rising. Taking the 1970 price index as 100 per cent, there was a jump to 127.9 per cent in 1974, and a further leap to 139.4 per cent last year. Rents have soared (148.7 per cent) and are chased by gas and electricity (176.8 per cent). On top of this the working people have to bear an ever increasing burden of income tax, while levies on employers are being lifted. Most of the 50 major companies in the FRG and West Berlin scored record postwar profits in 1974 and 1975, while in the first quarter of last year total wages and salaries of all blue- and white-collar workers taken together increased by a mere 2 per cent. Company profits, on the other hand, rose by more than 15 per cent, which shows just who is doing well out of the crisis.

While the ruling circles ramble on about freedom and democracy, the constitution is violated and the democratic rights of the workers

are increasingly infringed by those who live in fear of losing their power and privileges. It is a disgrace that in state institutions, schools and universities active democrats are subjected to humiliating loyalty checks designed to probe their personal attitudes. The promises of changes in the social sphere, made by former Mayor Klaus Schütz two years ago, have remained ink on paper.* The working people's conditions have gone from bad to worse instead of improving — such is the conclusion reached by the West Berlin communists and announced by them at their recent, Fifth Congress (April, 1977).

Even the leaders of parties with seats in the House of Representatives are compelled to discuss the crisis. But they do all they can to hide its true causes. The social democrats claim that the whole world is gripped by crisis, despite the obvious nonsense of this statement in the face of the steady economic development of the socialist countries. As for the Christian-Democratic leaders, their criticism of the existing situation is prompted by the obvious desire to elbow their way to the pay-offs and swing West Berlin policies even further to the right.

While the parties represented in the Senate (the government) adopt the tactics of masking the causes of the city's troubles, we say the truth must be told, and the truth is as follows:

the city is in crisis because it is dominated by capitalist relationships of property and power;

the city is in crisis because its working people are deprived of a decisive say in its affairs; this remains the privilege of the bosses of the industrial and commercial firms, the big banks and insurance companies;

the city is in crisis because its Senate, headed by the social democrats, is mainly concerned with protecting the interests of capital and, in pursuing such a policy, makes itself dependent on the laws of capitalism.

This is the truth and it leads to the conclusion that such a state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue. A fundamental internal political change is needed.

But is it possible? Yes, it is, although this will not be easy to bring about. The forces that tend to resist the policies of the ruling classes have been stirred into action by the crisis. This is due in no small measure to the activity of our party. The strikes for higher pay by the printers and civil servants, the militant protests at a number of enterprises against pay cuts and arbitrary action by the bosses, the demonstrations by students and workers in higher education in defense of their social and democratic rights, the increasing signs of solidarity

* The same fate awaits the promises of the new incumbent, Dietrich Stobbe, who has also backed down from curbing the power of the monopolies.

with blue- and white-collar workers who have lost their jobs as a result of closures, the growth of civil activity among sections of the population that formerly remained aloof from the struggle — all this is evidence that the industrial and office workers, people of intellectual occupations and other democratic-minded citizens of West Berlin represent a powerful force. This force will continue to grow if all its elements, regardless of political, ideological and religious beliefs, come out jointly in defense of their common interests.

Our party was, is and will continue to be a party of struggle for unity of action of the working class and for a broad alliance of all the democratic forces. Our party is ready to cooperate with any social democrats, Christian or non-party people who speak out in defense of the working people's democratic and social rights, who fight for peace and progress. It is for this reason that today far more workers than ever before are aware of their class interests.

Our struggle for working class unity of action and a broad democratic alliance is not just a tactical maneuver. It is our general policy line, because there is no other way except unity of action and a broad democratic alliance to mount a full and adequate defense of the interests of West Berlin's working people.

Realizing the urgent necessity for working class unity of action we communists will never act against our social democrat class comrades, despite the anti-communist hysteria of the right-wing leaders of social democracy. We are also guided by the workers' common interests in our activities in the trade unions. We acknowledge the independent role of the unions and oppose any party-political interference in their internal affairs. The aim of our party comrades working in the trade unions is to make union decisions accord as fully as possible with the interests of the workers. This major class organization of the working people must be further strengthened.

What are the most urgent tasks facing our party? First and foremost comes the struggle for safeguarding man's basic human right — the right to work. We know, of course, that in capitalist conditions full employment can never be guaranteed. It is for this very reason that our party is striving wholeheartedly to achieve its main goal — socialism. But definite steps against unemployment must be taken now. We consider it necessary:

— to shorten working hours without any reduction of wages, and to increase paid holidays;

— to mount resolute opposition to factory closures and transfers and to mass dismissals;

— to make radical changes in the granting of tax privileges and subsidies to employers in the course of rationalization of production. Although the Senate never tires of claiming that investments today

mean jobs for the workers tomorrow, the truth is that investment subsidies for companies are used only to cut the work force on the pretext of rationalization. In this way one in four jobs in West Berlin were eliminated over the past five years. The allotting of such subsidies should be placed under democratic control;

— to carry out a broad-based social program for making training opportunities in production available for school-leavers and young people who are unemployed. West Berlin's Free German Youth League has shown an important initiative in this respect and our party will give it every possible support;

— to conduct an economic and trade policy without any cold war restrictions, a policy for making proper use of West Berlin's natural geographical situation and particularly for expanding economic relations with the socialist countries.

This is what, as the West Berlin SUP sees it, is necessary and possible today to combat unemployment.

Defense of the interests of women, who today constitute more than half the city's population, figures prominently in our party's policy. Here we are continuing the traditions of the revolutionary workers' movement, which has from the first carried the call for women's equality on its banner.

In West Berlin this is an extremely urgent task because here, as everywhere in the world of capital, women are constantly subjected to discrimination. Women industrial workers receive 30 per cent less pay per hour than men, and women office personnel are sometimes paid 38 per cent less than men for the same job. They accordingly receive smaller unemployment benefits and smaller pensions. Many women have no professional training whatever and their right to acquire any is restricted.

We are concerned over the fate of the 400,000 old-age pensioners in the city, who feel the increasingly cruel pressure of inflation, rising prices, higher living costs and deterioration of the health services.

Many members of our party work side by side with foreign colleagues. We are well informed about the special difficulties of this section of the population, of whom there are nearly 180,000 in the city. Foreign workers are subjected to monstrous discrimination. Their earnings are low, but they have to pay much higher rents and they are denied the most elementary rights. They are made scapegoats for the growth of unemployment so as to set foreign and local workers at loggerheads and thus sidetrack attention from the true causes of this evil. The treatment of foreign workers and their families indicates that West Berlin's policy-makers are not in the least prepared to honor the clauses of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference stipulating that foreign workers should be granted the

same opportunities as the local population. We emphatically demand that our foreign colleagues should be granted equal social and political rights.

Together with the trade unions, the progressive organizations of parents and school pupils and also scientists and scholars, our party advocates a democratic system of education open to all, the abolition of inequality and discrimination in educational opportunities, reform of curricula that are out of touch with the needs of democracy, and changes in the principles of the West Berlin constitution and legislation on education. What is at stake here is the standard of education of the next generation of working people, the city's scientific potential. In other words, our future. If the children of workers continue to be debarred from quality education, if in a few years there is a shortage of trained workers, technologists, teachers and doctors, this will affect all citizens.

In higher education we are faced with a marked deterioration in the conditions of study and research, increasing interference by the authorities in questions of teaching and research, and ever wider application of anti-democratic practices and surveillance. At the same time the students are becoming increasingly determined to fight for their social demands and for democratic rights. This was illustrated by the impressive demonstration of December 1, 1976 in which 20,000 students took part. There is a growing awareness that students and people working in higher education can achieve optimal results only on the condition that they act in concert with the workers, with all the working people.

The authorities are planning to close down 78 of the 122 hospitals and reduce the number of beds by 7,000. The justification for these plans is said to be the excessively high cost of the health service. However, the Senate remains discreetly silent about what is making the health service so costly. We need only to take a look at the price policy of the chemical pharmaceutical firms. The managing boards of these firms themselves consider that the price of some of the medicines in higher demand could be lowered by at least a third. Our party believes that a particularly important step toward improving the health service and social security would be improvement of work safety and expansion of the medical services available at factories. We also propose ways of fighting the increasing pollution of the environment, which is detrimental to people's health in the city.

All our party's proposals are in accord with the democratic principles of the West Berlin constitution, which was drawn up to preserve, defend and extend citizens' democratic rights.

We are for social progress, by which we mean above all the fight against restriction of the working people's democratic rights and

freedoms, against the constant violations of constitutional provisions by the Senate. This means stepping up resistance to a policy that is in itself utterly undemocratic because it is conducted in the interests of an insignificant minority that wields power over the absolute majority of the population.

We are for social progress, by which we mean the campaign to give the workers and all working people more influence in the making of economic or political decisions that will have a direct effect on their lives. The law on participation in management that came into force on July 1, 1976, gave the working people neither participation in management not 'greater democracy.' It had no effect at all on the rights of the big shareholders to manipulate profits, investments and prices, and disband the trade unions. The big firms can sidestep the law merely by changing the legal formulations. Blue- and white-collar workers, whether as members of production councils or trade unionists, have no right to decide what is to be produced, how and where capital is to be invested, how dividends and profits are distributed, or how prices are fixed. We say that there should be control over such matters by blue- and white-collar workers.

We view the fight for the working people's rights in close connection with the need for a resolute struggle for peace and strengthening of détente. The main thing for West Berlin is that in a changing world its status should be in accord with the needs of peace and correspond to the interests of the West Berliners. This demands political realism. In this connection we must mention the major significance of the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin, which placed the city's political status on a firm treaty basis. Undoubtedly this agreement has helped to relax tension in Europe. It has created the preconditions for the normal and peaceful development of West Berlin and has brought its citizens nothing but good. We resolutely condemn all attempts on the part of the West Berlin authorities to act in contravention of this agreement and build up tension around the city. We advocate strict observance and full application of the agreement and its key proposition that West Berlin is not part of the FRG and cannot be governed by it. We advocate good-neighbor relations with the German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

For us to achieve all our objectives there must be a further political, ideological and organizational strengthening of our party. Definite successes have been scored in this respect in the past few years. We have recruited new members. The party is growing younger. More than 40 per cent of its membership are women, who form a great and necessary force for the party. The creative study of Marxist-Leninist theory, which is a constant need for us communists, has developed on a broad scale. The quality of the political work of many party

groups has improved. The majority of party organizations are more and more actively campaigning for the working people's interests, thus underlining the irrefutable fact that the work of the communists is not merely a goal in itself but dedicated service to the working class and all who labor.

A major impetus in this respect was given by the party conference held in April 1975, which analyzed the results of the elections to the House of Representatives and the local government bodies and disclosed the causes of the unsatisfactory results of these elections for the SUP, West Berlin. The conference reached the conclusion that the slogan 'Closer to the masses!' should be put into practice even more consistently.

As the election meetings of the primary organizations and also the district party conferences have reaffirmed, this was the correct policy. So it is this slogan that guides all the practical activity of our party.

If all the enemy's attacks on our party's unity and cohesion have failed, if voluntary communist discipline has gained ground in our militant alliance, this is in no small measure due to the strengthening of our ideological work. Even our enemies cannot deny this. They are becoming more and more worried by the distribution of our factory newspapers and leaflets and by the broad-based public discussions we are organizing. They claim that all this activity spreads the communist ideology. What a revelation! Naturally the party considers it its duty to reply to the working people's questions from communist positions and, wherever it can, to break the monopoly of bourgeois and right-wing social-democratic manipulation of public opinion. Naturally it seeks to encourage the young generation's growing interest in Marxist-Leninist theory and will in future make even greater efforts to satisfy this interest.

Since January 29th of this year the newspaper *Wahrheit,* our party's guiding organ, has been coming out in a new format and design. This is undoubtedly a great achievement, for which thanks are due mainly to the solidarity that the members and friends of our party have shown with the newspaper, to their constant efforts to win more subscribers. We must go on helping the paper to carry out even more effectively the task entrusted to it by the party of creating a genuinely popular newspaper held in high esteem by the workers and feared by big business and its political henchmen.

What is particularly important from the standpoint of ideological work in the current period? Generally speaking, it is a matter of using our world outlook even more widely and consistently to produce the answers to the questions confronting the working people of our city in the context of the the intensifying crisis of capitalism and reaction's mounting attack on their social and democratic rights. Naturally we

have no intention of abandoning the polemics against either the right-wing social-democratic or the ultra-left pseudo-theorists, with their various 'models' and quotations dragged out of context. But for us the essential thing is to get our world outlook across to the workers in this period of intensification of the ideological class struggle. Ideological work must therefore demonstrate the irreconcilability of the contradictions between labor and capital, the incompatibility of the class interests of the workers and the bourgeoisie; it must spread our belief that the working people can achieve success in the class struggle only by concerted action.

There can be no doubt that the struggle will be more effective if the increasing numbers of working people come to realize how hypocritical the declarations about social partnership and class harmony really are, if the workers reach a clearer understanding of their own class interests, if in fighting for their immediate aims they remember that in the final analysis something more is at stake, namely, overcoming the power of the monopolies and achieving social progress. This means combating the pseudo-revolutionary groups that, by spreading vicious anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, act as tools of reaction and the enemies of peace. More attention must be given to the questions of the changing balance of forces in the world as a whole, of peaceful coexistence and the class struggle, to proving that the future belongs to socialism. The 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution offers us splendid opportunities in this sphere.

As a revolutionary working-class party the SUP, West Berlin, has been and will remain an internationalist party. It works from the conviction that the effective defense of the present and future interests of the working people of our city and the consistent observance of the principles of proletarian internationalism are inseparably linked. This is particularly true today, when the class adversary is becoming more and more organized on an international scale and when the trend toward internationalization of the class struggle is emerging so clearly. Our party is constantly guided by Lenin's maxim that the essence of internationalism lies in dedicated activity in the ranks of the revolutionary movement in one's own country and at the same time unreserved support for the revolutionary struggle in all countries.

We are developing and strengthening our relations with the fraternal parties in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. It was in this spirit that the West Berlin SUP took an active part in preparing and conducting the Berlin Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties, which has become an important event in the life of our movement. Our party highly values the concluding document of this conference, which was worked out jointly and passed unani-

mously. In our view, it provides a sound basis for joint struggle. At their latest congress the West Berlin communists have assured all the fraternal parties that they will continue to play their part in carrying out the action program charted in Berlin.

Naturally we do not close our eyes to the existence of certain differences of opinion within our movement. Our enemies are mistaken, however, in assuming that the great family of the communist and workers' parties will fall apart. Much of what is at present being discussed in our ranks stems from the growing strength and impetus of the world communist movement, its increasing influence in new areas and sections of society, and from the great differences in the conditions in which some parties work as compared with others. The current discussions are therefore a perfectly normal thing and will — in our view — help the common cause if they proceed from the interests of the whole international working-class movement, from its historical experience, from the historical responsibility for social progress that is shared by all communists. We are convinced that the dominant tendency in our movement is and will be to strengthen its unity, to rally even more closely on the firm basis of proletarian internationalism and the immortal teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin. As for our party, it firmly adheres to internationalist positions. This means that it rejects all varieties of right and 'left' opportunism, that it resolutely defends scientific socialism, the great, world-changing teaching that serves as an accurate and reliable compass for us communists of West Berlin.

Living Marxism for the masses

Imre Györi
Secretary, CC HSWP

The assumption of political power by the working class marks the beginning of socialist changes in society. Experience shows that their depth and pace vary from one public sphere to another — in industry and agriculture, they are not the same as in law, ideology, culture or the way of life. What makes the uneven rate of development of these spheres inevitable is that conditions for socialist changes in them do not mature simultaneously and that the changes are effected by dissimilar methods. On analyzing the development of Hungarian society over the past decades, our party's Central Committee came to the conclusion that the role and significance of the subjective factor,

ideology, in our national life today are greater than ever. Let us see why.

Hungary has entered the stage of building a developed socialist society. This stage is distinguished, in particular, by new processes in the economy and other spheres. The state as a whole, the economy, culture and ideology are developing more dynamically on the socialist basis that has now taken solid shape, and this necessitates a more harmonious interconnection of all public spheres. In the years ahead, our party will work to strengthen this interconnection, for this will condition the pace and character of all social progress. Evidently, success will depend in large measure on how far we take account of the interaction and reciprocal influence — stimulating or hampering as the case may be — of the economy, politics, culture and ideology. Our party holds that we can achieve lasting results in solving political and economic problems only if we devote greater attention to the advancement of the people's socialist thinking, behavior and way of life.

It follows that the increased role of the subjective factor, and of socialist consciousness and way of life as its components, are a logical result and requirement of the new conditions in which Hungarian society is developing. What people think of our socialist reality, how far their interests and goals coincide with those of society or how their convictions transform themselves into action are all matters of paramount importance.

The role of ideology is also growing due to international factors. Détente and the vindication of the principles of peaceful coexistence in economic as well as in political and cultural relations have led to livelier intercourse between countries of the two opposed world systems. The Helsinki Conference provided new opportunities for this. At the same time, the shaping of a new world situation is attended by an expansion of the ideological world front, which, in turn, makes greater demands on our ideological work at home and abroad.

The vast experience of building socialism and the gains of the socialist community make it possible and necessary to publicize our achievements still more vigorously and to disseminate Marxist-Leninist ideas more widely. The policy of peaceful coexistence, by reducing the threat of nuclear war and increasing international security, affords favorable conditions for social progress and a more active struggle for national independence. The policy of peace and of unity is the struggle for peace and socialism — a policy being followed by the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole — is winning socialism and all progressive forces new millions of supporters among the working people. This, too, adds to the responsibility of the brother parties of all socialist countries for the solution of problems

arising from the stepped-up ideological struggle. We know very well that it is to Marxism-Leninism, to scientific socialism, that the progressive forces look for answers to key questions bearing on the present and future of mankind.

We do not forget that although world imperialism has been considerably weakened, it is still a very strong opponent having ample experience and substantial means for carrying on its ideological struggle. The huge machinery set up by it to indoctrinate the masses has now been geared to ideological subversion against the socialist countries and to one of the biggest anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaigns of the postwar period, launched on the spurious plea of defending human rights. The campaign is well orchestrated both nationally and internationally. Our party joins efforts with the brother parties of other countries of the socialist community to press forward the ideological offensive against imperialism and expose the nature of imperialism still more effectively while revealing the advantages and achievements of socialism more convincingly.

The results of political practice depend directly on the degree of the working people's ideological maturity, which must be attained through continuous Marxist-Leninist education. Our experience proves that to lead socialist society, it is not enough to regulate according to scientifically defined objectives and tasks the processes going on in it. The regulating role of party and state influence on society is fully effective only when the people, primarily party members, understand these objectives and tasks, are convinced of their correctness and work consciously and unwaveringly for their materialization.

This is why we give priority attention to raising the ideological and political level of party members and the people as a whole. We want political education fully to meet the requirements of building developed socialism, and so we see to it that Marxist-Leninism is widely publicized and studied.

The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party concerns itself with this task in accordance with its political leverage and significance in society. About 73 per cent of the party members study Marxism-Leninism systematically. Organized studies encompass over 400,000 people, including 800,000 who attend classes for cadres' training. Some 68,000 people work as lecturers and teachers in classes run by the party or by mass organizations. The party gives much attention to those who do not belong to it but attend party courses or schools for leaders of mass organizations or executive personnel of government agencies, as well as to university students.

The party's ideological and political education system involves over two million people. This indicates that interest in Marxist-

Leninist theory is growing both among party members and the population at large and that socialist ideas increasingly influence the people and mould society's complex spiritual and moral character.

With due regard to the fundamental guidelines of the 11th Party Congress (1975), the CC HSWP last October made a detailed analysis of the ideological and political schooling of party members. It carefully examined the situation and generalized the experience of the party's propaganda activity.

Our party's correct policy has united the people politically, the 11th Congress and the October 1976 meeting of the CC pointed out. Our aim now is to make this unity just as strong ideologically. The people's social consciousness does not generally run ahead of their material being. However, we can and must ensure that it contributes increasingly to the materialization of the tremendous potentialities of the socialist system.

We note with satisfaction that the ideological unity of the party membership and the politically active masses has reached a high level. Society as a whole accepts and supports Marxist-Leninist tenets regarding the leading role of the working class and its party, the policy of class alliance, socialist democracy, the state, planned economy, socialist economic integration, cultural revolution, and party guidance of cultural activities and ideological life. A characteristic of social consciousness at this stage is that Marxism-Leninism holds a dominant position and is winning the hearts and minds of more and more people. This is seen in gains made in building socialism, specifically in the production sphere; it is also exemplified by the democratic nature of human relations, the political activity of the working people and a new way of life whose standard is going up. The widespread movement of socialist work teams, for one, shows that the socialist way of life is neither something introduced 'from above,' nor an artificially created 'ideal' situation but an everyday mass phenomenon that has originated at grass roots. This movement reminds us once more that new positive initiatives should be promptly put to use and widely publicized.

The communists and all our working people are proud of their socialist country's political and economic progress. At the same time, the activity of our communists, workers, peasants and intellectuals shows that they are fully committed to internationalism. Our people look on the peoples of other socialist countries as brothers, welcome their gains and understand their problems. They identify themselves with the workers of capitalist countries who are fighting against monopoly power, for radical social changes, and with the peoples fighting for independence and social progress. Our working people participate ever more in the expanding process of socialist economic

integration and in political and other public actions in support of peoples battling for freedom and independence. An instance of our workers' internationalism is the nationwide production competition drive to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, an action initiated by workers at the Csepel plant.

Our society is following a path which we are certain will lead to complete victory for Marxist-Leninist ideas, the triumph of the socialist world outlook, and a universal realization that labor and production are the basis for society's existence. A high degree of social consciousness and activity and varied knowledge will become a necessity for everyone and there will be unity and interconnection between public and private life. As a result, the typical member of society will be a person whose life will harmoniously combine work, public activity and effort to extend his knowledge.

Phenomena and notions of a non-socialist nature still occur in our society. We even come across party members who do not always hold correct views. More often than not, this is due to the present development level of socialist social relations, to the circumstance that personal or group interests do not always coincide entirely with the interests of society and that certain survivals of the former society still linger in some people's minds. Besides, socialism cannot be completely immunized against the impact of the world capitalist system. And while society as a whole is dominated by collectivist relations, selfish tendencies make themselves felt here and there. Sometimes an event at home or abroad gives rise to comments overestimating or minimizing national peculiarities. In the case of religion, some are too willing to compromise and others too intolerant. With some party members, ideological training does not always go hand in hand with comparable political activity. We also know by experience that appreciation and acceptance of our principles do not necessarily develop into conviction, prompt the adoption of an explicit political position or lead to an active public role.

However, these phenomena do not undermine the foundations of the ideological and political unity of society; they are mere concomitants of the struggle for its continuous renewal. The party is aware that for all the importance of continuous ideological education, the only way to eliminate negative phenomena and views is to remove their objective causes.

Janos Kadar, first Secretary of the CC HSWP, has said that the teaching and dissemination of living Marxism are central to the party's ideological, political and educational work. Speaking of ideological education at a meeting dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the CC HSWP Higher Party School in September 1974, he pointed out: '...

To teach living Marxism-Leninism is to defeat subjectivism, which falsifies everything — theory and reality, to defeat dogmatism, which distorts theory and ignores reality, to defeat revisionist trends, views and tendencies, which falsify Marxism and reject the class theory, and lastly, to theoretically generalize practical experience, that is, carry forward living Marxist-Leninist theory.'

Our party considers that the main requisite of victory for the Marxist-Leninist world outlook is a sound knowledge of the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, on the one hand, and the party members' ability to translate theory into practice, on the other. This implies that students in the party education system must carefully assimilate the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism and give more attention to studying Marx, Engels and Lenin. A profound knowledge of Marxist-Leninist classics helps avoid vulgar interpretations and a simplistic or subjectivist conception of Marxism, adds to the party members' ideological preparedness and safeguards them against fashionable, passing views advocated by rightists or 'leftists.' It is also unquestionable that the reciprocal influence of Marxist theory and practice — the basis on which Marxism-Leninism is steadily developing — bears good fruit.

When leaning on this theory for support, party members gain a deeper understanding of the character and distinctive aspects of contradictions under socialism, grasp their complexity and consider them in development and in the historical interconnection of social, political and economic phenomena. In other words, they acquire a capacity for thinking in dialectical and historical terms. Our party's Central Committee expects this process to become more dynamic. We want all party members to know the objective laws of our epoch and contemporary society and see the inherent unity of the interconnections of diverse aspects of public life — ideology, economy, politics and culture. The Marxist world outlook, dialectical and historical materialism, helps the communists of our country to realize that our plans and socialist goals can only materialize to the extent that the contradictions of social development are overcome. Shaping a scientific, revolutionary world outlook, the CC meeting stressed, helps to rid educational work of dogmatism and simplification, prevent its isolation from reality and the problems it poses and put an end to the mechanical memorizing of theoretical propositions.

The ideological education of party members is based on substantial revolutionary experience. The CC gives much attention to the study of the history of the Hungarian working-class movement and the HSWP, for it considers that this should hold a fitting place in the study of our people's past. This helps to strengthen the communists' class positions in assessing the party's effort in home and foreign

policy. It helps to strengthen and enhance the significance of socialist patriotism, for the Hungarian communist movement has always served social progress and operated in its forefront. Bringing the party's experience home to the people holds the promise of their evolving a correct view of history. When taken together, historical events may be said to radiate — with the conviction of facts — the objective logic and meaning of the historical process. The main conclusion which the experience of our party invites is that the rise and spread of socialism in Hungary are a result of both a national and an international class struggle, a product of social progress. It is also important to study the experience of the working-class movement from the standpoint of solving today's problems, for Marxist-Leninist parties draw on it in their political practice. This means that teaching party history adds ultimately to people's conviction of the correctness of our revolutionary path and encourages them to strive for long-range goals.

Study of the history of the party and the working-class movement makes it possible to discern the universal, international aspects of the national struggle of the working class and reveals the meaning of proletarian internationalism. The idea of internationalism flows logically from the internationalist character of the struggle of the working class and from the fact that in striving to consolidate working-class power and fighting for socialism, for economic, political and cultural changes, the people of every socialist country necessarily enter into a fraternal alliance with the peoples of other socialist countries.

Theoretical interpretation of the experience of brother parties is part of our ideological and educational work. We acquaint party members with the immense creative effort of the peoples of socialist countries, with how brother parties in developed capitalist countries are fighting for working-class power, and with the changing social and economic conditions in which this fight is going on. We draw on the vast experience of the international class struggle, political and ideological documents of the international communist and working-class movement, its estimations, the discussions it holds, and lessons of the struggle against right- and 'left'-wing opportunism to foster devotion to the socialist ideal and cause, strengthen class positions, educate the working people in an internationalist spirit and build up their solidarity.

We assign a particularly important role to popularizing Soviet experience. Study of the history of Soviet society, which is preparing to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution, shows that the political system established by socialism is an instance of consistently fulfilling the historic mission of the working class and that the new social system sets in motion a tremendous material and

spiritual potential to solve the fundamental problems of mankind. The Soviet Union, by overcoming unprecedented difficulties and making numerous sacrifices for the happiness of all mankind, has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate that socialism is the most progressive and equitable social system on earth. Our party regards the experience of building socialism and communism in the Soviet Union as a most valuable legacy and turns to it time and again in its ideological education work.

The CC HSWP pointed out that as well as acquainting our people with the activity of the brother parties of socialist countries, we must inform them more extensively about the working-class movement in non-socialist countries and trends in the social-democratic and trade union movements. All this gives a real and adequate idea of the present-day state of the class struggle in the world.

By solving complicated theoretical problems and carrying on systematic propaganda, our party wants to ensure that all its members keep pace with the country's political development and the latest achievements in the sphere of theory. It focuses its membership's attention on the main social realities, the more important phenomena and interconnections of today and the need to disseminate Marxist-Leninist ideas still more effectively. This makes the party's ideological and educational work an effective instrument of building up society's ideological and political unity and continuing socialist construction.

The party's educational work and propaganda are dovetailed with the requirements of social development, the political tasks set by congresses and other party bodies, and the people's effort in building socialism. The party can keep abreast of social progress only by steadily raising the scientific standard of its propaganda.

Party propaganda draws many of its arguments and conclusions from the social sciences, from the latest findings of theoretical research. It uses in ideological and political studies conclusions and estimations that have been fully substantiated from the scientific point of view and repeatedly tested in practice. At the same time, the party finds it important that students should discuss controversial questions which have yet to be answered exhaustively and in specific terms by science and practice. In this respect, it proceeds from scientific recommendations that take proper account of developments and are entirely in keeping with Marxist-Leninist requirements and our political goals. Inasmuch as an important task of the party is to provide solutions for problems posed by our epoch, the Central Committee in October 1976 emphasized the need to link political propaganda more closely with the social sciences and to apply the results of the latest Marxist theoretical investigations at once more boldly and efficiently.

Our party works steadfastly to improve the methods of spreading its scientific world outlook. It strives to bring its propaganda work, and hence the activity of the mass media, into line with a political practice constantly adopting new methods and with the ever higher standards required in training its members. The decisions of the CC's October 1976 meeting call for steps to improve propaganda with due regard to the needs of social development and the tasks facing the party and the country.

The party is concentrating on improving the quality of its propaganda, for the stage at which the primary task was to enrol more students is over and the emphasis now is on a higher standard, on more effective studies. The party's ideological education work is aimed at ensuring that the political ideas and ideological views it propagates do not merely impart knowledge but become conviction. We want every party member and every citizen committed to our common cause, socialism, to feel the essential truth of the ideas championed by Marxism-Leninism. To this end, we perfect the forms and methods of ideological and political education and combat formalism, which reduces the educational impact of our ideas. In the party's opinion, ideological education cannot be restricted to the mere assimilation of political knowledge, for this would only means satisfying demands nominally. The purpose of instruction is to acquaint students with living ideas, to help them in assimilating these ideas in the course of exchanges of views that make them think, and to prepare them in the end for applying these ideas in practice. The students' aim should be not so much to obtain a certificate on completing a course of study as to learn to use in political and other public activity and in everyday work the knowledge they have acquired.

It is according to these demands that we are improving the party education system. We consider, for instance, that we need to establish a closer link between instruction in a party school and instruction outside it and to ensure that every subject taught at school should also be taught at evening courses, with increasing emphasis on the latter form. In deciding on the ratio between basic training and refresher courses, we give priority to the latter form because there are more and more people who have already acquired a basic knowledge and wish to update it or to carry it deeper. Besides, organized refresher courses do not suit many of our cadre members who are well trained theoretically and are active politically. We enable these comrades to study — under appropriate supervision and with the requisite help — problems of Marxist-Leninist theory that are more in line with their interests.

The propagandist's personality plays a decisive part in meeting the requirements of ideological and political education. He is the one who

conveys the party's policy and Marxist-Leninist ideas to the people. It is safe to say that the results of sustained effort by propagandists make communists more aware politically and contribute to the ideological and political unity of our party. The relevant decisions of the Central Committee's October meeting are based on previous results; at the same time, they urge progress in the ideological schooling of propagandists, perfecting their political orientation and improving their teaching methods. Our object is to train all propagandists in a way enabling them to closely link up their theoretical knowledge with political practice in teaching and in educational work and make competent use of teaching methods. This is indispensable if their work is to be more fruitful, if their arguments are to carry more weight with students.

An important means of raising the efficiency of ideological work is to improve organizing activity and guidance of instruction, primarily in party groups and branches. Growing tasks prompt party committees and organizations to pay greater attention to this activity. We want leading members and activists of the party to extend their knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and improve their ability to analyze a given situation and, on the other hand, to approach ideological work as a component of their activity. The Central Committee expects party organizations and committees to systematically concern themselves with ideological matters, analyze the membership's ideological training, generalize the experience of communist education and carry on this effort with due regard to the specific nature of the given organization. The CC meeting pointed out that in examining political, economic or cultural problems, it is essential to forecast the impact of ideological activity on people's thinking, behavior and decisions and to plan ideological and political education tasks accordingly. Party organizations must concern themselves with questions relating to world outlook and discuss all problems of fundamental political importance. Their political work should be based on the experience gained in carrying on party propaganda, which they should fully use. Our party sees the main factor for efficient ideological work in an increasingly close connection between propaganda and political activity.

The need to perfect ideological education also sets more exacting tasks before the party press and other media, which must help more meaningfully and effectively to improve the ideological and political training and all-round development of party members, of every member of socialist society.

The October meeting of the Central Committee formulated the main long-range tasks in the sphere of ideological and political education. By accomplishing them and thereby improving the party

membership's ideological and political training, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party is fulfilling its historic mission of serving the working people's cause and providing the guidelines for the building of a developed socialist society.

Lessons of Chile

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THE WORKING CLASS AND ITS POLICY OF ALLIANCE

The assumption of power in Chile by the Popular Unity government was neither a chance development, nor a product of miscalculation on the part of reaction, as some believed. It was a victory resulting from united action by the people in which the working class played the leading role, from a decades-long struggle that surged high in the 50s and 60s.

That was when the socialist-communist alliance grew stronger and the United Workers' Center (CUT) was formed under whose leadership big strikes for both economic and political demands took place. The peasants fought in organized fashion for land and townspeople for housing; there developed a vast and powerful movement of students and academic personnel for university reform. Using new forms, young people joined with a boldness typical of their age in a struggle whose objectives were determined by the need for revolutionary change. Characteristically, political freedoms were extended in those years, life in the country was democratized and the people gained in political maturity. Their political awareness was shaped in large measure by the political struggle when, during the 1958 and 1964 election campaigns, they backed Salvador Allende's nomination for the presidency.

Our party's correct policy under Christian-Democratic rule — a policy of uniting all progressives and democrats among the opposition forces and in the government and of resisting all reactionaries in both the government and the opposition — enabled us to bring it home to the masses that the government's promises of reform were delusive and to call their attention to pressing political and social problems. These problems, which agitated the most diverse population groups,

This is the sixth in a series of articles on the lessons of Chile. See *WMR*, January, February, March, May and June, 1977.

were recovery of Chile's natural resources, primarily the major copper mines, a reform of property rights, an end to the latifundium system through a far-reaching agrarian reform, the creation of new jobs, an end to backwardness and steps to assure the country's development as an independent and sovereign state.

The conviction that Chile needed deep-going economic, social and political changes became ultimately part of the social consciousness of most Chileans. It found reflection in the policy of the parties that subsequently joined Popular Unity and in the sentiments of most Christian Democrats and independents.

It was in that turbulent atmosphere that late in 1969 the Popular Unity political bloc came into existence. Its program was in keeping with the interests of the majority of the population and called for profound changes in Chilean society.

Popular Unity was established due chiefly to the communists. The party had a meaningful political program and made a correct assessment of the situation, indicating who were the principal enemies and inferring that a broad alliance of progressive forces was needed to isolate reaction.

The Socialist and Radical parties and the Christian Democrats who had withdrawn from their party to form the MAPU (Movement for United Popular Action) party made a decisive contribution to the formation of Popular Unity.

The victory on September 4, 1970, was achieved primarily by the working class and the more advanced peasants in alliance with the revolutionary forces of the urban petty bourgeoisie and a sizable part of the middle strata. To make further headway, it was necessary to strengthen the alliance by increasing the leading role of the working class and reinforcing it with allies from new population groups.

Our policy of alliance was based on an in-depth study of realities. Imperialist domination and the existence of a monopolistic and landed oligarchy whose interests run counter to those of the immense majority of the population were at the root of the main contradictions that had to be resolved in Chile. The working class needed to come to terms with all social strata whose interests were affected by the domination of imperialism and the domestic oligarchy or at least to neutralize this or that stratum. The popular forces had a certain experience that could help them attain this goal. It grew noticeably due to the alliance which diverse ideological currents — Marxist, Christian, Rationalist — formed in electing Allende president. The alliance developed fast as the result of a continuous search for common ground, with emphasis on what made for unity in the struggle against the common enemy and fostered the people's militancy. About 15,000 branch committees were formed during the election

campaign. They constituted a political contingent possessing a huge potential for effecting revolutionary changes.

In these circumstances, it was necessary to press forward with invariable regard to Lenin's statement that 'the more powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful, attentive, skillful and *obligatory* use of any, even the smallest, rift between the enemies ... and also by taking advantage of any, even the smallest, opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional' *(Coll. Works,* Vol. 31, pp. 70-71).

To carry on a common policy making the working class the pivot and driving force of revolutionary change, it was essential to strengthen the unity of the working class itself and then that of all wage workers, which, in turn, had to contribute to the formation of a broad national alliance of popular forces around the working class. Politically, it was based on socialist-communist unity of action. Trade union unity was promoted by the formation of CUT. The revolutionary forces' strong influence on the working people was demonstrated when, in 1972, CUT was founded and its leadership elected by direct vote. Large groups of voters (32.5 and 26 per cent, respectively) backed communist and socialist trade unionists; the Radicals won 4.7 per cent and MAPU, 4.1 per cent.

On the other hand, the vote showed that the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) was still influential among the working people (it polled 25.9 per cent of the votes) and that while organizing work was greatly intensified, large numbers of wage and salary earners were still unorganized. Then there were the many small industrial enterprises and handicraft workshops, employing 39 per cent of the industrial work force, according to statistics for 1967 and 1968. There was also the fast growth of the proportion of wage workers due to an influx of labor from other social classes and strata, chiefly from the peasantry, as well as to an influx of young people only just beginning their working lives. The national work force increased by 16 per cent in a mere five years (1966-71). Both these realities called for a consolidation of forces in the trade union movement and for sustained effort to enlighten socially those who joined the ranks of the working class.

In that process of change, it was no easy task to win over the majority of working people. Many mistakes were made. Take the economic sphere, for example. Miscalculations in Popular Unity policy bred, in particular, a trend toward wasteful spending out of proportion with the country's possibilities. The policy of fixed prices came up against excessive economic demands which conflicted with the program for wage increases envisaged by the Popular Unity government and the trade unions. Whereas the 1971 plan provided for

a 40 per cent increase (which exceeded the price growth), the actual increase averaged more than 50 per cent. Contrary to the policy framed by the government, many enterprises put up wages by 100, 200 or even 500 per cent over and above plan indices. Reaction seized on these blunders to pursue its destabilization policy, as was only to be expected. Even those who had always opposed the working people's demands, now eagerly supported the most unreasonable demands.

Of course, a further drawback was that certain trade union quarters supporting the government failed to realize that the situation had changed. They stuck to slogans of the past calling for economic strikes. They took advantage of the attention which the new national leadership gave to the working people's needs, as well as of the loosening of the employers' arbitrary methods.

Experience shows that the demand for better economic conditions, and other specific demands, which are generally an expression of the working people's struggle against the ruling classes can be used by these classes for their own ends if the working people lose sight of the overall situation during the formation of a popular government.

The Chilean events also show that right- and 'left'-wing opportunism can, objectively, converge in such circumstances. This is not accidental, we believe, but very typical and likely to recur at critical junctures. Competition between ultra-leftist and rightist trends in and outside the working class for the formulation of extreme slogans was added proof of the need to combat opportunism.

Our experience indicates that such a fight, far from weakening the working people's unity of action and cohesion, is a requisite of their unity and helps those influenced by opportunists join in the united movement. The conspirators' plans for a coup invariably provided for the use of opportunism and it was used, in particular, for backing the employers' strikes in October 1972 and July-August 1973. Opportunist trends were based on the factors we have mentioned: the very composition of Chile's work force, the existence of disorganized and apolitical groups in this structure and the influx of a new work force with an ideology of its own. In addition, the revolutionary forces made mistakes in their activity among the working people. Right-wing opportunism and ultra-leftism had a certain mass backing, which though not very large, was fairly strong.

To carry forward the revolutionary process, it was indispensable, along with the ideological struggle against influences alien to the working class, to enlist the working people's widest participation in economic management, in government, in the activity of every social sector. Accordingly, our party repeatedly raised the issue of working-class policy in the course of Chile's economic trans-

formation. I think it is important to give an idea of the party's actual approach to this matter.

'The battle for production is no battle unless there are specific plans, precise objectives and genuine participation by the working people. When speaking of plans, we mean neither tentative calculations, nor the formulation of forecasts in terms customary under capitalism. We put forward plans setting definite tasks and containing estimates in regard to production, marketing, investment, finance, the work force, labor productivity, average wages, exports and imports, social and cultural measures, and the use of surpluses. Without such plans, we cannot achieve the stability needed to raise productivity and ensure that enterprises in the public sector operate at a profit.

'The formulation and fulfillment of these plans must not be seen as something bureaucratic. They should constitute a process in which guidelines prepared according to scientific criteria provide the basis for decision-making, with the widest participation of the working people. The plans should specify monthly section assignments, so that every worker and every technician may understand them and ensure fulfillment. Managing boards should report to general workers' meetings monthly on progress in carrying out plans. Instead of employer tyranny and workers handing in demands, the way must be paved in the public and mixed sectors for democratic agreements on production plans and wages, to be drafted in cooperation with the trade unions as exponents of the will of the working class in its new role of leading force of the country invested with revolutionary and patriotic responsibilities.'[1]

Our policy was not merely formulated in general terms. Much was done to put it into practice. Unquestionable gains were registered, for instance, at the Yarur, Textil Progreso, Madeco, Socora, Inmar and other enterprises which were managed efficiently in accordance with the government's general guidelines, and where worker participation in management had become a reality. This contributed to better organizations, operation and bigger profits. Also worthy of note are the efforts made for the organization of machine pools, production planning, material incentives, and planned use of foreign exchange in the public and mixed sectors.

The steps taken by the Allende government in this field were of historic significance if viewed against the background of the Chilean situation of the time. From today's point of view, however, they were much too limited.

The government succeeded in bringing the working people into management in many enterprises. New distribution channels were created and the trade unions had a say on major national problems. This was important to the nation's progress and helped foster the

working people's social consciousness and introduce new forms of labor discipline replacing discipline based on capitalist exploitation. The government was successful above all where the workers had assumed greater responsibility for management. But where they had not done so the government came up against manifestations of anarchy that harmed production and, more dangerous still, lowered government prestige. This prevented the use for the people's good of the advantages of the early structural changes effected in the country. The introduction of new forms of worker participation in management outside the trade unions likewise had a negative effect, for it delayed the workers' actual involvement in management and led to the wrong notion that the unions should have nothing to do with management and should confine their role to making economic demands.

However, along with trends reducing worker participation in management there developed many other trends which contributed to worker unity and vigilance. The conclusion, proved correct by revolutionary practice, that these changes are likely to rapidly raise the people's social consciousness has been confirmed by the Chilean experience. The working class played the decisive role in situations that were very difficult for the government. During the October 1972 employers' strike aimed at paralyzing industry, the workers took over and resumed production shortly after. The revolutionary movement had new opportunities in spite of difficulties. The facts satisfied the workers that they were equal to managing the enterprises by themselves. It is indicative that the formation of the public sector was a result of major actions by labor. However, in some cases, when the government decided to transfer an enterprise to the public sector, it could not do so, usually because it could not reach agreement with the workers.

Worker participation in management took more clear-cut forms in the nationalized enterprises. As for the private sector, no suitable forms of participation were found even though there, too, the workers set up committee-like bodies to supervise production and ensure that the employers' did not act contrary to the national interest.

The paramount requisite of success was mutual understanding between the socialist and communists and joint action by Popular Unity. But the lack of a united leadership tended to reduce the workers' revolutionary strength and left room for the spread of alien tendencies in the working-class movement.

To perform its role as the center of the unity being formed and as the motive power of revolutionary change, the working class had to express and uphold both its own interests and those of the classes and strata it needed to unite around itself. The primary task was to strengthen the worker-peasant alliance since it was not strong enough

as yet, even though in the 60s the rural population had become more organized and the struggle in the countryside was on the rise. The changes that had occurred were very considerable. The number of agricultural workers' strikes increased from three in 1960 to 39 in 1964, 693 in 1967 and 1,580 in 1970. After the agrarian reform law had been passed, the more advanced sections of the rural population realized that the depth of the process would depend on the scope of their activity. In 1970, 368 farm estates went to those who worked on them, chiefly as a result of the struggle for the agrarian reform.

An equally significant change came about in the organization of the rural population. The membership of peasant trade union confederations went up from 103,664 in 1969 to 277,895 in 1972; growth was more marked in organizations led by communists or socialists. As a result, Popular Unity, above all the communists, won greater influence in rural areas during the 1973 general election.

The worker-peasant alliance undoubtedly grew much stronger under Popular Unity rule (as well as under the Frei administration, which initiated an agrarian reform). At the same time, more rural inhabitants were involved in national affairs. The government, first of all the communists, took numerous measures to aid the countryside, especially in 1973. The campaign for the full implementation of the agrarian reform, directed above all against the latifundium holders, was highly important because its results had their effect on the entire process of democratic development. The latifundia were a barrier to the development of agriculture and to the country's overall progress.

But while far-reaching gains were made whose effect is bound to show in the future, the popular government's rural policy was not exempt from miscalculations. The government did not cater to all the rural groups listed in its program. The agrarian reform benefited chiefly the agricultural workers and semi-proletarians. This was an achievement but it was not enough. The beneficiaries should have included the small peasants and those of the semi-proletarians who had somewhat bigger plots. Account should have been taken of the interests of all strata that could have derived definite benefits from the popular government's policy and rallied in its support as a result. 'There are over 200,000 holdings that are smaller than the established 40-hectare plots,' said Luis Corvalan in his report to the CC, which met in August 1972 to discuss the agrarian question, 'on which hundreds of thousands of Chileans work. We cannot supply the country if we renounce their output. The popular government has extended its aid to them in credits but this is not enough. It is necessary to help them organize in cooperatives, grant them more credits, effectively increase government purchases of farm produce . . . and above all, guarantee in reality the security of land tenure.

'Small and medium farmers should become allies of the historic process going on in Chile. Anyone whose clumsy approach pushes them toward the other side is a counter-revolutionary.'[2]

The results we can now sum up show that those shortcomings were by no means fully removed. The situation was aggravated by the fact that many proprietors felt increasingly uncertain owing to actions provoked by ultra-leftists with the aim of seizing lands which did not come under the agrarian reform, and that reaction used this in its propaganda. The government did not always counter such actions properly.

It was also unfortunate both politically and economically that in carrying out the agrarian reform, the authorities often ignored the peasants' opinion and tried to impose organizational forms from above, skipping certain stages of the process of establishing agricultural cooperatives. In August 1972 the Communist Party spelled out the state of affairs. 'We can draw some conclusions from the experience gained in this field,' it stated. 'Neither the *asentamientos* set up by the Christian Democrats, nor the agrarian reform centers set up under the present government entirely satisfy the peasants ... We consider that the fundamental task brooking no delay is to revise all these organizational forms and take account of the peasants' opinion and interests without fail, for this is the only way to win their support in carrying out the big tasks facing us in the countryside.'[3]

This was one of the problems that was not solved properly. Another shortcoming was that in searching for new forms of organizing production and property, attention was focused entirely on the sector in which the agrarian reform had been carried out. No serious attempts were made to encourage the development of cooperative forms of land tenure by small proprietors as envisaged by the fundamental program of the Popular Unity government. The ultra-leftists exploited these miscalculations. Some of their moves were a reflection of the real problems of diverse segments of the rural population but the solutions they offered were wrong. The 'land hunger' affecting a substantial part of the rural population requires new forms of carrying out the agrarian reform with due regard to the interests of all social strata.

In Chile as in some other Latin American countries, achieving mutual understanding with the urban middle strata was a matter of growing importance for the working-class policy of alliance. The numerical strength of these strata and, more important, their increasing political leverage played a role.

The urban population was growing at the expense of the rural. In 1970 the economically active rural population added up to a mere 23.9 per cent. Numerically, the middle strata are second only to the

working class (in relation to the population as a whole). Theirs is a very heterogeneous composition, for some of them have taken shape as a result of the preservation of pre-capitalist production forms, while others have developed under the capitalist mode of production.

In 1968, as much as 94 per cent of Chile's industry consisted of handicraft workshops and small factories employing up to 49 workers each. This section of the middle strata — the handicraftsmen and some of the small manufacturers — were exploited by monopoly groups and the financial oligarchy. The changes effected by the Popular Unity government delivered them from exploitation, which meant that they ought to have welcomed or at least taken a neutral stand on them. All the early measures for structural changes were carried out at a time when the balance of forces was favorable. To consolidate this situation, it was essential not only to turn the developing public sector into the most dynamic economic sector but to establish relations of a new type with private enterprises, with which every enterprise in the public sector was already linked, especially when many of the latter group became dependent on the former for raw materials.

Small and medium manufacturers increased their profits but they did not consider this a result of the changes brought about in the country. Indeed, many of them turned out to be involved in profiteering and black-market deals (these developments were spurred by reaction's destabilization policy). They regarded the restrictive measures adopted against these practices as proof of 'curbs' on their activity. The Chilean experience has confirmed Lenin's thought in that these strata vacillate between a desire to cast off the fetters of big capital and a dread of revolutionary change.

In spite of the opportunities afforded them for growth and activity, Chile's revolutionary forces failed to demonstrate that the progress made was a result of the changes being carried out. They failed to establish solid relations of a new type between the state, the public sector and private enterprises. The lack of mutual understanding was also due to excesses in setting up the public sector. A sizable part of the petty bourgeoisie and many handicraftsmen joined in the employers' strikes, being misled by reaction's demagogical slogan of 'defending property' and the demand for 'freedoms' whereas the real aim of those who provoked the strikes was to clear the way for a coup. Under today's fascist regime, which is massively eliminating small, medium and even big (non-monopoly) manufacturers, it is evident that their genuine interests were respected only by the popular government.

The new urban middle strata, still in the formative stage, are becoming more active politically in comparison with other urban middle strata. The students, members of the liberal professions, intel-

lectuals, and some of the army officers who may be listed as members of these middle strata are likewise gaining in social leverage.

A strong alliance has developed between the workers and students, whose mutual relations went deeper when the popular government was in power. The student movement as a whole helped the government in various ways. However, this was only one aspect of a complex process in which student groups backing the opposition became ever more aggressive. Many intellectuals, too, held essentially progressive views. At that time their creative thought found expression in the most diverse forms. The situation was different in the professional people's organizations. Some of them became tools of the most reactionary elements. Among the army officers there was a democratic current which lost ground as the overall situation worsened and which made no effort to strengthen its relations with the forces backing the government.

The struggle between revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries for a favorable balance of forces was aimed to a notable extent at winning over the middle strata. But the working class failed to campaign resolutely for the demands of these strata by using the positions it held in the government.

Experience tells us how very important it was to bear in mind the nature of the changes taking place in Chile and typical of a democratic revolution, so that there might be no attempts at skipping stages, to carefully analyze the contribution which the strata hit by the existing contradictions could have made and to study the possibilities of the revolutionary process moving on to higher stages with the support of the majority of these strata.'

A correct policy of alliance implied mutual understanding between Popular Unity and the CDP, a multi-class party holding strong positions among the middle strata and wielding appreciable influence among wage workers. The CDP voted for the confirmation by both chambers of Congress of Allende's election to the presidency, as well as for the nationalization of the major copper mines, a measure unanimously approved by parliament.

From the popular government's point of view, to achieve mutual understanding meant compromising, and definite efforts were made to this end but they failed owing to resistance in both the CDP and Popular Unity. On the one hand, the opposition consisted of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois sectors prompted above all else by the fear that the working class might strengthen its positions. On the other hand, it included left-wing forces which regarded all compromise as a retreat — on the false assumption that the task was to hasten socialist changes even though the political and economic requisites were lacking. However, it was an opposition which could perfectly well have

been foreseen and removed through patient work among the masses.

In Chile, as we know from experience, the achievement of mutual understanding made it possible to advance. Success in the effort to establish a broad democratic front depended in no small measure on the forces that were outside Popular Unity taking a broad approach to this question and on the nature of the trends developing among the masses, including the Christian Democrats. In noting the possibility and necessity of joint action with the Christian Democrats, the Communist Party leadership made the following points:

'To be sure, there is much that has divided and still divides the Marxists and Christian Democrats. But we also have common interests and one obvious lesson of the history of our country is that whenever we succeeded in unfolding joint action and achieving unity on the main issue, the result was specific benefits for the people . . .

'This is one side of the medal. But there is also the other side, for the CDP is a multi-class party in which opposed interests often make themselves felt. This explains why every time sectarian forces linked with monopoly and finding invaluable support in sectarian manifestations among the left-wing forces won the upper hand in the CDP leadership, the result was a split or even a confrontation that brought dividends to reactionary interests and privileges.'[4]

The Communist Party says explicitly, as we see, that it was necessary to fight for unity with all anti-fascist forces. It also stresses the special significance of the ideological struggle against those who hinder or oppose the effort for unity. The struggle for unity, in which the Communist Party plays a notable part, does not imply renouncing the ideological struggle or forgetting the central task, which is to bring positions closer together by increasing the possibilities of alliance.

There is no reason why the differences existing between the CDP and Popular Unity should become antagonistic, especially if the matter is considered from the point of view of the CDP's class composition. Those who opposed the working-class policy of alliance said that the working class was thereby relinquishing its leading role and would be unable to act independently. In other words, attention was drawn to a fictitious, non-existent contradiction. After all, it is not by decree but as a result of mutual understanding with other classes and strata that the working class can become the leader, which depends on how well it carries on its activity and how far the interests of these classes and strata become its own. This is not contrary to the independent activity of the working-class party and, moreover, makes its independence necessary. Unity inside the alliance inevitably combines with struggle, above all when the alliance comprises the most diverse forces.

To strengthen the Communist Party, build up its influence and

spread Marxism-Leninism are tasks whose fulfillment guarantees extension and consolidation of the alliance. This does not connote a sectarian approach; it neither presupposes an exclusive status for us, nor rules out the growth of other united front parties. To strengthen the Communist Party is not a selfish end in itself but an objective requirement of social progress. Consequently, greater unity hinges directly on the communists' growing influence, for they win allies not only through their policy and ideology but through the strength of their organization.

This makes it still more essential for the working-class party both to maintain its class independence inside the common front and to extend its ideological influence. The period we are analyzing has confirmed that this can be attained by invariably leaning on the masses, telling the working people the truth and helping them cope with difficulties and arrive at correct solutions. This is what our experience teaches us.

The nomination of a common candidate of the popular forces in 1970, the formulation of a unity program and the definition of the basic standards of activity of the popular government were done with the people's active participation, which played the decisive role in overcoming difficulties. However, the government did not always adhere to this principle. Many of the decisive debates on whether or not the revolutionary process was being led correctly were only held 'at the summit' or in very narrow circles. As a result, difficulties arising from the lack of a single leadership increased, which repeatedly found expression in divisive and anarchist moves and at times tended to paralyze the government. But every time the government turned to the working people they showed a great ability to mobilize.

Stressing the importance of mass action does not mean minimizing the importance of work among leaders. It would only harm our cause if we were to distinguish artificially between work among the masses and work among leaders.

The foregoing invites the conclusion that one of the main problems of the Chilean revolutionary process was that no solid and homogeneous revolutionary leadership was brought into being. At the same time, the gains that were made were largely due to the process of forming such a leadership. The main role in its formation and development was played, due to the very nature of the revolutionary process, by the working class, and to the extent that the working class failed in this respect, it made things easier for the enemy.

It was also revealing that the role of the Communist Party grew as the revolutionary situation and the struggle for power developed.

We communists take self-critical stock of both the achievements

and the shortcomings of the revolutionary process in Chile so as to learn its lessons, which is a prerequisite of transforming yesterday's defeat into tomorrow's victory.

1. Orlando Millas, 'La clase obrera en el Gobierno Popular.' *Cuadernillo de Propaganda*, No. 4, pp. 14-15.
2. *Boletin informativo del Comite Central del Partido Comunista de Chile.* Santiago-Chile, 1972, Boletin No. 8, p. 37.
3. *Ibid.* p. 33.
4. *Desde Chile hablan los Comunistas!* Ediciones Colo-Colo, 1976, p. 145.

A weapon in the struggle for democracy and socialism

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Czechoslovak National Front

As our experience in Czechoslovakia has clearly demonstrated, cooperation of communists with other revolutionary and democratic forces in a united — popular or national — front plays an extremely important role in the fight for working-class power and in the building of socialism.

The idea of a United Front was first advanced by Lenin. His analysis of the Russian revolutions, of the development of the labor movement in other countries after the First World War led him to conclude that unity of all the anti-imperialist, democratic, progressive forces, their organizations and parties in the fight for democratic and revolutionary change was of vital importance for the communists. It would be wrong and dangerous, he wrote, to believe 'that a revolution can be made by revolutionaries alone ... Without an alliance with non-communists in the most diverse spheres of activity there can be no question of any successful communist construction' (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 227). Lenin's united front concept has been tested in differing historical and national conditions.

This article will deal with the rise and growth of the National Front in Czechoslovakia, particularly its role in the struggle of the working class and all the working people generally against social and political oppression in the prewar years, in the resistance movement to the

nazi occupation, in the democratic and subsequent socialist stage of the revolution. And one of the most important lessons of our experience is that the very formation of the National Front and its conversion into a weapon of consistent democratic and subsequently socialist transformations, is possible only given the leading role of the Communist Party operating in alliance with parties and public organizations representing the country's democratic and revolutionary forces. In other words, the policy of united action of communist and other parties of the laboring people within such a front, can be successful, as we have seen, only if the Communist Party is the initiator of a resolute struggle 'from the top' and 'from the bottom' which leads to the isolation of the more reactionary leaders and elements in the allied parties; only if the Communist Party objectively becomes the leading force of the National Front by virtue of its determined championship of democracy, without, however, shedding its revolutionary-socialist aims and persistently working for their implementation; only if it is capable of correctly assessing the situation pursuing a correct policy that accords with the interests of the working people, and mobilizing them to support and carry out this policy; only if the party is capable of maintaining and strengthening its leading role, despite all attempts to divert it to reformist or leftist positions or dilute it in broad electoral blocs, etc.

It has to be said that in the early 30s differences arose in the party over the nature and purpose of the popular front. There was, on the one hand, unprincipled right opportunist advocacy of cooperation with certain reformist and bourgeois parties and, on the other, left opportunist rejection of any alliance with non-communist groups as betrayal of the revolution.

The impact of the fascist take-over in Germany, the Seventh Comintern Congress decisions and the party's mass political work combined to produce favorable preconditions for united action of the working class and other democratic and progressive forces. The desire for such unity was especially strong when bourgeois-democratic Czechoslovakia was faced with the very real danger of losing its national independence. However, in those days we did not succeed in creating a popular front, let alone a popular-front government.

Why? The main reason, the Communist Party declared, was the betrayal by the bourgeoisie which, like Czechoslovakia's capitalist allies, did not hesitate to sacrifice the independence of the Republic in furtherance of its own egoistic class interests. Responsibility also rests with those leaders of parties and organizations (composed mainly of industrial workers and other sections of the working people)

who opposed unity of the working class and thereby weakened its political positions.

In other words, though bourgeois Czechoslovakia was a classical example of the pluralistic political organization of capitalist society (which now, as then, is held up by anti-Marxists as the only real and broad democracy), it was unable to prevent this national tragedy. The pluralist system of the Czechoslovakia of those days, being a form of bourgeois government, deprived the working class and other sections of the laboring people of any opportunity actively to influence home and foreign policy, for by its very nature the system expressed and upheld the interests of only one of the basic antagonists of bourgeois society, the interests of capital. In those tragic days for the Czech and Slovak peoples decisions were made not by the masses, but by those who manipulated the pluralistic system, the big bourgeoisie. The opinion of the opposition — whose existence and rights the bourgeois and reformist advocates of pluralism consider the every essence of democracy — was wholly disregarded. And this despite the fact that the opposition represented the majority of the Czechoslovak population. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union's offer of assistance, this policy was pursued right up to the Munich sell-out, with its resultant dismemberment and occupation of the country and the threat of mass annihilation of the Czech and Slovak peoples.

In this situation, the only organized force that waged an active and persistent struggle was the Communist Party. Its policy, worked out by the party leadership and personally by Klement Gottwald, led to the foundation of the widely representative National Front (NF). Its aim was to oust the nazi invader, re-establish the independence and sovereignty of Czechoslovakia, extend the people's democratic rights — in short, work for the victory of the national-democratic revolution. At every stage of its courageous struggle the Communist Party emphasized the decisive role of the working class, never forgetting that the national and democratic revolution would be the prelude to socialist revolution. Even during the nazi occupation, underground National Committees were established throughout the country, composed of representatives of all the patriotic forces — workers, peasants, intellectuals, even representatives of the anti-fascist bourgeoisie.

This concept of the National Front was fully justified by subsequent events. At this crucial period for our peoples, the ideological and political position of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist vanguard, the role and weight of the Communist Party, its mass influence was the decisive factor in the fight for sicial progress. And the Communist Party formed closer ties with the masses, gave them

leadership, took account of their views, set goals that were understood by the people and accorded with their needs. The communists explained to the people that only alliance with the USSR could defeat nazism, liberate our country and ensure its freedom and sovereignty. The communists were in the front ranks in the fight for freedom and made the greatest sacrifices. This won the party the trust of the masses, enabling it to exert a decisive influence also after Czechoslovakia's liberation by the Soviet Army.

Beginning with May 1945, the Communist Party directed the effort to orient Czechoslovak foreign policy on alliance and cooperation with the USSR. In home policy, our party advocated consummation of the national-democratic revolution, i.e., nationalization, agrarian reform, making the National Committees the organs of popular rule and administration, the drafting, and approval of a new constitution, punishment of collaborationists and war criminals. These tasks were carried out in the hard-fought battles of 1945-48, with the party consistently pursuing its policy within the National Front and its government. In this period, too, the Communist Party was the most consistent protector of the working people's vital interests, and it was not by chance that it obtained the highest vote in the 1946 elections to the Constituent National Assembly.

The record of the class struggle in the 20th century shows that in every crucial conflict the bourgeoisie does not hesitate to use every available means to prevent the working class from capturing power, prevent the advance of the socialist revolution. That tactic was used in Czechoslovakia too. In February 1948 the reactionary ministers deliberately resigned from the National Front government as part of a counter-revolutionary plot. It was foiled because the Communist Party vigilantly watched over the revolutionary gains of the people, was in close touch with them and was constantly strengthening its alliance with the democratic and pro-socialist forces in the non-communist parties, the revolutionary trade unions and the peasants' commissions supervising the agrarian reform. The communist policy was in the interests of the working class and all working people, and millions responded to its call to defend the revolution. Reaction suffered a crushing defeat.

The events of 1948 reaffirmed anew the Leninist proposition that the transition to socialism through a national, popular front can be accomplished, depending on the concrete situation, through a one-party or multi-party system. Bringing non-communist parties that support the aims of the revolution to share in running the country does not contradict the interests of socialism. What does contradict them is passivity toward the activities of anti-socialist parties and groups. Our experience made it plain that the leading role of the

Communist Party in socialist transformations lies precisely in carrying out a policy that accords with the interests of the masses. And it has to carried out by proletarian dictatorship to overcome resistance by the opponents of socialism, at the same time relying on the support of the broadest, including non-communist, progressive forces that subscribe to the program of the National Front, now purged of reactionary elements.

The coming to power of the working class opened the road to socialism in Czechoslovakia. And it was at this stage that the role of the National Front was fully disclosed as a major instrument of socialist transformations by rallying the masses around a program for building the new society under the leadership of the Communist Party. The National Front promoted the activity and initiative of the working people in every area of socialist construction. It was instrumental also in cementing the bond between the Communist Party and the masses and in improving cooperation with the non-communist parties and mass organizations.

At the same time, however, negative factors were exerting an increasing influence within the party and in society, and this brought about the 1968 crisis situation, which affected also the National Front.

The statement, 'Lessons of the Crisis Development in the Party and Society after the 13th Party Congress,' noted that long before 1968 the leading role of the party was being weakened and its alliance and ties with the masses undermined. Naturally, the work of the National Front became more and more formal and its constituent organizations were gradually losing sight of the tasks and aims of our society, from which they were becoming increasingly isolated. This was one of the causes of the 1968-69 crisis situation. And it is highly significant that the anti-socialist forces, supported by the right-wing opportunists and revisionists within the party and in society, centered their attacks on the underlying principles of the National Front, especially the leading role of the Communist Party. They tried to revive the Social-Democratic Party (which in 1948 had voluntarily merged with the communists) in order to destroy the political unity of the working class as symbolized by the Communist Party, and cast the social democrats in the role of opposition to the Communist Party. There were frenzied attacks on the Soviet Union, their purpose being to disrupt Czechoslovakia's fraternal friendship with it and other members of the socialist community. The very principles of proletarian internationalism, of solidarity with the forces working for peace, freedom, independence, democracy and social progress, were questioned.

The right opportunists and revisionists, who before 1968 had played down the importance of the National Front, were now trying

to convert it into an instrument of reviving the old, pre-February, even pre-Munich, political system. And to do that, they took measures to weaken the elective and other bodies of state power, undermine the mass organizations, split the trade unions, the youth movement, etc. Behind this 'heightened interest' in the National Front was a plan to deprive it of its role as the vehicle of the moral and political unity of Czechoslovak society, as the symbol and embodiment of the alliance of classes, parties and organizations working for socialism under communist leadership.

The principled stand of the Marxist-Leninist forces within the party and in society, and internationalist assistance enabled us to cope with the crisis situation. The policy worked out and consistently operated by the new party leadership headed by Gustav Husak made it possible to consolidate Czechoslovak society, re-establish all the socialist gains of our people, including the Gottwald, socialist principles of the National Front.

The Czechoslovak working class and working people know from experience what is the meaning of pluralist organization of bourgeois rule and what aim is served by the slogan of pluralism when it is put forward by the spokesmen of capital, opponents of the socialist system, and advocates of petty-bourgeois spontaneity. This experience was gained during the years of the bourgeois republic, in the political battles of February 1948, in the crisis situation of 1968-69. It demonstrated that at any sharp turn of class, political struggle the pluralism advocated by the bourgeoisie either in conditions of its rule or in attempts to re-establish it, invariably proves to be a suitable cover for anti-national, anti-democratic and, certainly, anti-socialist actions. That was why our people categorically rejected both the practice and concepts of pluralism in their bourgeois and reformist varieties.

We consider this practice and these concepts inacceptable precisely because of their content which is inimical to the interests of the working class, of socialism. But, as noted above, we do not reject out of hand a multi-party system, a comparison of views, etc., in a socialist society. On the contrary, we rely on them in our national system of political leadership of the country. But the Czechoslovak working people reject all pluralist models that allow 'equal opportunities' for forces opposed to socialism. That is why the clamorous propaganda campaign in the capitalist West about alleged violation of 'human rights' in Czechoslovakia has found no support whatever in our society, for the obvious purpose of that campaign is to legalize anti-socialist activity.

Under socialism human rights are something very real and not merely a formality. And human rights are guaranteed by public own-

ership of the means of production, which precludes exploitation and social inequality. They are guaranteed also by the friendly relations between classes and social groups, all-round perfection of the political system and uninterrupted expansion of socialist democracy to give the working people a fuller and more active share in managing industry, society as a whole. Genuine, socialist democracy is not measured by the number of parties, nor by the 'right to oppose' a social system supported by the vast majority of the people. There is no opposition in the political structure of socialist society, and not because the communists are afraid of it, but simply because there is no place for it, for the social basis of an opposition disappears with the disappearance of the exploiting classes. As for the specific interests of the various social groups, they are realized through the trade unions, the cooperatives, youth organizations, scientific, creative and other societies, which are an organic part of the socialist political system.

The National Front has now fully re-established its role and functions. This is how the 15th Communist Party Congress defined its functions in the light of the experience of recent years: 'The National Front is the political embodiment of the class alliance of workers, peasants and intellectuals, of all the people, of the internationalist community of our nations and nationalities. In future, too, we shall regard the National Front as a tried and tested element of our political system. With its network of participating organizations, it provides ample scope for our people's varied interests, activities and initiatives, their participation in the administration of public affairs, at the same time concerting their efforts in building socialism. Through its political parties and other organizations, The National Front enables every citizen to exercise his political rights and freedom. It offers a broad program of socialist democracy which we shall expand and develop.

'This program, which fully reflects the leading role of the working class and the vanguard role of the Communist Party in our society, is the basis of the activity and development of the entire system of representative organs — the National Committees, National Councils and the Federal Assembly — and of the executive agencies of the socialist state.'

And so, the National Front, as it has evolved over the years, is a cardinal element of the socialist political system, representing, at one and the same time, an organization, a program and a movement. Organizing public participation in building developed socialist society and fulfilling the five-year plan is an important aspect of the activity of all its organizations. This finds concrete expression in the socialist work teams, which include members of all National Front organizations.

Another important National Front function is socialist education,

which implies cultivating a new attitude to one's work, socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism and a new moral outlook.

The National Front is now concentrating on bringing more people into the work of formulating and operating national policy, managing the affairs of state and society, and controlling fulfillment — in short, the things that go into socialist democracy. This is done in many different ways and forms, but the essential feature of this aspect of National Front activity, one that is expressive of its class character, is that all the people, all members of National Front organizations, have a constructive part in framing policy at all levels, from their place of work to national government.

The National Front is consulted on all decisions of the Federal and Republican governments relating to the work of public organizations. As a rule, the question is first discussed with the appropriate National Front bodies of public organizations. For instance, policy statements by the Federal Government and the governments of the two republics, the Czech and the Slovak, were discussed by the National Front before being submitted to Parliament. And since these policy statements were fully in keeping with the political line of the Communist Party and the National Front and accorded with the interests of the people, they were endorsed and supported by all the National Front organizations.

Another expression of genuine socialist democracy is the fact that the nearly seven million trade union members have the right, and effective opportunities, to share in framing and carrying out economic plans and in controlling their fulfillment. The trade unions have a say on all questions affecting the interests of the workers at their place of work or residence.

National Front organizations discussed all the documents of socio-economic development put before the 15th Communist Party Congress, with people expressing their views and offering suggestions. Similarly, National Front organizations discussed the Congress decisions and the ways and means of translating them into practice.

No legislative bill, decision or resolution affecting the interests of any public organization can be examined by legislative or administrative bodies without the participation of its representatives. The members of all elective bodies belong to the National Front and each represents the organization that nominated him. The deputies therefore express the views and interests of their particular organizations. For instance, deputies nominated by the trade unions show a special interest in legislation and government or local government rulings that have a bearing on working conditions, housing, etc. The same goes for other public organizations too.

Our agricultural, producer, consumer, housing or other coopera-

tives, which now have a combined membership of about four million, are an important element in the system of socialist popular rule. They are run on democratic lines and enjoy complete independence, in conformity with the laws of our socialist state.

Still another inalienable component of socialist democracy is the democratic procedures followed by our public organizations, based on the principle of democratic centralism.

Led by the Communist Party, the National Front together with other representative organs of popular rule has a key part in organizing elections at all levels. It participates in drawing up election programs and in the nomination of candidates. National Front nominees are required to appear before public meetings at which everyone can freely express his views, and if there are legitimate objections to the nominee he is struck off the list and a new candidate considered. To this should be added that voters can recall their deputy if he does not properly fulfill his functions, or acts in violation of our laws, or the principles of socialist morality.

All this, plus the guaranteed right to work, education, medical care, sick and old-age benefits, access to all cultural values and increasingly fuller satisfaction of material and cultural requirements, peace and confidence in the morrow, are, at one hand and the same time, the source and guarantee of genuine freedom of the individual. That is how we understand freedom.

The National Front is working toward a goal vital to all mankind — to bring to reality the program of further struggle for peace and international cooperation, for the freedom and independence of the peoples, advanced by the 25th CPSU Congress and approved by our own party's 15th Congress.

Our political and social system is based on the unity of the people's aims and efforts in further developing socialist society. The National Front and its affiliated organizations are part of this system.

Led by the working class and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the National Front will continue its work of strengthening the moral and political unity of our people, bringing all the classes and strata of our society closer together and extending socialist democracy which, in the historical perspective, will lead to communist self-government.

The party and the building of developed socialism

INTERVIEW WITH POLISH RESEARCHERS

Our series* on the problems of building a mass Marxist-Leninist party and extending its membership and influence continues with the answers of a group of Polish researchers to questions put by our correspondent. The interview was organized by the CC, Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) Institute of the Main Problems of Marxism-Leninism, and the following took part: Professor A. Lopatka, alternate member, CC PUWP, head of the department of party building at the CC PUWP Institute of Main Problems of Marxism-Leninism and director of the Polish Academy of Sciences' Institute of Law; A. Ozga, member of the PUWP Central Auditing Commission and deputy head of the CC PUWP organization department; Professor A. Dobieszewski, director of the CC PUWP Higher School of Social Sciences' Institute of Party Studies; docent K. Ostrowski, deputy director of the CC PUWP Institute of the Main Problems of Marxism-Leninism, and staff members of that Institute, docents J. Bluszkowski, B. Ratus, M. Staszewski and doctors J. Wawrzyniak, K. Konstanski and M. Szyszko.

WMR: Ths Polish People's Republic is building developed socialist society under the leadership of the PUWP. The strategy of dynamic socio-economic development, worked out more than six years ago and further elaborated by the 7th PUWP Congress, is successfully being put into practice. We know that this presents certain difficulties. Bourgeois ideologists, anti-communists, have actively joined the 'discussion' of these difficulties, giving a distorted picture of the party's role in Polish society, the interests it represents, its place in the political system, its internal affairs and its relations with fraternal parties in other socialist countries. In this context, we would like to put the following questions:

1. *How does Poland's advance to developed socialism affect the party's role in society? How does the party provide for the interests of the different strata of society? How does it, at this stage, combine its class features with its mass character?*

Lopatka. We are working on the premise that the leading role of the

* See *WMR*, April, June, July, November and December 1976, and January 1977.

working class Marxist-Leninist party in the process of socialist revolution and the building of the new society is a manifestation of a general law of development, in the sense the party leadership is an objective necessity at all known stages of the struggle and constructive effort of the working class. Apparently the question is how this law actually operates in building developed socialist society.

Several amendments were recently introduced to the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic. One of the most significant reads: 'Society's leading political force in the building of socialism is the Polish United Workers' Party.' Also this amendment: 'The People's Unity Front is based on cooperation between the Polish United Workers' Party, the United Peasants' Party and the Democratic Party.' These formulations indicate a specific feature of the way the party exercises its leading role in Poland, namely, that this is done in cooperation with other political parties. And the very fact that the constitution has been so amended reflects the heightened importance of the party's leading role at the present stage. This is due to objective circumstances connected, in particular, with the *WMR*'s question about the interests of various strata of society. Our comrades are prepared to give a detailed answer to that question.

Bluszkowski. First, let us take a closer look at the class structure of our society. At the initial stage of socialist construction the task was to eliminate the exploiting classes, the capitalists and landowners. At the present stage the characteristic process is one of closer association of classes and strata, of the advance to a classless society. And it is this developing process that should be taken into account in analyzing how the party provides for the interests of the various classes and strata of society.

This coming-together process is based on two objective preconditions: first, an increasing similarity in the relation of these classes and strata to the means of production and the socialist economy; second, the increasing similarity of the labor of the worker, peasant and intellectual. For instance, technological progress is changing the nature of the labor of the worker, reducing strenuous manual operations, intellectualizing his work, bringing him into the process of organizing and supervising production, etc. There is still private ownership of the means of production in the rural areas, but here, too, there is an intensive process of socialization, albeit in some special forms. State purchases of farm produce through long-term contracts, state-owned and cooperative farm machinery servicing individual farms, the latter's cooperation with farms in the public sector — all this brings individual farms into the planned-economy system and in many ways changes the very substance of the existing form of private property.

It is through this process that the interests of various classes and strata are brought closer together, though it would be wrong to say that they are identical in all respects. How does our party express these interests?

In a socialist society the working class is the ruling class, and, in historical terms, a new type of ruling class. Its dominant position rests not on exploitation, but on alliance and cooperation with the peasantry and intelligentsia, i.e., with all cetegories of the working people. Why? Because the vital interests of the working class coincide with those of all the other working people. As the political organization of the working class — Poland's biggest and leading class — the party expresses that class's interests and in doing so acts in the vital interests of all working people. The merging of the interests of various classes and strata, their integration on the basis of the vital interests of the working class, is an essential factor in strengthening the party's leading role. This is emphasized in the resolutions of the Seventh Congress of the PUWP. And addressing that congress, Comrade Gierek declared that our party is the people's leading force because it represents the working class, whose socialist ideals and aspirations are, at the present stage of history, expressive of the interests of the entire people. This is the foundation of the moral and political unity of our people and of their active part in attaining the goals set by the party.

Szyszko. I would like to add that the significant cultural changes over the past 30 years have been a major factor, along with the social and economic changes, in bringing the classes and strata of society closer together.

Ratus. And all these changes are the result of the party's consistent policy.

Lopatka. For a deeper understanding of the various interests the party expresses in its policy, it is important to single out group interests. By this I mean the interests of the working class and those of classes near to it in the social structure. For example, the common interests of the working class and the peasantry, artisans and intellectuals. These are the interests of the people as a whole. And lastly, there are the general human interests reflected in party policy.

Certain specific interests come to the surface when there is a social, economic or ideological basis for them. As a result of social change, classes and social groups whose interests are hostile to those of the working people, now have no economic or social basis, but we must bear it in mind that they still have an ideological basis among certain strata. This, I think, is in a sense characteristic of the stage of transition to developed socialist society.

Hence, when we speak of the party expressing the interests of

different classes and social strata, we must first of all emphasize that the party formulates and expresses the interests of the working class. What I have in mind are its interests as the leading class of society, its maintaining of that role and cultivating new traits to enable it to exercise leadership. I also have in mind the improvement of the working and living conditions of the workers. At the same time, the party expresses the interests of other sections of the working people, primarily the peasantry and the intelligentsia and, partially, also the artisans. What specifically are the interests of these classes and strata? Their interests are formulated not only by our party, but with the participation of the parties with which it is allied. For instance, our party draws up its agricultural program together with the United Peasants Party. Similarly, the program for extending services for the artisans is worked out jointly with the Democratic Party.

At the present stage of social change — and this was emphasized by the Seventh Party Congress — defining the common interests of society is of exceptional importance. To this should be added the increasing support and popularity of the party's role in formulating and expressing the interests of the entire society. Take, for example, international policy. We can say that never before has there been such wide approval of our alliance with the Soviet Union, our membership of the socialist community, and the policy of peaceful coexistence. The same applies to the political organization of society, and to our social and cultural policy. For instance, the people warmly support the party's housing policy.

Dobieszewski. A cardinal revolutionary transformation that has taken place in the country is the integration of our society, which is based on identity of fundamental interests of the working people in building socialism. But integration should be seen as a complex and constantly developing process. At this stage our society is not homogeneous, for though the process of bringing together the social classes, strata and groups is far advanced, ours is still a class society. We should therefore always bear in mind that identity of fundamental class and group interests does not preclude the need to reckon with specific differentiated interests and the contradictions arising therefrom.

Diverse social interests intersect in the party's policy and activity. And one of the main tasks here is to identify the common interests that make for the unity of society, or of its overwhelming majority. It is also important to single out specific interests and use appropriate methods and means to harmonize them with the common interests and overcome any contradictions that may arise in the process. Failure to disclose contradictory interests can — and, experience has shown, does — lead to social upheavals. Absolutizing the unity of the

interests of socialist society can obscure real contradictions. On the other hand, it would be incorrect to underestimate the degree of integration achieved and thus to detract from what we have done in refashioning the social structure. A correct understanding of the degree of unity of these interests and of the character of the differences between them is an essential element of party leadership in building socialism.

The mechanism of disclosing and overcoming non-antagonistic class contradictions requires closer study, particularly as there was a period when such research was given insufficient attention.

This brings us to the role of the subjective factor. Contradictory interests show up chiefly in the distribution of material benefits. Hence, it is important to design a policy that will have the approval of at least the larger part of society. The ruling party must resist the pressure of sectional interests, even if it comes from part of the working class, for the sake of the interests of the class as a whole. It is most important to dovetail the long-range objective interests of the working class with its current, partial interests, always being guided by the principle that the latter are subject to the former. This must be clearly explained to the workers. But there are times when certain compromises have to be made for the sake of combining these two types of interests. Realistic policy is inconceivable without such compromises.

Konstanski. The objective social and economic preconditions of growth of the party's leading role in Polish society can be used only if the maturity of the subjective factor, namely, the development of the party itself, is adequate. The period of the gradual development of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat into a state of the whole people led by the working class — a period which had begun in the Polish People's Republic — demands further development of the PUWP as the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class and the people as a whole. I wish to stress that the class nature of our party is evident, first of all, in its program, which expresses, as has been said here, the interests of the working class and at the same time, and to an increasing degree, the interests of all working people, this being due to the party's mass character. But the class nature of the party is also expressed in its social composition, which, in turn, is very important from the point of view of the party's leading role in socialist construction.

The party owes its strength directly to such qualities of the working class as political experience, a high degree of social consciousness and a sense of class cohesion and solidarity.

The party's social composition and the trend of its evolution reflect the changes that come about in the social composition of society as it

advances to developed socialism, and also the objective need to reinforce the party by bringing in more workers that has already been mentioned. As of June 1975, the party had 2,437,000 full and candidate members. This made up about 10 per cent of the adult population, or about 21.5 per cent of all who hold jobs in the economy. Workers constituted 42 per cent and peasants 9.6 per cent. Between 1960 and 1971, the proportion of industrial workers in the party more than doubled. In the 1972-75 period, 14 per cent more workers were admitted to the party and the overall membership rose by 8 per cent. In those years, 61.5 per cent of the newly admitted were members of the working class.

The party is becoming more representative of the interests of the whole people as socialist construction goes on, which means that the party's social basis is expanding.

Lopatka. I have a remark to add to that. There can be no complete correspondence in social composition between the party and society precisely because the party plays a vanguard role. Communists are more educated, for instance, than society as a whole. This is a very important gain for society and the party itself. In the final analysis, it is the material foundation of the thesis that the party is the intellect of the working class and the people. There is nothing surprising in the fact that at a time of accelerated scientific and technological progress the proportion of engineers and technologists among the party membership is greater by far than it is among those directly engaged in production. It is also important to note that the workers' leading role in social life, a factor that cannot be expressed in percentage terms, is gaining ground. We must remember that the working class is the ruling class not only in the sense that the party rules on its behalf, but also in the sense that in some decisive respects it operates directly as the ruling class, which means that it exercises power both indirectly and directly. I believe, therefore, that percentages do not tell the whole story.

Bluszkowski. The answers to the question we are discussing have naturally been somewhat controversial. We are concerned with dynamic and quite complicated processes whose study is also a process. Even so, I would like to make a summary and group the questions.

The first group relates to the nature of changes in the class composition and class relations under socialism. They are objectively conditioned by the development of the productive forces and production relations. Industrialization processes, for example, lead to numerical growth of the working class. The party's program and policies take account of these processes. Party policy may be defined as concentrated knowledge of changes in the class composition under

socialism. On the other hand, the part which the subjective factor plays in this respect can be fully taken into account only under socialism. We may even speak of a standard-setting or desirable model of class relations showing the trends and dynamics of their conscious transformation.

The second group of questions bears on the classification of interests. By using various criteria, we may, of course, single out interests of various types, such as private, group, public or national interests. This is the basis on which both theoretical and political problems of the interrelations and interdependences between classes arise.

A third problem I would like to emphasize is the connection between the party's influence on changing class relations and the results of this influence in terms of strengthening the party's leading role. If, for example, the party's social, cultural or educational policy is intended to bring classes closer together, the result is a convergence of their interests. This, in turn, results in stronger approval and support for party policy and greater effort by society to carry out the party program. The contradiction of interests pointed out by Comrade Dobieszewski is an important problem. We social scientists must analyze it carefully.

We are at present observing a rapid and important growth of approval and recognition of the party's leading role.

The party is a political organization of the working class, a class party in program, policy and composition; at the same time, it is undoubtedly a mass party by virtue of its numerical strength and also because it has a solid backing among the working people, whose fundamental interests it expresses.

2. *What is the role of the PUWP in the political system, the system of government of people's Poland, at this stage? What are its relations with the state and with other parties and mass organizations? What is being done to carry forward and perfect socialist democracy?*

Staszewski. These questions cover a wide field and so we can only dwell on some of their more topical aspects. There is, first of all, the relationship between the party and the state.

Edward Gierek has briefly formulated the principles of these relations at the present stage by saying that the party determines the main lines of development of the state. He has stressed the special role of the socialist state, which ensures the attainment of national and class objectives set by the Marxist-Leninist party. At the Fifth Plenum of the CC PUWP (December 1976), he pointed out that our party had made big gains in strengthening its leading role in society and the state. This has found expression in the program of dynamic social and economic development which was set by the party but assumes that

the socialist state will play a bigger role in managing the economy and in directing social processes and cultural progress. The requirements of society arising from its entry into the period of building developed socialism are set out in amendments to the constitution. The leading role of the PUWP is put first among constitutional principles on the understanding that this will mean at the same time consolidating the multi-party system, increasing the role and significance of the People's Unity Front and the role of the trade unions, mass organizations and self-government bodies, extending civil rights and duties and fostering socialist democracy.

It is essential, I think, to stress the class nature of the socialist state. The Polish socialist state at this stage of development performs the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Hence the issue of democracy and freedom should be considered within the framework of this type of state, with due regard to the fact that freedom in our country is not unlimited but is class freedom.

Szyszko. Poland has a well-functioning multi-party system comprising the PUWP, United Peasant Party (432,500 members), and Democratic Party (93,400 members). We regard the development and consolidation of this system as an important part of the effort to perfect socialist democracy.

The parties I have mentioned recognize the leading role of the PUWP. They recognize the program of building socialism as the basis for their activity, and the PUWP, in turn, recognizes their independence. This independence consists, first of all, in the sovereignty of inter-party life and the possibility for the parties to take an independent view of problems of building socialist society.

What are the merits of this system? It has reduced political divergences, eliminated inter-party competition and provided conditions for the harmonious functioning of all government agencies. This has been made possible by growing inter-party cooperation. How is this cooperation carried on?

First of all, by drafting and adopting joint decisions of inter-party significance, participating in the work of committees made up of representatives of the parties, cooperating in the Sejm, People's Councils, the cooperatives, self-government bodies, economic organizations, and so on.

An important aspect of this cooperation is coordination of the parties' activities on the platform of the People's Unity Front. The PUWP and the allied parties form the basis of the Front.

How does this system influence the political life of society?

It may be said in general terms that all parties shape the policy of the state, but they do so to the extent that they represent their social basis and according to the leverage of the social strata concerned.

The program for building a developed socialist society provides for measures to perfect the political system. This problem is dealt with explicitly in the decisions of the two latest congresses of the PUWP, the Sixth and Seventh.

In speaking of the political system or organization of socialist society, we must not forget the role of mass organizations. To increase their role is an important condition for furthering socialist democracy. The trade unions, the youth and women's leagues, the workers, peasant and neighborhood self-government bodies will influence the forms and content of socialist democracy, and hence the policy of the state, to a growing degree. The rising standard of society's political culture and the increasing ability of more and more citizens to think in terms of the state enhance the importance of political and other non-governmental organizations and contribute to the evolution of certain functions of the state.

Wawrzyniak. I would like to draw attention to what I regard as a substantial difference between the PUWP and the other political parties operating in Poland. The PUWP, being the party of the working class, is a party of the whole people while the other parties only represent the interests of certain, relatively narrow sections of society. This is seen in the fact that the PUWP admits members of any population group to its ranks while the other two parties only admit members of the social groups they speak for.

Dobieszewski. The opinion used to be held (it was voiced at the Unifying Congress of the Party in 1948) that the allied parties have a social basis only at the first stage of socialist changes. At the stage of building socialism, however, the existence of other parties would be an anachronism, it was argued. Experience has proved this view to be wrong.

Staszewski. Speaking of the People's Unity Front, mention should be made of something that is typical of the Polish socialist democratic system, namely, the activity of Catholic associations that are ideological and political rather than religious organizations. Operating within the People's Front and on its basis are organized groups of progressive Catholics. They unite relatively small religious circles, consisting primarily of intellectuals, who in the main stand for the policy of building socialism and seek to motivate this from the standpoint of the Christian world outlook. Applying the principle of religious freedom in practice, the Polish socialist state affords believers every opportunity for ideological and political activity.

Progressive Catholics have been elected to the Sejm. Non-party deputies and representatives of these associations belong to three 'deputies' groups' totalling 12 members.

Representatives of the Catholic associations mentioned above also

take part in government at the provincial *(wojewoztwo)* and communal *(gmina)* levels.

Secular Catholic associations have their own press. PAX has six publications, including the newspaper *Sowo Powszechne* (circulation 90,000 on weekdays and 180,000 at weekends). The Christian Social Union has four, including the weekly *Za i Przeciw* (circulation 50,000).

Another four publications are brought out by Catholic intellectuals' clubs. They include the Cracow weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny* (circulation 40,000).

Ostrowski. There is another question connected with this subject. The country's social and economic development is closely bound up with the development of socialist democracy.

This PUWP policy was endorsed at the party's Seventh Congress in a resolution that reads, 'The party will continue to develop socialist democracy. The essence of this democracy is participation by the working class and all working people in the country's political, economic and cultural life. Socialist democracy with its system of civil rights and duties serves the interests of socialist construction. The activity of anti-socialist forces hostile to the interests of the working people is incompatible with the essence of our democracy.' The fundamental character of the development of socialist democracy has been written into the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic, in amendments passed in February 1976. Also in February the PUWP Central Committee held a plenary meeting to discuss matters that have to do with strengthening the unity of the Polish people, the Polish state, and also the development of socialist democracy.

Mention should be made of an important democratic institution that has acquired constitutional status. It had previously (from the end of 1970) operated in party practice, then it became established in state life, and it has now been reflected in the constitution. This is the principle of consultations. In Polish conditions it would be hard to overestimate this new form of direct democracy.

What forms of consultation have been evolved in the past five years?

First, consultations with the workers of factories and other industrial enterprises. This was where we organized an all-round discussion of the draft of the new Labor Code, the new principles governing the formation and distribution of factory funds, problems connected with the housing program in the country and the provision of various everyday amenities, proposals for changing the system of sick pay and compensation.

Second, consultations with worker activists. This was where, for example, the materials for the All-Poland PUWP Conference of au-

tumn 1973 were discussed, and where the proposals for the new social program were drafted.

Third, nationwide discussion. The Central Committee's theses for the Seventh PUWP Congress and the fundamentals of educational reform were also discussed in this way.

Fourth, consultations with individual categories of working people on ways of dealing with everyday problems affecting their particular group — in farming, education, culture, transport, and so on.

Fifth, consultations with the staffs of separate industrial enterprises, concerning problems affecting their particular factory or group of factories.

In addition, there is a wide and ramified system of representation that enables every citizen to express his opinion to a given authority. This system covers production meetings, conferences between PUWP members and the allied parties, meetings of various public organizations, the workers' self-government councils and tenants' self-management councils, the submission of complaints and suggestions to various organizations, the expression of opinion and making of proposals through the press, and the broad public discussion of draft laws.

The question of the supply of information is another vital matter. No one can take up a proper civic stand on a subject without a thorough grasp of the facts. The need for information is particularly acute in complex situations when people may become confused.

Ratus. The strengthening of the party's ties with the intelligentsia also figures in the general context of the problems of perfecting socialist democracy at the stage of building mature socialism. Regular meetings between party leaders and various groups of intellectuals are extremely important. Before taking crucial decisions Comrade Gierek writes personal letters to various groups. For example, before the Seventh Congress, which passed the program on building a developed socialist society, one of the essential elements of which is repatterning intellectual and cultural life and developing a new type of person, his correspondence touched the thousand mark. The party's method of holding dialogues with representatives of the intelligentsia is highly effective, as we have seen in practice.

Lopatka. The development of socialist democracy is an essential element in the party's program. Democratizing society at the present stage is expressed in state policy, which is oriented on serving the interests of the broad masses of the working people and gearing the economy to the scientific and technical revolution, while at the same time giving the work force ample opportunity to influence the economic process. Democratization is reflected in reorganization of

organs of local government and giving them new opportunities for initiative, and particularly in the restructuring of the supreme organs of state, the organs of people's representation. And finally, in the development of the basic civil rights and duties. The amendments to the constitution have created conditions in which people can discuss things more widely, express their opinions and enjoy considerable rights. And this in its turn enriches the party with new ideas.

About the existence of several parties. As we have noted, at one time people used to say that as public ownership spread in the rural areas and among the small crafts the social basis for the allied parties would disappear, and so would the parties. Research has revealed that our present political structure will persist longer than originally expected. For it has been pointed out that besides the class (and group) basis and historical necessity for allied parties (the transitional stage) there are also certain psychological factors. The allied parties perform a specific type of social activity. The fact that the PUWP is not the only party that is growing and that some young people want to fulfill their desire for social activity as members of other parties, speaks for itself. Some of these young people, for a number of reasons (political immaturity, for instance), could not be accepted by the PUWP. So there would appear to be no reason for associating the multi-party system only with the stage of building the foundations of socialism.

It is sometimes suggested that the communists seek allies only while there is a struggle for power, and then abandon them. This is incorrect both in principle and from the standpoint of history. The worker-peasant alliance and the alliance between the working class and the intelligentsia, which is particularly important at a time of scientific and technological revolution, is not something of a purely tactical nature. It is a matter of principle. We believe in alliance, and not only when they are to our advantage. Our allies can rely on us.

Finally, on the subject of non-party people. I think the 'non-party' formula is too general for our conditions. Considered from the standpoint of their attitude to socialism, there are various kinds of non-party people. For instance, we have some people who are non-party, I should say, 'out of necessity' (because they cannot set up an anti-socialist party). There are others whose positions resemble those of our party, although for one reason or another they hold no party card. And finally there is a fairly large army of non-party people who show no interest in political life, but by their labor contribute to the realization of the party's policy, who are patriotic citizens, and so on. So, when it is a matter of activizing the non-party people in the political life of society, we adopt a differentiated approach to the various categories. Although in principle the activization and democ-

ratization of social life are simultaneous and interconnected processes.

In conclusion, it may be said that the party does not only proclaim democratization of the system. It is democratizing itself. But this overlaps with the next question that has been put to us by the journal's correspondents.

3. *What is happening now, as we move forward toward mature socialism, in the inner life of the party? What are the characteristic processes? Why does the PUWP regard the principle of democratic centralism as important and viable?*

Ozga. We have to a certain extent answered that question in speaking of the social composition of the party, its class features and mass character. I doubt whether we shall be able to give a full account of the diverse processes that are at work in the party at the present stage, but first of all, I should like to explain what we mean when we speak of the *qualitative strengthening* of the party.

On the one hand, as has already been noted, this implies making higher demands on new members joining the party, observing the Leninist principles of membership. On the other, it implies stimulating all party members to greater activity, while consolidating unity of action on the basis of the principle of democratic centralism.

In recent years the PUWP has been doing much to strengthen its ranks. The additions and amendments to the PUWP Rules passed at the Sixth Congress were of considerable importance. These changes set higher standards for those joining the party, defined the principles of active work with candidates for party membership, and substantially increased the responsibility of those who sponsor new members.

Now that one in ten of the adult population are members of the PUWP we are confronted with the problem not so much of achieving a general increase, as of distributing the party's forces among the most important groups and sections of the population, at the key enterprises. Party influence should be decisive everywhere, and there must be no gaps in this respect.

There are three basic areas where we are making an all-out drive for development and strengthening of the party's ranks. The first is the big industrial enterprises, where the working class is concentrated. The second is the rural areas. And the third is the youth. It is hardly necessary to speak of the importance of the first area. After this come the peasants, who now account for nearly 10 per cent of party membership. We feel that this is by far not enough in view of the important projects for socialist transformations and increased output in agriculture. We are particularly interested in strengthening the party's position among the rural intelligentsia, which in view of its

considerable local prestige can exert a substantial influence on the farmers. Finally, it is very important from the standpoint of the future for the party's positions to be strengthened among the youth.

The other aspect of qualitatively strengthening the party's ranks is activization of all its members. At present we are reconsidering the concept of 'party activists.' Traditionally, this term referred only to those who had been elected to perform definite party functions and members of the top-level administrative and managerial apparatus. Now we hold the view that the 'activists' should include all those who are doing active work in any definite sphere. The idea is to erase the distinction between those who, officially as it were, are supposed to be active and those who are really active but are under no official obligation. There should be no passive party members.

We are concentrating on the primary organizations. We want every communist to realize that party policy has to be carried out, whatever the circumstances, and ably argued and explained. The tasks the party sets are not always easy ones. That is what makes it so important for every communist to be thoroughly convinced, capable of upholding the party line and explain it to the masses. Again this is connected with the problem of admission to the party, and with the work of educating members. We attach particular importance to talks with individual members. We want to arrange things so that in the period between congresses there are individual discussions with party members about party work, about the member himself and his participation in this work. These talks should produce some specific conclusions on how to perfect the activity of the primary party organizations. We have already gained some very interesting experience from these individual talks.

The PUWP carries on its activity on the principles of democratic centralism. Experience has taught us that this is the only principle that guarantees democratic methods for working out programs, strategy and tactics, while at the same time ensuring unity of action, a sense of purpose and efficiency. We are working to increase the participation of all communists in shaping party policy at all levels. I have in mind both the formulation of program guidelines for the whole party, influencing the local and party-branch programs.

Ratus. I shall attempt to summarize in brief, a few of the aspects not yet mentioned, connected with the party's work in improving the quality of party membership. In this work we draw on the experience of fraternal parties, particularly the CPSU. How active the membership is depends on party assignments: the new party cards register the holder's public activities and recognition of his work, thus showing how active he has been. We have a program of inner-party studies embracing practically the entire membership and many non-

members. Another program includes the party *aktiv*. All of this is important to improving membership quality.

Lastly, I would like to mention the annual Days of Party Initiative. The work volunteered on free days by party members, as well as non-party people, has a definite economic significance and strengthens the moral and political unity of the Polish people. These days contribute to the integration of party ranks and to closer unity between party members and the whole of the people.

Staszewski. I should like to touch on the specific problem of the religious part of the party membership. When socialist construction was started in Poland in the 1940s, the party accepted all who upheld its program for reshaping the country's socio-political and economic structure and the program of national emancipation. At that time we were dealing with a social system that had shaped in the pre-war years and the majority of people, particularly the peasantry, were religious. The party involved these people in building the new social system, for otherwise it would have meant separating the party from a part of the working class and peasantry. Social conditions today are very different but there are still believers among party members. This does not mean we are deviating from the Leninist party standards. The fact that we are realistic does not mean passivity in ideological education. There has been noticeable ideological headway in this respect.

Lopatka. A few words on the question of membership participation in the formation of party policy. There can be no doubt — and this flows from the very essence of any party — that the leadership, naturally, has greater influence on the formation of policy than the rank-and-file. It is the leadership's responsibility not only to reflect the atmosphere 'in general' but to create this atmosphere. And should the leadership fail to do this it would be rejected by the masses.

It is believed that forming and influencing the party's program and policy means taking part in formulating congress and Central Committee decisions. This is a simplified view. Of course, the most important decisions are taken at that level. However, membership influence on local programs, on the formation of the programs of individual organizations within the framework of the party's general line is important too, for here membership influence is felt most of all. Rank-and-file influence on the party's policy has increased greatly in recent years.

Party democracy means that all the party's organs function on a regular basis, from the Political Bureau down to the primary unit, and that all norms are observed. We have achieved a good deal in making party affairs widely known. All of the most important documents are available to the public and drafts of these documents are discussed by

the party and nationwide. Meetings of the Political Bureau are reported regularly.

There are more discussions in the party today than ever before. We prefer broad discussions prior to taking decisions, and monolithic unity after. This is democratic centralism in action corresponding to the present stage of the construction of socialism and of party development.

4. *In the present-day socialist society of the different countries is there anything in common in the ways the party's leading role is performed? If so, what are these common features? What is the significance of internationalizing the experience of fraternal parties?*

Wawrzyniak. At the present stage in the socialist countries' development, more and more common elements and similarities in policy, economy and social life are emerging as their economies and culture progress toward an identical level. Naturally, under these conditions the communist parties in the socialist countries, so alike in their class nature and social base and guided by a single Marxist-Leninist ideology, display many common features, similar tendencies and methods.

In a socialist society the guiding role of a Marxist-Leninist party is one of the key laws governing the process of socialist construction and the socialist countries have a good deal in common in the application of this law. In other words the party's guiding role has forms that are similar. We believe they could include the following:

first — in all the socialist countries the Communist Party determines the general direction and strategy of socio-economic development and the state's program;

second — the Communist Party is the main source of cadres for state bodies or, to put it more simply, the party is responsible for the state's cadres policy;

third — the Communist Party controls economic and cultural progress and the functioning of state organs in this field and, if necessary, introduces changes in these programs;

fourth — the Communist Party guides the work of public organizations in socialist and communist construction.

These similarities are, of course, influenced by local conditions, and individual fraternal parties introduce something new and of value to all in the theory and practice of guiding the development of socialist society. That is why it is difficult to overestimate the importance of exchanging experience, particularly today when the fraternal parties have more and more in common in their work and in formulating tasks. We do not tend to exaggerate the importance of the specific while disregarding the experience of others. Learning from the experience of others is not a matter of mechanical copying, but of

extracting what is of value to us in our conditions and applying it. Experience should be exchanged at all levels, from the general party level to the primary organization. This is one of the essential aspects of applying the principle of proletarian internationalism by which the PUWP is invariably guided.

What, concretely, is gained by an exchange of experience?

First, it helps one party find optimal decisions in situations that have already been dealt with by another party. Second, mistakes can be avoided and correct paths chosen. And, third, even where conditions of party activities differ, an exchange of information and experience promotes a deeper understanding of problems, provides a wealth of material for self-appraisal by individual parties and shows that there are many ways of settling identical problems.

Ostrowski. Developments today bring out new forms and attributes of proletarian internationalism while stressing its basic class essence and historical meaning. One of the new manifestations of proletarian internationalism that is taking shape before our eyes and with our participation is the socialist community. Building up and developing the socialist community is by no means a matter of local significance. It makes it possible, using the experience of the socialist countries, to reveal certain general laws of social progress. Obviously the consolidation of the socialist community is a key factor in making more effective its internationalist aid to all who are fighting for peace, national and social liberation, for democracy and socialism.

Lopatka. What does implementation of the party's leading role mean and why, in general, do we say that it is important to strengthen its leading role?

The party is a part of society. We mentioned earlier that the PUWP has about 2.5 million members and candidates, that Poland's population is 34 million, of whom 24 million are eligible voters. So despite its mass character, the party is but a part of society, and it is possible to speak of its fulfilling its leading role only when society, more or less fully and exactly, does what the party wants it to do. We speak of the party leading the people. This means that all sections of the state apparatus carry out the party's policy and that as long as allied parties exist in this country their political program is also a program of socialism. Public organizations follow the party program and in its daily activities society is guided by the system of values that are also the party's system of values. Putting it in different words, the party's leading role means that society follows the party in all that is most important and essential. Today we can say that our society is definitely functioning in line when the party program and under its guidance, and this can be asserted with greater certainty today than a few years ago.

We must realize, however, that our society does not yet fully comply with the party's wishes, and that there still are certain areas where the party is misunderstood, even opposed. Consequently, we may say that party leadership is a historical process and that the present-day level is not the apogee but is only progress in relation to the past. We say historical because the tasks which the party sets society undergo constant change and what was acceptable, say, in 1950 falls far below our requirements today.

There are many factors determining how effective party leadership will be and among these is the all-important ability of the party to be leader of the people. The desire to be leader is not enough, it is necessary to be up to the standards required of a leader. There must be unflagging care for the party's ability to lead at every historical period and this is the concern of the party executive and of every party member alike.

From this standpoint the support for the parties in every country by the world communist movement is very important. We do not forget that socialist construction and the revolutionary processes taking place in Poland are but a fragment of the restructuring of the world, of the global transition from capitalism to socialism, they are but elements of the world revolutionary process.

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exchange of views

Political alliances in the anti-imperialist struggle

Don Wimalasiri Subasinghe
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The communists have always regarded alliance between the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses, above all the peasantry, as an essential condition for the success of revolutionary struggle. The strategy of class and political alliances, whose principles were evolved by the classics of Marxism-Leninism, retains its significance in contemporary national-liberation revolutions against imperialism. As we know, the driving forces in these revolutions is supplied by a composition of classes and strata — the urban and rural proletariat, the semi-proletarian masses, the peasantry, the middle strata, including the intelligentsia, and to a considerable degree the national bourgeoisie, although their relationship to one another and their roles differ owing to the great diversity of the specific historical, economic and other conditions in various countries. These factors, and particularly the role of the national bourgeoisie, vary also according to the stage reached by the national-liberation revolutions. Undoubtedly, however, the degree of cohesion and unity of action of these forces achieved by the representatives of their political organizations largely determines the force of the national-liberation movement as a whole, its social depth and consequently its results and perspectives.

At the stage of winning political independence it was not particularly difficult to force such unity in many countries of Asia and Africa, firstly, due to the character of the goal, and, secondly, because society was less differentiated in respect of classes than it is today, although in many cases this did not rule out serious differences of opinion over forms and perspectives of struggle and leadership. At the stage of economic liberation the change of the goal caused a difference in understanding this goal by various social forces and called for new methods of achieving it. This was accompanied by a growing class differentiation, and the importance of political and ideological factors of the revolution increased. All this complicated the problem of welding the anti-imperialist unity of the national patriotic forces.

The fight for economic independence and social progress and

against imperialism and reaction has international as well as internal aspects. And one of the key tasks for the communist parties of the young states is to pursue a correct, sustained, flexible and effective policy of class and political alliances in this struggle. In this article we shall examine some elements of this set of problems on the basis of the experience of several countries, above all Sri Lanka.

It must be noted first of all that the specific nature of the class structure of society in Afro-Asian countries, and particularly the predominance of the peasantry and other strata of petty owners also determine the political organization of society. Even in countries such as India, Sri Lanka, and others, where already under the colonial regime the process of the formation of the national bourgeoisie and working class was comparatively far advanced, the former class was favorably placed to control the political and ideological direction of this process and its consequent impact on the whole political life. Indeed, broad sections of the population involved in small private enterprises represented and still represent a social soil fertilized more for bourgeois than for proletarian influence. In some countries even the proletariat, which has not yet broken with the petty-owner element and not yet shed all the stereotypes and notions associated with it, forms, to a certain degree, a part of this social soil that is responsive to bourgeois influence.

These, in our view, are the basic objective reasons for the frequently observed gap between the political influence of the working class and its numerical growth. The insufficiently high level of class and political consciousness among the proletariat is still a factor that may have at least two results. First, it allows the national bourgeoisie or the intermediate strata to play the dominant role in the national-liberation movement not only in its first stage but often in the initial phase of the second stage, too. Of course, the history of the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle has provided dramatic examples of the opposite (Vietnam, Laos) that are of exceptional significance, but the political and historical conditions of the development of the revolution in these countries demand special analysis.[1] Secondly, this factor restricts intensification of the political role of the communist parties in the national-liberation revolutions and in the social life of the newly-free countries.

As we know, the spectrum of the anti-imperialist alliance of various classes and strata of society is the widest in the period of struggle for political liberation. This spectrum is bound to shrink at the next stage, when the element that held the different class forces together is a thing of the past and the tasks of economic, social and cultural development figure increasingly on the agenda.

There is, however, no simple formula applicable to all developing countries. Undoubtedly, in many Afro-Asian countries, particularly

the Arab ones, the winning of political independence led eventually, if not at once, to a retreat from active anti-imperialist positions by the upper and often the middle strata of the national bourgeoisie. Their economic conceptions and aspirations never envisaged anything beyond a development that is dependent on imperialism and their countries' continued subordination in the world economic system of capitalism. The anti-national essence of these aspirations ultimately converted these strata of the local bourgeoisie into supporters of imperialism's neo-colonial policies and brought them up against other national forces, including petty-bourgeois strata, not to mention the working class.

In some countries, however, particularly the major states of Asia (India, for example), the national bourgeoisie took up different positions after political independence was won. Naturally, as adherents of capitalist development, the greater part of the national bourgeoisie considered it possible to create a national economy based on private and state capitalist enterprise. Today, having made considerable headway in developing the productive forces, particularly industry, defending national interests in the sphere of external economic relations and pursuing a policy of non-alignment, the Indian bourgeoisie has in practice maintained its leading position in the national life despite the fact that in terms of anti-imperialist content its policy in general is moderate.

An intermediate position between the two above-mentioned variants is found in countries like Sri Lanka, for instance, where the positions and aspirations of the national bourgeoisie, particularly its upper layers, are generally closer to the first group due to certain specific conditions obtaining in her economy. However, the general features of the social structures of the young states of Asia and Africa, as well as some local peculiarities that intensify them, and the bourgeoisie's experience of political maneuver and social demagogy have enabled this class to win over large sections of the middle strata, to build up strong mass parties and gain a relatively strong hold over the social and political life in their countries.

So the national-liberation movement's transition to the second stage is not always accompanied by a narrowing of the social framework of the anti-imperialist alliance (through loss of the national bourgeoisie), although this does happen in many cases. It may probably be said that where the national bourgeoisie does not occupy a leading position in the anti-imperialist front it is fundamentally more cohesive and purposeful. But the conditions, effectiveness and prospects of the front's activities differ, of course, depending on whether the national bourgeoisie holds state power or has been deprived of it. However it is obvious that the changed character and aims of the anti-imperialist struggle after the winning of political independence

inevitably influences the *radicalism* and *consistency* of the positions adopted in this struggle by the various class forces, particularly those of the national bourgeoisie.

The leading position of the bourgeoisie in the system of state political power erodes and softens the anti-imperialist line, particularly on the home front. In a number of countries today this line is maintained, firstly, only insofar as the interests of the ruling class directly conflict with those of the imperialist monopolies. And, secondly, insofar as this class is pressurized by nationalist sentiments of the masses at home and by the international obligations and general positions evolved by the majority of the developing countries in the framework of the non-aligned movement.

It is necessary to note that in their general approach to the problem of unity of the anti-imperialist forces the communists take into account the following fundamental condition. In the present-day conditions of the general crisis of capitalism and growing competition between the two world systems of socialism and capitalism the democratic transformations carried out in the course of the anti-imperialist struggle do not necessarily clear the road for the development of local capitalism. In conditions of a developing working class and movements they lead to the rejection of capitalism and adoption of a socialist-oriented development. It presupposes — which is most important — a need for a possible alliance between the social forces demanding democratic changes and the forces that want to see these changes serve as a base for a socialist future.

The objectively existing unity of aims of the various classes and sections of society opposing imperialism and working for economic emancipation does not become a force unless it finds an appropriate form in the political alliance of these classes and sections. To achieve such an alliance the political organizations expressing the interests of the various classes must become conscious of this unity and work patiently to give it organizational form.

The communists are convinced supporters of an effective alliance of the progressive social forces that seek to undermine and liquidate the economic positions of the foreign monopolies and local big capital, to raise the living standard of the popular masses, and to extend economic and political democracy, that is, to introduce changes that, while important in themselves and answering the needs of the moment, at the same time would pave the way for further development in an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist direction. Life has shown that the question of the forms that political alliances may assume is of great importance in this respect. To a great extent they are predetermined by the actual balance of class

and political forces in any given country and the class nature of the hegemony in the national-liberation revolution.

In most of the Asian and African countries, it is either the middle strata or the national bourgeoisie or various tandems of both that play the leading role today.

Representatives of these social groups often try to use this role to gain monopoly of power which makes it difficult to ensure lasting and effective anti-imperialist unity. Furthermore, such claim to undivided leadership of the national-liberation process acquires a particularly negative meaning where there is a sizeable and long-standing working-class movement having its trade unions and political organizations. In any case, attempts to keep the working class and its organizations out of the decision-making process and bar them from the implementation of requisite changes or to reduce their role to strictly 'auxiliary' functions inevitably weaken the political and social potential of the national-liberation revolution and play ultimately into the hands of imperialism and home reaction. The experience of many countries shows that only an alliance of anti-imperialist forces, where the working class, the peasantry and other categories of the working people play the leading role, is really effective and makes it possible to harness the political energy of the classes and social strata concerned to the task of bringing about complete national liberation and social progress.

In a number of newly-free countries political alliance has assumed a form of a single official party. We believe account should be taken of the following factors. More often than not, this form occurs where the leading role in the national-liberation revolution belongs to the petty-bourgeois strata and the social strata gravitating to them, whose political spokesmen are mostly intellectuals associated with the army or army officers themselves. In these circumstances, primary importance attaches, as we see it, to the nature of the political and ideological concepts of the leading groups, for it is on them, at least for the time being, that the possibilities and prospects of increasing the social and political role of the working class largely depend. These possibilities are narrower, of course, where the 'single' party's anti-imperialist ideology is closely associated with concepts of a petty-bourgeois nationalist character, which is often used by reactionary elements to disguise their anti-national, pro-imperialist actions. It should not be forgotten either that these conditions render impossible the legal existence of communist parties, whose organizational and political independence is a key factor for consistent advnace along the path of democracy and social progress.

For all the importance of political alliances in the developing

countries, there is no doubt that even the best of them will have exhausted its function as soon as it ceases to be progressive at home and anti-imperialist in its foreign activity. This can result from a change of its position by the most influential, to say nothing of the dominant, member of the alliance. Such a situation calls for an appropriate regrouping of the patriotic forces. The evolution of the situation in Sri Lanka is a case in point, where the Communist Party and other left forces opted to leave the right-wing dominated United Front government.

The United Front, it will be recalled, was formed in our country in 1968 following the agreement on the joint program offered to the nation later, at the May 1970 general elections by the Sri Lanka Freedon Party (SLFP), the Socialist (LSSP) and the Communist Party (CPSL). When the United Front won the elections, the Communist Party entered the government.[2] The communists were fully conscious of both the potentialities and limitations of this alliance. We did not regard the United Front as a socialist alliance, despite the presence of the left parties in it. We saw it as a broad alliance of patriotic social classes and strata, which included the working class, the peasantry, the radical intelligentsia, and certain sections of the national capitalist class. The balance of forces within this United Front, however, gave greater weight to social forces other than the working class.

'Although such a broad patriotic front could not be expected to carry through the revolutionary transformations needed in order to establish a socialist society, it had, in our opinion, the necessary potentialities for completing the struggle for political and economic independence, widening democracy, and carrying through measures of social progress — all of which represented a necessary and inescapable stage in the struggle for an eventual socialist society,' says the Statement of the CPSL Central Committee 'For a New Front and a Radical Program.'

Within the present United Front, we have worked continuously for a progressive line of policy, supporting all the positive trends and coming out against what we considered to be negative. Furthermore, in order to maintain unity against reactionary attacks, we have sometimes acquiesced in certain decisions by the government with which the communists did not agree. But this situation could not but change when a general line of policy which we considered disastrous for the country took command.

The changes in the situation and in our stand were caused by the growth within the SLFP of the right wing which was gradually assuming a dominating position. It resisted radical changes from the outset, especially those which restricted the growth of private capitalism or

tended to undermine the system of capitalist relations. The right-wing circles demanded a 'mixed economy,' which they regarded not as a transitional stage along the road to socialism, but as a permanent arrangement whereby state power and the resources of the public sector are used to assist private capitalist development.

The big radical steps forward taken by the United Front government, such as the land reform, the ceiling on house ownership and enhanced taxes on the wealthy, aroused panic among all pro-capitalist forces in the country, including the right wing within the SLSP. The rightists saw the existence of radical and left forces in the government and the United Front as a major obstacle to the realization of their aims. They began, therefore, to work, step by step, to get rid of these forces.

As a first step, they provoked the LSSP to withdraw from the government and the United Front in September 1975. Nevertheless, the Communist Party tried to preserve the United Front, for it did not regard the right-wing victory as irreversible. The right-wingers, however, carried on their policy. They tried to paralyze the Joint Committee of Trade Union Organizations, the major attainment of progressive trade unions in the fight for the united working-class movement. The right wing also sought to paralyze the work of the Front, its Central Joint Committee and to isolate the Communist Party. Many of the important proposals advanced by the Communist Party were agreed to 'in principle' but shelved in practice. What is more, the rightists imposed on the government a policy of confrontation with the workers and students, that is, the forces that had worked wholeheartedly for the defeat of the reactionary United National Party (UNP) in 1970. The confrontration grew especially pronounced during the workers' strikes of December 1976 and January 1977. The repressive policies pursued toward the strikers have produced a political crisis within the government and within the SLFP itself.

All this took place when, with the approach of the general elections, the UNP-led pro-imperialist reactionary forces intensified their efforts and presented a formidable challenge.

This challenge from the reactionaries should have been the signal for re-unifying the democratic, radical and left forces, as proposed by the Communist Party. But the right wing of the SLFP sought to frustrate any such development: first it proposed to postpone the general elections, and then it took a sudden decision to prorogue the National State Assembly (parliament) almost until the date of its constitutional dissolution. As a result, many important bills were shelved. These include the nationalization of foreign banks, and the bills to abolish the remaining forms of feudal land tenure and safeguard workers' rights in employment contracts.

In these circumstances the communists were to decide on future action. Could we expect to defeat the UNP-led reaction under the leadership of the SLFP right wing? If not, how could we best regroup our forces in order to defend the gains made since May 1970 and to ensure further advance in the direction of socialism, along a non-capitalist road?

An answer to these questions was given in the decision of the Central Committee on February 19, 1977, on the CPSL's withdrawal from the government. The party took this decision 'in order to give itself full independence of action in the present complicated situation, and to enable it, without constraints, to pursue its policy of bringing about a new re-alignment of the progressive forces . . .' The CPSL has not merely become an oppositional party, and its attitude to the SLFP will not be influenced by subjective considerations. We continue to regard the SLFP as a party that contains social forces and a number of leading personalities whom the working class can look upon as friends. Therefore, while opposing the policies of the right wing, the Communist Party will support any measure of the government in home and foreign policy which it considers to be in the interests of the people.

All this does not at all mean that the Communist Party has abandoned the policy of a united front, which it had pursued for so long. The party actively cooperates with all progressive and left forces to evolve a radical program and a fighting front to combat the UNP and the right wing of the SLFP. Its decision to withdraw from the present government will clear the decks for such militant struggle.

We are convinced of the correctness of our policy of united action by progressive forces. But united fronts do not reamin static. Their aims and their character change with the needs of the objective situation. These are some of the conclusions made by the February Plenum of the CPSL Central Committee after it held consultations with party organizations and analyzed the new situation that had obtained in our country.

The content of the national-liberation process today includes a certain collective confrontation of the majority of developing countries with world imperialism and a deep-going process of solving internal economic, social and political problems whose character is expressive of the trend of social development. The relationship between internal and external aspects varies from country to country and constantly undergoes changes due to numerous factors, including the stage reached by the national-liberation revolution in the given country and the evolution of conflict situations in some regions (the Middle East, South Africa, etc.). Even so, it is probably safe to say that the importance of internal aspects of the liberation movement is

greater than before, since the fight against imperialism, for instance, increasingly translates itself into a fight against its internal allies.

The importance of external aspects, too, is changing in comparison with the past, when the task was to win political independence. The fight is shifting into the sphere of international relations — both political and, above all, economic — as the positions seized by foreign capital in the past in newly-free countries are being eliminated or restricted. In this field, the more closely united the developing countries are, the more consistently they act and the stronger the alliance between the national-liberation movement and world socialism, the main anti-imperialist force of today, the greater is the leverage these countries could exercise against imperialism and exploitation and the stronger is their impact on international relations.

The anti-imperialist solidarity of the African and Asian countries that have won their freedom expresses itself in diverse forms of relations between national public organizations or relations between countries. A manifestation of the former type of relations is the useful activity of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), which operates as a center effectively coordinating diverse actions carried out by progressive opinion against imperialist plans for aggression, subversion and neo-colonial policy, in defense of peace and friendship among nations, in support of their vital interests and aspirations, for social progress in the newly-free countries. The communist parties of the developing countries lay great store by the work of the AAPSO and its numerous national committees and help them to the best of their ability.

The situation is much more complicated when it comes to newly-free Afro-Asian countries achieving anti-imperialist solidarity and coordinating action at regional, continental or intercontinental level.

Most of these countries are taking part in the non-aligned movement, whose general anti-imperialist content has deepened and become more specific with the passage of time.[3] The non-aligned countries, which constantly advocate a durable peace and international détente and carry on the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism, have lately demanded more and more emphatically that an end be put to inequality in economic relations with developed capitalist countries. The political significance of extending the activities of the non-alignment movement to international economic relations would be hard to overrate, for coordinated measures, *which have now been launched* by numerous non-aligned countries, can raise serious obstacles in the way of neo-colonialist exploitation by imperialist monopolies.

It must be admitted, however, that these possibilities are by far not fully used. One of the reasons for this is the great social and political

heterogeneity of the newly-free countries committed to the non-aligned movement (this is also true of the narrower continental association, the Organization of African Unity). These countries include socialist, socialist-oriented and bourgeois states as well as absolute feudal monarchies. Despite this diversity, they find common ground on certain issues, or else the movement could not have existed at all. On the other hand, serious differences in the character of the regimes and in their orientation tell necessarily on the non-aligned countries' approach to the specific problems.

All this hampers the use of the anti-imperialist potential and fighting efficiency of the non-aligned movement. We think an essential condition for overcoming these difficulties is to go on strengthening and developing the alliances of progressive forces within each country while at the same time expanding their mutual relations and coordinating their actions on the international scene.

It should also be stressed that, while certain quarters in developing countries still claim that the national-liberation movement as a whole is all but equal to 'defeating' imperialism single-handed and that this concept should be the starting point of the strategy and tactics of coordinated action by the young states, the reality is quite different.

The success of the struggle of oppressed peoples for political liberation was made possible by the new balance of class forces in the international arena, a balance resulting from the rise of the socialist world system and its effective support of national-liberation movements. Conditions may be said to have changed since, with the result that the national-liberation movement today has a base of its own in the form of states and hence is much stronger than before. All this is true. But it is just as true that the objectives of the anti-imperialist struggle have become much more complex and that to accept the formula of fighting 'single-handed' would deprive the developing countries of the urgently needed strength derived from the interaction with their natural ally, world socialism. This explains why the more discerning leaders of Afro-Asian states, above all those looking toward socialist development, attach increasing importance to growing all-round cooperation and friendship with the socialist countries.

We will not go into the various theories which imperialist propaganda thrusts on to the developing countries with an eye to isolating the national-liberation movement, such as the theory of 'equidistance' from capitalist and socialist states; 'genuine' non-alignment or the 'geopolitical' division of the world. Their reactionary background is known well enough. We only wish to say that the history of international relations over the past six decades, or since the first socialist state came into being, proves incontrovertibly that support from the Soviet Union and later from the socialist world system, has been a

factor of growing importance to the national-liberation movement.

Today the socialist community's political support of young states is increasingly supplemented with assistance in the economic field and in strengthening their defense capacity. All this helps to build up their international positions in the face of imperialism and to unite the more advanced social forces in the struggle for social, economic and political progress.

The forms and lines of this support have been developing in step with the deepening of the social content of liberation revolutions and also in step with the growing strength and potential of the socialist countries. But its class essence has never changed, for it has always been based on the noble principle of proletarian internationalism.

1. For instance, developments in Laos are analyzed in the article by K. Phomvihan, 'The victory of creative Marxism-Leninism in Laos.' *WMR*, March 1977.

2. See S. Wickremasinghe, 'Sri Lanka United Front Program,' *WMR*, July 1973. — *Ed.*

3. See Pieter Keuneman, 'The policy of the non-aligned movement,' in *WMR*, November 1976. — *Ed.*

The human rights issue

Dear Editor,

The mass media of capitalist countries have lately been giving much attention to the need to honor international commitments on human rights and freedoms. I would like to know what these commitments are, what rights and freedoms they proclaim, how they are respected and by whom?

As a Palestinian, I am well aware that my people have long been denied every right and have been fighting for their freedom, making untold sacrifices. I know who our allies and enemies are in this fight and I resent it when anybody alleges that the very fight of my people is unlawful, that socialism ignores international law, that our friends deny their citizens democratic freedoms, which is said to be seen, for one thing, in the absence of a 'legal opposition' in the socialist countries, the existence of 'numerous dissidents,' and so on.

I am not a communist — just an educated worker — but those allegations strike me as false. Could you explain what it's all about?

Khalil Salami
(Jordan)

We have asked Professor *Igor Blishchenko,* Secretary of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (Soviet Union), and *Alberto Kohen,* (Argentina), a journalist who has written several books on legal problems, to answer the questions put in Khalil Salami's letter. Following is a record of a dialogue on these questions between Blishchenko and Kohen.

Blishchenko. The problems raised in the letter are most topical. The struggle for human rights today is part of the struggle for social progress, peace and détente. The very conception of these rights is something of a watershed between progress and reaction. They are interpreted in numerous ways and so I suggest that we begin by specifying the range of questions we should try to answer.

Kohen. I believe we need a brief definition of the basic provisions of international agreements on human rights. We ought to say who carries them out and how and, in general, how human rights and freedoms are variously interpreted. We should also show up the specious bourgeois propaganda allegations mentioned by the Jordanian reader.

Blishchenko. I would single out the problem of 'dissidents' in the socialist countries.

Kohen. I agree. Let us first give an idea of international legal provisions concerning human rights, shall we?

International laws on human rights

Kohen. International legislation on human rights has a long record but as it stands today it took shape after the October Revolution, particularly after World War II, under the impact of the ideas and forces of socialism, peace, democracy and progress. It is a vast body of legislation but I would single out three groups of legal standards agreed and approved at international level. First of all, the UN Charter, from which the most important of the relevant provisions proceed, the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and a number of agreements between socialist and capitalist countries outlawing war as an instrument of government policy, inviting the states concerned to settle their disputes by peaceful means, and confirming the right of peoples and individuals to peace and a peaceful life. This is a very important legal postulate which I think should be constantly reminded of because not everyone by far is aware that to live in peace is an inalienable human right.

Another group of agreements, which includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN in 1966, the covenants on human rights[1] and a number of other international agreements, contains general standards and principles relating to economic, social,

cultural and individual civil and political rights and freedoms. Lastly, the Nuremberg Statutes and the sentences passed by international military courts in Nuremberg and Tokyo, the covenants on the prevention and punishment of the crimes of genocide and apartheid, on the abolition of every form of racial discrimination, on non-application of the statute of limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as other agreements define responsibility for criminal violations of human rights.

Blishchenko. I would stress that international human rights agreements are based on the principle of self-determination of peoples and nations.[2] It has been supplemented by the crimination, and the principle of equal rights for men and women. On this basis, the covenants on human rights proclaim the right to work and to equitable and favorable working conditions, the right to form trade unions, the right to social security, including social insurance, the right of the family, of mothers and children, to protection and assistance, the right to an adequate standard of living and the highest attainable level of physical and mental health, to education and to participation in cultural life.

The covenants confirm the law-protected right to life, which implies that no one may be arbitrarily deprived of his life. They prohibit the application of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment to anyone and ban slavery, slave trade and forced or compulsory labor. They demand that the signatories should guarantee the individual man freedom and immunity, prevent arbitrary interference in anyone's private or family life, encroachments on the inviolability of the home or the secrecy of correspondence, on people's honor or reputation. They also contain what is known as traditional civil and political rights: freedom of speech, assembly, association, procession, demonstration, opinion, conscience, religion, and so on. The covenants and other international agreements condemn racism, racial discrimination, genocide and apartheid and define every manifestation of these practices as a crime.

Kohen. As a result of the efforts of the Soviet Union and other peace-loving countries, international treaties and agreements outlaw all propaganda of war, hatred and enmity among nations. Furthermore, any social order, such as fascist dictatorship, racism, apartheid or colonial oppression, which denies human rights and freedoms should be regarded in international law as contrary to legal standards. In these cases, international law recognizes the peoples' right to strive by every possible means for effective freedom and its legal protection.

Blishchenko. That is why wars waged as a means of resisting aggression, as well as national-liberation wars, are not crimes under international law. This has a direct bearing on the struggle of the Palestinian people. A number of UN documents explicitly stress the

right of every people to self defense and the right of peoples under colonial rule to fight for their freedom by every means, including the use of force.[3]

Kohen. I think we have stated the main international human rights agreements in sufficient detail. Let us see how they are carried out in practice.

Why international human rights standards are not always respected

Kohen. It's an open secret that the richest capitalist country, the United States, cannot guarantee eight per cent of its able-bodied citizens the right to work and denies civil and social rights to the overwhelming majority of American Blacks, Indians, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos and members of other nationalities. The 31st UN General Assembly reaffirmed its strong condemnation of recurrent serious violations of human rights in Chile. In El Salvador, presidential elections rigged by reaction ended in a massacre. There are numerous violations of human rights in the Middle East, South Africa and those of the Latin American countries that are ruled by fascist or reactionary regimes, as well as in West Germany and elsewhere.

Although the situation in Argentina is different than in neighboring countries ruled by dictatorial regimes, an obsolete economic structure dominated by foreign monopolies and latifundium holders prevents the establishment of genuine democracy and breeds coups, terror, repression, social and political instability. The brutally suppressed ultra-leftist terror and the growing, and unsuppressed, ultra-right terror (all that has come to be known as 'marginal repression') are evidence of disregard of the most elementary of human rights, the right to life. Democratic opinion at home and abroad is concerned about these facts. The plight of hundreds of political detainees being held without charge or trial, the dismissals for trade union or political activity, daily kidnappings, torture, massive crimes against the whole people, and against statesmen who show any persistence in seeking a democratic road have brought the issue of human rights in Argentina to the fore. This is implicit in statements by spokesmen of the working-class movement and political quarters, even by General Jorge R. Videla, the President, and other military leaders, as well as by representatives of the Catholic church.

However, real and effective exercise of human rights is a concrete matter. In Argentina, for instance, it calls for measures making possible an unhampered public dialogue. But a dialogue is hardly conceivable if kidnappings and detention without charge or trial are not stopped, if the trade union movement is not fully democratized and if the curbs imposed on political parties are not lifted. Nor can the

dialogue be conducted if the problems of economic depression, the external debt, massive layoffs and unemployment, the decline in real wages and the uptrend in the cost of living are not solved.

In most capitalist countries the condition of women, youth and national minorities is likewise at variance with the international standards and obligations contained in agreements on human rights. This prompts some to wonder whether the lawyers who call for a supranational legal agency that would concern itself with these matters are not right after all. But this bourgeois liberal idea is hardly acceptable.

Blishchenko. I think you are right. To accept it would mean violating the sovereign right of every state to exercise jurisdiction on its territory. It is for the states themselves to amend their legislation in accordance with the international legal standards accepted by them. Increasingly strong appeals have lately been made in the capitalist countries for the institution of an international legal agency that would operate as a civil rights court of the highest instance and examine complaints from individuals. I believe those who make these appeals see such an agency as an instrument that would facilitate their interference in the affairs of the socialist countries, which have ratified all international human rights agreements. The capitalist powers, however, generally take their time over assuming legal responsibility for the implementation of these agreements. First they were against signing the agreements and now they are holding back ratification.

Kohen. Could you specify?

Blishchenko. Of course. Here is a book by James Green, *The United Nations and Human Rights*. I read in it that the United States played the decisive role among the delegations which insisted on confining human rights to civil and political rights.[4] You may recall that the United States, Britain, Salazar's Portugal and South Africa voted against the draft covenant on the prevention and punishment of the crime of apartheid. Britain, Belgium, South Africa and the United States insisted on leaving out the articles on the rights of peoples and nations to self-determination and to independent disposal of their natural resources. The United States tried to prevent the signing of the covenant banning all racial discrimination. Britain Holland and other capitalist countries took a stand against the provision that no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life. It is revealing that the Dutch delegation, in listing cases in which it considered that deprivation of life without charge or trial was permissible, mentioned measures aimed at quelling unrest or revolt.

As for holding back ratification, the United States plays the leading part in this respect as well. 'Human Rights Studies in Universities,' a report prepared in collaboration with UNESCO, says that the United States has ratified no international human rights documents except

the Covenant on Slavery.[5] In that country, many international treaties are made largely ineffectual by the so-called Federal reservation, which says that the provisions of international covenants shall be applied only in so far as they do not contradict state legislation, which admittedly contains many curbs on human rights, including racist curbs. The reason for this stubborn resistance was disclosed by former U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, father of the cold war. He said the United States had no intention of adhering to international treaties that would lead to internal social changes.[6]

Kohen. A revealing statement, isn't it?

Blishchenko. Yes, in a way it is a forced admission of the fact that only socialism can grant people the broadest democratic rights and freedoms.

Kohen. Exactly. Now for the next question: rights and freedoms as specific concepts under capitalism and socialism.

Rights and freedoms as conceived by capitalism and socialism

Blishchenko. Let us begin with the fact that the capitalist system provides and guarantees real freedom primarily for a negligible minority, the exploiters, and is a source of non-freedom for the overwhelming majority, the exploited. Even the wealthiest capitalist countries have proved unable to provide their peoples with sufficient jobs, bread or education, protect their health or guarantee them a secure old age.

Kohen. Even in countries long regarded as the cradle of bourgeois democracy, a process is going on in which the very concept of civil rights is losing its original meaning. Ordinary people have less and less opportunities to exercise their rights as citizens. Not that they cannot, say, read the newspaper they prefer or join in a strike, for bourgeois democracy still tolerates this and other freedoms won by the people through struggle, even though it makes it harder and harder to exercise them. Nominally people are free to say what they think but they are becoming less and less free to think. This is because monopoly domination is spreading more and more not only to the production sphere, but also to the formation and satisfaction of man's needs. Using the mass media, the monopolies impose their own system of values on the ordinary citizen. They try to make it difficult or impossible for him to think and act on his own.

Blishchenko. By contrast, freedoms under socialism, which make the rights of every individual effective, are characterized by the absence of private ownership of the means of production and by equality in the sphere of production and exchange, and are guaranteed by the genuineness of this equality. The socialist conception of human rights and freedoms is premised on the fact that guaranteed

economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms enable people to fully enjoy their political and civil rights and to make a real contribution to society's progress. The socialist countries were the first to propose drafting and adopting international laws on human rights. Moreover, they have shown the greatest consistency in carrying them out. They have ratified all international agreements on human rights and freedoms and have made them national laws. This has won international recognition. The UN Commission on Human Rights has pointed out that the range of individual rights, originally restricted to personal and political freedoms, has been extended to the utmost in the socialist countries to include economic, social and cultural rights, which have been defined as precisely and clearly as civil and political rights.[7]

Kohen. We may say, therefore, that capitalism cannot, by its very nature, grant equal rights to all. So long as there is inequality in regard to the means of production because they are based on private property there will also be social, political and civil inequality. On the other hand, socialism is the first system in history which not only has declared but guarantees:

— the development of the whole range of the individual's economic, social and cultural rights: the right to work, education, rest and recreation and social security, without which genuine freedom is unthinkable;

— the most complete and unlimited suffrage, as well as genuine production democracy in the form of direct worker participation in management;

— a just solution of the national question, which led to the rapid progress of all peoples and nations;

— a just solution of the problem of equal rights for women.

Blishchenko. Many of the universally recognized rights and freedoms, both as they have been formalized by international legal standards, and even in the curtailed form in which they have been laid down in the laws of the more democratic capitalist countries, were absent from legislation prior to the October Revolution. The impact of the legal practice of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries prompted the masses to step up their fight for democratic legislation and compelled capitalist legislators to extend the working people's rights.

If we accept these conclusions we can go on to the next group of questions concerning the untenable bourgeois criticism of the socialist conception of human freedoms and rights.

Untenable criticism

Kohen. Strictly speaking, we touched on the subject in discussing the

difference between the capitalist and the socialist world in interpreting the very concept of rights and freedoms. But let us go back to the questions put in the letter. It's a fact that bourgeois ideologists, while pointing out that the socialist revolution brings into being a new society, a new legality and a new type of state, allege that the revolution is incompatible with law and denies it. As for revolutionaries and socialist states, they regard law, we are told, as a tactical means and respect or violate international legal standards at will. In a way this echoes the ultra-leftists contention that a country which accomplishes a revolution must shun all legal standards.

Blishchenko. Such theories turn things upside down. Yes, the revolution— I refer to the October Revolution in Russia — deprived several thousand or even tens of thousands of exploiters of civil rights. But then it granted real civil, social and economic rights to millions and tens of millions of poor people who had had no rights.

Kohen. Besides, the Russian revolution did not originally disfranchise all former exploiters. Lenin told an American journalist that after the revolution of November 7, 1917 the Soviet state had not closed down even bourgeois newspapers and had released not only many members of the Kerensky cabinet, but even General Krasnov, who had carried on an armed struggle against the Bolsheviks and the working people. Not until the exploiting classes had unleashed a civil war did it become indispensable to defend the revolution by every means, including a certain curtailment of the rights of its enemies.

Blishchenko. That is also true of other socialist countries, which by no means deprived all one-time exploiters of civil rights. As a matter of fact, it was only the victory of the October Revolution, the growing world influence of the Soviet Union, the defeat of Hitler Germany and the increased strength of the forces of peace and socialism that paved the way for proclaiming basic human rights and freedoms at international level. The new legal standards formulated by Lenin in theoretical terms were incorporated in the UN Charter due to the efforts of the Soviet state as universally recognized principles of international law. These new principles — the prohibition of wars of aggression and the obligation to safeguard peace, the right of nations to self-determination, the abolition of colonialism, sovereign equality, peaceful settlement of disputes, and so on, as well as the ban on genocide, apartheid and racism and the contribution of man's social and economic rights — have thoroughly altered the social substance and nature of international law. Due to socialism, it has acquired a general democratic content and become a genuine law of peace and peaceful coexistence of sovereign and independent states with different social systems. As such, it now serves the interests of all nations and furthers social progress. And this is why imperialism violates it.

Kohen. Inasmuch as socialist legality is a most important Leninist principle of the state and legal organization of society, shouldn't we now discuss Khalil Salami's question about the right to opposition? Bourgeois critics claim that the absence of opposition parties in the socialist countries means there is no freedom there. The claim has a certain effect on the masses, since the existence in some capitalist countries of strong communist and workers' parties that are in opposition and the fact that in a number of cases they have won important positions to the point of participating in the government are an indication of the working people's democratic gains.

Blishchenko. The existence of opposition parties under capitalism is natural and necessary, for capitalist society is made up of antagonistic classes. Indeed, there is a certain differentiation even inside the ruling group, because its members have dissimilar ideas about the interests of their class and the nation as a whole. This is the objective source of, say, the political pluralism of bourgeois democracy.

There are no opposition parties in the socialist countries. Some of these countries have a multi-party system but the non-communist parties are not in opposition, for under socialism there are no exploiters or exploited, no antagonistic interests and so no need for these interests to be expressed by warring political factions.

Besides, the formation of every state has been influenced by diverse social, economic, historical and national factors and peculiarities, which necessarily puts its stamp on today's situation in that state. It would be wrong, therefore, to mechanically 'transplant' a given situation from one country to another.

Kohen. In other words, the demand for opposition parties under existing socialism, with the means of production and political power in the working people's hands, is tantamount to social regression, to a demand for the abolition of the existing order and for the restoration of exploitation and inequality.

Blishchenko. Yes, and that explains the zeal which monopoly propaganda shows in trying to create the impression that there is an 'internal opposition' in the socialist countries, and in inciting a handful of people who call themselves opponents of socialism. Socialist society's attitude to 'dissidents' is seen in their universal condemnation by the people.

Kohen. However, some critics of socialism, including members of the administration of some countries, such as the United States, claim that by treating 'dissenters' as persons betraying the interests of their country and people, the socialist states are proceeding unlawfully, are 'curtailing' human rights and freedoms.

Blishchenko. Let us first consider the moral aspect of the matter.

We know that the U.S. administration, the Pentagon and the CIA have ample experience of *suppressing* people's civil, economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms. They tried to destroy these freedoms with bombs and napalm in Indochina. They have paid and go on paying the murderers at work in Chile, Paraquay and other countries. Now that these 'humanists' have set out to 'defend' freedoms in the socialist countries, it is fair to ask: whose freedoms and rights they are campaigning against? The answer is easy enough — they are campaigning against the sovereign right of the peoples of the socialist countries to build their life as they see fit, according to their laws and constitutions and not on the Washington model. They are campaigning against the right of all peoples to a peaceful life, which requires détente and peaceful coexistence.

It's that and not the so-called humanism of bourgeois zealots of 'human rights' that is behind the hullabaloo about 'dissenters' and an 'internal opposition,' in particular behind the presumption to 'teach others how to live' and the attempts to impose one's own system of arbitrary rule and disregard of law on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

Kohen. America's rulers should be the last to hold up their country as a model of respect for civil rights. A model, indeed! It's a country where a presidential candidate eavesdrops on his electoral rival, where you can hire a gangster to get a political opponent out of your way, where almost 14,000 people, mostly Blacks and Indians, are being held in 77 prisons of North Carolina alone, according to the Rev. Benjamin Chavis, the civil rights champion sentenced to 34 years in prison on a trumped-up charge. Speeches in 'defense' of civil freedoms based on 'moral achievements' of this sort can only be described as hypocritical.

A recent statement by leaders of the Communist Party of Argentina exposed U.S. imperialism's interference in the affairs of my country on the hypocritical pretext of 'defending' human rights, whereas the CIA and monopolies are the mainstay of a brutal reign of terror. The statement stressed that 'while recognizing the undeniable role of international solidarity, we deny the sincerity and moral authority of U.S. imperialism to defend human rights beyond its frontiers, for it violates them within its frontiers and in various parts of the world.' Chile's communists, for their part, have declared that what they expect of the new U.S. administration is an end to interference in the internal affairs of Chile, which expresses itself in support for the fascist regime.

But this is the moral aspect of the matter. What about its legal aspect? Do Soviet laws, for instance, curtail freedom of opinion or dissent?

Does socialism curtail freedom of opinion?

Blishchenko. Let us first agree on what we mean by 'freedom of opinion' and 'dissent.' Criticism of shortcomings is 'dissent' which socialism encourages. Anyone who reads the Soviet press can satisfy himself of this. Our press discusses the most delicate and challenging problems of building socialism. Freedom of criticism at all levels and widespread discussion of every social problem are standards of our internal life protected by Soviet law. It is unscrupulous of our ill-wishers from capitalist countries to list as 'dissenters' workers, farmers and intellectuals who offer criticisms in the press, at public meetings or at sessions of government bodies. Unscrupulous because what we have in this case is not 'dissent' as seen by critics of socialism, but citizens' participation in the life of society.

It is equally unscrupulous, in my view, to class as 'dissidents' anyone who is dissatisfied for some reason with his life but blames society for his personal failures and miscalculations. There are disgruntled people in any society whose discontent is not due to political, social or economic but rather psychological causes. In our country, too, we have people with a consumer mentality, weaklings, occasionally sick people who are over-ambitious and have an exaggerated idea of their merits and abilities, and people offended by real or imaginary wrongs done to them in this or that case. They blame the Soviet state for their setbacks. But the Soviet state does not regard them as its opponents. It helps the offended to restore justice. It treats the sick, educates those who have slipped up and helps the weak to find their place in life. By the way, our critics lose interest in the fate of such 'defenders of rights' as soon as they emigrate from the Soviet Union. It is not mere chance that many an emigre takes his life while others land in mental institutions or are unable to find a job and are living in poverty. Nor is it accidental that Soviet embassies abroad receive numerous letters from former 'champions of human rights' who on acquainting themselves with capitalist reality and freedom ask to be readmitted to the Soviet Union.

Kohen. So what is left of the 'numerous discontented and dissenters' who are said by capitalist propaganda to exist in the Soviet Union and whose rights are allegedly threatened?

Blishchenko. What is left is a handful which, moreover, is far from homogeneous. It includes people who've been misled. We are willing to argue with such people, to try to show them why they are wrong. It's an approach that bears fruit. Many of those who had held anti-Soviet views for one reason or another discard their incorrect ideas and shake off the influence of an alien ideology. The case of Solzhenitsyn, Bukovsky, Amalrik and other rabid anti-communists is different.

Kohen. I think the aura of 'champions of freedom' that surrounded the men you have mentioned dimmed considerably after they were deported from the Soviet Union. Although the bourgeois media continue to support them, it is dawning on many that these individuals are rabid reactionaries and anti-communists instigating intervention against the Soviet Union and the socialist community. Their links with NTS, a white-guard fascist organization, and with reactionaries and capitalist intelligence services have been revealed.

Those who chose to meet Bukovsky, for one, included not only the master of the White House but Pinochet, who is a fascist, as well as his assistant and adviser on prisons, ex-Obersturmbannführer SS Walter Rauch. Rauch is the inventor of the gas-chamber on wheels which the fascists used in the Soviet Union to murder with exhaust fumes those who did not suit them for political or racial reasons or even on account of age. Sympathy for the 'dissidents' has been publicly voiced by such 'stalwarts of democracy' as Strauss, Springer, Vorster and Smith. There are still certain delusions among the public in the capitalist countries about restrictions on human rights and freedoms in the socialist countries.

Blishchenko. Yes, we know that 'violations of human rights' in the socialist countries are alleged in the West, among others, by some progressives, including those who are in principle for socialism. We will not go into their stance here. It's a special matter. Speaking generally, it has to be borne in mind that while socialist democracy already provides the individual with a maximum of rights and freedoms, it is a social institution that is still developing and perfecting itself. This is evident, among other things, in the draft of the new Soviet constitution submitted to the people for discussion. But in furthering democracy, we reject the abstract concept of unlimited freedom, which in practice could only lead to anarchy. Certain restrictions are indispensable and the individual must have certain obligations toward society. Even the Romans knew this — they used to say *'in favorem libertatis omnia jura clamant'* but *'est modus in rebus'* ('Every law calls for freedom' but 'there is a limit to everything'). It is the law that officially determines the measure of individual and social freedom. Marx noted that 'freedom in a state exists in the form of *laws* . . . The code of laws is the Bible of freedom.' In the Soviet Union all propaganda of war, obscurantism, racism or militarism is considered a crime. Treated as violations of Soviet law are also acts and agitation designed to undermine or weaken the Soviet social system. When acts of this nature are committed deliberately, above all with the backing of foreign powers or organizations or of persons living abroad, it is the duty of the state and society to defend themselves. We are certain that if we don't want to abandon

our class position or violate our own laws, we cannot allow freedom of action in a socialist state to enemies of socialism.

Kohen. In fact, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights speaks of obligations toward society and defines the principle of legality as meaning that the law can restrict the rights and freedoms of individuals with a view to recognizing and respecting the rights and freedoms of the other members of society and to meeting justified requirements of morality, public order and universal welfare. Yet occasionally the legality of imposing such restrictions is questioned from the standpoint of international law.

Blishchenko. Groundlessly. The UN seminar on human rights held in Cyprus in 1969 pointed out that persons living together in an organized society must reconcile themselves to certain curbs on their rights because the rights of the individual must be balanced with the interests of society. Even the international covenants on human rights provide for certain legal restrictions on a number of freedoms listed in them. Restrictions of this nature are imposed by all states. I remember that in Belgium the law provides for up to five years' imprisonment and a fine of up to 20,000 francs for persons who, with money obtained from abroad, carry on activities or propaganda intended to shake the citizens' loyalty to their state.

Kohen. I wish to note, however, that for all their outward similarity, the restrictions imposed by socialist and capitalist law are exact opposites. Bourgeois law imposes them to safeguard the interests of the capitalist system and an exploiting minority. Socialist law does it to safeguard the interests of all working people, all citizens, against encroachments by some individuals. This is an answer to Khalil Salami's question about who defends human rights and how, as well as to the question of what is seen as human rights under capitalism and under socialism.

Blishchenko. I fully agree with that. But we are almost through with the questions raised in the letter. We could certainly not discuss the whole range of problems relating to enforcement of international legal standards in regard to man, but even so we ought to draw certain conclusions. I would like to stress that the general democratic and universal substance of these standards is a result of the peoples' growing struggle for democracy, human rights and freedoms, peace and social progress and plays an increasing part in this struggle.

Kohen. I think we could word our second conclusion as follows: the imperialists use the manifest lie about 'violations' of human rights and freedoms in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries as a political weapon against the growing mass movement for genuine democratic rights for the majority of the people. The campaign over 'violations' of human rights is a propaganda facade behind which

imperialist quarters, especially in the United States, try to conceal the fact that they are the mainstay of fascist regimes. They use it in an effort to reduce the appeal of the socialist and progressive conception and exercise of guaranteed rights and freedoms as rights and freedoms for the working majority and to divert public attention from such realities as police arbitrariness and violations of human rights and freedoms in the capitalist world.

Blishchenko. The campaign also pursues other political and ideological aims. This is not a new attempt to erode the socialist system from within. Besides, aggressive imperialist groups calculate that attacks on the order prevailing in the socialist countries and gross interference in their affairs, contrary to all international standards, will undermine the favorable international political and legal climate that has been taking shape with détente. This could be our third conclusion.

Kohen. To Marxist-Leninists and to everyone who wants to transform society along socialist lines, the gauge of freedom is freedom for the working class and other working people, and the struggle for democracy is an important component of the struggle for socialism. I believe, therefore, that we must continuously show that the assertions about violations of human rights and freedoms in the socialist countries are wrong, irrespective of whether they are prompted by class considerations or stem from faulty understanding or misinformation. We must not forget that anti-Sovietism, anti-socialism and anti-communism are an obstacle to the fight for human rights in those countries where they *are* violated. Explanatory work and sound arguments will help the movement for peace, democracy and social progress win new forces and will contribute to the unity and mobilization of the masses in the struggle for these goals.

1. For instance the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

2. Article 1 of the covenants on human rights reads as follows:

'1. All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

'2. All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic cooperation based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

'3. The States, Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the adminstration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.' — *Ed.*

3. See, for example, the Report of the Sixth Committee of the UN, A/7809, December 4, 1969.

4. James F. Green, *The United Nations and Human Rights*. Washington, 1956, p. 40.

5. See 'Human Rights Studies in Universities.' UNESCO, 1975, p. 35.

6. See M. Moskovitz, *Human Rights and World Order,* New York, 1958.

viewpoints

New dimensions of the anti-monopoly struggle

Pierre Baghi
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Internationalization of production i.e., extension beyond national boundaries of designing, manufacture and marketing of goods, is a trend of our time, reflecting the socialization of production in capitalist economy.

The multinational companies (MNC) are the monopoly's answer to the objective need for an international exchange of knowledge, technology and manufactured goods. The expanding influence of this typically monopoly form of concentration of capital and production is quite apparent today. It can be seen in the appropriation of natural resources, mobility of capital, multiform exploitation of the working people, currency speculation, etc., all of which is the work of monopoly groups operating in many countries and regions and motivated only by their drive for superprofits.

The imperialist essence and plundering operations of the MNCs have been thoroughly researched. It is time now to analyze the new traits in their policy in the serious crisis that has gripped the capitalist world system.

New strategy of the monopolies

For the national and international trade union movement it is imperative that the dimensions be determined of the new monopoly strategy, its goals, consequences, obstacles, and limits. This would help to outline specific forms of struggle and unitary initiatives to be developed and amplified by the movement.

We believe that the primary objective information to be considered is, first, the contradiction between level of development and degree of socialization of productive forces and, second, the nature of the decisions offered by capitalism in response to the demands arising from this contradiction.

This fundamental contradiction is, above all, political. Imperialist governments no longer strive to protect the interests of all capitalists, their primary function now is to serve monopoly capital. It follows,

therefore, that the question now is not only to ensure exploitation of workers, but also to plunder the old and new intermediary layers of society.

Though this idea is not new, it is now acquiring global proportions and during the crisis is enforced with the help of 'counter inflation' plans, 'austerity measures,' etc. All this is needed to better finance the industrial giants under cover of projects for 're-deployment of forces, or 'reorientation of foreign investments . . .' This new orientation is needed by imperialism because it must reckon with the historic changes throughout the world, particularly in recent years.

And so, the primary aim of big capital's new strategy is to protect its positions in the favorable alignment of political and social forces. In attempting to change this alignment the monopoly bourgeoisie is feverishly searching for means to create new lines of defense in a world where the sphere of imperialist influence is steadily shrinking. These means are not of an offensive character and in general form express a desire by the monopolies and multinationals to adapt to imperialism's severe economic, social and political crisis. The new strategy also shows how much more difficult are the conditions for assimilation of monopoly capital when there is a surplus, and when super-accumulation increases while rate of profit drops and the masses step up their demands for radical changes.

The main directions of the international monopolies' strategy and the imperialist states expressing their interests, stands out more clearly in bold relief against the background of the crisis. These directions are best illustrated by the operations of the metal industry giants which strongly influence economic, political, social and financial affairs in the capitalist countries.

Basic trends and methods

The multinationals have operated in two main directions in recent years.

The first is transfer of capital from one economic sector to another. In practice this means stopping capital investments, possible liquidation of capital invested in the zone of the industrial capitalist countries in such areas as ferrous metallurgy, textiles, iron mines, etc., and a noticeable drop in investments or of production in certain branches, in favor of those whose products are in high demand. For instance, though the nuclear industry is the privilege of American trusts and their French, West German and Japanese competitors it is also an arena of rivalry among them. Besides, nuclear contracts are signed preferably with fascist or pro-imperialist regimes (Brazil, South Africa, South Korea, Iran, etc.).

The second is geographic production mobility, i.e., transfer of

some production to countries abundant in raw materials and cheap labor. This applies to Latin America, Southeast Asia, southern Africa, the Middle East, where investment is much safer or is guaranteed by the interested states. It is mainly auto assembly, electrical equipment and garment factories that are transferred.

Latin America, for example, became a most lucrative region for the giants of the auto industry and also an area of competition between Ford, Chrysler and General Motors, all of whom have branches in practically every Latin American country. Volkswagen invests in Mexico, Brazil and South Africa; Renault, Fiat and Peugeut are firmly rooted in Latin America, especially in Argentina and Brazil.

As for pro-imperialist Brazil, it attracts monopoly investments mainly from the United States and the developed capitalist countries. Such multinationals as *ITT, Kawasaki, Singer, U.S. Steel, General Motors, Phillips, Siemens, Ford* and others control more than 50 per cent of that country's foreign trade. This high concentration of investments in Brazil is explained by the drive for quick profits by exploiting exceptionally cheap labor. Besides, the reactionary government provides the MNCs with such privileges as guaranteed investments, tax exemptions, investment bonuses, the right to export profits, etc.

The same can be said of Argentina, although on a lesser scale. In 1975, 65 of the country's 100 larger enterprises were controlled by foreign monopolies. Forty-four powerful multinationals operate in Panama and, following the fascist coup in Chile, the 'new legislation on foreign capital' reinstated the MNCs in power.

These examples demonstrate how sharply the international monopolies are stepping up their rate of capital export. And this means greater rivalry on the international labor market.

Understandably, the imperialist powers favor such a flow of capital through the various industries and regions, but state support is highly selective. It serves the interests exclusively of monopoly accumulation. Obviously, the imperialist states are partial to a steadily diminishing group of multinational companies. But, while the number of beneficiaries is narrowing down, the aid to the 'selected' few multinationals is becoming more concentrated and extensive, as seen in the unprecedented growth of 'state financing' through encouraging export of capital (tax exemptions, subsidies), foreign investment guarantees and channeling research work to suit the monopolies.

The conclusion is also promoted that as the multinationals grow stronger, their network of ties with other national monopolies becomes more complex. For instance, in such leading branches of the metallurgical industry as nuclear production, computers, electronics and aircraft building, the capitalist countries are becoming ever more

dependent on the United States and also the FRG and Japan. In Western Europe today such American multinationals as IBM and Honeywell are in control of 80 per cent of the computer industry, while the Boeing, Douglas and Lockheed firms, the leading capitalist aircraft companies, control approximately 90 per cent of that industry, in the capitalist world. So, together with the capitalist states, the MNCs employ transnational integration to exploit the world market to greater advantage, even to the detriment of national independence.

As for the developing countries, political and economic pressure is used to worsen their already unequal economic and trade exchange, in particular through various measures of political and economic pressure. Faced with the third world's mounting struggle for national sovereignty and economic independence, MNC strategy today strives, on the one hand, to keep these countries on the periphery of modern industrial developments and obstruct any industrial production that could benefit economic progress, while on the other, bringing into these countries production requiring only unskilled or little-skilled labor. In this way the MNCs strive to keep the emergent nations as a source of raw materials and cheap labor and to integrate them into the new international division of labor within the confines of the manufacturing industry.*

From this several basic conclusions can be drawn:

1. By imparting a new impulse to capitalist integration the MNCs act as imperialism's shock force.

2. The role of the imperialist states in accelerating monopoly development is seen in 'super-austerity' which, in the sharpening rivalry, is meant to finance the MNCs' plundering strategy.

3. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the capitalist countries are taking their cue from American imperialism.

Such is the basic characteristic of the role and place of the monopoly giants in the complex process of the re-deployment of the world imperialist forces. It was already pointed out that the main trends and methods of monopoly policy are not totally new, but, as the capitalist crisis worsens, notably since 1975, they have been given a powerful impulse and are being realized at an unprecedented rate.

Ruinous consequences for the working people

The social consequences of monopoly policy are a heavy burden on the working people. Recent years have shown that largely as a result of MNC operations plants have been shut down, many small and middle enterprises have gone bankrupt, mass unemployment has

* In 1975 the automobile industry alone accounted for over 600 enterprises in 86 countries where only assembly or installation work was carried out or partial or licensed production of models from the big producer-countries (see *L'Usine Nouvelle,* No. 9, March 3, 1977).

swelled rapidly, the purchasing power of wages and salaries has dropped and trade union rights and freedoms have suffered. Workers and employees, the intermediary layers, all the working people are directly and acutely affected by this new monopoly strategy.

Simultaneously the 'super-austerity' policy pursued jointly by the capitalist states in various forms makes for further deterioration of living standards and consumption, accompanied by escalation of prices and growing taxes. Unemployment reaches dangerous proportions causing extreme concern. According to information released in Geneva by the International Labor Office, in 1976 for the first time unemployment in many countries had reached or surpassed the level of the late 30s.

This brief enumeration of the dire consequences for the working people of the policy of monopoly capital, explains just why the struggle being waged today by the working people and the trade unions, has reached such broad proportions. Distinctively, much of this struggle has acquired a unitary and mass character and and has on many occasions forced employers and governments to retreat. The broad action by the working class and its organizations is aimed directly against government and monopoly policies and in many cases expresses a determination to win radical changes in the interests of the workers and all the people.

New opportunities for internationalizing the struggle

The revolutionary trade union movement has carried out several initiatives against the MNCs that dominate the capitalist economy. The accent has been on mass action and ways and means of coordinating it.

Opposition to the giant monopolies controlling capitalist economic development means opposing the very capitalist mode of production. It means waging a struggle against imperialism's main force, against its strongest bastion. Besides, the revolutionary trade union movement is fully aware that expansion of the giant firms by opening branches in many countries, imparts concrete content to the class solidarity and internationalism of the workers there. Objectively, MNC operations create a new field of battle for workers in different countries all of whom have a common oppressor. This helps to activate the trade union struggle on a regional and an international scale. For the hundreds of thousands of working people at the numerous branches in countries affected by sharp drops in wages, layoffs and shut-downs, the need for coordinated struggle has become not only a question of principle but a practical necessity.

Aware of existing conditions and the working people's determination, the class trade unions have taken the needed initiatives. There is greater international exchange of experience between trade

unions to establish the most acceptable forms of ties within the framework of a single multinational company. As a rule, at such meetings joint demands are drawn up to be presented to the MNC, and common forms are planned of possible joint action.

It is generally accepted that the struggle for demands must be waged primarily at the individual enterprise because that is the arena of class confrontation. However, many of the demands become common to working people employed at various enterprises of one and the same MNC because the methods of global exploitation are identical. This is precisely why many of the initiatives that have emerged in recent years have, in many places, led to coordinated action in several countries or even an entire continent. This was the case at the Michelin and Dunlop-Pirelli plants located in several countries of Western Europe. A similar development has been observed in the French and British aircraft industry, in Singer plants in Europe and Latin America. There has also been solidarity action at many of the national enterprises of the Massey-Ferguson, Ideal Standart, Selvay and other companies.

In time, these ties, established between trade unions in enterprises of one MNC, led to multilateral meetings and even to regional conferences where special coordinating bodies were set up, called coordinating committees, committees of struggle or standing committees. There are many such committees in the metallurgical, chemical, textile, food and other industries.

All these initiatives were supported by working people's mass action and were the outcome of their desire to establish permanent ties between the trade unions for joint struggle. Such action, together with organization measures undoubtedly help to extend the scale of opposition to the monopolies and allow the working people to act in common on a broad front.

Experience shows that coordinating committees, most of which were created by activists belonging to trade unions of different trends, are unitary in character and help promote ties and better understanding between the various trade union centers. They help remove artificial obstacles created in the way to unity and, most important, they succeed in formulating demands, at times limited, but precise, and in this way create the basis for joint and coordinated action.

The World Federation of Trade Unions and its organizations attach prime importance to the struggle against the multinationals. Internationalization of exploitation which has been increased by the new monopoly strategy and the 'austerity' policy demands also organized international opposition. That is why coordination of the trade union struggle against the international giants is becoming an urgent necessity. The international revolutionary trade union movement is doing

everything possible to launch a bold and decisive offensive in that direction.

Conditions are ripe today for a successful struggle against the international monopolies, because these imperialist bastions epitomize the contradictions of capitalist society in crisis. Therefore, a united trade union struggle at MNC national enterprises, could be an important step forward on the road to joint international actions by the working people, which would contribute greatly to future working class victories.

The social and political significance of nationalization in the newly-free countries

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One of the most important means used by developing countries against imperialist exploitation of their manpower and natural resources, and for economic independence, is the nationalization of foreign property. The scale and pace of such nationalization, as well as its vindication under international law, are closely bound up with progress of the national-liberation movement in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The analysis of nationalization and its effects presupposes examination of a wide range of problems involving government intervention in the economy. This article confines itself to the socio-political aspects of the starting point of this policy, that is, the very act of nationalization. It deals chiefly with the nationalization of foreign property, which is widely practised in the developing countries in connection with the fight for economic independence. Nationalization of domestic capital, which is narrower in scope, is only considered with reference to individual instances needed to clarify the main issue.

As an instrument of state economic policy, nationalization is nothing new,[1] not even in the Afro-Asian world. It was a marked element of the étatist policy adopted by Turkey after the victory of the anti-imperialist national bourgeois revolution in the 20s and 30s.

But Turkish étatism was, in effect, a local phenomenon; nor could it go beyond the framework of state capitalism. Speaking generally, the few attempts made before and even at the beginning of the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism to convert foreign property into national state property were defeated by superior imperialist forces (Turkey and the nationalization of the British and U.S. oil companies in Mexico in 1938 were exceptions). However, roughly from the mid-50s on, the territorial and branch spheres of application of this measure were gradually (and steadily) extended.

Data released by the UN show that in the 1960-74 period 60 developing countries registered 875 acts nationalizing or establishing control over foreign enterprises. From 1970 to 1974, the rate of nationalization was double that of the 60s.[2] Nationalization involved primarily British, French and Dutch assets. The Suez Canal Co., Anglo-Iranian Oil Co., Union miniere, Iraq Petroleum Co. and some other 'states within the state' were liquidated. Nationalization also affected the positions of the U.S. monopolies in the developing countries even though they went out of their way to pose as anti-colonial. One result of the anti-imperialist struggle is the abolition or considerable weakening of the one-time domination of Western monopolies in the oil industry of developing countries.[3]

What makes nationalization of foreign companies indispensable is that their activity generally runs counter to the young states' effort for economic independence. It is generally acknowledged that these states remain an object of imperialist exploitation even after winning political independence. According to official statistics, direct U.S. investments in Asia, Africa and Latin America between 1971 and 1974 rose by a total of over $5,000m. and the profit derived by the U.S. from these regions topped $25,000m. Experts estimate that the developing countries' foreign debt, which in 1973 passed the $100,000m. mark, had approximately doubled by late 1976. Payment of interest on debts in 1976 exceeded $10,000m., or almost equalled one-tenth of the hard-currency earnings of these countries. Their trade deficit is going up (except for the oil-producing countries); in 1974-75 alone, it increased from $26,100m. to $35,000m., or by one-third. This growth will continue if the current trend of raw material and industrial goods prices persists. By contrast, per capita national income, which stood at 0.5 per cent in 1970-73, dropped to nil in later years.

'Imperialism,' says the Economic Declaration adopted by the Fourth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries (Algiers, 1973), 'is still the biggest obstacle to the liberation and progress of the developing countries.' There can be no question that for as long as economic exploitation and plunder are the lot of Afro-Asian and Latin American peoples, a condition for their development will be, as the Fifth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries (Colombo, 1976) pointed out, to

exercise their inalienable right to 'full permanent sovereignty over their natural and human resources,' including the 'right to nationalization.' The conference also reaffirmed the developing countries' right to exercise control over the activity of 'transnational corporations' and to nationalize them 'in conformity with their national objectives and principles.'

Nationalization of imperialist monopoly property is a requisite of the struggle for economic independence because it undermines one of the pillars of imperialist exploitation and plunder of Afro-Asian and Latin American countries.[4] And it is only natural that the communist parties of these countries have always and most actively supported nationalization of foreign property, above all the basic means of production. The communists maintain that this measure meets both the interests of the nation as a whole and the immediate interests of the working class. The Tenth Congress of the Communist Party of India (January-February 1975), defining the main lines of the struggle to be waged by the party and its mass organizations on the economic front, specified one of them as depriving foreign and multinational companies of their positions in India. The CC report of the Third Congress of the Iraqi Communist Party (May 1976) described the nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company as a tremendous achievement of the National Progressive Front. It noted that 'the placing of the oil wealth in the hands of the public sector' has 'provided for the country very big possibilities for an active and rapid implementation of the policy of the state aiming at building up a diversified, balanced and independent national economy.'[5]

To reveal the distinctive social significance of any particular case of nationalization (and of the resultant state property), we must, first of all, consider the class nature of the state as the subject of the act. In this way we can distinguish between bourgeois and democratic nationalization although in numerous developing countries its social significance is very 'fluid' due to frequent and in some cases very sharp changes in the political superstructure.

Another factor on which the character of nationalization depends is the given stage of the liberation movement. Most acts of nationalization carried out by a state with the national bourgeoisie in power were effected when the dominant task was the political liberation of a one-time colony or semi-colony and the achievement of state sovereignty for it.

Bourgeois nationalization in a country exploited by imperialism is usually intended, in our view, to restrict the positions held by foreign monopolies on the home market as obstacles to the formation and accumulation of national capital. But the domestic bourgeoisie, socially a close if 'poor' relative of foreign capital, that is, a group of the same social type as the foreign bourgeoisie, accepts nationalization

only in an emergency, at a time when there is no opportunity for a less drastic treatment of foreign partners. Characteristically, the national bourgeoisie strengthens those economic fields in which it already commands definite positions. It does so by using the levers of state law, by effecting 'nationalization' in such a way as to alter not the social but only the national form of property, or, in other words, by transforming foreign private companies into private national or mixed (national and foreign) ones. This device is known as 'Egyptizing,' 'Ceylonizing,' 'Tunisizing,' and so on. The bourgeoisie resorts to nationalization proper (transforming foreign private into national state property) only where and when it lacks the economic means of 'assimilating' the industry concerned and when its contradictions with foreign capital are generally aggravated.

When assessing bourgeois nationalization in terms of formation of aggregate capitalist property, one cannot fail to notice its dual, contradictory nature. It is directed against imperialism (forcing out foreign capital) but, on the other hand, it cannot meet the demands of the working people because these are barred from participating in the utilization of nationalized assets. This contradiction is a reflection of the dual role of the national bourgeoisie in the anti-imperialist revolution, a role conditioned by the very nature of this class. One of the two trends usually predominates and this circumstance affects, in particular, the timing and scope of bourgeois nationalization.

But even when it remains only a means of forming aggregate capitalist property, bourgeois nationalization also meets the national interest to the extent that it weakens imperialist positions in the given country and helps it to gain economic independence. Of course, the class interests of the national bourgeoisie coincide with those of other social groups to varying degrees. Specifically, national bourgeois nationalization as a means of forcing foreign monopoly capital out of certain economic fields in a country that has won political freedom admits theoretically of a trend toward nationalization going beyond bourgeois bounds as a result of the struggle of democratic forces, first of all the communist parties, for progressive social and economic changes.

The situation is different in countries whose regimes are linked with imperialism, such as Iran or Saudi Arabia. In such countries nationalization is reduced to the replacement of foreign capital by a reactionary state operating as an aggregate national capitalist in spite of its markedly feudal features. Incidentally, it is this variety of bourgeois or bourgeois and feudal nationalization, above all in oil-producing countries, that has given rise to the idea of 'participation,' which usually means the purchase of 51 per cent of the shares of foreign enterprises as well as participation in their investments and other activities on the soil of the countries importing fuels and raw

materials. The result is not discontinuance but a restriction of the process of reproducing economic relations based on subordination and on imperialist exploitation of the country,[6] although nationalization in itself is a major point of confrontation with imperialism.

Even when carried out by the national bourgeoisie, nationalization is a result of intricate social processes in which this class is not the only driving force. The stronger the influence of the working class, democratic intellectuals and other progressive social strata, that is, the stronger the pressure 'from below,' the more pronounced the anti-imperialist slant of nationalization. The nationalization of the oil industry and iron ore mining in Venezuela, which is prominent among the developing countries for the scale of its national bourgeois nationalization of foreign capital, was made possible by a protracted and unrelenting struggle of the people, first of all the communists, against imperialism.

Growing democratic influence on the dimensions of nationalization and the nature of the state is a key aim of the communist parties of the developing countries fighting for the transition from national to social liberation. It is also an aspect of the class struggle that is waged over how the means and product of production and circulation taken away from foreign monopolies are to be appropriated (and used). The national bourgeoisie and the social strata linked with it understandably favor capitalist appropriation while progressive forces advocate democratic appropriation of these means of production and circulation. Under strong pressure from the latter group nationalization spreads to this or that part of the national bourgeoisie's property (as was the case in India, where nationalization involved the banks and coal mines and then the textile mills).

Unlike bourgeois nationalization, democratic nationalization of foreign capital is designed to make possible further progressive social and economic changes and bring about corresponding changes in the superstructure. The subject of this kind of nationalization in the newly-free countries is the revolutionary democratic state. Analysis of its class essence also reveals in the most general terms the specific social significance of the nationalization carried out, although this process takes complex historical forms. We would describe the determinants of the social nature of democratic nationalization as anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism and anti-capitalism.

Some countries, such as Algeria or Guinea, established revolutionary democratic rule immediately after winning political independence. Others achieved it after a long and complicated period of evolution which led to the transformation of national bourgeois power into revolutionary democratic power. Corresponding processes also took place in regard to the social significance of nationalization of foreign private property.

In Algeria, the very first nationalizations were prompted by the rural and urban proletariat. They became effective in October 1962, and above all, March 1963,[7] under decrees which foiled the Algerian bourgeoisie's attempts to take the place of the French landed proprietors and factory owners who had fled. These nationalizations were democratic from the outset.

The record of nationalizations in Iraq, Syria and Burma consists, as we see it, of relatively 'pure' instances of development from bourgeois into democratic nationalization. At the national bourgeois stage of the revolution these countries carried out nationalizations and did not go beyond capitalist bounds in spite of the people's active part in them. The way for democratic nationalization was paved by revolutionary democratic forces, which took power and gave their countries' social development a socialist orientation. This was a natural result of the patriotic progressive forces' struggle for independence from imperialism, which implies, among other things, stripping foreign monopolies of the means of production.

In our opinion, the thesis that the social significance of nationalization may be modified as the process goes on also applies largely to the democratic type of nationalization. In the newly-free countries, revolutionary democracy develops primarily on a petty-bourgeois basis and bears to one extent or another certain class characteristics of the petty bourgeois, who is 'a contradiction incarnate' (a working man, on the one hand, and a proprietor, on the other). In some cases these characteristics persist for a long time, hampering the progress of the national democratic revolution and even threatening to reverse its course.

A consistent policy for democracy is the principle internal condition for the extension of the scale of nationalization as a regular feature of development stemming from the fundamental economic interests of the majority of the people and not from the limited class interests of the national bourgeoisie. In our view, it is only under a revolutionary democratic regime and, moreover, only at the higher stages of its development, that foreign capital's function of domination and exploitation can be fully abolished and that it can (under rigid government control) be made to serve the growth of the nation's productive forces. There are no more 'independent' foreign investments in Iraq and the state sector dominates the economy. The situation is much the same in Algeria, Yemen, Somalia, Tanzania and other socialist-oriented countries.

The possibility of nationalization in capitalist-oriented countries going beyond the bounds of foreign property, a possibility that presents itself (and is partly used) there in certain conditions, becomes in our view, a regular feature of development in revolutionary democratic countries. Nationalization affects, first of all, the big domestic

bourgeoisie, which generally tries to 'take over' from foreign capital and keep the economy on a capitalist basis. The revolution in Egypt, where the most substantial nationalizations of big domestic capital (Misr, Abud, Taher, Rigela and other groups) were carried out in the 60s, is most revealing in this respect.

The nationalization decrees and constitutions of revolutionary democratic states generally distinguish between national ownership of the means of production based on exploitation and ownership having no such basis. What happens in reality, however, is that nationalization also affects small handicraftsmen and traders. Measures of this kind breed considerable economic difficulties and prejudice the revolution politically. They are then revised to return small nationalized enterprises to their former owners (cf. Burma 1962-1963).

Democratic nationalization prevents the accumulation of private capital and is an effective means of reorganizing the economy on anti-capitalist lines. We think it turns the property of the foreign monopoly bourgeoisie and the domestic big or even middle bourgeoisie into aggregate property of what may be called the 'non-exploiting' middle strata and, to one degree or another, into property of the working people, including the working class and the rural and urban semi-proletariat.

While democratic nationalization usually serves as a weapon of the nationalist vanguard of the middle strata against imperialism, we are convinced that it tends to become socialist by bringing the mass of the people into this struggle. This transition from democratic to socialist nationalization is by no means always an 'automatic' process, but the logic of the struggle for social progress suggests correct, scientifically sound solutions. A case in point was Cuba's transition from democratic to socialist nationalization (property of the whole people), in the first half of the 60s.

A prerequisite of transforming nationalized property into property of the whole people is, unquestionably, to enlist and extend the participation of members of the working class in the management of production and distribution in the socialized sphere of the economy. This is no easy task from either the technological, economic, political or ideological point of view because of the working people's often inadequate professional training, political awareness and organization, on the one hand, and a certain reserve on the part of the national leadership as regards the prospect of the working class playing a bigger social and political role, on the other. Nevertheless, attempts of this nature are made, as in Algeria,[8] which is evidence of both an increasing socialist orientation in general and a continuing change in production relations in favor of the working class in particular.

Nationalization of foreign capital in former colonies and semi-colonies is something more than a 'national phenomenon.' It is a form of struggle against international imperialism. We know from history that the newly-free countries were able to resist imperialism only when world socialism began to exert decisive influence on international relations and world social progress. Had it not been for the Soviet Union, Fidel Castro said with good reason at the 25th CPSU Congress, 'the capitalist powers would not hesitate, in this period of raw material shortages and energy crisis, to redivide the world. The degree of independence that small nations enjoy today and the successful struggle which peoples are carrying on to regain control of their natural resources ... would have been unthinkable but for the existence of the Soviet Union.'

The role of world socialism as the chief external factor objectively making nationalization in the developing countries possible has two aspects. First, the historic achievements of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in the sphere of material production have deeply undermined the industrial, trade and credit monopoly of imperialism in international economic relations. Second, the very existence of the socialist countries, their economic and military power, and the policy they follow doom to failure any imperialist attempts to do away with nationalization through military intervention.

Now that détente is gaining ground, imperialism changes the ways and means of its struggle against nationalization and combines old devices with new ones. Its goal is unchanged, of course. Imperialism, as the Fourth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries pointed out in its Economic Declaration, 'not only resists the economic and social progress of the developing countries but takes an aggressive attitude toward those that resist its plans, and tries to impose political, economic and social structures favorable to foreign domination, dependence or neo-colonialism.' In this situation, the progressive, democratic forces work to strengthen the developing countries' anti-imperialist unity of action and the alliance between the national-liberation movement and world socialism, the natural bulwark in their struggle for liberation from imperialist exploitation.

1. Nationalization, or the replacement of private ownership of the means of production and other economic assets by state ownership, has been used to various degrees in various periods of history. Needless to say, its purpose has varied according to who effected it and whose class interests it was intended to serve. An occasional industrial enterprise was transferred to the state in capitalist countries even in the last century, under free-competition capitalism.

Episodic at the early stages of capitalist development, nationalization became a permanent and increasingly strong factor at the state-monopoly stage, whose salient characteristic was described by Lenin as the merger of monopoly with the state. The dimensions of state property vary from country to country depending on the concrete historical conditions of capitalist development. Whereas they are considerable in a

number of West European countries, this form is virtually lacking in, say, the United States.

The October Revolution imparted an entirely different substance and new forms of nationalization. In Soviet Russia at the time of the New Economic Policy, when state capitalism was being used as a means of rehabilitating a war-ravaged economy, a democratic nationalization was carried out. It preserved some of the bourgeoisie's property rights and was intended, among other things, to prevail on this class to serve the socialist state. However, the specific conditions of the revolutionary process in the first socialist state prevented democratic nationalization from being taken very far. From the first, the main form of socializing the economy was socialist nationalization entirely abolishing private capitalist ownership of the basic means of production. The other socialist countries of Europe, due to the distinctive aspects of their transition to socialism, carried out nationalization stage by stage, widely using workers' control, state capitalism and so on.

2. See UN Doc. A/9716, Annex 10.

3. *Ibid,* Annex 4.

4. It should be obvious that nationalization or various forms of curbing the activity of foreign capital and putting them under government control cannot fully eliminate imperialist exploitation of the developing countries, which is constantly reproduced by the very nature of the international economic relations developed at the time of imperialism's undivided domination and motivates entirely in the interests of the foreign capitalist. In recent years the developing countries, invariably backed by the socialist community, have declared more and more emphatically for a restructuring of international relations to rid them of all elements of exploitation, inequality, dependence and discrimination.

5. *Iraqi Letter.* Special Issue, No. 4-5, May 1976, pp. 51, 76-77.

6. Partial nationalization, outwardly similar to 'participation,' has a fundamentally different meaning. Its limited character is due in the main to the limited technological, economic and financial opportunities for the independent operation of this or that industry. It is important, however, that this measure is just short of putting the industry concerned under full government control. This was the nature of Algeria's nationalization of the French oil companies in February 1971.

7. The decree legalized the self-management committees set up by the employees of enterprises abandoned by foreign owners.

8. In November 1971, Algeria passed a law on 'socialist management' of the enterprises in the state sector. The law provides for the participation of working people's representatives in decision-making in these enterprises.



Building communism

M.A. Suslov. *Building Communism.* Speeches and Articles. In two volumes, Politizdat, Moscow, 1977.

This two-volume edition contains speeches and reports by Mikhail Suslov, Politburo Member and Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, as delivered to CPSU congresses and CC plenums, summit forums of fraternal parties and various conferences and meetings in the Soviet Union and abroad, and also his articles published in the Soviet and foreign press. Although it covers a wide range of subjects and different periods in the CPSU's activity, the material in the book constitutes a single whole. Reflecting the political line pursued by the party at one or another period in nearly 40 years — from prewar days to the present stage of communist construction — it illustrates the continuity of the Communist Party's Leninist course and the consistency with which the party sets and accomplishes its tasks in building communism.

The collection provides convincing proof that throughout its activity in the theoretical, political, organizational, ideological and educational fields, the Leninist party has taken a purposeful and creative approach to pressing problems, showing boldness of decision and careful scientific analysis in assessing the objective state of affairs — all this combined with tremendous work in mobilizing the masses.

The articles and speeches highlight various aspects of the CPSU's theoretical work in collectively elaborating current problems of communist construction. Suslov's meticulous analysis of the objective laws governing social development stresses the significance of the immense work carried out by the party, by its 23rd, 24th and 25th congresses. This was the period, he notes when Soviet society entered 'the stage of developed socialism, and set out to build the material and technical basis of communism' (Vol. 2, pp. 521). A powerful economic advance, he says, a steady rise in the living and cultural standards of the working people, the dynamic progress of

social relations and the growing cohesion of all classes and social groups, and of the fraternal nationalities within the country are all characteristic elements of mature socialism.

The book stresses that under mature socialism, when the scope of economic and cultural development is rapidly increasing, there emerge problems whose solution is closely related to the destinies of socialism and therefore is of epochal significance. These include combining the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution with the advantages of the socialist economic system, moulding a comprehensively developed individual, building a socially homogeneous society, and promoting the socialist way of life.

'The leading role of the CPSU grows as our society advances toward communism,' Suslov writes: (Vol. 2, p. 108). While emphasizing that the party invariably charts the general prospects and political line, coordinates and guides the people's creative activities, the author notes the importance of further developing the initiative of the masses, their broad and effective participation in directing the economy and society.

Together with the economic foundations of socialist democracy, the working people's conscious participation in government is a major and most decisive advantage of socialism. The forms that democracy may take in its development and the tasks confronting it, are not static, they are improved as the historic endeavor of the masses expands (Vol. 2, p. 455). The invariable factor in the development of socialist democracy is that all its aspects are continually perfected: the working people make full use of their rights, while accepting greater responsibility and raising the level of organization; the work collectives and other units display more initiative and at the same time the principles of centralized planning and the single state and social discipline are still more firmly established.

'The great cause of building communism,' Suslov writes, 'presupposes an all-round development of man, of his culture and social consciousness, his morals and communist ideology' (Vol. 2, p. 354). For this reason, the author stresses, the CPSU has always regarded the ideological education of the working people as an indispensable element in its effort to build communism. It provides them with knowledge of Marxist-Leninist ideals and goals, and develops in them a conscientious, communist attitude to work, Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and the ability to fight uncompromisingly against bourgeois ideology.

The author presents a broad picture of the CPSU's line for peaceful cooperation between states with differing social systems, the line followed since the first foreign-policy steps of Soviet power. He notes the class character of Leninist foreign policy and stresses its genuine humanism, its inseparable link with such general human values as

peace and international security. He offers convincing proof that it is communists that inherit, develop and carry through the ideas of real humanism in their fight for a lasting peace and international understanding. The policy of détente, its attainments and the high prestige it has won among true champions of peace is a case in point. Of course, Suslov observes, 'we all know that international détente is not an easy process, that it has come up against stiff opposition from the forces of reaction and militarism ... This is a dangerous game. Any attempt to provoke a new round of international tension and force mankind back to the days of cold war presents a threat to the cause of peace, to all nations and states, whatever their socio-political system' (Vol. 2, p. 504).

In almost every material one finds illuminating analysis of the problems related to world development, the working-class and national-liberation movements, to combating the plottings of imperialism and reaction and the ideology of revisionism, right or 'left.'

Whoever he is speaking to, scientists and ideological workers in Moscow, the Leningrad workers, delegates of the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba in Havana, the Ninth SUPG Congress in Berlin, or the Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in Hanoi, Mikhail Suslov puts the emphasis on rallying all fighters against the threat of war, imperialism and reaction and strengthening the united anti-monopoly front and the world communist and working-class movement.

He describes the fraternal community of socialist countries as the greatest achievement of the postwar period, as the bulwark of all revolutionary, progressive and peace-loving forces. 'In working for this community,' Suslov writes, 'our party has alwasys pursued a truly internationalist policy. It is stepping up the effort to promote the economic integration of the socialist community countries and is doing everything in its power to further consolidate their equal and fraternal political alliance' (Vol. 2, p. 359). The CPSU also gives support to all movements opposing imperialist reaction and oppression and fighting for national and social freedom.

Noting the CPSU's practice of analyzing the current situation and the new phenomena emerging in the world revolutionary process, the author examines the forms of international communist unity in various specific historical conditions.

The keynote of the work is the idea that the strength of the communist movement lies in its faithfulness to Marxism-Leninism, to the ideals of proletarian internationalism. Marxism-Leninism, Suslov writes, emerged and is developing as a generalization of international experience, as an expression of the international interests of the working class. It is only logical therefore that the CPSU is determined to go on working persistenly for close communist unity, and to

counter any incursion of opportunist and nationalist ideas into the international communist movement.

Suslov shows the CPSU's stand in clear focus, noting at the same time that the party has always felt its inseparable ties with the destinies of the revolutionary movement, that it is well aware of its responsibility for the common cause. 'We have never viewed our interests in isolation from the interests of other contingents of the revolutionary movement,' he said in a speech at the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, 'for we fully realize that the attainment of the goals facing each of them largely depends on their cohesion and interaction' (Vol. 2, p. 483).

This edition of speeches and articles by Mikhail Suslov will help us to gain a better understanding of the long path traversed by the Soviet Union under the banner of the October Revolution, the 60th anniversary of which will be marked this year. Under this banner the CPSU and the entire Soviet people will continue to build communism, working for the unity of all revolutionary and democratic forces of today and contributing to the international struggle of the working class and all working people, to the elaboration of the major questions of the world liberation struggle, and bringing nearer new victories for the cause of peace, democracy and socialism.

Y. Mushkaterov

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