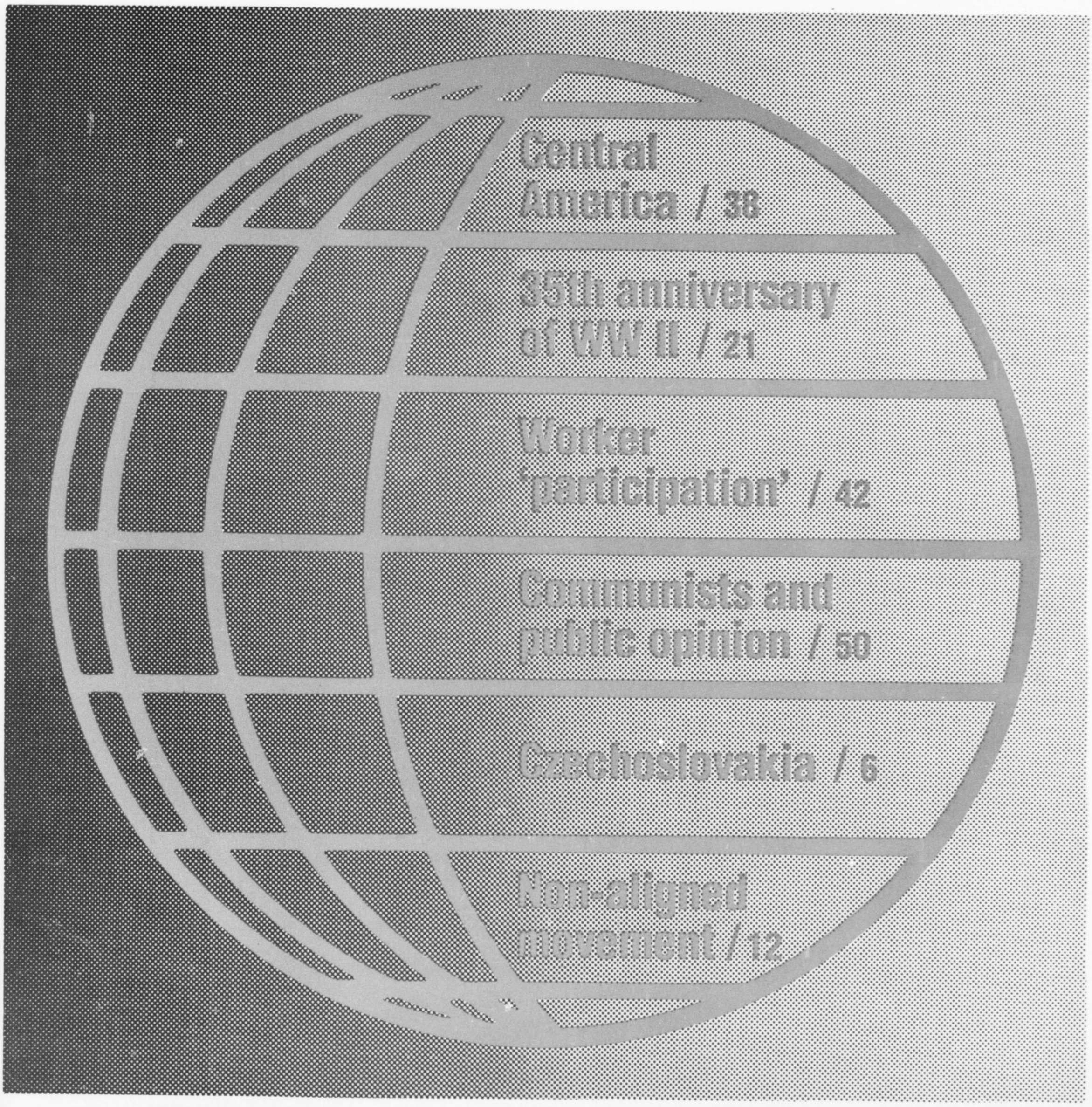
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feature

An important factor of peace and international security

Edward Gierek
First Secretary, PUWP Central Committee

The 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, which the socialist states concluded in Warsaw on May 14, 1955, is of the broadest historical and political significance. It provides an opportunity for looking back on the events that we have witnessed over the quarter-century in which the socialist countries' defense and political alliance has existed and to reaffirm the role of this alliance as an important factor of peaceful stabilization in Europe and consolidation of international security. For Poland, after whose capital the Treaty was named, this anniversary is also remarkable in that it makes it possible to assess the successes attained in strengthening our national security through our ties of alliance with the fraternal peoples of the USSR, GDR, Czechoslovakia and other socialist-community states.

We are deeply convinced that the socialist community's military and political alliance has helped to strengthen our unity and cooperation, which rests on a harmonious blend of national interests and common class goals. The cooperation of the Warsaw Treaty countries is an expression of socialist internationalism which springs from their common, Marxist-Leninist ideology, the similarity of their social system and also from our countries' common goals in the international arena.

Paging through history, we naturally give thought to the stages through which the Warsaw Treaty Organization has passed in its development and to our common accomplishments arising from its functioning over the past 25 years. On these pages we find both events of exceptional historical importance and the daily labor endeavor which has secured the fulfillment of the tasks put forward by the Treaty countries.

We are now marking the 35th anniversary of the historic victory over fascism. Among the many conclusions connected with that victory, one is of overriding importance. It bears on the need to be strong enough to be able to resist the forces of war. This is a conclusion that is also important for Poland, which in September 1939 had to face the aggressor virtually alone.

After the victory of the Third Reich, the peoples of Europe expected the policy of cooperation among the victorious powers to be continued in the new conditions, and that it would be aimed to maintain peace and stabilize relations. But that did not happen. The capitalist countries, using their myth of a communist menace as a screen, broke up the anti-Hitlerite coalition.

The foreign and home policy pursued by the forces hostile to progress was embodied in the establishment of the military NATO bloc aimed against the USSR and the young People's Democracies. This policy has proved to be extremely dangerous for world peace. Its architects hoped to use the revanchism which was on the rise in West Germany and to upset the politico-territorial status quo which had taken shape in Europe.

The Soviet Union, Poland and other socialist countries could not remain inactive in face of this policy. In order to prevent the situation in Europe from being further aggravated, they undertook a diplomatic act aimed against the ratification of the so-called Paris Accords and the Bonn General Treaty,[1] and proposed the convocation of a conference on collective security in Europe. But the Western powers rejected the proposal. That is why the socialist countries of Europe held a conference on peace and security in Europe in Moscow from November 29 to December 2, 1954. It reiterated the proposal to set up a collective security system in Europe and also warned the Western governments that if the Paris Accords were ratified the socialist states would undertake the necessary 'joint measures to organize their Armed Forces and their command'.[2]

However, despite the socialist countries' repeated peace proposals, the Paris Accords were ratified. The FRG became a member of NATO.

In these conditions, at a conference held in Warsaw from May 11 to 14, 1955,[3] the socialist countries signed a multilateral Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, which was designated as the Warsaw Treaty. It was ratified by all the parties concerned and took effect on June 5, 1955.

The Warsaw Treaty's programmatic principle is defense of the socialist-community states, of their security and peaceful socialist construction. The record of the establishment of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and its entire quarter-century activity show that it is designed to maintain peace and security in Europe and throughout the world and that it is a purely defensive alliance.

The whole content of the Warsaw Treaty is entirely consistent with its main purpose, that of strengthening peace and security in Europe. The Treaty countries have expressed their urge to main-

tain the independence of Europe and pointed to the need to set up a European collective security system. Until such a system is set up, the Warsaw Treaty Organization serves and will continue to serve as a reliable shield and a tested instrument of the policy of lasting peace and equilibrium of forces in Europe.

The political aspect of the Warsaw Treaty Organization's activity is also highly important. The leaders of the fraternal parties and governments of the socialist countries take part in the work of its highest organ, the Political Consultative Committee (PCC). At the PCC's meetings programs are put forward for political acts, and proposals are made concerning the whole system of international relations. The importance of these actions in the struggle for détente and peace has been growing.

The Warsaw Treaty ensures the security of the socialist-community countries. At the same time, from the outset it has been an effective factor of peace and a center invariably coming out with initiatives designed to develop détente and end the arms race. This line of the Warsaw Treaty countries' policy has been and continues to be the main one.

The Warsaw Treaty countries' peace initiatives over the past quarter-century were designed to consolidate the politico-territorial status quo in Europe, the results of our continent's postwar development which has been characterized by the growth of the forces and the strengthening of the prestige of the socialist community. This struggle has included implementation of the policy of détente and normalization of relations between European states, and recognition of the GDR, the first socialist state on German soil. It has also gone hand in hand with the signing in the 1970s of the well-known bilateral treaties between the USSR and the FRG, between Poland and the FRG, the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin and also the treaty between Czechoslovakia and the FRG. The result of the Treaty countries' consistent action was the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and its Final Act, into which were written the basic principles of the peaceful coexistence of states with different socio-economic systems, principles which spring from Lenin's ideas. How hard the way to Helsinki has been is shown by the efforts of the Warsaw Treaty countries to create a Europe-wide security system and to eliminate the threat of confrontation between states in our region.

Already during the Geneva Four-Power Summit Meeting in July 1955, the Soviet Union after consultation with its allies, tabled a project for the establishment of a collective security system in Europe. But this initiative was rejected by the Western powers. The USSR then proposed that the states belonging to NATO and the Warsaw Treaty should commit themselves to refrain from the use of force in their relations with each other. Regrettably, that proposal supported by progressive public opinion in Europe, was not accepted either.

However, the Warsaw Treaty countries did not cease their efforts to overcome the division of the European continent into opposed military blocs. The strengthening of European security was a subject discussed at virtually every meeting of the Political Consultative Committee. The very first meeting of the PCC in Prague on January 27 and 28, 1956, formulated the principles which determined the line of these efforts for many years to come. It said in particular, that the peaceful conditions for the development of the European nations could best be assured through the establishment of a collective security system in Europe to replace the existing military groupings. In an effort to facilitate the establishment of a genuine European security system, the Warsaw Treaty countries expressed their readiness to consider proposals that would meet this purpose. An important element of the efforts at that time aimed to contain the arms race and to prevent the deployment of nuclear weapons on European territory was also Poland's proposal, which was supported in Warsaw Treaty documents and which pertained to the limitation of armaments in the heart of Europe and the establishment of a nuclear-free zone there.

The Warsaw Treaty countries fought against the establishment of NATO's multilateral nuclear force and against the FRG's access to nuclear weapons. This struggle helped to strengthen the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the practice of international life and resulted in the conclusion of a relevant treaty in 1968.

The Warsaw Treaty countries have always taken a principled stand in defense of the GDR's rights and interests, and worked to prevent an aggravation of the situation along its borders with the FRG. In the early 1970s, the GDR received universal international recognition and its role as an important factor of stabilization of relations in Europe has grown.

A fresh impetus to the socialist countries' struggle for laying just foundations of security and cooperation in Europe came from the Peace Program adopted by the 24th and 25th congresses of the CPSU, which gave primary importance to the problems of détente and disarmament. Supported by the congresses of the fraternal parties, the Peace Program has become the political platform for the international activity of the socialist countries and all other peace forces. Polish communists have also made a contribution to these joint efforts. Our party, together with the other fraternal parties, above all the CPSU and the Land of Soviets, has been doing its utmost to ensure Europe's peaceful development.

In the 1970s, the Warsaw Treaty had a crucial role to play in strengthening European security and advancing détente. Our acts, designed to implement the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, helped to bring about a substantial change in European relations. Détente has become the dominant trend. It is impossible to cancel out its achievements, which have helped to distance the threat of war and to elaborate treaties on the limitation of strategic weapons and many other agreements which to some extent limit the arms race. Enriched with the experience of the struggle for détente over the past decade, we can confidently assert that but for the

Warsaw Treaty countries' consistent stand for peace, but for their multilateral initiatives, it would have been impossible to start negotiations on mutual arms and troop cuts in Central Europe.

The proposals put forward at PCC meetings over the past several years on the non-first use of nuclear weapons, on the immediate cessation of the quantitative and qualitative buildup of weapons and the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from military arsenals are of great importance for the future of mankind as a whole. The socialist countries have reaffirmed their readiness to disband the Warsaw Treaty Organization simultaneously with the disbandment of NATO and as a first step, to wind up their military organizations. They have declared again and again that there is no type of weapon that they would not be prepared to reduce or to limit. Finally, after consultations with its Treaty allies, the USSR is unilaterally effecting a reduction of its armed forces in the GDR.

Millions of people are now concerned over the fact that these acts of good will on the part of the socialist countries and their calls to reason have not met with a response from the leaders of the capitalist world. What is more, the advocates of the cold war are once again trying to undermine the principles of peaceful coexistence and to impose on Europe another twist of the arms race spiral. The NATO Council's decision in December 1979 on the deployment in Europe of U.S. nuclear-armed medium-range and Cruise missiles and the refusal to consider the socialist countries' initiative for holding talks without delay on the whole complex of problems bearing on military détente and limitation of armaments in Europe, as Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet proposed on November 6, 1979 — all that is evidence of another attempt to talk to the socialist countries from a position of strength. In this situation, special importance attaches to the ideological and political unity of the Warsaw Treaty countries and their consistent acts aimed to preserve détente and peace. We believe that negotiations could yield positive results but only, and exclusively, under the equilibrium of forces which the NATO decisions have upset.

The present stage in the development of international relations calls for a redoubling of efforts so as to impart fresh impulses to the process of détente in Europe to avert the arms race danger, and to revive the realization and further development of the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. A constructive meeting of the Final Act signatories in Madrid should help to further strengthen peace on the continent.

For Poland, as for its Warsaw Treaty allies, the main thing is the urge to strengthen peace and this was also expressed in the proposal made from the rostrum of the Eighth Congress of the PUWP to call in Warsaw a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe. This initiative continues the Warsaw Treaty's policy of implementing a broad program of measures on military détente which our states have put forward in the recent period. This is a reflection of the ideals which have been intrinsic in the Warsaw Treaty since its origin.

The Polish People's Republic will spare no effort to impede the forces which want to lead Europe and the world away from the road of peace and cooperation. We believe that reason, understanding of the necessity of détente and a relaxation of the arms race will triumph, so paving the way for disarmament, which the nations demand.

1. These agreements included West Germany in NATO's military organization and paved the way for the revenge-seekers' buildup of a West German army. — *Ed.*

2. *Pravda*, December 3, 1954.

3. It was attended by Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and the USSR. Since 1962 Albania has not taken part in the work of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and in 1968 unilaterally abrogated it.

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Turning point in Czechoslovakia's modern history

Gustav Husak
CC General Secretary, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia,
President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

It is already 35 years since Czechoslovakia was liberated by the Soviet Army and the last shots in the Second World War were fired on the European continent. Nazi Germany surrendered unconditionally. On May 9, 1945, the European nations celebrated the victory over fascism, which was the result of the historic struggle of the national-liberation, democratic and progressive forces against the darkest reaction history had ever known. These forces were led by the Soviet Union, the world's first socialist state, which in the hardest of trials displayed tremendous military might and moral authority and demonstrated the all-round advantages of socialist ideas and the socialist social system.

People will never forget the events of that terrible and devastating war which affected the life of all nations and every social sphere. Mankind will never forget the crucial role of the heroic Soviet people and their army in routing Hitlerism and saving world civilization. Having crushed German fascism, the shock force of international imperialism and reaction, they warded off the mortal danger which threatened the world, opened up before the people the way to a new life and gave them hope for a better future.

I

Czechoslovakia's liberation by the Soviet Army carried the Czechs, Slovaks and all the other nationalities of our country into a new historical epoch. Victory Day on May 9, 1945, which on Czechoslovak soil marked the end of the war in Europe and the triumphant completion of our people's national-liberation movement, was simultaneously the first day of the new era in Czechoslovakia's life. Klement Gottwald, the CPCz's unforgettable leader and outstanding Czechoslovak statesman, characterized this fact very precisely when he said: 'May 9 is our truly great — if not our greatest — national holiday. On that day in 1945 the savage nazi occupation, which threatened the very existence of the Czech and Slovak peoples came to an end forever. That day is simultaneously the historical boundary line from which the Czech and Slovak peoples start a new and most radiant era in their history, an era of genuine national freedom and independence, an era of the people's power and the free labor of the masses, an era of socialist construction.'*

*Klement Gottwald. 1949-1950. *Shornik stati a projevu*. Prague, Svoboda, 1951, p. 321.

The responsibility for our people's six-year enslavement is fully borne alongside the Western allies, which left Czechoslovakia for the nazi aggressors to tear apart, by the country's ruling circles which represented the interests of the Czech and Slovak bourgeoisie. The events in the late 1930s preceding Czechoslovakia's destruction exposed the capitulatory role of the bourgeoisie and showed that it was incapable either of assuring the republic of reliable international positions and state sovereignty, or of solving the vital problems of inner-political, economic, social and national development. The bourgeois government's negative attitude to the Soviet Union's offer of assistance in September 1938 showed that the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie, guided by its class interests, preferred to accept the Munich diktat rather than allow the Soviet Union to become Czechoslovakia's defender. This stand resulted in a situation in which a part of the Czechoslovak bourgeoisie was eventually prepared to collaborate even with our people's worst enemies. The collapse of the bourgeois republic, the fiasco of the bourgeoisie's state and foreign-policy orientation, the whole bitter experience of the 20 years of its rule and the six years of the nazi tyranny led the masses to understand the need for a revolutionary transformation of society.

Our people never accepted the fascist bondage and from the very first rose up in a relentless fight against the invaders. The Communist Party was the most active, consistent and leading political force in this anti-fascist struggle. Immediately upon the outbreak of the Second World War, its leadership abroad, headed by Klement Gottwald, formulated a program for the Czechoslovak people's national-liberation struggle. Our party emphasized the connection between national liberation and social emancipation and pointed out that in this situation the working class, led by the communists, naturally became the vanguard of the national-liberation movement.

This produced two fundamentally distinct lines of struggle against fascism. The Communist Party stood for an active, revolutionary line aimed to establish a new, people's democratic republic, while the bourgeoisie and its political representatives preferred a passive wait-and-see attitude, reconnaissance of the enemy forces and an effort to reestablish the pre-Munich order. In the course of the national-liberation struggle, the Communist Party's revolutionary line, ever more actively supported by

broad sections of the people, made headway and ultimately won out.

The party gave a clear-cut answer to the important questions of social life which arose in the course of development. Thanks to its consistent and keen-sighted policy a broad anti-fascist unity of the masses — the National Front of Czechs and Slovaks — was taking shape. It was perfectly obvious that the working people would not be satisfied with the mere re-establishment of the bourgeois Czechoslovak republic. They wanted not only national freedom but also substantial political and socio-economic transformations.

The conclusion on December 12, 1943, of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Postwar Cooperation markedly strengthened this new orientation, thereby providing tremendous support for the national-liberation struggle, which helped to shape the principles of a new and just social and national postwar order. The alliance with the world's first socialist country provided a reliable guarantee for Czechoslovakia's freedom and national and state independence.

The courageous national-liberation struggle of the Czechs and the Slovaks, which abounded in sacrifice, was carried to a triumphant completion thanks to the USSR's historic role in the Second World War. The main burden of the war was borne by the great Soviet people and their army. In hard-fought battles, they not only stopped the fascist aggressors and routed their main forces, but having driven the nazi invaders from their own soil, went on to liberate the enslaved peoples of other countries. In the life and death struggle against the fascist aggressors, over 20 million Soviet people lost their lives. Mankind will never forget these tremendous sacrifices!

Operations by the Czechoslovak resistance were linked at every main stage with the Soviet Army's heroic battles. For us it was an example, a source of strength and optimism and a bulwark in our irreconcilable fight against the enemy. A Czechoslovak military contingent under the command of Ludvik Svoboda was formed on the territory of the USSR, and shoulder to shoulder with the Soviet troops it fought through the long way from Buzuluk to Prague.

Closely rallied round their Leninist Party, the Soviet people defended not only their own country but also fulfilled a great internationalist mission of liberation. The world's first socialist state showed itself to be the truest and most reliable ally of the freedom-loving peoples. With gratitude, Czechoslovakia pays tribute to the heroism of its liberators. The 140,000 Soviet soldiers who fell on our soil will always live in its memory.

The closing stage of the national-liberation struggle against the fascist invaders merged with the country's liberation by the Soviet Army. The most important milestone in this struggle was the Slovak National Uprising, one of the largest anti-fascist actions in Europe, which inaugurated our national-democratic revolution. On the territory liberated by the insurgents, the revolutionary people's power proclaimed the re-establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic based on the principles of social justice, the equality of Czechs and Slovaks, and reliance in its foreign policy on an alliance with the USSR. These revolutionary transformations became the prototype of the new, people's democratic Czechoslovakia.

The next important event in the national-democratic revolution was the Czech people's May 1945 uprising, which flared up in a number of cities and culminated in Prague. The armed action by the Czech patriots merged with the Soviet Army's Prague operation, the last major operation in the European theater. The May uprising toppled the occupation regime; a start was made on the practical realization of the revolutionary measures of the Kosice Program, the first government program in the new Czechoslovakia. It was proclaimed on the basis of a draft drawn up by the CPCz and constituted a coherent program for the national-democratic revolution, resting on the experience of the revolutionary transformations in the liberated areas and containing the basic principles for building a people's democratic republic.

For our country, the revolution meant structural changes in the whole social system. Power was assumed by the National Front, a broad class alliance. In it the leading role and the political initiative belonged to the working class, led by the communists, but political power was also partially in the hands of the anti-fascist section of the bourgeoisie. It was obvious, and subsequent events merely bore this out, that the bourgeois circles were trying to gradually contain the sweep of the revolution and to slow it down, so as eventually to restore capitalism. The whole of subsequent development was pivoted on the struggle by the working class and its party against the bourgeoisie for preserving and strengthening the popular nature of the state, its home and foreign policy, for consistently realizing the great cause inaugurated by the national-democratic revolution.

The Communist Party gradually succeeded in implementing all the principles of the Kosice government program, thereby laying sound foundations for the people's democratic system. As early as 1945, the key industries were nationalized and a start was made on a land reform and other measures for the benefit of the working people. It is not surprising that the communists' prestige grew rapidly. In the first postwar parliamentary elections in May 1946, the CPCz turned out to be the strongest political party. The reactionary representatives of the right-wing parties, ever more clearly expressing the interests of the bourgeoisie, realized that the communists had a real opportunity to gradually win over a majority of the people and to successfully complete the process of developing the national-democratic revolution. That is why the reactionary circles began to increase their resistance, to drag out implementation of revolutionary measures and to close ranks in an effort to change the balance of forces, to overthrow the people's

democratic system and to return Czechoslovakia to the imperialist fold.

In February 1948, the bourgeoisie supported by international reaction, attempted a counter-revolutionary coup. But within a few days that putsch was put down by the indignant people, a powerful offensive mounted by the working people in unanimous support of the CPCz. Our people were aware that all the revolutionary gains of the national-liberation movement and the behests of those who had fought for a better future for the Czechs and Slovaks were now at stake. The historic victory of the working class and the rest of the working people in the dramatic days of February 1948 consummated the gradual development of the national-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, broadly paving the way for building a new society and further developing the revolutionary gains of the Czechoslovak people's national-liberation struggle.

II

In no period of its history has our country had successes comparable in scale and importance to those the working people of Czechoslovakia have secured under the Communist Party's leadership over the past 35 years. In the revolutionary struggle for socialism, we have built up and consolidated the new type of state resting on the power of the working people with the working class at their head. The working man has become the country's true master. Freedom for the exploiters has given way to genuine democracy for the people. The National Front, the political form for a class alliance of workers, peasants and intellectuals — all working people — provides ample room for active participation by broad masses in running society. Democratically elected representative organs — national committees in the localities, the Czech and Slovak National Councils and the Federal Assembly — are among the most important elements of our socialist system of popular power.

Socialism, the fraternal friendship and unbreakable alliance with the USSR and the other socialist-community countries have secured for good the independence and state sovereignty of the Czechs and Slovaks, who for centuries were forced to stand up for their right to a national existence.

The nationalization of industry, cooperatives in agriculture, socialization of the means of production and other revolutionary measures in the country have done away with man's exploitation of man and have created relations of social equality, cooperation and mutual assistance among people. The haphazard development of the economy attended with crises has given way to a planned, scientific management of the economy which safeguards our country against the chaotic processes in the capitalist world.

On the basis of socialist relations, a new social structure of society has taken shape. It is characterized by a growing moral and political unity of the nations and nationalities, of the whole Czechoslovak people. The working class, society's leading force, has developed its capabilities and creative initiatives to unprecedented proportions and has learned to manage all its affairs. Life in our countryside has been radically changed by the transformation of agriculture on socialist lines. The erstwhile land-hungry peasants and middle peasants have become a socialist class of cooperative peasantry, a strong ally of the working class. The best members of our intelligentsia, true to our country's progressive traditions and socialist ideals, have also found their place in life alongside the working class. From the midst of the working people has sprung a numerous new intelligentsia which together with the whole people, is taking part in the great endeavor of socialist construction.

Czechoslovakia, which was enabled to take the socialist road by its liberation by the Soviet Army, had been a fairly industrialized country with a strong working class, a numerous intelligentsia and rich traditions of democratic culture even before the Second World War. Still, bearing in mind both the economic and cultural progress, it is obvious that during the construction of the new society much greater values have been created than in the whole long period of the class power of the bourgeoisie in our country.

Czechoslovakia's 35-year experience has borne out the universality of Lenin's principles of socialist construction, which are also fully applicable to industrialized countries. Let us recall just a few facts.

Compared with the pre-war period, the volume of Czechoslovakia's industrial and building output has multiplied nearly 12-fold. Our socialist agriculture now turns out 50 per cent more produce than before the war, while its productivity has gone up more than four times over. The social wealth created by the working people under socialism ensures the growth of the well-being and cultural standards of all the sections of the population. The socialist system gives every citizen social confidence and opens up before each, clear prospects which reflect society's concern for man from the day of his birth to his old age. Everyone is guaranteed the right to work and a life in true human dignity. Today, our citizens' personal consumption is over three times higher than it was in the pre-war period, while their social consumption cannot even be compared with that under capitalism.

In this period, Lenin's theory of the ways for solving the nationalities question has helped to eliminate every form of the erstwhile inequality among the nations and nationalities in this country. In accordance with Lenin's principles of the federal constitutional system, optimal conditions have been created for the full development of the creative forces and capabilities of the working people of all the nationalities in their common state. With the fraternal assistance of the Czech working class, the Slovak people have built up a developed industrial and agricultural base. Slovakia's industrial output is now 45 times greater than it was in 1937. Its share in Czechoslovakia's industrial output has gone up from less than 8 per cent to roughly 28 per cent and

is still growing. On the map of Czechoslovakia there are no longer any poor or backward areas: the country's economic and cultural potential is located evenly, in a manner which is totally unknown in capitalist countries with a similar economic structure.

Socialism has preserved and developed everything that is most valuable in the cultural wealth accumulated by earlier generations. It has opened up for the people access to education, it has equipped the working people with the scientific world view — Marxism-Leninism — has brought about an unprecedented development of education, culture, science and art, and has markedly brought closer together workers by hand and by brain.

We recall these achievements on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's liberation by the Soviet Army, and are justly proud of them. We are aware of course, that not all the problems we have set ourselves have been solved in the course of socialist construction. From the historical standpoint, only the stage of the laying of the foundations of socialism has for the time being been passed and the building of a developed socialist society begun. We were able to really get down to this great and complex task only after the sharp and stiff struggle against opportunism and revisionism, which ended in the late 1960s with the fraternal international assistance of the USSR and other socialist-community countries in the defeat of the right-wing anti-socialist forces supported by international anti-communist centers.

The conclusions which our party has drawn from this major battle also confirm the universal effectiveness and significance of Lenin's theory of socialist construction. In that period, the Czechoslovak communists learned from their own experience that any departure from the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism leads to grave mistakes in political practice and the loss of the revolutionary perspective. The causes and consequences of the crisis and the ways in which it was overcome were analyzed by the party in its well-known document *Lessons of the Crisis Development in the Party and Society After the 13th Congress of the CPCz*, which has had an exceptionally important role to play in the process of consolidation and the further development of socialism in Czechoslovakia. This important document helps in our work to this day.

The historical April 1969 Plenary Meeting of the CPCz Central Committee marked the emergence from the grave crisis situation, a strengthening of socialist social relations and a fresh upswing in socialist construction. The 14th and the 15th congresses of the CPCz elaborated the party's further course. The 1970s became a period of persevering construction of a developed socialist society, an endeavor in which we have scored many successes.

The results of the past 10 years show that the policy which the party has pursued since April 1969 is a creative embodiment and development of Marxist-Leninist ideas. This policy really meets our people's requirements which is why the programmatic line for building developed socialism, as formulated by the 14th and 15th congresses, has had full support from an absolute majority of the working people.

Despite the fact that in the past decade the Czechoslovak economy has developed in much more complicated conditions (especially in the external economic sphere), our socio-economic indicators have remained balanced, dynamic and proportional. In the early 1980s, Czechoslovakia is a modern, mature socialist state with a sound international position and a great economic potential; it is a society with a high standard of living and reliable unity of the party and the people, of all the classes and sections, of all the nations and nationalities.

III

We are on the eve of the 16th congress of the CPCz, which is to work out the main lines for the development of Czechoslovak society in the first half of the 1980s and over a longer term. These years will become a period of further construction of a developed socialist society, a deepening of its unity and a strengthening of cohesion and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries, something that for us will continue to be the main source of all-round development and a guarantee of life in peace.

The vast material and cultural values won by the people's dedicated efforts over the past 35 years provide the starting positions for subsequent effort. They make it possible to successfully solve even more complicated problems and also to set bold but realistic goals for the future.

In order to make the 1980s a truly important stage in building developed socialism in Czechoslovakia, our party strives above all for the following:

— *in the economic sphere*, a high level of the material and technical basis of social progress, sustained improvement of socialist relations of production, and forms of management and planning in the economy;

— *in the socio-political sphere*, stronger unity of all the classes and sections of society, and the nations and nationalities of the country under the leadership of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, improved activity by all the echelons of the state and fuller use of the potentialities of socialist democracy;

— *in the sphere of spiritual life*, further progress in developing socialist education, science and culture and bringing up of our citizens in the spirit of socialism.

In setting our goals and working to attain them, we start from the doctrine of developed socialism as a long-term, historically necessary stage in building up the communist socio-economic formation, a doctrine elaborated on the strength of the experience in building a new society in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and other socialist countries.

Further success in continuing our 35-year advance will be determined above all by the consistent implementation of the party's economic

strategy, which is aimed at intensively developing the economy and enhancing the efficiency and quality of all workmanship. We set ourselves the goal of producing more and better, with smaller inputs of labor resources, with a lesser increase in the consumption of energy and raw materials, but with a higher level of their useful utilization. This demand is made imperative by the specifics of the economy of a country which is highly industrialized but which has at its disposal limited raw materials and energy sources.

Intensive economic growth can be attained only if we rely on the latest achievements of the scientific and technical revolution and carry on our economic development on the basis of a long-term program for their application. That is the only way we shall be able to rapidly boost the social productivity of labor and have more efficient reproduction of resources. The acceleration of scientific and technical progress is the most urgent task and we regard the efforts designed to achieve this as primary in our daily work.

The building of a developed socialist society calls not only for qualitative changes in the structure of production and improvement in the system of economic management, but also resolute steps in expanding cooperation with the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries and in deepening socialist economic integration. This growing economic, scientific and technical cooperation is of tremendous importance. There is no substitute for it, because it enables us to develop, on a long-term basis, technically the most complicated industries, guarantees a stable supply of key raw materials and reliably ensures the marketing of our products. Only through cooperation with the USSR has Czechoslovakia been able to largely overcome the negative impact of the economic instability, rapid inflation and growth of prices and of other crisis phenomena in the capitalist world.

The subsequent dynamic upswing of our economy is closely bound up with an all-round strengthening of this cooperation, especially with extensive use of its new and progressive forms, above all joint formulation and realization of key scientific, technical and economic programs within the CMEA framework. A major stride of this kind will be the long-term program for specialization and cooperation between the USSR and Czechoslovakia covering joint measures in power (including nuclear power) and chemical engineering, electronics and electrical engineering, the manufacture of rolling and mining equipment and a number of other progressive lines.

We know that these are difficult tasks, but it is vital for Czechoslovakia to get down to tackling them. Without an orientation upon high efficiency and quality of social labor, upon scientific and technical progress and a deepening of socialist economic integration, it is impossible to build developed socialism, to attain the goals of further improving the people's life and securing every individual's all-round development which the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has put forward.

Much remains to be done in the steady improvement of socialist social relations. The country's whole progress since liberation has shown that they provide the basis on which new and ever more complex problems can be solved in practice. With the advance in building developed socialism ever more importance will be attached to relations of cooperation and mutual assistance among citizens while the concept of the socialist unity of society will be filled with an ever more tangible content. Alongside this, the working people's attention will be ever more clearly concentrated on social interests as the real basis for the development of man's creative powers and capabilities and the shaping of the socialist way of life.

It is highly important that the social interest should be strengthened in every sphere of our life. Our assumption is that the building of developed socialism, as Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet has emphasized, entails completion of the restructuring 'of the entire system of social relations on the collectivist principles intrinsic to socialism.' An organic component part of our policy is a consistent effort to realize the principle of 'from each according to his abilities, to each according to his work,' i.e., a fair balance between everyone's personal labor input and his share in the consumption of the collectively produced values.

Socialist social interests will increasingly provide the basis for the balanced management of social processes. The building of the new society calls for a high level of consciousness and unity, and scientific planning and organization of the whole of our life on socialist principles. In the context of the tasks of management, this means that scientific and technical progress and all the economic and social transformations are aimed to benefit man, whose all-round development, creative initiative and civic activity are the new and basic source for our continued advance.

For the sake of these goals, we shall continue in the 1980s to perseveringly realize the comprehensive program for the social and cultural development of society which the CPCz has been consistently implementing since the country's liberation, and whose achievements are especially great, mainly over the past 10 years. For us, the measure of social wealth consists not only in the indicators of growing material production and consumption, but also in the level of man's all-round development. It is here that socialism has at its disposal the far from used sources of progress and extensive potentialities for demonstrating its decisive advantages. That is why with the development of socialism there is also a growth in the importance of moulding the man of the new society.

Our successes spring from the establishment and strengthening of the working people's socialist unity under the leadership of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard, the Communist Party. In the next decade, the accent in our socio-political

activity will be a further alignment of the economic, social and cultural interests of social classes and groups and a closer integration of our country's nations and nationalities. This is the basis for the steady deepening of socialist democracy, whose chief expression is the citizens' active participation in the management of the country's affairs. Experience shows that the most important prerequisite for sustained progress in socialist society is a blend of scientific leadership with the promotion of conscious activity and initiatives on the part of the working people, which is the substance of democratic centralism.

Consistent fulfillment of new tasks and attainment of the goals we have set ourselves will mean a great stride forward along the way opened up before our people by Czechoslovakia's liberation. The present stage in socialist construction is especially important. Only the mature socialist society will fully bring out the advantages of the new social system and fully show its uniformities and principles, for in such a society its own development and every individual's will become ever more harmonious. The revolutionary initiative of the people led by the Communist Party, our indissoluble unity and cooperation with the Soviet Union are the guarantee that these historical tasks will be fulfilled.

In building a mature socialist society, we always bear in mind that our country's successful development depends on the international situation. Within the framework of its potentialities, the CPCz and the Czechoslovak state actively promote the strengthening of the might and unity of the socialist community. Our foreign-policy line starts from the principles of proletarian internationalism and solid unity and identity of interests of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries. Acting in the spirit of the international conferences of communists, we have been working for the all-round strengthening of solidarity within the world communist and working-class movement, and developing our ties with the national-liberation, democratic and progressive forces throughout the world. We have been promoting the assertion of the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems and this is all the more important now that the reactionary imperialist circles, those of the United States in the first place, are trying to return to the language of the cold war.

This is precisely the time to recall the lessons of the events of 35 years ago and the experience which has enriched us over the intervening period. The imperialist circles, gradually losing their positions and their foothold, seek to revive the spirit of the cold war, attack the people's vital interests and trample and tear up concluded international treaties. Their dangerous schemes, which clashed with the interests of peace and détente, will be seen from NATO's recent decision to deploy new U.S. nuclear missiles in Western Europe, the anti-Soviet campaign mounted over the events in Afghanistan and so on.

The reactionary imperialist forces are obviously losing their ability to make a realistic assessment of world development. It is not surprising therefore, that even in some Western capitals the hysteria, the adventurism in the policy of U.S. imperialism and the Peking hegemonists have been met with some confusion and have evoked a more or less veiled negative response. There is a tide of alarm in the world over the further development of international relations and the future of what has been achieved and gained in this area over the past decade. We do not turn a blind eye to the existing danger and have no illusions that the struggle to maintain peace will be an easy one. But we look to the future with firm confidence, because the balance is objectively tilted toward a continuation of the process of détente. In the past, the imperialists have repeatedly tried by means of armed intervention, discrimination and economic blackmail to exert an influence on the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Such attempts have always failed and they will once again prove to be a fiasco.

This idea was very wisely expressed by Leonid Brezhnev in his address to his constituents on February 22 this year, when he said: 'To the "doctrine" of military hysteria and frenzied arms race we oppose the doctrine of a consistent struggle for peace and security on Earth. We are true to the Peace Program set forth by the 24th and 25th congresses of our party. For this reason now, in the 1980s, just as before in the 1970s, we stand for the strengthening and not the destruction of détente. We stand for a reduction and not the expansion of armaments. We stand for rapprochement and understanding between peoples, and not for artificial alienation or enmity.'

The face of the world has been changing rapidly. The peoples have been taking their destiny into their own hands and their confidence in themselves, the urge for independence and sovereignty have been growing. The balance of forces in the world has been naturally changing in favor of democracy, progress and socialism. We are sure that despite all the dramatic aberrations, détente will continue to make headway, because the overwhelming majority of mankind wants it. The growing economic, political and military might of the Soviet Union and the other socialist-community countries, and their sound, principled and wise policy which expresses the vital interests of millions of men and women, will be a mighty bulwark and a source of inspiration in this process.

The Czechoslovak people, who successfully completed their national-liberation struggle with the assistance of the heroic Soviet people, naturally sympathize with the efforts of all the nations aspiring to freedom and progress, independence and peace. We have been doing our utmost to help them in this struggle, because we know from our own experience what imperialist domination and savage fascist oppression and war are fraught with.

In close friendship and unity with the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries,

Czechoslovakia will continue to pursue its foreign policy of ever more actively promoting peaceful coexistence and averting the danger of war, and the triumph of progressive development in the world. Peace is now the only alternative for mankind's continued existence. Peace is also the main condition enabling the Czechoslovak people to multiply the fruits of their emancipated labor, which has been triumphant in this country for 35 years now since its liberation by the Soviet Army. We need peace, so as to build a developed socialist society in continuation of our traditions of liberation struggle and the national-democratic and socialist revolutions.

Bandung and present-day realities

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A new term, 'Bandung,' entered the international political vocabulary 25 years ago. This geographical name defined an important development in the life of the Asian and African continents. Bandung, a lovely and hospitable town in Indonesia, owes its new luster to the Afro-Asian Conference held there in 1955.[1]

What impels us to look to that event again after a lapse of a quarter of a century? There can be no two minds on the subject: the Bandung Conference marked the birth of a huge international force, namely the movement of countries fighting for liberation from colonial and semi-colonial dependence, and was the first international action of the countries concerned on the basis of a broad democratic platform. To this day the Conference's final communiqué is evidence of the perspicacity of distinguished Asian and African statesmen, who were able to identify some basic trends of international development in the latter half of the 20th century.

The Conference participants spoke in defense of vital human rights and the rights of oppressed nations, demanded the implementation of the legitimate right of nations to self-determination and censured the outrageous practice of racial discrimination and segregation. More, although the final communiqué did not directly name imperialism,[2] many of its provisions were distinctly anti-imperialist, an example being the Conference's emphatic condemnation of the 'subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation.' 'Colonialism in all its manifestations,' the communiqué declared, 'is an evil which should speedily be brought to an end.'

For many years to come these essentially anti-imperialist guidelines determined the basic content of the collective actions of the developing nations on the international scene.

Further, Bandung was the first forum in the history of Asia and Africa at which it was declared at the highest level, that the countries and peoples of these continents were determined to live and work in peace and have a peaceful future. The Conference expressed its anxiety over the international tension in the then obtaining cold war situation that was fraught with the menace of a nuclear war, and called for greater security in the world, for a reduction of armaments as the first step toward general disarmament and the destruction of nuclear weapons under effective international inspection. The Asian and African nations thus clearly defined their stand in this key international problem, making it plain that they had no intention of remaining uninvolved in its solution.

The Conference took a broad, constructive and far-sighted approach to problems of international cooperation and sought to infuse this cooperation with the spirit of peaceful coexistence, friendship and good-neighborliness. The accent was placed on economic cooperation on the basis of mutual interest and respect for national sovereignty. It was recommended that the participating nations should take collective action to stabilize world prices and the demand for raw materials and adopt a common approach to these problems at international forums. Later, in the 1970s, this was destined to become one of the main orientations of the struggle of the newly-free nations against imperialist dictation in foreign trade.

Further, the Bandung Conference noted the special significance of cultural contacts among the Asian and African countries themselves and already then stressed the importance of broader, worldwide cultural cooperation, calling for the removal of all discrimination in such cooperation.

A fundamentally new approach for Asian and African nations to problems of social progress was recorded in the final communiqué, which declared that 'all nations should have the right freely to choose their own political and economic systems and their own way of life' in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter. In effect, the Conference rejected imperialism's 'right' to impose a social system on the newly-free nations that suited it best. Later, when the colonial system disintegrated completely, this negation crystallized with the appearance on the world scene of a growing number of socialist-oriented nations.

Lastly, the Conference communiqué contained detailed definitions of the principles of peaceful coexistence — Pancha Sila — which had by then won international recognition.

In a brief summary of the achievements at Bandung it may be concluded that despite the anti-

communist-motivated opposition of some reactionary circles and elements of compromise inevitable at a heterogeneous forum, there was ultimately overwhelming support for the fundamental orientation toward independent development under peaceful conditions on the part of nations that had won liberation from colonialism. But this was yet only a statement of intent, which remained to be put into effect. Ahead lay a hard struggle for this orientation and regrettably, not all the governments of Asia and Africa, including those that were represented at Bandung, were subsequently able to demonstrate fidelity to the letter and spirit of the Conference's decisions. The fetters of the cold war and affiliation to imperialism-sponsored military-political blocs sometimes proved to be stronger than the aspiration for actual sovereignty, for an independent role in international affairs. This evidently explains the fact that the concluding desire of the Bandung Conference — the convocation of another Afro-Asian conference — remained unfulfilled.

Nevertheless, the basic orientation mapped out at Bandung moved from strength to strength. This was facilitated by the change — to the detriment of colonialism and imperialism — in the balance of world strength, evidence of which lies in the growth of the socialist community's might and the dramatic speedup of the disintegration of colonial empires (especially in Africa in the early 1960s). With the downfall of colonialism and the proclamation of independence by tens of countries, the liberation struggle itself acquired a deeper content and came into conflict not only with concrete colonialism — British, French and so forth — but also with imperialism as a system that continued to oppress these nations, chiefly economically, and force them into neo-colonialist dependence.

Meanwhile, it was becoming crystal clear that success in this struggle was being increasingly hindered by international tension, by the cold war, of which the network of military blocs created by imperialism, mainly U.S. imperialism, and embracing Asia as well, was one of the cardinal elements. Spearheaded at the Soviet Union, these blocs — SEATO, CENTO (first the Baghdad pact) — were used more and more by imperialism as an instrument for attaining its neo-colonialist objectives on our continent. In this situation the non-aligned movement came into being organizationally at the Belgrade Conference in September 1961. It strikingly demonstrated the viability of the ideas proclaimed at Bandung and in effect took the baton from the latter in the new situation.[3] The principles elaborated at Bandung underlay the program of the movement. To them it added yet another limitative principle, namely non-alignment with military blocs, and defined assistance to liberation movements as one of its principal tasks.

It will be recalled that the idea of non-alignment was put forward and defined by India's outstanding statesman and first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. A patriot and a democrat, Nehru saw that the destiny of a newly-free nation would depend largely on its ability to take an independent stand on the world scene. As early as September 1946, after pondering the future foreign policy of independent India, Nehru declared on Delhi radio his intention to formulate the nation's attitude to all international problems on the basis of India's interests, which meant 'keeping away from politics of groups aligned against one another' in the world.[4] In a situation in which the imperialists were fuelling the cold war against socialist countries, when the not unknown John Foster Dulles had proclaimed that 'those not with us are against us,' the anti-imperialist substance of the line charted by Nehru was self-evident, and this evoked an angry outburst from the selfsame Dulles, who called it 'immoral.'

Nehru subsequently explained on several occasions that India's proclamation that 'we will not attach ourselves to any particular group' had nothing in common with neutrality, passiveness or isolation in international affairs, that it did not mean 'sitting on the fence.'[5] On the contrary, he saw non-alignment as giving India the possibility of pursuing an active, independent policy in the world and declared that India was prepared to cooperate with all countries on terms of equality and support those of them that in specific issues maintained a posture coinciding with India's interests.

Symbolically, Nehru further specified the content of the policy of non-alignment following the conclusion of the Manila and Baghdad pacts, which instituted military blocs in Southeast and Southwest Asia. Speaking of this development in the Indian parliament, he said: 'We think that they push the world in a wrong direction. . . . Instead of taking advantage of those new factors which go toward peace, disarmament and the lessening of tensions, they deliberately check them and encourage other tendencies which increase hatred and fear and apprehension and come in the way of disarmament.'[6] Even India's mere attendance at the Manila Conference (to say nothing of joining SEATO) Nehru said, 'would have meant our giving up our basic policy on non-alignment.'[7]

Thus, when we trace the genesis of the idea of non-alignment in its negating aspect — non-alignment with the blocs formed by greater powers — we shall find that the nations that have won liberation from colonial rule had, properly speaking, no option as to which blocs to join. Neither in Asia nor in Africa (to say nothing of Latin America) has there been nor is there a single military bloc set up by the Soviet Union. There have only been U.S.-imperialist sponsored blocs — SEATO, the Baghdad pact. For the newly-free nations there was only one option — to join these blocs or to remain outside them. This latter posture became known as non-alignment.

Little wonder that the imperialists reacted negatively to the resolute action of the non-aligned movement, chiefly of newly-free Asian and African nations, against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism, for peace and peaceful coexistence, one of the principles of which is the

'right of nations to self-determination, to independence and to the possibility of freely choosing their road of economic, social and cultural development.'[8] This underlying substance of non-alignment, expressing the democratic stand of the anti-imperialist forces, continues to be savagely attacked by imperialism, although in words (the times have changed) the latter has become an ardent 'proponent' of the movement.

Reactionary intrigues against the non-aligned movement have increased sharply in recent years, this being primarily due to the movement's enhanced role and influence in the world. The imperialists are particularly worried over the bankruptcy not only of political neo-colonialism (the breakdown of military blocs, the fall of pro-imperialist regimes) — neo-colonialist economic methods have also proved to be ineffective. The trend toward independent economic development is steadily asserting itself in Asian, African and Latin American countries. They are now more determined than ever to put an end to their unequal status in the system of international economic relations, a system created and protected by imperialism. A striking example of this is the appearance of the Group of 77 at the close of the 1960s, an association that now embraces nearly 120 developing UN member states. 'If the non-aligned movement ... was the political consciousness of the countries emerging from colonialism and neo-colonialism which were attempting to achieve their independence fully,' Fidel Castro, leader of revolutionary Cuba noted, 'the Group of 77 has emerged as their economic consciousness.'[9]

Imperialism sees its plans and positions menaced by the fact that the collective, essentially anti-imperialist actions of the developing nations united in the non-aligned movement have the staunch support of socialist-community states. The non-aligned and socialist countries are acting jointly against colonialism and imperialism. The socialist states have expressed their solidarity with the non-aligned movement on fundamental issues such as assistance to national liberation forces, the struggle to restructure international economic relations and opposition to imperialist dictation and aggression, to racism and apartheid and so on. More, the movement itself acquires new strength in the course of the positive changes taking place on our planet as world socialism increases its might. It has played a role of no little significance in the formation of independent Asian and African nations that have linked their destiny with it. A large contribution is being made to the movement by member countries that have shaken off colonial dependence and taken the road of socialism, as for instance, united Vietnam.

Confronted on the international scene with the newly-free countries in their new, authoritative and prestigious role, the imperialist forces have had to renounce their 1950s policy of total rebuttal of the attempts of the newly-free countries to pursue an independent line in international affairs and have begun to have recourse to new tactics. These tactics, sometimes flexible but in no way less ominous for the destinies of national liberation and state independence, are used relative to the non-aligned movement as well.

The change of guidelines underlying the attitude of the imperialist circles toward non-alignment is quite clearly seen in the policy of the present U.S. administration. It seeks to capitalize on the movement's heterogeneous character. It is no secret that the movement has a progressive body of nations consistently adhering to anti-imperialist positions, a center that consists of nations that cooperate with the progressive wing on many basic issues but are not always consistent, and a conservative wing. The latter is always prepared to succumb to intimidation by imperialist propaganda, which tirelessly alleges that the movement is threatened by the socialist countries, chiefly the Soviet Union, and qualifies any objective coincidence between the stand of the movement and that of the Soviet Union on major international issues as a 'retreat' from the principles of non-alignment.

Indeed, the movement is no longer criticized directly. Efforts are made to 'straighten it out' and especially to make sure that non-alignment is 'genuine,' in other words, that it should 'follow its original principles.' The implications of this were shown by the imperialist clamor over the Sixth Conference of Non-aligned Countries in Havana (september 1979). The mouthpiece of British big business *The Financial Times*, for example, interpreted the Conference's results in the following way: 'Faced with what looked like a Cuban attempt to turn the movement into a sort of fifth column for the Soviet Union, the majority insisted on strengthening and reconfirming all the original principles of the movement — including independence from both power blocs and non-intervention.'[10] Together with slandering Cuba, the new coordinator of the movement, bourgeois propaganda is particularly anxious to make people believe that the non-aligned movement was formed with the purpose of jointly countering 'pressure from the superpowers — the USSR and the USA,' and that this, the preservation of an 'equidistance' from them, remains the rationale of its existence. One can only regret that in some non-aligned countries there are media and even statesmen who obediently parrot these propaganda ploys.[11]

In fact, as I have tried to show, from the very outset the idea of non-alignment presumed the desire — and this was later recorded in the Declaration of the Belgrade Conference — to 'cooperate with any government that seeks to contribute to the strengthening of confidence and peace throughout the world.'[12] It is not the 'fault' of the non-aligned nations that on these issues they have to cooperate mainly with the governments of socialist-community countries, that together with them they are waging a struggle against imperialism, foreign occupation, domination and hegemony.

It seems to me that not only centrist but also conservative governments taking part in the non-aligned movement will have to understand that in

the present situation, when imperialism is once again trying to mount an offensive agianst the newly-free nations, declares that large regions of our continents (for instance, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf) are zones of its 'special vital interests' and proclaims its intention to protect these interests by military force — in this situation any pandering to imperialist intrigues is fraught with the danger that the non-aligned movement will be seriously weakened together with its capacity to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of its member nations.

It is indicative that the 'equidistance' theory is used also as a pretext for attacking non-alignment from another direction — by 'leftist' elements, including those that claim to speak on behalf of the working people, of the working class. A theme song of the 'leftists' is that non-alignment is a dirty game, that it is nothing more than playing between the two opposing systems. Hence their argument that by being associated with the non-aligned movement even the governments that pursue progressive domestic policies 'are betraying the cause of social progress' and playing into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

The Indian communists categorically reject this 'stand.' In its basic foreign policy documents the Communist Party of India invariably emphasizes its support for the non-aligned movement, holding that regardless of the distinctions in the sociopolitical systems of its member nations the movement's program and struggle against imperialism's aggressive policies, for national independence and peaceful coexistence express the democratic interests of most of the classes and social strata in the developing countries and are entirely consistent with the correct understanding of the interests of the working class, of all working people.

In our view the very phenomenon of non-alignment has become one of the most symbolic features of the international relations of our epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a global scale. The changed world balance of strength, which characterizes our epoch, is what has paved the way for the rise and consolidation of this movement as the assertion of the independent role played by nations that have shaken off colonial and semi-colonial dependence. We see this as the materialization of a prevision of Lenin's, who some 60 years ago at the very beginning of our epoch, predicted that Eastern peoples winning liberation, peoples that had been a reserve of capitalism and imperialism, would join in deciding the destinies of the world (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 159-160).

In our day they do uphold this right, drawing strength from the principles that were re-articulated so forcefully in Fidel Castro's ardent words at the Havana Conference of Non-Aligned Countries: 'We are firmly anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-neo-colonialist, anti-racist, anti-Zionist and anti-fascist, because these principles are a part of our thinking: they constitute the essence and origin of the movement of non-aligned countries and have formed its life and history ever since its founding. These principles are also very fresh in the life and history of the peoples we represent here.'[13] There can therefore be no question that the 'principles' concocted in imperialism's propaganda kitchens to drive a wedge between the non-aligned movement and the socialist community, to discredit the socialist countries belonging to the non-aligned movement, split the movement and thereby undermine its growing prestige and influence in the world, are doomed to ultimate failure.

But there is more to this than propaganda and international scheming. At the back of it is the more formidable reality of imperialist subversion: from the imposition of pro-imperialist policies on some countries to the organization of direct aggression against others. An example of this is the policy of the present U.S. administration toward Iran, which it would like to see as an obedient ally once more and, as in the days of the shah's regime, hostile to the very idea of non-alignment. However, the Iranian people have made their irrevocable choice. The Iranian republic has joined the movement.

Or take another example — Pakistan. It was admitted to the non-aligned movement only recently. But it is being dragged back into the mire of bloc politics, to the cold war days when Pakistan was member of SEATO and CENTO. The USA has resumed its efforts to turn Pakistan into its outpost in the region, which it could use to continue its undeclared war against revolutionary, non-aligned Afghanistan and at the same time menace the independence of non-aligned India.

As everybody knows, after the shah was deposed in Iran, the CIA regional headquarters was moved to Pakistan. Konrad Eagle, editor of the American journal *Counter Spy*, let the cat out of the bag when he wrote that a special CIA operation group headed by the professional intelligence officer Robert P. Lessard was set up in Pakistan more than a year ago to train Afghan mercenaries and direct their subversive activities. The agency includes John J. Reagan, David E. Thurman and Richard D. Jackman. U.S. citizens of Afghan origin head some of the mercenary gangs. It is characteristic that although the military regime in Pakistan has banned all political activity in the country, this ban evidently does not affect the Afghan counter-revolutionary organizations, whose ringleaders freely gather together, discuss 'unification' and organize bandit raids into Afghanistan.

Over the past few months even several bourgeois Indian newspapers have cited many facts testifying to the unceasing acts of aggression against Afghanistan from Pakistani territory. These facts bear out the statement of Babrak Karmal, leader of the Afghan revolution, that far from ceasing, the aggression against Afghanistan from without is being escalated.[14]

Meanwhile, the latest developments in Southwest Asia provide further evidence that the independent policy of our countries, the policy of non-alignment, is being countered not only by Washington and its NATO allies. The danger of war breathes from the hegemonistic policy pursued in

the region by Peking, which together with the USA and Saudi Arabia, and also Egypt and Israel, is arming the reactionary Pakistani regime and encouraging and giving every possible assistance to the Afghan counter-revolutionaries and to various separatist movements in India's northeastern states thereby threatening India's unity, and harboring far-reaching plans for changing the existing state frontiers.

One cannot brush aside Indian newspaper reports that these actions are being taken as part of a sweeping plan for Sino-U.S. cooperation in our region agreed upon during U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown's visit to Peking. One of its provisions is that in exchange for supplies of advanced U.S. military technology Peking will send instructors to Pakistan to set up centers training mercenaries and wreckers and supply them with armaments.

It is also noted that this is creating a direct threat to the security of India as well. For instance, a large special-purpose subversion base directly subordinate to the Pakistani high command is being set up in the small mountain village of Aliabad near the town of Punch in the Pakistani-controlled part of Kashmir. An additional 250 Chinese military instructors arrived there recently. They supervise the training of mercenaries and saboteurs and their infiltration into Afghanistan, India and other countries of the region. Strategic roads leading from the new base to India's frontier are under construction. The Press Trust of India believes that this is only the first step toward turning the region into a springboard for a strike at the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The purpose of this course was noted with anxiety not very long ago by the Karachi newspaper *Dawn* in an editorial devoted to the visit of Zbigniew Brzezinski, the U.S. President's national security adviser. As the newspaper put it, the Pakistani regime's present policy, its line toward allied relations with Washington and also with Peking, harbingers its departure from the policy of non-alignment. This signifies an inevitable impingement on Pakistan's independence.

All this is causing deep anxiety in India. Its independent foreign policy has always been an eyesore for the imperialists, who had always frowned upon its anti-imperialist line in the non-aligned movement. True, in the mid-1970s especially after the Janata Party came to power, the ruling circles began tilting to the other side. The smokescreen of talk about a return to 'genuine non-alignment' hid the intention to dilute the anti-imperialist content of India's foreign policy. This was speedily used by the imperialists, who began to bring increasing pressure to bear on India in order to steer it away from non-alignment.

The way this is done is very symptomatic. Nobody now charges India with 'immorality' as in the days of John Foster Dulles. On the contrary, the Carter administration poses as a spirited champion of 'foreign policy pluralism,' pretending that it strives to take the posture and policy guidelines of the developing nations into account. But in laying bare the content of these streamlined formulas, the imperialist press is much more frank. For instance, it unambiguously described Carter's visit to India in January 1978 as a U.S. attempt to get India to move from close cooperation with the USSR to a 'more pro-U.S. style of neutrality.'

With the change of government in Delhi (January 1980), we are again witnessing an escalation of pressure by international imperialism on India in order to compel it to abandon its independent policy. Various means are used to this end: from attempts at flirtation and persuasion, to open promises of material assistance and intimidation with the notorious 'Soviet threat' bogey. During three weeks last January, more statesmen of the imperialist West and pro-Western countries visited Delhi than in the course of a whole year in the past.

The purpose of this feverish activity has been noted time and again in the Indian press: imperialism is using the so-called Afghan question to achieve its ambition of driving a wedge into the traditional friendly relations between India and the USSR; to make India believe that supplies of U.S. armaments to Pakistan and China will not endanger its interests; to persuade the Indira Gandhi government if not to join then at least not to oppose the formation of the tripartite Washington-London-Peking axis. More, there is evidence that Carter's representative bluntly offered Indira Gandhi to subscribe to the U.S. plans for a 'cooperative security framework' in the region, plans that are in fact aimed at reanimating the ignominiously deceased SEATO and CENTO. Little wonder that many media in India qualify this policy as a new attempt to compel India to move along the road charted by the West, to draw it into the plans for reviving the cold war.

The Communist Party of India exposes this imperialist pressure on India, and considers it its most important task to prevent a slide back in the country's non-aligned policy. By uniting all the patriots of India, the party demands of the government that with the nation's interests in mind it should not succumb to provocations.

Thus, at the beginning of the 1980s, we are once again confronted with a situation fraught with the danger of a slide into a resurgence of tension. The responsibility for this devolves squarely on imperialism. But it is indicative that this ominious policy is being widely censured, for it places the national achievements, sovereignty and independence of entire nations in jeopardy. The dangers and inadmissibility of a policy of this kind were noted by Asian and African countries 25 years ago at Bandung. Today a large group of non-aligned nations is using its new weight in international affairs and linking the prospects for progress with the restoration of durable peace, the spread of détente to all parts of the globe and the total extirpation of the positions of strength policy from international relations. These guidelines receive profound understanding in socialist-community countries and in the progressive and democratic movements

in the capitalist states. Life imperatively demands further unity among all the forces fighting the conspiracies of international imperialism and reaction.

1. Convened on the initiative of the Prime Ministers of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia and Pakistan, this conference, in session from April 18 to 24, 1955, was attended by 24 Asian and African countries in addition to the sponsoring nations.
2. Leo Mates, *Nonalignment Theory and Current Policy*. Belgrade, 1972, pp. 371-381.
3. From the moment it was founded, the movement united exclusively Asian and African countries, with the exception of socialist Cuba and Yugoslavia. It was joined by countries of other continents only at the Fourth Conference, held in Algiers in September 1973.
4. Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy*, Delhi, 1961, p. 2.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 67-68.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
8. *Documents des conferences et reunions des pays non-alignes, 1961-1978*, Belgrade, 1978, p. 6.
9. *Granma, Weekly Review*, December 30, 1979.
10. *The Financial Times*, September 13, 1979.
11. A recent example of succumbing to imperialist pressure was given by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, who as a result of their meeting in Kuala-Lumpur with their EEC opposite numbers, signed a joint political statement with them containing slander against non-aligned Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Vietnam, and also against the Soviet Union.
12. *Documents des conferences et reunions des pays non-alignes, 1961-1978*, p. 6.
13. *Granma, Weekly Review*, September 9, 1979.
14. *World Marxist Review*, April 1980.

May Day — trade unions — communists

Kemel Kervan
WMR Editorial Council member,
representative of the Communist Party of Turkey on the Journal

COMMENTARY

Nine decades separate us from the first May Day demonstrations, in which in 1890 the working people of many countries paid tribute to the memory of their class brothers who fell victim to police violence and stained the streets of Chicago with their blood. In marking the 90th anniversary of May Day, we as always, recall all who gave their lives in the struggles against capital and stretch our hand out in solidarity with those who are today fighting at the barricades of the class battles on all the continents of our globe.

The road traversed by the working-class movement has never been an easy one. 'Ten thousand times,' Eugene Debs, a distinguished personality of the American working-class movement wrote at the beginning of this century, 'has the labor movement stumbled and fallen and bruised itself, and risen again; been seized by the throat and choked and clubbed into insensibility; enjoined by courts, assaulted by thugs, charged by the militia, shot down by regulars, traduced by the press, frowned upon by public opinion, deceived by politicians, threatened by priests, repudiated by renegades.'[1]

These words by Debs are applicable to this day. The exploiting class continues to use the weapon of repression, blackmail and provocation against the working people, striking its heaviest blows at the leaders of the working class, the communists, and its mass organizations, the trade unions.

The list of capital's victims is growing ever longer. In it are many hundreds of my countrymen. Two years ago more than 30 of the people participating in a May Day demonstration were shot down by the police in Istanbul. Last February the government sent troops, armor and aircraft against 11,000 strikers — workers and office employees of the Tarish agrarian-industrial complex. Two and a half thousand of them were jailed. In early 1980 it was only the determined protests of working people in Turkey and abroad that secured the release of six leaders of the metalworkers' union (Maden-Is) and a group of activists of the office employees' union.

My country is of course, no exception. During the past several years activists of the metalworkers' union in the FRG have been subjected to ceaseless persecution. In France, entrepreneurs use yellow trade unions to blackmail and intimidate progressive trade unionists and employ strikebreakers to stop strikes. The manhandling of factory and office workers picketing striking enterprises has become a daily occurrence on the British Isles. In the USA, factory owners do not scruple to use the services of the Ku Klux Klan, while the National Association of Manufacturers, headquarters of the U.S. monopolies, set up a Council on Union-Free Environment in 1977. In Japan tens of thousands of railway and communications workers are punished for participating in action in defense of their socio-economic, including trade union, rights. In Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Bolivia, Guatemala, El Salvador and other countries thousands of people have been tortured, died in prison or listed 'missing.'

The policy of repressions pursued by the bourgeois states rests on a ramified system of brutal laws that restrict the rights of the working people and their organizations and legalize the persecution of progressive trade union leaders and the class unions themselves. Turkish legislation drastically

limits the right to strike. General strikes and also political, including solidarity, strikes are outlawed altogether. On the other hand, the law gives employers and the state the right to lock out workers and this is widely used to intimidate the malcontent. Civil servants are barred from joining in trade unions.

Here again Turkey is no exception. The entire legislative program of the Conservative government in Britain is undisguisedly anti-union. In the USA there are many laws that fetter the working people in their struggle against the monopolies and ensure an almost automatic ban on strikes. Countless decrees and laws have been promulgated by reactionary Latin American regimes in an effort to suppress 'undesirable' trade unions.

But the repressions against the working-class movement and the laws juridically justifying them will remain in history as evidence of the bourgeoisie's weakness not strength, for the whip is used when social protests reach a tension level where they can no longer be defused by 'respectable' methods, where it is no longer possible to placate the working class with partial concessions and where reformism can no longer divert the working people into the quiet backwaters of 'social partnership.'

The bourgeoisie has a fairly large and diverse armory of ideological and political means against the rising tide of class anger. This is exemplified by, among other things the efforts being made in many countries, including Turkey, to turn the trade unions into a component of the bourgeois-democratic mechanism of power, to integrate them into the system of capitalist regulation and thereby make them an abettor of the exploitation of the working people and use them to consolidate capitalism's economic and political power. The edifice uniting the bourgeois state, business and the trade unions is being skillfully erected to create the semblance that the latter — and through them the working people — have become equal participants in socio-economic decision-making.

In Austria, Britain, the Scandinavian nations and some other countries, i.e. where the trade union élite is most deeply infected by reformism, the monopolies and the bourgeois governments are using the services of the theorists and practitioners of 'social partnership' to defuse class confrontation. In Argentina the bourgeoisie is endeavoring to lure the working people into the trap of right-wing Peronism, which in the working-class movement of that country parallels the role of social democracy in Western Europe. In the USA state-monopoly capitalism is served by the avowedly reactionary, violently anti-communist leadership of the AFL-CIO, which is the nation's largest trade union center.

A major aspect of the anti-union strategy of the monopolies consists of divisive operations designed to undermine the trade union movement on the national level, strengthen reformist influences in it and isolate the trade unions from each other in different countries. In Turkey the ruling circles are spiking the attempts at united action by two large trade union associations — Türk-Is and the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers (DISK) — and making every effort to split DISK. The contacts maintained by the metalworkers' union and the World Federation of Trade Unions are evoking unrestrained anti-union and anti-communist hysteria.

For the bourgeoisie the trade unions have always been and remain a *class* enemy who must be if not destroyed (even the most rabid custodians of capitalist orders appreciate that this is unfeasible) then at least weakened, intimidated and confused. Hence the efforts to cut short any further accentuation of the *class* principles underlying the posture of the trade unions.

State-monopoly capitalism's political and economic strategists are alarmed not only by the fact that the trade unions are the largest organizations of the working people that have a total membership of nearly 70 million in the developed capitalist countries, over 15 million in Latin American states and many hundreds of thousands in Asia and Africa. As the bourgeoisie sees it, the greatest danger comes from the growing political role of the trade unions or, to be more exact, their anti-capitalist orientation (naturally, the bourgeoisie would not object to the inclusion of the working masses in *its* political game).

The politicization of the trade union movement is the inevitable outcome of the development of state-monopoly capitalism, of the increasingly more active intervention of the bourgeois state in the economic and social spheres. As a result, the economic struggle waged by the working people more and more frequently brings the latter into collision not only with individual entrepreneurs but also with the bourgeois state itself.

Advanced contingents of the working class have begun to take the first steps in an offensive against the very foundations of the capitalist socio-economic system. Even in cases when the trade unions formulate immediate demands linked for instance, to quests for a democratic way out of the crisis, these tactical thrusts are ultimately directed at monopoly capital's socio-economic and political strategy. This tendency is to be observed also in say Turkey or Latin American states, where state-monopoly capitalism is only at its initial stage of development.

In many middle level capitalist countries, trade unions increasingly move to the front line of struggle against the transnational corporations. In Argentina for example, the unions succeeded in placing curbs on the penetration of foreign capital.

Articulating the desire of the working people for peace, the trade unions more and more frequently take a stand against the aggressive actions of the governments of capitalist countries and firmly oppose militarist hawks of all species and hues. They link their hopes of settling urgent social and economic problems to détente, to disarmament.

The monopolies are thoroughly alarmed by the gradual growth of left tendencies in the working-class movement, by the consolidation in it of a

progressive, revolutionary wing that is adopting clear-cut class positions. Also, many trade unions, even those that are oriented on reformist or bourgeois parties, are ceasing to be reliable partners of the monopolies and the governments serving the latter.

In Turkey for example, pressure from the working people often compels the reactionary leaders of the Türk-Is trade union association to attack the anti-labor policies of the government and criticize its economic strategy. The conflict between many influential trade unions in Britain and the right-wing leadership of the Labour Party of which they are collective members, is gathering momentum. Similar developments are to be observed in trade union practice in Austria, Spain, the USA, France, the FRG, Belgium and Latin America.

Determined actions by the working people can be successful even under the anti-democratic regime in my country, where a state of emergency has been declared in 20 of the 67 provinces. For instance, the DISK-organized two-day general strike in June 1970 put paid to a bill that would have in fact banned that class trade union association. A general strike in September 1976 compelled the reactionary forces in the parliament to abandon their project for setting up 'special tribunals' for political cases.

The specific features of the present stage of the working-class movement are seen in their most concentrated form in the dynamics of strikes, which are a tested weapon of the proletariat and its allies. The number of strikes has increased sharply in Turkey during the past few years. Some 100,000 Turkish working people have been on strike or announced their intention to strike during the spring months of this year alone. The spreading strike movement throughout the capitalist world is an irrefutable sign of the high organizational level and hard, unflinching determination of the working class.

The strike struggle is increasingly becoming a mass phenomenon involving the proletariat's allies: working peasants, intellectuals, the urban and rural middle strata and young people. In reply to the intensifying exploitation by the transnational corporations the working people are helping each other across state frontiers and strengthening international solidarity.[2]

This explains why in pursuing their anti-labor, anti-union policy, the bourgeois governments are going to all lengths to slow down the growth of the strike movement and limit the aims of strikes. This is precisely why the organizers of the strike struggle, those who march in the vanguard of that struggle — trade union activists, strike committee members and pickets — are the main victims of court persecution and violence at the hands of reaction.

But however brutal the repressions, they are not breaking and cannot break the militant spirit of the working people, who are realizing more and more clearly that a direct and resolute confrontation with monopoly capital, the root of evil, is the only way out of the social and economic difficulties. They know that they have the support of the progressives, the communists in the first place, who are prepared to use the entire weight of their moral and political prestige to defend their interests and their organized contingent, the trade unions.

The communist stand is not determined by situation considerations. The communist parties do not counterpose their aims to the tasks of the trade union movement. As Marx and Engels noted when the 'specter of communism' had only appeared in the world, the communists 'have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.'[3] The communists regard their support for the trade unions as their contribution to the struggle of the working people against capitalist exploitation.

They are aware that the destiny of modern social development depends to a large extent on what political forces the trade union movement sides with. For the Marxists this one of the cardinal problems of the revolutionary working-class movement in the capitalist world. 'If the trade unions are required for the guerrilla fights between capital and labor,' Marx wrote, 'they are still more important as organized agencies for superseding the very system of wage labor and capital rule.'[4] Of course, this does not imply that we communists are blind to the weaknesses of the trade union movement, say the confinement of the work of some trade unions to the fulfillment of narrow, 'guild' tasks. Nor do the communists belittle the difficulties that spring from the still tangible influence of social-democratic reformists and sometimes of capitalism's hirelings over the trade union movement in capitalist countries.

But regardless of this, the communists unfailingly support the trade unions when their rights are attacked. Of decisive significance here is the fact that the objective needs of the struggle against the monopolies, for an improvement of the working people's social and economic conditions, for détente and disarmament, are gradually establishing an identity of many positions of the trade unions with those of the communists.

At the same time, the communists are well aware that the weak aspects of trade union activity can be transcended not by isolation from them but by vigorous work among the working masses. That is why Lenin insisted that the trade unions should be drawn into the political struggle of the working class and that there should be the closest possible link between them and the revolutionary social-democratic movement (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 13, p. 460). Experience, including that of our party, eloquently shows that the orientation and effectiveness of the working-class movement in capitalist countries depends on how ramified and profound the links are, between the communists who lead the poltical struggle of the working people, and the trade unions which organize the mass struggle for specific, chiefly socio-economic, demands.

The communists are tireless in stressing that a split in the trade unions seriously jeopardizes the interests of blue- and white-collar workers, that it

undermines their strength and their capacity to rally the non-monopoly strata in the common struggle against the monopolies. They are making every effort to unite the trade unions on the basis of the defense of the working people's class interests. Here their point of departure is, as we pointed out at the Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties in Berlin in the summer of 1976, that 'the influence of the working class is growing through the unification of efforts by its trade union organizations.'[5] Trade union unity, states the document adopted at the 1975 Conference of Communist Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean, 'helps, as is indicated by vast experience, to draw new legions of fighters into the great struggle for social progress.'[6]

What I mean here is unity not only on a national but also an international scale. An example of such unity is the World Federation of Trade Unions, which has been working for nearly 35 years to combine the efforts of the trade unions of different countries and orientations and to establish contacts and united action with other international trade union centers.

As the communists see it, their task is not only to support the trade unions morally and politically. They believe that the positions of these organizations could be strengthened also through the influence of the ideological and political guidelines of the communist parties. Marxist-based assessments of the main trends of international development are helping the trade unions of the capitalist countries to find their bearings better on such intricate questions as the alignment of forces in the world, the ways and means of the anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly struggle and the end goals of that struggle. A Marxist analysis of the causes and effects of economic crises is increasingly mirrored in the socio-economic programs of trade unions and influences them in their quest for a way out of the crisis that would benefit the working masses.

In keeping with their class duty the communists adopt a strong stand against the attempts of the monopolies and bourgeois governments to deprive the trade unions of their militant potential and turn them into a vehicle of 'class collaboration.' They are doing all they can to strengthen the trade unions, enhance their role and place them in a position to influence state socio-economic policy. The communists are expanding their links with the left forces in reformist trade unions. In its program, the Communist Party of Turkey declares that it is 'waging a persistent struggle against attempts to make the trade unions an instrument of bourgeois policy, against yellow trade unionism.'[7]

The objective conditions in which modern society exists and develops are leading not to a fading but to an intensification of the class struggle. The development of state-monopoly capitalism and the scientific and technological revolution are not only aggravating old but also producing new social antagonisms. The working people bear the entire burden of increased exploitation and war preparations. Having lost the historical initiative, capitalism is trying to preserve its positions by increasingly more violent repressions in its countries. Such being the case, the trade unions will continue to play an ever larger role in the class struggle and these organizations will come under increasing pressure from the capitalist classes. The communists see their duty in arming the trade unions ideologically and helping them organizationally.

A retrospective view of the history of the international working-class movement shows how far it and its largest contingent, the trade unions, have advanced: from the demand for an eight-hour working day — the slogan of May Day 1890 — to the present struggle to consolidate and extend the political and socio-economic rights of the working people and as the end goal, to put an end to exploitation of man by man. But whatever the slogans of the May Day demonstrations, the principal slogan has been and remains the call of the *Communist Manifesto* — 'Workers of all lands, unite!' — the call for labor unity in the struggle against capital, for a world based on the ideals of social equality and justice.

1. *Debs: His Life, Writings and Speeches*, Girard, 1908, pp. 239-240.
2. The strike movement in developed capitalist countries is discussed in some detail in a statistical survey in this issue of *WMR* under the heading 'On the Class Battle Front.'
3. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 119.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 83.
5. *World Marxist Review*, August 1976.
6. *Granma*, June 22, 1975.
7. *Türkiye Komünist Partisi*, Program, Istanbul, 1978, p. 49.

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35th anniversary of a historic victory

On the occasion of the 35th anniversary of the historic victory over nazi Germany *WMR* presents contributions from three war veterans — General Pavel Batov, a distinguished Soviet military leader, Polichronis Vais, CC member of the Communist Party of Greece, who commanded a battalion of ELAS (the Greek Resistance), and the British author James Aldridge, who was a war correspondent.

A PRESENT-DAY VIEW OF THE LESSONS OF WORLD WAR II

Pavel Batov
Chairman, Soviet War Veterans' Committee,
General of the Army,
Twice Hero of the Soviet Union

The Soviet people and all other progressives in the world are marking the 35th anniversary of the victory over nazi Germany, a victory that has entered history as one of the main factors behind mankind's destiny and the make-up of the world today.

At the time it poised for its sneak invasion of the USSR, nazi Germany had command of the economic resources of almost the whole of Europe enslaved by it. It had military experience and a heavily equipped army thoroughly indoctrinated in the spirit of the nazi ideology of war and prepared, in blind obedience to the Führer's orders, to savagely fight to establish 'Aryan domination' in the world and win unlimited 'lebensraum' for the 'chosen' German race, bringing death and slavery for other, 'inferior' nations.[1] It is horrifying to picture what the European continent and the world with it, would have been like had Soviet troops and the Soviet people led by their Communist Party, been unable to block the road to the fascist plague, stop and smash the nazi war machine and save the peoples from bondage and extinction. The significance of this grandiose feat will never fade.

Several generations were born and began an independent life in the years that have passed since that spring when guns fell silent in Europe. These generations want to know who is responsible for the fact that the forces of extreme reaction, which made no secret of their aggressive ambitions and manhating ideology, were able to unleash the most terrible of wars that took a toll of more than 50 million lives. They want to know how the guts were torn out of the fascist beast, how it was prevented from carrying out its criminal plan of ruling the world. Lastly, they want to know what to do in order to prevent another world war, that would be even more horrible than the last and bring mankind incalculable suffering.

These are very topical questions indeed. Many aspects of the present world situation have their historical roots in the course and outcome of World War II and an interpretation of its history, character and results are of the utmost significance for the struggle that is today being waged by the forces of socialism, progress and peace against the forces of war and reaction.

Sufficient time has elapsed since the Second World War for all nations of all continents to see not only 'that war is hatched in the greatest secrecy' (V.I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 447), but also how the Second World War itself was hatched. And if this secrecy has not been exploded everywhere, it is certainly not the peoples who are to blame. In the world today there still are forces — strong forces at that — who do not want the truth about the Second World War to be known to the people. Also, there is propaganda specializing in falsifying history. I mean not only frankly imperialist, undisguised neo-fascist propaganda. There are liberals and even some who call themselves 'socialist' scholars and politicians who cannot withstand the temptation to throw a mist over the causes and course of the war, embellish and whitewash nazism and belittle the significance of the Soviet people's contribution to the world's liberation.

Some go so far as to assert that Hitler had not counted on fighting a 'big war,'[2] that his actions which brought almost the whole of Europe under the fascist heel, were a series of unforeseen circumstances, each of which brought on the next, that his invasion of the USSR was a forced preventive war calculated to 'save Europe' from the 'Soviet menace,' from the 'communist threat.' Monstrously absurd and hypocritical as this assertion is, it is today eagerly accepted by those who, as Hitler had done in his time, want anti-Soviet and anti-communist hysteria as a screen for their hegemonistic and imperialist schemes, for suppressing the striving of nations for freedom and independence, and for reversing history. I shall therefore take a quick look at the actual situation in which the war broke out and at the plans and intentions of the Axis powers, their Western adversaries and the USSR.

Beyond question, on the eve of the war the international situation was complex and contradictory. It was characterized by an exacerbation of imperialist contradictions between two groups of capitalist powers (France, Britain and the USA on one side, and Germany, Italy and Japan on the other) and also by the hatred that both these contending groups had for the Soviet Union. Of course, Paris, London and Washington regarded Germany, Japan and Italy as potential enemies. But this did not prevent them from adopting a benign attitude to the Anti-Comintern Pact[3] while rejecting the Soviet Union's repeated offers to set up a reliable system of collective security in Europe. British, French and U.S.

imperialists were prepared to make concessions to the aggressor, sacrifice republican Spain,[4] surrender Austria to Hitler and sign the outrageous Munich diktat on the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. Although all these acts of appeasement were camouflaged with strident verbiage about the need to 'preserve peace,' they were motivated by the hope that fascism's aggressive ambitions would be directed eastward, toward the USSR.

Billions of dollars, pounds sterling and francs poured from the safes of the Western monopolies to the safes of the nazi war concerns and banks. This lavish assistance was instrumental in enabling Hitler, within a matter of only a little over four years (from 1935 to the autumn of 1939) to increase the number of Wehrmacht divisions from 31 to 102, and within seven years to increase the Wehrmacht's numerical strength from 105,000 to 3,755,000 effective, i.e., more than 35 times. During these years German military output grew 22-fold.

Blinded by anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, the ruling circles of the Western powers wanted neither to see nor believe that this encouragement of the aggressor was hastening a catastrophe for their own countries and harboring a direct threat to their existence.

For his part, Hitler did not so much as think of concealing his plans of annexation relative to both the East and the West. German fascism's aggressive ambitions had been set out in *Mein Kampf* long before the war and Hitler had no intention of abandoning them. He made thorough military, political, economic and ideological preparations for war, and was in no mood to limit himself to a local war. As a result, the policy of appeasing the aggressor, of encouraging him, of refraining from intervening in the actions of reaction aimed at suppressing the striving of nations for freedom and democracy yielded results opposite to what the architects of this policy expected. The moral surrender of the Western democracies to Hitler only spurred fascism. The first strikes of its military machine fell on those who had nourished and reared German militarism, placed it on its feet and armed it. The Second World War began not as a clash between imperialism and socialism, between the forces of reaction and the forces of social progress, but as a collision between two imperialist groups for imperialist interests.

This is a vital lesson of history that has lost none of its significance to this day. It tells us again and again that *imperialism, its policy of aggrandizement, its drive to subjugate and enslave nations, is the mainspring of wars.*

This must be understood. Even if today there not many living witnesses of the tragedy of republican Spain, the tragedy of Chile is fresh in everybody's mind. Even if many people have forgotten or want to forget the nazi 'racial laws' and the death camps, look at the racist laws in the South African Republic and the racism in the USA, the death camps of Pol Pot, the genocide. There are forces that would like to see the developing nations that have won liberation from imperialism, to share the fate of republican Spain and Chile. Today we see the U.S. administration and the governments of other capitalist countries supporting Peking's hegemonistic ambitions and supplying it with armaments and technology. All this, as in those far-off prewar days, is accompanied by hysteria about a 'Soviet threat,' a 'communist menace.' Indeed, those who do not want to learn can be taught nothing.

The lessons of the Second World War call for vigilance relative to imperialism's schemes, for non-appeasement of aggressors, for exposures of their plans, for repulsing their dangerous actions and strengthening the ranks of the anti-imperialist forces. When it is a question of war or peace, the ostrich policy of hiding one's head at the least sign of danger bodes nothing but evil. A policy of genuine peace is a policy that without fear of imperialist threats consistently and perseveringly removes the obstacles preventing nations from living in peace, coexisting and cooperating. Such as been the policy of the Soviet Union and its Communist Party before and during the war and it has remained unchanged to this day. 'We stand for restraint, for a considered approach,' said Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, in characterizing this policy. 'But we also stand for a determined rebuff to aggression if that proves necessary.'[5]

The fascist aggressor was resolutely resisted and crushed on the battlefields of the Great Patriotic War. People of my generation vividly remember that on the eve of the war, in order to push nazi Germany eastward against the USSR, the Western politicians, military leaders and propagandists tried to create the impression that Soviet society was unstable, that the Soviet Union was weak militarily and economically. When Hitler began his invasion of the Soviet Union not only nazi generals but even some 'oracles' among our Allies believed that the USSR would not hold out for long, that Moscow would be taken before winter and so forth.

History convincingly answered predictions of this sort. The war showed the futility of world imperialism's hopes that Soviet society would prove to be weak, that the multinational Soviet state would crumble. All the peoples of the USSR. closely united around the Communist Party and the Soviet government, rose to defend their socialist motherland. Soviet society's political, economic and military organization displayed such strength and vitality that even after it lost a large part of its territory and had to fight fierce defensive battles and evacuate industry and people under severe conditions, the Soviet Union was able to halt and then smash the hitherto invincible nazi hordes and, in fulfillment of its great international mission of liberation, extend decisive assistance in delivering other peoples from nazi tyranny. This earned it the greatest respect and raised its prestige to an unprecedented level.

At the same time, the Hitler invasion of the Soviet Union fundamentally changed the very character of the Second World War. Beginning as a clash be-

tween two imperialist groups it now became a war of liberation of peoples against fascism, a revolutionary struggle of the forces of socialism, progress, freedom, democracy and peace against the forces of counter-revolution and aggression, against a terrorist man-hating dictatorship.

Imperialist reaction failed to achieve its main objective, that of destroying or at least weakening the world's first socialist power for many years to come and remove it from the political scene. The victory over fascism was more than a victory of socialist armed forces over the armed forces of nazi Germany. It was a triumph of socialist over capitalist economic organization, a triumph of socialist society's socio-political and ideological unity, of Soviet patriotism and friendship among peoples over the chauvinistic, nationalistic, inhuman, individualistic ideology of imperialism and fascism.

Soviet people appreciate the contribution of the peoples of the USA, Britain, Canada and other countries to the defeat of nazi Germany. Brotherhood forged in battle and cemented by blood links us with the Polish, Czechoslovak, Yugoslav and French patriots, with the resistance fighters in all the countries that were overrun by the nazis, and with the peoples of nazi-satellite countries who overthrew their pro-fascist governments and turned their guns against the nazi Reich. History will not forget the courage of the communists and anti-fascists of Europe, of all who helped to destroy fascism.

However, the historical truth is that the burden of the war was not shared equally by all its participants. The main burden fell on the Soviet people and also on the working class and all other working people of the nations of the anti-Hitlerite coalition. The bourgeoisie suffered much less. More, the war made the capitalists richer.

The main forces of nazi Germany and its allies — fascist Italy and the pro-fascist regimes in Hungary, Rumania, Finland and other countries — fought on the Soviet-German front. The 'crusade' against the USSR was joined by volunteers from other countries, beginning with the Spanish Blue Division and ending with fascists from the occupied nations. During the most difficult period for the Soviet people, the early part of the war, the Axis forces on the Eastern front were 15-20 times larger numerically than the troops fighting the Western Allies.[6] More than 20 million Soviet people died in battle, in the nazi death camps, as a result of fascist terror, or of disease and starvation in occupied territories in the USSR. This was approximately 20 times more than the human losses suffered by Britain and the USA combined. The material damage inflicted by the nazis on our country in the occupied territories amounted to 128 billion dollars (in prices prevailing at the time), while the U.S. monopolies on the contrary, made a profit of over 115 billion dollars.

Such are the facts. The reason I recall them is not to declare that the Soviet people have any claim to special rights or to having rendered special services (although this is indisputable). I do so to emphasize one thing, namely that the victory over fascism and the right to peace and a peaceful life were won by us at an inestimably high price, and we therefore defended, are defending and will defend this right under all circumstances, consistently and steadfastly — for ourselves and for the whole of humankind.

The consolidation of the Soviet Union's international standing and the emergence of the socialist community fundamentally changed the balance of strength in the world. The war resulted not only in the defeat of German and Italian fascism and Japanese militarism, but also in a weakening of the capitalist world, in a severe crisis of bourgeois society as a whole. Following the Second World War imperialism's potentialities for deciding the destinies of nations narrowed considerably — and they continue to narrow. It became evident that its attempts to resolve the historic dispute with socialism in its favor by military strength would be futile. Once again developments bore out Lenin's profound prevision that 'no matter what attempts are made to invade Russia and no matter what military moves are made against us ... all these attempts will go up in smoke as we know from our actual experience, which has steeled us. After every such attempt by our enemies, we shall emerge stronger than ever' (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 329). *The victory over fascism and reaction led to a colossal growth of the influence of socialist ideas and practice, to an unprecedented spread of the national liberation, democratic and anti-imperialist movements.*

True, bourgeois propaganda spares no effort to make people believe that the victory of the new social system in some European and Asian countries was 'brought on Soviet bayonets,' that the rapid disintegration of imperialism's colonial system after the war was the result of Soviet 'penetration,' of the Soviet Union's 'ambition' to subjugate foreign territories and peoples.

As a person whose whole life has been linked with the implementation and defense of Soviet policy, with the development of the Soviet Armed Forces, I should like to say a few words about this. Neither before, nor during, nor after the war has the Soviet Union, which is true to its class nature, set or could set itself the aim of seizing foreign territories and reducing foreign peoples to bondage. The Armed Forces of the USSR serve other aims. Created by Vladimir Lenin at the dawn of Soviet power 'in the interests of assuring the working people of the entire fullness of power and removing every possibility of a restoration of the power of the exploiters,'[7] they have throughout their history, in upholding and consolidating the triumph of the October Revolution, carried out profoundly internationalist tasks, rendering 'the best, the most powerful support to the proletariat of all countries in their incredibly hard struggle against their own bourgeoisie' (V.I. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 27, p. 61).

This profound understanding of their internationalist duty was never lost by the Soviet people either in the prewar years or during the war. Speaking on radio on July 3, 1941, during the grimmest period of the war, J.V. Stalin, Chairman of the USSR

State Defense Committee, declared on behalf of the Communist Party and the Soviet people that the objective of the 'Great Patriotic War is not only to end the danger overhanging our country but also to help all the peoples of Europe oppressed by German nazism.'[8] Led by the Communist Party, the Soviet people turned the Great Patriotic War for the liberation of their homeland into a battle for the freedom and independence of all nations held in nazi slavery. In the hostilities in Europe and Asia outside the USSR, which ended with the liberation of a territory of 2,500,000 square kilometers with a population of nearly 200 million, the Soviet Armed Forces used more than 90 operational units, army groups, fleets, individual armies and flotillas. Those who took part in this campaign of liberation remember the warmth of the reception given Soviet troops by the population of towns and villages that had for years groaned under fascist tyranny. They remember the endless columns of saved people — Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Dutch, French and Poles returning home from nazi concentration camps and prisons.

Without interfering in the domestic affairs of the liberated territories and countries, Soviet soldiers helped the population to restore the economy, organize supplies and transport and provide electricity and water. All the conditions were created to enable the nations to choose their organs of power themselves, to determine the ways and means for the further development of their countries.

As a matter of fact, we were not surprised when most of the nations liberated by us chose to follow the road of people's democratic and socialist development, to restructure their society along revolutionary lines. They did not want the return of prewar practices, the return to power of the class forces that had betrayed them, left them to be torn to pieces by fascism and plunged them into the horrors of war and occupation.

This unparalleled international achievement of the Soviet people profoundly influenced the destiny of all mankind. The socialist community of nations, which was formed and has grown strong during the years since the end of the Second World War, has become a powerful life-asserting force, a dependable bulwark of the peoples in the struggle for peace and national and social liberation. The Soviet Union and the other socialist-community states are unswervingly pursuing a policy of easing international tension, complementing political détente with military détente, and fulfilling the realistic Peace Program drawn at the 24th and 25th congresses of the CPSU and at congresses of fraternal parties of other socialist countries, a program that meets the interests of all nations.

This policy has already brought and continues to bring mankind tangible results, the most important of which is that for the past 35 years the world has not known the calamity of world wars. It has proved possible, as Leonid Brezhnev noted in his answers to a *Pravda* correspondent, 'to break the tragic cycle: world war — short peaceful respite — and another world war.'[9] This historic achievement gives legitimate pride to Soviet people and to our friends, the peoples of fraternal socialist countries, everybody fighting for peace, détente and peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems. However, an improvement of the international situation does not suit the reactionary imperialist circles. They are not ceasing their material preparations for war. Military budgets are being continuously increased and the arms race is being escalated in the USA and other NATO countries. The situation deteriorated greatly at the close of the 1970s and the outset of the 1980s. The Pentagon's new five-year military program envisages a further buildup of armaments. In the 1981 fiscal year the USA plans to allocate upwards of 160 billion dollars, or almost 25 per cent of its national budget, for militarist purposes, and it is envisaged that by 1985 these allocations are to rise to 250 billion dollars. The U.S. administration plans to deploy a new generation of medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe and has frozen the ratification of SALT-2.

Parallel with these mounting war preparations, the imperialists are trying to mobilize and unite all the forces of international reaction on an anti-communist and anti-Soviet basis. They would like to undermine the friendly relations between socialist and developing nations and split and suppress the national liberation and revolutionary-democratic movements. They are distorting history, including the history of the Second World War, attributing to the Soviet Union aggressive intentions alien to it. Washington is looking for a pretext to continue its expansion in various parts of the world, dominate Asian and African nations, lay its hands on their national wealth and use their territory for its strategic plans against socialism and the national liberation movements. It is going to all lengths to create that pretext.

However, we are living not in prewar times nor even in the 1950s: imperialism's bellicose plans are opposed by the powerful socialist community of nations, the national liberation movements, the communist and workers' parties, and the worldwide peace movement. The many former dependent countries now have the experience of independent life and politics. The peoples have learned to see through the game played by the imperialists, to understand better who are their friends and who their enemies. The contradiction between the aims of peoples and the aims of bourgeois governments which formerly, as Lenin noted, was seen only by a small conscious minority (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 50), is now coming into stark prominence.

The lessons of history, particularly the lessons of the Second World War, are that war can be countered most successfully before it breaks out. The peoples of the anti-Hitlerite coalition turned the Second World War from an imperialist into a liberation, just war and this was what objectively led to the defeat of the forces of imperialist reaction and the victory of socialism. Today the possibility for preventing another world war depends in large

measure on the people themselves, on their understanding of the dangers springing from imperialist aggression. War can be prevented and a durable and lasting peace ensured in the world through the combined efforts of the socialist countries, the international working class, the national liberation movement, all peace-loving nations and public organizations and movements.

As regards the Soviet Union, as Leonid Brezhnev reiterated in his meeting with his constituents on February 22 of this year, we will not be intimidated. We have the strength and the potentialities. We and our allies will always be able to stand up for ourselves and give a rebuff to any attack. We abide by the Peace Program. We oppose the 'doctrine' of war hysteria and the feverish arms race with our doctrine of consistent struggle for world peace and security, and confidently hold on high the banner of our Leninist foreign policy, the banner of peace, freedom and independence of nations, the banner of social progress.

1. The recommendations of the nazi 'Eastern Ministry' for the 'Ost' plan elaborated by the German General Staff long before the war, envisaged for example, the extermination or resettlement (even as far as in Africa) of between 46 and 51 million Poles, Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians, and the settlement of 10 million Germans in the cleared territory. The end objective of this nazi plan was the total annihilation of the population of Poland and the USSR 'up to the Urals,' in other words, the massacre of between 120 and 140 million people.

2. *History of the Second World War*, edited by B.H. Liddel Hart, Vol. 8, Paulton-Bristol, 1968, p. 3232.

3. This was the anti-Soviet pact signed in 1936 by nazi Germany and militarist Japan. In 1937 it was joined by Italy.

4. Like other members of the International Brigade in Spain and the Spanish republicans who fought in the civil war, I will not forget how behind a smokescreen of verbiage about preserving peace, the notorious London Committee for Non-Intervention in Spain left the unarmed Spanish Republic to the tender mercies of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini. — *Author.*

5. *Pravda*, April 27, 1979.

6. The situation was compounded by the fact that the USSR had to maintain large forces in the Far East in the event it had to repulse aggression by the Japanese militarists. Although China had by then joined the anti-aggression bloc, it could not be counted upon to help. On the contrary, when the situation was difficult and tense for the Soviet Union, Chiang Kai-shek tried to precipitate war between Japan and the USSR, while when the nazi armies approached Moscow, Mao Tse-tung made no effort to step up operations in North China in order to pin down Japan's Kwantung Army, which was poised for an attack on the USSR. On top of that, he ordered operations to be cut down, using only 10 per cent of his forces against the Japanese (this is dealt with in detail in V.I. Chuikov's article 'Mission to China,' *Novy Mir*, December 1979).

7. *Decisions and Resolutions of Congresses of Soviets of the RSFSR*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1959, p. 28 (in Russian).

8. *Pravda*, July 3, 1941.

9. *Pravda*, January 13, 1980.

A LOOK AT THE EXPERIENCE OF THE RESISTANCE

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The theses of the CC of the Communist Party of Greece for its 10th Congress, which was held in May 1978, say that the years of experience in the people's struggle for progress, especially during the resistance carried on under the banner of the National Liberation Front (EAM) and the Greek people's truly national and profoundly democratic traditions which have taken shape on that basis are among our country's specific features. An analysis of this experience and its lessons are of great interest above all because the present international situation requires, more insistently than ever before, that concrete historical examples should be used in exposing the anti-popular and anti-national substance of the policy of imperialism and its true goals and plans, which patently and sharply cut across the people's aspirations and interests, their ideals, freedom, independence and security. The experience of the Greek people's liberation struggle during the fascist occupation (1940-1944) is especially instructive in this respect. It helps to take a close look at the true face of imperialism and its henchmen and to realize that their declarations for peace are false and their attempts to present themselves as champions of the people's interests futile.

The resistance movement which started in Greece under the fascist occupation, being the highest form of anti-fascist, anti-war activity by the Greek communists, had its roots in the prewar period. It was the Communist Party of Greece which led the strikes and massive action by the working people, which held the Greek Anti-Fascist Congress in June 1934, and concluded the agreement about joint struggle against the fascism that was developing in the country with the agrarian, socialist and social-democratic parties and the then existing three trade union associations.

The decisions of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in July-August 1935 were of great importance for strengthening unitary actions by all the anti-fascist forces. Dimitrov's report at the Congress set out the main task before the world communist movement: to re-establish the unity of the working class and to set up, on that basis, a broad anti-fascist popular front in all the countries against advancing fascism and the war it was preparing. In accordance with Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics with respect to wars, the Comintern, of which the CPSU (Bolsheviks) was the leading force, called on the working class and the communists of all countries to give a lead to the anti-war forces and to do its internationalist duty, which consisted in 'fortifying and defending the positions of the Soviet state in the fight against the looming war.' The May Day (1940) Address issued by the Comintern said: 'Unite your ranks with the great country of socialism, defend its policy of peace, which expres-

ses the cherished aspirations of the peoples of all countries!'

The formation of popular fronts in European countries to fight fascism and war was the crucial factor in the growing influence and authority of the communists among the working people, providing the basis on which the resistance movement was started in Europe. In pursuance of the Comintern decisions, the CP Greece had achieved, even before the war, important successes in uniting the peace-loving and anti-fascist forces.[1] The ruling classes in the country and their sponsors, the imperialists of Britain, did not like that at all and reaction set up the savage monarchist and fascist Metaxas dictatorship. Thousands of Greek anti-fascists and communists were imprisoned or thrown into concentration camps.

Despite the persecution and the heavy blows dealt it by the dictatorship, the Communist Party of Greece warned the people about the fascist aggression, prepared it for resistance and urged defense of the national territory. The Greek army mounted 'a successful counter-offensive, the first since the start of the war in Europe, against the armed forces of Italy, nazi Germany's ally. *Greece scored this success above all because of the people's support* (my italics — *P.V.*) and its defense of its homeland against the invaders . . . Its struggle was one of the striking manifestations of the change in the character of the Second World War and its gradual transformation into an anti-fascist war of liberation,' say a group of Soviet historians in their history of the Second World War.

The start of the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War against nazi Germany gave a powerful impetus to the national-liberation struggle in Greece. The Sixth Plenary Meeting of the CPG Central Committee in July 1941 issued an address to all the Greek communists characterizing the people's struggle against the invaders as an anti-fascist and national-liberation struggle. The CPG called on the people and the various parties and political movements to set up a united organization to bring together all the forces of resistance to the invader. The first partisan groups and contingents were formed in the mountains of northern Greece. Across the country, Greek patriots staged acts of sabotage and subversion and carried on propaganda and agitation against the German and Italian invaders and the local collaborators.

The Greek partisans were inspired by the heroic struggle of those who were defending the socialist USSR, the defenders of Moscow and Leningrad, Sebastopol and Stalingrad. There was growing conviction among the insurgents and the rest of the people that the Soviet Union would have the crucial role to play in achieving victory. Even when the nazi hordes reached Stalingrad, there was unflinching conviction among the still small and scattered groups of Greek partisans that the Red Army would win out.

In September 1941, on the initiative of the CP Greece, a National Liberation Front (EAM) was set up to include the Communist Party, the Agrarian, United Socialist, Radical and other progressive parties and socio-political organizations. Such broad unity of popular forces was achieved for the first time in the modern history of Greece. EAM was the most massive organization of the resistance movement. Resistance organizations subordinate to the EAM CC were set up at each enterprise, in each urban neighborhood and village. They led the mass strikes by workers and employees and organized combat action against the invaders. The patriots blew up enemy ships loaded with arms, destroyed the nazi army's supply depots, derailed German and Italian troop trains, burned enemy planes at airfields and cut telegram and telephone wires.

The struggle against the fascist invaders, which was led by the communists, called for a merger of all the armed groups of the resistance into a single military organization with a unified command. With that end in view, EAM organized in late 1941 the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS), which brought together the partisan units operating against the invaders. In the course of 1942, ELAS gained in strength and in 1943 started military operations across the whole of occupied Greece. By the autumn of that year, it had liberated nearly one-third of the country's territory.

The Soviet Army's Yassy-Kishinev operation and then the rout of the nazis in the Balkans in the autumn of 1944 put the fascist troops in a critical situation. By the end of October of that year, ELAS troops had driven the invaders from the whole of mainland Greece. ELAS made a big contribution to the freedom-loving people's victory over nazi Germany and its accomplices. From May 1943 to October 1944, the People's Liberation Army staged 327 battles, in the course of which the nazi troops lost in Greece, according to incomplete data, over 19,000 dead, 8,000 wounded and 5,000 prisoners. There was universal recognition of the combat successes of the Greek patriots fighting in the ranks of ELAS.

The foundations of a people's democratic power — people's councils, militia organs and elective courts — were being laid in the liberated areas. The Political Committee of National Liberation was set up in March 1944 with the effective functions of a provisional democratic government and in April elections were held to the National Council, the highest legislative organ, in which 1.8 million persons took part. The elections were held both on the liberated and the occupied territory. Thus, even before the country's complete liberation, real prerequisites were created for transforming Greece into a truly independent, free and democratic state, once the invaders had been expelled.

The successful development of the resistance movement in the country and its growth into a people's democratic revolution was due to a number of internal and external factors. The main thing here was that first, the failure of Hitler's plans for a blitzkrieg against the USSR, followed by the successful Soviet offensive, tied down the bulk of the fascist forces on the Eastern Front and prevented their use for attacks against the national-

liberation movement in the countries occupied by the fascists; second, the Communist Party of Greece, which relied on an extensive network of its organizations and committees, became the leading force of the resistance, succeeded in rapidly reforming its ranks and in 1944 already had hundreds of thousands of members. The communists succeeded in setting up on the basis of EAM a broader alliance of the working class, the peasantry and the middle urban strata and also a section of the patriotic national bourgeoisie under the leadership of the proletariat, providing the masses with a clear program of action in the anti-fascist struggle. Finally, the internal reactionary, pro-fascist, and pro-imperialist forces were weak at the time, for their anti-national policy, which led to the country's occupation, had undermined their influence on the masses. The government in exile in Cairo did not enjoy any authority either, for it had left the country for Hitler and Mussolini to deal with as they liked.

But the establishment of the organs of popular power across nearly the whole territory of Greece, the growth of the CPG's influence and the development of the national-liberation struggle into a people's democratic revolution greatly alarmed the government in exile, the reactionary elements and above all, the British imperialists. Together with the British imperialists, who sought to prevent the establishment of a popular power in the country after liberation, the reactionary and pro-British forces got down to forming armed units in Greece mainly for fighting the popular movement, ELAS.

In December 1944, realizing that the Greek reactionaries were unable to put down EAM and ELAS, the British imperialists transferred a part of their troops from the Italian front to Greece to attack ELAS.[2] The interventionists wrested power from the people and handed it back to the old parties, which were either collaborating with the invaders or did not take part in the national-liberation struggle at all. As a result of the direct armed intervention, Britain managed to impose a regime on Greece which continued loyally to serve the interests of capital, to hold the country in a state of political, economic and military dependence on imperialism and cleared the way for U.S. imperialism, the most predatory and savage imperialism of our epoch.

In the period after the foreign intervention and the December 1944 defeat, the National Resistance Movement was fiercely persecuted. The Report to the Eighth Congress of the CPG said: 'Tens of thousands of fighters, communists in the first place, were arrested, tortured, put on trial and savagely killed. Only in the first few months after the signing of the Varkiza Agreement,[3] over 1,500 fighters were murdered, over 75,000 were imprisoned and 65,000 persecuted.'

Despite the defeat, the National-Liberation Front played a tremendous role in the Greek people's liberation struggle. For the first time a power was set up in the country under the EAM banner which put through democratic transformations. The working class, led by the Communist Party, its military vanguard, and the peasantry, its loyal ally, were the leading force of this patriotic movement for liberating the country and establishing popular sovereignty. The middle strata, a part of the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia also joined in this alliance. The Report to the Eighth Congress of the CPG in August 1961 emphasized: 'The EAM movement under the fascist occupation was so powerful that, despite the difficulties, the forces of Greek reaction were unable to prevent its ultimate triumph. But for our mistakes,[4] it would have been possible for the people victoriously to rebuff the foreign imperialist intervention, the tanks and planes of British imperialism and to win and consolidate its freedom and independence.'

The broad popular-front policy which was put to a harsh test under the fascist rule, continued to be meaningful even after the invaders had been driven from Greece. The struggle for alliances and other forms of cooperation with the country's democratic forces continued to be the CPG's general line up until the establishment of the fascist military dictatorship in 1967. After the Civil War of 1946-1949, a political bloc of communists, socialists and other democrats — EDA, the United Democratic Left — was set up and it gradually came to act in the country's political life as a party of the left and progressive forces under a program close to the CPG's minimum program, aimed at a democratic and anti-imperialist revolution.

But the CPG leadership at the time failed to take into account the experience of the resistance, in which, while acting in a broad alliance with all the other progressive and patriotic forces, the communists retained their political independence and organizational structure, combining the struggle for their minimum program — expulsion of the invaders and establishment of a people's democracy — with transition to profound and radical social transformations. Within EDA, the Communist Party, its grass-roots organizations in the first place, were for all practical purposes dissolved in the broad alliance of diverse political forces. The result was a weakening of the CPG's influence in the masses and this made it easier for reaction to carry out the fascist coup.

Since the collapse of the fascist dictatorship in June 1974, the CPG has bent every effort to secure the unity of the left and democratic forces, laying accent on the establishment of its own party organizations everywhere as the main motive force for starting a broad popular democratic movement. The Fourth Plenary Meeting of the CPG CC in July 1976 stressed that the basis and backbone of anti-imperialist democratic unity is the working class and the allied working peasants, middle sections, progressive intellectuals, young people and the forces firmly demanding national independence and popular sovereignty. Our party, General Secretary of the CPG CC Harilaos Florakis declared in the CC Report to the party's 10th Congress, stands 'for broad democratic cooperation with all the democratic opposition parties and groups which to this or that extent oppose the state of the rightists and

the "new democracy" policy, a policy of national subordination and authoritarianism.' Having emphasized that 'the basis of the front of struggle for a people's democracy must be provided by an alliance of workers and peasants,' Florakis recalled in light of the experience of the national-liberation struggle against the fascist invaders, that 'in the past, the agrarian movement in our country had its political expression in the APG (Agrarian Party of Greece), which was an ally of the CPG, and especially within the framework of the national resistance, in which it was its main ally.' The CPG is prepared to cooperate with other opposition democratic forces as well. Despite some difficulties arising along this way because of the refusal by some democratic parties and organizations to cooperate with the CPG on the basis of a program for transformations, there is a growing urge in the grassroots organizations, the trade union movement above all, for joint action with the communists and with all the other forces fighting for the country's progressive development. The experience of the resistance, like that of the Greek people's liberation struggle generally, confirms that no unity of the left forces is possible without the CPG.

Despite the harsh measures, the death of a great many fighters and the persecution of the supporters of the EAM national-liberation movement, the spirit and the ideas by which a majority of the Greek people were inspired in the years of national resistance continued to be an important factor and the basis for cohesion of broad democratic forces in the fight against imperialism and for national independence, democracy and world peace. That is the direction in which the United Left Forces Movement, which started with the establishment of initiative committees in almost all the towns of Greece with the active support of the communists, has been moving. At a Conference in Athens on March 1 of this year, which was attended by representatives of these 130 committees, among the important problems facing the country there was also a discussion of the questions relating to the activity of this movement, notably, the establishment of the Greek Coordination Organ.[5]

This year, the peoples of the world are marking the 35th anniversary of the victory of the forces of progress over Hitler fascism. By its dedicated struggle against the invaders, the Greek people made a fitting contribution to the common struggle against fascism. It paid a high price for the victory over the aggressors. During the war, over 400,000 Greeks were killed, died of hunger or fell in the partisan fighting. The losses were especially great among the communists and other ELAS fighters who were in the frontline of the struggle against the fascist invaders.[6] But it is they (and that is the only example in Europe!) whom the imperialists and their local Greek agents refused to regard as representatives of the genuine national resistance and who are being persecuted and subjected to repressions. At the same time, they have included in the 'national resistance' leaders who had collaborated with the fascists, and diverse monarchists and pro-British groups who did not so much fight against the nazis as inflict treacherous blows on the ELAS forces.

That is not surprising. The effort to minimize the importance of the Soviet Union's contribution to the rout of nazism, the silence over the communists' role in the resistance movement and the hypocritical allegations about the USSR's aggressive schemes — all these are component parts of the fierce slanderous anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign which imperialist propaganda has now carried on for years. In the recent period however, such propaganda tends increasingly to miss the mark. That is so because the firm and consistent policy of peace pursued by the Soviet Union and the other socialist-communist countries has met with a wholehearted response in the hearts of all people.

Whereas 40 years ago the peoples were unable to prevent the Second World War, the situation today is totally different. The might of the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries, the development of the working-class movement in the capitalist countries, the growing authority of the communist and workers' parties and the steady deepening and spread of the national-liberation, anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples which have thrown off the colonial yoke, all of this, together with the concerted and resolute struggle of the forces which want to maintain peace, can bring to their senses U.S. imperialism and all those who having forgotten the lessons of history, are following them along the way of gambles and aggressions. On February 4 of this year, Leonid Brezhnev said: 'The nations of the world now have a common concern and it is to overcome the tension which has once again darkened international relations. Détente is the result of diverse efforts, it is a common gain of the peace-loving states. And the reckless imperialist forces cannot be allowed to destroy its fruits.' That is something the peoples will certainly not allow.

1. Thus, in mid-1936, the CP Greece secured the merger of the then existing three union associations into a Federation, which enabled the working class to join forces in resisting fascism.

2. Following the shooting on December 3, 1944, by the police and British troops of a 500,000-strong demonstration in Athens, demanding that the government should abandon its policy of subordinating the people's national-liberation, anti-fascist struggle to the purposes of the British imperialists, sanguinary battles broke out between the forces of Greek reaction and the British troops on the one hand, and the forces of the EAM liberation movement on the other.

3. The Agreement signed by the EAM leadership at Varkiza, near Athens, in February 1945, with the then Plastiras government, under which ELAS troops were demobilized and handed in their weapons to government agencies.

4. These were rightist mistakes which the CPG leadership made in the occupation period. Thus, it failed to realize in good time that the British command in the Middle East, when entering into its alliance with EAM and taking control of ELAS forces, had no intention of carrying on military operations in Greece against the fascist invad-

ers for the common benefit of the anti-fascist coalition, as EAM and the CPG sought to do. That agreement, the Theses for the CPG's 40th anniversary said, deprived ELAS of independence.

5. *Rizospastis*, March 1, 1980.

6. Eighty-five thousand men alone died in the fighting against the enemy during the Italian and German invasion, and later in the National Liberation Army units.

MEMORY AND DUTY

James Aldridge
British author

It is always difficult for someone of my generation to decide when the war actually began, because there were so many beginnings to it. The moment (historically) that fascism became recognizable for what it was, the political struggle against it began. There was always violence where fascism was concerned. An Italian anti-fascist could justifiably say that the war began for him in 1922, when Mussolini (marched) on Rome in the sleeping car of a local train. For a German anti-fascist it began when Germany's industrialists put Hitler into power. For the Ethiopians it began with the Italian invasion in 1935, and for a Spaniard it began when Franco and his generals landed from Morocco and began the dissolution of the Spanish Republican Government with the help of fascist Germany and fascist Italy.

For me it began that day in September 1939 in a London street when the British Prime Minister declared that we were now at war with Germany. A few minutes later the air raid sirens went, but like millions of other people I did not believe there was going to be an air raid.

This was the beginning of the 'phoney war' when the West still did everything possible to turn Hitler east instead of west, but as I wandered around the deserted London streets that day carrying one of the useless gas masks we had been issued with, I knew that the world as we had known it, the era I had grown up in, was about to come to an end.

The curious thing is that though we were technically at war with nazi Germany and fascist Italy, those people who had been most active against fascism were still the people most under suspicion in Britain. The appeasers of Hitler were still in the very marrow of our government and there never was any hint of anti-fascism in their behavior. To the very end of the war there was a tendency among some of our political and military leaders to behave as if this was a war between gentlemen. The adulation among certain sections of Britain's generals and politicians for the nazi General Rommel was a good indication of this. Hess' flight to Scotland was a sample of the same kind of thinking on both sides. The behavior of the American Allen Dulles in Switzerland right throughout the war was another curious episode in this 'gentleman's war.' At all times during the war there was an element of a 'gentleman's agreement' in the air between the Western powers and Hitler Germany.

At the same time, it became a people's war in Britain, and because the people were determined to fight it and to resist fascism, the war became a total effort by the soldiers and workers of Britain against an enemy they were able to recognize at home as well as abroad.

I did not see anything of the war in Britain. I was away on other fronts as a war correspondent, but we felt the real effect of British popular feeling wherever the British Army was fighting. We did not always fight successfully at the beginning, because we still had a long history of appeasement and the 'phoney war' to overcome. Our leadership — both political and military — was never more than half-hearted. This was the situation when the nazis began the first attack in the west with the invasion of Norway.

I was in Sweden at the time and I went north and crossed the mountains to Namsos, where the British had an expeditionary force. But what could a handful of British soldiers do against the first of the Nazi blitzkriegs? I was with a Danish correspondent, Eric Seidenfaden from the *Politken* of Copenhagen, but all we saw in Namsos was the remnants of a little lost battle, and we went back to Sweden to send our dispatches of a hopeless gesture that had failed to save Norway from its Quislings and future nazi occupation. We were in retreat.

We were in retreat again when the nazis finally invaded France and we were thrown out of mainland Europe in the famous evacuation of Dunkirk. The only time when it looked as if we could equal some aspect of the nazi war machine was in the Battle of Britain. Hitler hoped to bomb us into submission, but for the first time since the war Hitler's aerial blitzkrieg failed because of a handful of airmen who held the Luftwaffe at bay.

But this was only a brief aspect of the war, and the battles which I watched in the Western Desert of Egypt were the only real confrontation between the armies of the Axis and the Western allies. We came and we went across that Egyptian desert, sometimes defeating the Italians and sometimes retreating before them. When the German armies came to help the Italians it was a far more serious war and at no time could we say that we were winning it. At best we were holding a line, and anyone who was in the Western Desert during that war knows what massive amounts of incompetence and bad leadership we suffered. Again and again we survived because of our soldiers rather than our generals, and the lessons learned in those campaigns they never forgot when the war came to an end and they had to make a choice of what kind of government they were going to have. We lived through those campaigns with no end in sight, no possible victory on the horizon. They were, as it turned out, small campaigns, a mere periphery of what the war would become.

When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union the war changed its character, and there was not a British soldier who did not watch the initial resistance of the Red Army with the realization that this time it was a real war to the finish. Finally they had an ally whom they knew would never give in and would

never compromise or be betrayed to a 'gentleman's war.' Even in the Western Desert of Egypt it was the first time we felt any real hope of some final outcome to the war. The real turning point of the war for us, as well as for the Soviet people, was the victory at Stalingrad. We knew after Stalingrad that Hitler and his fascist friends in Europe were on their way to their final destruction.

I arrived in the Soviet Union just after Stalingrad, in fact I landed at Stalingrad on the way up to Moscow and the skeleton of the city was a revelation. I had seen a lot of war, but not war on this scale. Moscow then was well behind the lines but it was only the year before that Red Army soldiers had marched through Red Square on November 7 for the parade and then went on straight out to the front.

Moscow then was a war city because it was the heart of the Soviet offensive, which was already liberating Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia. It was also a political city, because the complexity of the alliance against Hitler meant that statesmen came and went, and as correspondents we saw them all: Churchill, Stalin, Molotov, Vishinsky, de Gaulle and others.

We correspondents covered the two aspects of the war, the political and the military, and what we saw as we followed the Red Army across the steppes of the Ukraine and Byelorussia was the devastation which the nazis has left behind them. It was incredible to see Leningrad almost immediately after the siege was lifted: a ghost of a city that was nonetheless functioning. It was alive but almost ethereal, and though I have been back to the city many times since, I remember it always as that city I saw when its heroism seemed to be in the very air it breathed as it began, even then, to restore itself to its former beauty.

When we went to Sevastopol, with the nazi armies and their satellites still being mopped up in the surroundings, there was not a human being left in the city. It was a shell of destruction and emptiness. On the Kherson peninsula, just beyond the city, were the remnants of German and Rumanian fascist armies, about ten thousand of them, who had been trapped with their equipment on the peninsula and destroyed to a man. The sea too, was full of bodies and this ancient Greek site was a brutal reminder of the long history of this whole section of the countryside. The Crimea looked geographically as if it had been designed for war, and the fascists had devastated it as they had every other part of the Soviet Union they had occupied.

We found the same story in Vitebsk, Kiev, Odessa and other cities. Odessa was a warren of underground tunnels where the resistance had fought the nazis for three years of war. We saw a pit there where the nazis had herded several hundred people, poured gasoline on them and set them alight. It was a copy of the sort of thing they did in every village and town they had occupied right across Russia and the Ukraine, and it eventually led us to the death camp of Maidenek, in Lublin, Poland. Here a million and a half people were gassed and incinerated. Bodies were still on the butcher's slabs where their gold teeth were extracted after death. The gas ovens were still there, the cabbage fields were covered with human ash and there were warehouses full of the goods and chattels of Russians, Poles, Ukrainians, Czechs, Frenchmen. Even boxes filled with combs and nail files, and filing cabinets filled with music composed by the victims carefully stored by the nazi camp administrators.

This was the first death camp ever seen anywhere by Western correspondents. There were about 20 of us and when we wrote our dispatches to our papers in London and New York, editors would not believe what we had written. Some dispatches were published with a little preface saying that correspondents in Moscow were 'exposed to Soviet propaganda.' Editors did not believe then that these nazi 'gentlemen' would behave in this fashion. For most of the correspondents, even those who were not friendly to the Soviet Union, it was the worst day of our lives, and for those of us who had some stronger political feelings — it was a day we never forgot.

As the war was coming to its end the political future became more and more important. Already during the war we had watched from Moscow the delays in the Second Front and the beginning of the future delineation of Europe. Every day in those last weeks of the war there was some sort of political activity, which was really a preparation for the political and military agreements that ended the war and began the period of peace. The problem was to understand what was happening, and for those of us who had been aware of the anti-fascist struggle before the war it became a time of political tension. Even before the war was over we could detect the first signs of what became the cold war. The fascists were defeated militarily, but Western plans to take up where Hitler had left off were visible to anyone who followed the diplomatic and political activity of that time.

I did not see anything of the war against the Japanese militarists but when that war too came to its end, the world suddenly found itself with a totally different set of circumstances. To begin with, the Soviet Union had not only proved that it could survive as a socialist state, but it was obvious that it had been the Red Army that had torn the guts out of the nazi system.

Yet when I came back to England after the war I was astonished to discover how little people really knew of the size and destructiveness of the battles that had been fought between the German and Soviet armies. People admired what the Red Army had done, but they had no idea about the vast sweep of those battles and why it had cost the Soviet Union 20 million lives. To this day the West knows little or nothing about the biggest battles fought on the Russian front or the superiority of the Russian arms not only on the ground but in the air as well. It was good tanks and guns and planes that won these battles, as well as the men and the women.

In any case there was a strong socialist state at the end of the war with a tried and tested army to defend it. So when the West began its cold war

against the Soviet Union it was based on a weapon which the Soviet Union did not have: the atom bomb. The cold war, though directed primarily against the Soviet Union, was also a war against socialism. The epitomy of the idea behind it was the McCarthy era in the United States. In fact it was the anti-fascists who were put on trial in the United States by the McCarthyite philosophy of blackmail and social ostracism philosophies of the Western world. McCarthy's weapon was the Un-American Activities Committee, which could wreck your life. The weapon of the military-industrial complex of the Western world was the atom bomb, which could wreck our cities, and the architect that gave a blackmailing purpose to the philosophy behind it was Winston Churchill in his famous cold-war speech at Fulton, Missouri.

As the London *Guardian* reported last November: 'In April 1948 Winston Churchill urged the British and American governments to launch a nuclear war against the Soviet Union because the Russians did not then have the atom bomb ... His proposals (according to British Cabinet and Foreign Office records) were that Britain and America should require the Russians to retreat from Berlin and East Germany on pain of having their cities razed.'

The cold war was a brutal period and for anyone who remembers the first Peace Congress in Paris (and Prague) and the session of the World Peace Congress' standing committee in Stockholm, there was an element of life and death in the proceedings. Long before the famous CND campaigns that soon pre-occupied our youth and our intelligentsia, the Stockholm Peace Appeal made the first dent in the cold war attitudes in the West. For those of us who were delegates to the Congress in Paris (and Prague) and the Stockholm session, the real impression we went away with was the single-mindedness of the declarations.

Following the example of McCarthy, the world's press at that time had turned 'peace' into a dirty word. The problem the Paris and Stockholm congresses presented to us was to restore the word to its true popular meaning; and when we toured the country addressing meetings, particularly after the Stockholm Congress, you could feel the growing awareness of ordinary people to this first campaign against the atom bomb. Later, when it swelled into a vast movement right across the world, it justified those early campaigns, which might have seemed hopeless to some, but not to those of us who took part in them.

The cold war ended because the cold war failed to achieve its dangerous objectives and because the socialist community persisted in its policy of peaceful coexistence. Détente was always a socialist policy and it has been the basis of our survival since the cold war. Now however, there is an attempt to restore the old cold-war policies to world affairs, and the recent decision by NATO to introduce almost 600 new American missiles into Europe is an attempt to re-introduce blackmail into European and world policies.

Once again the world is going to need a vast new peace campaign to counteract the militarists and those politicians who dream once more of blackmailing the socialist community into submission. Once again we are going to need the kind of anti-fascism which inspired the prewar generations to sacrifice and resistance.

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the Party

Our strategy and tactics in the class struggle

Horst Schmitt
Chairman, Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin

The animated public attention focussed in West Berlin on the Soviet peace initiative advanced by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CC CPSU and President of the Presidium, USSR Supreme Soviet, in the capital of the GDR last October is particularly significant in view of the dangerous international tension caused by some foreign policy moves of President Carter and his imperialist allies. Throughout the past few months, the measures proposed by the Soviet leader to bring about military détente in Central Europe and promote confidence between countries of the two opposed socio-economic systems have been the subject of an acrid controversy between advocates of lasting European security and partisans of sustained militarist hysteria.

The Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin has been playing an important role in this context. Much of its ongoing political work among the people and its ideological effort center on spelling out the implications of the Soviet initiative and achieving effective cooperation with all peace forces ready to support that initiative. We refute the militarists' allegation that discussion of the Soviet proposal on medium-range missiles can be harmonized with the NATO decision to deploy new U.S. nuclear missiles in Western Europe. The communists of West Berlin urge all their fellow citizens to make 1980 a year of

struggle against the plans of the North Atlantic strategists.

The reckless policy of the ruling circles of West Berlin, who tie our city to West Germany's pro-NATO policy, is a glaring contravention of the 1971 quadripartite agreement on West Berlin, which says that our city is not a part of the Federal Republic and hence does not come within its jurisdiction. Should the pro-NATO forces have their way nothing would be left to the visible improvements won by the people of West Berlin in the past decade as a result of détente. Our city can only safeguard its future by a policy taking present-day world realities into account and based on peaceful coexistence and cooperation in Europe.

These are the starting points of the line our party has been steadfastly pursuing. To keep on that course, we have to repulse virulent attacks from the bourgeois parties and media as well as from right-wing social-democratic leaders, who use anti-communist slander to justify their attempts to revive West Berlin's 'front-line city' status of the cold war years.

A pet contention of anti-communist propaganda is that the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, 'endanger' West Berlin's viability and world peace. This is not new. Ever since the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia changed the political pattern of the world, bourgeois ideologists have been spreading countless variants of the allegation that there is a 'threat from the east.' The purpose of these allegations is to conceal the actual threat emanating from the policies of the imperialist circles, to which profit means far more than the peaceful life of nations or the working people's desire for social, political and economic progress.

This is what makes the fight for peace and for democratic and social rights inseparable from the fight against every manifestation of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. This linkage is all the more evident to us communists of West Berlin, for many of our fellow citizens still cling to prejudices born of the policy which has made West Berlin an anti-communist trump skillfully used by the bourgeois media to this day.

In assessing the problem of West Berlin as a whole, it is important to remember that our city lies where the socialist and capitalist worlds meet and that there is hardly any other city in the world where home and foreign policy are so closely interwoven as here. Our party's strategy and tactics in the class struggle are always sensitive to the dialectical interconnection of the fight for peace and the fight for democratic and social rights.

West Berlin (population — 1,900,000, including nearly 200,000 immigrant workers) has considerable economic, scientific and cultural potentialities. Its aggregate social product exceeds DM48,000 million annually, with industrial output accounting for 24,000 million. However, the city is wrestling with deep contradictions.

The fact that West Berlin is situated deep in GDR territory could have helped it develop extensive economic, commercial and other relations with that socialist state, which is free of crises and their effects. But this favorable circumstance has never been used. In the cold war years, the one-sided orientation on the economy of West Germany and other capitalist countries aggravated the impact of the capitalist crisis on the city.

Bourgeois propaganda has long since stopped presenting West Berlin as a 'showcase of the free world' on a capitalist island surrounded by a socialist sea. Social insecurity has become a long-standing evil in our city. Last December, there were over 33,000 officially registered unemployed. However, many of the unemployed are ignored by statistics.

An extensive system of 'economic incentives' has been devised by agreement with Bonn to 'aid' West Berlin. Its sole purpose is to transform the city into an oasis for big capital, primarily West German monopoly capital. In 1979 alone this program gave employers subsidies, tax reductions and allocations for investment totalling nearly DM6,000 million. These funds were used primarily for rationalization, which helped increase profits by raising labor productivity and reducing employment.

Industrial jobs are being eliminated at a high rate. In October 1979 the city's social-democratic mayor, Dietrich Stobbe, said that since 1980 the number of jobs had decreased from 290,000 to roughly 170,000. In the same period, the number of jobs in the services industry increased from 125,000 to roughly 250,000, or equivalent to 25 per cent of the economically active population. The economy of West Berlin is becoming a 'service economy.'

The current economic policy, if continued, is bound to lead to greater unemployment. In 1978 Prognos AG, a Swiss institute which studied the problem at the request of the West Berlin authorities, found that by the early 1990s the number of industrial jobs could be expected to diminish by another 16,000. Other investigations covering every sphere of the city's economy forecast that by 1990 there will be 100,000 fewer jobs in West Berlin.

Needless to say, this trend is strongly affecting the composition of the population. Unable to find employment, highly skilled young workers, university graduates and others leave the city. At the same time, the number of pensioners is on the upgrade. They now add up to nearly 25 per cent (barring immigrant workers) of the population.

The situation can only be described as paradoxical. The Senate,[1] led by the social-democrats and Free Democrats, fund measures to abolish jobs; to get this money it draws on taxes paid by the workers. Our city's constitution binds the Senate to guarantee all citizens the right to work. Yet the Senate's policy is geared entirely to the interests of the employers.

This breeds acute problems that prompt even bourgeois journalists to describe West Berlin as a 'dying city.' They certainly have reason to call it that, for the population has declined from 2,200,000 in the late 1950s to 1,900,000 today, and according to an official forecast of the Senate it is likely to dwindle to 1,600,000 by 1990.

Our party considers that the decline of West Ber-

lin should and can be stopped. This requires an effort to provide jobs for everybody and improve working and living conditions. The SUPWB gives these tasks priority in its policy and day-to-day work.

What is needed to assure the future of West Berlin?

First, ending the city's one-sided orientation to the Federal Republic and complementing its present relations with capitalist countries with extensive equitable and mutually beneficial economic and commercial relations with socialist countries.

Second, stopping the redistribution of public wealth in favor of the forces dominating the economy; imposing higher taxes on capitalist companies, monopoly profits and shareholders' dividends and granting employers subsidies only if they commit themselves to preserve existing jobs or create new ones.

Third, a policy aimed — in accordance with the West Berlin constitution — at organizing society and the economy on democratic lines.

Our party insists on creating new jobs for skilled specialists, particularly in economic fields whose development would benefit the majority of the population. What we mean is education, health care, social security, environmental protection and services for old and disabled people. We declare for longer holidays and a 35-hour week without pay cuts.

We consider that an economic policy meeting the interests of our city's working people can be framed and carried out provided all working people and the production councils and trade unions representing them participate in decision-making on all important matters at the enterprise, in the economic sphere and in the administration of the city. Moreover, the working people must have the instruments for effectively controlling compliance with decisions.

In other words, the future of West Berlin will depend in no small measure on whether the working people can exert greater political influence in our city, and whether we succeed in restricting the power of the bosses of industrial and trading concerns, big banks and insurance companies. The SUPWB sees this as a stage in the struggle for socialism.

We communists of West Berlin see a major socio-political problem of the city in materializing the right to work and social security. Awareness of the significance of this problem alters the thinking of part of the working class and other working people, and hence the nature of their actions.

Lately the policy of the Senate and the monopolies has given rise to major actions to preserve jobs, halt the deterioration of social conditions and ensure higher wages. The communists are in the lead. Strikes by metalworkers, building workers, printers, civil employees and services and distributive industry personnel have produced further evidence of what our party has invariably emphasized, namely, that active defense of the working people's social and democratic rights and the promotion of peace must be central to our work among the masses.

Our party is convinced that to defend the interests of labor in a situation where under the impact of the economic changes we have mentioned structural changes constantly take place in the composition of the working class, we should concentrate our political work among the masses on the core of the working class, that is, workers at big enterprises.

In the final analysis the subsequent trend of social progress will hinge on the class consciousness, organization and militancy of the working class. This is why the party's general line is to further and consolidate unity of action by the workers, primarily on the basis of cooperation between the communists and the social democrats.

The time has come for a democratic change in West Berlin politics. Accordingly, our party reveals the substance of social relations to the working class and other working people, organizes joint actions in defense of their interests and does all it can to promote their class consciousness. The revolutionary ideas of scientific socialism, the lessons of the victorious October Revolution and the vast experience of the international communist and working-class movement have led our party to the conclusion that the task now is not to talk about this or that 'model of socialism' but to organize class actions in the real sense of the word.

'Every West Berliner who wants to do something for social progress,' says the Board report to the Fifth Congress of the SUPWB, 'must first commit himself to fight for a more durable peace and repulse the enemies of détente. Anyone who wants to resist the bosses of concerns must participate continuously in the defense of the working people's democratic and social rights. Anyone who wants to advance to socialism must, without ever losing sight of the ultimate goal of the revolutionary working-class movement, devote all his energies today to achieving effectual democratic reforms in the interest of labor, building up the militancy of the working class and gradually altering the balance of forces in our city in favor of peace, democracy and socialism.'[2]

Developments have confirmed that our party's orientation on defending the present and future interests of the working class — an orientation announced by the Congress — is in harmony with the aspirations of numerous working people of West Berlin. One indication of this was last year's May Day demonstration, during which over 30,000 trade unionists — communists, social democrats, Christian-Democrats and non-party people — marched together through the city. Their slogans and demands showed that they were largely at one on key issues in spite of political and ideological diffferences.

Yet May Day demonstrations of this nature, under red banners, were out of the question in West Berlin as recently as the late 1960s. At that time, anti-communists and reactionaries of every stripe blasphemously abused May Day to hold their notorious

'freedom rallies,' whose sole purpose was to fuel the cold war.

Last year's May Day revealed notable changes in the working people's thinking. It showed that there are good openings for more vigorous joint actions, for tearing the mask off property relations and the nature of power in capitalist society and for gradually bringing it home to the workers that the interests of labor leave no alternative to a struggle for social changes.

Today anti-communism finds it harder than ever to divert the working people from the internal contradictions of capitalist society. The duplicity of 'social partnership' is coming to the surface. Class frontlines are growing more distinct.

The rulers of West Berlin talk readily about improving the condition of young people. But they do nothing to suit their action to their words. Young West Berliners come up increasingly against problems such as unemployment, the lack of guaranteed jobs in their chosen field and pay discrimination. As a result, many see their lives ruined before they really can get off to a start. This is the primary cause of the crime rate, alcolholism and drug addiction among young people.

At the same time, public life in West Berlin shows that young people are eager to defend their interests. Among other things, they are joining more actively in the solution of the city's problems, including environmental protection. This is an expression of their protest against official policy and the deterioration of living standards.

True, in some cases growing militancy generates the most contradictory phenomena. As in other developed capitalist countries, numerous young West Berliners renounce the traditional way of life and customary forms of labor and become adherents of what is known here as an 'alternative existence.'[3] Most hold anti-capitalist views but even so, while protesting instinctively against the hardships brought on by state-monopoly capitalism, they often accept individualist slogans and romantic utopian concepts, failing to see the need to side with the workers in the class struggle.

The challenging problems of the youth movement require serious attention on our part. This is why, in formulating urgent tasks, the 12th Plenum of the SUPWB Board (April 1979) noted that it was necessary 'to do all in our power to ensure that precisely young people . . . come round to the realization that lasting changes can be brought about only in common with the working class and its most consistent force, our party.'[4] The only way to achieve this is patient work among young people to help them shed anti-communist preconceptions.

There is no doubt that the women's movement too, is becoming a major element of the democratic struggle. The difficult social and economic problems familiar to women in all non-socialist countries are growing increasingly more acute in West Berlin. Like the youth movement, the women's movement is developing in numerous forms and sometimes shows contradictory trends. However, this should not prevent our establishing more extensive contacts with it.

We communists of West Berlin hold that by keeping our sights on the working class, putting the emphasis on work at the factories and supporting progressive decisions of the trade unions, we also defend the interests of most young men and women. Our party's ultimate aim is to draw more and more young men and women into the working-class movement.

The growing concern which declining employment and reduced opportunities for vocational training cause to the working people of West Berlin is aggravated by mounting inflation and constant increases in prices, rent and service charges. It would be absurd to deny that the standard of life is still relatively high in the city. But then it would be wrong to disregard the fact that the working people are forced to dig deeper and deeper into their pockets to cover growing everyday expenses.

What makes the situation in West Berlin distinctive is that the cost of living is pushed up not only by the corporations but also by the Senate, which periodically raises rates for gas, electricity, water and the disposal of refuse, as well as public transport fares. The working people are hit hardest by the official policy toward rent, which benefits speculators in real estate. Many tenants have to spend up to 30 per cent of their earnings for housing.

In resisting this policy, our party seeks cooperation with all who want the economic burden to be eased, that is, primarily civic initiative groups and tenants' organizations. Joint action expressed itself for example, in tenant's rallies and demonstrations in Neukölln, a working-class district of the city. We see these actions as a sign of new opportunities for double cooperation among the most diverse political forces.

The numerous social and economic conflicts typical of the life of our working people objectively help pave the way for a broad democratic alliance of anti-monopoly forces. The realities of the class struggle in our city bear out the theoretical conclusions about the unifying impact of the fight for social and democratic rights, which were formulated by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern.

In forming and backing broad democratic alliances, the communists of West Berlin show great flexibility while retaining their political, ideological and organizational independence. The SUPWB considers that the working class, by defending its interests, defends the interests of its allies. This makes our party's assistance to the democratic movement and its actions in favor of democratic reforms an important component of the struggle, whose final objective is to end capitalist property relations and bourgeois power and build a new society, free of oppression and exploitation.

The ruling circles of West Berlin try continuously to impose on our public opinion a concept of West Berlin's legal status that runs counter to international law, for they regard the city as a part of the FRG and want to commit it more strongly on NATO

policy. In these circumstances, all actions and movements for peace, against the arms race and neo-fascism become increasingly important. Every day we see signs of the impressive anti-imperialist and anti-fascist potential of West Berlin, a city whose history is linked so closely with the rise and fall of nazism and which thirty years ago was converted into an imperialist outpost against the first worker-peasant state on German soil and against the entire socialist community. Action by the democratic forces ranges from powerful anti-fascist peace demonstrations, which last year culminated in Anti-War Action Day, to numerous educational events.

The facts show that the rulers of West Berlin have not learned the lessons of the Weimar Republic and have hardly done anything to discard the fascist past. Now as before, anti-communism is their state doctrine. Their nominal condemnation of neo-fascist actions cannot mislead anti-fascists and democrats, for their actual policy has provided conditions for glorifying the nazi ideological legacy and for belittling the neo-fascist danger, with the government bodies showing tolerance. This policy has always been a catalyst of hostility for the GDR, a hostility that permeates the attitude of the West Berlin authorities and the bourgeois media.

If this political atmosphere cannot prevent broad campaigns against neo-fascist attacks, we owe it primarily to the efforts of the communists and many of our anti-fascist fellow citizens. We think it is highly important that in many cases anti-fascist actions link up very closely with the struggle to promote détente, complement it with military détente and safeguard world peace. The growing scale of the anti-fascist movement offers opportunities for exposing the origins of the capitalist crises and wars and winning new allies in the fight against imperialism.

By organizing the defense of the political, social and economic interests of West Berlin's working class, our party is also doing its duty to the international communist and working-class movement. Its activity, whose purpose is to ensure that West Berlin adopts a realistic policy leading to a secure future, also serves to attain a key goal of our time — preserving and furthering peace and strengthening the positions of the progressive forces.

1. Highest executive authority (government) of West Berlin. — *Ed.*

2. *Protokoll der Verhandlungen des V. Parteitages der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Westberlins.* Berlin, 1977, p. 22.

3. Meaning those who call for a 'simple life;' they bake their own bread, sew their clothes, prefer peasant houses, try to change the forms of family life and oppose utilization of the latest achievements of physics. They are generally unorganized, but some groups hold rallies and meetings and occasionally join in elections. — *Ed.*

4. *Konsequent*, 2/1979, p. 133.

New experience

OUR INTERVIEWS

EVERYONE'S CONCERN

What is your party's approach to the struggle for détente, disarmament and peace in present-day conditions? What are the concrete forms of struggle used by the communists? *WMR* correspondents asked these questions of representatives of communist parties working in different regions: Europe, Asia, Latin America. Below are their answers.

Robert Francis
CP Belgium

First of all, we seek to draw public attention to these problems and naturally to mobilize broad masses of people for attaining concrete goals entailing the creation of optimal conditions for strengthening peace and deepening détente. Practice shows that invigoration and mobilization of public opinion could have an effective influence on government agencies and also promote broad awareness of the fact that the struggle for peace is a vital necessity.

The forms of struggle for disarmament, détente and as a result, for peace as a whole naturally tend to change depending on the international situation and national political conditions. Apart from merely listing the various forms of action, like petitions, demonstrations, the circulation of propaganda material, the posting of placards, organization of public debates, etc., I should like to draw attention to a number of factors which the communists take into account in seeking to make the struggle for peace more effective, especially now that imperialism is carrying on its wild campaign for a return to the cold war and is trying to undermine the important accomplishments of détente.

First of all, the role of the mass media today is taken into account. The communists make maximum use of all the potentialities of their own press, i.e., national newspapers, weeklies, newspapers at enterprises, provincial newspapers and the time allowed us on radio and television. In this way, the party sets forth its attitude to the struggle for peace and disarmament. True, that is not enough to counter the lying propaganda constantly being carried on by the opponents of peace through the mass media. That is why, when seeking to enhance the activity of the masses and to block the campaigns of lies and slanders, the communists cooperate with other progressive forces which also have

publications at their disposal (trade unions, socialists, some Christian-Democratic organizations, etc.).

The political role of CP activists at the enterprises and in the trade unions is important in working out various forms of struggle. The Belgian communists make use of every opportunity for putting forward, together with working people belonging to other trends in the working-class and democratic movement, proposals and resolutions in support of peace, détente and disarmament.

Finally, we start from the need to carry on the struggle in the political arena, with the broadest possible mobilization of the masses, the use of extra-parliamentary activity, reflection of this struggle in parliament and other representative institutions. The point here is to act, in the light of the real possibilities, with reliance on pluralistic fronts so as to ensure massive support in these institutions for the political forces acting for peace and disarmament. Action first organized on the local level, on the scale of a province or district, could develop — and does develop — into broad unitary action. One indicative example was the massive demonstration held in Brussels against the deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles. This was followed by a new campaign in the Flemish part of the country for a review of the decision to deploy the missiles, for preventing decisions being taken without discussion in parliament and for a national forum on this issue.

There are some other forms for activating public opinion like political debates with the participation of parties, trade unions and democratic organizations; coordination of acts by youth movements; political support by the communists and their potential allies for the peace and women's movements, in other words all the forms which allow the utmost use of the social energy of various action committees, parties, trade unions and so on.

We believe that the main emphasis should be on initiatives — both organized and spontaneous — at the grass roots. It is certainly important whether this or that act is realized consistently and in due time (for instance, the movement of protest against the missile deployment). Vacillation of some participants in the mass movement could slow down the pace of its development (then some belated acts cease to be effective). We could say for instance, that the action for broadly mobilizing the masses in defense of peace and against the deployment of U.S. missiles on Belgian territory started long before NATO's decision in Brussels, so that mass pressure forced the Belgian government to accept the possibility of reviewing or revoking this decision.

The very latest experience has enabled us Belgian communists to seek new ways for uniting all the progressive forces in the country in the struggle for peace. The actions taken after the mass demonstration in Brussels were designed primarily to intensify the pressure on the representative institutions, parliament in the first place, to enable them to act quite sovereignly and independently and to prevent our people from being once again subjected to diktat from the cold warriors, for it not only jeopardizes peace and leads to an escalation of the cold war, but also helps reaction to attack democratic rights and freedoms.

Srinivasan Gunalan
CP India

Although the struggle for peace and détente is common to all of us, it naturally has its specific features in each region.

As everybody knows, a very tense situation has been taking shape in our part of the world. After its defeat in Vietnam and after the Iranian revolution, the United States began a buildup in this region, seeking new ways to buttress its positions. The Americans have been increasing their naval presence in the Indian Ocean, and their warships, carrying thousands of men who can be used as a landing force at a moment's notice, keep entering the Persian Gulf. The U.S. decision to sell more arms to Pakistan is having an influence on the military balance on our subcontinent.

The militarist forces are being abetted by China through its political support for the U.S. presence in the Indian Ocean and its deliveries of arms and dispatch of experts to Pakistan to train armed gangs for attacks on Afghanistan's revolutionary government.

In a way there is an attempt to encircle India by the forces of the Washington-Peking axis, and this is evident from a rapid increase of U.S. military strength in the region as well as from the continued Chinese military buildup on our frontiers and the incursions by Chinese-trained armed gangs in the northeastern region of our country. The aim is obviously to threaten India's sovereignty and to pressure it to alter its policy of non-alignment and friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. U.S. President Carter has already put forward the notorious doctrine of a 'cooperative security framework' for this region, which is nothing but a rehashed version of the CENTO and SEATO military pacts.

We believe that the events in Afghanistan are being used as a pretext for fuelling military tension. We cannot help seeing this as an ominous threat to India, to its foreign policy of peace and to the preservation of peace in our region, and we cannot of course, be indifferent to this situation.

The National Council of the Communist Party of India has made a close study of this issue and has drawn up a concrete action program for the communists. The party feels that much more has to be done, orally and in print, to explain the substance of the U.S.-Chinese threat and to expose the inventions about Afghanistan. We have many Afghan citizens and students in India. In January and February we organized mass demonstrations with their participation in Delhi and other cities in support of the Afghan revolution. We expect this campaign to continue. We are trying to establish contacts also with the Iranians studying in our country. 'To what end?' you may ask. I'll give you a concrete example. In India, Iranian students organized a conference to

mark the anniversary of the revolution and invited many parties to send their representatives. We took part in that conference not only to demonstrate our support for the positive aspects of the Iranian revolution but also for the revolutionary forces of the whole region, including Afghanistan. Moreover, we are trying to enlist such support from other parties.

Our party feels that in the present situation each of its branches must find its own way to contribute to the struggle to preserve peace and consolidate détente. The CPI National Council meeting was followed by meetings of committees of all states. The communists of each state worked out their own action program. The party organizations operating in the trade unions and wielding influence in them have put the question of peace to the trade unions and they have likewise adopted action programs. Further, we are seeking to act in youth, students' and women's organizations, sponsoring mass rallies and meetings to pass the relevant resolutions and appeals.

The need of the hour is to build broad unity of all patriotic forces against the threat to India's policy of peace and non-alignment. Keeping this in view, our party does not hesitate to work for similar initiatives coming from other organizations. The communists worked wholeheartedly for the Asian conference for peace, security and solidarity, convened jointly by the World Peace Council and the All-India Peace and Solidarity Organization in Delhi, in March. Preparations for this conference, held all over the country, provided a big opportunity for taking our views to larger sections of the masses, through numerous local conferences, meetings and rallies. It will bring all peace-loving anti-imperialist forces in our country and in the whole region onto a common platform against the sinister plans of Washington and Peking.

In briefly characterizing our activity in defense of peace, I would emphasize three of its aspects: initiative, argumentation and organization.

Jose Israel Cuello
Dominican CP

Détente, disarmament and world peace are common goals of the peoples. But in the dependent countries, some argue that these goals are irrelevant to national problems. They assert that détente is the business only of the great powers and that its attainment can put off structural changes in developing countries for an indefinite period.

We believe that these theses and all their possible variants are erroneous. Our party's Second Congress, which was held last year, resolutely came out in support of détente. That is an issue which affects everyone. It was emphasized at the Congress that détente reduces the imperialist powers' opportunities for resorting to direct force and consequently, strengthens international stability, producing a favorable situation for improving the condition of the countries dependent on imperialism and for a solution of their vital socio-economic problems. The Congress documents show that the basic factor stimulating the arms race in the developed capitalist countries is the urge of monopoly groups to secure tremendous profits and to keep the crisis-ridden economy going through the manufacture of new types of weapons.

That is why our party seeks above all to help the masses to realize the importance of the struggle for détente and to become fully aware of the dangers of the arms race and its consequences. We believe that these tasks require a concrete approach. When urging the people to protest against the manufacture of neutron weapons, we explain in particular, their deeply inhuman nature. When opposing the deployment of Eurostrategic missiles in Western Europe, we seek to show that that is not the way to solve the problems which arise today; it is important to secure the observance of already concluded or signed treaties — which are a major gain of the democratic forces — because that is the only way to mutual understanding among states with different systems and to truly lasting peaceful coexistence.

The party believes that an important task in the struggle for détente is to expose — by presenting precise data — the predatory policy and activity of the transnationals in Latin America, mainly the U.S. transnationals. If we can manage to reduce and eventually to eliminate the power of foreign capital in the Dominican Republic, this will help — however modestly — to reduce the economic potential of imperialism, to narrow down the opportunities for U.S. military-political intervention in the affairs of other countries and to bring on our country's genuine independence.

The communists' activities are also expressed in other forms, either directly or indirectly bearing on these goals. One of the latest acts was a campaign to expose the activity of Ramon Emilio Jimenez, one-time Foreign Minister, who was nominated for the post of Secretary-General of the Organization of American States. In a cable sent to the Foreign Ministries of several Latin American countries, our party emphasized his responsibility for the appearance of terroristic gangs in the country and their responsibility for the assassination of Orlando Martinez, Gregorio Garcia Castro and other Dominican revolutionaries; it pointed to his close ties with the U.S. State Department. We are satisfied that we have made a contribution to defeating this representative of reaction.

Ever broader sections of Dominican public opinion are coming to realize that in conditions of détente growing importance attaches to an independent foreign policy as a key instrument for ensuring socio-economic development. The Communist Party is naturally in the van of the struggle for national sovereignty, economic independence and stronger peace. We resolutely demand the establishment of diplomatic and trade relations with the socialist countries, our neighbor Cuba in the first place, support for the Latin American trade and economic associations which are free of U.S. tutelage and which are designed to safeguard the national interests of its members.

Central America: the masses are beginning to act

Milton Rene Paredes
Political Commission member and CC Secretary,
Communist Party of Honduras

The revolutionary upheavals in Central America are evidence of the mounting crisis of the system of domination imposed on our countries by the local oligarchy and imperialism. The Nicaraguan people's victory over the Somoza tyranny and the external forces backing it was a telling blow to that system. The Sandinista revolution was undoubtedly the overriding socio-political event of the past 25 years in Central America and it confirmed the communists' conclusion that the balance of forces in the region was changing in favor of the liberation process.

The events in El Salvador are a new, important stage of the Central American revolution. It would be wrong to believe that the Romero dictatorship fell because a small group of military men willed it. They would never have brought themselves to undertake the coup of October 15, 1979 had the popular movement not reached a high degree of maturity. A section of the Salvadoran bourgeoisie and the U.S. State Department (in the person of Viron Vaky, then Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs) may well have believed that Romero's elimination would be enough to stop the revolutionary struggle. But they mis-calculated. The Salvadoran people did not take the bait. They demand tangible changes, primarily the removal of the oligarchy from power, the purging of fascist elements in the state apparatus, the granting of democratic freedoms and radical social and economic changes.

The situation in El Salvador bears little resemblance to what obtained in Nicaragua. There is no dynasty comparable to the Somoza clan, against which virtually the whole nation rose. This lends the conflict in El Salvador a more clear-cut character. Besides, the domestic situation is compounded by the headstrong behavior of groups of ultras, especially in the armed forces, and by the inflexibility of the ruling quarters. But there also are characteristics in common. As in Nicaragua, El Salvador has no liberal bourgeoisie or strong centrist organizations. The influence of the reformist Christian-Democratic Party has been sapped by its conciliatory stance in the current events. Many of its adherents have gone over to left-wing organizations. For the Christian-Democrats the option is either to join in the common struggle or serve as a political cover for the oligarchy.

Also common to the two nations (the Nicaragua of the Somoza reign and present-day El Salvador) are the massive, unspeakably brutal repressions, the efforts to leave the opposition leaderless. There is a striking resemblance between the summary treatment of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, chairman of Nicaragua's largest democratic group, on the eve of the Sandinista victory, and the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, head of the Salvadoran Catholic Church known for his courageous pronouncements in defense of patriots. However, both murders backfired, signalling an intensification of the strike movement and spurring the armed actions of the left-wing organizations.

The struggle in El Salvador is characterized by an extreme polarization of forces. Politically, the popular movement now has a tremendous advantage because the junta has completely lost the confidence of progressives. The revolutionary consciousness of the workers and peasants is higher now and the middle strata are in ferment. New revolutionary organizations have sprung up. Operating jointly or in parallel with the Communist Party, they have roused the people to courageous actions. Left unity is growing and this has found expression in the formation of a Revolutionary National Coordinating Committee, which comprises the Revolutionary People's Bloc, the United Popular Action Front, the February 28 People's Leagues and the Nationalist Democratic Union Party, or all the main mass alignments of the country. This is a result of the rapid advance of the Salvadoran revolutionary process over the past decade.

A statement signed by the leadership of the main underground organizations (Farabundo Marti People's Liberation Forces, Armed Forces of National Resistance and the Communist Party of El Salvador) points out that the 'the Salvadoran people did not seek violence — it was imposed on them by the oligarchy and the criminal military tyranny obedient to it. In recent years, legalized violence, which dooms the working people to hunger, poverty, illiteracy and unemployment, starves our children and robs the citizens of elementary rights, has been supplemented with constant military aggression against an unarmed population ... This has made our people realize that the only road left to them is to arm and organize themselves to repulse the aggression, defend their gains and maintain their right to transform society.'[1]

The formation of the Revolutionary National Coordinating Committee has given the left a political advantage and it can now operate more effectively.

But it is still weak militarily, being faced with a huge repressive machinery, primarily the army and numerous paramilitary organizations. This makes it vital for the revolutionaries to receive military training and learn to rouse the masses to resolute action and make the utmost use of the revolutionary situation. The left has learned much of late. Ana Martinez, leader of the People's Revolutionary Army, said in an interview that a searching political and economic analysis of historical conditions and creative application of key Marxist-Leninist principles allowed the guerrilla movement to rectify mistakes springing from its uncritical use of models of the revolution in other countries. The Nicaraguan revolution was further evidence that no victory can be won without the people's participation.

Reaction will certainly try to strike back, hence the imperative need for solidarity on the part of world-wide progressive opinion, U.S. imperialism is planning a frontal attack on the Salvadoran revolution. An indication of this is the growing frequency of the visits William Bowdler, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, is making to Central American countries. An objective of these visits is to form a cordon sanitaire around Nicaragua and prevent El Salvador from Following what the *New York Times* describes as the Marxist example of Castro-led Cuba. Nor is direct armed intervention ruled out. We believe the United States will resort to such intervention in spite of the risk of 'Vietnamizing' the region.

According to the *Washington Post* the Carter administration plans military aid to the Salvadoran junta in order to head off the people's revolution. This plan, approved by the National Security Council and by Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's national security adviser, provides for a $7,000,000 package of arms and other counter-insurgency means, as well as for the dispatch of U.S. advisers to train the Salvadoran army. But the ultimate goal of the Pentagon, the newspaper notes, is to land Marines as a demonstration that they can win a guerrilla war.

Last February, Shafic Jorge Handal, General Secretary of the CPS Central Committee, noted that real danger was looming over the nation. On the one hand, he wrote, U.S. imperialism allied with the Salvadoran finance and landed oligarchy is out to impose a 'reformist' regime and on the other, it is backing the most reactionary elements in the army, supplying arms to gangs of ultras and forming new gangs from remnants of Somoza's guardsmen and soldiers of the Guatemalan dictatorship. At the same time, the USA is planning to invade El Salvador, preferring to drench the nation in blood than to put up with the emergence of another Nicaragua in Central America. Accordingly, the U.S. troops in the Canal Zone and the newly-established Caribbean task force, with headquarters in Key West, Florida, have been placed on stand-by alert.

An uptrend in popular struggles and a desire for unity of action on the part of left and democratic forces are in evidence also in other Central American countries, primarily in the most developed of them, Guatemala, which has for decades been ruled by one of the most hated dictatorships in the region. Mass resistance there has increased under the impact of the Sandinista victory and the current intensification of left activity in El Salvador. The rulers of Guatemala, who are terrified by what is for them an adverse trend of the domestic political situation, are using their pet method — repression — more and more often. Not long ago the world was shocked by the murder of a group of peasants who had occupied the Spanish Embassy to make public the outrages committed on their lands by the official security force. It is worth recalling in this connection that last December the Guatemalan capital was visited by Pentagon experts. There is no doubt that they advised a 'cleaning and warning operation' against 'subversives.' Guatemala's communists stress that 'the fascist character of the Guatemalan military dictatorship is accentuated more and more as part of a global process in which the oligarchy and imperialism are closing ranks in a desperate bid to block the people's growing struggle and curb their discontent by an all-out escalation of repression and terror against the people in general and mass, progressive organizations in particular.'[2]

In this case, too, Washington would have preferred a 'reformist' way out of the crisis since the semi-fascist dictatorship does not justify its hopes. However, the problem is, according to the *New York Times*, to find a center, since all prospective centrist leaders have been killed.

If you look back, Manuel Colom Argueta, a leading Guatemalan politician said in March 1979, you will see that the victims of each crime were prominent persons. These people by no means had one and the same ideological orientation. They had simply belonged to one or another movement or social stratum and had had the ability to unite the people for a common cause. A few days later, Colom Argueta was shot dead. Little wonder the masses are toughening up their struggle. Every time the regime's punitive units kill a peasant or a worker dozens of others step in to support revolutionary organizations.

There is also the example of my own country, Honduras, where a reformist-type military coup in 1972 ended the traditional bipartisan system. For a time there was a climate of political tolerance, which enabled diverse currents to fight one another in spite of the absence of elections, without going to extremes. But the reformist regime soon spent its possibilities. It resumed repressions against the workers and the popular movement. The government under Colonel Melgar Castro, which took over in 1975, shelved the National Development Plan announced earlier for the modernization of the economy and the restructuring of society through a series of reforms, including an agrarian reform. At present, attempts are made to restore an outdated form of government in order to assure the dominant role to the National Party, the country's most reactionary political organization. The communists of Honduras feel that this will bring nearer a situation similar to that in Nicaragua.

Unlike reactionary regimes, representative democracy in Costa Rica is a fairly solid and flexible political system making it possible to strike something in the nature of a balance between the diverse trends born of the deepening socio-economic crisis. Official policy swings alternately to the left and right. But its fundamental orientation is centrist and since the 1948 civil war the political struggles have never been excessively sharp and there has been no extreme polarization of the contending forces. However, recent events — the action of banana plantation workers and its brutal suppression, as well as the adoption of an undisguised anti-communist attitude by the Carazo government — show that deep crisis phenomena are in the making even in 'tranquil' Costa Rica.[4]

The crisis of the system of domination in Central America affects diverse classes and population groups. Two alignments may be tentatively singled out among the big and part of the middle bourgeoisie; one calls for more repression against the popular movement, while the other has to some extent learned Nicaragua's lessons and considers that since a hard line is likely to hasten the revolution, democratic changes would be advisable.

As for the petty bourgeoisie, it is in a state of political unrest. The growing socio-economic crisis is having a disastrous effect on the condition of small and medium employers, shopkeepers, handicraftsmen, members of the liberal professions, intellectuals and students, whom it prompts to join the opponents of the political and social status quo.

Most important of all, the political consciousness of Central America's working class is growing, the various trade union currents are looking for closer unity and the strike movement is expanding, the strikers taking both legal and illegal action, such as the seizure of factories or armed self-defense. The progressive Unity Confederation of Salvadoran Workers has come to play a bigger role in the labor movement. Its entry into the People's Forum, an alignment of democratic political and public organizations, has quickened the revolutionary process in El Salvador. The Trade Union Unity Committee of Honduras and the National Trade Union Unity Committee of Guatemala have gained in importance. The latter comprises all the main confederations.

In estimating the potentialities of the peasant movement in Central America it is essential to remember that most of its organizations are persecuted with increasing beastiality, hundreds of its leaders have been killed by the security services or paramilitary gangs, the agrarian problem is more acute than anywhere else in Latin America and the big landowners wield enormous power. Even so, the peasants and agricultural laborers have not been broken. Their fighting potential as allies of the proletariat is great and goes on growing.

A democratized political structure could certainly ease the impact of the socio-economic crisis in Central American countries. However, the oligarchy and imperialism realize that democratization would exacerbate the contradictions in the ruling bloc to bursting point, put the reactionary military clique in greater isolation than ever and give the working people the possibility of forming, building up and staunchly defending their organizations. This is why the ruling classes reject out of hand even moderate reformist projects.

It follows that profound democratic changes in Central America can only be brought about by an anti-dictatorial, anti-imperialist democratic revolution that would sweep away murderous military dictatorships, destroy their political, legal and repressive institutions, end foreign oppression, dependence, poverty and exploitation and solve the nation's pressing problems. An active role by the masses in the revolution would make it possible to form really democratic governments, give the working people a larger say in government and set about building socialism.

Democratic, revolutionary changes would provide the basis for the subsequent unification of Central American countries, a dream of Francisco Morasan, Augusto Cesar Sandino and our other national heroes.

The revolutionaries of Central America, who want to bring that day nearer, see their chief task in uniting all democratic opposition groups which would have the support of the majority of the people. Nicaragua's lessons are unmistakable in this respect. The main accomplishment of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the leading force of the Nicaraguan revolution, is that in spite of political and ideological differences, it united virtually all forces opposed to the dictatorship and nullified the U.S. manoeuvers to preserve Somozism without Somoza. Broad-based anti-dictatorial unity helped to oust the tyranny and the external forces backing it — U.S. imperialism and Central American dictatorships.

The success of the fight against Somoza revealed the tremendous democratic potential of Latin America. A powerful movement of solidarity with the Nicaraguan people — a movement comprising diverse political and social forces — has developed on the continent Fidel Castro has said that 'around the Sandinistas' struggle there tacitly developed an alliance which we might call a great democratic anti-interventionist independence front in Latin America.'[4] This indicates that the democratic and anti-imperialist forces of the region now have greater opportunities for cooperation.

We consider that the struggle for democracy can bring together the communists, socialists, social democrats, Christian-Democrats, liberals, priests, patriotic military and even some groups of the bourgeoisie whose economic interests and political rights have been curtailed. A broad democratic front can take shape on this basis despite differences in the programs and political objectives of the various parties and social groups. Its formation would give our struggle unprecedented scope, for it would involve the masses.

The revolutionary experience of Central American countries shows that in striving for democratic unity it is necessary to proceed with the greatest

flexibility and circumspection. We believe the issue of who is to guide the process of change or what the substance of this process is to be need not be a stumbling block. Joint action by diverse social and political forces does not imply that any of them has renounced its program. The issue of leadership of the democratic movement must be settled in the course of struggle. The working class has a most important part to play, for it must do all in its power to carry revolutionary processes deeper and unite other exploited population groups under its leadership.

We wish to stress that while democratic anti-imperialist unity is important, left unity is a requisite of victory. Operating on the Central American political scene side by side with the communists are other left-wing organizations proclaiming their adherence to Marxism-Leninism. We owe this to the growing prestige of scientific socialism as a theory inspiring the masses with optimism. Some of these organizations spare no effort to bring down dictatorships. We do not deny that we differ, sometimes greatly, on this or that issue. This makes dialogue the most suitable way of achieving unity of action against the common enemy. At the same time, we communists take a stand against groups which use revolutionary talk as camouflage to attack communists parties, thereby making common cause with the oligarchy and imperialism.

The acuteness of the class contradictions and the depth of the crisis of dependent capitalism in Central America prompts me to touch on a further key problem, that of power. We Honduran communists know that the forms of assuming power may vary, depending on how far the class struggle has developed. At some point in history, when the national and international situation is favorable, the non-violent path can be used. We consider however, that as matters stand in our countries (possibly with the exception of Costa Rica), the armed path is the likeliest. To be sure, every effort must be made to win power with the minimum of bloodshed. However, says our party program, 'bitter experience shows that in the long run it is the ruling classes that impose the most savage forms of class struggle on the masses.'[5]

The choice of the way of winning power certainly does not imply that the communists commit themselves to only one option. Now as in the past, they must be prepared to use any way (or even several ways at once) depending on the political situation, the actual strength and intentions of the enemy, the militancy of the masses and the position of the left-wing parties and their allies.

From this point of view, the communist parties of Central America consistently follow a clear-cut line. El Salvador's communists hold that their country 'is going through a historic stage of revolution and only the unity of revolutionary and democratic forces taking the path of armed revolution will transform this possibility into victorious reality.'[6]

Guatemala's communists are convinced that 'there is no alternative to the non-peaceful road for the Guatemalan revolution; it is within its framework that we will use the most diverse forms of organization and struggle according to the circumstances.'[7]

Late in 1979, we Honduran communists discussed these problems in line with the December 1978 plenum of our CC, which changed the composition of leading party bodies as well as the forms and methods of party work. We came to the conclusion that in view of the government's swing to the right and the deterioration of the domestic political situation, armed struggle would be the likeliest way of coming to power.

The formula of armed struggle gives rise to heated debates that often lead to mistaken conclusions. There are those on the left, including people in our parties, who absolutize one of the ways of winning power. On the one hand, the opinion is expressed that armed struggle can be used in any situation, irrespective of the organizing work linking us with the masses; on the other hand, it is argued that one 'must first carry on political work and then military work.' We believe both approaches are simplistic and disregard the existing situation.

A lesson we have learned is that we cannot confine ourselves to general statements, such as 'we must be prepared to use any form of struggle.' Political agitation and military training should become our standing task. We will not be lulled by the declaration that no revolutionary situation exists at the moment, for when it does develop it will be hard or even too late to make up for lost time. The situation in Central America today demands continuous and effective work among the masses, primarily among the workers, peasants, intellectuals and students, to ensure that no class or social group is outside the orbit of our influence. Not until we have won over large sections of the population shall we be able to use this or that form of struggle and win, that is gain political power, which is our main goal.

U.S. imperialism will nc doubt do all it can to prevent such an outcome and cling to its political, economic and military positions in Central America. This is the purpose of every step and every political move it makes in our region.

Nevertheless, we think the main factor in this case is not what the United States does or plans to do but the deep crisis of the prevailing system of domination. We are far from underrating imperialism's strength but we consider that to regard it as the sole maker of the processes going on within the ruling classes and the institutions set up by them (primarily the army) is to ignore our peoples' long, persevering struggle and the rise and existence within the ruling circles of currents that are in a sense autonomous in regard to the USA. Nicaragua is an instructive lesson to us in this respect as well.

Every process going on in Central America or for that matter, elsewhere on the continent is linked with the USA directly or indirectly. This is an objective reality and it would be very dangerous to discount it. But it would be just as dangerous to attri-

bute to imperialism an omnipotence which it lacks in today's world.

Once again we recall the old truth which says that a nation can win freedom only through its own effort backed by the solidarity of other nations. Central America's peoples are fighting courageously for their freedom and a better future. Leading the way next to Nicaragua is El Salvador. They have the sympathy and support of progressive mankind. And difficult as it may seem in view of the geographical proximity of Central America to the USA and its colossal strategic importance to the latter, this struggle is certain to be crowned with success.

We communists must be both worthy of this historic moment and equal to its requirements.

1. *Patria*, January 26, 1980.
2. *Declaraciones del Secretario General del Comité Central del Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo*, Paris, February 4, 1980.
3. The situation in Costa Rica is discussed in *WMR*, October 1979.
4. *Boletin de informacion*, Comité Central del Partido Communista de Cuba, No. 3, 1979, p. 8.
5. *Programa del Partido Comunista de Honduras*, III Congreso, 1977, S. 1., s.a., p. 25.
6. *Sólo la unidad de las fuerzas democraticas y de izquierda convertiran la posibilidad revolucionaria salvadorena en realidad victoriosa*, San Salvador, January 7, 1980.
7. *El Camino de la Revolucion Guatemalteca*, Mexico City, 1972, p. 63.

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exchange of views

The communist view of worker 'participation'

International Symposium

A symposium on worker participation in production management in capitalist countries and the communist attitude to this problem was suggested by the delegates of the German Communist Party and the Communist Party of Great Britain at a Prague conference on the dialectics of economics and politics in a revolution.* This suggestion was prompted by the differences in attitude of the communists of some countries to the question of worker 'participation' and control. The trade unions too, do not see eye to eye on this matter. Various 'participation' systems have lately become increasingly widespread, especially in European countries, and this makes the problem more urgent.

The symposium, co-sponsored by *WMR* and the Board of the German Communist Party, was held in Leverkusen, FRG, on December 13-14, 1979. It was attended by representatives of communist parties in nine countries: Belgium, Britain, Chile, Denmark, France, the FRG, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden. The first two speakers (from the German Communist Party and the Communist Party of Great Britain, which initiated the symposium) expounded views which, while agreeing on fundamental aspects, contained some points of difference. Both papers are published below. A survey of the debate that followed, in which all the delegates took part and which produced a better understanding of this question, brought the different attitudes closer and made it possible to draw meaningful general conclusions, will be published in one of our upcoming issues.

*The Prague conference was covered in *WMR*'s March, May and June 1978 issues.

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION AND CONTROL — A CLASS DEMAND OF THE WORKERS

Lüdwig Müller
Presidium member, Secretary, GCP Board

The struggle for democratic participation in production management and workers' control is a major area of the struggle in the FRG to uphold, consolidate and extend the democratic and social rights of the working class and of its agencies and organizations at the factory and company level. This is where it influences economic policies.

The increasing pressure brought to bear by the working people for a say also in other fields of social life, such as higher education or environmental protection, reflects the growing opposition of broad democratic opinion to authoritarian rule and the manifest shift to the right in the FRG.

Our party program says that both these directions of struggle are of immense significance in the sense that they are providing the ideological and organizational foundation for a powerful democratic potential aimed at achieving a turn toward social and democratic progress, winning anti-monopoly. democracy and thereby paving the way for a socialist system in our country.

The point of departure and central element of all the demands for worker participation in the management of enterprises in the FRG are what Marx called the political economy of the working class, namely control and management of social production on the basis of social knowledge and prevision.* Today the issue is over participation in decision-making concerning working conditions, production, distribution and state-monopoly regulation, namely to secure such participation in unremitting class battles and other actions against capitalism's undivided management of production.

This struggle is going on in peculiar conditions. In the FRG the past few years have seen the aggravation of capitalism's all-embracing crisis and the exacerbation of the consequences of this crisis for the working class. This has greatly enhanced the importance of the struggle for democratic participation in management and workers' control.

The deepening of the general crisis, the growing contradictions and rivalry between the main imperialist powers, the constant change in the international balance of forces to the detriment of capitalism — to some extent all this is limiting the possibilities of big capital in the FRG. A major element of its strategy for overcoming or lessening the growing difficulties is the assault on the working class of its own country, on the social and democratic gains it has already won. This assault is being conducted all along the line and it affects not only the economy, not only factories, companies and entire industries, but also leads to serious political and ideological collisions and is spilling over into international relations.

The general strategy of big business provides for three main lines of action along which it is trying to assure basic, long-term solutions in its favor at the expense of the working class.

First, a change in the terms of distribution and the correlation of distributed goods in favor of big business. For this purpose businessmen's associations have even invented the term 'inverse distribution.' This implies in the long run, reducing factory and office workers' share (in terms of individual and social consumption) of the goods and services produced by them.

The *second* major objective is associated with the advance in science and technology, namely intensified rationalization of production and the capitalist use of new technology. Owners of capital obviously seek unchallenged use of the results of the considerable growth in labor productivity that has now been partially achieved. Having a monopoly over the means of production they are using businessmen's associations and the state to grasp the opportunities offered by new technology mainly to consolidate their positions in the economy and the government. At the same time they turn a blind eye to the fact that opportunities also exist for bettering the living conditions of the entire population. This is hitting the working people, for it reduces the number of guaranteed jobs, dissolves whole professional groups, lowers skill ratings and wage rates, and emasculates and intensifies labor.

Closely associated with this are the attempts of big business to cut short any influence of the working class and its organizations on decisions on the use of scientific and technical achievements. This concerns all forms of control, as well as any effort to extend participation in production management, and especially, to change property relations.

The *third* major goal of monopoly capital in the FRG is to ensure a significant diminution of the long-term possibilities for the working-class struggle and clip the democratic rights and freedoms of the workers by whipping up anti-communism, mass lockouts and other methods of increasing pressure on the trade unions and finally, by working out new forms of the 'social partnership' ideology aimed at distorting the character of the trade unions and turning them into a factor stabilizing the employers' system of profit making.

The struggle for democratic participation in management and workers' control is thus a key element of the strategy of the trade union and political working-class movement in the FRG in all three sectors of the struggle. This is now the most pressing socio-political demand of our working class.

We communists do not forget that this struggle has its own history. The demands for a say in management were articulated in the FRG not only in the 1960s or 1970s. They are a reflection of the general demand for democratic control of the capitalist economy, notably production, by factory and office workers and their organizations, a reflection of the present-day alignment of forces, historical experience and the conditions of struggle in our country.

It will be recalled that Marx pointed to the significance of setting up trade unions which would not only exclude competition among workers on the labor market but, by uniting workers in opposition to capital, become a factor influencing the actual terms for employing labor. From the very outset this was a struggle against capitalism's arbitrary rule and brutality, a struggle to ensure the conditions for the reproduction of labor and enable the working class to exercise its democratic rights. It involves both direct actions to correct or curb individual measures taken by capital and action for wage rates, in other words for a contractual fixation of the relations between labor and capital, between workers and capitalists, between trade unions and capitalist associations. With the state increasingly intervening in the general conditions of realizing capital in order to preserve the capitalist system as a whole, with the intrinsic despotism of capitalist industrial relations and of production generally becoming more dependent on state regulation, the struggle for legislative formalization of working-class rights is acquiring growing importance. Marx called the winning of a 10-hour working day by the British working class, that is, the first ever legislative

*Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. II, p. 16.

limitation of working hours, 'the victory of a principle.'*

Lenin's concept of democratic, workers' control as a method and instrument of restricting and overcoming capitalist power is based on this experience.

During the November 1918 revolution in Germany and the subsequent battles, the struggle for workers' control or for participation in management was of great significance as a factor of the class struggle waged by the workers and their organizations to extend their rights and influence. It was closely linked with the movement for setting up Soviets and the demands for socialization. After the defeat of the revolution and as a result of the changed balance of forces, the militant struggle for workers' control, which reflected the striving for all-embracing and effective control over production, became in the main, a struggle in defense of the rights that had been won.

After 1945 the demands for socialization and participation in management were included in practically all policy statements. The reason for this was that the public realized that big business was to blame for the fascists' coming to power and for the outbreak of the war. In the statements issued by workers' organizations at that time the demand for participation in running enterprises was put forward not as a substitute for socialization, but as a special factor giving workers direct participation in the control and management of enterprises. In the first years after the war, work collectives and trade unions in the mining, metallurgical and other industries in some West German lander, specifically Bremen and Hessen, won the right to participate in economic management. The movement for democratic participation in management fused with the actions against the dismantling of enterprises sparked by fear of competition and for an improvement of the food supply network.

However, as big capital regained its power it launched a counter-offensive. When the FRG was formed and its constitution proclaimed, the democratic rights won by the working class were attacked from all directions. The trade unions responded by demanding legislation on the status of enterprises. The legislation enacted after this bore the stamp of integrationist 'social partnership.' Beginning with the mid-1960s, especially as a result of the aggravation of capitalism's general crisis, all the social problems have been steadily growing more acute. This is increasingly substantiating the workers' class-oriented demands for participation in production management.

Participation in management is thus a class demand with deep roots in the FRG working-class movement: it is integrated into the objective of extending democratic rights and can by no means be reduced to institutionalized participation in management, in other words to legislation-controlled relations at enterprises. Democratic participation in management is an objective of the class struggle in all its forms — economic, political and ideological — and at all levels. The extent to which compliance with the demands for such participation can be enforced depends on the actual balance of strength between labor and capital and in the final analysis is linked to the question of power.

In periods witnessing a sharpening of the class battles and an intensive growth of the workers' class consciousness, this struggle is openly expressed in demands for democratic, workers' control. The demands for participation in management are at present a specifically limited form of expressing a broader and more far-reaching demand for democratic, workers' control. But what has already been achieved is above all, the result of the working-class struggle. The capitalists would never have yielded an iota of power of their own free will.

The communists realize that if the demands for participation in management are not based on the anti-monopoly strategy of the working class, if they ignore the social base of capitalist society at its latest stage, they may degenerate, in ideological and practical terms, into the starting point for monopoly capital's policy of class collaboration and integration, whose purpose is to erode democratic rights and muzzle the working class and its organizations.

Democratic participation in production management and workers' control have been among the program and policy targets of the GCP from the outset. As we see it, the class approach implies unrelenting opposition to any distortions along the line of 'social partnership.'

In the situation obtaining in the FRG today the GCP regards participation in management as a historically-shaped link between current and future interests and gains of the working class, between day-to-day matters and problems of the social system.

We see participation in management not as a substitute, an ersatz for the historically necessary abolition of the capitalist system, but as part and parcel of the struggle for a turn to social and democratic progress, for a democratic renewal of the state and society, a struggle that is essential to achieve that goal. The struggle for participation in management is inseparable from the effort to bring about any social change and create the conditions for anti-monopoly state power backed by the working class and other democratic forces, i.e., a cardinal change in the balance of political forces. In our view, the struggle for participation in management and control is closely linked to the campaigns for other anti-monopoly reforms, such as nationalization of raw materials and other key industries, market-controlling enterprises, banks, insurance companies, press monopolies and culture concerns and other reforms.

The struggle for participation can by no means be confined to state institutions and legislation. Even in cases where management participation has been legislatively formalized the workers and their trade union cannot afford to relax their efforts to make sure that these rights are implemented in the interests of the working people. For that reason we

*Ibid.

communists insist on the maximum use of legislation provisions on participation in management. We demand a substantial extension of this legislation. At the same time, we support every effort by workers and trade unions in their day-to-day opposition to arbitrary actions by employers. Supervisory boards cannot replace the class struggle (although this is exactly what the entrepreneurs want). They complement that struggle and are closely linked to it. The communists in the participation bodies never act as 'social partners.' They fight for the rights and interests of the workers. This too, is a front between the opposing forces of labor and capital. When necessary, the struggle ranges beyond these limits and receives effective support from the trade unions and all working people. Further, we urge the use of production and wage-rate agreements as a mean of exercising the right to run enterprises.

Let us briefly review some currently important orientations and objectives of the struggle for democratic participation in management and for workers' control.

First, guarantees and an extension of the basic democratic rights and freedoms essential for the struggle of the working class and its unions. These include the right to negotiate wage rates, the right to strike, action against lockouts, against blacklisting and spying on strikers, freedom to form coalitions, action to repulse all attempts to straitjacket the trade unions by legislation and so on. This requires stronger and more united trade unions as a force organizing the working class and enabling it to intervene in important decisions being made by capital and in this way to influence these decisions, to avert or lessen their consequences. I mean above all, massive lay-offs and the relocation or closure of enterprises.

Second, improvement of the wage-rate contract provisions on working conditions and social security. Here priority is given to measures against capitalist rationalization: action to back up legislative guarantees against dismissals with adequate wage-rate contracts, provide work consistent with skills, end the increasing labor monotony, shorten the working day, regulate annual leaves, determine the minimum number of workers needed to operate various machines and systems, enforce provisions on the granting of pensions before the appointed time and so forth.

Third, maximum use, guarantees and extension of the right to participate in production management.

In the FRG, as a result of the working people's struggle and also of the attempts by the ruling circles to integrate the working class into their system, there is now a ramified and differentiated system giving the trade unions and other organizations of the working class the right to obtain information, state their views, exercise a veto and take part in drafting decisions. These rights are ensured mainly by the 1972 law on the status of enterprises, the law on personnel representation, the law on participation in the management of the mining and metallurgical industries and the so-called law on worker participation in production management adopted in 1976, which determines the composition of supervisory boards at big enterprises. Besides, there are numerous acts of labor legislation, such as the pensions law, the law on wages in the event of illness, the law regulating social security measures in the event of unemployment, and lastly the provisions on working hours. None of these laws was proposed by the businessmen's associations or the state and none of them was accepted voluntarily. All were won as a result of vigorous action by the workers and their unions. For instance, it took a 13-week strike to win a full wage in the event of illness of a duration of up to six weeks.

But we feel that despite the many laws, the workers' rights to participate in management are inadequate in some crucial areas, particularly the orientation and consequences of capitalist rationalization. To this must be added the fact that the limited interpretation of laws by the courts deprives the workers' rights of much of their effectiveness. But the countless attempts to nullify these rights through various manipulations show that monopoly capital regards as a threat even provisions on participation oriented toward 'social partnership.' Take the legislative action by big capital to dispute any law the trade unions feel does not even merit being called a law on participation in production management. The same attitude is mirrored by the list of bans, which amount to a declaration by the businessmen's associations of their uncompromising stand against any attempt to extend the right to participation in economic management.

In many of their resolutions and statements the trade unions recognize that developments over the past few years make it imperative to step up the struggle for participation in management, giving that struggle a new dimension. Hans O. Fetter, Chairman of the Confederation of German Trade Unions, said in a recent speech that parallel with the buildup of opposition at the shop floor level, at every factory, at every capitalist firm and in the economy as a whole, the main aspects of the struggle are to strengthen solidarity, coordinate the wages policy pursued by sectoral unions, with special emphasis on the practical implementation of the agreements reached at every enterprise. At the same time, he said, it is necessary to use and achieve the greatest possible extension of participation in production management at various levels and with the assistance of the trade unions, to create an early-warning system informing the working class of the capitalists' major decisions, mainly in the sphere of rationalization, thereby enabling it to take effective counter-measures. It is of great significance that the trade unions are set on envigorating their work at factories and firms. I mean cooperation between work collectives, production councils, workers' delegates and trade union representatives in managerial bodies and in the trade union agencies themselves. We are now witnessing broader exchanges of experience and discussions of pressing aims and strategy of trade union policy of

participating in production management. This work should also be conducted in transnational concerns.

The GCP regards the struggle for democratic participation in management as an effective means of revealing class relationships and developing class awareness. In its program and its recommendations on democratic participation in management, the GCP has many points in common with the class notions of the trade unions. It supports their demands and at the same time, calls for more far-reaching action.

We see the stepped up actions at the level of factories and entire trade unions and also the struggle over wage rates, as well as the militancy of the trade unions in protecting the interests of the workers as being closely associated with the drive to ensure participation in management and curb domination by big capital. The GCP supports every initiative that helps to strengthen the position of the working class against capitalist rule. The political demands concerning legislative regulation are highly important. With extreme right forces becoming more active on the political scene, the social-democrat-led Federal government retracting its promises for reforms and all the problems of the working class growing acute, it is imperative to press harder for long overdue worker participation in industrial management and to step up the corresponding action by the working-class movement. Centering discussions on a single problem, namely the composition of the supervisory boards, and confining this problem to equal representation do not help to achieve a radical improvement of the situation. The communists see the struggle for these trade union demands as an opportunity for exposing the existing power structures, specifically at the level of concerns and transnational corporations, and for gradually giving prominence to more meaningful demands for participation in management.

In this case too, a key task for our party is to promote concerted action by the workers, strengthen the unity of the trade unions and enable them to be more active in discharging their function of protecting the rights of the working people and shaping social relations. This implies among other things, developing democracy in the trade unions, upholding their independence from the state, parties, religion and associations, ensuring tolerance of different outlooks and last but not least, promoting cooperation in a spirit of solidarity between the trade union and political working-class movements, including the GCP.

THE WORKERS TAKE A NEGATIVE STAND ON CLASS 'CONCILIATION'

Bert Ramelson
Communist Party of Great Britain

We would like to make it clear from the outset that the following reflections and proposals bear on ways of extending industrial democracy within the framework of capitalist society in Britain today. What we are discussing is not workers' control in the abstract. We are discussing how to extend workers' control in capitalist society. *Full* workers' control is only possible — as I think all of us will agree — *after* the workers have achieved power.

We must remember however, that the working people feel strongly they should have a much greater say in the decisions that affect them in their work situation and in production and distribution. They want this now. Furthermore, modern society, modern industry, objectively cannot be run any longer on the basis of decisions taken by one side of industry, which also happens to be a tiny minority of the population whose interest in the company or factory is almost exclusively a financial one. Such decisions are very narrowly based. Also, it is increasingly recognized that decisions taken in industry are social decisions and this is particularly true in periods such as the present period of economic difficulties, mass unemployment and the introduction of new technologies.

There has been an extension of industrial democracy over the last 100 years in that the range of questions subject to negotiation between the two sides of industry — management and labor — has widened. Today wages, conditions of work, hours, fringe benefits, discipline, etc., are the subject of negotiation and agreement. Where the trade union organization is strong the area subject to collective bargaining has been extended to include the question of redundancy. Having recognized that, we must also admit that these developments are not universal and there are many industries and areas where managerial prerogative prevails or where government intervention has had to be used to give some protection to employees. Above all, it is obvious that real economic and political power is wielded by state-monopoly capital. We have no doubt *even now* that its domination must be curbed. But *how* are the workers to win a greater say in production, in decision-making? *In what way* can the management, which represents capitalist interests, be restricted in regard to unilateral decisions affecting the interests of all working people and society as a whole? This is the crux of the matter.

A basic Marxist thesis is that there is an irreconcilable conflict between capital and labor in the sphere of production and distribution. How then, can the two sides be reconciled in the process of decision-making? I think 'reconcile' is really the wrong word. Everything can only be determined through a confrontation between labor and management (on behalf of capital), while the outcome of each particular struggle, which is continuous within the framework of capitalism, is determined by the balance of strength between the workers on the one hand, and capital on the other. It is important to adhere to this fundamental approach in proposing ways of extending industrial democracy, which is no easy problem.

A debate has been going on for some 10 years on

very topical issues of worker participation in management. We ought to be self-critical, because I believe that Marxism in general and communists in particular — and now I am talking about the British Communist Party, for I know the situation — were somewhat late in joining in this debate. We were almost compelled to start thinking about this problem because suddenly there emerged a whole literature, a whole glossary of new terms, such as "participation,' 'co-determination,' 'co-partnership,' 'joint regulation,' etc. And it is disturbing that much of this literature did not originate in the working-class movement. *The Financial Times* for one, spent a quarter of a million pounds to organize an international seminar in London to which they invited some of the world's outstanding tycoons together with some leading right-wing reformist trade union leaders to discuss the problem of involving workers in management. So we ask ourselves: Why should capital suddenly begin to talk in terms of involving workers in participation?

Different structures and different forms were presented at the seminar. It was suggested that there should be two boards, a supervisory and an executive board. Some were talking about the need of consultation and others, about official trade union representatives on boards. Still others were prepared to 'concede' the need for all workers, whether they belonged to a trade union or not, to have the right to be elected to economic policy-making bodies and so on. Why this solicitude?

In the course of the debate there began to emerge literature and proposals emanating from reformist leaders of the trade unions. Material began also to emerge from other 'leftist' sources. Fairly often the latter coincided almost fully with proposals and ideas coming from big industry and from the reformist trade union leaders.

The issue went beyond discussion or debate. Governments and managements began to act and to put into practice some of the proposals. A special Royal Commission was set up, originally proposed by a Conservative government, and when this government lost the elections, the proposal was actually implemented by a Labour government.

The facts that came out at the Royal Commission were the very high level of strikes, which prompted capital to try and find ways and means of dampening down the struggle. The Commission found that 95 per cent of all the strikes in the late 1960s were unofficial, that is were called against the instructions of the trade union leaders. They were strikes of a national character, sometimes involving a whole industry, sometimes a big multinational firm with many different factories.

The question arises: is extended 'participation' in various forms an attempt by capital to respond *in its own way* to the growth of the working-class movement, its increased strength and militancy, the radicalization of the trade unions? Because it is a fact that in the industrially developed capitalist countries of Europe the trade unions have grown, have developed. We have the highest level of trade union membership in the unions' entire history. (By contrast, trade union struggles show a downward trend in the United States, where there is hardly any question of 'participation'.)

However, we ought to stop and think whether we are not losing the initiative by failing to make constructive proposals so as to meet the workers' aspiration to curb the rights of management in decision-making on production and extend the workers' own rights and influence in this sphere today and not only in the future, not only under socialism.

So we started to examine the whole question. We wanted to find out how the trade unions had made their gains, what methods had proved particularly effective in achieving this or that objective of the working class.

The British trade unions came into existence over 200 years ago. From the first their purpose and objective and function were to limit the ability of capital to impose upon the workers decisions taken unilaterally, above all on wages. By combining, the workers were able to confront the employers. Call it 'negative' workers' control if you will in the sense that the workers were able to stop and declare, 'Your decisions don't suit us. We want a say!'

In other words, the whole concept of trade union, the emergence of trade unions, began with the first step toward workers' control of their work situation. Comrade Müller was certainly right in stressing this in his paper. Of course, the horizon of the trade union movement was narrow at first for two reasons. One, the concept of the prerogative of management to take the decisions was infiltrated into the thinking of the working class. It was a sacred right which could not be challenged, or so it seemed, any more than property rights. Two, the unions were simply weak at that time and only had a vague idea of their functions. But the whole history of trade unions is a history of struggle to share with the management in ultimate decision-making. I say deliberately 'share' and don't say 'joint decision-making.' I don't say 'co-determination,' which is the English rendering of the German 'Mitbestimmung,' because 'Mitbestimmung' implies that there are two opposite sides taking decisions to which they both agree in their common interest. The concept of coming together to discuss and make joint decisions — a concept hallowed by the capitalist state and its legislation — should put us on the alert. We believe it eradicates from working-class ideology the very idea of uncompromising conflict.

We asked ourselves why then, capital now wants to involve the workers in decision-making. Why for instance, does the Secretary of State for Employment in Mrs. Thatcher's government talk about the need of introducing appropriate legislation in this field?

We came to the conclusion that in the present circumstances, with the vast investment that modern capitalism demands, particularly with the scientific and technological revolution, when radically new methods of work are required, when vast 'de-skilling' is taking place, when the integrated

process of production is such that a militant small section of workers can disrupt the whole process of production, for it can call a strike and hold out with the support of the trade unions for a long period if necessary, it becomes vital for capital to make the workers police themselves. To this end the workers must be made to believe that they have a common cause with the capitalists and carry it on in common with the capitalists because they have a stake in it.

When capital failed to prevent the emergence of the trade unions it fell back on its second position. And the second position was: 'We couldn't prevent the emergence of trade unions, so let's absorb them, let's involve them in the Establishment and make them serve us.' This has proved impossible in Britain so far.

One of the most remarkable developments of recent years has been the shop-steward movement. (I believe 'shop steward' has become almost an international word.) Now, what distinguishes a shop steward from a trade union official? The shop steward is a worker, he is elected by the workers on the spot and is subject to re-election every year. His working conditions, his salary or wage are exactly the same as his workmates'. The shop-stewards' movement has developed and was a powerful force in the democratization of the trade union movement, which has made it difficult but not impossible for reformist top union leaders to take decisions on behalf of all workers and ensure that they are implemented.

In any case, it is evident that for the time being the policy of 'absorbing' the trade unions does not produce adequate results. This seems to explain why capital is beginning to think of ways of corrupting the shop stewards, of involving the rank and file worker at the place of work, taking him out of the real work situation and giving the semblance of participation in decision-making. Capital hopes that perhaps the shop steward will be able to deliver the goods because of the trust his workmates put in him.

Our analysis revealed that both internationally and in Britain the days when workers only demanded a say in decision-making on wages and hours have gone. The trade unions and the workers have realized, as Comrade Müller rightly pointed out, that today every decision the management makes, whether on introducing new techniques and technologies, on how much should be invested, where a new factory should be placed, what new commodities should be produced, whether to produce commodities for export or to export capital and establish a production unit abroad in order to sell output — every one of the crucial managerial decisions directly affects the worker, who may or may not retain his job as a result. So the trade unions began to demand that these decisions should be on the table. And capital realizes that it cannot get away from these demands. That we believe, is why capital, at least in Britain, is constantly giving as an example the Federal Republic of Germany, where 'participation' is widespread. It explains in our view, why the Common Market is now preparing to foist upon all members of the EEC legislation on 'participation' which patterns itself on the FRG model of Mitbestimmung, in the hope that involving workers in management will create the illusion that they participate in decision-making and thus eliminate militant struggle by the working class and their unions.

We would note that in the country with the greatest experience of this form of industrial democracy, the Federal Republic of Germany, the adopted system has added very little as we see it, to the workers' power to influence or change decisions. Indeed, it has weakened the trade union organization at the factory level in that Supervisory Board discussions become now and then an alternative to trade union action. The evidence suggests that the German workers have had less influence on decisions than organized workers in Britain. Thus for example, the decision taken by the Supervisory Board of Volkswagen AG to reduce the work force by 25,000 disarmed the workers. The situation was much the same at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, where the workers rejected similar proposals and eventually made the government reconsider its attitude.

The conclusions that we drew are as follows:

Workers have achieved some advances in industrial democracy and made considerable steps forward in workers' control. But we asked ourselves *how* they had achieved this. The answer was obvious. They created no illusions that there is any other way except by confronting the employers and insisting that decisions affecting them be made only by mutual agreement. Of course in capitalist society, every negotiation ends in a compromise, but the character of the compromise will change from day to day because it reflects a particular balance of power existing at a given moment, and we believe the change is for the better. And so, if today the workers have lost, they may be able to win tomorrow if they learn some of the lessons of their loss.

Our experience prompts us to oppose the concept of workers in a private industry participating in a formal way on management boards. We believe that the consequence of that could be a dampening of the struggle, that the illusion could be created of what capital has always wanted, namely getting the workers to think: 'We have a *common* interest, it is our factory; not only mine — it's *your* factory as well.' The employers are telling the workers as it were: 'You help us, you assume responsibility for running our common factory profitably because after all, we must compete in common against somebody else.' In this way the management wins one section of workers after another, urging them to compete against another enterprise, against other workers and this is where the danger of division lurks.

So our general approach is that workers' control is a slogan which has both class and political content. It must be fought for constantly without any illusion that the goal can be achieved within the framework of capitalism, the workers knowing that they can only win control through confrontation. Then workers learn the real limitations to workers'

control under capitalism. Thus we help them win in the struggle for changing the system of society which is a hindrance to *genuine, full workers' control.*

However, within the framework of capitalism we also have a public sector. Only in 1978, the shipbuilding and the aerospace industries were nationalized. That was a result of struggle, *not* a result of decisions taken by some management board. While the public sector still works within the system of state-monopoly capitalism and while the capitalist state tries to use this sector for its own ends, to make it serve the private sector, ideologically it is possible to argue that there should be no fundamental, irreconcilable conflict between the workers in a publicly owned industry and the management, whose objective is not or at least ought not to be, the maximization of profit at all costs and against the workers' interests. It is possible to win the whole community to participate in a solidarity movement with the workers in the public sector in order to advance the policies that the workers are fighting for. Therefore we recognize the need for workers to participate in management in the public sector.

We are in favor of a democratically structured single board system with worker participation, responsible for the running of the enterprise and accountable both to the workers in the industry and to Parliament representing the community as a whole. This single board should have four constituencies:

(a) directors elected from and accountable to the workers in the industry. These representatives should be elected through the trade union machinery and subject to recall. We believe that such directors should not be simultaneously involved as trade union officials or shop stewards;

(b) directors appointed by the TUC and representing the interests of all trade unionists. We believe that to confine worker representation to the workers in the industry could lead to the promotion of sectional interests, whereas what is sought is democratic control in the interests of the people as a whole;

(c) directors elected by and responsible to representative bodies with a special interest, such as for example, metropolitan or county councils, the Welsh and Scottish Assemblies when they are set up;

(d) directors appointed by the government, and who believe in public ownership. One of the weaknesses in the present structure of nationalized industries is that often key people come direct from private industry and are not committed to the principle of nationalized industry and democratic control.

While the size of the board will vary depending on the size of the industry, etc., we believe that the guiding principle must be that the directors representing the workers in the industry and those appointed by the TUC should constitute a majority on the board.

We recognize that expert management is essential and propose that such management should be engaged by contract of employment to implement the board's policy, be accountable to it and available to advise it.

In turn, the board should be accountable to the Minister concerned and to a Parliamentary committee, and should supply material for public discussion and for consideration by Parliament with due regard to the Parliamentary committee's own views.

The shop-stewards' committee should have mandatory consultative rights on policy decisions, including the right to veto appointment of plant management.

Now for a few comments on the proposed structure.

We see a certain danger in the concept that the workers in a public factory or industry should have a decisive say in decision-making on production, marketing and so on. A sectional approach may result in upholding the interests of workers in a particular industry to the detriment of the interests of other workers. And this smacks of anarcho-syndicalism. Indeed, many of those on the ultra-left who support the concept of participating in management as a result of disillusionment with social democracy, the cynicism evident in political parties and in politics itself have drifted back to anarcho-syndicalist trends. Therefore our concrete proposal — how to develop workers' control in the public sector — is that the workers in a particular industry or enterprise should elect not more than a third of the representatives on the controlling body. Another third should be elected by the working class as a whole through the united trade union movement in order to protect the interests of the class and prevent one group of workers from realizing sectional interests against the interest of the working class as a whole. Anyone who is acquainted with the history of trade unions knows what harm sectionalism can do, what divisions it can create among workers.

We are against the concept of two-tier boards being advocated by the Common Market. We believe that the Supervisory Board as it is called, is a body on which the workers sit and which takes overall policy decisions for a year or several years. The *real* power is in the Executive Board, because it is entrusted with the implementation of policy.

And here is another thing. There cannot be and we ought not to permit a conflict of interests in an individual person's mind. When we elect representatives to a board in a public industry we still say it is no substitute for struggle, because we still work in a capitalist society. Hence the important role of the independence of the trade unions to use their organized strength and power in negotiations with the management board even of a publicly owned industry. In capitalist society the unions must be independent, must have no dual loyalties. When you sit on a board you begin to think of what is in the interests of the company as a whole. If you represent the workers you think only of what is in

the interests of the workers. We therefore argue against some of our own militants that the trade union negotiator, whether he is a shop steward or a full-time trade union official, must not be allowed to be a board member. If elected, he ceases to uphold the sole interests of the workers he represents and there is a conflict of interests in his own mind.

Let me give some revealing examples in conclusion. One of the characteristics of today's times is the multinational firms. The state itself cannot control them. How is it possible then, for the national management board of a subsidiary of a multinational firm to take real decisions? Workers can make gains only through confrontation and struggle and they are learning this fast. Ford workers of West Germany and Ford workers in London met in London recently and took joint decisions. They promised to do everything they could to prevent the transfer of jobs from one country to the other, achieve protection against capitalist rationalization and win fundamental improvements in working conditions. Their other common aims are to cooperate on the introduction of new technology, exchange information about the country and so on. This is how the workers are beginning to encroach upon managerial functions, upon the management's right to take unilateral decisions, not as a result of workers' sitting on a Ford board in the FRG but of the workers' combined confrontation with Ford International. They do not allow Ford in Germany to be played off against Ford in Great Britain.

Everyone realizes that the British Steel Corporation is engaged in an actual fight to control the whole industry. In order to make itself more competitive, it is importing coal from the USA, which means posing a threat to the pits in South Wales. I have before me an article from the *Morning Star*. Welsh miners approached the dockers and they agreed in solidarity not to unload the coal that had come from the USA. For two weeks the ship was there. The British Steel Corporation had to negotiate with the miners. What about? The company said it planned to import another 18,000 tons of coal from the USA and to buy an additional 18,000 tons from the Welsh pits. As for future imports, it promised that they would be subject to negotiations in the unions. Here is an example of decision-making that goes well beyond wages, hours and working conditions. The whole economic and commercial policy of an enterprise is decided with an element of workers' control as a result of working-class solidarity. We have a worker director in the steel industry but he could not stop the coal from being imported.

That is basically our approach. That is how we see the problem of developing workers' control.

The communists and public opinion

WMR Round Table

The successes of the progressive, revolutionary forces in many countries of the non-socialist part of the world in the 1970s have evoked, on the one hand a sense of whole-hearted solidarity in the socialist world and among the working people of the whole globe, and on the other a sharply negative reaction from the forces of imperialism seeking to halt the revolutionary processes, frustrate détente, aggravate the international situation and start another cold war. World public opinion is an arena of acute political and ideological struggle and this adds special importance to the problems arising from an analysis of the nature and various characteristics of public opinion as a social phenomenon.

Last year, *WMR* began a discussion of the shaping and functioning of public opinion in the modern world and the attitude of communist and workers' parties to it (see *WMR*, February, June and October, 1979). Below we report on a round table on the subject of 'the communists and public opinion' which was held at *WMR* and attended by party workers and social scientists representing the communist parties of 12 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Finland, GDR, Greece, Poland, South Africa, USSR and the United States.

I. *Nature and role of public opinion in contemporary socio-political structures*

Opening the discussion, *Roland Bauer*, CC member, SUPG, and Chairman of the *WMR* Commission on Science, Culture and Sociological Studies, emphasized that the subject under discussion was not only meaningful for communist and workers' parties but was also characterized by a new and broader content than the traditional Marxist approach to the shaping of the class consiousness of the proletariat and its allies, or to the tasks of politico-ideological work among the workers and broad masses of other working people for the purpose of winning them over for democracy and socialism.

Public opinion in the socialist and capitalist society differs radically in status, functions, properties and features. There are different models of its formation and functioning and accordingly, different approaches to public opinion by the political forces dominant in society, including the lines and modes of its spiritual assimilation.

The communists evidently determine their attitude to the stand and opinion of various groups of the population directly depending on the concrete socio-historical conditions, but it is also clear that this attitude cannot be purely pragmatic, but must include a scientific, theoretical mastery of public

opinion as a social phenomenon and its in-depth and all-round analysis from the standpoint of Marxist-Leninist sociology and the methodology of dialectical and historical materialism.

Public opinion, speakers at the round table said, is a specific form of social consciousness coinciding with the value judgments of various 'sectors' of society on meaningful problems. That is why the analysis of its nature must include two aspects: the epistemological aspect (content of public opinion, its reflection of objective reality) and the sociological aspect (determination of public opinion by social existence and active influence of the former on the latter).

Considering the problems of epistemology, *Karel Rychtarik*, Doctor of Sociological Sciences and Director of the Institute for the Study of Public Opinion in Prague, stressed that on the scale of society public opinion takes shape and is realized on the level both of ordinary and theoretical consciousness. Hence its contradictory content and the presence within it both of true and of false, illusory knowledge.

The relation between the ordinary and the theoretical consciousness within public opinion is a historical magnitude, which tends to change depending on the socio-economic, national and other specifics of a given society and which has qualitatively different values under capitalism and under socialism. Research in the socialist countries has invariably brought out in public opinion a considerable influence of theoretical consciousness, specially when its comes to expressing the people's attitude to the basis principles and goals of social development.

When analyzing public opinion, *John Pittman*, CC Political Bureau member, CPUSA, said there is also a need to reckon with the fact that it is a composite of the ordinary consciousness of the masses, of social psychology and prevailing ideologies. On the one hand, opinions, sentiments and moods constitute public opinion, the ordinary consciousness of the masses, their reactions to day-to-day, immediate conditions of work and life. Before the initial impact, the perception or sensation of a form of exploitation or oppression becomes crystallized as an opinion or sentiment, it passes through the prism of ideology, of social ideas and concepts which are systematized and theoretically substantiated reflections of social being deduced by ideologists, 'the thinking representatives of a class,' to reflect social relations and processes from the standpoint of their class interest.

V. Korobeynikov, D.Sc. (Philos.), Institute of Sociological Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences, said that the specifics of public opinion also consist in the fact that it is not a purely spiritual entity. Let us recall that Marx identified the theoretical (scientific), aesthetic, religious and spiritual-practical modes in assimilating the world. Public opinion undoubtedly falls under the latter head and it is this that paves the way for an understanding of the complex structure of the phenomenon.

The close connection between public opinion and human behavior, the transition from judgment to action are of much importance for practice and indicate the effectiveness of ideological and political education among the masses. That is why it was pointed out at the 25th Congress of the CPSU that the party regards as its constant concern the efforts to educate communist consciousness and a readiness, will and ability to build communism.

In analyzing the social nature of public opinion, *Kurt Rückmann*, D.Sc. (Philos.), member of the Agitation Commission under the CC Political Bureau, SUPG, said, cardinal importance attaches to its class substance. There is good reason why Marx, Engels and Lenin considered above all the public opinion not of society as a whole but of its individual classes.

Under capitalism, the content of public opinion reflects the antagonistic class contradictions and the objective antithesis of interests between the ruling and oppressed classes. In the process of socialist transformations there emerges and steadily gains in depth an identity of the interests of all members of society, being ever more fully expressed in a fundamental consensus of all classes and sections of the population. The ideological basis for shaping this kind of public opinion is provided by the world view of the working class. That is why even under socialism, public opinion retains its class character, although there it is increasingly the common opinion of the whole nation.

Polichronis Vais, CC member, Communist Party of Greece, said that because of the class content of public opinion account must also be taken of the fact that there are problems and phenomena in society which have a much broader basis than class interests. These are, in particular, the problems which are usually called national problems and which shape a similar consciousness among various sections of the population belonging to different classes and taking a different stand on other issues. Of course, this relates mainly to broad sections of the working people, and not to the 'upper crust' of the bourgeois society. Love for one's country and for freedom and the urge for national independence can shape a broad public opinion forming a result which combines the various components of public opinion.

Elaborating on this idea, Professor *Boris Grushin*, D. Sc. (Philos.), a staff member of *WMR*, said that this reality sharply poses the question of the social nature of the vehicle of public opinion as a specific type of social consciousness (which is not identical with the class forms of consciousness, being a typical case of so-called mass consciousness). At the same time this also produces the problem of the relation between public opinion and class consciousness.

If one were to compare the aggregation of views characteristic of say, the class consciousness of the working class with the actual stand taken by workers in their day-to-day activity, one could record three fundamental situations corresponding to the existence within the working class of various types of consciousness: (a) when the public opinion of the

workers (views expressed by them on this or that occasion) coincides with class consciousness and is a direct expression of the latter; (b) when public opinion differs from class consciousness but more or less corresponds to it and is determined by it; (c) when public opinion is visibly at odds with class consciousness and is in an antagonistic relations to it. The correlation of all these three 'sectors' of public opinion in the working class, their proportions and specific weights evidently show the measure of success scored by Marxists, by communists in the revolutionary education of the proletariat's class consciousness and self-awareness. On the other hand, they also demonstrate the measure and depth of still outstanding problems.

There was a lively discussion on the question of the limits within which public opinion exists or in other words, what is one, after all, to regard as public opinion: is it to be any collective judgment? This question arose above all in connection with the problem of competence in the expression of views by the public.

Andrzej Lawrowski, D. Sc. (Polit.), Director of the Institute of Contemporary Problems of Capitalism, Poland, said that bourgeois politicians and ideologists, alarmed over the socio-political activity of the masses, seek in every way to narrow down the social basis of the subject of public opinion, to confine it to a circle of 'specialists,' so-called competent persons — politicians, military men, 'pressure groups,' spokesmen for big corporations and mass-media men. That is why bourgeois sociology has broadly accepted the idea that public opinion is élitist, that the masses of working people are allegedly organically incapable of expressing any views on the intricate problems of politics, economics, etc. But the practice of broad public-opinion polls in the capitalist countries clashes with this conception, for it extends the limits of public opinion to the scale of the whole population in the countries concerned.

Nevertheless, the problem of competence not only exists but is highly important, according to *Y. Georgiyev*, BCP CC alternate member and head of the BCP CC's Sociological Information Center, and *Wieslaw Klimczak*, the PUWP's representative on the Journal, among others. Various groups of the population naturally reveal a different level of understanding in the discussion of many problems and cannot equally take part in their constructive solution. This in effect, proves that public opinion is 'stratified,' and within it one can and must draw a distinction not only between the 'horizontal' structure (number of standpoints) but also the 'vertical' structure, which is a definite hierarchy of judgments, starting with the most incompetent statements and ending with the opinion of experts. In the socialist countries, the communist parties constantly seek to enhance the competence and consciousness of broad masses of people by carrying on tremendous work for their political, economic and technical education and their broader participation in various types of social management. But for researchers and organs of administration, incompetent opinions are also opinions of unquestionable interest (even for the purposes of decision-making), especially from the standpoint of assessing the actual state of mass consciousness. This means that the criterion of competence — for all its importance — cannot be used in defining the limits of public opinion. Besides, competence is a relative magnitude depending on the subject of the judgments, so that the volume and make-up of the competent and incompetent groups of the population tend constantly to change.

Similarly, said *Jan Debrouwere*, Political Bureau member and head of the CC's International Department of the Communist Party of Belgium, the criterion of opinion awareness also fails to work if considered from that angle. After all, actual public opinion always consists of individual views of a differing degree of awareness, including opinions of which there is no awareness at all but which nevertheless not only exist but are quite objectively expressed in various political processes, like elections.

The participants in the round table unanimously supported the idea contained in preliminary *WMR* publications that the role of public opinion in the life of contemporary societies tends markedly to grow. There is good ground for saying today that the 20th century, especially its second half, is characterized by qualitative changes in the functioning of public opinion: it is becoming an essential, constantly operating — and most importantly — effective element in the life of most contemporary states, and is beginning to take an active part in the formulation and adoption of political, ideological and many other decisions virtually at all, including the highest, levels of social management.

At the same time speakers emphasized, the Marxist analysis cannot be confined to such a general statement but must involve a concretization of the actual potentialities, forms and limits of public-opinion action in the different socio-economic and politico-ideological structures of capitalism and of socialism.

One must see in particular, Vais said, that in socialist society the growing role of public opinion receives important additional impulses through the everyday efforts and assistance of the state. By contrast, under capitalism the state seeks in every way to resist the growing influence of public opinion, because the social and political institutions set up by the monopoly bourgeoisie naturally pursue above all the interests of the latter.

The participants in the round table devoted special attention to the factors behind the growing influence of public opinion in the life of contemporary societies. The following were brought out in the discussion:

— the new alignment of forces in the international arena arising from the emergence and development of the socialist system and also the overcoming of the erstwhile isolation of the various areas of the globe, extension of contacts and ex-

change of information among countries, regions and groups of countries, processes which acquire special importance under the policy of peaceful coexistence and détente;

— the spread of the scientific and technical revolution, which leads to a marked growth of education mong the people, a higher level of information among people in various spheres of social life, and in consequence, to a growth of their political and social activity;

— in-depth processes leading to the massiveness of virtually every sphere of life in modern societies and resulting in a growing role of the masses not only as objects but also as subjects of historical, social action, including the mechanisms of effective social management.

Johan Von Bonsdorff, member of the International Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Finland and Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper *Folktidningen Ny Tid*, stressed that the importance of each of these factors should be evaluated in accordance with the socio-political conditions in which public opinion has to function. For instance, the seemingly obvious influence of the spread of education on public activity actually depends to a large extent on the concrete social characteristics of the education system in a given society.

Georgiyev dealt with the factors underlying the growing role of public opinion under socialism, among which he listed the growth of the people's educational, cultural and political level, which leads to an extension of the sphere of public activity and to an increase in the number of problems on which public opinion can be competently expressed; the development of the mass media which entails marked changes in the information available to the public; the growing importance of work collectives in the socialist country's economic and political life; and the further unfolding of socialist democracy, which implies an ever more active involvement of the masses in managing all the affairs of society.

II. *The shaping, functioning and study of public opinion*

The struggle for public opinion, speakers at the round table emphasized, is now an important aspect of the current class and ideological struggle. Its concrete content on the scale of the whole world is connected above all with the most important political issues, like the public struggle for détente, the further enhancement of the socialist-community countries' role in world developments and social emancipation and national liberation in the developed capitalist and developing countries. This struggle is expressed in a clear social orientation of views, values and norms which the socio-economic systems opposed to each other seek to spread among broad sections of the population, in the very choice of questions and themes to which public opinion is drawn in individual countries and groups of countries and also the nature of the methods and means used in the process.

A key mechanism in the shaping of public opinion, Lawrowski said, is provision of information to the public on the events and processes going on in the world. Under capitalism, this mechanism is skillfully used by the ruling classes to distort and present a biased picture of reality both within the capitalist countries and elsewhere.

Here, concealment of the truth and important social information is only one of the methods used by institutions in the capitalist society which are engaged in the shaping of views and notions among the public at large. *Alfred Matzinger*, member of the CC Secretariat, Communist Party of Austria, *Bruno Furch*, CC member, CP Austria and others showed that downright lying is just as broadly used in the practice of these institutions as open or subtle distortion of the facts.

In this connection, the round table considered the mechanisms used to manipulate the mass consciousness by the ruling classes in capitalist society and the scope of this manipulation.

Capitalist management, said Rückmann, has always used violence and fraud, the latter involving the manipulation of the people's consciousness, i.e., the creation of a semblance designed to substitute for the actual reality. The main purpose and meaning of this activity consists in an effort to integrate — on the level of consciousness — the working masses with the capitalist society and to create the impression that they are allegedly immune to the ideas and practice of socialism. Hence the tremendous scope of the manipulatory activity by the mass media and various educational and propaganda organs under capitalism.

By contrast, it is in principle alien to the nature of socialism to dupe the masses and produce false images of reality. In socialist society, the shaping of public opinion is a part of the development of socialist consciousness and of the communist education of the working people in a spirit of political activity and civic maturity.

Manipulation of mass consciousness in capitalist society, speakers said, is an incontrovertible fact and a basic characteristic of the ideological practice of present-day imperialism. But one has to take a sober view of the actual limits and real results of this activity.

First, the interests in public opinion on the part of the numerous organs of capitalist, including ideological, management springs not only from the purposes of manipulation. It is also based on the ruling class's urge to solve other problems, above all those connected with socio-political and ideological intelligence.

Second, Debrouwere and Matzinger emphasized, from the fact that under capitalism public opinion is massively doctored by bourgeois propaganda it does not follow that as a result we always have to deal with a 'doctored' mass consciousness. The manipulatory potentialities of capitalism are not boundless because public opinion is a reflection not only of the dominant ideology but also of the acute contradictions inherent in capitalism, which means that it is a field of constant class struggle.

The factors and sources in the shaping of public opinion in modern types of societies was the next problem discussed at the round table.

The shaping of views and moods, Rückmann said, has actually never been — and cannot be — a purely spontaneous process, if only because the appearance of any opinion results from the active work of consciousness. In present-day conditions, the production and spread of mass views results primarily from the purposeful activity of numerous social institutions and establishments. In face of the information they transmit, man remains independent to some extent, having in particular the possibility of selecting the reports he is interested in, and of accepting or not accepting them. But on the whole the shaping of public opinion is characterized by a different trend, namely the ever increasing switch from views which spring from individual or group experience to those borrowed from 'outside.'

N. Bokarev, D.Sc.(Philos.) of the Institute of Sociological Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences and many others noted the exceptionally important role of the modern mass media which have a truly vast 'conductive capability.' Hence also the tremendous social responsibility of the mass media for the orientation and consequences of the development of mass consciousness.

Speakers cited many facts on the scale and great effectiveness of the press, radio and television, but they also cast doubt on the idea that the mass media were allegedly almighty. This idea, first circulated by bourgeois sociology in the 1950s, needs to be critically analyzed and corrected. Indeed, the mass media can do a great deal but not everything, because public opinion is shaped in a much larger context of socio-economic, ideological and political conditions characterizing life in present-day societies.

In the last two decades, Pittman said, U.S. public opinion has undergone a change of potentially great significance. This change formed the premise for a number of decisions by the 22nd National Convention of the CPUSA last August, which affirmed that there is now a majority sentiment for peace and against the huge military budgets, a majority sentiment for ending inflation and the system of extortionate taxation of the working people, a majority sentiment against racism. These changes are above all of a class character and are a massive response to the growing exploitation and oppression by the monopolies and the state, and the steady worsening of working and living conditions for broad sections of the population, although the influence of socio-economic processes on the shaping of opinions, views and attitudes among the masses is intricately mediated.

The sharp crisis of bourgeois democracy, Debrouwere added, has a substantial influence on the state of public opinion in the capitalist countries. Apart from everything else, it tends to produce a loss of interest in politics and the spread of political indifference among some sections of the population so producing some new phenomena in the shaping of public opinion. One of these has highly dangerous potential consequences, namely the growing role of charismatic leaders, like Tindemans in Belgium or Franz Josef Strauss in the FRG, who have won authority among the masses not through some political programs but exactly through the lack of such programs, by replacing them with various breezy slogans.

Jose Miguel Varas, CC member, Communist Party of Chile, considered the role of culture in the shaping of public opinion. He described in detail his party's work with the masses in the period before the fascist coup, including the use of diverse elements of cultural and aesthetic activity; poetic, musical, dramatic, etc., creativity by professional artists and the masses themselves. His conclusion was that in some conditions, notably those connected with the traditional specifics of the nation's life, elements of aesthetic culture frequently have an equally important and perhaps an even greater role in the shaping of political mass consciousness than the mass media.

Considering the question of the relation between social and personal characteristics of the individual in the shaping of public opinion, Korobeinikov said, we must of course give preference to the former. But Klimczak added, it is important not to lose sight of the effect of 'secondary' factors connected with the peculiarities of the individual consciousness of men and their influence on their immediate surroundings and various informal groups. The results of sociological studies in Poland for instance, show that the family has a highly important role to play in this area. Accordingly, in its documents of the past several years dealing with society's socio-political development the PUWP has invariably emphasized the importance of the institution of the family in solving various problems.

Among the problems arising from the functioning of public opinion much attention was given to the role of the public in social management.

In this context, speakers said, the radical distinction between conditions in capitalist and socialist society has an effect on the forms in which public opinion is related to the organs of social management and the actual role of public opinion in the adoption of responsible political and social decisions.

Under capitalism, there is a marked development of the historical antagonism between the purposes of government (formulated by the ruling classes) and the interests of broad sections of the population, i.e., between the 'rulers' and the 'ruled.' This leaves a visible imprint on the attitude of the institutions of power to public opinion and also on the ways in which it is recorded and used in the practice of capitalist management.

In acute social conflicts, when some 'sectors' of public opinion oppose various elements of the existing system, the capitalist class resorts to its well-tried methods of repression, attacking the masses with its apparatus of economic and police coercion. But this produces only a temporary

'tranquillity.' That is why present-day capitalism has to change its strategy and tactics, making use of a broad range of diverse means and methods in its relations with public opinion.

Some forms in which the ruling exploiter classes record public opinion, Grushin said, are patently 'protective,' being designed to eliminate or prevent mass tensions. (This is done above all by a steady and purposeful brainwashing of mass consciousness through the numerous institutions of education, culture, information and propaganda. There is also the use of diverse methods of satisfying the claims and requirements of public opinion, creation of relevant conditions for its functioning and expression, numerous 'outlets,' 'fulcra' etc.). At the same time, on the basis of their long experience of working with public opinion, the ruling classes of the capitalist society have long since drawn the conclusion that it can also be used to solve purely 'positive' problems, like optimization of managerial processes variously connected with the activity of broad strata of the population. That is the basis on which a set of formulas is worked out for the active use of public opinion in politics, culture and other areas of social life.

However, speakers said in the course of the discussion, this characterization calls for essential reservations. The chief of these is that every participation by public opinion in capitalist management is effected not through the good will of the ruling classes but as a result of struggles by progressive public opinion, by the masses against the organs of management in the resolution of social conflicts.

The connections between public opinion and political decision-making and socio-economic planning under socialism were considered in detail by Professor Zbigniew Sufin, D. Sc. (Soc.), Director of the Institute of the Basic Problems of Marxist-Leninism, PUWP CC, who emphasized that the study of public opinion on various issues does not yet produce all the necessary knowledge for the adoption of the relevant decisions (because any decision must rest on a large number of data on the objective state of things), but he also noted that the study of subjective assessments of this or that problem under socialism is an important prerequisite for decision-making and the management of socio-economic processes.

Socialism is a society without antagonistic class contradictions, a society in which the people are morally and politically united. Any social assessments, including critical ones, are formulated in that society on the basis of recognition of the socialist system. An important factor which determines the functioning of public opinion here involves the positive attitude of people to the organs of power and a high sense of trust in the lines and methods of social management. That is why socialism's political system includes many mechanisms for bringing out the opinions, requirements and interests of men, their subsequent generalization and consideration in the process of decision-making. Of course, even under socialism an expression of public opinion is not in itself either a form in which power is exercised or a form of direct influence on decision-making. But here it is an essential and necessary element of this process.

Each communist party, speakers said, naturally proceeds from the concrete conditions in its multifaceted activity shaping and ensuring the effective functioning of public opinion, its study and consideration.

In the capitalist countries, Bonsdorff said, in particular, such activity on the part of the communists has invariably to face many serious difficulties, even if the communist party (like the Communist Party of Finland) is a member of the government. One of these is how the communists can best and more fully convey their views to the broad public, views which are distinct from those of the other parties of the coalition. The fact that the communist party has no access to basic channels of mass communication results in considerable complications and frequently produces confusion among the public concerning the communists' actual policy.

Matzinger spoke of the specific conditions in which the Communist Party of Austria has to work. Radio and television in my country, he said, are owned by the state and pursue an avowed anti-communist policy which is expressed not only in the content of its programs but also in the fact that the CP Austria is virtually deprived of access to these key channels of information. In the press, there is now a flourishing of so-called independent publications which refuse the communists the opportunity to declare their views even in the form of paid advertisements. Of course, the party has its central newspaper and publishes duplicated local papers. But it continues to lay great emphasis in its activity on oral forms of political and educational work, which are less effective than the bourgeois mass media.

Vusizwe Seme, South Africa, described a totally different situation. In South Africa, he said, the communists do not have even the very limited opportunities which are available in the West European countries. They have to work in clandestine conditions and these set before the party many peculiar problems concerning the methods, forms and content of its activity.

The chief of these problems (in this aspect) is how to raise the level of class consciousness of the masses in the atmosphere of continued fascist terrorism. There is no need for any special public opinion polls to show that the overwhelming majority of the oppresssed Black population of South Africa rejects racism and national oppression. But we have to intensify our efforts to raise the consciousness of the working class in respect to a more profound understanding of the socialist prospects for society's development.

Speakers in the discussion noted the specific aspects of the communist parties' work in shaping the mass consciousness in the various countries and emphasized the existence of many common elements characterizing the objective functioning of public opinion in various groups of countries.

An important uniformity which can be observed

in most developed capitalist countries, Pittman said, is the further concentration of mass information and ever greater control of the mass media by monopoly capital. In all the capitalist and developing countries, the communists need to resist this and to combat the growing control by the monopolies in the sphere of information.

The winning of public opinion, Vais said, entails not only correct orientation of public opinion on various problems but also stimulation of its readiness to take vigorous action. For that reason, this is a difficult and drawn-out process. It requires that the communists should thoroughly work out their plan of action based above all on a scientific study of the problems involved and the possible ways and means of solving them. Such a plan must take into account the existing and expected attitudes of the masses and the possible responses by various classes and sections of the population to the proposed decisions. The communists must also have effective methods in shaping public opinion, including instruments enabling them to reliably assess this opinion, keep track of its trends, etc.

Of crucial importance here is the effort to ensure conditions for the open and broad expression of views by all the democratic sectors of present-day capitalist society. Hence the important tasks facing the communists in their struggle against any curtailments in the already curtailed bourgeois democracy to which the ruling classes constantly resort.

In this context, said *Robert Francis*, representative of the CP Belgium on the Journal, special importance attaches to the functioning of the non-conformist, critical consciousness in capitalist society. Its further development in a constructive direction fundamentally extends the basis for the activity of communist parties and creates favorable conditions for their work in enhancing the class consciousness of the working class and all other working people.

Some speakers characterized a number of general aspects in the party's work in shaping public opinion under developed socialism. This is as a rule carried on, Bokarev said, through the complex use of all means of information and education of the masses available in socialist society. But in tackling concrete problems, preference may be given to one or several means. Thus, in shaping opinions on the politically most important problems special importance attaches to the political and educational activity of party organizations, party propagandists, political information officers.

In the final analysis, Klimczak said, the most effective methods of shaping the socialist consciousness of the masses is the party's daily political work on the shop floor and in the residential areas, with party members setting a personal example, seeking to convince the people and involve them in the common endeavor. It is a duty not only of the specialized institutions of management operating in the sphere of ideology and education to spread the party's ideas: that is a duty of all party members.

Rychtarik and Sufin dealt with the problem of studying public opinion and using the results of such studies under socialism. Sufin brought out several specific features characterizing the study of mass opinion in light of Marxist sociology. The first of these is the complex nature of the studies, according to which analysis should take into account not only the characteristics of opinions as such but also the objective status of the subject of opinions, people's participation in production and consumption, their way of life, etc. The second specific feature is the establishment of in-depth ties between the subjective and objective aspects of public consciousness, with the latter going beyond the limited number of population characteristics that are traditional for bourgeois sociology, but involving a much broader set of data relating to the enterprise, region and the country as a whole. The third essential feature of Marxist studies of public opinion is consideration of the dynamic characteristics of the objects being studied, because it is not enough to obtain merely a picture of public opinion, Sufin said, there is also a need to know the structure and dynamics of the processes of development going on in society and reflected in the realm of consciousness.

The concrete methods used to measure public opinion under socialism were described by *B. Sabrsulova*, Cand.Sc. (Philos.), director of the Institute for the Study of Public Opinion in Bratislava. The sources of public opinion study were analyzed by Georgiyev, who emphasized that alongside the purely sociological modes of solving the problem (representative polls of the population, an analysis of the content of texts, etc.), extensive use under socialism is also made of the party's direct organizational and political work among the masses of working people.

Speakers at the round table noted that communist parties in the capitalist countries have to operate in totally different conditions in studying public opinion. The chief of the methods available to them in tackling this problem, Vais said, is a thorough study of the political and economic struggle by the working people. The scope of strikes and other actions by the working class and its allies provides the party with an opportunity of assessing the state of public opinion in the country at this or that time, as a basis for elaborating its strategy and tactics for work among the masses. All other forms and methods have a much smaller role to play.

In this connection, the participants in the round table considered the question of the possibility for the communist parties in the capitalist countries making use of public opinion polls held by governmental and other institutions and services.

The CPUSA, Pittman said, seeks other, new forms for studying and evaluating mass opinion. Polls and studies carried out by the services in the country are designed to extract profits and strengthen the social basis of state-monopoly capitalism. That is why their results are not objective and distort the picture of the nation's public opinion.

Bonsdorff described a different kind of experience. For his party, he said, the study of public opinion means more than taking opinion polls among the population. Like other parties, the CP

Finland relies above all on direct contacts with the masses in the residential areas and on the shop floor. But on the other hand, it makes use in its work of methods of polling public opinion, including cooperation with other parties involving participation by bourgeois sociologists.

In conclusion, Bauer said that the round table confirmed the need for an in-depth theoretical analysis of the problems discussed by means of Marxist social science. That is the only basis on which it is possible practically to master the mechanisms of shaping and functioning mass consciousness, so achieving important political results in the effort to win over the masses for socialism and involve them in active construction of the new society.

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the press

Facts of history — against distortions

I

A SURVEY OF SOME BOURGEOIS PRESENTATIONS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The Second World War was the most bloody and destructive of the wars started by imperialism. Although 35 years have passed since it ended, the causes, character, the results and lessons of the war and the significance of individual battles and fronts continue to attract unflagging public interest. Tens of thousands of books have been written about the war and it remains the subject of innumerable films, television productions, radio programs and newspaper and magazine articles.

The history of the war holds a prominent place in the present battle of ideas. Marxist scholars as well as progressive historians in capitalist and developing countries are giving an impartial and comprehensive picture of its causes and character and of its key battles and correctly assess its results and lessons, which they regard as a forceful warning to those who are today brandishing nuclear-missile weapons and threatening mankind with incalculably greater suffering and destruction. As regards bourgeois publications (over 10,000 books about the war have been published in the USA alone), they usually misrepresent the history of the war. In pandering to the aggressive ambitions of the monopolies, they endeavor to exonerate imperialism and show that it is not the main cause of wars; to shift if not all, then at least some of the blame for the war to socialism and thereby undermine its growing international prestige in the struggle for world peace and security; to slow down and disunite the revolutionary movement; to justify the aggressive policies of the bellicose circles of world imperialism, particularly the USA and its NATO allies.

The principal part in distorting the facts is played by a long-standing 'cartel' of politicians and historians in the leading capitalist countries, institutions studying military history and special state agencies. For example, the Pentagon has brought out a set of fundamental works (more than 100 volumes) about the war of 1939-1945. The core of this huge publication is a series of about 85 volumes under the general title *U.S. Army in World War II.* In Britain, the basic publication of this kind is the 80-volume *Official History of the Second World War* written under government auspices. In the FRG it has been announced that a 10-volume history headed *The German Reich and the Second World War (Das Deutsche Reich und der zweite Weltkrieg)* is to be published (the first two volumes were brought out in 1979) by the military history department of the Bundeswehr. In Japan the National Defense Agency has published a 96-volume *Official History of the War and Greater East Asia (Daitoa shensho kokan shan shi).* These are only a few examples.

The guidelines in these and other official publications are amplified and streamlined, but in the final analysis all the different variants are parroted by bourgeois historians writing about the Second World War.

Imperialism's spokesmen have produced volumes upon volumes about the Second World War for the mass reader. The first such history of the war (journal format) was published by Purnell, a British printing firm. With its eye-catching make-up and the names of widely-known bourgeois scholars as the authors, it attracted a fairly large readership and in recent years has been translated into the Italian, Spanish and other languages and put on sale in many capitalist and some developing countries. In the USA Ballantine Books cashed in on the popularity of publications of this kind by bringing out a series of cheap paperbacks about the Second World War and the Soviet-German front.

In this spate of literature falsification is finding wide scope and developing in the following main directions. First, the causes of the war are perverted;

second, the Soviet Union's part in defeating the aggressors is belittled; and third, every effort is made to magnify the myth about a 'Soviet military threat.'

The philosophico-sociological foundation of the bourgeois rendering of the causes of the Second World War is a deliberately simplified non-class interpretation of the very concept 'war.' For instance, the American historian T. Ropp regards war merely as 'a violent conflict between states.'[1] There have always been wars and they will continue to break out as long as there are people in the world — this is the cornerstone of widely touted bourgeois views. It is backed by various anthropological, theological and other 'arguments' and also by the idealist theory of violence.

Of course, Lenin's definition of war as the continuation of the imperialist politics 'of the powers concerned — and the *various classes* within these countries — in a definite period' (*Coll. Works*, Vol. 21, p. 219) is hitting the bourgeois historians engaged in providing an apologia of capitalism. Hence their rejection of that definition and efforts to shift the responsibility for the Second World War from imperialism to 'human behavior' and their explanation that the causes of that war lie in the 'impulsive' decisions of politicians (Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, Chamberlain, Daladier), in secondary or accidental circumstances. They distort the class character of war as a social phenomenon and together with it, the socio-political nature of fascism as an undisguised terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary forces of monopoly capitalism.

This explains the unceasing, persevering attempts to justify the policy of appeasing the fascist aggressors pursued by the ruling circles of Britain and France with U.S. support and the 1938 Munich agreement, which placed Czechoslovakia at the mercy of the nazis. An example of this is the assertion, made by the West German historian G. Niedhart at an international symposium in Cologne in December 1979, that in the prewar years Britain 'held firmly to the liberal model of ensuring peace.'[2] The course toward supporting Germany's remilitarization as early as in the 1920s and 1930s and the prewar efforts of the Western governments to direct German aggression against the USSR likewise, strange as it may seem, 'fitted into' the 'liberal model.' In *United States History*, published in 1977 as a handbook for young people, it is alleged that the Munich pact was concluded 'to appease Hitler and thereby avoid war.'[3]

It now turns out that appeasement was both 'wise and highly realistic.'[4] In order to whitewash the appeasement policy, bourgeois historians divert the censure of the masses from those who orchestrated and abetted the war and impute the blame to the USSR. 'Too long,' one of them laments, 'have Great Britain and France borne the entire burden of shame.'[5] But distortions cannot blot out the shameful past. It cannot be denied that the Munich agreement cleared the way for the Second World War and confronted the USSR with the fact that what amounted to a bloc of imperialist powers had been ranged against it.

The main issues on which bourgeois ideologists concentrate their speculations are the 1939 Moscow Soviet-British-French talks and in particular, the Soviet-German non-aggression pact. The Soviet Union, concedes Jacques Bariety, Director of Strasbourg University's Institute of Modern History, 'adopted a serious approach to these decisive talks.'[6] But in the same breath he asserts that the Soviet Union 'was profoundly mistrustful of the West's sincere desire to conclude an agreement with it.'[7] The truth is that this 'sincere desire' was exactly what the Western countries did not have. At the talks the British government sought to foist unilateral commitments on the Soviet Union and avoid making any concrete commitment to go to the USSR's assistance in the event it was attacked by nazi Germany. More, behind the back of the Soviet Union Britain conducted secret negotiations with nazi Germany with the purpose of making a deal at Poland's expense and bringing the German armies to the Soviet frontiers. Acting perfidiously, the capitalist powers signalled to Hitler that the Soviet Union had no allies and that Germany was free to attack Poland and then the USSR without the risk of a confrontation with the West. During the cold war years the American historian Hanson Baldwin went so far as to express regret that the Western nations had lost the opportunity to act in a united front against the Soviet Union after it was attacked by nazi Germany on June 22, 1941.[8]

The last possibility of countering fascist aggression by collective measures and preventing the Second World War was lost when the Western powers deadlocked the Moscow talks. The Soviet Union was forced into a difficult position. International imperialism's plans of striking at the USSR from the West and the East were near to materialization (it will be recalled that at the time Soviet and Mongolian troops were already locked in forced battle with the Japanese aggressors along the Khalkhin Gol in Asia).

In this situation, which was dangerous to the USSR, the Soviet government decided to accept Germany's offer of a non-aggression pact. Loath as it was to take this step it enabled the Soviet Union temporarily to ward off the military threat from the West and as subsequent developments showed, win almost two years in order to strengthen and improve its defenses. This perspicacious policy of the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government neutralized the attempts of the imperialists to drag the USSR into the war in 1939 and upset their anti-Soviet front. This is what motivates the continued savage attacks of Western reactionary circles against the Soviet decision to sign a treaty with Germany.

Bourgeois historians have developed a theory of decisive battles of the Second World War in order to 'prove' that the crucial role in defeating the fascist-militarist bloc was played not by the Soviet Union but by the USA and Britain.

These battles (depending on the historian they

number from five to 20) include El-Alamein (Egypt) and Tunisia in the North Africa theater, the naval battle at Midway Island and the fighting for Guadalcanal in the Pacific theater and only one battle on the Soviet-German front — the battle of Stalingrad. Thus, the vast majority of decisive battles were fought in the theatres involving British and U.S. troops. An unfoundedly exaggerated priority is given to the Pacific and North Africa theaters, while a secondary place is accorded to the main theater, the Soviet-German front. Many bourgeois historians completely ignore the Moscow, Kursk and other major battles on that front.

The incompatibility of the scale and most importantly, of the results and military-political effects of these battles are obvious to any unbiased analyst. For example, in the fighting at El-Alamein in October and November 1942 the British faced four German and eight Italian divisions with a total complement of 80,000 effectives. Moreover, in the course of the operation the core of the fascist troops succeeded in retreating and thereby avoiding a total rout. On the other hand, in the fighting for Stalingrad the numerical strength of the German forces exceeded 1,000,000 effectives. During only the Soviet counter-offensive at Stalingrad in the period from November 19, 1942 to February 2, 1943, the Soviet troops crushed 32 German and satellite divisions and three brigades. The enemy lost more than 800,000 men.[9] It was this battle that laid the beginning for a radical turn in the war, which was developed and made irreversible in the subsequent operations of the Soviet Army.

As regards the Tunisia campaign, the number of German and Italian prisoners (130,000, according to the latest estimates[10]) taken by the British and Americans likewise can in no way be compared with the results of the Battle of Stalingrad or say, the 50-day Battle of Kursk in which nearly 30 fascist divisions were crushed and casualties totalling half a million men were inflicted on the enemy.

In the battle at Midway Island on June 4-6, 1942, the U.S. Navy inflicted heavy losses on militarist Japan (four aircraft carriers, one heavy cruiser and 332 aircraft, most of which sank with the carriers)[11] but did not end the Japanese Navy's superiority in the Pacific. This battle too, did not perceptibly influence the overall course of the Second World War. Approximately the same may be said of the operation on Guadalcanal, where a reinforced U.S. marine division landed in August 1942. The decisive battles and, together with them, the turn in the Pacific came much later. Little wonder that in his assessment of the Midway and Guadalcanal battles on January 7, 1943, the U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt told the U.S. Congress that they were essentially defensive and 'part of the delaying strategy that characterized this phase of the war.'[12]

Marxist historiography is giving the lie to the bourgeois distortions, consistently and convincingly showing the untenability of the bourgeois 'theories,' including the 'theory of decisive battles.' Many of the works of Marxist historians and military specialists on the war are published in the USSR. One of the most important of these is the 12-volume *A History of the Second World War, 1939-1945*. It must be emphasized that in their works Soviet historians assess the war contribution of the USA, Britain, China, France, Canada and other nations of the anti-Hitlerite coalition, and also of the Resistance and of the peoples of colonies and dependent countries circumstantially, impartially and on their merits. Marxist works about the war are published also in other socialist countries. Historians of these countries are completing a joint concise history of the Second World War. A major contribution to giving an unbiased picture of the war has been made by Marxist historians in the USA, Britain, France, Italy and some other capitalist countries. In their works and periodical press the communists rebut those who disparage the significance of the Soviet-German front in defeating the fascists. For example, in its criticism of N. Longmate's *When We Won the War, The Story of Victory in Europe*, a futile attempt to belittle the Soviet Union's contribution to the defeat of the fascist-militarist bloc, the *Morning Star*, newspaper of the British left, wrote: 'Despite the magnificent efforts of the British, Commonwealth and American forces on the Western front, no one will surely deny that by far the toughest and bitterest fighting was on the Eastern front, where the Russians had been locked in combat with the bulk of the Wehrmacht since 1941.'[13]

Bourgeois historians have no other option but to maneuver. They 'refurbish' battered concepts and theories and have recourse to greater flexibility in order to make their arguments credible. An example of this is, in particular the 'theory of decisive battles,' which has undergone modifications in recent years. Bourgeois historians now have to concede that in addition to the Stalingrad battle, the battles at Moscow and Kursk were also of decisive significance. One of them, Hanson Baldwin whom I have already mentioned, writes in his new book, without mentioning his former declaration that only the Stalingrad battle was of significance, that the 'battle of Moscow was a turning point in World War II — more so than Stalingrad.'[14]

Moreover, even the 'theory of decisive battles' itself is by no means accepted by all Western bourgeois historians. Those who try to present an impartial analysis note the vital significance of the operations on the Soviet-German front. The French historian Henri Michel writes that Soviet historians justifiably see the Stalingrad battle as the 'crucial victory marking a turning point in the Second World War,'[15] while the British historian A. Taylor notes: 'The fighting strength of the German army was and always remained on the Eastern front.'[16]

Although they are rare, unbiased assessments can also be found in the works of U.S. historians. In a book entitled *The Russian Front* one of them offers the conclusion that 'in reality Germany lost World War II on the plains of the USSR, not in the bocage in Normandy.'[17] Unquestionably, assessments of this kind are justified and correctly show the con-

tribution of the various countries to the victory over the aggressors.

Lastly, one cannot ignore the fact that for a fairly long time an artificially inspired debate has been going on in U.S. bourgeois literature over the Soviet Union's part in the victory over militarist Japan. The debate was started by U.S. President Harry S. Truman who, in a letter to American historians, said that 'no military contribution was made by the Russians toward victory over Japan.'[18] This irresponsible statement was just what reactionary historians were waiting for.

But history tells a different story. Nazi Germany's total defeat, consummated by the seizure of Berlin by Soviet troops in May 1945, also predetermined the defeat of militarist Japan. However, as was pointed out by Jambyn Batmunkh, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Mongolia (Mongolian troops took part in smashing the Japanese invaders), an immense effort had still to be made to end the war. 'The Soviet Union and its valiant armed forces,' he wrote, 'played the decisive role in the victory over nazism and Japanese militarism.'[19]

On August 6 and 9, 1945, the Americans atom-bombed the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing or maiming hundreds of thousands of civilians. But this did not make Japan stop the war. It still had a land army of over five million effectives, a large air force and considerable stocks of weapons.

In fulfillment of an understanding with its allies and motivated by its desire to hasten the end of the Second World War, the USSR entered the war against Japan on August 9, 1945. At a sitting of the Supreme War Council on that same day the Japanese Premier Suzuki declared: 'The Soviet Union's entry into the war this morning finally puts us in a hopeless position and makes it impossible to continue the war.'[20] The Soviet and Mongolian troops crushed Japan's main ground force, the million-strong Kwantung Army and on September 2 Japan signed the act of surrender. According to estimates by various U.S. headquarters staffs, the former U.S. Ambassador to the USSR George Kennan testifies, had it not been for the Soviet Union the war might have gone on to the close of 1946.[21] Charles Bohlen, another former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union, admits that Soviet assistance saved huge American losses in the final offensive against Japan.[22]

Distortions of the history of the Second World War are used by reactionaries to fuel the myth of a 'Soviet military threat.' To this end the USSR is accused of having had 'expansionist ambitions' on the eve and during the war, the principles of its foreign policy of peace are misrepresented and the liberative mission of the Soviet Armed Forces in Europe and Asia is smeared.

West German exponents of these lies (U. Walendy, W. Glasebock, E. Helmdach and others) depict the measures taken by the USSR to fortify its western frontiers in the prewar years as preparations for an invasion of Central Europe. The American General M. MacCloskey, who claims to be a military historian, asserts that 'Hitler, fighting the British in the West, could not accept the Russian expansion.'[23] The British historian D. Irving uses mythical intelligence reports to support his assertion that the Russians were threatening Germany.[24]

What is the genesis of the lie that Hitler fought a 'preventive war' against the USSR. It was invented by the nazis themselves to justify their sneak invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. The same lie was used by the Japanese militarists to justify their acts of aggression against the USSR and it has entered the stock in trade of Japanese bourgeois historians (T. Hattori, for example).

The Soviet Army's liberative mission during the Second World War is likewise deliberately distorted by reactionary historians and publicists to sustain the myth about a 'Soviet military threat.' They assert that Soviet troops entered Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Norway and other countries against the wishes of their people. They portray the Soviet Army as a force that 'imposed' the socialist system on liberated nations.

In addition to insulting the peoples of these countries, fabrications of this kind are a crude attempt to slander the Soviet Union's foreign policy and its Armed Forces. In liberating foreign countries from the fascist yoke the Soviet Union abided strictly by operating treaties and agreements. For example, the Soviet Army entered Poland in accordance with an agreement reached with the Krojawa Rada Norodowa in the spring of 1944. Analogous agreements were signed with Czechoslovakia in December 1943 and with Norway in May 1944. The question of the Soviet Army moving hostilities to Yugoslav territory was agreed with the Supreme Command of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia. Josip Broz Tito, who headed the liberation struggle of the Yugoslav peoples, told PLA officers and men on October 27, 1944, in his speech on the occasion of Belgrade's liberation by the PLA jointly with Soviet troops: 'Your task is to fight side by side with the Red Army in order to drive the accursed enemy from our sacred, blood-drenched land.'[25]

In sending its Armed Forces to liberate European and Asian countries the Soviet Union at no time interfered in their domestic affairs, showing respect for national traditions and customs. The bourgeois system remains supreme to this day in a number of countries which had a Soviet military presence (Austria, Denmark, Iran, Norway). In these countries the internal conditions that might have ensured the success of the revolutionary forces were obviously non-existent at the time. Soviet troops did not enter Albania or Vietnam, yet revolutionary changes took place in these countries.

By discharging its internationalist duty the Soviet Army won worldwide acclaim. It liberated the whole or part of the territory of 12 countries in Europe and Asia with an aggregate population of nearly 200 million. Its losses in only this mission of liberating these countries exceeded three million, including a million dead. 'Those who went through the Second World War and took part in the anti-

fascist struggle,' Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the CPCz Central Committee and President of Czechoslovakia said, 'will never forget the Soviet Union's exceptional role in the battle for the freedom of nations, its sacrifices and the heroism of its people and army. They will never forget that the Soviet Union's struggle and sacrifices enabled many nations to regain their national freedom and state independence and also to start fighting for the class victory, for the way to socialism.'[26]

These are the facts of history.

Of course, in bourgeois literature it is acknowledged that the war led to dramatic changes on the world scene. But it is more important how its socio-political results are interpreted. The most reactionary historians openly lament that the Second World War did not bring the results expected by imperialist circles. The Soviet Union not only stood the test of fire but came forward as the standard-bearer of the peoples in the struggle against fascism, for peace, democracy and social progress.

Bourgeois historians often ask: How did it happen that the war began with a clash between imperialist coalitions? Why had the plans for forming a united front of imperialist powers against the USSR not materialized? They are now engaged in justifying 'new coalitions' against the Soviet Union, against existing socialism. The American Lieutenant-Colonel L. Palmer for instance, wrote in an article that all the attacks on Russia and the USSR failed because they were launched from the West. He therefore hopes for an invasion from the East, linking his calculations to the anti-Soviet policies of the present Peking leaders. It is not to be excluded, he says, that 'Red China might be our staunchest ally in conflict with Russia.'[27]

However much the war and its lessons are falsified by reactionary bourgeois authors, the principal lesson is that international imperialism has been and remains the main cause of wars. Imperialism had brought to life fascist-militarist regimes that plunged humankind into a cataclysm in order to dominate the world and destroy the Soviet Union, the bulwark of socialism, peace and progress. Consequently, the struggle against the threat of another war is first of all a direct struggle against imperialism and its aggressive ambitions.

The second lesson is that international imperialism's anti-Soviet policies are what basically led to the Second World War and continue to prevent wars from being excluded from the life of society. Anti-Sovietism, the ideology of anti-communism and the 'Soviet military threat' myth invented by that ideology continue to serve as the cover for the arms race and the aggressive plans of imperialism and Chinese hegemonism aimed at the socialist-community nations and the international working-class and national liberation movements. The struggle against war is thus a struggle against anti-Sovietism and imperialism's anti-communist ideological subversion in, among other areas, the interpretation of history.

The third lesson is that the forces of peace and socialism are invincible. The Soviet Union and socialism bore the brunt of the struggle against fascist aggression and saved humankind from the threat of fascist enslavement. The combined might of the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries, of all the revolutionary forces, is today an insuperable barrier to any aggressor, as has been strikingly demonstrated by the successful struggle against imperialism's acts of aggression and export of counter-revolution in many regions of the world. Consequently, the strengthening of existing socialism and other revolutionary forces, unity of action by them and the joint, determined struggle of progressives throughout the world against imperialism's aggressive designs are the iron-clad guarantee of world peace and security.

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An unfading image

Ernst Thaelmann, Eine Biographie
(Ernst Thaelmann, Biography),
Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1979, 804 pp.

The publication of this first substantive study of the life of Ernst Thaelmann, leader of the German proletariat and outstanding personality of the international working-class movement, was seen as a significant socio-political event in the GDR.* The product of intensive research by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the SUPG Central Committee, it contains many new facts about the life and work of this great son of the German people, showing the ideological evolution of a man who rose from the midst of the working class to the leadership of the Communist Party. It gives a comprehensive picture of Thaelmann's political, theoretical and organizational work in the concrete situation created by the class battles during the first 30-odd years of this century. This fundamental research, which contains over a hundred photographs and extensive reference material, presents the unfading image of a courageous fighter for the interests of the working class, a dedicated patriot and internationalist, staunch champion of peace and ardent anti-fascist.

This biography is divided into five parts. The first is devoted to Thaelmann's family, his childhood, adolescence and the start of his working career. It shows how a politically conscious young worker gradually became a communist.

He was born in Hamburg on April 16, 1886. At 17 he joined the Social Democratic Party of Germany. He was a docker, stevedore and a coachman in a transport agency — a man of the working class. He rose quickly from a section leader of the transport workers' union to an acknowledged Social Democratic Party and trade union leader uncompromisingly opposed to right-wing opportunism.

Early in 1915 Thaelmann was conscripted and sent to the front, where he conducted anti-war propaganda among the soldiers. The Independent Social Democratic Party was set up in Germany in the spring of 1917. 'Thaelmann considered himself a member of that party from the day it was founded and most of his political friends among the workers of the port and the dockyard joined it' (p. 53).

When revolution rocked Germany in the autumn of 1918 Thaelmann called for its steadfast development. He returned from the front to become a non-staff associate and spokesman of the ISDPG in Hamburg. In March 1919 he was elected a deputy to the municipal assembly and in May, the first chairman of the city party organization of the Independents. It was due to his efforts that late in October 1919 the Hamburg organization of the ISDPG 'voted overwhelmingly in favor of joining the Communist International' (p. 78) thus breaking with the opportunist Second International. In December 1920 the ISDPG merged with the Communist Party of Germany set up a year earlier. Thaelmann thus became a member of the Communist Party.

The second part covers the years 1921-1925, when as a leader of a local Communist Party organization Thaelmann was active in the fierce revolutionary battles in postwar Germany. In 1921 he went to the Third Congress of the Communist International in Moscow and met with Lenin. In the autumn of 1923 he headed the Hamburg rising, winning national recognition as a party activist and becoming a professional revolutionary. He was a delegate to the party's congresses and was elected to its central bodies. In September 1923 he was the political editor of the newspaper *Hamburger Volkszeitung*. He was constantly in touch with the workers and knew their aspirations and needs. Throughout his life he was dedicated to the working class and its party. This determined his purposefulness and principled commitment and gave him the strength to fight unfalteringly for revolutionary goals.

These vital qualities of a communist were displayed distinctly during the Hamburg rising when as chairman of the city organization of the Communist Party Thaelmann led the rising both in the period of its upsurge and during its organized retreat. That experience advanced the maturing of this revolutionary leader of the German proletariat. Later he often looked back to that experience, drawing important conclusions from it for the development of the party, its policy, strategy and tactics.

In February 1924 Thaelmann was elected deputy chairman of the CPG and in May, a deputy to the Reichstag. 'On the strength of his principled struggle against opportunism, his consistent proletarian, internationalist stand and unswerving faithfulness to that stand, courage in the struggle and political experience, Thaelmann was elected an alternate member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern and a Presidium member of that committee' (p. 206). In September 1925, at the age of 39, he became head of the CPG, the world's second largest Communist Party at that time. He held that post to the end of his life.

The chapters covering the years 1925-1933 are perhaps the most important. In those years, as Chairman of the CPG Thaelmann made an immense contribution to the consolidation and development of the Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the German working class. This contribution may be judged for instance, by the fact that the membership rose from 114,000 in 1925 (p. 255) to 360,000 in 1932 (p. 548). At the elections to the Reichstag in November 1932,

*This book has also been published in the FRG by Marxistische Blätter, Frankfurt on Main.

5,900,000 people or almost 17 per cent of the entire electorate voted communist (p. 622).

At that time Thaelmann did much to win the broad masses of the working people to the side of the Communist Party and build a united working-class front of communists, socialists, Christians and non-party people for the common struggle against the militarization conducted by German imperialism and the rise of fascism.

Thaelmann always drew a clear distinction between the openly anti-communist right-wing leaders of the Social Democratic Party and the majority of its rank-and-file members and lower-echelon activists. He was tireless in exploring opportunities for joint actions by the workers against the big bourgeoisie and fascism. He considered the struggle for working-class unity 'the central question of CPG policy' (p. 381) and called upon communists to counter the divisive policies of the social Democratic right-wing leadership and explain to the people that the CPG stood 'for the unity, not the division of the working class' (*ibid.*). He was ardent in his defense of a united front policy at a meeting of the Presidium of the Comintern Executive in 1932: 'Our entire revolutionary oreintation ... our strategy will mean nothing unless we build a militant union with all workers, including those holding views different from ours' (p. 566).

Thaelmann's biographers have paid great attention to his uncompromising stand against nationalistic demagoguery and the anti-people policy of the Hitlerites, who were lusting for power. As early as 1927 the CPG warned against the threat of fascism and the striving of monopoly capital for undisguised dictatorship. In 1930 Thaelmann categorically opposed interpreting fascism as merely a movement of the radicalized and infuriated petty bourgeoisie. He saw fascism 'not only in the bloody terror of Hitler gangs but also in the industrialists' program' (p. 471), and called the nazis, in accordance with their class nature, 'the most dangerous and dirtiest weapon of German finance capital' (p. 472).

While exposing fascism, which sought to disguise itself under national-socialist slogans, Thaelmann stigmatized any tendency in the work of the communists to underestimate or ignore the national interests and feelings of the people. In August 1930 the CPG Central Committee published, on Thaelmann's recommendation, the Program Statement on the National and Social Emancipation of the German People, which formulated the party's goals: 'To expropriate capitalist entrepreneurs and big landowners, nationalize banks and wholesale trade and give land to the working peasants.' Further, the CPG demanded 'the abolition of the housing shortage, the introduction of social security for all working people and equality for women and for young people, above all equal pay for equal work' (p. 478).

For the first time Thaelmann's biographers lay great emphasis on his merits as a theorist. Apart from his substantiation of the need for working-class unity and the need to intensify the work in trade unions and his assessment of social democracy, Thaelmann's conclusions about the strategy and tactics of the German working-class movement at the various stages of the country's development are a valuable contribution to Marxist-Leninist theory as applied to the conditions of Germany. Of no smaller importance are Thaelmann's ideas about the state, revolution, the policy of alliances, production control and analysis of fascism.

Consistent proletarian internationalism and solidarity with all communist parties, above all with the Party of Lenin, formed the basis of Thaelmann's convictions. November 7, 1917 was and remained for him 'the start of the greatest turn in the history of humanity' (p. 55). He clearly realized the significance of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the role of Lenin's party and Leninism, which he saw as a 'vital cause springing from Marxism' (p. 220). In January 1924 he was in the honor guard at Lenin's coffin. His words 'Lenin has died but his revolutionary spirit lives on in all of us' (p. 194) were the keynote of his life and work to the day he died.

In 1926 he formulated the proposition that the attitude to the Soviet Union was 'the decisive question in the international working-class movement' (p. 308). His belief in the power and superiority of socialism was so great that even in 1941, when nazi troops were approaching Moscow and Thaelmann himself was in a fascist prison for the ninth year, he told his torturers: 'The fascist armies will find their death in the Soviet Union' (p. 769).

The concluding part of the biography is devoted to the years spent by Thaelmann in prison, from 1933 to his murder in August 1944. It shows the great moral strength of the herald of the new, socialist Germany for which he fought. It also shows the dimension of the international solidarity movement for Thaelmann's release from prison and describes for the first time how the party maintained secret ties with its chairman. We learn how Thaelmann continued to guide the party from prison, how through his lawyers, his wife, daughter and also special messengers of the Central Committee information, experience and ideas were exchanged between him and the party leadership, which operated in secrecy.

The biography of a man like Ernst Thaelmann is a contribution to the history of the CPG and the international communist movement. Its authors realized the importance of their task, which they fulfilled with scientific accuracy and in a communist spirit as they described historical events and Thaelmann's life and work.

They drew upon extensive sources, some of which are published for the first time, reminiscences by many of Thaelmann's associates and a great number of documents from the archives of various countries and recent publications. This enhances the scientific, political and ideological value of the biography.

It mentions or quotes distinguished leaders of the communist movement with whom Thaelmann worked or had close contacts. Further the book pre-

sents an analysis of posture of those who played some role, more negative than positive, among the communists, thereby showing the complexity of the class struggle and the hard process of the formation of the world communist movement and the growing maturity of its leaders.

The fascists killed Ernst Thaelmann but the cause to which he devoted all his life is now being translated into reality in the GDR, where the working class and all other working people are successfully building a developed socialist society.

Roland Bauer

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facts and figures

The benefits of peace

The Second World War, which sprang from inter-imperialist strife, resulted in the death of over 50 million men and women and caused tremendous destruction. Since then, for 35 years now, the peace-loving forces — the socialist countries and broad masses of people in the non-socialist part of the globe — had succeeded in preventing the outbreak of another world conflagration.

But there are forces whose ideologists have continued to claim that war has some 'useful' function to perform, that it has a 'purgative role to play,' etc. This man-hating, arch-reactionary stand, in effect denies the need for the progress of world civilization.

But mankind has always advanced and has always striven for progress. In marking the 35-year period of our world's life in global peace, it is certainly worthwhile to think about the benefits that this period has brought to the countries, nations and working people.

Socialist countries

The 35 years without war have been a period of steady expansion and rise of the socialist system, and this alone shows that peace is beneficial — and necessary — for socialism.

In the early postwar years (1945-1949), the socialist road was taken by the peoples of Albania, Bulgaria, China,[1] Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, the democratic People's Republic of Korea, Poland, Rumania, Vietnam and Yugoslavia. (The Mongoalian People's Republic developed along socialist lines even before the Second World War). Socialism transcended the boundaries of the Soviet Union and became a world system. With the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959, the first socialist state appeared in the Western Hemisphere. The mid-1970s were marked by the historic success of the Vietnamese people in the struggle to reunite its country, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Laos, where the Marxist-Leninist People's Revolutionary Party came to power, also joined the family of socialist states.

The broad spread of socialism led to the establishment of the world socialist economy, which has reached the highest level of maturity within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).[2] The CMEA countries' aggregate national income in 1977 was roughly seven times the 1950 figure. In that period, their industrial output multiplied 11-fold, and now comes to over one-third of the world's industrial output, as compared with one-sixth in 1950.

The socialist countries have used their dynamic economic development to raise the people's living and cultural standards and to put through ever broader social programs. Especially important results in this area were achieved in the 1970s. In the first half of the decade, real income per head of the population in the CMEA countries increased by 29 per cent, and is to markedly go up further from 1976 to 1980.

The rise in the people's living standards will be seen in particular, from the changing structure of diets and the growth of consumption of the most valuable foodstuffs. Thus from 1960 to 1977, meat consumption per head increased in Bulgaria from 32.7 kg to 62.0 kg, in Czechoslovakia from 56.8 kg to 81.3 kg, in the GDR from 55.0 kg to 83.6 kg, in Hungary from 47.6 kg to 67.5 kg (1976), and in Poland from 49.9 kg to 77.1 kg.

There has been an improvement in the working people's housing conditions. The number of flats built per 10,000 of the population in 1950 and 1977 respectively, was as follows: GDR 17 and 97.1 (including modernized flats); Hungary 37.5 and 87.7; Poland 24 and 79.5; Rumania 30 and 67; and the USSR 60 and 82.

Systems of education and public health are being improved. In 25 years from 1950, the share of students in the population doubled in Bulgaria, increased by 250 per cent in Hungary, more than

doubled in Mongolia, nearly tripled in Poland, more than tripled in Rumania, and increased by 150 per cent in the Soviet Union. In the same period, the number of hospital beds per 10,000 of the population went up in Bulgaria from 39.2 to 85.8, in Hungary from 52.5 to 79.9, in the USSR from 56 to 118, etc.

The socialist-community states, seeking to provide ever fuller satisfaction of the people's steadily growing material and cultural requirements, something that can be done only in peace, have centered all their foreign-policy initiatives and efforts on creating such conditions.

Developed capitalist countries

Peace does not of course, rid capitalism of its organic economic and social contradictions. What is more, the fact that they spring directly from the uniformities of capitalism becomes more explicit and they are more fully brought out. It does not follow from all this that peace holds no benefits for the people of the capitalist countries.

It is noteworthy that the most important social and political gains have been made by the working people in the developed capitalist countries only in the postwar period. In Western Europe, a sizable package of progressive social laws was adopted in the early postwar years which were marked by a balance of socio-political forces that was especially favorable for the working class.

Thus in 1946, the Constituent Assembly in France passed laws on improving the social insurance system, increasing wages and reducing the pay differentials between men and women, the establishment of production committees in industry with the participation of workers to control the activity of the entrepreneurs, on social security for agricultural workers, an increase in their wages, and others. The 1946 Constitution guaranteed the right to work, rest and leisure, the establishment of trade unions and the right to strike.

In the early postwar years, the working people of other capitalist countries also won important social gains. As the monopoly bourgeoisie was strengthened, every success required much greater efforts on their part. Now and again, especially during the cold war period, big capital mounted offensives, so that the working class had to fight stiff battles to safeguard its gains.

Détente once again improved the conditions for the working people's struggle for social and political progress. Gains like minimum wages, pensions, a fixed work-day and week, paid holidays and unemployment benefits increased the objective possibilities for a further drive against capital and extension of the range of the working people's demands. These now include not only problems in labor relations, but also in housing, public health, education, public transport, democratization of the mass media, etc.

It was in the period of détente that the fascist regimes were toppled in Portugal, Greece and Spain; the bourgeois governments made markedly less use of the army and the police for suppression; anti-communist bans and diverse restrictions were relaxed. The growing strength of the communist parties and progressive trade unions enabled them to formulate programs for ensuring social progress and to rouse ever broader masses of people to the fight for their realization.

There is on the whole, no doubt that peace, a situation without war, helps to advance the working people's class and democratic struggle. The final document, issued by the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe in Berlin in June 1976, said that 'the policy of peaceful coexistence, active cooperation between states irrespective of their social systems, and international détente ... create optimum conditions for the development of the struggle of the working class and all democratic forces as well as for the implementation of the inalienable right of each and every people freely to choose and follow its own course of development, for the struggle against the rule of the monopolies and for socialism.'[3]

Peace is in no sense counter-indicated for capitalism as such either, for détente helpd to develop mutually advantageous economic and technical ties between countries belonging to the opposite social systems.

Economic cooperation on the European continent developed most successfully. In 1978, the CMEA countries' trade with Western Europe exceeded $50 billion. From 1976 to 1979, it grew at 9 per cent a year, and for the Soviet Union, at over 10 per cent. Alongside the traditional forms of external economic ties, new ones emerged and were strengthened, among them long-term industrial cooperation, which now involves over 1,500 agreements. It springs from the objective requirements of the European states and the advantages of the international division of labor.

Economic cooperation benefits both socialist and capitalist countries, the working people of the latter in the first place. The fulfillment of CMEA countries' contracts for instance, provides roughly 2 million jobs in Western Europe, where there are almost 6.5 million unemployed.

Economic ties with the socialist world have enabled a number of capitalist countries to ease their energy and raw materials balance. Thus, the FRG receives from the socialist countries of Europe 11 per cent of its raw materials, 15 per cent of its natural gas, and three per cent of its hard coal. Deliveries from the Soviet Union meet 22 per cent of Italy's requirements in natural gas.

The CMEA countries' industrial, scientific and technical potential has induced some West European leaders to apply the long-term program-oriented approach to economic ties. A realistic policy in this field is incompatible with reckless calls for an economic boycott of the Soviet Union, like those recently sounded by the most aggressive and short-sighted imperialist spokesmen. To follow such calls means subjecting to grave, even if unwarranted risk, the capitalist countries' own interests.

There is no doubt that but for the arms race,

which imperialism has imposed and which involves the waste of tremendous resources, détente would have even more economic benefits for all the states. In an effort to justify the buildup of arms manufacture, imperialist propaganda claims that it falls just short of being a cure-all for all crisis phenomena. But it is well known that in fact, this 'cure-all' tends to distort the process of capitalist reproduction, to slow down economic growth, increase inflation and multiply unemployment, facts which the communists have constantly pointed out.

Why does an inflated military budget for instance, aggravate unemployment and hold back economic growth? In a recent article Gus Hall, General Secretary of the Communist Party USA, wrote: 'First is the fact that, dollar for dollar, military expenditures create on the average only half the jobs that civilian expenditures do ... Pre-empting money for this military budget from the limited funds available means preventing that money from being used in other ways that could create twice as many jobs ... The second point is that by spurring inflation and making the dollar still more shaky internationally the increase in military expenditures will, regardless of temporary, short-run effects, basically reduce economic growth and make for recession rather than the opposite.' Gus Hall gives the following example: 'If military expenditures were good for economic growth the United States ought to have the highest growth rate of the capitalist countries. It is far from doing so. West Germany and Japan, for example, have been having far higher growth rates ... These are countries that were defeated in the World War II. They have had no wars since then. And their military expenditures have been far lower than those of the United States.'[4]

The militarization of the economy in the capitalist countries, an inevitable concommitant of international tensions, does nothing to improve their economic health. By claiming the opposite, the learned troubadours of the arms corporations want to torpedo the very idea of halting the arms race as a first step to general and complete disarmament.

Developing countries

One of the most important changes in the world since the Second World War has been the almost complete elimination of the political forms of colonialism as a result of the powerful upswing of the national-liberation movement. Back in the 1940s, 13 colonies became sovereign states. From 1951 to 1960, 27 countries were liberated from direct colonial dependence; from 1961 to 1970, 26 countries, and from 1971 to 1980, over 20 countries. Today, nearly 120 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, with almost 70 per cent of the world's population, make up the group of developing countries which account for 80 per cent of the UN membership.

What has peace meant for these peoples?

The winning of political independence in Asia and Africa was itself facilitated by the conditions in which, under the new balance of forces which took shape in the international arena after the Second World War, the imperialist powers did not always consider it possible to try to put down the national-liberation struggle by force of arms. These same conditions substantially favor measures for eliminating the economic positions of imperialism: nationalization of foreign enterprises in industry, trade and finance, establishment of genuine sovereignty over natural resources, and the fight against neo-colonialist forms of imperialist exploitation. Furthermore, there is no doubt that peace alone has on the whole enabled them to make some advances in economic development. From 1961 to 1975, this group of countries had the following annual averages in the growth of the key economic indicators (per cent):

	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75
Gross domestic product	5.0	5.8	5.5
Industrial production	6.0	6.8	8.6
Agricultural production	2.5	3.4	2.2

Of course, behind these overall figures there are important distinctions by countries not only in the rate but also in the nature of development. But there is no doubt that many countries have markedly progressed in building up a diversified national economy and in advancing to economic independence.

One must emphasize the special importance for the developing countries of the retroactive connection between expenditures for military and civilian purposes. Because resources are extremely limited, the freezing of a part, frequently a very large part of them in arms spending does tangible harm to their socio-economic development. But such expenditures are frequently necessary in view of the policies pursued by the imperialist powers and the Chinese hegemonists. Pursuing their own interests, they seek in every way to increase tensions in Asia and Africa, provoke armed conflicts and so on.

On the contrary, a reduction of military spending to a minimum expands the potentialities for boosting the national economy. It is clear therefore, how important for the developing nations are the strengthening of world peace, improvement of international relations, an end to the arms race and disarmament, as a necessary objective condition for more fully mustering their internal resources for socio-economic purposes and increasing the influx of aid from outside.[5] There is good reason why most developing countries are involved in the non-aligned movement, which has an important positive effect on the international political climate,[6] and which wants a restructuring of international economic relations on an equitable, just and democratic basis, and the eradication of every form of discrimination and neo-colonial exploitation. Peace alone makes it possible to take real steps in this direction.

Keep war out of society

Consequently, a world without wars is a vital need for mankind. Everyone needs it: the socialist coun-

tries, the developed capitalist countries and the developing countries. Sober-minded and responsible politicians in the West are well aware of the need for lasting peace and for détente. That is why the improvement of the international climate in the 1970s could have been much greater. And the main reason why the political détente was not followed by a military détente is the activity of highly influential forces in the capitalist world who have a stake in conducting a militaristic line and stepping up tensions. These are the military-industrial complexes and their agents in the centers of political power and in the mass media.

It is now especially important to preserve peace and to continue and deepen détente. The 35 years without war should not be seen as some kind of 'record,' with efforts merely to improve it by reaching, say, 40 or 50 years. No, not all. The communists are convinced that efforts can and must be made to exclude war from the life of society altogether.

The objective conditions for this are there. The broadest masses of people all over the globe seek lasting peace. Let us recall that over 700 million men and women in more than 100 countries put their signatures to the new Stockholm Appeal for halting the arms race and for disarmament. But the militarists wield strong instruments of economic and political power. That is why the peoples of the world will not receive peace and security on a platter, as the saying goes. To preserve and consolidate peace, there is a need for constant and growing activity by all the peace forces. No one who cherishes peace can afford to 'sit on the fence' or take up a position 'equidistant' from the two 'superpowers.'

Indeed, how is it possible, on the questions of war and peace, to be 'equidistant' from U.S. imperialism, which has fettered the world with a dense network of military bases, which openly claims the role of world gendarme and which threatens to apply military 'punishment' for any turn of events it does not like on the one hand, and from the Soviet Union, whose foreign policy has been and will always be based on tireless efforts to ensure lasting peace throughout the world on the other?[7] Such 'equidistance' is nothing but a cover for the actual sliding down into the camp of those whose stake is on preparation for war.

Today, the alternative to peace poses an unprecedented threat to mankind's very existence. A symposium of U.S. scientists recently said, in a message addressed to Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev, that even a limited nuclear war would result 'in death, injury and disease on a scale that has no precedent in the history of human existence.' The radioactive fallout would contaminate the greater area of the globe throughout the lifetime of many generations and inflict grave harm on all forms of life. The scientists' concern for mankind's destiny is understandable. In his reply, Leonid Brezhnev said that the USSR has consistently stood for the prohibition of nuclear and all other types of mass-destruction weapons.

People do not want to die. They can and must safeguard peace. What does this require? Active support for the initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries. Tireless exposure of the acts of the militaristic circles and their political henchmen who are trying to push the world back into the 'balancing on the brink of war' period. Ever closer cohesion of the anti-war forces in each country and on an international scale.

Mass organizations of working people, the young, women, scientists and workers in culture are involved in the peace movement. Political parties, organizations and national peace committees from more than 130 countries in five continents are represented on the World Peace Council. In 1978, the trade unions of all countries had a membership of over 310 million. The Women's International Democratic Federation has 129 member-organizations from 114 countries. Nearly 300 young people's associations from more than 100 countries are represented on the World Federation of Democratic Youth. That is a tremendous force. It is capable of erecting an insuperable barrier in the way of the criminal urges of the bellicose imperialist circles.

Prepared in the *WMR* Commission on Scientific Information and Documents.

1. The Chinese leadership's subsequent pursuit of the nationalistic ideology of Maoism and the establishment of an actual alliance with the imperialist, reactionary and aggressive forces has led to a distortion of socialism and the use of the internal economic potential in the interests of militaristic circles of the capitalist West.
2. Set up in 1949, it has 10 members: Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Rumania, the Soviet Union and Vietnam.
3. *WMR*, August 1976.
4. *Daily World*, February 14, 1980.
5. For details, see 'The Arms Race and the Developing Countries,' *WMR*, April 1980.
6. See 'The Non-Aligned Movement: from Belgrade to Havana,' *WMR*, February, 1980.
7. Even a mere listing of the most important peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist-community countries would be much too long. Since the 1975 Helsinki Accords alone, the socialist countries have made prosposals alongside many others, like a commitment by all the Helsinki states not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other; conclusion of a World Treaty on the Non-Use of Force in International Relations; an end to the manufacture of every type of nuclear weapons and a gradual reduction of their stockpiles until their complete elimination.

On the class battle front

STRIKE MOVEMENT IN DEVELOPED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES FROM 1979 TO EARLY 1980

On May Day, the working class and all other working people sum up the results of the struggle for their rights, social progress, democracy and socialism. In the class battles against capital, they make ample use of the strike, their time-tested weapon.

The overall strike movement in the developed capitalist countries over the past two decades will be seen from the following table:

	number of strikers (mln)*
1960	44
1965	19
1970	45
1975	50
1979	over 50 (estimate)

*Totals include participants in national days of struggle.

We find, therefore, that the number of strikers has been high. The working class and the working people's organizations have been stepping up their fight against monopoly capital. During the cyclical crisis of 1974-1975 the strike movement in capitalist countries as a whole gained in strength, instead of weakening as had been usual in the past. The scale of the strike struggle will be seen from the following table (1,000 man-days):

	1978	1979
Australia	2,131	3,539*
Belgium	1,002	541*
Canada	7,490	6,500**
Great Britain	9,404	29,000
Italy	71,239	153,533**
USA	39,000	33,149***

*9 months; **10 months; ***11 months.

This table does not give any data for some countries, including France and Japan, where the strike movement has always been very vigorous (thus, in October 1979 alone, there were over 1,200 strikes and other types of action in France, while over 12 million workers and employees were involved in the Japanese working people's traditional spring offensive in 1979). Still, even these incomplete data testify to the high activity of the working-class movement.

Over the past decade, notably in 1979 and early 1980, strikes have had some features characterizing the general line and content of the working people's struggle. This is above all the unity in the nature of their action. This was most vividly expressed during national strikes, when hundreds of thousands and even millions of working people are involved in the movement. On December 7, 1979, Belgium was paralyzed by a general 24-hour strike, the largest for the past two decades. Almost simultaneously a national strike was staged by the Greek working people, who repeatedly mounted similar action in 1979 and early this year. As in the past, the working people of Italy displayed a high level of organization and cohesion. In June 1979, a national strike for collective agreements involved 14 million working people, and in mid-January 1980, a general strike for democratic and economic transformations in the country involving 14 million workers and employees was a tremendous success. General strikes were also staged in Ireland, Spain, New Zealand and other countries.

Participation by broad masses of working people is becoming ever more characteristic of the proletariat's strike struggle. Here are a few examples. In the summer of 1979, over 100,000 workers and employees struck in Quebec, Canada, and in that period hundreds of thousands of working people in Britain, Italy, Spain, Australia and the United States were also involved in strikes; in September, strikes were staged by 3 million government employees in Italy, and by 200,000 French railway men; in October, by tens of thousands of workers at the Renault motor Works and by 200,000 workers in the French chemical industry; in November, by 200,000 workers in Queensland, Australia, and the early months of 1980 were marked by powerful strikes in the United States, Australia, Spain, Turkey, France and other countries.

Long strikes tend to become more frequent. Now and again, strikers have to engage in a protracted and stiff struggle for their demands. In October 1979, a 15-month struggle against the illegal firing of their comrades at the Portuguese subsidiary of the transnational Standard Electric Company ended in a victory for the workers. The conflict between the owners of the British *Times* newspaper and printing workers lasted for 11.5 months and ended in a victory for the working people in the autumn of 1979. In December of that year, a two-months strike by 23,000 workers of the U.S. Caterpillar Tractor Company ended in success. There are a great many similar examples in other countries.

Among such class battles, the national strike by over 100,000 steelworkers in Great Britain started in early 1980 has a place apart. On the night of January 1, dozens of steel mills were shut down in various parts of the country. Workers' pickets were posted at the factory gates. This is the first strike of such proportions in Britain's heavy industry since 1926. The management of the government-owned British Steel Corporation at first brushed off the strikers' demands for higher wages. For several weeks the

British steelworkers carried on a persevering and hard struggle which assumed the form of a direct confrontation with the reactionary policy of the Conservative government headed by Margaret Thatcher.

Combination of various forms of struggle helps to make the working people's action more effective. Alongside strikes, the working class and its organizations stage rallies, demonstrations, etc. Thus, in February of this year, a fortnight's series of mass actions by working people for higher wages, against mass firings and in defense of trade union rights was organized at the call of France's leading trade union center, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). Explaining the purpose of this action, one of the CGT leaders, René Lomet declared: 'We seek to spread the struggle above all at enterprises, organize diverse, decentralized and the most different action closely connected with the grass-roots organizations . . . Of course, we intend to carry on our struggle relying on the broadest unity.'[1] In May 1979, the U.S. Rubber Workers' Union, which has 40,000 members, used so-called selective strikes for a concentrated blow at the Uniroyal monopoly. Finally, in some cases the working people have to resort to the hunger strike, the most exhausting form of struggle. That is precisely what the workers of the Ford Motor Company did in the Spanish province of Valencia in the spring of 1979 against their arbitrary firing by the owners for staging a strike. The same thing was done by two trade union leaders in protest against dismissals at the Berliet Motor Works in France in the autumn of 1979.

Strikes are being increasingly used not only to fight for the satisfaction of the working people's socio-economic demands, entailing higher wages, better working conditions, shorter hours, etc. The strike is becoming a form of action and massive *political movement.*[2] Thus, in the summer of 1979, at the call of the Workers' Commissions, Spain's biggest trade union association, over 300,000 workers and employees held a day of protest in 45 cities across the country against the government's attempts to impose a reactionary 'labor statute' which seriously infringed their rights. In neighboring Portugal, over 80,000 cooperative peasants and agricultural workers in the province of Alentego and Ribatejo staged a day of struggle in defense of the agrarian reform in July of that year. In mid-January 1980, 14 million working people took part in a national protest strike in Italy against a 'government which does not govern.' In this context, *L'Unita* wrote: 'There is no doubt that the demonstrations, like the motives for which the strike was staged, reflected a clear resolve to protest against the policy of the government,' which 'has forced the trade unions to wait for months for an answer and has finally failed to give one.'[3]

The intensity of the class battles will also be seen from the fact that the police intervene in virtually every strike. The strikers are frequently subjected to ruthless repression, like the dock workers of Rotterdam and the workers of Marseilles in September 1979 and the workers of Sheffield in February 1980. The participants in the mass strike at the Tarish agro-industrial complex in Turkey in February of this year were subjected to a savage massacre.

Proletarian solidarity has always been a hallmark of strike action in capitalist countries. Acts of such solidarity marked many working-class actions. Thus, in June 1979, 1.5 million workers and employees in Australia staged a general strike in solidarity with arrested trade union activists. In the course of a strike by dock workers and crews of marine tugs in Rotterdam in September 1979, thousands of Dutch working people voiced their support for the strikers. There was an especially vivid manifestation of class solidarity with the participants in the steelworkers strike in Britain in the early months of this year, when railway men, dock workers and truckers acted in support of the steelworkers.

The strikers' steadfastness and courage and reliance on solidarity from their class brothers are a reliable guarantee of success in the class battles against capital. The strikes staged by the working people frequently yield higher wages, better working conditions, re-instatement of dismissed activists, etc. Commenting on one such success, the newspaper of the French Communists, *L'Humanité* wrote in the autumn of 1979: 'The prospects lie in action which . . . unite, give a taste for victory and generate the will to change the political situation in favor of the working people and the rest of the nation and pave the way for genuine change.'[4]

The communists are invariably in the van of the working people's fight. The communist and workers' parties, unbending fighters against monopoly power and oppression, are dedicated to the cause of the working class and all other working people, the cause of democracy, peace and socialism.

WMR Information Department

1. *L'Humanité*, February 15, 1980.
2. For details see the commentary published elsewhere in this issue.
3. *L'Unita*, January 16, 1980.
4. *L'Humanité*, November 26, 1979.

September 30: truth and lies

Satyajaya Sudiman
Leadership member,
Communist Party of Indonesia

Nearly 15 years have passed since the tragic events of the autumn of 1965, which are now known as the "events of September 30".[1]

In this period the record of the trials of participants and pseudo-participants, records that were havily censored by the military, have been made public. Many other facts have also come to light. But to this day the regime is silent on what actually happened during the night of September 30-October 1. The official interpretation of what occurred passes over the main facts and grossly exaggerates secondary developments, which at best concerned the drama in Jakarta. The pivot of the official version is the charge that the Communist Party of Indonesia was the "inspirer, organizer, and leader" of a putschist action that has since been called the "September 30 movement". This doctored version was perhaps most fully presented in a recently concocted White Book, published by the security service — its Indonesian acronym is KOPKAMTIB[2] — which has won notoriety for its savage repressions.

The actual course of the "September 30 events" is given on the basis of a close analysis of innumerable facts in a statement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Indonesia under the heading "Reply of the CPI to KOPKAMTIB". We feel that *WMR* readers should know what really happened during these events of nearly 15 years ago because the portrayal of the "September 30 movement" as a hideous act of "treachery" by the CPI remains the cornerstone of the entire anti-communist propaganda of the Indonesian regime, in all cases providing the "basis" for repressions and atrocities against Communists and democrats.

An anti-imperialist regime, called "guided democracy", was established in Indonesia in the early 1960s. It was headed by President Sukarno, a prestigious personality of the nation's liberation movement and a distinguished progressive nationalist. The progressive and positive aspects of that regime's policies, chiefly its anti-imperialism, had the support of the people and the political forces that had long followed Sukarno's leadership, notably the National Party, the Partindo (Party of Indonesia), and some others. These aspects of Sukarno's administration also had the support of the Communist Party, which brought it the backing of the masses following the communists.

However, while posing as staunch Sukarnoists, the Communist haters in the right wing of the army leadership, the Moslem parties, and even the National Party itself, sought to undermine the CPI, weave intrigues against it, and discredit it in the eyes of the people and the president. The military authorities set up all sorts of roadblocks to the activities of the communists, not shrinking from direct repressions. These forces saw "guided democracy" merely as a compromise government which they had temporarily to tolerate because of the existence of a powerful Communist Party, which supported the patriotic president.

Meanwhile, the capitalists and bureaucrats steadily strengthened their position in the regime itself, while a group of top army generals undertook the leading role among them. While demagogically speaking of their anti-imperialism and establishing contacts with the CIA, the generals endeavored — not without success — to tip the frail balance of political forces in their favor, taking steps to restrict the influence of the Communist Party and block all its initiatives and the communist-supported actions of the president. In the summer of 1965, with the confrontation against Malaysia as their pretext,[3] the right-wing generals secured the concentration of all authority in the localities in the hands of the commanders of military districts. At the same time, they consolidated their control of the army.

In this situation President Sukarno learned of the existence of a "council of generals", a conspiratorial organization linked to imperialist intelligence agencies and aiming to change Indonesia's state system forcibly. Regardless of the name assumed by the group opposed to the regime and planning a counter-revolutionary coup, its activities were an indisputable fact. The president, leaning on the political parties and circles adhering to progressive and democratic positions, and on progressive nationalists in the armed forces, counted on repulsing the traitors. But there Sukarno's main weakness, his petty-bourgeois thinking, proved fatal. Instead of appealing to the masses he decided on a "purge in the top echelon", on a counter-conspiracy.

The group on which the president depended in his attempt to forestall the coup by the generals included elements which had joined it in the hope of fishing in muddy waters, of satisfying their own selfish interests. These were "military careerists", generals with a capitalist or bureaucratic background, who were outranked by the members of the "council of generals". They shared the anti-communist views of the top generals and their anxiety for the future of capitalism in Indonesia, for the future of the capitalists and the bureaucrats, but in the meantime they felt it would be in their interests to refrain from open opposition to the president and

were therefore regarded by him as "honest military men who would have nothing to do with politics". The careerists closely followed developments, prepared to use any outcome for their own advancement, enrichment, and then a political career. In the event the counter-conspiracy succeeded they would be assured of higher ranks in the army.

What then happened during the night of September 30-October 1, 1965?

With Sukarno's knowledge, units of the presidential bodyguard regiment, and of the KOSTRAD[4] reserve and air force led by their own officers received orders to arrest, in Jakarta, seven generals of the top military leadership who were suspected of belonging to the "council". Shortly before this the 454th and 530th crack battalions of the KOSTRAD had been brought into Jakarta. Leadership of this operation, code-named "September 30 movement" (it was launched in the early hours of October 1), was entrusted to Lieutenant-Colonel Untung, commander of one of the battalions of the presidential bodyguard regiment, and Brigadier-General Supardjo, commander of KOSTRAD's Kalimantan units, who had likewise been called to Jakarta. The latter was subordinate directly to General Suharto (who became president after Sukarno was removed).

However, in contravention of the president's instructions, six of the seven generals who were to be taken into custody were killed. Learning of their death and of the flight of the seventh — Nasution — the president realized that this might arouse the whole army, to say nothing of the reactionary generals. This induced him to back away from the "movement" and thereby deny support for the progressive officers in it. The road to a coup was thus cleared for the "military careerists".

KOPKAMTIB wants to keep the actual role of this group in the dark. In the "CPI Reply", however, irrefutable arguments are given to show that the "military careerists" were responsible for the national tragedy, that they bore the direct responsibility for the death of six top generals. Having joined the "movement" on the invitation of the president, the "military careerists" dissociated themselves from it (in the latter half of October 1) and set about attaining their own objectives: hitting the CPI, removing President Sukarno, and seizing power. The murder of the six generals had eliminated higher-ranking rivals. The "military careerists", i.e., the lower echelon of the generals, thus in fact fulfilled the class task that the "council of generals" had set itself.

Let us now see how the version of the events put out by the generals took shape. This will help to ascertain what class and political interests brought it to life.

The preliminary investigation into the charges brought against Communist Party leaders in late 1965 showed that the military had tried to get them to admit that the "September 30 movement" was directed by the CPI. The investigation, controlled by the generals, was designed to persuade public opinion that the Political Bureau of the CPI Central Committee had planned and organized the entire operation. The interrogators found themselves in an impasse. As early as the autumn of 1965 Njono, member of the Political Bureau of the CPI Central Committee, told his interrogators that seizure of power as a result of the "September 30 movement" did not enter into the Political Bureau's plans. But the military press trumpeted the allegation throughout the nation that the CPI had gone against the lawful government of Sukarno and had the intention of establishing a state system "on the pattern of socialist countries".

There was a political calculation at the back of this propaganda clamour. In that period, while still using Sukarno's name as a cover, the generals who were ignoring his authority started an unprecedented anti-communist operation. They used their fabricated story about the CPI having led the "September 30 movement" in order to muster and throw against the Communist Party tens of thousands of Moslem fanatics, lumpen-proletarians, and the army propaganda-deluded masses. Throughout Indonesia the military organized gangs of assassins, gave them two or three days training in their odious trade, and set them on a hunt for communists. In this way the version of the "September 30 events", cooked up by the generals, triggered the physical and total destruction of the communist and democratic movement.

Following the decimation of the Communist Party, the military elite, which had been vowing fealty to President Sukarno, began looking for a showdown with him. The investigators were now given a new assignment: while sticking to the main, anti-communist, interpretation of the "September 30 events", they had to underscore Sukarno's complicity in them. The military were determined to discredit and intimidate him, for they still feared that his continued efforts to regain real power would get the backing of the remnants of his supporters. Engaged in a creeping coup since October 1965, they now prepared for the climax — the replacement of the anti-imperialist president. That is exactly what happened in March 1967.

The hired hacks of KOPKAMTIB have now gone to the extent of calling the executed Chairman of the CPI Central Committee D.N. Aidit the supreme leader of the "movement", asserting that the CPI leadership had acted against President Sukarno with the objective of deposing him and seizing power.

But here the question immediately arises: If the CPI leaders had indeed directed the course of events, how were they able to direct the military units involved in the "September 30 movement", units of the anti-communist army and the bodyguard regiment loyal to Sukarno? More, how could the CPI have coordinated the actions of these heterogeneous forces? All the fabrications of KOPKAMTIB are full of contradictions: If we are to believe them the communists issued orders to military that were not subordinate to them or linked to them by party ties.

Also, the authors of the White Book labored in

vain to invent a convincing story about the role played in these events by President Sukarno. They gave an incoherent picture of this role. Sukarno is portrayed as an imperious president who ordered his bodyguard to "take steps" against the military conspirators; as a confused, frightened, and helpless man; and as an obedient executor of the CPI's will. The latter viewpoint is strongly stressed in the White Book.

As regards the Indonesian communists, we acknowledge that in the critical situation of the autumn of 1965 some CPI leaders did not choose the proper method for successfully staying the hand of reaction, for fighting the counter-revolutionary coup planned by right-wing conspirators in the person of army generals. Instead of appealing to the Party and the working masses to rise in defense of the revolution, D.N. Aidit and some of his colleagues in the Executive Committee limited themselves to supporting the actions planned by President Sukarno. The CPI with its more than three million members in effect took no part whatever in the events. Even after October 1 the CPI leadership did not appeal to the Party, but urged "entrusting the political settlement to President Sukarno".

The CPI leaders thereby failed to rise above Sukarno's petty-bourgeois narrowness. This was not accidental. It reflected the pernicious influence of Maoist ideas, which had then penetrated the CPI. Maoism's distrust for the masses and for the Party and its negation of the Party's role as the vanguard of the working people were brought to their logical consummation in Indonesia, materializing in absolutization, support for elitist actions, and attempts to resolve the nation's problems with the help of the palace guard. With Mao's counter-revolutionary, anti-people ideas as their guide, the CPI leaders proved unable to mobilize the Party and the working people to repulse the reactionaries.

In order to cover up their crimes, the reactionaries murdered many of those who knew the truth about the events of September 30, 1965. Without trial or investigation they killed the Chairman of the CPI Central Committee D.N. Aidit, his deputies Lukman and Njoto, and member of the Political Bureau Sakirman. The military, General Supardjo among them, whose testimony came into conflict with the story fabricated by the authorities, were also killed.

But a lie repeated a thousand times does not become the truth. The generals' version of these events leaves open many questions which honest and unbiased people can ask. As we have shown, this is done bluntly by the Communist Party of Indonesia in its "Reply to KOPKAMTIB". That even the testimonies and facts doctored by the secret police cannot serve the ideologists of the "new order"[5] is shown by the hasty withdrawal of the White Book from circulation. As a matter of fact, this was done not without prompting from the CIA, which has long-standing ties with the military elite. This widely publicized political provocation has failed ignominously.

1. During the night of September 30-October 1, 1965, a group of patriotic military attempted to forestall a rightist counter-revolutionary coup aimed at toppling the anti-imperialist regime of President Sukarno.
2. Field Command for the Restoration of Security and Order.
3. In 1962 the Indonesian government opposed the plan of the governments of Britain and Malaya to form a Federation of Malaysia, and its policy on this question was known as confrontation with Malaysia.
4. KOSTRAD, the army strategic command under General Suharto, who was known for his anti-communist views.
5. This term has been introduced by the regime's official ideologists to draw a distinction between it and Sukarno's "old order".

In memory of a comrade

The death has occurred after a long and grave illness of comrade Choju Ugai, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan and member of the Editorial Council of *World Marxist Review*.

Comrade Ugai was born in 1908. He joined the Communist Party of Japan at the age of 24 years and from then on was invariably an active fighter for the radiant ideals of communism. He was repeatedly elected to leading party bodies. In 1966, he became a member of the Central Auditing Commission of the CP Japan and from 1969 — for more than 10 years — was a member of its Central Committee.

An experienced journalist and an incisive writer, comrade Ugai worked successfully for many years in the communist press. For eight years he was the correspondent of the newspaper *Akahata* in the Soviet Union and during the last three and a half years represented his party on our journal. Despite his illness, he continued to take an active part in the work of the Editorial Council and various commissions and creative groups.

The radiant memory of comrade Ugai will always remain with us.

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