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Viability and topicality of a great doctrine

Kurt Hager

Political Bureau member and CC Secretary,
Socialist Unity Party of Germany

MARXISM A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER MARX

At its fifth plenary meeting the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany proclaimed 1983 the Year of Karl Marx in the GDR. The Theses adopted at this plenary meeting state: "We revere Karl Marx as one of the greatest sons of the German people. Together with Frederick Engels he substantiated scientific socialism, the scientific world view and the theory and program of the revolutionary working-class movement for the building of a society free of exploitation."¹

In the German Democratic Republic the people are marking dates linked to Karl Marx — the 165th anniversary of his birth and the centenary of his death — strengthening socialism in their own country and intensifying the struggle for peace. Factories, agricultural producers' cooperatives, schools, universities, and offices have responded to the decisions of the SUPG Central Committee with new initiatives, undertaking to work more efficiently than ever to fulfil the economic development plan for 1983 and thereby create the conditions for the fulfillment of long-term tasks as well. In parallel, the SUPG pursues the aim of further activating its ideologico-political work in order to foster appreciation by the people of the viability of the Marxist doctrine and the successful fulfillment of its projections in the GDR.

Marxism appeared in the 1840s, when the contradictions implicit in capitalist society had become visible, the working class of Britain, France and Germany was fighting the first major battles for liberation from capitalist exploitation, and the revolutionary working-class movement was taking shape. The proletariat was in need of clear orientations for its struggle. These could only be produced by a scientific world view consonant with its class interests. Lenin wrote that Karl Marx and his friend and associate Frederick Engels had "proved by scientific analysis the inevitability of capitalism's collapse and its transition to communism, under which there would be no more exploitation of man by man.

"It is to the great historic merit of Marx and Engels that they indicated to the workers of the world their role, their task, their mission, namely, to be the first to rise in the revolutionary struggle against capital and to rally around themselves in this struggle all working and exploited people."²

A key proposition of Marxism is about the historic mission of the working class, that of overthrowing capitalism and building a socialist society. Marx proved scientifically that socialism is the inescapable outcome of the development of the productive forces and the class struggle, that it is not the invention of a brilliant mind. Socialism is objectively necessary, but the working class can build it only in alliance with other working people under the leadership of its revolutionary party.

Today, as in the day of Marx, bourgeois philosophers, sociologists and historians regard historical development as either more or less accidental, or the result of the operation of a definite idea or of the actions of great personalities. Marx revealed the regularity of social development and established the simple fact that political and juridical relations, and also ideology are rooted not in ideas but in relations of material life, that they depend on the development level of the productive forces and relations of production, and that social consciousness is determined by being and not vice versa.

Marx spread dialectical materialism to cognition of human society and thereby replaced chaos and arbitrariness in the views on history and politics by an amazingly coherent and harmonious scientific theory.

Historical materialism discovered, as Engels put it, "the great law of motion of history, the law according to which all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes, and that the existence and thereby the collisions, too, between these classes are in turn conditioned by the degree of development of their economic position, by the mode of their pro-

duction and of their exchange determined by it."³

Of course, the attribution of political, juridical, aesthetic and other views to the material conditions of society's life does not imply that these views play no role whatever in society's development. Their impact or the role of individuals in history is a different aspect of the problem, an aspect that Marx and Engels repeatedly scrutinized in their study of specific historical events, unconditionally recognizing the significance of these forms of consciousness or, more specifically, the role of the subjective factor in history and society.

The regularities of society's development that have been discovered are a guide to understanding specific historical events and not a universal key to all doors, a sort of "Open, Sesame!" The theory of historical materialism requires thorough study of extremely intricate and complex historical and social relationships, for instance, the causes that led to the seizure of power by the nazis in 1933, the causes that gave rise to the Second World War, the USA's present policies, and so forth.

Marx engaged mainly in a critical study of the capitalist mode of production. In the period from the first half of the 1840s until his death, his scientific interests were concentrated on unravelling the secret of capitalist exploitation of the working class. He proved that the substance of this secret lay in the surplus value produced by the workers and appropriated by the capitalists.

Of course, Marx and Engels could not answer the questions linked to capitalism's transition to its highest and last phase, imperialism, when the class struggle reaches an unparalleled intensity and the socialist revolution is imminent. But what distinguishes Marxism as the science and world view of the working class is that it is constantly enriched by new experience and conclusions and develops further. On this point the Theses of the SUPG Central Committee note: "The work of Karl Marx is continued creatively in the international working-class movement. An outstanding contribution has been made by Lenin and the CPSU. Lenin shielded Marxism against all attacks and enriched scientific socialism with new conclusions. Currently, the communist and workers' parties, abiding firmly by scientific socialism, are discharging their duty of further developing Marxism-Leninism."⁴

Had the ability for constant progress not been inherent in it, the doctrine of Marx would not have been historically effective and, like many other doctrines, would at best have been no more than a phenomenon of its time. All the

achievements in the building of the socialist social system and the entire experience of the class struggle in capitalist countries and of the national liberation movements enrich our scientific world view with new knowledge.

A favorite gimmick of bourgeois ideologists is to pay tribute to the genius of Marx and extol his understanding of history or his philosophy while rejecting all the other component parts of Marxism. To illustrate. They speak of distinctions between "Marx the philosopher" and "Marx the prophet," between "Marx the sociologist" and "Marx the economist," and recommend drawing from the doctrine of Marx what best suits the concepts of each individual scholar.⁵

The ultimate purpose of all the attempts to tear Marxism into shreds, so to speak, is to strip it of its revolutionary character, deprive the working class of its scientific theory and world view, and poison its mind with hostile, bourgeois thinking. The key component sections of the doctrine and world view of Marxism — dialectical and historical materialism, political economy, the theory of the class struggle, of the world historical revolutionary mission of the working class, and of the building of socialism and communism — are linked inseparably with each other to form a single whole. One cannot, for instance, recognize only Marxist-Leninist philosophy or economic theory and reject all the other sections of Marxism. For that reason the SUPG program declares: "With all its component parts in integral unity, Marxism-Leninism is the theoretical foundation of all the party's work. The revolutionary struggle for the interests of the working class and all other working people can be waged triumphantly only on the basis of this universally significant scientific doctrine and its further creative development. Marxism-Leninism is the dependable compass for the building of a developed socialist society and for the transition to communism."⁶

Marx was a colossus in science, a researcher who never rested content with what he had achieved. In studying the socio-historical process, he was extremely conscientious in applying the method of dialectical and historical materialism. His central purpose was to put scientific conclusions into practice, to use them in the revolutionary struggle. The passion with which Marx devoted himself to research was pointed out by Frederick Engels in his speech at Marx's graveside on March 17, 1883: "Science was for Marx a historically dynamic, revolutionary force. However great the joy with which he welcomed a new discovery in some theoretical science whose practical application

perhaps it was as yet quite impossible to envisage, he experienced quite another kind of joy when the discovery involved immediate revolutionary changes in industry, and in historical development in general."⁷

These words very clearly express our own attitude to science. Particularly today, at a time of scientific and technological revolution, we see distinctly why Marx regarded science as a motive force of history, as a revolutionary force. Microelectronics, robotics, automation, the peaceful uses of atomic energy, biotechnology, and other scientific and technological breakthroughs compelling changes in the productive forces are making high requirements of research and development, of the work of the personnel of industrial facilities and research institutions.

In the same way as Marx valued discoveries in theoretical fields, we now attach considerable significance to fundamental research that paves the way for advances in promising areas of science. Marx derived particular delight from the use of the results of research in practice. We follow his example in this respect as well: the SUPG constantly stresses that the results of research have to be introduced into production as quickly as possible and profitably realized in new products and technological processes. If with cooperation between industrial facilities and scientific institutions the practical realization of innovations takes place purposefully and without waste of time, we shall raise labor productivity and economic efficiency to the level necessary for further economic growth and, thereby, for the further strengthening of the German Democratic Republic.

Moreover, the SUPG clearly sees the need for further developing Marxist-Leninist theory and enhancing the role of the social sciences in socialist construction. This need is linked intrinsically to the creative essence of the Marxist doctrine. Theoretical work is not an end in itself but a paramount means for resolving the problems posed by practice.

Marx was not only an eager researcher. He was also a passionate revolutionary. This fusion of scientific objectivity with revolutionary energy and determination distinguishes Marxism from all other world views.

In 1845 Marx wrote: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."⁸ Thus, even an exhaustive explanation of the processes taking place in society is far from being everything. Revolutionary theory is the indispensable compass of the revolutionary struggle, but it is this struggle that is decisive

for transforming the world. In all cases revolutionary theory must be linked to revolutionary practice. Unity between theory and practice is a distinctive feature of the working-class scientific world view.

This principle was consistently applied by Marx. He was active in the communist movement, first in the Brussels Communist Correspondence Committee and then in the Communist League, which was the first international proletarian party. On assignment from the League Marx and Engels wrote the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Soon after the *Manifesto* was published a bourgeois-democratic revolution broke out in Germany. Marx was active in this revolution. He was editor-in-chief of *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and headed the Communist League. Even as an emigré in London he did not cease his revolutionary work, his efforts to organize the revolutionary movement.

He was one of the founders of the First International and helped to form revolutionary social democracy in Germany and other countries. When in 1871 French reaction attacked the Paris Commune, that first attempt of the working class to establish its political rule, Marx unconditionally sided with the Parisians "storming the heavens." Following the dissolution of the International Working Men's Association, Marx's name was closely associated with the successes of the working-class movement in practically all European countries and also in the USA. He wrote the theoretical preface of the program of the French Labor Party. He corresponded and had personal contact with British, Belgian, Portuguese, Dutch, Italian, Czech, and Hungarian Socialists, and with Russian revolutionaries, and attended the many rallies of solidarity held in London with the Polish uprising of January 22, 1863.

Thus, Engels' words that Marx was above all a revolutionary are entirely and fully consistent with the facts. Engels said: "His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival."⁹

Marxism is not a dogma; it is a guide to action. This observation by Lenin is the key to understanding the essence of Marxism. First, the doctrine of Marx, Marxism-Leninism

should always be applied in accordance with the specific conditions of a country and the specific features of the given period of history. Second, the revolutionary actions of the working class and other working people led by the vanguard party of the working class, the struggle for socialism, peace and social progress constitute the core or soul of Marxism. One cannot be a Marxist without being a revolutionary. This conclusion, which stems from the life and work of Marx, will never lose its validity. In order to adhere to this principle one has to have a profound understanding of the essence of Marxism-Leninism and an unshakeable proletarian class consciousness, and be prepared to devote all one's strength to the lofty ideals of socialism and peace.

"The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent, because it is true,"¹⁰ Lenin wrote. Further, he noted: "Marxism differs from all other socialist theories in the remarkable way it combines complete scientific sobriety in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most emphatic recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius, and revolutionary initiative of the masses — and also, of course, of individuals, groups, organizations and parties."¹¹

That Marxism is true has been tested and borne out by history, social practice, and the experience of the revolutionary working-class movement and the Marxist-Leninist parties.

The bourgeoisie and its servitors do not relax their attempts to halt the advance of scientific socialism and the revolutionary forces, to counter the influence of Marxism. Marx himself was the target of their attacks. As Engels wrote, "Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his time . . . All this he brushed aside as though it were cobweb, ignoring it, answering only when extreme necessity compelled him."¹²

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* opens with the words: "A specter is haunting Europe — the specter of communism. All the Powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this specter: Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies."¹³

Ever since these lines were written there has been no let-up of the harassment of communists and of Marxism. A great deal of ink has been used for this purpose and much blood has been shed. Bourgeois ideologists, scholars, newspaper writers, telecommentators, and all churches and universities throughout the capitalist world engage, as they have always done, in "criticizing" Marxism. The police and

the military attempt, as they have always done, to crush the Marxist-Leninists and the Marxist doctrine upheld by them by means of direct and undisguised terror, murder and brutal summary treatment of tens of thousands of revolutionaries. Bismarck tried to counter the growing influence of the scientific doctrine and political movement of the working class by a discriminatory law against socialists; the German counter-revolutionaries of 1919 sought to achieve this with the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg; Hitler pursued the same aim by means of concentration camps, mass executions, and war. It is also the aim of U.S. President Reagan, who proclaimed a "crusade" against communism in a speech to the British parliament in June 1982.

The century that has elapsed since the death of Karl Marx has witnessed the ignominious fiasco of innumerable detractors. Revolutionary theory and the political movement, and — for the past 65 years — the existing socialist society, which reaction has been savagely assaulting, are alive and have achieved successes such as no social doctrine or party has been able to achieve within such a short span of time.

Marx's critics not only in the bourgeois camp but also in the ranks of the working-class movement have all labored in vain. In the beginning Marx's doctrine was not predominant; it was only one of many schools of socialism. But within only four decades it prevailed over the other currents and schools in the working-class movement. This compelled Marx's adversaries, who were unable to halt the triumphant march of his doctrine by a frontal attack, to pose as Marxists in order to fight Marxism on its own ground, in the guise of revisionism and reformism.

But, as developments have shown, even this perfidy cannot be constantly successful. At the close of the 19th century, after the death of Engels, the revisionists led by Bernstein tried to bury the revolutionary conclusions of Marx's doctrine. Lenin, the giant of the revolutionary theory and practice of the class struggle who was Marx's equal in intellect, revolutionary passion, brilliance of mind, scientific knowledge and human dignity, defended and creatively developed the revolutionary doctrine in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. Then followed the Great October Socialist Revolution, which was the first experience in world history of applying Marx's doctrine in practice; a new communist international organization of the revolutionary working-class movement emerged.

The transition from capitalism to socialism

inaugurated by the October Revolution of 1917 spread to a number of European and Asian countries in the latter half of the 1940s, then to Cuba, and now it is spreading to some African countries.

Marx's scientifically substantiated revolutionary ideas thus captured the minds first of hundreds, then of thousands, and finally of many millions of people. Despite the persecution and slander sustained for almost 140 years, these ideas live and function. They are being successfully translated into reality in the socialist countries, and their influence is broadening in the non-socialist world as well, where other revolutionary forces — the working-class and national liberation movements — are growing. Confronted with this development, even the adversaries of Marxism-Leninism cannot deny that it works, that it is keeping in step with the times and attracting millions of people.

The SUPG Central Committee Theses point out that all anti-Marxist ideologies designed to vindicate the capitalist exploiting system and all the theories extolling reformist ideas or seeking to win support for utopian, unrealistic notions about socialism have failed the test of time. The rhetoric about "social partnership," the "welfare state," "people's capitalism," and the "disappearance" of classes and the class struggle has proved to be nothing more than bombast.

Of course, in the time that has elapsed since the death of Marx much has changed in the character of labor and in the structural composition and social status of working people in industrialized capitalist countries. But what direction was followed by these changes and what factors predetermined them? Obviously, the swift growth of the world socialist system, the crumbling of imperialist colonial empires, and the development of the class struggle and the anti-imperialist democratic movement in the capitalist countries themselves led to dramatic changes in the conditions of capitalism's existence and in the forms and methods of capitalist exploitation. However, neither exploitation nor the economic regularities of the system were uprooted. Capitalist society remains divided into possessing and non-possessing classes. The working people continue to be denied the means of production. They continue to be forced to sell their labor to the capitalists and allow themselves to be exploited.

The continuing economic crisis in the USA, the FRG and other capitalist countries is bringing the contradictions of this society increasingly to light. These are exemplified by

mass unemployment, inflation, bankruptcies, monetary crises, unutilized productive forces, and the growing exacerbation of the class confrontation. Pessimistic assessments and fear of the future are generating in capitalist countries a sense of hopelessness even in the circles dominating society.

The excuses for the cutbacks on social spending and the calls for belt-tightening and abandoning the welfare line of thinking are all that have remained of the "theories" of those who heap praise on capitalism. They are now counting heavily on anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, which are being used by imperialism's aggressive circles in a bid to disguise their methods of ending the crisis and their policy that is jeopardizing peace.

The revolutionary movement aimed at fundamentally renewing the world along the road of peace, democracy and social progress has reached an unparalleled magnitude, embracing all continents and all parts of the world. Never before have such huge numbers of people joined this movement. This is most strikingly borne out by the growth of the national liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America and also by the appearance of new nation-states. The force of attraction and influence of the socialist alternative for society's development are steadily growing, it was noted at the 10th congress of the SUPG. In the course of the 1970s more countries took the road of non-capitalist development.

In Karl Marx Year, said Erich Honecker, General Secretary of our party's Central Committee, at the fifth plenary meeting of the SUPG Central Committee, the tasks before us are more wide-ranging than ever before. "The reason for this," he said, "lies in national and international requirements. The danger of war must be eliminated, and despite all the storms of the times the GDR must be strengthened all-sidedly as a socialist state of workers and peasants."¹⁴

In world politics there are two opposing tendencies. On the one hand, imperialism's most aggressive elements, notably U.S. imperialism, are looking for a way out of the long and ever-deepening crisis of the world capitalist economy in confrontation and a "crusade" against the socialist community. On the other hand, one cannot fail to see that headway has been made in safeguarding peace. The struggle between the forces of peace and war has by no means ended in favor of those who want to trigger a nuclear catastrophe. It is not only vital to humankind but possible to prevent another world war.

In the Prague Political Declaration of the

Warsaw Treaty countries serious attention is drawn to the fact that as a result of the further activation of imperialism's aggressive circles international developments are acquiring an increasingly dangerous character. The threat to peace, chiefly from the policy of building up arms, confrontation and boycott pursued by the USA, is countered by the consistent policy of peace of the Soviet Union and other socialist community countries.

The Prague Political Declaration says that despite all the diversity of present-day international problems, the prospects for European and world development depend mainly on whether success will attend the efforts to sweep suspicion aside and lower the threshold of confrontation between the two big military-political alliances — the Warsaw Treaty and NATO — which possess colossal strength, particularly in nuclear armaments. This document points out that a military clash between them would have disastrous effects for all nations.

The proposal made in the Prague Political Declaration for a treaty on a mutual non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations between members of the Warsaw Treaty and members of the North Atlantic bloc is of enormous significance. Implementation of this proposal would substantially reduce the threat of a nuclear war.

In the course of the struggle to prevent a nuclear world war the progressive movements are, despite the distinctions in the world view and social interests of their members, uniting ever more closely in defense of peace. In all parts of the world growing numbers of people are rising to fight the threat of nuclear death, to ensure peace and the continuation of détente. Becoming global, this movement, to which the people and government of the GDR are committed, has lately grown significantly stronger and more influential. It plays a large role in the life of humankind.

By its steadfast policy of peace the German Democratic Republic, which is one of the signatories of the Prague Political Declaration, is making an important contribution to safeguarding peace in Europe and throughout the world. It is making constructive proposals for the solution of all outstanding problems by negotiation. As was stated by the Political Bureau of the SUPG Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the GDR, the Prague Political Declaration indicates a realistic alternative to nuclear catastrophe.

Motivated by its sense of responsibility, the GDR supports the Soviet stand on the question of limiting and reducing strategic armaments

and also medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

Socialism's policy of peace, mirrored in the Prague Political Declaration, is wholly and fully consistent with the principles of working-class foreign policy set out by Marx in October 1864 in the Inaugural Address of the Working Men's International Association. It declared that experience had shown that "the working classes have the duty to master themselves the mysteries of international politics." Further, Marx stressed that it was necessary "to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

"The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working classes."¹⁵

Marx did not live to see at least the commencement of socialist construction. Nevertheless, he left us, alongside general principles, important ideas on socialist society's development, ideas which remain highly topical for us in building a developed socialist society. For example, he wrote that labor productivity had to be constantly promoted and stressed the immense role that science and modern technology had to play in this. In his *Critique of the Gotha Program* he clearly makes the point that socialist society would have to run its economy economically. He evolved the theory of the lower and higher phases of communism as consecutive phases of the development of the productive forces and the economic maturity of the new system. He set forth the essential idea that rationality and expediency had to underlie the distribution of the aggregate social product. A socialist society, Marx wrote, could not consume more than it produced, and the individual could not receive from society more than he gave it.

Experience has shown that after socialist relations of production are established it is impossible to move at once to the building of communism, which is the second phase of the communist social system; that there has to be a long period — this is exactly what developed socialist society is — for the all-sided development of the productive forces and social relations, and for the further molding of the socialist individual.

In the GDR, led by the SUPG, its own Marxist-Leninist party, and in solid alliance with the peasants and other working sections of the population, the working class has risen, as was foretold in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, to the position of the ruling class, established socialist democracy, and used its politi-

cal supremacy "to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie" and "increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."¹⁶ Like the other socialist community countries, the GDR constitutes, to use Marx's words, state power in the hands of the producers, it is the people acting by and for themselves, the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat that means "not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class-rule."¹⁷

In keeping with Marx's theoretical conclusions, especially those given in *Capital* and *Economic Manuscripts of 1857-1858* (*Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie*), the 10th congress of the SUPG adopted the economic strategy formulated by Erich Hon-ecker. This strategy spells out an enlargement on the concept of intensive extended reproduction in the GDR. The introduction of micro-electronics and robotry, the use of our own raw materials and the recycling of secondary raw materials and waste, the replacement of liquid fuel with natural gas or brown coal, self-sufficiency in the means of rationalizing labor and scientific instruments, the priority use of railways instead of trucks for the transport of freight, and so on will bring about, as the party's economic strategy foresees, structural changes in the republic's economy. Not a single industry, industrial facility, or research institution will remain unaffected by all these changes.

In fact, this amounts to the formation in the GDR of an economy, based on advanced productive forces and the optimal utilization of the republic's own resources, that will ensure not only the satisfaction of the population's requirements but also a growth of exports. Each person who can appreciate how complex the measures are will draw the conclusion that structural modifications aimed at achieving the highest efficiency are inconceivable without the full utilization of science, research and breakthroughs. Of course, many difficulties and shortcomings will have to be surmounted. Whoever believes that in a developed socialist society everything is accomplished easily, without conflicts and problems, that person is evidently far removed from reality.

Our targets are to achieve more with smaller outlays of materials and energy, to achieve in all areas a fundamentally better balance between costs and results, to make effective use of available resources and thereby ensure the gradual rise of the living standard and cultural level.

Interaction with the other socialist community countries in the Council for Mutual

Economic Assistance, joint utilization of the scientific, technological and economic potential, and, above all, cooperation with the USSR, which is our largest trade and economic partner, are basic to the GDR's further successful development. Socialist economic integration and scientific and technological cooperation among countries of the socialist community guarantee socialism's further consolidation and give the people of these countries a reliable prospect.

In private life Marx suffered many blows. He and his family lived in desperate want, especially during the years of exile in London, and he would not have withstood it had it not been for Engels' warm friendship and constant support. But Marx never gave himself up to despair. He loved life, and being highly educated himself, he brought up his children to love literature and art. With inexhaustible energy and perseverance he wrote scientific studies and continued his revolutionary work, serving the international working class.

It was the work of an internationalist, who at the same time had no more passionate striving than to see fundamental social changes in his homeland — Germany. The slogan "Working men of all countries, unite!" that closes the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, expresses the common interests, aims and solidarity of the working class of all countries. Marx's life is an example of proletarian internationalism — suffice it to recall his work in the First International.

Proletarian internationalism is the distinctive feature of our world view. Today it is expressed in the firm, unbreakable alliance of our party with the CPSU, in the friendship and cooperation between the USSR and the GDR, in our alliance with the fraternal parties in both the socialist community and the capitalist world, in solidarity with all the forces fighting imperialism and working for peace and social progress.

We see proletarian internationalism as inseparable from socialist patriotism, from love for our socialist homeland, the GDR. We bear the responsibility for the success and flowering of the socialist German state before the working class and other progressive people in all countries. By strengthening the German Democratic Republic and successfully building a developed socialist society we contribute to the strengthening of socialism and all revolutionary forces in the world fighting for peace and progress.

Marx's doctrine, cause and behests live in the revolutionary transformations, social movements and class battles of our time. For the

peoples of the world the name of Karl Marx is the beacon showing the road to the future, a synonym of peace, democracy and socialism, of all that is progressive, good and beautiful, of all on our planet that is worth fighting for.

1. *Thesen des Zentralkomitees der SED zum Karl-Marx-Jahr 1983*, Berlin, 1982, p. 8.
2. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 165.
3. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 396-397.
4. *Thesen des Zentralkomitees der SED*, pp. 8-9.
5. For instance, Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Kapitalismus, Sozialismus und Demokratie*, Bern, 1950, p. 17.
6. *Programm der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1976, pp. 93-94.
7. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 162-163.

8. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 15.
9. *Ibid.* Vol. 3, p. 163.
10. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 23.
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 36.
12. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 163.
13. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 481.
14. 5. *Tagung des Zentralkomitees der SED. Aus dem Schlusswort des Genossen Erich Honecker*, Berlin, 1982, p. 5.
15. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 18.
16. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 504.
17. Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 19.

The bankruptcy of imperialist policy in Chile

Luis Corvalan
General Secretary,
Communist Party of Chile

The struggle against the Pinochet dictatorship has entered a new phase marked by growing activity and militancy of the masses. In Chile today, the most diverse social sectors and political circles, including many supporters of Pinochet, realize that his regime is a passing phenomenon. Fresh facts confirm the old truth that a tyranny serving imperialism and oligarchy cannot hold the people in subjection for long.

The fascist regime under Pinochet has invariably adhered to the doctrine of national security which goes back to nazism and has been adopted by the Pentagon. This doctrine (all army officers in Chile as well as in some other countries have by now been bred according to it) implies that the people of Chile are ultimately its own enemy. It was under this alien ideological banner that fascist terror began on the very first day of the coup.¹ There came torture, the physical destruction of thousands of people, and concentration camps all over the country. Hundreds of thousands of Chileans were deported or had to emigrate. The regime did away with the working people's gains and Chile found itself under a dictatorship in the service of imperialist and oligarchic interests. The economic policy of the country, likewise inspired from without, follows the postulates of the neoconservative monetarists of the Chicago school.

Thus the nationalism and patriotism which

Pinochet boasts of are mere camouflage. Chile has never had a more anti-national and anti-patriotic government than today.

Under Salvador Allende, far-reaching social and economic changes were carried out. The country was advancing to socialism. This caused anger and deep concern among the imperialists, both because Chile was freeing itself from their domination and because the Chilean revolutionary process had an increasing impact on other countries of Latin America and even beyond.

Those behind the military coup set themselves two key goals: first, recapturing for U.S. monopolies and the Chilean oligarchy the dominant positions they had lost in the economic and political spheres, and second, imposing a political, economic and social regime that would perpetuate the capitalist system and serve the interests of transnationals and Chilean financial clans. In a country whose people had embarked on deep-going anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic changes with a socialist outlook, that regime could only be of a fascist type.

Having seized all political power, the Pinochet clique proceeded to reprivatize nationalized companies, attacked the agrarian reform, gave foreign capital access to natural resources, and set out to transfer industrial enterprises created and owned by the state, and those of the service sector, to the private sector. Needless to

say, it stepped up the concentration and centralization of capital, closely linking the economy with transnationals. All these measures were and still are a decisive part of the most sinister class objectives of the Pinochet clique. But the clique has been unable to achieve (nor could it have achieved) the main objectives of the regime's bosses, who had wanted to establish an order ensuring steady economic development on capitalist lines and social peace (if only maintained by force of arms), eliminate the Communist and Socialist parties, eradicate Marxism, remove all political parties, and suppress democracy in any form. What is more, the ship of the regime has sprung a leak. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of the policy of U.S. imperialism, father of the fascist tyranny and ally and bulwark of home reaction. The Chilean people are fighting to put an end to this policy and pave the way for an entirely different, anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic policy leading to the complete destruction of fascism, the formation of a people's democratic government and the resumption of social transformations.

Imperialist policy is in crisis everywhere on the continent. This was shown by the Cuban revolution at first and now the revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada and the insurgent movement in El Salvador and Guatemala testify to the fact that Central America and the Caribbean are the region where imperialist domination is at its weakest and the people's fight for liberation from monopoly oppression, at its highest. It is also obvious that the peoples of Latin America are stirring everywhere, from the Rio Grande to Patagonia, that their social consciousness is growing and so is the intensity of their anti-imperialist action. The tide of reaction which in the early 70s swept across the continent, particularly the South Cone, is on the ebb now. And while hated regimes like those of Pinochet and Stroessner are still there, fresh winds are blowing. The formation of a Democratic and Popular Unity government in Bolivia, the upsurge in the democratic movement of the masses in Argentina, the outcome of elections in Brazil and Uruguay,² the growing struggle of the workers and peasants in Peru and Ecuador, the consolidation of political freedoms in Colombia, the militancy and scope of anti-fascist actions in Chile are only some of the important developments opening up new promising vistas on the continent.

This is not to say that the future will be easy. Far from it. U.S. imperialism, particularly under the Reagan government, clings to its positions in Latin America, so hard as to seem willing to mount a criminal, adventurist attack

on Cuba and back armed intervention in Nicaragua or even to invade it directly, as well as to continue rendering political, economic and military aid to the most barbarous tyrannies. This is part of Washington's global policy, which puts U.S. capital and the U.S. military machine in the service of the foulest designs, intensifies the arms race and is pushing the world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust.

I

After the "great depression" of the late 20s and early 30s Chile, like other capitalist countries, tried to come out of the impasse of backwardness and monoculture by diversifying its economy and replacing imports with its own products. Decades later the country achieved an average level of capitalist development. Copper, the chief export, was still the pivot, but the country was also setting up and expanding a production sector geared to meeting domestic demand for various manufactured goods. At the same time the foundations were laid for heavy industry and chemical production. All this came about amid a continuous struggle between progressive and reactionary forces. Economic development did not escape deformations, nor did the economy achieve optimal results in every field. However, the country acquired a material and technical base on which to seek real independence and well-being for the people. And it was this upturn in economic strength that fascism broke off with fire and sword.

The inspirers and executors of the dictatorship's economic policy began by alleging that many Chilean industrial enterprises, brought into being with government assistance, were inefficient and had to be updated. That being so, the argument went on, it was necessary to make them compete with foreign producers and, consequently, to end protectionism, primarily by removing tariff barriers. *El Mercurio*³ wrote in November 1973 that inefficient enterprises which could produce no inexpensive high-quality articles would have to switch to a different type of output or disappear. With this orientation, production began to fall off fast; many plants were closed down or became bankrupt. The number of bankruptcies went up from 20 in 1974 to more than 800 in 1982.

Employers were compelled to switch to a different type of output or disappear, as the newspaper had predicted. However, the regime's economic policy did not at all result in updating the industrial sector and this fully refutes its theory. On the contrary, production became still more obsolete. Machinery was not

renewed inasmuch as funds earmarked for investment were used for speculation or squandered. What happened in reality was not an updating of industry but a rundown of a substantial part of it and the substitution of foreign for domestic production, which the Communist Party had warned against. But this was not understood by everyone in the past. Today it is understood even by many of those who backed and defended that policy.

The regime's economists insisted that priority should be given to industries which could get their output on to the world market by using Chile's natural conditions. They considered that in addition to copper and other minerals, this could be done in the case of products of the woodworking industry, fruit and seafood as well as goods that industrial enterprises, on becoming effective, were expected to supply. The regime concentrated accordingly on this line, counting on "comparative natural advantages" and reducing wages to a mere pittance. Circumstances helped the regime score a brief success, as by then investments made under democratic governments had begun to yield results; besides, the regime took advantage of a favorable situation on the world market and manipulated the exchange rate of the escudo and other financial mechanisms. Subsequently, however, reality showed up the short-sightedness of calculations making economic advance conditional on export of raw materials or articles requiring simple techniques, on a steady flow of foreign credits and unlimited imports.

Had Chile in the past tied its prospects solely to export of the output of the mining industry and agriculture, the country on the eve of the fascist coup would have had no industries capable of meeting growing domestic demand for textiles, steel, machinery and durables.

Chile's current economic policy, which has an American imprint, ignores fundamental economic laws. In this age of transnationals, one of the worst delusions is to put everything at the mercy of the market as in the days of Adam Smith and David Ricardo. The regime has adopted neoclassical monetarism, or the most reactionary variety of economic liberalism. This theory maintains that prices in their absolute expression are determined by the volume of payment media in circulation and attributes inflation, crisis, unemployment and other economic evils to mismanagement of variable financial values by the state. In other words, money is said to be the fundamental instrument capable of causing fluctuations on the economic situation while at the same time serv-

ing as a stabilizer of the mechanism of capitalist reproduction.

However, life refutes spurious theories. Indeed, financial factors can prove effective only if treated as part of an overall policy intended to solve fundamental problems and hence to remove whatever hampers the growth of the productive forces. Thus, one of the important tasks is to rid the Chilean economy of the domination of transnationals and the financial oligarchy. This domination ruins small, medium and even big proprietors, forces many employers to turn their enterprises into appendages to monopolies, participate merely in assembly, the manufacture of spare parts, distribution or the provision of services.

The Pinochet dictatorship has been following an economic policy prescribed by the U.S. imperialists, who do not apply it. They are intensifying protectionism while demanding of others what does not suit themselves. *L'Humanité*, commenting on the latest conference of GATT,⁴ described Washington's motto as "Do what I tell you and not what I do."⁵

Economic policy on the Chicago model is implemented along with the concept of the "subsidizing state," said to be a guarantee of "universal welfare" and the free play of market forces. All this is posed against socialism as well as against government interference in the economy, practised in Chile and in many other countries in the interest of independent industrial development.

Yet it is evident that under fascism the state has been playing a decisive part in a retrogressive restructuring of the economy. To this end it has not only used economic levers but brought the full weight of its repressive machinery to bear. It has been carrying on its Chicago economic policy by armed force and has stamped out all free thought and monopolized the mass media. The so-called "subsidizing character" of the state means encouraging financial sharks, domestic and foreign alike, and curbing small and medium Chilean employers but above all the working people, who are made to bear the brunt of the hardships imposed by the regime.

Owners of big banks and industrial companies associated with financial clans get away from the crisis at state expense, that is, by drawing on what is taken out of every Chilean's pocket. As regards other businessmen, the state pushes them to bankruptcy and "punishes" them for their debts by selling off their property. But this boomerangs in the end. Industrialists, agriculturists, merchants, and owners of transport companies expose the privileges of

the oligarchic groups and insist that the state support them in the same way as it supports financial sharks.

Chile is summing up. The fascist regime has brought the country death, destruction, hunger, repression and a decreased economic potential. In the four decades immediately preceding the coup an increase in GNP averaged 3.5 per cent a year. There has been no growth in the 10 years of fascist rule. At the same time the huge funds (about 30 billion dollars) secured by increasing the external debt, overexploiting the workers and selling off government enterprises and natural resources (even reservations) have served as a means of speculation and the further enrichment of a select few, who can afford to live in luxury. The regime also uses these funds to keep up for a time an illusion of prosperity among some sections of the middle strata, whom it has enabled to live on credit and indulge in consumption for consumption's sake.

The damage caused to the cultural patrimony and technological potential of the country by the dictatorship plus the moral and psychological loss suffered by many population groups are immense. The deportation or forced emigration of hundreds of thousands of Chileans who are neither allowed to freely express their views in their own country, nor given jobs is a real drama. It affects almost every family — directly or indirectly — and seriously handicaps the development of society. In training skilled workers, Chile traditionally ranked high on the continent. Knowledge is handed down from generation to generation but when production steadily declines during a whole decade, as it has done under Pinochet, this potential is lost, atrophies or declines sharply. One has only to add to this the dismantling of many factories, mass unemployment, bans and restrictions on cultural activities and on higher and secondary education to realize the tremendous harm that has been done to the country. It will evidently take years and, needless to say, an entirely different policy to remedy this situation.

II

Fascism conceals its real aims, professing to have noble intentions which it does not have. In Chile, too, it emerged at a certain moment under the banner of defending democracy, restoring order and protecting private property. The Popular Unity government tried to achieve one of the nation's major objectives, the recovery of its copper ore resources. It adopted in the interests of the people and country measures affecting the property of imperialists and

oligarchy. Nevertheless, reactionary propaganda, assisted by certain actions of the ultra-left, managed to frighten small and medium employers (in industry, agriculture, trade and transport) into deserting to the enemies of social changes. Yet the Allende government had supported these employers and made credits and dependable markets more accessible to them. Everyone realizes now that the dictatorship effected a brutal expropriation of small and medium proprietors in favor of big capital.

Fascism always begins typically by attacking the communists and the working class and then extends the range of its fire to suppress every manifestation of democracy and take repressive measures against all social sectors whose interests are at variance with those of financial capital. The case of Chile fully confirms this. From assailing the Popular Unity government fascism moved on to attacks on the Christian Democratic government⁶ and then on all the progressive aspects of the republican democratic system which the country had built up since the last century. Proceeding to undo the socio-economic changes effected under Allende, it subsequently set its sights on breaking off the historical trend of independent economic development which the masses and a large section of the national bourgeoisie had supported for more than five decades.

And now the final stage — the failure of fascist demagoguery — has set in. It is a moment when the effects of the regime's policy fully unmask fascism. There is no doubt any more that fascism poses itself not only against the working class and progressive sections of society but against the vast majority of the nation.

With imperialist transnationals in a dominant position, the fascist regime of Pinochet, which is subservient to them and to domestic financial clans, has unavoidably come into conflict with the whole country. This is why it cannot stay in power even by force of arms and by strangling freedom. In fact, all these crimes turn inescapably against it.

Fascism calls itself an opponent of the class struggle yet wages an all-out class war against the people. But sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. At present the dictatorship is encircled by a hostile people and by a growing opposition — the one that has existed ever since the coup, the opposition that has formed over the long period of struggle against the tyranny, and the opposition brought into being by the regime's own policy.

The country is going through the deepest economic, social and political crisis that has ever hit it over the past five decades. Strikes and walkouts disrupt fascist law and order. Hunger

marches and demonstrations in support of democratic rights, land seizures and other actions are accompanied by violent clashes with the dictatorship's repressive forces. The call to protest by ignoring bills for water and electricity and refusing to pay rent and tuition fees in schools and universities has met massive response. Hundreds and thousands of Chileans besiege municipalities to protest against unemployment and demand medical care and aid in solving other vital problems. Students devise the most diverse forms of expressing their anger at the militarization of the universities. The fascist regime's regulations are infringed everywhere. Occasionally pylons of high-voltage lines are blown up and radio and television broadcasts interfered with by way of expressing the people's protest. Numerous other actions are aimed at destabilizing tyrannical rule. The spirit of revolt has spread to crisis-ridden bourgeois sectors. It finds expression in, among others, collective resistance to the selling off of property for non-payment of bank debts.

Time was when Pinochet claimed that Chile's problems were a consequence of the crisis affecting the main capitalist powers. Actually they are due to a number of causes. The severe crisis in which the country finds itself also stems from a slump in the world capitalist economy, from a further cycle of the crisis and a slowdown in the growth of the productive forces brought about by the domination of domestic and foreign financial capital. But the main factor determining the proportions of crisis phenomena in Chile is, now as in the past, the policy of fascism. The dictatorship is largely responsible for the impact of the general slump in the capitalist world on the crisis in Chile, for it has weakened our country's production apparatus and increased dependence on imperialism. This is what explains the failure of fascism's economic model.

Nothing could be a sadder sight either economically or socially than today's Chile. Whole factories have gone out of existence. Industrial output falls far short of what installed capacities could produce, but even these have decreased in comparison with the potential which the country had 10 years ago. The traditional branches of agriculture are on the decline. The annual grain crop, which in the past exceeded one million metric tons, has diminished by half. Over 2,000 companies have failed under fascist rule. The foreign debt has risen from 3 to 18 billion dollars of which the private sector owes 12 billion. Employers are more indebted to domestic banks than ever. Interest rates exceed 50 per cent. This plus a

shrinking home market (due primarily to low wages and unemployment) and an avalanche of foreign goods are leading to a further run-down of national industries.

Fascism, says the *Manifesto* of our party,⁷ has trampled on the civil rights of the working people, particularly their trade union freedoms. It has drastically cut real incomes and introduced a system of slave labor known as the Minimum Employment Plan, repealed the progressive Statutes of Copper Mining Workers, greatly limited the right to strike, and fully banned strikes in the Chuquicamata mines and many other large enterprises. The population can no longer obtain housing through social security agencies. Social security funds are as a general rule spent arbitrarily. The regime has established a miserly minimum wage, with young people getting 25 per cent less than their elders. The laws on maternity leave and the trade unions are virtually ignored. The right to length of service pension has been abolished and pension age for both men and women has been raised by five years. The attitude of the ruling military fascist clique to the working class is characterized by frank hatred.

Fascist policy has reduced the working people to appalling poverty. Under the Popular Unity government, their share in the national income was close to 60 per cent while now it is down to 40 per cent. Purchasing capacity has been forcibly lowered. Unemployment involves over 30 per cent of the work force, which means that over one million Chileans are jobless, with the result that about four million people suffer from hunger and poverty. Education is no longer free; it has ceased to receive constant attention from the state and has become a source of profit. Few people can afford to receive a secondary, specialized or higher education. The health services have greatly deteriorated.

III

The fascist regime has never had freedom of maneuver. The Communist Party has called for struggle and anti-fascist unity from the outset. The working class and other segments of the population are steadily increasing their resistance to the tyranny. A development of recent date is that resistance has become more massive and militant and points in the direction of popular rebellion. Another new fact is that the middle strata and a considerable section of the bourgeoisie have joined in the struggle against the regime's policies.

The majority of Chilean employers were opposed to the Popular Unity government and so backed the coup in one way or another.

Furthermore, they came to believe in the alleged merits of the economic model that the regime began to introduce after the coup as recommended by the "Chicago school," in particular the Milton Friedman group. Today, however, the same employers are resisting or sharply criticizing the regime. The Association of Metallurgical Plant Owners, Association of Wheat Producers, Confederation of Agricultural Producers, and other organizations of industrialists and agriculturists supplying the home market insist on being protected by tariff barriers. They have launched a movement for the imposition of a 10-year moratorium on debts (and the granting of a three-year term for the beginning of repayment). These demands are also backed by transport company owners and merchants.

A substantial part of the bourgeoisie has lost confidence in the dictatorship, seeing the deplorable results of its policy and realizing that the steps taken by Pinochet to alleviate the crisis merely make it worse. After all, these are a continuation of the abortive policy aimed at defending imperialist interests, as is shown by agreements with the International Monetary Fund and by government interference in the affairs of some banks (including big private banks), by virtue of which the state assumes responsibility for the repayment of their enormous debts, primarily to the main U.S. financial institutions.

The situation is such that all Chileans ranging from workers to many members of the bourgeoisie are fighting for survival, some defending their jobs and others trying to preserve their enterprises.

The regime has brought something very different from what it had promised. There is oppression and chaos instead of "democracy and order," economic dislocation and a drop in production below the level of 10 years ago instead of "balanced economic development." Instead of "full employment," the dictatorship's rule throughout the past years has been marked by a high rate of unemployment greatly exceeding that in other countries with a similar development level.

The actual results of fascist rule indicate that the regime is, in effect, anti-labor, anti-popular, anti-national and anti-patriotic. It has always placed the profits of financial clans and transnationals above the interests of the country. Pinochet, who had the audacity to compare himself to the founder of the Chilean state, Bernardo O'Higgins, is a mere pawn in imperialist hands. That tyrant posing as "general of the poor" has pushed poverty to the limit to serve the well-being of the handful of those at the

other pole, the very rich. Chile's security and sovereignty have been undermined by a deteriorating economy, the alienation of the armed forces from the people and international isolation.

This situation also makes itself felt in the armed forces. More and more of their members realize the need to renounce the infamous role of enemies of the people.

The light at the end of the tunnel can be seen already. There are many battles ahead but the fate of the fascist regime is sealed. Some of its backers, being aware that it is in a blind alley, are searching for a way out to safeguard their main class interests and prevent a "plebeian" solution.

The opposition, which ranges from the working class to a sizable section of the bourgeoisie, and from the Left to the so-called democratic Right, proposes various solutions. Some want a simple change of policy without removing Pinochet or by putting someone else at the helm of state at the worst. As regards the center, where Christian Democrats wield the strongest influence, the dominant idea is that of a gradual transition to a bourgeois democracy granting the communists a legal status but barring them from the government to be formed after the abolition of the dictatorship.

The Communist Party, however, advocates a government representing all anti-fascist forces, who should participate in it directly or support it. Only this kind of government, that is, the most democratic and most representative of possible governments, would be able to overcome difficulties and solve big problems as it eradicated fascism and effected a renaissance of the country. Its formation would depend above all on the strength of the working-class movement and the influence of left parties, it becoming ever more imperative for them to reach mutual understanding.

The dilemma in Chile today, says the Communist Party, "is not fascism or socialism, fascism or bourgeois democracy. What is needed is a new national people's democratic government that would favor and promote meeting the objective needs of social progress."⁸

The transformations effected under President Allende as well as certain of the Christian Democratic government's reforms preceding them met the imperative need to alter antiquated structures, urgent requirements of social development. This need and these requirements are going to increase, not decrease. After all, fascism has thrown Chile far back and in the meantime society's requirements have grown. The country must make up

for lost time in many fields and draw level with what has been achieved in the world over the past decade.

Fascism has led to socio-economic deformations and fully laid bare the class character of the armed forces, the judiciary and the media. It has exploded many myths that had bemused a substantial part of the population. There are objective prerequisites for ensuring that future social changes go very deep under the impact of the people's struggle.

However, real changes will be unthinkable if the approach is narrow-minded and short-sighted, unless the roots of the people's misfortunes are tackled and unless their chief enemy is fought, and this fight is impossible without the working class and the Communist Party, without the Left.

Certain members of the bourgeois opposition carefully test the ground before taking a further step. They rightly consider that Pinochet will leave ruins behind him and so they would like someone else to assume the initial burden of the struggle against economic dislocation. We think this attitude is wrong, to say the least. The country must not be left to the mercy of fate, which threatens chaos. Selfish calculations should not override one's patriotic duty. And this duty demands that early steps be taken to rehabilitate Chile and spare its people further suffering. We communists consider that it is

necessary and possible to avoid an interregnum and work from the very first day after removing the dictatorship to overcome the main difficulties, meet the vital needs of the masses, and grapple with urgent problems. This calls for agreement among all opposition groups, left and right alike. Such an agreement, while not easy, is feasible. The communists are willing to devote all their energies to bringing it about.

The communist position is perfectly democratic and consistent. Our party is not trying to exclude anyone from joint action against fascism, to isolate anyone from the fight against the tyranny or from the future formation of a new democratic system. On the contrary, it is convinced that all anti-fascists must coordinate their actions against the tyranny today to reach agreement on joint rule tomorrow. It may well be that in a specific political situation one party or several parties, including the communists, do not enter into the government to be formed after the downfall of the dictatorship but support all its progressive initiatives or join the opposition. Evidently, any such solution, even if imposed by the circumstances, is the sovereign right of every party.

We, however, stress our readiness to do all in our power in order to hasten the downfall of the tyranny and then, with due regard to the given situation, to go as far as possible on the basis of joint action by popular forces, with the majority of the nation uniting around the working class.

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1. The military fascist coup which overthrew the constitutional Popular Unity government (left coalition including the Communist Party) took place on September 11, 1973. — Ed.

2. On November 15, 1982, elections were held in Brazil for the National Congress, local government bodies, and the offices of governors. The results were evidence of the increased strength of the democratic opposition, which won the majority of seats in the lower chamber of Congress and whose candidates were elected governors in 10 states, including the economically most developed ones.

In the elections for the leading bodies of the traditional bourgeois parties of Uruguay held on November 28, 1982, opponents of the dictatorship polled 82 per cent of the votes. — Ed.

3. Mouthpiece of the most reactionary section of the Chilean bourgeoisie; it is owned by the Edwards financial clan directly linked with U.S. imperialism — Ed.

4. General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, an international organization comprising the majority of capitalist countries. — Ed.

5. *L'Humanité*, November 27, 1982.

6. The Popular Unity government, formed after Salvador Allende, the presidential candidate of the Left, had won the 1970 elections, was preceded by a Christian Democratic government under Eduardo Frei. — Ed.

7. See *Manifiesto del Partido Comunista de Chile*, Santiago, September, 1981; *Boletín del exterior*, No. 50, 1982, p. 12.

8. "Nuestro proyecto democrático," *Boletín del exterior*, No. 37, 1979, p. 6.

A new development in the balance of strength in the Middle East

Faik Warrad
CC First Secretary,
Jordanian Communist Party

About a year ago the Israeli military invaded Lebanon on a massive scale. Acting in "strategic alliance" with the USA, their intention was to heat up the international situation as a cover for achieving their expansionist designs. Although the invasion fell short of all the designs of its organizers, the USA and Israel made gains of no little consequence. It was as though an earthquake had hit the Middle East — the Arab liberation movement was dealt a painful blow. The effects of the aggression continue to be felt, complicating the situation in the region.

The intervention was a surprise for nobody. But this time, unlike the previous occasions when Israel launched an aggression, the Arab countries maintained a helpless silence for more than three months, and in some matters acted as direct accomplices of the aggressors. At the time many people asked in embarrassment: How could all this happen? What is the reason of such inactivity? There were other, justified questions: Why had the forces of the Arab liberation movement, which involves various classes, parties and currents, been unable to organize effective mass resistance to the interventionists and their allies, the U.S. imperialists? Why had they not acted against the stand of "aloof observers" adopted by the Arab states? Why was there massive condemnation of the aggression and solidarity with its victims throughout the world, even in Israel itself, while Arab solidarity was weak and pitiful?

We shall try to answer these questions by considering some important factors and circumstances that shed light on the matter.

During the past decade there has been a growth of the influence and strength of the right-wing reactionary forces in most of the Arab countries. This was seen most strikingly after Egypt, the largest state in the Arab world, signed the Camp David agreements, making a volte face and joining the imperialist-Zionist camp, while Iraq and Iran engaged in a bitter war of attrition that is bringing them nothing but ruin and eroding their resources.

Reactionary and right-wing regimes began moving closer and reinforcing their links to U.S. imperialism. U.S. military bases and strongpoints were built in a number of Arab

countries, while some others signed agreements with the USA on the formation of bilateral military commissions as a step toward a so-called strategic consensus based on anti-Sovietism.

In that same period there was a dramatic growth of oil revenues — to many hundreds of billions of dollars annually. Right-wing reaction thereby obtained huge resources for influencing the course of events in the region. Massive financial assistance and, where possible, bribery enabled it, in one form or another, to influence the posture and political line of different countries, organizations, parties and social forces.

On the domestic scene lavish spending and innumerable programs promoted the growth of bourgeois strata. The tendency toward embourgeoisification and the drive for wealth intensified not only in the oil-producing but also other Arab countries. The bureaucratic and parasitical bourgeoisie began to play a large role in countries with a national-patriotic regime. The interests of the neobourgeois strata dovetailed ever more closely with the interests of world capitalism. In this situation the objectives of the Israeli aggression proved to be consonant with the striving of influential right-wing and reactionary Arab circles to be rid of the hotbed of revolutionary ferment in Lebanon.

The regimes in the vast majority of Arab countries are continuing their policy of massive terror and, in some cases, brutal repression accompanied by bloodshed. There is a total absence of political and civil freedoms. The people are barred from any participation in deciding matters vital to them. The communist parties of these countries have warned time and again that the muzzling of democracy threatens the stability of internal fronts and undermines the ability to repulse aggression from without.

Some quarters are inclined to belittle the pernicious effects of terror and repression on the mass movement. Formally comparing the present state of the movement with the situation in the 1950s when, despite harassment, it was on the upgrade, the proponents of such views use the present decline as a pretext to

attack the forces and contingents of the Arab liberation movement. These people evidently do not understand that backed by petrodollars and the ambition to monopolize power these repressive actions are now of an incomparably greater magnitude and brutality than ever before.

The socio-economic structure of the Arab countries has recently undergone a change. In particular, the numerical strength of the working class has grown. However, in a situation of harassment and suppression of freedoms, including the freedom of trade union activity, against the background of mass emigration, bribery and corruption of some sections of the people, this has not yet led to any visible enhancement of the working class' role in socio-political life.

The policy of repression and suppression of freedoms pursued by the right-wing reactionary forces and their dictatorial methods of government have created the soil for wide-ranging ideological subversion and a more active implementation of the notorious policy of divide and rule. This is not confined to distortions of progressive ideas, to the smearing of and attacks on Arab-Soviet friendship. Fanaticism is fanned and ethnic, regional, religious-communal, tribal and other conflicts are kindled. Internecine bloodshed has been provoked and encouraged, and efforts have been made to subvert individual countries, movements and parties from within. A sense of cosmopolitanism and "attachment to the West" has been disseminated. This has undermined unity, demoralized the masses, young people and intellectuals, corrupted them spiritually, and led people to return to the times of glaring backwardness.

Such are the hallmarks of the situation in which the Israeli aggressor invaded Lebanon and resistance to it was organized. It is to this situation that the interventionists owe most of their successes.

The helpless silence of the right-wing reactionary and dictatorial regimes and the practical ineffectiveness of the Front for Steadfastness and Confrontation, generated among the Arab masses defeatist feelings, bitterness and disappointment. For the same reasons nothing was done to use the Soviet Union's willingness to help and support those who do not bow to the aggressor. Detachments of the Palestine Resistance and the Lebanese national-patriotic movement had to face a numerically superior enemy single-handed. In the fighting that lasted more than three months the Palestinian and Lebanese fighters displayed unparalleled courage and heroism. The just cause of the

Palestinian people had wide sympathy and support worldwide. The historic battle in Lebanon yielded quite a few instructive lessons.

The aggression in the Middle East gave shape to what is on the whole an extremely dangerous situation that holds out the threat of U.S. imperialism consolidating its domination, of Israel enlarging the scale of its expansion and of forcibly pushing through liquidationist, capitulationist solutions of the Palestinian problem. Early last September, U.S. President Reagan came out with an initiative for the "settlement of the Middle East conflict" that boiled down to an attempt to assert U.S. hegemony in the region and to knock an anti-Soviet military bloc together making out that the main pressing problem was that there was a "strategic threat" from the Soviet Union.

The U.S. imperialists want to be in full control of the affairs of the Middle East, to tailor them to their own interests and the interests of their Israeli ally. This is testified to by Reagan's refusal to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, to return to their homes and hearths, and create an independent state of their own under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. The USA is trying to widen the framework of the Camp David agreements by bringing Lebanon and Jordan into them in one form or another, void the Palestine problem by imposing on the population of occupied Arab lands an "administrative autonomy" in association with Jordan, and set up a military base in Lebanon.

A few days after Reagan announced his initiative, the 12th Arab summit was held with PLO participation in the Moroccan city of Fez. The summit adopted an Arab plan for peace in the region. It contains realistic provisions that create the foundation for a just, sensible settlement of the Palestine problem. In many ways these provisions dovetail with the stand that has been consistently maintained by the USSR, and this paves the way for coordinating the efforts of Arab countries and the Soviet Union. However, the summit's decisions say nothing about what the Arabs should do if the USA and Israel reject this plan, and lack even a hint of the possibility, in this contingency, of taking steps that would clash with the interests of U.S. imperialism. Many people are quite rightly saying that in fact the leaders of most of the Arab states do not intend to abide by the position proclaimed at Fez, that they are inclined to approve the American initiative.

Furthermore, imperialism, Zionism and reaction are trying to sow discord, to split the Palestinian movement, the PLO itself, and ag-

gravate and erode Syrian-Palestinian relations. There is suspicious talk that the PLO should lay down its arms and confine itself to work among the people and to diplomatic activity. Also, attempts are made to lure it into the trap of the illusory "solutions" suggested by the Americans.

All this is evidence that the situation in the region is being inflamed, that there is a mounting threat to the cause of the Palestinian people. Under these conditions, the danger of our region being turned into the source of a war threat to world peace and to the friendly Soviet Union is becoming quite real and tangible. In this event the Middle East states would be not only a zone of imperialist-Zionist influence and exploitation but also the target of devastating retaliatory nuclear strikes if the imperialists venture to start a military adventure against the USSR, which is constantly extending to our peoples its hand in peace and good-neighborly friendship.

Counteraction to this serious and ever-growing danger is today the principal task of the Arab peoples, of their liberation movement. Success can only be achieved with the active and effective participation of the masses. To ensure such participation, democracy and civil rights must be upheld perseveringly and consistently. This is central to the multiform battles against imperialism, Zionism, reaction and aggression, for peace, liberation and social progress.

In the plans of imperialism and Zionism for domination and expansion in our region, an important role is assigned to Jordan and the Palestinian problem separately and together.

The U.S. President categorically rejects the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, rights that have been recognized by the international community, and insists, entirely in accordance with the Camp David line, on giving the inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip nothing more than "administrative autonomy" in association with Jordan. No provision is made for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the territories occupied by them, and this opens the door to the spread of Israeli influence to Jordan.

On the other hand, Israel's rulers have time and again urged the settlement of the Palestinian problem within the framework of Jordan, the creation there of an "alternative homeland" for the Palestinians or even a "Palestinian state," and threatened that more hundreds of thousands of Palestinians would be exiles to that country. At the height of the aggression of Lebanon, when besieged Beirut was being methodically destroyed, this idea was repeated

by the then Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. To give effect to it, he went so far as to threaten that Jordan would be occupied.

At a plenary meeting in October 1982 our party's CC stated: "... the purpose of this constant repetition of the theme is to camouflage the process of liquidating the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to their land and homes, to justify the expansionist actions of the Israelis relative to Jordan, and give effect to the plan for building a 'Greater Israel' even behind the smokescreen of setting up a state for the Palestinians." Moreover, they aim to sow discord, to introduce a division in the relations between the Palestinians and the Jordanians, to undermine their patriotic unity, to paralyze their struggle for common interests, chiefly their resistance to expansionist encroachments directed equally against each of them.

The concrete historical conditions of the existence of both fraternal peoples — the Palestinian and the Jordanian — make it necessary to bear in mind some important factors and circumstances that decisively influence the relations between them, regardless of the plans and wishes of Reagan and Israel's rulers, of their expansionist ambitions.

After the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 the largest and most densely populated part of Palestine, the West Bank of the river Jordan, was incorporated in Jordan. It was then that the Gaza Strip came under Egyptian administration. As a result of the June 1967 aggression both these regions were occupied by the Israelis, and further hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven into Jordan. Since then Jordan has had the largest Palestinian community, numbering nearly 1,250,000 persons. The latter have Jordanian citizenship and live in the same conditions as their Jordanian brothers. The inhabitants of the occupied West Bank (750,000 persons) continue to have personal, public, economic, financial and administrative links to Jordan.

Thus, Palestinian-Jordanian ties remain objectively close to this day, and a common status is enjoyed by the two peoples, the people of Jordan and the bulk of the Palestinians. This objective reality constantly poses the question of the character and prospects of the relations between them. Internationally, as well as in the Arab world and in Jordan itself it is recognized that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. But the situation in Jordan, the stand of its ruling circles, and the policies pursued by them directly and tangibly influence the struggle and destiny of this people. In turn, the state of the Palestinian problem profoundly and

directly affects Jordan's political and socio-economic position.

With this as their starting point, officials of the Jordanian government speak of, on the one hand, the "positive aspects" of the Reagan initiative and, on the other, of hypothetical plans for establishing, already now, "federal" or some similar relationship between the proposed Palestinian entity and Jordan. In the present situation we are opposed to such plans, holding that they are premature. The cart cannot be put before the horse. Israel continues to be in occupation of the lands of the Palestinians, to flout their national rights. A Palestinian state is as yet non-existent. The statements about its preconditional association with Jordan are used by Israel to further its expansionist designs, to retain and annex the occupied territories, and abolish the rights of the Palestinian people. As a result, the Palestinian problem remains unresolved and continues to be a potential trigger of future conflicts and wars. There remains the direct threat of Israeli expansion toward Jordan.

It is our party's view that in the present situation, when the central task is unquestionably to deliver the Palestinians from Israeli occupation and restore the rights usurped from them, Jordan should make a worthy contribution to this struggle and thereby honor its national and Arab duty. Every assistance must be given to the PLO to enable it to organize resistance to the Israeli occupationists from Jordanian territory. For our country, the successful outcome of the battles for the national rights of the Palestinians would be not only a victory of a fraternal people. It would also be a guarantee of the security of Jordan itself against Israeli expansion.

This is not the time for coming to agreement on how to build the relations between the future Palestinian state and Jordan. But it should not be overlooked that the objective position and interests of the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples require that these relations are given a special character. Hence, it is quite natural and logical that the decisions of the 16th session of the Palestine National Council (February 1983) speak of the prospect of a subsequent confederative union of two independent states, the Palestinian and the Jordanian. This approach coincides with the stand adopted by our party. Our CC's Political Report declares: "The termination of the occupation and the realization by the Palestinian people of their right to return to their homeland, to self-determination, and to the creation of their own independent state would mark the beginning of a new stage. At that stage the important problems would be

to strengthen and develop Palestinian-Jordanian relations on the basis of equality, for the welfare and in the interests of the two fraternal peoples, chiefly in the interests of the Jordanian and Palestinian working people under conditions of freedom, democracy and social progress."

The joint struggle of the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples and the special relations between them are threatened from two directions.

I have already spoken of the danger of forestalling events when, on the claim that the two peoples have vitally important common interests, some quarters are urging that the character and forms of future Jordanian-Palestinian relations should be defined already now. This is urged sometimes by officials of the Jordanian regime.

On the other hand, some Palestinian quarters, justifiably dissatisfied with the discriminatory practices in Jordan, the despotic methods of government and the impingement of democratic freedoms, and basing themselves on the legitimacy of the Palestinians' right to self-determination and the creation of an independent state of their own, call in advance for a total rupture with Jordan. They fan "regional" fanaticism and even try to split the working class in Jordan and its Communist Party on the principle of "national affiliation." Our party stresses that any tendencies toward fanatical sectarian insularity no matter who is at the back of them, play into the hands of imperialism, Zionism and reaction, helping them to enforce the policy of divide and rule. The CC Political Report notes: "Patriotic duty and true fidelity to the two fraternal peoples — the Palestinian and the Jordanian — call for a rebuff to these dangerous tendencies, whatever their color."

One way or another, all the plans of the U.S.-Israeli alliance are directed toward the attainment of Israel's aggressive expansionist ambitions, the spread of Zionist influence to Jordan, and the establishment of a U.S. monopoly over the implementation of the "peace process" and the "intermediary efforts" in the region. In the past few decades there have been five wars in the Middle East. The main cause was the impingement of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Can there be peace as long as these rights are usurped and the people of Palestine are denied justice and equality? The realistic way to a genuine, just peace in our region is indicated in the Soviet proposal for an international conference with the participation of all the interested sides, including the PLO, the USSR, and the USA.

The dynamic of the revolutionary process

Ruben Dario Souza Batista
CC General Secretary,
People's Party of Panama (PPP)

The Panamanian revolutionary process has been put to a hard test by the developments since the tragic death of General Omar Torrijos. However, despite the difficulties, the Torrijista orientation continues to prevail within it to this day: the country's decolonization is proceeding, the pluralist democracy with the involvement of diverse classes and strata of the population is being consolidated, and the embryonic forms of people's power are being preserved. The national economy has been developing on the basis of a multisectoral structure (state enterprises, working people's cooperatives and private companies) and the country's international line, including its adherence to the principle of non-alignment, is unchanged.

The process of transformations has not been affected by the resignation of the National Guard Commander Florencio Flores in March 1982 and the stepping down of the President Aristides Royo in July of the same year. These events eloquently confirmed that the Panamanian process has gone beyond the framework of short-term ups-and-downs and fits and starts and has acquired the characteristics of a country that is at a definite stage of historical development and is in a highly concrete international situation. Those who reject the concept of the particular in a revolutionary process and confine themselves to stating general propositions, mechanically contrasting the typical and the specific, may misinterpret the process of our social struggle. What is more, failing to realize that these events are a creative enrichment of universal laws, they assume that an end has come to everything that began in Panama as an experiment by petty-bourgeois military circles in October 1968,¹ and that subsequently acquired the form of a people's democratic and national liberation movement.

Peculiarity of the Panamanian experience

It is impossible to understand the dynamic of the class struggle in Panama outside its specific historical context and with emphasis on a search for analogies with other situations. The point is that a revolution has matured in the country which is democratic by virtue of its

motive powers and bourgeois in historical tasks. However, the situation and circumstances in which it is proceeding, notably specific features like the level of the development of the productive forces and the country's place within the international system of imperialist exploitation (from the standpoint of its degree and mode) have made for the anti-imperialist tenor of the changes. Confirmation of this comes from the Panamanian people's long struggle against colonialism, for the nationalization of the Canal, against the scenario of a dependent capitalism enabling U.S. imperialism to exploit the country and to plunder its wealth. Consequently, the very nature of the revolution set the task of determining the social forces which must and can carry it out.

The People's Party of Panama (PPP) has been dealing with this problem since 1956,² working to ascertain the positions of diverse social groups whose representatives had at the time already joined in the revolutionary torrent and strove to be in the front line of the struggle. In the light of the Marxist-Leninist thesis concerning the multi-class character of democratic revolutions, we were able to establish the social composition of the Panamanian revolutionary movement at its democratic level, bring out the pluralism of aspirations and the actual contribution made by each of the social groups to realizing the transformations in our concrete conditions. The party established, for instance, that a sizable part of the petty bourgeoisie, not yet having taken a consistent anti-imperialist stand, was evolving toward a struggle for democracy, against dependent capitalism, and that it had the initiative and the main role in mobilizing the people for active struggle.

The vanguard tendencies of the progressive petty bourgeoisie sprang from the conditions of its political development. From its separation from Spain in 1821 to the start of the struggle against U.S. imperialism, Panama travelled a long way abounding in vicissitudes. In the period of the independent republic, the aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie were not always identical with the forward-looking interests of

the nation: conservative trends alternated with progressive ones.

Thus, just after the emergence of the Panamanian state in 1903, the petty bourgeoisie was in a conservative mood, opposing Panama's separation from Colombia and accusing, from a moral standpoint, the supporters of independence of "collusion for the purpose of plundering Colombia." But when it became clear that the conflict over the formation of the new state was being used by imperialism, which at once bent the country to its own interests (by establishing colonial domination over the territory across which the Canal was to run and a protectorate over the state itself), the petty bourgeoisie was swept by nationalistic feelings, and inscribed bourgeois liberalism on its political banner.

Somewhat later, a large part of the bourgeois strata was corrupted by U.S. imperialism. The economic and political basis for dependent capitalism formed in the country while liberalism, once a progressive attitude, degenerated into an ideology of national oppression, which helped to foster a ruling caste loyal to imperialism, a caste the people hate and have branded as the oligarchy. That was one of the reasons why the petty bourgeoisie moved away from liberalism and found itself in political opposition to the new rulers, who had become lackeys of U.S. monopolies.

Let us recall Marx's well-known dictum about the dual nature of the petty bourgeoisie: it is conservative in virtue of its ties with the past, and it is revolutionary "only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat."³ This was singularly expressed in the political evolution of the Panamanian petty bourgeoisie: a large part of it, without having completed the full cycle of proletarianization, switched to the positions of revolutionary democracy and national liberation.

The ideological conflict between the petty bourgeoisie and liberalism created the conditions which — within the framework of the ever more reactionary character of the oligarchic circles and the active and broad penetration by imperialism after the Second World War — paved the way for its break with the existing regime. And that was impossible to do without a democratic anti-imperialist revolution.

In view of the character of the Panamanian revolution and objectively recognizing the petty bourgeoisie's leading role, to which it had up to then laid claim, the PPP supported its positive contribution to the social struggle for

the purpose of isolating the chief enemy and opening for the working class the way to fulfilling its vanguard mission characteristic of the proletariat and its party (such a line did not, of course, signify acceptance of all the aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie).

The PPP's tactical and strategic propositions were based on Lenin's idea concerning the classes destined to carry out the democratic revolution in the epoch of imperialism and the leading role which the proletarian party has to play. In Panama's specific conditions, we started from the possibility of transforming the progressive petty bourgeoisie's bourgeois-democratic and insufficiently consistent anti-imperialist line into a principled anti-imperialist line in order to hasten the maturity of a new type of democratic revolution (in contrast to the classical bourgeois revolution), namely, an anti-imperialist democratic revolution. In Panama it has assumed the form of a democratic, national liberation revolution.

We are trying to apply to our realities the idea expressed by Lenin on the Resolution of the Third Congress of the RSDLP concerning the provisional revolutionary government. The Marxist proposition about the bourgeois character of the democratic revolution was seen by Lenin as "a preface or first premise" for "conclusions as to the progressive tasks of the progressive class fighting both for the democratic and for the socialist revolution."⁴ The PPP's principled stand with respect to the progressive petty bourgeoisie enabled it — with an eye to the anti-imperialist content of the Panamanian democratic revolution — to assume the leadership of the "vanguard class" in its fulfillment of its "vanguard task," with a democratic and socialist perspective.

The realization of this task was promoted by the student movement into which Marxist-Leninist ideas penetrated under the influence of the mass struggle; it was in a rapid process of radicalization in the anti-imperialist democratic direction. This factor had an influence on all the social classes and strata backing the democratic revolution, but the petty bourgeoisie in the first place. In this way, the basis of its progressive wing was enlarged, and the petty bourgeoisie as a whole came close to comprehending that U.S. imperialism was the chief enemy and that the dependent bourgeoisie provided a basis for it in the country. In the course of the anti-imperialist battles, a clash with dependent capitalism led inevitably and imperceptibly, as it were, to the start of a resolute struggle against the capitalist system. And that despite the fact that our revolution had yet to grow into a socialist revolution,

while the petty bourgeoisie had yet to shed its reformism and to be fully proletarianized, in consequence of which such struggle meets only the first condition for attaining socialist goals.

In other words, we formulated the question of a democratic, national liberation revolution aimed to prepare the real foundations for a socialist revolution. The PPP did this in an effort to give the progressive petty bourgeoisie a lead from an anti-imperialist position and to use its democratic potential so as to create favorable prerequisites to enable the working class to fulfil its revolutionary vanguard role. In this way, we acted in practice in the spirit of Lenin's requirement on the eve of the Russian democratic revolution: "to guide (if the great Russian revolution makes progress) not only the proletariat, organized by the Social-Democratic Party, but also this petty bourgeoisie, which is capable of marching side by side with us."⁵

The PPP has always believed the democratic, national liberation revolution to be a drawn-out process above all because of the exceptionally complicated tasks which it has to tackle. The country has to be rid not only of colonial oppression, but also of semi-colonial and neo-colonial forms of imperialist exploitation. That is why we assume that the petty bourgeoisie is capable of giving a lead at the early stages of the democratic anti-imperialist struggle. But in the course of it, the leading role must pass to the working class acting in alliance with the peasantry. Meanwhile, the democratic, national liberation revolution keeps developing and continuously grows into a socialist revolution.

We believe that in Panama's concrete situation, there has arisen the possibility which Lenin assessed as a specific feature of the Russian revolution of 1905: it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution in its social content, but a proletarian revolution in its methods of struggle.⁶ In other words, the way before us toward complete liberation and democracy, guaranteeing the people's basic rights (even if not yet within the framework of a socialist revolution, in view of all its complexities and social depth), must be travelled under the leadership of the proletariat. The point is that the petty bourgeoisie, in virtue of its organic class positions, cannot of itself get rid either of its reformist views or of its utopian notions. This transformation can be effected only by the working class from a vanguard position, thereby winning the petty bourgeoisie's progressive wing for socialism.

Panama's experience shows that so long as the revolution develops along anti-colonial and

anti-oligarchic lines, that is, so long as it seeks only to remove the ruling caste, the oligarchy, from power, but not to eliminate it economically, the petty bourgeoisie is on the whole capable of leading the process of transformations and regarding the proletariat as a strategic ally. But as soon as the revolution enters upon the anti-neocolonial stage and aims to do away with dependent capitalism, that social group, in virtue of its class nature, could reduce cooperation with the proletariat to a tactical level and even possibly abrogate it, because it is inclined to reformism. It follows that the working class needs to be in the vanguard of the struggle and to get the petty bourgeoisie to evolve toward itself in such a way that the alliance with it would continue to be a strategic one at the highest phase of the democratic, national liberation movement and play an important role in paving the way to socialism.

Alliance with the working class and its vanguard

In Panama's specific conditions, the progressive petty bourgeoisie has actually reached a mutual understanding with the overwhelming majority of the working class and its vanguard. That was definitely a stride forward in the revolutionary forces' political offensive. The most important, though not the only factors in the political evolution of this category of the population, were the correct assessment of the role of the petty bourgeoisie at the initial stage of the democratic revolution, which enabled the PPP to formulate a consistent policy with respect to it, and simultaneously a break with bourgeois ideology. One could say that these factors helped the intermediate strata to accept truly revolutionary ideas.

The development of the class struggle itself, in the course of which the role of the working class kept steadily growing, convinced the petty bourgeoisie that not it alone, but also some other social groups wanted a democratic revolution and national liberation. The consolidation of its progressive wing was also promoted by major shifts in international life over the past three decades. The achievements of socialism, the mounting struggle of the world proletariat, and the steadily growing movement in defense of peace awakened in the petty bourgeoisie a lively interest in these phenomena and aroused its enthusiasm. The successes of the national liberation movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America had a strong impact on it. The victories scored by the Cuban and the Vietnamese peoples over imperialism provided a powerful moral and political impulse for broad petty bourgeois strata to move

into vanguard positions in the struggle.

The deepening general crisis of capitalism and the weakening of its institutions have also had an effect on these strata, speeding up their abandonment of fatalism and inducing them to seek new ways. The break with conformist traditions was also promoted by the scientific and technological revolution, the emergence of renewal trends in the church, the decline of pan-Americanism and the emergence of powerful social movements in the United States, notably that against racial discrimination. The petty bourgeoisie began to express less sympathy for the existing order and its frame of mind and behavior were undoubtedly in a process of change. The PPP strove to channel them into a course that helped to consolidate the political basis of the social revolution. Hence the policy of alliance with that social force.

Nevertheless, these changes did not at all signify that the petty bourgeoisie was actually taking a socialist stand. Clinging tenaciously to its class roots, it is trying to produce a "third" ideology, and therefore "adjusts" the concept of revolutionary democracy to its social objectives. In this way it wants to supplant socialism or to postpone it, while preventing the working class from using its proletarian means to take its legitimate place as the vanguard of the democratic revolution.

So long as the petty bourgeoisie maintains its class interests, it continues to mistrust the working class and naturally rejects scientific socialism. This is due to the fact that its social aspirations are not antagonistic to private property. On the contrary, small-scale private property, on which it pins its hopes for survival, is a permanent premise for the preservation of private property generally.

Consequently, if the Panamanian revolutionary-democratic process continues to be led by the petty bourgeoisie, which has not made a break with its class nature but is besides still trying to avoid being involved in the basic contradiction of our epoch — that between capitalism and socialism — its revolutionary resolution cannot be carried to its logical end. In these circumstances, the leadership of the struggle must pass to the most revolutionary class — the working class — which is capable of filling the alliance of all the forces involved in the liberation process with a new and profoundly anti-imperialist and democratic content. So, the petty bourgeoisie, as such, is capable of being an ally of the proletariat at the initial stage of the democratic revolution; the subsequent stages require a radicalization of that group, something that cannot occur of it-

self, but only under the decisive influence of the proletariat, which has to be the genuine and monolithic vanguard and to consolidate the unity of all the revolutionary class forces.

The Panamanian experience shows that the petty bourgeoisie which is directing the process of social transformations, is prepared to accept an alliance with the working class and its vanguard so long as they help it to realize the matured bourgeois-democratic changes, to eliminate the dependence on imperialism and to promote the development (but not the destruction) of national capitalism with a mixed economy. The petty bourgeois leaders are inclined to postpone the socialist goals to a more distant future, because they rule out the use of proletarian means for their attainment in the hope of socialism arriving by way of evolution.

This kind of behavior on the part of the petty bourgeoisie logically follows from its class interests. It depends on the independent socialist stand of the working class and primarily of its political organization whether or not the petty bourgeoisie will be able to impose its will on them. In view of this, the proletariat needs to find all the means for heading the revolutionary movement. Here, it must display circumspection so as not to break with the progressive petty-bourgeois circles, but on the contrary, to convert cooperation with them into solid unity based on firm principles and a clear revolutionary objective. This requires intense and highly intelligent ideological struggle and great political tact. It is important to discover in advance the enemy's real urges, however thoroughly these are camouflaged, and to draw a distinction between the enemy and the potential ally who tends to equivocate and to be in error.

The PPP believes that the petty bourgeoisie has made a considerable contribution to the Panamanian revolutionary cause: that is something that cannot be denied. However, it is now following in the wake of the events generated by our reality. This situation draws attention to the following aspect of the ideological struggle. The process of transformations tend to develop in depth and in breadth only if the working class plays a growing role in society, something that it is in effect now doing, winning over to its side the progressive and more consistent sections of the petty bourgeoisie and creating the conditions for an uninterrupted advance to the culminating phase (still to be reached) of the democratic, national liberation revolution, which in our conditions is the gateway to socialism.

In order to preserve and strengthen the unity that has been achieved it is necessary to raise to

a higher ideological, political and organizational level the mutual understanding of the forces involved in the revolutionary process. Their coalition must acquire a clearer form. It must be more solid and united in the struggle for new goals. The proletariat and its political vanguard can cope with this task with this necessary proviso: if they consolidate the alliance with the peasantry, which in the Panamanian conditions means primarily the agricultural workers.

Democratic forces' advances and retreats

The democratic, national liberation process in Panama has reached a phase at which it is necessary to go on to new and deeper transformations. Up to now we have been going through a stage characterized by the exclusion of the oligarchy from power and the destruction of the juridical basis of colonialism in the former Panama Canal Zone. But the oligarchy has not been destroyed as a caste, and in some sectors of the economy it continues to have dominant positions. Nor has imperialism been completely ousted from our country. After all, the Torrijos-Carter Treaty does not provide for the elimination of colonialism at one blow, though its conclusion marks the attainment of the main thing: by the end of the century, the colonial status of the Canal Zone will disappear for good. But it should be borne in mind that colonialism is not the only form of imperialist domination in Panama.

However that may be, the question of anti-colonial struggle has in the main been removed, and the revolutionaries are faced with new tasks: completion of national liberation and the country's constitutional reorganization on the lines of progressive democracy envisaging active participation by the masses in consolidating people's power, something that is now still embryonic but that should eventually become the main form of government.

The very dynamic of social transformations itself stresses the need for their further development. At the same time, new revolutionary demands are also being put forward. The main thing is that the social changes have sharpened and invigorated the class struggle in the country and have had a beneficial effect on the political consciousness of the masses and the conditions for our party's work. As we anticipated, the role of the working class has been substantially enhanced and it now exerts a greater influence on every sphere of social life. That is yet another factor which determines the continuity of the transformations.

The petty bourgeoisie heading the liberation process has as a whole failed to overcome its

class limitations. Its political leadership has weakened under pressure, on the one hand, from reaction and imperialism, which are trying to impede the transformations and even to reverse them, and on the other, from the masses of people insisting that the transformations should be given greater depth. Hence the zig-zags in the democratic, national liberation movement, with its alternating advances and retreats.

But it would be a mistake to assume that this inconsistency is a distinctive feature of the Panamanian democratic revolution. In actual fact, there is a readjustment of the class forces, a regrouping in the ranks of those who are heading the process of transformations. The main trend in these changes favors the forces backing the line which was conducted by General Torrijos.

We have reached a period in the development of the country when we must step up the ideological struggle — a requisite of carrying transformations deeper and strengthening the alliance between the working class and the peasantry as well as the progressive and more consistent sections of the petty bourgeoisie. This factor is bound to condition the radicalization of our process in its culminating phase even though part of the petty bourgeoisie is continuing to vacillate in the course of the democratic and national liberation revolution.

The vicissitudes of domestic and foreign policy

The death of General Torrijos raised the question of a new leader and, quite naturally, of the continuation of the process. Reaction and imperialism were quick to capitalize on the situation and so further complicated it.

It has to be admitted that the forces supporting the democratic and national liberation process found themselves at that point in a trying situation: it took a great effort on their part to ensure the continuity of the transformations. It should be borne in mind that a negative influence on the morale and unity of these forces was exerted by the crisis of power and the offensive of the enemy seeking to win back the positions lost in running the country.

All the major political events which have taken place in the country since the death of Torrijos, notably the resignation of Colonel Flores and Royo's departure, should be considered from this angle, but it is not right to assess these events as the start of a reversal of progressive policy or as a result of some retreat. On the contrary, they were effected for the purpose of maintaining the continuity of the line formulated by Torrijos and strengthening the

leadership of the democratic movement (with an eye to all the difficulties which arose in the course of the struggle).

In addition, another important task had to be tackled, that of preventing the parties opposing the revolutionary process from uniting; this had to be done by isolating the most extremist-minded and inviting the others to negotiate. There was, for instance, the proposal to put through a constitutional reform with a preceding national referendum. In view of the level of the political consciousness of the masses and the growing influence of the working class and the peasantry, one may be sure that such a reform will not harm either the people's gains or the existing forms of its power. On the contrary, there is a real possibility of blocking the attempts by reaction to convene a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of cancelling the progressive changes in the country's public life. The main thing is that the transformations were neither nullified nor abolished altogether.

It is as safe to say that the Panamanian state continues to be loyal to the policy of fighting colonialism, of practising non-alignment and solidarity with the embattled peoples of the world. Any attempts to damage the democratic process in any way immediately leap to the eye. Real obstacles have arisen in its way, and it is ever more difficult to overcome them as the political, class struggle deepens. For its part, this struggle is being exacerbated by the worsening of the economic situation and the Reagan administration's blackmail and economic aggression against our country. The hostility of the United States to Panama is expressed above all in delays in the fulfillment of the Torrijos-Carter Treaty (in that which pertains to the neutrality of the Canal, the transfer to Panama of its share of the revenues from the operation of the Canal, and the ensuring of the working people's economic rights). Behind this foot-dragging is a U.S. attempt to postpone the final decolonization of the Canal Zone.

Despite some difficulties, the process of progressive transformations in Panama has been steadily advancing. This is due to the masses, which, having realized that the petty bourgeoisie has constantly vacillated, have undertaken the responsibility for social, political and economic changes and are vigilantly safeguarding their gains. Such is the political reality in our country. The point now is to strengthen and develop the liberation process and to align it with the newly emergent demands and tasks, to fill the leadership vacuum with leaders who would be sufficiently authoritative and able to bring the interests of the democratic circles to a common denominator.

Changes in the National Guard, in the organs of power and in the main ruling party — the Revolutionary Democratic Party — and also the objective need for all the progressive forces to act together at the forthcoming elections in effect constitute the elements of the line designed to ensure the continuity of the Panamanian democratic, national liberation movement.

The communists' stand

Taking account of the crucial role of the masses in the revolutionary process and its objectively multi-class character, the PPP supports the democratic and liberation tasks mapped out by General Torrijos. We consider their fulfillment a condition for going forward to social transformations on a higher level. In our view, an effective means for realizing this kind of transition with the participation of all the forces involved in the process could be offered by a democratic national liberation alliance operating on the basis of Torrijos' political program, an alliance whose primary task would be to defeat reaction and imperialism at the forthcoming elections in 1984.

All the democratic circles can be united only by strengthening the alliance of the workers and the peasants, which, the PPP believes, guarantees a change in the balance of forces in favor of the only class capable of leading the democratic and national liberation revolution. In tackling its tasks, the proletariat and its political vanguard would simultaneously create the prerequisites for an uninterrupted advance toward socialism.

The PPP believes that at the present stage of the Panamanian revolution it is necessary to complete the country's national liberation fully, to secure resolute progress in democratizing social life, to assert the people's power as the main form of government, and to consolidate the mixed economy with a preponderance of state and cooperative property. At this stage, private enterprise is permitted, provided it has a secondary role to play in the economy. It is important to solve the problem of advancing national culture, making use of the inexhaustible ethnic wealth of the nation, and eliminating all discrimination or imperialist influence. Our culture must reflect the ideas of the revolutionary classes, carrying on a struggle for democracy, peace and friendship with all the peoples of the world. Wherever the elements of the new society appear in one form or another, they need to be encouraged and strengthened. The PPP supports Panama's policy of non-alignment and anti-imperialism. We are doing our utmost to make the country's foreign policy even more vigorous on the issues

of peace, solidarity with the national liberation struggle and friendship with the socialist countries.

Such a revolutionary line requires the earliest transformation of our Marxist-Leninist party into a mass revolutionary organization. The first step in this direction was the recruitment drive for party membership announced a few years ago, as a result of which its membership increased to 36,000. This enabled it to obtain official status, that is, the right to participate in every sphere of social life. In addition, the PPP's legalization helped it to move closer to the other democratic forces, which have come to realize its great political potential and which have become aware that only in alliance with the communists will they have any real chance of advance despite ideological differences (and these will undoubtedly surface in the future as

well). Apart from the PPP's numerical growth, it is working to enhance its ideological level and to extend and diversify its organizational forms. Relying on the masses and pursuing a thoroughly considered policy of alliances, our party, the political vanguard of the working class, spares no effort in doing its utmost to maintain the continuity of the revolutionary process and to bring the socialist future of Panama nearer.

1. A reference to the 1968 military coup, which brought to power the government of Omar Torrijos and led to a number of important socio-economic transformations in the country. — Ed.

2. See the central document of the sixth plenary meeting of the PPP CC in September 1956.

3. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 494.

4. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 40.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, p. 46.

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. 23, p. 238.

May Day 1983: pitch of social battles

Bert Ramelson
WMR Editorial Board member from
the Communist Party of Great Britain

COMMENTARY

Annually, the working people in all countries, on all continents of the world, mark May Day as the day of their international solidarity and brotherhood, as the day on which they review their forces fighting all forms of oppression and exploitation, against imperialism and reaction for the right to live in peace, equality, freedom and social justice.

The working class and its militant vanguard — the communists — mark this day under differing conditions. In the socialist countries they are working on diverse and complex tasks in building, consolidating and developing the new society. In Latin America and many new nations of Asia and Africa, where the working class is growing and gaining strength rapidly, the energy of the ascendant class and the efforts of the communists are focused on successfully consummating the national liberation struggle, shaking off the yoke of neocolonialist dependence, surmounting the heritage of the colonial past or economic backwardness, and creating the conditions for economic and social progress. In the citadels of capitalism the communists are courageously championing the rights of the working people and mobilizing them to repulse the onslaught of the monopolies.

Here, in the imperialist countries, in the old centers of monopoly-capitalist rule, where the confrontation between the bourgeoisie and the working class has a long history and where the many class contradictions have come together in a tight knot, the working people are marking May Day under difficult and onerous conditions. These conditions are taking shape under the impact of the deteriorating international situation, and the profound crisis that is embracing all aspects of bourgeois society's life.

Imperialist circles are engaged in an offensive against the forces of peace, progress and socialism to bolster their class supremacy. This is mirrored in the aggressive foreign policy line of the imperialist powers, the USA in the first place, and in monopoly capital's anti-people domestic policies aimed at brutalizing exploitation and overcoming crisis convulsions at the expense of the people.

In their attempt to break the resistance of the working class, the reactionary forces are using diverse ways and means, in fact all their instruments of class suppression. In the political sphere this is an offensive against democracy, against the rights and freedoms of the working people; in ideology it means brainwashing the people, psychological warfare

under the banner of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism; in the economic field this spells out a tightening of screws and encroachment upon the socio-economic gains of the working sections of the population.

In this situation the struggles of the working class of industrialized capitalist countries are over a wide spectrum of political, ideological and economic issues. To defend its interests the working class has to fight battles in many directions and resolve many interconnected problems.

The central of these issues is the preservation and consolidation of peace. The struggle in this direction acquires paramount significance in view of the mounting threat of a nuclear war attending the adventurist policies of aggressive imperialist circles. Vital issues of social development affecting the basic interests of the people are inseparable today from the task of preventing war, of bridling the militarist circles. The unprecedented magnitude of the anti-war movement in Britain as well as in other countries, mirrors the people's growing understanding of the special importance of this task, on whose successful attainment the future of humankind depends. The communists are active in this movement, making a vital contribution, seeing the defense of peace as their prime duty in the struggle for the crucial interests of working people.

The problems linked to peaceful development, to ensuring democratic rights, to resisting imperialist reaction, and to standing up for progressive socio-economic and political demands cannot be considered in isolation, outside the context of developments in the world. Working-class actions for the redressing of economic grievances coalesce with actions in defense of peace, for ending the arms race and achieving disarmament; in the capitalist countries the upholding of democratic freedoms is inseparable from support for the struggle of the peoples of developing countries against imperialist tyranny, for freedom and independence.

This year, when all progressive humankind is marking anniversary dates linked to the name of Karl Marx, the May Day celebrations put special emphasis on the unfading significance of the Marxist principles of internationalist solidarity among working people and the pressing need for promoting cooperation and unity of action among all revolutionary and progressive forces.

The communists of the industrialized capitalist countries take close to heart the achievements and difficulties in the life of the peoples of socialist countries, and wish them

success in all areas of creative work in the name of the triumph of common ideals. We reject both anti-Sovietism and anti-communism, which are weapons of imperialist reaction that is seeking to divide the ranks of the champions of peace, democracy and progress.

The communists of our countries, as was stressed in, for example, the joint communiqué of the German Communist Party and the Communist Party of Great Britain, express their fraternal solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America for national independence, democracy and social progress. We support the aspiration of these peoples to consolidate their national independence, deliver themselves from imperialist arbitrary rule, establish just international relations, and create a new international economic order. The communists of Great Britain act against all manifestations of racism, national oppression and inequality in their own country and abroad, against any, direct or indirect, form of domination of some nations over others. This is precisely why our party sides with the people of Northern Ireland fighting for freedom and self-determination. As other fraternal parties, the Communist Party of Great Britain has repeatedly declared its solidarity with the peoples of the Middle East, South Africa, Chile and El Salvador, and denounced the intrigues of the imperialist forces against Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada. We are in solidarity with the victims of anti-communist harassment and terror, wherever this takes place, with imprisoned fighters for the cause of the working class and all other working people, with those who are jailed for their persuasions, and demand their release.

In view of the exacerbation of capitalism's general crisis emphasis must be placed in the huge diversity of forms of class struggle on the vital significance that has been acquired for the workers of capitalist countries by the social and economic aspects of the confrontation with the bourgeoisie. This struggle is important not only because the actual conditions of the life and work of workers depend largely on its outcome but also because it helps to steel the will of the workers, promotes their class consciousness, and gives them a better understanding of their economic and long-term political interests.

While acting in defense of the direct interests of the working people and advancing programs of concrete demands aimed at a democratic way out of the crisis, the communist parties of the capitalist countries are, at the same time, making every effort to open the prospect for profound social changes in the interests of the broad masses. The communists, to use the

words of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, are fighting "for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement."*

Conforming to their conventional thinking capitalist ideologues hope that in times of crisis big capital gets considerable opportunities for an offensive, for strengthening its positions in both the short and the longer term. As the monopoly bourgeoisie sees it, these opportunities arise because an economic crisis creates a massive reserve army of unemployed desperate to find work at any price. They count on the demoralization of the working class, not only of the unemployed but, above all, of those still in jobs frightened of losing them and therefore becoming more amenable and tolerant, without too much struggle, of the wages and conditions imposed by employers. Employers expect similar demoralization to permeate the working class' mass militant organizations and see a high unemployment rate as a means of weakening the trade unions both numerically and financially.

In short, the ruling class in the industrialized capitalist countries anticipate a dampening, if not elimination, of the class struggle, and hope to increase their profits at the expense of a reduction of the working people's living standard and of the costs of labor. The bourgeoisie is trying to cripple the trade unions for good through legislation backed by massive anti-trade union campaigns. In writing this commentary I am basing myself mainly on the experience in Britain, whose crisis is deeper and unemployment higher, the ruling class probably the most experienced, and the trade unions the oldest and most experienced too, than in most advanced capitalist countries. Nevertheless, while the form and perhaps tempo on both sides of the class barricades may differ, there are sufficient examples from other countries to show that a common pattern is evolving.

The profound recommendations of big capital's pundits I referred to are as fallacious as so much "conventional wisdoms" considered axiomatic in the past, which experience has proved to be "conventional nonsense," e.g., that mass unemployment is a thing of the past, or that unemployment leads to deflation, to name but a hallowed few.

What are the facts? It would be wrong to believe that mass unemployment had no effect on the morale and combativeness of workers, or

on the achievements of their struggle. But it would be equally wrong to exaggerate the degree of demoralization and, above all, the duration of it and its depth, or ignore the relative speed, despite the continued rise in the number of closures, with which the working class is regaining its determination to fight for both living standards and jobs. And the ruling class has become aware of this, too. This can be illustrated by several examples.

The British government, the single largest employer in the country, announced a maximum four per cent increase in the public sector, approximately half the then rate of inflation. However, faced with the certainty that they would be confronted with a determined struggle by the miners and electricity supply workers, they soon settled for more than double the declared norm.

The recent water strike, which lasted for more than a month, ended in a tremendous victory. Although it was the first of its kind in Britain, the strikers displayed great determination and an unbending will to fight. In face of this unity the government had to retreat, consenting to a 10 per cent wage rise, or double the original maximum. Moreover, the working week has been shortened by one hour.

There is a special significance in the struggle of the British miners. It reflects the sharp collision, to be noted in many capitalist countries, between the interests of big capital and those of the working sections made victims of capitalist rationalization and the restructuring of industry. Only two years ago the Tory government had publicly stated its intention to close many "uneconomical" pits. The miners replied that any attempt of this sort would spark a national strike. Knowing that these were not empty words, the Tory cabinet backed down and had to allocate several hundred millions of pounds to keep the pits in operation.

At the beginning of the year the government and the Coal Board reneged on their promise and decided to shut a pit in South Wales even though it was not exhausted of coal. What was the reaction? The pit went on strike and was supported by other pits in the Welsh coalfield. Although in this instance the government avoided a national strike, the miners are prepared to fight back if there is a campaign of wholesale pit closures.

Militance and staunchness were displayed in actions like the civil services strike, which lasted for months, and the first ever national steel strike, which evoked considerable solidarity, especially from the miners and railmen. Willingness to struggle and readiness to express solidarity are vividly demonstrated by

*Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 518.

health workers who have been on strike for over six months. Miners, print workers, building workers, seamen, and thousands in other industries expressed their solidarity with them not only in words and money but in deeds of solidarity stoppages and grand demonstrations, defying the law in doing so.

Solidarity is displayed in various ways and is acquiring a steadily growing scale. For instance, the struggle of the workers to prevent the closure of one of the Timex enterprises announced by the multinational's owners was supported not only by the community, faced with the threat of living in a derelict town, but the whole Scottish labor movement. This forced the government to start negotiations with the firm about terms for retaining the plant. This spring a People's March for Jobs started in Scotland, marching through the length of Britain and ending in London. But what is most significant about this event of solidarity with the unemployed is that when it was first demanded by the rank and file both the TUC and the Executive of the Labour Party shied away from it, refusing support. The pressure, however, from below soon mounted to a pitch that became irresistible and both the TUC and the Labour Party Executive were compelled to reverse their original negative attitude and are now the official sponsors and organizers of this unprecedented national event. For while there were "hunger marches" in the dark days of the Great Depression of the 30s, they were all unofficial, condemned by the official leaderships of both the trade unions and the Labour Party.

A crucial point is that all the actions I have dealt with were called by the unions, and some had the support of the TUC. This only underscores the miscalculation of the government and big business, who expected unemployment would sharply affect the morale of the workers and the unions. Statistics demonstrate the futility of hopes of this kind. Data culled from the government's official *Employment Gazette** shows that the number of strikers and days of work lost doubled in the first nine months of 1982 compared to the same period in 1981. This was the tendency in subsequent months as well.

It is noteworthy that not only the economic levers of pressuring the working people but also the political and juridical measures taken by the ruling class to debilitate the strike movement are proving to be ineffective. The Thatcher government, for instance, rushed through two acts of parliament — the Prior Act

in 1980 and the Tebitt Bill in 1982 — to undermine the unions' ability to use the strike weapon. However, the irresistible pressure of the rank and file has compelled the TUC to officially declare their intention to defy the laws.

Nor is the workers' fightback limited to their own wages and jobs. They are active in organizing marches, demonstrations, lobbies of parliament, as well as strike actions against the government's general policies, against particular cuts in social benefits, cuts in social services, and the government's slavish implementation of Common Market policies threatening vital industries.

In opposing the offensive of the monopolies, the workers of Great Britain are seeking to unite their fightback with that of the working people of other capitalist countries. British trade unions were represented, for example, at the massive demonstration of West European trade unions in Brussels last February. This demonstration protested against the EEC's employment policies and the flagrant violations of working people's rights.

Of course, where the unions are weak or non-existent there have even been cases of workers' being intimidated by the threat of closure to accept drastic cuts in wages, or even where they are organized to settle for less than they would have obtained a decade ago.

But what I have described above as actually happening shows a picture of trade unions infinitely stronger, both numerically and structurally organized, and politically more mature than was the case in the past major crises. Having overcome the first shock, they are regaining their confidence. The militance of the working people is growing despite their weakened bargaining position from the economic point of view. This is an indication of the growing determination of the organized working class and of the clearer understanding by their advanced segments that economics is inseparable from politics.

In the capitalist world today the prospects are for a big leap in the duration and spread of the class battles, and not only of those confined to the traditional bread and butter trade union issues. That alone will no longer suffice. A struggle is developing over key political issues, first and foremost, the issues of peace and war, so closely linked to various aspects of social development. And this is being recognized by growing numbers of workers. It is becoming crystal clear to many of them that the growth of unemployment and the worsening of the people's material and social condition are largely the result of the burden of the arms race,

**Employment Gazette*, October 1982.

of the war preparations. The deterioration of the education system, social security and medical care is the direct result of the growth of military spending, of the transfer of resources from peaceful to military purposes. The workers now see with growing clarity that there is a dependence between economic regress and the anti-democratic policies of the government, the reactionary policies of the ruling class.

The Communist Party of Great Britain and the communist parties in the other advanced industrial countries are doing much to reinforce the morale of the working class and its allies and to expose that what may have been "conventional wisdom" in days gone by is mere wishful thinking. The world is changing, above all, the nature, strength and maturity of the organized workers. They are being joined by more and more sections and groups of work-

ing people — women, young people, the services sector, white-collar and professional workers, and intellectuals. Of particular political significance are the unionization and radicalization of the civil services right in the heart of the state itself.

It is these changes that will ensure that the period we are moving into will be one of sharp class struggles leading to important political changes. These changes will be of considerable significance in the attainment of the ultimate aim — the aim of a socialist society, a society free of the nightmare of unemployment, of the criminal waste of equipment and resources when the need for them is so urgent, of a society on whose banner will be inscribed the words: Peace and Work, the two ideals, the two symbols of May Day expressing the right to a life worthy of human beings.

Europeans against Euromissiles

TOWARD THE WORLD ASSEMBLY FOR PEACE AND LIFE

FRG: THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT GATHERS MOMENTUM

Sepp Mayer

Board Secretariat member,
German Communist Party¹

Q. What features of the present international situation does the German Communist Party take into consideration when it defines its aims in the struggle against the threat of war?

A. By the beginning of the 1980s, as they were developing and enforcing their policies, the USA and its NATO allies found that significant changes had taken place in the world. These changes sprang from the major shifts in the balance of strength on the world scene. Washington, for example, has to reckon with the fact that U.S. imperialism's positions in the world have deteriorated and that its political and economic influence has declined. The interests of the USA are increasingly coming into conflict with those of its partners in the capitalist world. The weakening of U.S. capital is seen, in particular, in the relative growth of the strength of its chief rivals — Western Europe and Japan. Although the USA is still the leading power of the capitalist world, it is no longer the power dominating the world.

This is seen most clearly in economics, where the present trend is toward the levelling up of the economic development of different

countries. In many indicators some countries have come level with or even outdistanced the USA. The latter now has much fewer possibilities for imposing its guidelines in politics as well; this is principally the result of the détente process in Europe, a process that has given the West European nations more freedom of action. In the FRG the impact of these changes cleared the way for the success of the efforts of the progressive forces to ensure a shift to a relaxation of international tension. This led to the signing of the Moscow and other treaties.²

Détente has yielded fruit in many areas. So far as I can judge, President Reagan's intention to cut that process short evoked in Western Europe, notably in the Federal Republic, resistance from the steadily growing peace movement.

The situation is highlighted by the continued efforts of the U.S. ruling circles to regain their domination, for which purpose they are resorting increasingly to pressure and force. After the present U.S. administration came to power it used all the means available to it to impose upon the USA's West European allies its strategic concept of East-West relations.

This concept has changed qualitatively since the first half of the 1970s. In that period the capitalist world saw the relationship between confrontation and cooperation in what may

roughly be described as an unstable equilibrium. Today there is a tendency toward reanimating the cold war policies with all the elements implicit in them such as the arms race, confrontation, interference in the internal affairs of other countries, military threats, unceasing fanning of international tension, eruptions of conflicts, employment of tactics such as embargoes, and so on. Here the accent is put not on compromises leading to the settlement of various problems but on attempts to resolve them by means of a test of strength, the exacerbation of crisis situations, and a policy based on military power.

Had the West European countries, especially the FRG, been subservient to the interests of the USA — and this is exactly what the latter country wants to see from them as allies — the economic, political, social and military consequences would have been catastrophic for the peoples of the world. The West European nations should not permit the nullification of the freedom of action they have acquired through détente. It must be championed, extended, and used for the defense of national aspirations, also in relations with Washington.

The interests of Europe, including those of the FRG, require the development of equal cooperation and good-neighborly relations between all countries. This makes it imperative to deepen détente through disarmament based on equality and reciprocity. In the first place it is necessary to secure the renunciation of the deployment of new U.S. nuclear weapons on the European continent.

A sound foundation for the continuation of this course is provided by the new disarmament proposals made by the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee at its meeting in Prague last January. On the basis of these proposals progress can and must be achieved at the talks.

The initiatives of the socialist countries have given a new impulse to the peace movement. The Prague Declaration contains ideas that have long been nurtured in the entire peace movement, including in the FRG. They create the conditions for a further expansion of the work of the anti-war militants.

Q. How does the international situation affect the political climate in the FRG?

A. The change of the state leadership in the Federal Republic,³ stage-managed by big capital in the autumn of 1982, is an attempt by the military-industrial complex and the FRG governmental circles linked to the Pentagon to put an end to the course toward détente, which had to a large extent determined the FRG's policy during the years the Social Democratic

and Free Democratic coalition was in power. The purpose was to return to confrontation.

The right-wing coalition has supported Reagan's threats against the socialist countries with more willingness and firmness than its predecessor. In Bonn more influence has been acquired by elements urging the application to these countries of the "sanction" introduced by the USA. The new government has instantly approved the plans for stationing U.S. medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe.

The shift to the right has shown with crystal clarity that the most aggressive circles of monopoly capital in the FRG do not shrink even from maneuvers that discredit bourgeois parliamentarism when they need such maneuvers to enforce an anti-people and anti-peace policy. In the face of the economic convulsions, to which no end can be seen in the FRG, and in the face of the ongoing mass struggle for détente and the right to work, a struggle that is increasingly involving social democracy, the SDP-FDP coalition lost the confidence of big capital as a factor of stability.

The long-term arms build-up program approved by the North Atlantic alliance is devouring vast material resources and productive forces, diverting them from the process of reproduction. The spending on the manufacture of armaments is leading to a steady diminution of the allocations vital for social and communal requirements. This is a chain reaction. With every passing year the arms race is swallowing an ever larger proportion of the federal budget. This is turning into daylight robbery of the poor, the ill, the elderly, the unemployed, in short, of all the socially disinherited sections of society. The working people are being made to pay for militarization and the course toward confrontation.

Direct and indirect taxes have grown. Prices have risen as a result of inflation and the growth of the national debt. The real incomes and living standards of a large part of the population have come down visibly. The consequence of this is the fall of purchasing power and of the solvent demand. The output of consumer goods and means of production is being frozen or reduced. Millions of blue and white-collar workers are finding themselves without jobs. Young men and women, including school graduates, cannot find employment.

But the military industry is swiftly filling its coffers. It is not affected either by the economic crisis or the fluctuating economic situation. The state dependably guarantees the sale of the output of the arms manufacturers, toning up their business with injections of cash. Thanks

to this their profits are usually two or three times above the average in industry as a whole. The super-race for arms is increasingly becoming a source of super-enrichment.

Rising unemployment and the soaring allocations for militarist purposes intertwine, they are interconnected. From this it follows that today the defense of the vital interests of working people is linked, to a larger extent than ever before, to the struggle against the arms race. For this very reason our party's main slogan in the campaign against the medium-range U.S. missiles is: "Jobs, Not Missiles!" We see the close link between the peace movement and the working-class struggle for social rights as the guarantee that the build-up of the lethal arsenal in our country will be halted.

Q. What are the hallmarks characterizing the anti-missile movement in the FRG?

A. By signing the Krefeld Appeal,⁴ millions of people in the FRG have expressed their outrage over NATO's missile decision. The struggle against the dangerous NATO plan has become the pivot of the actions of all the peace forces. In the time that has elapsed hundreds of thousands of people in my country have become active in the peace committees, civil initiative groups, and democratic organizations. The number of people demanding disarmament has grown significantly also in the two main religious communities — Evangelist and Catholic. Questions linked to the peace struggle have received high priority on the agenda of church conventions. The demands of the anti-missile movement are winning approval and making a profound impression also in the middle sections of society, and getting the support of businessmen interested in selling and manufacturing consumer goods.

The strength of the peace movement lies in the fact that it embraces the most diverse social groups and concentrates its main effort on the attainment of the common demand that no medium-range missiles should be deployed in Europe and that the NATO plan for deploying missiles should be disrupted.

A peace conference in Cologne last October put forward many ideas that are helping to use the movement's political weight more effectively. The preservation of unity after the Bundestag elections, in other words, the concentration of all efforts on preventing the deployment of new nuclear missiles, is a condition of success.

To divert the peace movement from this cardinal aim means to prevent the movement's successful development. Given all its diversity it should, we believe, be directed toward enlarging the anti-missile coalition, enlisting the

active support of more people, and explaining the dangerous consequences of the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in the FRG.

We communists accord special support to forms of action based on the experience of the working people's struggle for their rights and making it possible to draw on a larger scale the social democrats and trade unions into the peace movement. Much evidence has accumulated to show that among the social democrats there is a mounting trend to turn away from NATO's dangerous plans.

A document adopted by the Confederation of German Trade Unions states: "No new medium-range missiles must be deployed in Europe." Similar demands have been made by the Federal Conference of Women Members of the Steelmakers' Union and the Congress of the Building Workers' Union. This is far from being a complete list of such resolutions.

More and more trade unionists are reading these decisions as a call to action. At a rally in Stuttgart on October 30, 1982, attended by 150,000 people, the chairman of the Baden-Württemberg CGTU organization Siegfried Pommerenke declared: "We should help to turn the Confederation of German Trade Unions into a component of the peace movement. We should break the chain of the mad arms race, which, as we all know, is dragging us to the brink of an abyss. The arms race must be stopped in East and West! Down with the armaments program adopted by NATO on December 12, 1979. We will not permit nuclear missiles to be deployed in Baden-Württemberg or anywhere else."

The combining of the strength of the working-class movement, that was so impressively demonstrated at the rallies held recently, with the spreading peace movement will create the prospects for a successful struggle against the deployment of new missiles.

Q. What, in your view, will be the contribution of the World Assembly for Peace and Life, Against Nuclear War, to be held in Prague, to the further invigoration of the peace movements?

A. I do not doubt that this Assembly will play a significant role. The experience gained in the FRG reaffirms that a dialogue between representatives of the various peace forces on the main issue, namely, how to reduce and ultimately remove the threat of a nuclear war, helps to reinforce the struggle for peace. This dialogue should not be confined to abstract problems. Its purpose is to map out concrete actions and work out a joint action program. It will thereby be possible to mobilize new forces.

The preparations for the Assembly in our country provide for a series of important actions. These include the mass anti-fascist rallies that have already been held in connection with the 50th anniversary of the nazi seizure of power. They not only reminded people of the past but also were a protest against the threat of war. There has been a wide popular response to the idea of holding Easter marches. The appeal for participation in them said: "Our chief demand is that the federal government should cancel its agreement to the stationing of new nuclear weapons. This is the main purpose of Easter March-83. This is how the way must be cleared for wide-ranging disarmament measures in the East and the West."

The discussions between members of all peace currents in the FRG, held in connection with these spring marches, helped to accentuate and disseminate the idea of peace. Concepts that crystallized in the context of the preparations for the Prague forum, were advanced at the discussions. It is important for all contingents of peace fighters in the republic to exchange experience with like-minded people in other countries, to make new proposals so as to promote our common cause. That is why we welcome the forthcoming Assembly in Prague.

1. The following are answers to questions put by WMR.
2. These are the 1970 Moscow treaty between the FRG and the USSR, the 1970 treaty between the FRG and Poland, the Treaty on the Principles of Relations between the FRG and the GDR (1972), and the 1973 treaty between the FRG and Czechoslovakia. The signing of these treaties signified that the ruling circles of the FRG had recognized the immutability of the existing frontiers in Europe and had abandoned further attempts to isolate the German Democratic Republic politically. This opened the way to normal relations between the FRG and socialist countries on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence. These treaties became a major factor fostering the détente process in Europe. — Ed.
3. This is discussed in Karl-Heinz Schroder, "Shift to the Right in Bonn," WMR, No. 1, 1983, — Ed.
4. In November 1980 representatives of a number of organizations championing peace gathered in Krefeld and adopted an appeal to the people of the FRG to demand that the government deny the country's territory to the stationing of new U.S. medium-range missiles systems. By the end of January 1983 the Krefeld Appeal had been signed by 3,700,000 people. — Ed.

SWEDEN: STRUGGLE IN A NEW DIMENSION

Urban Karlsson
Executive Committee Secretary of
the Swedish Peace Committee

Never before has the peace struggle reached the magnitude it has now achieved. More and more people are coming round to seeing that powerful anti-war actions can help to prevent a nu-

clear catastrophe and return humankind to the path of détente. The peace movement is growing everywhere. To some extent this predetermines its motley character, for it acts under the most diverse conditions. In socialist societies the striving to prevent war is a natural requirement of life. But in a number of countries people involved in anti-war actions are sometimes threatened with even the death penalty.

Sweden is one of the few nations that were not embroiled in the two world wars. It has thus been enjoying the blessings of peace for nearly 200 years. For this reason peace is something that is taken for granted by the people, and the Swedish anti-war movement has rarely acquired anything approaching a massive scale.

But it so happened that a little over 30 years ago the first appeal to fight nuclear weapons was adopted in Stockholm. In the cold war atmosphere obtaining at the time, this document signed by hundreds of millions of men and women induced the peace forces to mount an offensive. The Stockholm Appeal has retained all its significance to this day. Its words continue to be an action program:

"We demand the unconditional banning of nuclear weapons, which are weapons of aggression and mass annihilation and the establishment of strict international inspection ensuring compliance with such a ban.

"We will regard as a war criminal the government that first uses nuclear weapons against any country."

The words spoken in support of the appeal issued in our capital gave rise to the world peace movement, a movement that has indeed become a people's movement. At first the bourgeois mass media tried to ignore it. When these attempts failed various means were used to distort the movement's aims, provoke mistrust for it, and slander its participants.

The scale of the anti-war actions that swept across the planet in the first half of the 1980s showed how futile these subterfuges were. In Sweden itself there has been a dramatic activation of the struggle for peace. That it has acquired a new dimension and scale and a new quality is demonstrated by the recent actions of the peace forces.

The beginning of the present stage of the anti-militarist protest in our country was laid in January 1982 by a national forum, the Swedish people's parliament for disarmament. It was attended by representatives not only of peace fighters but also of groups that have hitherto held aloof from anti-war actions. The more than 500 deputies of the people's parliament from roughly 300 organizations represented practi-

cally all sections of society, all areas of society's life. In the hall were leaders of trade unions, religious organizations, charities, intellectuals (doctors, teachers, artists and others), and activists of youth and women's organizations.

The people's parliament was a milestone in our peace movement's preparations for the second special UN General Assembly session on disarmament. In particular, the people's parliament urged that at the session the Swedish representatives should call for:

- a total ban on nuclear tests;
- the subscription of all nations to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty;
- a commitment by all countries to abstain from developing, manufacturing, stockpiling, and using this and other weapons of mass destruction;
- the destruction of existing stockpiles of nuclear arms;
- a ban on the development, manufacture, stockpiling and use of neutron and other types of tactical nuclear weapons lowering the threshold of a nuclear war, and the destruction of existing stockpiles of such weapons.

The very fact of the convocation of the people's parliament and the results of its work have confirmed that all the anti-war organizations want nuclear weapons to be banned. The striving for peace has acquired such huge dimensions that even some conservative elements, who are, by virtue of their political posture, inclined to favor the arms race, do not venture to say so publicly.

Increasing support is being received by another important proposal, whose purpose is to proclaim Northern Europe a nuclear-free zone. This proposal was made 20 years ago by the then Finnish President Urho Kaleva Kekkonen. The people's parliament unambiguously aligned itself with the advocates of this proposal and called upon the government to consider the prevention of the stationing of nuclear weapons in our region as a central element of a policy of true security, of which the pivot must be détente and disarmament.

The debate on the question of a nuclear-free zone involved a particularly large number of people during the drive for signatures to the demand to prevent Northern Europe from being turned into a nuclear bridgehead. The initiators of this drive were not only the traditional but also new peace organizations. The most important of the latter, I would say, is Women for Peace.

The large scale of the struggle, evidence of which is the million signatures collected under the anti-nuclear appeal, has compelled all the parties represented in the Riksdag to state their

position. A parliamentary majority has taken shape, and this has made it possible to pass a resolution recommending that the government, headed at the time by conservative bourgeois parties, should persistently work for the creation of a nuclear-free zone. Nonetheless, no practical measures were instituted to put the resolution into effect. Hope is now being derived from the circumstance that upon their return to power the social democrats have declared that they would tackle this matter vigorously.

Pressure brought to bear by the people is mounting. The largest-ever peace demonstration in the country was held last spring in Goteberg. A hundred thousand people, or twice as many as were expected, filled the streets. The demonstration was conducted on the initiative of a committee consisting of representatives of the municipal council, trade unions, the church, sports societies and anti-war groups. They were united by the slogan: "For a nuclear-free North! For a nuclear-free Europe!" An important point to be noted is that the organizers of this demonstration did not have any considerable funds at their disposal.

Some bourgeois quarters have always sought to discredit the ideals and aims of the peace movement. For example, despite the incontrovertible fact that various currents are taking part in the anti-war movement as independent partners, without renouncing their ideological and political guidelines, one often hears the assertion that the movement is "headed by the communists." When these "arguments" fail to have an effect, the peace fighters are charged with being "blind" and "naive." But since despite all such maneuvering the ranks of the peace fighters are growing, the apologists of militarism are using the perfidious device of joining the movement and trying to weaken it from within, to sidetrack it, to provoke its abandonment by anti-imperialist forces.

This tactic was seen quite clearly during the peace march in the summer of 1982, held on the initiative of Scandinavian women, across the territories of Sweden, Finland, the Soviet Union, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria.¹ By spreading all sorts of inventions about Peace March-82 and its organizers, the bourgeois mass media gave further evidence that their cardinal aim is to smear the Soviet Union and its policy of peace at all costs. Rejecting the inventions of their ill-wishers, the participants in the march showed what the peace forces are capable of today.

A major initiative was taken by the pacifist Swedish Association of Advocates of Peace and the Solution of International Issues by Arbitra-

tion. Last October its appeal was responded to by 40,000 people, who joined hands to form an unbroken line extending from the Soviet to the American embassy. In this way a symbolic peace bridge was formed during the Disarmament Action Week sponsored by the United Nations.

A considerably bigger role is now played by the education system in shaping anti-war views. The study of problems of peace has long been part of the curriculum in our schools. However, until recently this received inadequate attention. Now the school authorities are sending the aids and methodological instructions for the teaching of this subject.

It still cannot be said that the education of children in a spirit of peace is entirely in keeping with the UNESCO call "to stress the impermissibility of starting wars for the purpose of expansion, aggression and occupation and also the illegality of using force and violence for the purpose of suppression." "Everybody," this document says, "should understand this and undertake the responsibility for preserving peace . . . strengthen peace and step up the struggle against racism, fascism, apartheid, neocolonialism, and other ideologies that kindle hatred between nations or races and are in conflict with this recommendation."²

An important hallmark of the present anti-war movement is its steady growth. In Sweden, by tradition it relies on pacifists, Christians, and anti-imperialist forces. In recent years there has been a mushrooming of organizations uniting various groups of intellectuals by profession. The special knowledge of this category of people enables them to act in favor of peace and against the arms race more concretely and, hence, more effectively.

The strongest of these groups is unquestionably the movement of Doctors Against Nuclear Weapons. Its membership now consists of more than one-fourth of all Swedish medics and continues to grow. Its members are very convincingly informing the people about the dangers of a nuclear war and its disastrous consequences for humanity. A role of no little significance is also played by the organization of teachers, whose professional work binds them to give particularly close attention to educating children in an anti-war spirit.

Winter is the season of the longest nights, and torch processions are traditional in Sweden at this time. In recent years they have been held on December 12, the anniversary of that day in 1979 when NATO adopted its fatal decision to deploy new American medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe. Last year's anti-missile processions on December 12 were a

tangible contribution to a cause that is common to Western Europe and to the whole of humankind.

All of us are perfectly well aware that the threat of war is global. Although in each country the anti-war struggle has specifics of its own, it is vital that all people of good will should unite. That is why the striving for dialogue must be encouraged. This noble aim is what is motivating the World Assembly for Peace and Life, Against Nuclear War to be held in Prague. It will provide an excellent opportunity for exchanging experience and for a free discussion between the different peace forces. The Swedish peace movement intends to use it for further coordinating its actions with those of the anti-war organizations of other countries.

The most diverse forces are acting to prevent war. They represent different ideological and political schools. This, in particular, explains why, despite its viability, the peace movement in Sweden is hindered by the fact that some of its participants do not see who actually is for peace and disarmament and who is the enemy of détente. However, by continuing to act under the common slogan denouncing any use of nuclear weapons we will, first, sustain the powerful impetus of the anti-war protest and, second, help many people to understand where to look for the real enemies of peace.

In my view, the main thing is to prevent any reduction of our movement to loose, wishful thinking. Still more important is to prevent its use for aims contravening humanism. This can only be achieved by keeping the people massively informed. This is what we want. Truth is by no means feared by people dedicated to peace.

1. See "Peace March 82," WMR, No. 2, 1983. — Ed.
2. *Pedagogiska Meddelanden*, No. 4, 1982.

APPEAL FOR ACTION

The day is nearing when the hundreds of participants in the World Assembly for Peace and Life, Against Nuclear War will gather in Prague. Addressing itself to all who are concerned about the future of our planet the Working Group of the International Preparatory Committee for the World Assembly declared on behalf of the 71 international and national organizations represented on it:

"By joint action, effective, resolute and determined, we can still draw back from the nuclear holocaust . . .

"Every movement for peace and disarmament, all groups and individuals, irres-

pective of ideological, political or religious convictions, must join together in the common struggle ...

"All questions and problems can be discussed with the aim of resolving the present tense and dangerous international situation. No differences of views need prevent us from strongly opposing the destruction of the world's material and intellectual heritage.

"At the World Assembly in Prague we can reach a better understanding, we can strengthen mutual trust, security and co-operation, the only basis for lasting peace.

"There is only one way to escape the present-day dangerous situation in the world:

"Common action to liberate humanity from the danger of a nuclear holocaust, to defend peace and life on our earth."



For a peaceful future and real change

Charilaos Florakis
CC General Secretary,
Communist Party of Greece

The 11th CPG congress, held in the middle of December 1982, was an event of special significance not only to all Greek communists but to our people and country as a whole, for it deliberated in a period that was crucial and complicated from the point of view of internal political developments.

The defeat of the Right in October 1981, after nearly unbroken 40-year rule, marked the beginning of new political processes.

The Right gave the country a grim legacy: an ingrained tradition of political subservience to imperialism that grew worse after World War II, the shackles of dependence on imperialist powers, the burden of national problems, an authoritarian anti-democratic order and a grave economic situation which assumed a dramatic character in the context of a complex production crisis.

From October 1981 on, everything began to move. The country found itself in a new situation. The government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), which succeeded the Right, effected certain democratic reforms. It repealed a number of reactionary laws dating from the civil war years. Our National Resistance was recognized. The working people scored some new gains, mostly in the sphere of trade union and political freedoms. The government occasionally adopts a positive stance on problems of peace and international relations.

However, the government's steps, while positive, do not go beyond the framework of the existing system. In taking them, it did not heed the popular movement, which had led to the

defeat of the Right and persists in demanding far-reaching anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly changes. It is only changes of this nature that can lift the country out of the crisis and a situation difficult for the nation and pave the way for the development of our society in a socialist direction.

Furthermore, reactionaries and conservatives retain important positions, primarily in decisive echelons of the state apparatus, despite the powerful blow dealt to them. Taking advantage of the fact that the government often pursues a dual policy, they are trying to regroup with outside support, and are stepping up their counter-offensive in a bid to bring about a political reversal, which is their chief aim. Above all also they want to prevent any further growth of the prestige of the CPG.

We stressed at the congress that the situation shaping in Greece is very complex and contradictory. On the one hand, new prospects are opening up for progressive changes, thanks above all to new possibilities of an upsurge in the popular movement; on the other hand, there arise new difficulties due to the reactionary counter-offensive and the overall strategy of the ruling class as well as the policy of concessions and compromise which PASOK has been carrying on so far.

In these circumstances the congress had to say outright and clearly how it visualized the solution of pressing national problems. The party had to continue elaborating its militant policy line with due regard to every aspect of the given complicated situation, show the way to more effective communist participation in

the defense of peace and national independence, offer a more clear-cut program of urgent measures for a progressive resolution of the crisis, ways and means of bringing this about, and work out more deeply its policy of alliances, of popular unity and struggle. It was necessary to enhance the ability of the party to accomplish the exacting tasks facing it in the interest of real change in order to pave the way to democracy for the people and to socialism.

The congress expressed deep concern — a concern shared by the vast majority of the Greek people — about the grave consequences which the new cold war being unleashed by the more reactionary sections of imperialism, above all the Reagan administration, may have for the world and our country.

Greece has had to pay very dearly, in adventures abroad and tragedies at home, for its subservience to NATO and U.S. policy. The effects of the dictatorial rule of the military fascist junta (1967-1974) still make themselves felt; aided and abetted by the U.S. and NATO imperialists, the junta tyrannized the people for more than seven years and, besides, opened the door for Turkey's chauvinists to invade Cyprus.

Now that imperialism's aggressiveness is on the rise and is particularly marked in the vast region surrounding Greece, the outlook for our country is becoming gloomier while it remains a member of the North Atlantic bloc.

The current tension in Greek-Turkish relations over operational control of the air space above the Aegean Sea within the framework of NATO is a serious trial for our country. It is fomented by U.S. and NATO quarters, who want to exercise control on two sides. Also, the existence of U.S. military bases on Greek territory, including bases equipped with nuclear weapons, Washington's intention to use them as a bridgehead against socialist countries and a springboard for its rapid deployment force tend to increase the danger of Greece being involved in imperialist adventures in our region, especially the Eastern Mediterranean.

The 11th CPG congress forecast mounting popular resistance to U.S.-NATO imperialism in the context of the latter's general switchover to cold war, and it is fair to say that the signs of this resistance are more and more marked. Frank pressure from without, by the United States and NATO, dovetails with attempts made by reactionaries inside Greece to destabilize the situation and do away with the gains of the people, who are now faced with new problems. This is why, it was pointed out at the congress, actions for peace and détente link up more and more closely with the struggle to deliver the country from imperialist

bondage, safeguard national independence and democracy and meet the working people's lawful aspirations.

Greece must not be a pillar of the North Atlantic bloc but a bridge of peace in the region; staying out of blocs, it must play an active peace-loving and constructive role in the Balkans, in Europe, in the Mediterranean. This is a prospect which can be materialized and fully meets the vital interests of the nation and the exigencies of its security.

More than one year after the defeat of the Right,¹ some changes (if not durable ones) came about in foreign relations. Certain positive processes aimed at making the Balkans a nuclear-free zone got under way on the initiative of our government as well as the governments of Bulgaria and Romania.

In this period Greek-U.S. talks on the future of bases, begun in view of the expiry of the relevant agreement, have reached a crucial point. The Reagan administration uses pressure and blackmail to retain the U.S. bases in Greece but the majority of the Greek people insist on dismantling the bases, as PASOK explicitly promised during the latest election campaign.

Meanwhile, despite the fact that the Right has dragged Greece back into the military arm of NATO although it declared in 1974 that we were withdrawing from it, the question of setting up NATO headquarters in Larissa, envisaged by the so-called Rogers Agreement,² is still unsettled.

The government has taken a positive stand on some international problems, in particular on non-deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Western Europe and made a favorable reply to the latest peace proposals of the Warsaw Treaty countries. This is also true of its approach to a number of problems in our region, the Middle East, the Palestinian question, and others. However, these positive foreign policy trends are not of a lasting nature; indeed, the government is undecided and hesitates when action is needed, instead of taking with the people's support real steps affecting the very foundations of the U.S.-NATO presence in our country.

Along with this, domestic reactionaries are becoming more active as they try to block every step toward an independent foreign policy. It is particularly important to stress that the United States and NATO, taking advantage of the talks on bases, resort to more and more outspoken pressure and extortion in an attempt to force Greece into toeing the line in the North Atlantic bloc and to preserve the bases indefinitely. Also with an eye to "taming the recalcitrant," the

USA unhesitatingly uses gross blackmail by instigating the Turkish junta to stage military provocations fraught with a serious danger to peace.

However, our people, most of whom have voted for deliverance from NATO and U.S. fetters, know that imperialist domination in Greece, for which they have repeatedly had to pay dearly, is not fatally inevitable. They are uniting to reject diktat.

At this crucial stage, with problems of vital importance for peace and our national independence more acute than ever, popular action for peace, against imperialist blackmail and for a radical solution of the problems of the country can play an increasingly decisive role.

The congress called for effort to contribute to the further growth of the peace movement, considering this a priority task. It worked out and proposed a realistic program of struggle for peace and national independence. What is meant is a struggle:

- first, for a Greece outside NATO, without nuclear weapons and U.S. bases;

- second, for *Balkans* without nuclear arms and the missiles, and for the transformation of the region into an area of peaceful cooperation and good-neighborly relations among nations;

- third, for a non-aligned and sovereign Republic of Cyprus without Turkish occupation troops and foreign troops or bases;

- fourth, for détente and cooperation in Europe, a freeze on and a substantial reduction of medium-range nuclear weapons on the principle of equal security as first steps;

- fifth, for a *Mediterranean* without nuclear arms and transformed into a sea of peace, friendship and cooperation, for a fair settlement of the Middle East problem and recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinians.

These objectives meet response among the vast majority of Greeks and can become to a still greater extent the basis for unity and, above all, joint action.

The congress declared that the struggle for peace cannot divide the nation; the anti-war movement must have no boundary lines separating one part of the people from another; the strength of this movement lies in its scope and unity.

One of the main tasks of the party is to work among the people in the spirit of unity and frankness and overcome on the basis of common goals obstacles to the struggle for peace that are due to political or ideological differences, passivity or a tendency to subordinate the movement against war to narrow party interests.

The Greek people are fighting perseveringly for peace and national independence and we considered it our duty to reaffirm from the congress rostrum our invariable and complete solidarity with the socialist countries, primarily the Soviet Union, and our equally invariable support for their peace initiatives. Today, when humanity is being put to severe trials and exposed to grave dangers, the irreplaceable role of the socialist countries as the chief force in the struggle to curb imperialism, promote security and détente, and safeguard peace is more evident than ever.

We took a resolute stand against those also here in Greece who allege that the threat to peace comes from the "two poles" existing in international relations and from the "two superpowers." The theory of "bipolarity" absolves the sins of U.S. imperialism in one way or another. It says nothing about the fundamental difference between the two blocs in class substance and policy, the fact that imperialism is the only source of the war danger, with the more bellicose quarters of the United States and some of its allies in the lead. Also, this theory underestimates the positive role which the growing anti-war movement, the non-aligned or small countries, and other international factors can and do play.

We think such views seriously weaken the peace front and prejudice peace initiatives, particularly in Europe. Theories about the "legacy of Yalta and Potsdam," whose proponents make out the current division of Europe to be a result of the agreements concerned and put the blame on "both superpowers" play a similar part. Those who advance these ideas pretend not to be aware of the repeated proposals of the Warsaw Treaty countries for the dissolution of the two military blocs, détente, and an easing of confrontation in Europe. Objectively they make common cause with the reactionaries who are out to weaken the socialist countries and nullify the anti-fascist content of the relevant treaties concluded at the end of World War II in the interests of all nations and peace.

One of the pivotal problems examined by the 11th CPG congress was that of the deep economic crisis in Greece, a crisis developing against the background of the general crisis of capitalism. The latter is particularly marked in our country, due above all to the dependent character of our economy.

The present situation is a "natural" result of our country's post-war development, which has been based on a drive for profit, foreign and domestic monopoly domination, and predatory use of manpower and natural resources.

Production has stagnated or has even been

falling off for years. Last year — for a second year running — there was an absolute decrease in industrial production. The amount of investments in industry and the economy as a whole was smaller than in the early 70s. Inflation, which swallows the working people's earnings, stays at a very high rate. Unemployment has reached unprecedented proportions; it exceeds eight per cent of the workforce. The problem of qualitative conditions of life and environmental pollution has sharpened to the utmost. There are more and more enterprises which close down or experience serious difficulties, having an excessive burden of debts. Greek membership in the EEC is making the effects of the crisis much worse. Greek products are being rapidly forced out of the home market by goods from other West European countries.

We communists have stated in no uncertain terms that to end the current slump, it is necessary to carry out deep-going structural changes of an anti-monopoly character in every field. The PASOK government, however, is going the other way contrary to its own program declarations. It does nothing to remove the causes that have led to the crisis and are carrying it deeper. The dominant position and superprofits of big capital are intact. The regime is searching for a way out by trying to establish a precarious equilibrium between the public and private sectors of the economy and harmonize which cannot be harmonized, namely, the interests of the working people and monopoly capital. Instead of taking Greece out of the EEC as promised earlier, it now seeks special provisions for our country within the community.

This year the government's incomes policy is leading, in particular, to a wage freeze under the relevant law, which means hitting the standard of living hard. At the same time, a 15 per cent devaluation of the drachma (an official measure) is giving rise to a new wave of price increases that painfully affects the incomes of wage workers.

This policy of the regime is a source of growing popular discontent and disillusionment, which the Right tries to exploit for demagogical ends.

Both before and during the congress there were extensive debates on the main lines and effects of government policy as well as on the nature, framework and prospects of the activity of PASOK and our attitude to this party.

PASOK came into being and took shape as a political force after the downfall of the dictatorship. Its fundamental statements, while not exempt from contradictions, had an anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly content. But

subsequently its policy and character began to change step by step, a trend which grew with the transformation of PASOK into the chief opposition party and, above all, with its accession to power. The radicalism typical of the initial stage of development of PASOK became less and less marked, the political and ideological heterogeneity of its membership increased, and its statements gradually became less explicit while its policy assumed a more evasive character.

Proceeding from the evidence, we defined PASOK as a distinctive social-reformist party, the distinctiveness being due to the social (mainly petty-bourgeois) base of the party, its policy and certain particularities of Greek reality. Coexisting inside PASOK are different or even contradictory trends ranging from left radical to bourgeois centrist, technocratic and reformist ones. Reformist trends predominate today and it is they that determine and shape the government's policy.

The policy of PASOK, which is contradictory and inconsistent in all spheres of vital importance to the country (the economy, foreign policy and the exercise of democracy), has so far been restricted to modernizations and reforms that do not affect the decisive foundations of monopoly domination or Greece's dependence on the United States and NATO. This policy is complicating the development of the popular movement, impeding a further change in the balance of forces to the detriment of reaction. Specifically, the still negative stand of PASOK on cooperation among progressives seriously weakens the working people's struggle, something which benefits the Right. We consider that the only way to contribute effectively to the building of a sufficiently solid bulwark of democracy is to strengthen the positions of the CPG among the masses and in parliament.

While drawing these conclusions, we certainly do not deny that given definite prerequisites and powerful pressure from the popular movement and a stronger CPG as well as cooperation in various forms, currents with a social-reformist orientation like PASOK could contribute their share to the democratic anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist changes needed by the country. The Communist Party works continuously to extend these possibilities and advocates cooperation among progressive forces in every sphere, particularly in mass struggles.

It was stressed at the congress that Greece cannot end the present crisis by means of reformist half-measures or without the participation of the people. The big problems of the nation and the dangers threatening the country

necessitate solutions running counter to imperialist interests. The only way out is real change. Accordingly, the congress worked out a program containing realistic and mature proposals for the solution of the most acute and urgent problems facing the people and the country, in particular economic problems, on anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly lines. The realization of these proposals can begin even now provided there is close cooperation among the progressive forces and support from the popular movement.

Our economic proposals may be listed in general terms as follows: curb the privileges and prerogatives of monopoly, improve the people's life and effect a fundamental tax reform in their favor, nationalize certain strategic industries, channel government investments into production, use the state sector as a lever of a progressive restructuring of the economy, and take concrete steps without delay to overcome the effects of Greek membership in the EEC and then to cast off its shackles.

In the foreign policy sphere the Communist Party declares for the immediate withdrawal of Greece from the military arm of NATO as a step toward a complete dissociation from the bloc, for the adoption at the Greek-U.S. talks on military bases of a schedule setting the technically necessary deadlines of the complete and definitive removal of the bases from our territory in a short time, for seeking a settlement of Greek-Turkish differences outside the Atlantic bloc and without U.S. super-arbitration, and for Greek support of a real internationalization of the Cyprus problem.

As regards democracy, our proposals envisage in general a democratization of the state apparatus, the abolition of discrimination in any form, a democratic reform of the constitution, a really democratic decentralization of management, the adoption of an electoral system based on the principles of proportional representation and real participation of the working people and youth in decision-making, and so on.

To be sure, these proposals do not imply complete abolition of the order imposed by monopoly or dependence on imperialism. However, their purpose is to bring about substantive changes directed against them to one degree or another. The struggle for these changes amid sharp class antagonisms is intended to weaken and restrict the positions of the monopolistic oligarchy while at the same time bringing the masses closer to revolutionary positions.

Real change is no particular "Greek road" to socialism but implies that "we do not forget

about the future as we fight for the present." It is a policy that will help, both quantitatively and qualitatively, achieve a balance of forces enabling the country in definite conditions to go over to anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly democracy for the people opening up the prospect of a socialist future in accordance with the strategy evolved by the ninth and carried forward by the tenth CPG congress.

As the CPG works steadfastly for real change and this is the main lasting front of struggle against the Right, monopoly and imperialism, the congress discussed the current tactics of the party and its attitude to the government.

Communists have never confined themselves to merely criticizing government policy in general terms, nor will they ever do so; they never engage in opposition for opposition's sake. So far we have backed every positive measure of the government while criticizing retreats, compromises and other negative aspects of its policy. The CPG wants its interference in this sense to be more imaginative and encompass not only general policy but the totality of concrete problems. We want our criticism to be increasingly clear, specific and constructive so as to facilitate dialogue and the achievement of working people's unity, and that even in crucial situations the party propose correct solutions leading to positive results.

Without disregarding the essential distinction between the Right and PASOK, we reject the dilemma "either the Right or PASOK" which various circles would like to impose on our party. Were the communists to accept such an approach to the matter, this would benefit none but the ruling class and its plans for the alternation of two parties at the helm of state; it would make the CPG an appendage to PASOK and injure the interests of the people and all democratic parties and organizations, including PASOK itself. We have also rejected the tactic of frontal attack on PASOK, for it would deadlock developments and make it easier for the more conservative forces to carry on their counter-offensive.

In defining its tactics, the CPG not only takes account of the present policy of the government but coolly and objectively examines all class forces. We are mindful of the schemes of the Right, the international situation, the need to rule out every likelihood of a political reversal as well as the fact that PASOK influences the mass of working people and that voices in favor of change are still raised in its ranks.

The aim of the Communist Party's active interference is to help defend the achievements of the working people and isolate the Right from the people still more. Our party wants the

dissatisfaction of the masses with the policy of the government to take a direction leading forward, wants the working-class and popular movement to expand on the basis of unity and open up prospects for real change.

The CPG supports the legitimate demands which the working people make of capital and government bodies. At the same time it warns the masses against instigation and subversion on the part of fascist and other dark or irresponsible forces whose ultimate goal is to thwart any reform and nullify all democratic gains.

In the course of battles for the solution of economic problems, the CPG strives to ensure that the vanguard role of the working class grows in the fight for the unity of the people as a whole, for democratization, against imperialism and monopoly and for a better life.

This political perspective, it was said at the congress, is impossible without cooperation among the progressive forces of the country. In a little more than a year, life has repeatedly shown that the "independent" plans made by the government in reply to the demand that the country be led along an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly road are not very effective and that there can be no real change without, let alone against, the CPG. Increasingly large sections of the people are awakening to these realities as they come up against many difficulties and obstacles and see the government's compromises and the resultant ruin of their hopes.

Our party said plainly at its congress that Greece needs a democratic government differing from the present if there is to be real change and if the country is to make headway. We mean a democratic government backed by all those who declare in one way or another for a swing to real change, a government expressing their interests and aspirations, a government that will implement an anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly minimum program in every sphere, *basing itself on a mass popular movement*. Only a government of this nature, that is, one based on broad cooperation among the forces that have made a decisive contribution to the defeat of the Right, can find the possibilities and means of overcoming all difficulties and obstacles and blaze truly new trails.

It should be clear that in making its proposals, the Communist Party does not aspire "simply" to enter the government or become part of a parliamentary majority under any conditions. We are against "entrusting" a government with the task of effecting a change in isolation from the people. The important thing for us is a change in the forces forming the mainstay of authority, greater activity by the vast majority of the people, and an alteration of

policy and the program of governing the country. We communists want a government that would not restrain but encourage the initiative and independent activity of the masses and their real participation in every sphere of public life, and would rely on a mass popular movement as one of the main instruments of progressive changes.

This policy has not been invented by our party; it is prompted by Greek reality, by the requirements of the people and country, by the need to prevent reactionary changes. We also know that the forces favoring real change are numerous and powerful and that they will find a way to unity and joint action notwithstanding all difficulties.

The CPG neither makes the pursuit of this policy conditional on the present mood of the PASOK leadership, nor limits it to a rigid pattern, to the framework of an only goal or one front. In striving for unity, our party counts on the radical popular forces active within the framework of PASOK without ignoring certain other factors. In particular, we must not dismiss the fact that the crisis of the bourgeois parties and the actual policy of PASOK create increasingly ample prerequisites for positive changes in the thinking of the masses.

Various forces whose views are not always explicit are coming by many paths to realize the need for cooperation with the CPG in the interest of serious and effective joint efforts for the solution of the country's burning problems. Our party encourages these trends and searches for ways and means of bringing about united action, if only for the attainment of partial objectives, and steadily to extend the framework of unity and the scope of actions in favor of real change. The permanent and unshakable basis for this is the policy of popular unity at the grass roots, without any discrimination or exception whatever, a policy aimed at solving common problems and carrying out anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly transformations. We want cooperation with other forces in any form not only to be based on popular unity and rely on it, but to serve it, to contribute to its consolidation.

We are confident that in the present domestic situation, with all its complexities and difficulties as well as the new potentialities, our party will be able, thanks to the experience it has gained, to meet the challenge and cope with its new difficult and important tasks. The attempts to isolate the CPG from Greek politics have proved groundless, being prompted by illusory notions. The party has shown that it is linked with the working class and the people by solid

bonds resulting from years-long struggle and sacrifice.

True, the numerous blows delivered to the CPG and the popular movement have repeatedly put us in a difficult situation. But life has shown that the party is in a position to recover from them. Today the CPG enjoys considerable influence in the country. It has grown stronger but the communists do not forget how much more they will yet have to do.

This is a period when we cannot allow ourselves any respite. The situation and developments demand of the party a still keener sense of responsibility in order to cope with its tasks, raise its work to a new plane, win increasing confidence among the people, and operate in the sphere of practical policy imaginatively and in a militant spirit on the basis of unity.

The party, we emphasized at the 11th congress, must take a qualitative leap in its development while continuing its revolutionary traditions. The CPG must be a party of the masses, of class struggle, political alliances and authority, if it wants to achieve real change and subsequently to bring about anti-imperialist, anti-monopoly democracy for the people and socialism in our country.

The success of the 11th CPG congress inspires us with justified optimism and with confidence in our ability to meet the exigencies of the times.

1. This article was received in March 1983. — Ed.

2. Names after the Supreme Allied (NATO) Commander in Europe (1980); it provides for the reintegration of Greece into the military arm of the bloc. — Ed.

Party factory newspaper

Fritz Noll

Board member, German Communist Party

Expert estimates say that in the FRG the "average" citizen spends six hours daily viewing television. Day after day the people in our country are virtually deluged with information. The press, radio and television directly influence cultural and political life and people's thinking and behavior. Is the existing order just or unjust? Can it be changed? Ought one to seek happiness singlehanded or in joint actions with others? People tend to see the answers to these questions through the prism of mass media pressure.

In the FRG, as in other capitalist countries, the bourgeois press is in the hands of the monopolies and subjected to the process of concentration. The monopolies are not relaxing their efforts to introduce private commercial television. This creates the danger of a further enlargement of the brainwashing machinery, which is already colossal. In the struggle for democracy and social progress one of the basic demands of the communists is, therefore, that the mass media have to be democratized, that they have to be freed from the determining influence of private capital. The second task, which we feel is within our power to resolve, is to continue developing the communist press itself: *Unsere Zeit*, the central newspaper of the GCP, and the town, district and factory party newspapers.

There is a vital flaw in the capitalist mind-manipulation apparatus and in bourgeois in-

formation strategy as a whole. It is that from the press of the ruling class you will learn practically nothing of what is taking place on the territory and in the workshops of industrial facilities, of what the working person wants and thinks. And it is here, from this starting point that the information strategy of the communist factory newspapers begins. It was not accidental that as early as 1925, in the resolution on the party press passed by the first All-Germany Conference on Agitation and Propaganda, it was stressed that party newspapers should keep the people informed, above all, of the facts and developments hushed up by the bourgeois and the social democratic press.

Democratic public opinion in the FRG is protesting ever more strongly against the existing situation in the mass media. The number of civil initiative groups advocating the democratization of radio broadcasting, the right of access to television, and the possibility of influencing the content of broadcasts is growing steadily.¹ Moreover, disregard by the bourgeois mass media of the stand of the trade unions, the growing social tensions in these media themselves, and the standardization of newspapers as a result of the deepening process of concentration of the press in the hands of the big corporations have induced the trade unions to invigorate their own policy in this area. Evidence of this is, in particular, the determination of press, radio and television employees to set

up their own trade union and the demands being made by functioning trade unions for a say in how radio and television broadcasts are programmed. Lastly, non-commercial alternative publications,² whose daily circulation has now reached several million copies, are developing under the influence of the example of GCP factory newspapers. Not all are long-lived, but despite this the overall circulation of this press is growing uninterruptedly.

With the monopolized mass media widely manipulating the public consciousness and in view of the growing popular distrust of these media, an increasingly bigger role is played by the GCP factory newspapers.

The first factory newspapers, published and circulated by communist workers, began to appear in Germany 60 years ago. An agitation and propaganda department and a press bureau were set up in the Communist Party in September 1923. These sent newspapers materials on a large range of issues. An important impulse was given for the development of the party's factory newspapers by the 10th congress of the CPG (Berlin, 1925): it adopted new party rules in which it was stated that the party groups at industrial facilities were to be the main centers of the work of communists. The task of the day was formulated as follows: "The best cadre — to the factories and the trade unions! Patience and a readiness to conduct the simplest day-to-day work among the masses for years — this is what is needed by the German communists."

From the outset the party factory newspapers were in the thick of the class struggle. They attacked the effects of capitalist rationalization and were in the forefront during mass strikes. They supported the referendum that showed that the people were against the payment of compensation to the landed aristocracy, the mass protest against the building of heavy cruisers, and organized actions in solidarity with the locked-out Ruhr steelworkers. They fought the mounting danger of fascism and were tireless in calling for a united anti-fascist front.

In 1932 (i.e., a year before the nazis came to power), when the Communist Party's press reached its highest pre-war level of development, there were in Germany nearly 3,000 factory newspapers.

The horrible night of fascism that descended on the country lasted 12 years. The nazis outlawed the Communist and the Social Democratic parties, and disbanded the trade unions. However, they were unable to muzzle the communists, who went deep underground. Some of the factory newspapers continued to

appear. They were printed in dark basements with primitive equipment and smuggled into the factories. Many comrades paid with their lives for this. But the voice of another Germany continued to be heard at the factories. It told the nazis that their regime would be destroyed.

After fascism was defeated in the Second World War the network of the CPG's factory newspapers grew rapidly. They featured the struggle against hunger and the pressure for removing war criminals from the government apparatus, for united trade unions, and against the remilitarization of West Germany. In 1956 the CPG was outlawed in contravention of the law. This meant another 12 years underground. But newspapers continued to be printed at the factories. These had a central role in organizing the big steelworkers' strikes in Baden-Wurttemberg and Schleswig-Holstein. They contributed to the growth of the movement against emergency laws. They mobilized people for the traditional spring (Easter) marches. They helped to prepare actions of solidarity with the people of Vietnam.

With the formation of the German Communist Party in 1968 (this was announced in special issues of factory newspapers) new party newspapers appeared at many large industrial facilities. These are working in the spirit of Lenin's behest to the party agitator: "... to merge our activities with the practical, everyday questions of working-class life, to help the workers understand these questions, to draw the workers' attention to the most important abuses, to help them formulate their demands to the employers more precisely and practically, to develop among the workers consciousness of their solidarity ..."³

The newspapers are organs of the factory party groups. They are written by members of these groups and are printed at the printing facilities of district or county party organizations, usually in a small format. Once a month (sometimes more frequently) they are circulated at the factory gates. Depending on the situation special editions are printed.

The main task of these newspapers is to get the workers to see them as militant organs of the entire workforce. For that reason the front page is usually devoted to matters concerning the given factory, exposures of malpractices, abuses by the employer, and the management's plans for cutting down jobs and rationalizing production at the expense of the workers. This page becomes exceedingly important in periods of struggle for wage rises or against massive dismissals. And quite naturally, when U.S. President Reagan tried to force on the FRG and other West European countries his embargo on

supplies of equipment to the Soviet Union for the USSR-West gas pipeline (this threatened many thousands of jobs), the protest against this blatant dictation became the principal theme of the factory newspapers.

Another task is to explain clearly and persuasively the political link between the state-monopoly system and the attacks on the working people's gains won in struggle against employers, between the reduction of allocations for public spending and the arms build-up, between the restrictions on democratic rights at industrial enterprises and the general trend of the state to move to the right. To put it in more general terms, it is the task of the factory newspapers to set forth the GCP's policies and its alternatives on many problems understandably and vividly.

A constant theme of the factory newspapers is the struggle for European security. They explain and popularize the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and their proposals for constructive cooperation with capitalist countries, call for active participation in the peace movement, and expose the "threat from the East" lie. They regularly feature articles telling the workers about the achievements of the socialist countries.

Further, they help to mobilize the workforce for militant struggles in defense of its own interests. In the limelight here are the efforts of the communists seeking unity of action with the social democrats. While urging trade union unity, the GCP orients the working people on trade unions that militantly champion the best interests of the working class.

The newspapers contribute to the growth of the GCP's influence and prestige both in and outside the factories. In recent years they had been giving more attention to problems such as housing, schools, kindergartens, rest and recreation, and gas, water, transport and electricity rates. Cooperation with comrades from party groups acting at the place of residence has proved to be of extremely great value here. These groups make use of what the newspapers write of the housing problems of workers' neighborhoods, especially those dominated by some big corporation.

At factories with a workforce of about 5,000 the newspaper is brought out in from 1,500 to 2,000 copies. Our comrades feel that the newspaper should be passed from hand to hand, that people should ask for it. It is often displayed on the notice board in front of the canteen.

I do not wish to say that the factory press has no shortcomings. For instance, it does not in all cases make it convincing that there is a link

between what is happening at the given factory and the problems affecting the whole of society. There are difficulties in ensuring the uninterrupted printing of publications.

Our class adversary is well aware how effective a weapon the factory newspapers are of the GCP. The Institute of the Association of West German Employers estimates that for the workers they have become the second most important source of information (after the national newspaper they subscribe to, or the radio or television). Another indication of the influence of the factory newspapers is that bourgeois newspapers constantly complain of their activity and attack them. An interesting point is that during the past 15 years attempts to bring out factory newspapers have been made by social democrats and Maoist groups, and in some instances by organizations oriented toward the Christian Democratic Union. However, all were shortlived and were not accepted by the workers. The reason for this is simple: those who want to probe deep into the life of factories should adhere to clear-cut class positions, and this is something only the GCP can do.

To mention by name a militant and popular factory newspaper of a GCP group, it is *Heisse Eisen* ("Hot Iron" or, metaphorically, "Burning Issue"), a fortnightly for the workers of the Hoesch steel concern in Dortmund. It has been in existence for 15 years. This newspaper succeeds in mobilizing the workers for collective actions and rallying them, especially in periods of tense class conflicts.

In 1981, in secret from the workers, the concern planned to relocate the facility. The threat of unemployment loomed for more than 10,000 steelworkers. *Heisse Eisen* was the first to report this. "Is our Dortmund, a city of steel-makers, doomed to extinction?" it asked. A solidarity movement in which the city's entire population joined was started. The issue sold like hot-cakes.

As a result of the timely exposure and the mass protests the concern did not venture to carry out its plan, although it has not abandoned it. For that reason, the struggle of the steelworkers continues, and it gets unrelaxed coverage in *Heisse Eisen*.

For the past several years New Year's eve has been marked in Dortmund as a "Night With *Heisse Eisen*," a festival in which the steelworkers join together with their families. This has become a good tradition that merits the attention of other party groups. Much of what I have said about *Heisse Eisen* applies to other newspapers, two of which are *Roten Kafer* ("Red Beetle") printed for the workforce of

Volkswagen and Kiek ut (meaning "Look Sharp" in the North German dialect), which is issued in the Hamburg port.

To assist the factory party groups, the district and county party organizations as well as the GCP Board organize seminars and courses for workers participating in bringing out the newspapers. As well as general political study, they consider practical questions. Where should information be obtained? How to verify the accuracy of facts? How is an article written? The significance of headings. The printing side of bringing out a newspaper. What should get prominence? And so on.

Useful aids for the factory party groups are the *Guide for Factory Newspapers* brought out by the GCP Board and the party monthly information bulletins printed specially for party groups. These bulletins contain information which the party groups would find hard getting themselves, arguments for polemics, samples of newspaper layouts, cartoons and drawings. The party leadership devotes special sittings to discussing the work of factory newspapers, extends concrete assistance to them, and passes decisions on the further development of this important area of political activity. *Unsere Zeit* carries a permanent feature under the heading "GCP Factory Newspapers," where the most

interesting material from these newspapers is reprinted.

Much attention was given to the party's factory press and its problems at, for instance, the sixth plenary meeting of the GCP Board held last November in Dusseldorf. A section of the report delivered by the GCP Chairman Herbert Mies was devoted to this. Noting that "at hundreds of industrial facilities the party's newspapers hold a strong position in conducting explanatory work among work collectives," he stressed that these newspapers had to continue being printed regularly. The class adversary is worried by the fact that our factory newspapers take their point of departure from the concrete conditions and practices at industrial facilities, "beginning with boiling water for tea." The party leadership, Herbert Mies said, would go on helping the factory press. For their part, the party groups should enlist more workers into cooperation with the newspapers.

These small newspapers are doing a big job for our cause.

1. See Gerhard Deumlich, "Freedom of Opinion Illusions Blasted," *WMR*, No. 8, 1981. — Ed.

2. In capitalist countries alternative press is the name for publications that have no links to the big corporations and are brought out on a cooperative basis by various organizations and groups or on funds provided by enthusiasts. — Ed.

3. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 329.

New experience

OUR INTERVIEWS

IN THE FOCUS OF TAP CHI CONG SAN

Hong Chuong
Editor-in-Chief, *Tap Chi Cong San*
(Vietnam)

Q. What does your journal focus on at the present stage of socialist construction in Vietnam?

A. First, a few words about the history of *Tap Chi Cong San* (*The Communist*), which is the theoretical journal of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Its first issue was printed in February 1931. But under colonial-feudal rule it was not easy to print and circulate communist publications, and the printing of the journal was often interrupted. Only since December 1955 has it been published regularly, once a month.

Our journal plays a big role in the implementation of the party's general line. The substance of this line was formulated by the fifth

congress of the CPV in March 1982: to give the communists, the army, and the whole people a knowledge of the underlying ideas of scientific socialism so as to enable them to fulfil the strategic tasks now confronting Vietnam. These tasks are to build socialism and defend Vietnam. Closely relating Marxist-Leninist theory to the practice of the Vietnamese revolution, we spell out the party's policies, its stand and guidelines on specific issues, help people to get a better understanding of the essence and specifics of our revolution's present stage, and spread advanced experience in defense, the economy and culture.

Further, we study the historical road traversed by the CPV and write of the practice of party building. Considerable attention is given to disseminating the rich experience of the fraternal parties of socialist countries.

Q. What is your journal's role in the party's ideological and theoretical work?

A. As far as we can, we research the theoretical problems of the Vietnamese revolution, such as the regularities of the transition from a small-commodity to the socialist economy without passing through the stage of capitalist development; the CPV's economic policy at the initial phase of the period of transition; party building under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and others. More space is being given to international affairs. For instance, we have run a series of articles on new trends in the development of the three revolutionary currents of our day and on U.S. imperialism's global strategy.

The journal is active in fighting various non-proletarian theories, resolutely counters bourgeois ideology, and exposes survivals of neocolonialism and feudalism in culture and the public consciousness. It contributes to the class revolutionary education of the communists and to the efforts to put an end to individualism, indiscipline, lack of organization and indications of bureaucracy.

The journal's unquestioned successes in ideology do not prevent us from seeing shortcomings and omissions. In some cases the quality of theoretical articles is not consistent with the requirements of the Vietnamese revolution. We often respond belatedly to pressing issues that arise in the process of socialist construction, while other articles are long-winded or schematic. There is thus much to do.

Q. What is the journal's internal structure? Who writes for it? How do you build up your relationship with readers?

A. The journal has two sections: one is the editorial staff, who prepare the articles for publication; the other is managerial and it is responsible for the printing, circulation and contacts with readers. The editorial staff is divided into five departments: political, economic, party building, international, and culture. Our contributors include party and government leaders (they account for one-fourth of the articles), academics, and people prominent in culture. About 25 per cent of the articles are written by staff members.

Our links to readers are diverse and productive. We traditionally send staff members to grassroots organizations where they not only address the members but acquaint themselves with the practice of party building so as then to write of the best experience in the journal. We sponsor round table meetings and talks with diverse readers and specialists. They make their critical comments and suggestions with the view to improving the contents and make-up of the journal. This is a direct live dialogue with readers. They show their committed

interest and help the journal play an ever more active role in society's life.

DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION

Janet Jagan
CC Secretary,
People's Progressive Party of Guyana

Q. PPP documents stress the importance of work among Amerindians. What is the reason for your party's close attention to that section of Guyanese society?

A. There are some 40,000 Amerindians in Guyana.¹ Unlike the majority of Guyanese, who live in the coastal belt, most Amerindians live in the interior. Roughly eight tribes are known, most with their own language, culture and customs, with such enchanting names as Arawak, Akawaio, Makushi, Wapishana, Wai-Wai.

Intelligent, resourceful, with superb understanding of interior life, Amerindians, however, are given very few opportunities for higher education or obtaining jobs. The government denies them much needed help in producing and marketing their wares. The majority of Amerindians are an object of brutal racial discrimination and exploitation and are living in dire poverty. "The Amerindian population," said the 21st PPP congress in a resolution, "suffers the worst effect of the economic and social crisis. They are denied rudimentary medical care and little or no effort is made by the government to ensure that Amerindian children, in particular, are given the proper level of education in keeping with the norms of their culture and language."

When the PPP was in office (1957-1964), it successfully dealt — despite strong resistance from reaction and Christian missions² — with a number of problems of the Amerindians: medical, educational, jobs, assistance in agricultural development, sale of crops, etc. Amerindians still remember the help and concrete advantages they received during the time the PPP was in office. This they contrast to their plight now, under the People's National Congress government, when their economic and social position has deteriorated, so much so that they call themselves "third-class citizens."

Amerindians have been particularly angered over government interference in the election of "Toushous" or "Captains," who govern each village. Like the general and regional elections, the election of Captains is rigged so the government can have its hand-picked persons in charge. Amerindians at each election actively campaign against the rigging, distributing handbills and holding meetings. I think it is

understandable why we want the indigenous population to receive every manner of help and support.

Q. What is the party doing, specifically, to improve the Amerindians' condition?

A. The PPP has taken up many issues for Amerindians through officials, in the courts, and elsewhere. It has moved in parliament for the discussion of medical care for the interior, more jobs for Amerindians, and improved education to prepare them for better jobs. The party has campaigned with Amerindians to demand their land rights by collecting signatures and picketing the parliament buildings. Interior medical centers have been picketed and demands made for more doctors to be stationed there, for more medicines and equipment. Recently the party protested against the sending of the least qualified teachers to Amerindian schools as well as against excessive increases in transportation costs in the interior, which have raised the cost of living.

The party constantly takes up the defense of Amerindian victims of police arbitrariness and outrages. In one case, an Amerindian was murdered by officials and the matter was covered up. The party demanded of the law authorities and in parliament an inquest into his death. In another instance, two young Amerindian women were raped by policemen and no charges were brought against them. The party tackled the matter, forced prosecution of the policemen, and arranged for legal representation for the women. And here is a further example. When two young men were tortured with hot irons while in police custody, the party raised the matter with the Commissioner of Police, publicized it, and raised protests. These and other instances of torture and maltreatment of Amerindians were documented in a party booklet, *Human Rights Violations in Guyana*.

Q. Do Amerindians take any part in the life of the party?

A. Of course, nor is their contribution small. More and more members of the Amerindian community join the party. They serve on regional and district party bodies, on the cultural committees, and have been members of the Central Committee and PPP members of parliament, and many belong to the youth and women's sections of the party. Interior members come to Georgetown in growing numbers for classes at the Party School, Accabre, where they receive political orientation courses for two or more weeks. Returning home they arrange seminars, lectures and film shows in their villages and distribute party literature and

the party newspaper, sometimes using the services of an interpreter.

I must say that the government does its utmost to reduce our influence in the Amerindian community and curb PPP activity by means of various bans and restrictions. Under the laws of Guyana, non-Amerindians require permission to enter Amerindian areas. The authorities take advantage of these laws to bar PPP members from Amerindian settlements. Official quarters are so sensitive to party work in Amerindian communities that they occasionally find themselves in a painful situation. In one case, a police posse descended on an Amerindian home where we were distributing clothing — the believed that arms were being handed out.

As PPP activists find it difficult now to visit Amerindian areas due to government restrictions, the party publishes regularly a broadsheet called *Interior Special*. This bulletin is sought after by practically every Amerindian. It contains accounts of problems, protests and letters about Amerindian life, as well as the PPP position.

More and more often, we register manifestations of a thoughtful attitude to the party by Amerindians. During the last party congress, for example, despite their own hardships, Amerindians in the Rupununi, some of whom are cattle rearers, sent beef for the preparation of meals, while from another area they sent coffee. When a party building was needed in the northwest, near the Venezuelan border, Amerindian members went into the forest, cut logs and hauled them to the site, and then assisted in the construction.

On the whole, constant political work and agitation by the party have succeeded in developing the consciousness of the Amerindian tribes, who today are alive to their rights and willing to struggle to attain what is rightfully theirs.

1. Guyana has a population of 830,000 (1976 census). Over 50 per cent of them come from India — their parents or grandparents arrived at the turn of the century; 31 per cent are Blacks, 11 per cent, half-castes and mulattoes, and about 5 per cent, Amerindians. — Ed.

2. From the earliest times and throughout the colonial period, the majority of Amerindians were influenced by the various churches (mainly the Catholic Church), which set up missions and schools.

IN THE MIRROR OF THE PRESS

VOIX OUVRIERE

Facts versus lies

Voix Ouvrière, newspaper of the Swiss communists, writes of the subjectivity and bias of some bourgeois mass media, which keep harp-

ing on what they term as the "steady ageing" and "conservatism" of the Swiss Party of Labor. Using the example of the Geneva cantonal party organization, the newspaper convincingly refutes these slanderous inventions. It writes, for instance, that the average age (up to 40) of the leaders of the SPL local sections and also of those responsible for the printing of the communist press does not exceed analogous indicators of other political organizations in the canton. It is far below them.

As regards party work, the newspaper notes, it is not, as bourgeois propaganda falsely asserts, confined to meetings, discussions and parliamentary activity. On the contrary, it embraces the most diverse areas of society's life. To mention some of these areas, they are the collection of signatures under appeals and petitions to the government, participation in and organization of innumerable demonstrations, the arranging of international solidarity festivals and rallies, the distribution of leaflets at the gates of factories, and demonstrations of moral and material solidarity with working people. Further, one should not discount the dynamic role played by the communists in many trade union, sports, cultural, neighborhood and other public organizations.

IN THE FACE OF LAWLESSNESS

ARREST OF BRAZILIAN COMMUNISTS IN SAO PAULO. WHAT DOES THIS SIGNIFY?

WMR has already reported the arrest by the Brazilian police of a large group of communists and the subsequent broad international solidarity campaign that forced the authorities to release the detained persons.¹ One of the arrested was Amaro Valentim do Nascimento, member of the *WMR* Editorial Council. He recently returned to his office in Prague. Below he gives an insight into the political background of these events.

I was on my annual holiday and, having arrived in Sao Paulo on December 13, 1982 to visit a relative, I decided to call on the editorial offices of the weekly *Voz da Unidade*. One of my journalist friends invited me to attend a national seminar sponsored by the weekly to consider the nation's economic, political and social problems, and also the question of getting legal status for the Brazilian Communist Party. But hardly had an hour passed after the opening of the seminar when dozens of federal police agents broke into the building, cut off the telephones, and took over control of all the departments of the *Novos Rumos* publishing

house, which is situated in Dom José Gaspar Square in the very center of the capital of Sao Paulo State.

Located next to the editorial offices of *Voz da Unidade*, the hall where the seminar was being held was taken virtually by storm. Brandishing pistols and submachine-guns, the police warned that nobody should move and that those who did and resisted would get a bullet in their heads. They made the people in the hall hold their hands behind their necks, then arrested 91 persons and took away the documents that had been prepared for discussion at the seminar. The arrested were searched. After it was found that none of us was armed, we were lined up in a column and marched to the federal police building. There the detainees were divided into groups, registered, and some were subjected to many hours of questioning.

Newspaper and radio and television reporters appeared almost at once opposite the police station and began giving an on-the-scene report of the arrest of communist leaders, which became the lead story of the mass media in Brazil. That evening a delegation of the Working People's Party headed by its leader Luis Inasio Lula da Silva and members of parliament demanded and got permission to visit the detainees, thereby breaking through the cordon of isolation in which we were being held. Meanwhile, a mass public rally was held in the Tuquinha building adjoining the Catholic University of Sao Paulo. Among the participants were more than 80 well-known public figures and also representatives of the different mass organizations that had declared their solidarity with the detained communists. Senator Severo Fagundes Gomes, a former Minister of Industry and Trade, addressed the rally, denouncing the arbitrary action of the police. "This violence," he said, "is directed not only against the BCP but also against all Brazilian citizens in order to prevent freedom for the work of organizations and for the discussion of matters concerning the people and the entire Brazilian nation. To resolve this basic inner-political problem we have to demand the legalization of the BCP, which would be significant both for the Communist Party and the whole Brazilian people."²

The detention of the communists outraged the nation. Rallies like the one in Tuquinha were held in many cities in Brazil. Ulisses Guimaraes, member of the parliament and chairman of the national organization of the Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement, Franco Montoro, who was recently elected governor of Sao Paulo State, and Mario Covas, member of parliament, signed the following

public denunciation: "The right of assembly is enshrined in the constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Any violation of these rights merits condemnation by democrats, especially when these violations are perpetrated in the name of the authoritarian national security law, which is in conflict with the present historical moment, as has been acknowledged by the ministers of the Supreme Military Tribunal themselves."³

The Working People's Party published an official statement declaring its full solidarity with the BCP. In the statement it affirmed its stand in defense of unequivocal freedom of party and trade union activity and demanded the legalization of parties compelled to function underground and the immediate release of the detained communists. Member of parliament and leader of the Trabalhista Party Ivete Vargas sent the republic's President a telegram expressing concern over the arrests in Sao Paulo.

Many other mass organizations published official statements condemning the arbitrary action of the police and demanding the release of the detainees. These organizations included the Order of Lawyers of Brazil, the Brazilian Press Association, the National Association of Higher School Teachers, and the unions of journalists, doctors, and steelworkers. State governors, members of parliament and public personalities representing all political currents condemned the detention of communists, demanded the abrogation of the national security law, and urged the legalization of the Brazilian Communist Party. *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, *Folha de Sao Paulo*, *Folha da Tarde*, *Journal do Brasil*, *O Globo*, and other leading newspapers gave front-page coverage to the arrest of communist leaders and denounced the arbitrary actions of the authorities.

There were wide repercussions throughout the world to the police repression against communists, the seizure of the *Voz da Unidade* editorial offices, and the forcible closure of the seminar. In Paris and other French cities there were demonstrations of solidarity with the detained Brazilian communists, protesting against police violence. The Brazilian Minister of Justice Ibrahim Abi-Ackel received a telegram signed by representatives of many mass organizations and by civic leaders of France censuring the invocation of the security law and demanding the observance in Brazil of freedom of speech and of assembly and organization.⁴

Moreover, the Minister of Justice received a telegram on behalf of nearly 30 political parties and democratic organizations in Mexico and

other Latin American countries. It stated: "We protest most emphatically against the aggression, perpetrated on December 13, by the Brazilian government against the communists of Brazil. Repressive measures of this sort expose before the whole world the hypocrisy of the so-called policy of democratization, which the Brazilian government alleges is being pursued in the country. We demand compliance with freedom of assembly and organization and also the immediate release of all detainees."⁵

That same day, in face of the massive movement of national and international solidarity, and also the pressure from the many protests sent to the Brazilian government, the federal police had to release 83 of the detainees and relax the conditions of preventive detention for members of the national communist leadership, including the General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee Giocondo Diaz.

However, on the basis of Article 40 of the national security law⁶ the police began investigating the "crime" of the arrested communists. After it is completed the findings will be sent to the Military Tribunal, which can either disagree with the results of the investigation and return the findings to the federal police for additional specification, or send the findings to the archives, or go on with the proceedings and pass sentence.

In view of the present situation in Brazil and in the world, the government is not interested in sentencing a large number of people for political convictions, for this would hurt its "democratic" image abroad. However, there is the danger that the Tribunal will sentence some members of the communist national leadership to long terms of imprisonment. Nonetheless, there is a real possibility of getting the case shelved in archives. This depends on the evolution of the political situation in the country, on the level and breadth of national and international solidarity.

Police repression against communists pursues quite obvious aims: to try and isolate them from the public, intimidate the democratic forces that were successful at the November elections,⁷ restrict the few freedoms still operating in Brazil, and take a step back from the already unstable and narrow process of political renewal. Also, the purpose is to prevent the holding of the national communist seminar, make it difficult to legalize the BCP, and compel its members to return to underground status. Lastly, the purpose is to divert the people's attention from the serious economic and financial crisis into which the military has plunged the nation.

The government believed that the com-

munists were isolated from the people and had no support from Brazilian public opinion. But, as even the few facts I have given show, it grossly miscalculated. Millions of people have begun to think that it is time the Brazilian Communist Party is legalized. Favorable conditions have formed for raising before the Supreme Electoral Tribunal the question of the official recognition of the BCP and the adoption of juridical steps to ensure the legal holding of the seminar.

Ever since the amnesty was announced in 1979, the Brazilian communists have acted openly and, like all ordinary citizens, have not concealed who they are.⁸ We are fighting for the right to legal existence as a political and ideological current firmly upholding the interests of large sections of exploited and oppressed people. We shall not retreat from the legal positions won together with the other democratic forces. The BCP disappearance underground would suit only obscurantist and reactionary quarters. The communists will continue to act against the illegal status that an insignificant minority of the nation is trying to force upon them.

Ever since it was founded in 1922 the BCP has never ceased its political activity in the country, despite the fact that, having functioned underground for 59 years, it was constantly harassed in every possible way. The viability and staunchness come from its close links to the working people and its steadfast championing of the people's interests. This is the result of the heroism and dedication of

members and leaders of the BCP, who held high the party's glorious banner even in the most difficult moments when it seemed that police repression had destroyed the party.

We are determined to remain a profoundly national, democratic and internationalist Marxist-Leninist party that is in solidarity with all who are fighting for peace, democracy, social progress and socialism. Relying on the support and solidarity of the progressive forces of Brazil and the whole world, the Brazilian communists are stepping up their efforts to consolidate their links with the working people, notably with the working class and the peasants, and build a mass proletarian party, a party capable of uniting politically conscious members of all classes and social strata fighting to win democratic freedom, end Brazil's dependence on imperialism, cut short the power of the oligarchical monopolies, and set up a democratic regime developing in the direction of socialism.

1. See WMR, No. 3, 1983.

2. *Voz da Unidade*, December 16 and 22, 1982.

3. *O Globo*, December 14, 1982.

4. *Voz da Unidade*, January 13 and 19, 1983.

5. *Voz da Unidade*, January 20 and 26, 1983.

6. This article prescribes five years' imprisonment for "restoring or an attempt at restoring de jure or de facto, under an alias or in fictitious form, a political party or association disbanded by decision of the authorities or juridical organs," and also for any activity seen by the authorities as "prejudicing national security."

7. At the elections in November 1982 the opposition won most of the seats in the federal chamber, winning in 10 of the 22 states and in 82 of the 100 largest towns with a population of over 100,000.

8. See WMR, No. 11, 1982.

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"While honoring him, we are building a better life"

Harald Wessel

Assistant Editor-in-Chief of *Neues Deutschland*,
newspaper of the SUPG Central Committee

These notes were written in the district center of Karl-Marx-Stadt, GDR. For nearly 800 years the city was called Chemnitz, but during the past three decades it has borne the name of the founder of scientific communism. This city's past and present set me thinking of the traditions of the German working-class movement and made me want to compare Marx's vision of a socialist future and the day-to-day life of our republic.

I

"Freedom ... can only consist in socialized man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favorable to, and worthy of, their human nature" — Karl Marx, *Capital*.¹

At first sight one can tell that the Karl Marx Numerik plant is an advanced production facility. The tall building and the low structures alongside it are clean and airy. There are no smoke-blackened walls or chimneys, and one does not hear the rumble of machines. All the workers are in white smocks. The plant manufactures microelectronic control devices for machine-tools and industrial robots. These devices are small (allowing for the saving of space, materials and energy) but extremely efficient.

The name of Marx was given to the Numerik plant five years ago. On the wall in the entrance-hall there is a plaque commemorating the day when Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SUPG Central Committee and Chairman of the GDR State Council, announced that the facility had been named after the founder of the scientific world view of the working class.

"This was on the eve of the 160th anniversary of the birth of Marx," recalls Dorothea Bohme, who works in the economic department. "We had only just begun to go over to microelectronics. The entire workforce had to readjust to the new products and at that difficult stage the fact that our plant was named after Marx gave us a boost."

The Numerik plant has a workforce of about 2,600, of whom more than 800 are women. One in every three employees has a higher or a secondary education. When Dorothea Bohme studied at a technical school by correspondence, she read Marx's principal works. She knows the Marxian law of value, that the value of a commodity is determined by the socially necessary time spent on manufacturing it. The line toward cutting the necessary working time is mirrored in the motto of the workforce, and it is to match the highest world level. In other words, as long as somewhere in the world similar microelectronic devices are manufactured with smaller outlays of labor than in Karl-Marx-Stadt the Numerik products will not have full recognition in the world market.

The price of microelectronic control devices depends chiefly on their quality, especially their reliability, and, therefore, there is technical control at all stages of the production process. Ines Frommhold works in the quality control department. She is 22 and the secretary of the Free German Youth League cell in the team that pledged to maintain a high level of efficiency every day of Karl Marx Year and, by using electronic testing equipment intensively, save a total of 20,000 hours under the rationalization plan.

This clause was included in the plant's commitments at a meeting of trade union representatives. When the national press in the GDR published these commitments as an example of a good orientation of socialist emulation in 1983, the youth team of which Ines Frommhold is a member likewise became known throughout the country.

... Marx's daughters once asked him what distinguished him. The reply was: "Singleness of purpose." The youth team tries to measure up to this.

"Our work requires us to be consistent and persevering. But sometimes we are still much too humane," Ines Frommhold says.

"What do you mean by that?"

"We are not strict enough, for instance, in our control of incoming components. The moment you close your eyes to something out of 'cour-

tesy,' you can expect surprises. The subsequent stages of production become senseless work. For that reason, in the interests of the common work we have to be stricter and more insistent."

Ines Frommhold has never had to experience the inhuman pressures of unemployment. She cannot imagine how anybody could be threatened with dismissal in order to increase output. She only knows of the conscious discipline of confident workers, a discipline that is consistent with the norms of socialist relations of production. And she is proud of this collective, reasonable, dignified discipline. She has every reason to be proud, for this is the only way associated producers control production, which Marx regarded as economic freedom.

"Marx would have been delighted with microelectronics," said Klaus Lange, 42, who heads a design group at the Numerik plant. "We are developing a new generation of switch circuits. Electronic control devices are becoming so small that they can be built into machine-tools and robots. Microelectronics has made it possible to raise labor productivity to an unparalleled level, foreseen in general outline by Marx, Engels and Lenin. Under capitalism the development of technology in this direction leads to new and more acute socioeconomic contradictions. Under socialism it benefits people. Socialism and microelectronics mutually condition each other in the true sense of the word.

II

"These gallant Lugau miners are the first in Germany to be entering into direct contact with us; we should act publicly in their defense" (from a letter by Karl Marx to Frederick Engels on February 13, 1869).

It is a good thing that in 1869 there was still no telephone communication between London and Manchester. Had there been we might not have had this written confirmation of Marx's long-standing link to the Lugau workers, a fact that everybody in Karl-Marx-Stadt district is so proud of today.

Lugau is about 20 kilometers southwest of Karl-Marx-Stadt, in the former Lugau-Oelsnitzer coal basin. Coal-mining began there in the 1840s, and by the 1960s the coal had been exhausted. In Marx's day the Lugau miners were subjected to appalling exploitation. If a miner fell ill or met an accident in a pit both he and his family were doomed to death by starvation.

At the close of 1868 the politically active Lugau miners heard of the International Working Men's Association that was founded by Marx and Engels and decided to make their

troubles known to Marx. Gustav Adolph Bachman and Karl Wilhelm Jungnickel sent a letter to London asking for information on how they and their fellow-miners could join the International. Moreover, they asked for advice about miners' mutual aid funds, to which the workers were deducting a fixed percentage of their meager wage in the hope that they would get some money if they fell ill or were disabled and when they grew old. The mine owners likewise contributed to the funds, chiefly to use them as additional capital and, where possible, trick the miners out of them. The Lugau miners formed societies, by means of which they hoped to gain control of the funds.

On November 24, 1868 the miners' letter was read at a meeting of the General Council of the International. The workers were informed of the terms of admittance to membership of the International and requested to send the regulations of their societies. At the end of January of the next year the Lugau miners sent Marx an application, signed by members of the miners' committee, requesting membership in the Association. It was then that Marx asked Engels to draw up a report for the General Council. This report was approved and it appeared in print on March 20, 1869 in the *Demokratischen Wochenblatt* of Leipzig.

The correspondence between the "gallant Lugau miners," to use Marx's description, and the founders of the scientific world view of the revolutionary working class led, in large measure, to the creation of the first trade unions in Germany. The struggle was stepped up for minimum social insurance — for unemployment benefits, mutilation at work, sickness and disability allowances. This was the period that witnessed the beginning of Chemnitz's revolutionary traditions, which today continue to live in the production affairs of the city's working people, including the workforce of the people's Karl Marx Numerik plant.

III

"Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc." — Frederick Engels, "Speech at the Graveside of Karl Marx."²

Had we wanted to select 10 of the loveliest city streets in the GDR, Bruhl in Karl-Marx-Stadt would go into the last round. You will not find any architectural marvels in it. This was formerly an ordinary tradesmen's street in a

fairly squalid district. During the military senseless U.S. bombing in the spring of 1945, when one-third of all the dwellings in Chemnitz were destroyed, Bruhl survived by a miracle. As a tradition-rich workers' district it simply begged renovation. Houses were completely rebuilt, and the flats were enlarged and modernized. Attractive shops, restaurants and cafés made their appearance. The street is now reserved for pedestrians. Its beauty attracts passers-by at any time of the day.

Karl-Marx-Stadt's chief architect, Karljoachim Beuchel, who was born and bred in the city, is proud of Bruhl as are all of its inhabitants. For him this is the first step toward the fulfillment of the program for resolving the housing question in the GDR as a social problem by the year 1990.

"Between 1850 and 1910, as a result of industrialization, the number of people in Chemnitz quadrupled," Karljoachim Beuchel says. "No dwelling houses were built. The dwelling of a worker's family usually consisted of a small kitchen-living room and a tiny bedroom. Incidentally, that was why tuberculosis was so rampant in workers' districts. The ravages of war compounded the situation. We received a terrible legacy.

"Between 1945 and 1980 the city's population continued to grow: from 246,000 to 318,000. But new houses began to be built. During the first post-war years as slowly as before — not more than 450 flats annually, but later, with the switch to industrial methods, the pace picked up. In Karl-Marx-Stadt today there are over 67,000 newly-built or modernized flats. One in every two families now has a new or rebuilt flat.

"At first we restored the city's center, building residential blocks on the outskirts. We are now modernizing more and more of the old housing, keeping it in good repair. Suitable modern methods are being developed for this."

As everywhere else in the GDR, children's facilities, medical institutions, and shopping and services centers are being built in Karl-Marx-Stadt alongside new or rebuilt houses. The district hospital was completed in the city at the end of 1981. It has sophisticated medical equipment and serves both in-patients and out-patients.

"What are the most common diseases today?"

Professor Alexander Dempe, Dr. Sc. (Med.) and head of one of the hospital's departments, thought a while before answering.

"Cardiovascular diseases are in first place. We are getting more diabetes cases, and also neurosis, all of which are linked to food pat-

terns and the way of life generally. You could call all of them 'welfare ills.' "

When I mentioned tuberculosis, Professor Dempe said:

"We've wiped out that social disease."

The professor drew attention to the GDR's advances in public health. For instance, new methods of treating expectant mothers, diabetes patients, have brought about a sharp decline in the morality rate among new-born babies. This is a world-class achievement. Professor Dempe spoke highly of the pharmaceutical industry, which is keeping in step with medical advances.

IV

"The very fact that while official France and Germany are rushing into a fratricidal feud, the workmen of France and Germany send each other messages of peace and goodwill, this great fact . . . proves that in contrast to old society, with its economic miseries and its political delirium, a new society is springing up, whose international rule will be Peace, because its national ruler will be everywhere the same — Labor!" — Karl Marx, "First Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Franco-Prussian War."³

A street intersecting Bruhl is still called Untere Aktienstrasse. It did not hand out securities. But it was the scene of historical meetings of workers. A workers' union was formed in Chemnitz in 1869 on the initiative of August Bebel. Its members, as *Chemnitzer Tageblatt* tells us, used to gather in an inn on Untere Aktienstrasse to study *Capital*.

On Monday, July 18, 1870 this newspaper published a mobilization order in connection with the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, and under it an account of a meeting in the City of London restaurant where August Bebel exposed the dynastic interests that led to war.

A day earlier, social democrats gathered in an inn in Wiesenstrasse, Chemnitz, and on behalf of 50,000 Saxony workers unanimously condemned the war. Replying to an address by the Paris workers "To Workers of All Nations," they gave the assurance: "With the slogan of the International Working Men's Association, 'Working men of all countries unite!' in mind, we never forget that the workers of all countries are our friends, and that the despots of all countries are our enemies."

Marx wrote highly of the statements of the French and German workers. In the "First Appeal of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Franco-Prussian War," which he wrote, there are quo-

tations from the most important passages of the Paris Manifesto and the resolution of the Chemnitz socialists. The founders of scientific socialism knew, of course, that the working class lacked the strength to prevent the war started by emperors, kings and capitalists, but Marx regarded the courageous actions of the workers as a "hope for a brighter future," as the herald of the new society whose principle would be peace, because labor would be predominant everywhere.

V

"If we have chosen the position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live on quietly but perpetually at work" — Karl Marx, "Reflections of a Young Man on the Choice of a Profession."⁴

At first glance the three Graces sitting decorously at the big table in the office of the headmaster of the Karl Marx Secondary School, Karl-Marx-Stadt, can be mistaken for Marx's three daughters. But they are not Jenny, Laura and Eleanor. They are Ines Stefan, Heike Fassmann, and Katrin Friedrich. They are in the senior, 12th, class and after the examination for their matriculation certificate they plan to study medicine, stomatology, and Sinology respectively.

Indeed, these girls are over a century younger than Marx's daughters. Their generation (born in 1965) grew up with radios, television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, free medical care, school lunches and low-cost books. Young people of this age are handy with cars, computers and robots, are initiated into the secrets of the atom and have, of course, read the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. What they do not know from their experience are hunger, exploitation and war, racial hatred and war profits, pawnshops and usurers, eviction, and corporal punishment in schools. They know of this from books or from the reminiscences of their grandparents. The three girls we have mentioned today pay for their bread exactly what was paid for it throughout their almost 18 years of life, not a pfennig more. They belong to a generation of socially confident people.

"Are you afraid that a nuclear war will break out because of the NATO missile armament program and the policy of confrontation pursued by Washington?" I asked them.

"Of course, this possibility worries us. Ever since the Second World War peace in Europe has never been threatened as now. But we be-

lieve in the strength of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. Their policy of peace will prevail, especially as the anti-war movement is steadily growing in the USA and Western Europe. The latest peace initiatives advanced by Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and the proposals of the Prague meeting of the Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee are so convincing that no person in his right mind can reject them."

"What are you yourselves doing for peace?"

"We are in the Peace Watch of the Free German Youth League."

In Karl Marx Year the girls are determined to study hard and pass their matriculation exams. In the long run, this too helps to strengthen the GDR and consolidate socialism and peace. The girls mentioned Bertolt Brecht's poem *Carpet-Makers of Kujan-Bulak Revere Lenin*, which tells the story of how carpet-makers in South Turkestan planned to erect a memorial to the leader of the October Revolution, and later decided to use the collected money to buy kerosene and destroy malaria-carrying mosquitoes. "By making a better life for themselves," Brecht wrote, "they honor Lenin. And in honoring him, they made a better life and understood Lenin truly." This is exactly how the schoolchildren want to pay tribute to the memory of the man after whom their school is named. Every class sets itself a work or educational task: some are organizing a Karl Marx exhibit in the Tradition Room, and others are painting the school's windows.

VI

"The worker will some day have to win political supremacy in order to organize labor along new lines; he will have to defeat the old policy supporting old institutions, under penalty — as in the case of the ancient Christians, who neglected and scorned it — of never seeing their kingdom on earth" — Karl Marx, "The Hague Congress."⁵

The building housing the Karl Marx School was built in 1929 for a technical school. But two years earlier a debate erupted in the Chemnitz city parliament over the name to be given to the square where the new handsome building was being erected. The social democrats, who had the largest faction (17 of the 61 deputies), suggested calling it Square of the Republic, the communists (14 deputies) wanted it called Marx Square, and the bourgeois parties insisted on the name Hindenburg Square. When the social democrats failed to get a majority for their proposal they voted with the communists for the name Marx Square. This motion was

carried by 31 votes against 30.

The city administration resorted to every imaginable subterfuge to sabotage the parliament's decision. More than a year passed before the plaque with the name of the square was finally in place. When the school opened, the bourgeois press and speakers studiously avoided mentioning the name — this was a conspiracy of silence. The square was renamed as soon as the nazis came to power in 1933.

In the famous *Brown Book on the Reichstag Arson and Hitler Terror*, published in France by German emigré communists, there are two photographs taken in Chemnitz in the spring of 1933 and used by the nazis on picture post-cards. The first shows a wheelbarrow and in it a manhandled social democrat — Bernhard Kuhnt, former Prime Minister of Oldenburg, whom the nazis caught in Chemnitz. The caption reads: "The chief instigator and November⁶ criminal Kuhnt takes a trip during the cleaning of the streets in Chemnitz." The second photograph also shows a social democrat. He is Robert Muller, city councillor, who is pushing the wheelbarrow with Kuhnt to the accompaniment of shouts by nazis. Muller and Kuhnt were forced to remove everything from the city streets that was a reminder of the working-class movement.

Robert Muller, who was time and again arrested and imprisoned in concentration camps for anti-fascist activity, lived to see Germany's liberation by the Soviet Army. Together with his class comrades, communists, he was one of the First Hour⁷ activists. He helped to train teachers in an anti-fascist spirit.⁸ He supported the merging of workers' parties in the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, of which he was a member to the last day of his life.

During the 12 years of nazi dictatorship 641 persons were killed for political motives in Chemnitz: 334 communists, 55 social democrats, and 252 non-party anti-fascists. Six and a half thousand persons were held in custody for more than six months: of these roughly 4,100 were communists, 1,200 social democrats, and 1,200 non-party anti-fascists. Symbolically, the Chemnitz square that prior to 1933 bore the name of Marx is today called Square of Victims of Fascism. The new Karl Marx Square is the most beautiful in the city. Situated in the center of the city it has a memorial to the founder of scientific communism.

VII

"This constitution of the proletariat into a political party is indispensable to ensure the triumph of the social revolution and of its ultimate goal: the abolition of classes" — Karl

Marx, "From the Resolutions of the General Congress Held in the Hague."⁹

"Why was it decided, in 1953, to rename Chemnitz Karl-Marx-Stadt when Marx had probably never been in Chemnitz, which was known as the Manchester of Saxony?" I asked in the city party organization.

"There are many reasons," replied Lizbeth Wetzel, 76, who heads the district Fighters Against Fascism Committee. "Chemnitz merited it, above all, because it has long been a large revolutionary center. The local workers are highly class conscious and they have always fought courageously for their rights. I myself have experienced, in 1932, a mass strike by textile workers. At the time I was a deputy to the city parliament, in which we were doing all we could to relieve youth unemployment. Moreover, Chemnitz was a sort of school for revolutionaries: many steeled leaders of the working-class movement came from here — Fritz Heckert, to mention one. Leaders of the German communists and socialists Wilhelm Liebknecht, August Bebel, Rosa Luxemburg, Ernst Thalmann, and Wilhelm Pieck liked coming to Chemnitz."

"The class forces were distinctly polarized in this industrial, workers' city," said Werner Hoppe, who was a party official for many years and is now chairman of the city's People's Solidarity¹⁰ committee. Even at the Reichstag elections of March 5, 1933, despite the unprecedented fascist terror that followed the burning of the Reichstag, the communists won new votes in the city. Nearly 50,000 of its inhabitants voted for the party led by Ernst Thalmann. Add to this the 50,000 people who voted for social democrats, and you'll find that these were considerably more votes than the fascists could get."

"After 1945 the Chemnitz social democrats and communists drew lessons from the past with an integrity that merits every possible respect," said Erich Uhlich, a veteran communist and member of the commission for history of the district SUPG committee. "The differences dividing the two workers' parties were pushed into the background. In the autumn of 1945 they enforced a land and school reform by joint effort, and later confiscated the property of war criminals and of people who had become rich on the war: this expropriation was approved by 88 per cent of the inhabitants of Chemnitz in a referendum conducted in Saxony in 1946. Working-class unity grew ever stronger, and in the spring of the same year the CPG and the SDPG merged to form the united Marxist-Leninist party."

"The banks of the Chemnitz river have al-

ways been inhabited by hard-working people," said Dietmar Wendler, an official of the SUPG southern district committee who, as a young man, had written his diploma thesis on the renaming of Chemnitz into Karl-Marx-Stadt. "The city had suffered severe destruction in the war, and the clearing of the ruins was started immediately after May 8, 1945. We soon even got a letter from Hamburg asking how we had managed to clear away the ruins so quickly."

"By their work the people of Karl-Marx-Stadt have always been a credit to the name borne by their city," said Frank Wagenknecht, an official of the municipal council. "They are maintaining a high output level in their work and doing much to adorn the city. In the emulation movements of cities and communities of the GDR we always take an impressive place. For instance, we have a movement called For the Decoration of the City. Each person who does something particularly useful for the city is presented with a red rose."

VIII

"It is to the great historic merit of Marx and Engels that they indicated to the workers of the world their role, their task, their mission, namely, to be first to rise in the revolutionary struggle against capital and to rally around themselves in this struggle all working and exploited people" — V.I. Lenin, "Speech at the Unveiling of a Memorial to Marx and Engels, November 7, 1918."¹¹

Thirty years ago, on May 5, 1953, *Neues Deutschland*, newspaper of the SUPG Central Committee, carried the following headline on its front page: "Decision of the CC on the 135th Anniversary of the Birth of Karl Marx." One of the clauses of this decision was: "Rename the workers' city of Chemnitz into the city of Karl-Marx-Stadt, and the Chemnitz District into Karl-Marx-Stadt District."

In the FRG the reactionary newspapers raised a deafening clamor. "Infamous Name," "Chemnitz Continues to Suffer," "Chemnitz Will Never Be Turned Into Karl-Marx-Stadt," yelled the headlines in the vicious tone of the cold war. The bourgeois press said that the new name would never be accepted. In the FRG people were enjoined upon to continue addressing their correspondence to Chemnitz.

On May 10, 1953 the Prime Minister of the GDR Otto Grotewohl delivered a speech here in connection with the state act renaming the city. He ridiculed the persons who were living in the past and their hypocritical arguments that it was absurd to give the name Karl-Marx-Stadt to a city founded by Benedictine monks in the 12th century. "Benedictine monks no longer

live here," Otto Grotewohl said. "Nor is their teaching followed by anyone. The only thing that is a reminder of them is Benedictine, the liqueur invented by them . . . From the standpoint of history and tradition Chemnitz means much, but Karl-Marx-Stadt means much more."¹²

Otto Grotewohl foresaw that by their achievements and their life the working people of Karl-Marx-Stadt would make the city known internationally. Today it is quite obvious that this forecast has come true. Time has shown that the efforts of the cold warriors to boycott the new name were futile. Rainer Dorfel, who heads the Karl-Marx-Stadt district post office, says that for years hardly any mail has carried the city's old name. The last time a letter with the old address came was from a Swiss museum that had missed the renaming. The FRG authorities and newspapers have likewise learned to write Karl-Marx-Stadt.

Three decades ago Otto Grotewohl said that the name of Karl Marx placed a big obligation not only on the city's inhabitants but on all the people of the GDR and their party. This is always remembered by the SUPG.

Karl-Marx-Stadt District is the constituency of Erich Honecker. Of course, the General Secretary of the SUPG Central Committee meets regularly with the city's people. His many cordial meetings with the people, with the engineering, building, and electronics workers, with members of the Free German Youth League, Siegfried Lorenz, Secretary of the Karl-Marx-Stadt party district committee, said at the 10th congress of the SUPG, are never forgotten and serve us as an effective stimulus in our work.

1. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1962, p. 800.

2. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 162.

3. *The General Council of the First International. 1870-1871. Minutes*, p. 328.

4. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 8-9.

5. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 292.

6. Bernhard Kuhnt participated in the revolution of November 1918 in Germany. — Ed.

7. These were people who began building an anti-fascist, democratic system immediately after Germany surrendered. — Ed.

8. A crash teacher-training program for anti-fascists. During the school reform they replaced the former teachers, most of whom were National Socialists. — Ed.

9. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 291.

10. A public organization that provides social and cultural services for elderly citizens. — Ed.

11. V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 165.

12. Otto Grotewohl, *Im Kampf um die einzige Deutsche Demokratische Republik*, Vol. III, Berlin, 1954, pp. 333-334.

In search of a flexible economic mechanism

Karoly Lipkovics
HSWP representative on WMR
Marina Pavlova-Silvanskaya
WMR staff member

HUNGARY'S EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING SMALL-SCALE PRODUCTION

The readjustment of the socialist economy mainly along the lines of an intensive type is a complex and multifaceted task. The fraternal parties of all the CMEA countries have been working on the problem of shaping an economic mechanism that would set in motion new reserves. It has one important aspect: the search for an optimal blend of large-scale and small-scale production for the ever fuller satisfaction of the working people's requirements in goods and services. There are stable forms of small-scale production in the GDR and decisions to promote it have been taken in Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. The journal has reported on the experience in organizing subsidiary agricultural production in Bulgaria (see *WMR*, No. 7, 1982). Below is a report on Hungarian experience in this field.

Efforts to organize small-scale production in Hungary are of fairly long standing, first in agriculture and most recently in industry, building and the services. Some elements of this experience have already been established and have stood the test of time, while others are at the experimental stage and are being discussed in the party, among economic managers and economists. Conversations in party bodies and governmental agencies in Hungary and visits to industrial enterprises and cooperatives give a broad picture of the new elements in the party's economic policy.

All our conversations began with a discussion of terminology. No one was quite satisfied with the concept of "small-scale production," which seemed to imply some disparagement of a labor effort that is useful and beneficial for the society.

"But the main thing," said Lajos Faluvegi, HSWP CC member, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Chairman of the State Planning Administration, "is that this term now and again seems to carry unwitting and unwarranted associations with petty-com-

modity production under capitalism. Indeed, some people altogether refuse to see how small-scale production can serve the purposes of developed socialism."

In our view, both the dissatisfaction with the term and the theoretical doubts are largely caused by the fact that by small-scale production in Hungary are designated phenomena which are fairly distinct in socio-economic terms. Indeed, how is one to reduce to a common denominator the subsidiary enterprise of a big plant and a small team of artisans, a leased café, and a subsidiary farm run by someone who is a member of an agricultural cooperative? On the strength of size alone, what is small, say, in engineering, could be fairly large in another sector. Nor will one find such a common denominator in the forms of economic management, because they are diversified so as to develop the working people's active participation in economic life.

Nevertheless, if there were no common element in these measures, the concept of small-scale production would long since have disappeared from Hungary's political lexicon. The fact is, however, that it is very much alive and is a very burning issue indeed. It is alive because, however imperfect, it is a reflection of a definite line in economic policy. The purpose of this line is to diversify the forms and methods of socialist economic management, and to create a more flexible structure for the socialist economy, as a blend of economic units of differing scale. Its purpose is to have production respond more rapidly and unerringly to the changes in demand, including small-scale demand, and to enable it to satisfy the people's requirements more fully.

Let us say at this point that small-scale production is in no sense a synonym of private production, just as socialist production need not necessarily be large-scale. The measures relating to the development of small-scale production in Hungary make no encroachments at all on the socialist nature of property and fully fit within the system of socialist relations of production.

Up to now, the experience in organizing small-scale agricultural production in Hungary has been reported at the greatest length abroad, and it is the successes achieved in the countryside that have provided the impetus for the broader use of diverse forms of small-scale production in other sectors of the national economy.

Rationality breeds trust

The labor of the Hungarian cooperative farmers has yielded results of which one need not be ashamed in the most stringent international comparisons. Over the past few years, wheat yields have ranged between 32.6 and 47.6 centners per hectare. The feed problem has been solved; the country is turning out about 160 kg of meat per head of the population (with consumption at home at over 74 kg per head). Hungary has not only assured its own population of a steady supply of farm produce, but has been exporting meat, fruits and vegetables. What has been the role here of the homestead and subsidiary farms?¹

Here is what the figures say: these farms now provide, year round, potatoes for 2 million people, vegetables for 2.9 million, fruits for 3 million, wine for 1.9 million and eggs for 5 million, etc.² In 1981, small-scale production accounted for roughly a third of the gross and for a quarter of the marketable farm produce. Is this much or little, considering that the countryside is fully cooperated, that is, in it large-scale farming predominates? That depends on how you look at the figures. Addressing itself to the inexperienced reader, bourgeois propaganda usually reasons on roughly these lines: Hungary's total arable land comes to 6.6 million hectares, and the house-and-garden plots and subsidiary farms account for about 1 million.³ This means that a sixth of the land yields a third of the produce, which seems to put the score at two to one in favor of small-scale production. At this point, another concept is glibly substituted for small-scale production, namely, private production, and this provides the basis for trite talk about the advantages of private enterprise and the organic defects of socialist property. The sleight-of-hand works because in the capitalist world very few people know any details about the Hungarian reality.

But it is precisely the details that throw a new light on the problem. Small-scale individual production did not develop spontaneously in Hungary's agriculture to its present level, nor in virtue of some imaginary intrinsic advantages that it has over large-scale socialist production, and nor as a counter-weight to it. It is the result of the purposeful policy of effecting a division

of labor between the collective and individual farms, a policy the HSWP and the government have seen conducting for more than two decades. The cooperatives concentrate on the production of cereals, feedstuffs, potatoes and beef, that is, the farm produce where there is evidence of a spread of industrial techniques and where extensive mechanization shows just how far labor has been actually socialized. Meanwhile, the house-and-garden plots and subsidiary farms specialize in produce which requires such manual labor and which is, for that reason, relatively more expensive, like fruits, vegetables, pork, rabbit-meat, etc.⁴ This naturally has an effect on the "farmland produce ratio," which means that it is wrong to draw any political conclusions on the strength of primitive arithmetical comparisons.

Let us take an impartial look at the problem. First of all, who is this petty producer? Minister of Agriculture and the Food Industry Jeno Vanzo gives the following figure: 1.5 million families, that is, more than 5 million people, or one-half of the whole population, and that in light of the fact that Hungary is not, after all, an agrarian country. But it is not very large, and it is no problem to commute from any spot to a city or to the nearest factory or plant. That is why 47 per cent of all the families live in the countryside. Only 16 per cent of them are employed exclusively in agricultural labor, while almost every family has either an orchard or a vegetable patch.

For half of those who own the subsidiary farms, work on them is above all a hobby, an occasion for rest and recreation. They sell nothing (or next to nothing) and do not respond in any way either to the state of the market or to any economic regulation. But these people meet the needs of their families, which means that state supplies and the marketing network have so much less to provide, and also indirectly augment their incomes. Roughly one-half of the produce they grow remains on these farms and is not converted into commodities.

Nearly 700,000 families, however, sell their vegetables and fruits⁵ and some even specialize in a definite line of produce. For instance, at the Lajos Kossuth Cooperative (near the town of Kecskemet), one peasant annually delivers to the state 4-5 tons of cucumbers, which he grows in hot-houses on his house-and-garden plot. The night watchman of the same cooperative has the lease of 7 hectares of meadow, and keeps 12 milch cows and a host of poultry. One old-age pensioner from the Torekves Cooperative keeps more than 50 pigs and piglets of various sizes, 6 cows and more than 100 chickens in ungainly rickety barns (and also has a

hectare of land under vegetables). Those are the farms which supply the market with 80 per cent of all the marketable produce of small-scale production.

Those with whom we spoke recalled that in the 1950s there was prejudice in the party against house-and-garden farms that was based on ideological objections: since the small-scale farms sought and found outlets on the market, they were regarded as a potential source for the restoration of capitalism, a factor for the conservation of the petty-bourgeois way of life, and that is why the orientation toward limiting and curtailing the subsidiary farms prevailed. As a result, the country was faced with a growing need for the produce that had been earlier turned out in abundance. The population, which once used to feed itself, had to be supplied from centralized stocks.

In the early 1960s, a more realistic view of the role of small-scale production in the countryside gained the upper hand in the HSWP. While still giving the utmost support to the development of state and cooperative farms, the party reached the conclusion that there were major reserves in the country's agriculture and that these could be rapidly and effectively mobilized only with the aid of house-and-garden and subsidiary farms.

Farm buildings provide the first example.

"When setting up collective farms," we were told by Jozsef Sicar, Chairman of the Lajos Kosuth Cooperative, "cattle were socialized only where large farm buildings were left by the landowners. Where no suitable large sheds remained, the cattle were left for the peasants to tend. Of course, the cattle-sheds the peasants have may not be up to the latest technical standards, but they can well be used, so that it would have been mismanagement to neglect them. By not building cattle-sheds and by handing out the cattle for fattening up on the farmsteads, the cooperative saves 200-300 million forints in capital investments. It is a good thing that at the time we did not discourage the peasants from keeping cattle."

From the standpoint of the sector as a whole, the problem looks as follows: 1.6 million head of cattle, 6 million pigs and 50 million head of poultry can now be kept on the farmsteads and subsidiary farms without additional outlays. It would take more than one five-year plan period to build such facilities in the cooperatives from the ground up.

Minister Jenő Vancsa sums up: "We naturally seek to make the utmost use of all the buildings: new and old, big and small. That is a step toward intensifying production."

Labor reserves are another example.

In the villages there are many housewives, old-age pensioners, and persons working in other sectors of the national economy. They are prepared to do much work on subsidiary farms but not on a regular basis: now in the daytime, now in the evening, now over the weekend. That does not suit the cooperative and state farms, but the house-and-garden plots and subsidiary farms absorb such "fragments" of the working day very well. It has been estimated, for instance, that the annual fund of time actually put into small-scale production across the country comes to 2.7 billion hours, i.e., 4.5 hours a day per farm, with nearly 60 per cent coming from dependents and old-age pensioners. That is no longer a trifle, and reserves of such dimensions should not be neglected.

Finally, one question that has kept cropping up in conversations again and again was the organizational and psychological reserves in enhancing the efficiency of production.

"There must be a rational division of labor between the collective and individual farms," said Jozsef Sicar. "The cooperatives should handle the operations that it pays to perform collectively. But those in which socialization fails to yield a tangible economic gain are best left to the house-and-garden farms. After all, socialization is not an end in itself, and becomes meaningful only when it goes to benefit both the peasants and society."

Such an approach makes economic sense because it unburdens the cooperatives and enables them to specialize. That is why it has met with complete understanding and sympathy on the part of the peasants. Their great-grandfathers and grandfathers taught them to keep count of every penny, so that far from dampening their ardor, rational decisions, in effect, encourage them to the thrifty management both of the collective and of individual farms. All of this ultimately develops into profound trust on the part of the farmers for the policies of the party.

Small-scale production is not opposed to large-scale production, it does not divert from the latter, but merely supplements the operations of the cooperatives. The house-and-garden plots and subsidiary farms cannot assure themselves of the funds, the labor-power and the implements on a scale that is required for independent reproduction. Such a farm does, of course, yield an income, but only a supplementary one: it comes to roughly a quarter of what work on the cooperative farm yields. This supplementary income is spent mainly on the building of houses, and the purchase of cars and furniture, and only to a small extent on the needs of production consumption.⁶ The

house-and-garden farms' own sources of accumulation do not fully cover the actual costs of production, and they would inevitably have fallen into decay without the large-scale investments in the state and cooperative sectors and the system of subsidies.

Let us consider what is perhaps the most visual example of the connection between small- and large-scale production. How is it possible for a cooperative farmer to keep 15-20 cows or several dozen pigs on a relatively small farmstead? He can do so only because the feed problem has been solved in Hungary on a national scale: through the efforts of the highly efficient mechanized production in the state and cooperative sectors. Last year, for instance, green feed was on sale freely throughout the country at more than 5,000 centers. Moreover, the roughly 200 cooperatives which have contracts with their members for the fattening of cattle on farmsteads regularly supply them with feedstuffs, and do so on credit.

When bourgeois propaganda claims that the allocation of cattle, etc., among the farmsteads amounts to "disbandment" of the cooperatives, it engages in wishful thinking. Far from being weakened, the farmers' links with the cooperative tend to become stronger and more diverse. Hungary has discovered the economic forms for integrating homestead farms with large-scale socialist production. These forms are such that they warrant no fear that this type of small-scale production will daily and hourly generate capitalism even in a socialist society that has a long history behind it.

The development of small-scale production along the lines required by society is regulated by a ramified system of economic instruments: taxation, the prices of machinery, fertilizers, and the produce, subsidies for the tending of cattle, etc. It was not so easy to find such instruments of regulation and to strike the right balance between them.

Lajos Faluvegi recalled: "In the early 1970s the prices of feedstuffs were raised, the peasants responded swiftly and unanimously by markedly reducing the output of meat. The mistake had to be corrected and the procurement prices increased."

These small farms have now become a sector of the cooperatives' activity. Both they and the state want to see cooperation with small-scale production stable, and lending itself to accounting and planning. That is why the economic mechanism is so adjusted as to make it profitable for the farmers to have long-term contracts.

Three-quarters of all the marketable produce coming from the homestead and subsidiary

farms goes into the state marketing network. Many peasants, especially those whose farms are specialized, are quite satisfied with the procurement prices (which come to about 80 per cent of the retail prices) and are willing to establish direct or indirect (through the cooperatives) ties with the shops. Only a quarter of the marketable produce goes on the free market and this, the Minister of Agriculture believes, testifies to the mutually advantageous relations between large-scale and small-scale production.

Over the past several years, small-scale production has been developing on a stable basis, without any special ups or downs, and Chairman of the State Planning Administration Lajos Faluvegi believes that this is a major achievement of the HSWP's agrarian policy.

The experiment and its social aspects

Those with whom we spoke repeatedly suggested the following idea: if it has proved possible to fit small-scale production into large-scale production so successfully in agriculture, why not try the same thing in industry, building or the services?

"The potentialities of small-scale production in these sectors, especially in industry, are, of course, limited," Lajos Faluvegi said. "But here there is also a need for such enterprises."

A serious study of the economic peculiarities in the functioning of economic units of various sizes was carried out on the initiative of the party leadership in Hungary. The results of this study do not in any way minimize the tremendous advantages of concentrated production. On the contrary, in the conduct of structural policy and the perfection of the economic mechanism, the main accent is on the large-scale enterprises. The goal-oriented programs of the sixth five-year plan period set the most responsible tasks before the industrial giants of the priority industries, but there are also lines of production where excessive concentration tends to slow down the rise of efficiency.

You cannot go to a large plant in the evening and ask them to let you have, say, 50 bolts of a special design by the following morning. But that is something small-scale production takes in its stride. The making of a small lot of items on imperfect equipment may cost a little more than it does in specialized production, but major losses from idling or late delivery can be avoided by swiftly obtaining the necessary components. The simplified accounting and the small scale of operations make it easier to run small and medium-size enterprises, which is why they can profitably turn out many types

of products and provide services which a big plant will refuse to handle. Optimal organization of industry implies a rational combination of large and small-scale production.

"A high degree of concentration of production is characteristic of Hungary," says Bela Rabi, State Secretary of the Ministry of Industry. "A comparison shows that in countries roughly the same size as ours, like Belgium and Austria, the share of small and medium-size enterprises is much higher. In the course of our socialist industrialization, we built mainly large modern factories and plants, which had obvious advantages, allowing us rapidly to make good the lag in the development of national industry, but nothing was done to build up a necessary 'hinterland' of small-scale production."

"We must admit," says Laszlo Ballai, head of the Economic Policy Department of the HSWP CC, "that because of our lack of experience we tended, for a fairly long time, to believe that socialist economic units were those which were large in size. Indeed, we reasoned roughly along these lines: the fewer small and medium-size enterprises we have, the more 'socialist' our relations of production are."

But it proved to be easier to take down the signboards than to arrange the work of the newly established trusts or combines. The large-scale enterprises were given the status of actual monopolists. It was this "exclusiveness" of theirs that slowed down the pace of scientific and technological progress, and had a bad effect on costs, competitiveness and the state of the domestic market. Autarkic and local-interest trends began to appear, and an urge for every plant to have the whole range of its own lines of production.

The centralization of production did not always go hand in hand with its actual socialization: concentration and specialization and a deeper division of labor. The old economic units actually often continued to exist within major enterprises, having weak links with each other, frequently scattered across the country, and having lost, together with their juridical independence, a part of their production effectiveness and a readiness to take risks.

"It became more difficult to satisfy the needs of the population," Lajos Faluvegi went on. "As living standards rise, people's requirements not only increase, but also become more diverse. Whenever the concentration of production exceeded the optimal proportions, enterprises became less capable of adapting to the changing and specific interests of the consumer. It became more difficult to make good the shortages now in this, now in another type of prod-

uct: experience showed that the large enterprises frequently found it unprofitable to make certain items and frequently to renew their product mix.

The sphere of the services was in the worst state. Over the past decade, their share in the overall consumption of the population increased to 24-25 per cent, but the old organization (large trusts with territorial branches) made the provision of many services unprofitable because of the high management costs.

All of these symptoms did not go unnoticed. In the mid-1970s engineering and the textile industry were broken down into smaller units. In 1980 and 1981, the ministries checked on the work of 20 trusts (mainly in the food industry and the services) and decided to divide them into 146 independent enterprises. In this way, the organizational framework of production was more fully aligned with its actual socialization and the level achieved in the development of the productive forces. But this important line of economic policy does not boil down to a break-up of large economic units into small ones, or the starting of new small-scale lines of production. The principle for these economic measures of the HSWP is that the scale of production must be determined above all by considerations of economic efficiency. That is why in some sectors of the Hungarian economy, concentration continues to advance on the double, while in others, in the "hinterland" sectors of engineering, in the light industry and the services, smaller units are preferable.

In Hungary, an effort is being made to move closer to the optimal size of production by surrounding large enterprises with satellite branches and subsidiaries which are within their orbit, constituting in the aggregate something of a production system. This is expected to help relieve the big factories and plants of ancillary operations and small-batch production, so paving the way for a more rational distribution of labor and better satisfaction of the people's requirements.

In such small economic units, the regulation of wages is much easier, and the system of material incentives operates with greater precision. If any loss is suffered, it has to be met by the enterprise from its own funds; if it cannot do so, it is closed down.

But these satellites are only one of the many forms in which small-scale production is organized in the country. We saw this production at first at the Csepel Worsted Cloth Combine, which employs more than 2,000 people and turns out 20 per cent of the country's woolen fabrics.

What sort of small-scale production is that?

General Director Otto Zalatnay explained: on the management's initiative, the women working in the spinning shop set up an economic-production association. The shop is short-handed, and has become something of a bottleneck at the combine. The wool is there, the demand for their products on the external market is great, but everything is held up by the yarn. In order not to miss the favorable market outlook, the management is prepared to pay roughly 2.5 times more than the usual rate for additional labor. Why then did it not offer overtime? Because that would have meant the shifts coming in as a body, including the ancillary workers, the bookkeepers and accountants, and the management. In the association, things are organized differently. It was joined by only one-third of the spinners of the shop, but on a voluntary basis. They want to earn more, perform the ancillary operations themselves, even swap machines whenever necessary, arrange for the allocation of the work and do all the accounting.

Otto Zalatnay says that the workers have very exacting standards for admission to such associations. Some are and some are not admitted, as in the case of those who like to take too many coffee breaks. They are aware that the additional income does not come easy, and we were told as much by the spinners.

In one of the shops of the Csepel Combine, the lighting system had become outdated and it was time to change it. The management did not start looking around for a contractor on the side, as it would have done in the past, but simply told the workers how much it was prepared to pay for the job. Those who were prepared to take it on set up an association, and fulfilled the order. The members of the association were satisfied and the combine gained time and cut costs.

The director told us: "I knew very well that many of those who installed the new lighting system used to make some money on the side. Now and again, they would take along some tools from the shop and even some materials, to say nothing about the fact that this activity of theirs escaped the financial control of the state. Under the new arrangement, more money can be earned at the plant, legitimately and without carrying anything away or making a secret of it. The association pays the combine for the lease of the means of production, which are then better used. The additional work is taken into account by the local council, and a part of the workers' income goes into the budget in the form of taxes. It is not only that in this way

production is intensified and its planning enhanced, but that labor and social morality are strengthened," Zalatnay believes.

We were told by Minister of Internal Trade Zoltan Juhar that since 1981 the work of small foodshops selling mainly meat, vegetables and fruit has been organized on new lines. These marketing outlets remain the property of the state or cooperatives but are transferred to private persons under contract for a definite period. The person in charge has a broad freedom of action: he hires the staff (5-6 persons), finds the suppliers (either cooperatives or farmers), and buys the produce. Since the amount being paid to the state is fixed in advance,⁷ the manager and the collective have a stake in increasing turnover, cutting costs and maximizing the profit. That is why small shops working under contract are frequently open in the evenings, on Saturdays and Sundays, and as a rule have fewer shop assistants. Once he has settled accounts with the state and paid the fixed wages, the manager is free to dispose of the remaining funds, including the payment of additional rewards to his staff. In such marketing outlets, they earn more than in the conventional shops but then they have to work longer hours — voluntarily. The manager runs some risk, because when the turnover is insufficient, he will still have to settle accounts with the state and pay wages to his staff — out of his own pocket. What does this contract method give the state? The revenue from the running of such a marketing outlet tends to increase on average by 20-50 per cent, and the marketing management is noticeably reduced. Similarly, some restaurants or cafés, employing no more than 10 persons, can be leased under contract for a period of five years.

Broad opportunities have been created for developing small cooperatives in industry, the handicrafts and the services. Small cooperatives (from 15 to 100 people) employ persons for a full working day or for a few hours, as in the case of old-age pensioners, housewives, students and persons on the staff of state institutions. Every member of the cooperative contributes a definite share, and the incomes are distributed in proportion to that share, to a person's labor contribution and the extent of the risk involved. Artisans are allowed to set up special groups to carry out repairs and to provide other services to the population, and also building cooperatives. These frequently undertake to erect buildings that state organizations find it unprofitable to bother with. Small design offices, groups taking contracts dealing with the scientific organization of labor, the application of technical innovations, etc., are a

special form of organization akin to the cooperative.

The economic production associations and the lease of shops or restaurants are socialist forms of economic management, because socialist property is preserved and there are no elements of exploitation. The source of additional income is provided only by one's own labor (manual or managerial). The size of the remuneration ensures only a higher level of consumption, and it is impossible for capital to originate in this case. The various types of co-operatives, where the property is collectively owned and the income distributed in accordance with the work done, also have a socialist character.

Here in outline are the proportions of small-scale production which is to be found in the cities. Lajos Faluvegi said:

"In industry, there are 150 small state enterprises, 150 small cooperatives and 2,780 economic production associations. Altogether, small enterprises (state, cooperative and private) account for about 11 per cent of the total employed in industry and building."

These data were supplemented with the following figures by Zoltan Juhar: "In Hungary, there are now nearly 5,500 small shops, private cafés and restaurants working under contract. In 1985, we expect them to number 12,000-13,000, roughly one-fifth of all the marketing outlets in the country. Their turnover will be 12-13 per cent of the total turnover of enterprises in marketing and public catering."

The overall socio-economic and political result of these figures is as follows: 98 per cent of Hungary's social production is covered by socialist forms of property.

"In elaborating the new measures," said Lajos Faluvegi, "the party leadership and economists have scrutinized the various aspects of their impact on property relations, on distribution and the consciousness of our citizens. First of all, small-scale production does not create any special or independent sector, because it exists within the state and cooperative sectors and the insignificant in size private sector.⁸ In order to determine the social nature of the new economic ties, it is of fundamental importance that only those who intend to work there themselves are entitled to join an association or specialized group or lease a shop or restaurant. In Hungary, no one is now entitled to make a fortune by owning property in the means of production of exploiting the labor of others."

The Chairman of the State Planning Administration stressed that the new elements of the HSWP's economic policy do not alter the

nature of the relations of production. What bourgeois propaganda is trying to present as a return to capitalist methods of economic management and the encouragement of private enterprise is in fact an element in the perfection of socialist economic management: the administrative and institutional framework of production is being aligned with the objectively existing level of the actual socialization of production and is adapted to the requirements of the economy's intensive growth.

Of course, these changes have not proceeded without a hitch. The HSWP leadership addressed the people and has kept discussing with them the problems which may arise in the sphere of distribution.

"At the initial stage, the increase in the income differential may arouse some misunderstanding on the part of some working people," Lajos Faluvegi thinks. "Indeed, where shortages have existed for a long time, it is temporarily possible to obtain an income that is larger than a person's actual labor contribution — through unwarranted price hikes. But that is precisely a temporary chance: the additional income attracts small enterprises to turning out the products for which there is a heightened demand. As the demand is met, the incomes are gradually levelled down to normal. The transient increase in income differential does not jeopardize the socialist social relations because the state has a grip on all the instruments for regulating the economic activity of the small enterprises."

"At first," Zoltan Juhar says, "the local councils and financial agencies act with circumspection, sizing up the situation, issuing licenses to set up associations, cooperatives and private enterprises to those who undertake to launch a new enterprise, but keep a close watch on them and, wherever necessary, create additional incentives or contain activity in which the society has no interest."

Lajos Faluvegi believes that on the whole, the existing economic instruments for directing small-scale production cannot be called "soft." This will be seen from the fact that there is no rush to take out licenses to open new enterprises. Some turn in their licenses after a short trial period (in the first quarter of 1982, as many licenses were cancelled as issued). This evidently means that there is a need here to grope and search for flexible and precise methods of economic regulation.

It was emphasized that the state creates the legal framework for unorganized production activity, which began to acquire considerable proportions in Hungary as a result of the partial discrepancy between the organizational struc-

ture of the economy and the people's requirements. Such activity has now become open and surveyable, and it will be taken into account in the plans and programs. In other words, organization is replacing elements of haphazardness in economic activity.

It is still too early to evaluate the concrete results of all the measures being effected in Hungarian industry, building and the services. But the scheme itself is in line with the basic economic task of the present stage of Hungary's socialist construction, which is the utmost expansion of intensive forms of economic management. The new measures are also aimed to adapt the national economy to the complicated economic situation in the world and to raise it to a new level of development for the people's growing well-being.

1. House-and-garden, or homestead, plots (of which Hungary now has 674,000) are made available to members of agricultural cooperatives. Every cooperative member who has worked more than 2,000 hours a year on the collective farm is entitled to 0.6 hectares of farmland and 0.3 hectares for vineyard or orchard.

Subsidiary farms (826,000) are run by other sections of the population, including workers of state farms, on land allotted by the state close to or not far away from their homes or country houses. Only 75,000 of such farms have plots with an area of more than 1 hectare, while 200,000 have no land at all: these engage in bee-keeping, the breeding of pigs, rabbits, etc.

In addition, at the end of 1982, Hungary had roughly 22,300 individual peasant farms, with allotments of 2-5 hectares. They account for less than one per cent of all the agricultural output.

2. Hungary has a population of 10.7 million.

3. Let us note that 80 per cent of this area is unsuitable for mechanized cultivation, which means that the cooperatives have no use for it.

4. House-and-garden plots and subsidiary farms account for 90.5 per cent of all the area under vegetable gardens, for 45 per cent of the area under vineyards, and for 29 per cent of the area under orchards. They grow 35

per cent of the cows, 56 per cent of the pigs and more than 80 per cent of the poultry. In 1981, they yielded 88 per cent of the total crop of strawberries and cucumbers, 84 per cent of the raspberries and plums, 76 per cent of the cherries, and 63 per cent of the green peppers.

5. About 70 per cent of the milk produced on the house-and-garden plots and subsidiary farms, 50 per cent of the pork and eggs, 40 per cent of the grapes and vegetables, and 30 per cent of the fruits are marketed.

6. Production consumption on the house-and-garden farms consists above all in the purchase of feedstuffs, seeds, fertilizers, plant protectors and drugs for farm animals. All of these the state sells to the peasants in convenient small-size packaging. There is also a demand for small-size farming machinery, but this cannot yet be fully met: only 3.8 per cent of the petty producers now have such machines.

7. This is fixed when the shop is leased by means of bidding on the strength of average turnover for a period of past years.

8. In Hungary it is allowed — with the permission of the local authorities — to open small private enterprises for various repair work (housepainting and internal decoration, electrical circuitry, auto body work, etc.), making clothes, footwear, knitted goods, leather or metal haberdashery articles. A private operator can be an independent craftsman, own a family enterprise or a shop employing just a few persons, so few that the income level would not allow him to avoid participation in the work. The finished goods are either made to order or are designed for a narrow, local market.

Wherever it is for some reason unprofitable for the state to open a state shop (for instance in some villages, on the outskirts of cities and in thinly populated streets) and where it has not yet opened its own trade outlets (say in new housing developments) small-scale private trade in foodstuffs and manufactured goods is allowed. According to Zoltan Juhar in 1982 there were 14,000 private shops in Hungary (including stalls in market-places, where commission agents sell the produce from homestead and subsidiary farms). They account for just 1-2 per cent of the retail trade turnover. At the Ministry they believe that by the end of the current five-year period the share of the small-scale private trade will increase to 4-5 per cent.

In recreation areas, it is allowed to open small hotels and hostels, and this makes it unnecessary for the state to invest in this sphere.

Mass unity against monopoly sabotage

Dorothee Danset

Member of the FCP CC Economic Department

Following Francois Mitterrand's victory in the presidential elections in May 1981, the French Communist Party and the Socialist Party reached a governmental agreement which set out clear-cut economic and social objectives meeting the aspirations of a majority of the French people. These objectives are:

— the new policy should be centered on combatting unemployment and increasing the number of jobs, which requires an effort to get the national economy moving again and to put

through social reforms, like a reduction of working hours;

— these measures should be linked with a policy of social justice and a reduction in inequality, and efforts to increase the incomes of the most disfavored sections of the population; the pace of social progress cannot, evidently, be planned outside the context of the economic potentialities being created by the struggle against the crisis;

— the activity of the parliamentary majority

must rely on major structural reforms: expansion of the public and nationalized sector, its democratization, development of the working people's rights and freedoms, and decentralization of the administration;

— France should pursue an active and constructive policy in Europe and throughout the world, promoting the national liberation and the socio-economic rise and progress of the peoples of developing countries.

That is precisely the policy that has been set in motion. The government, and the parties constituting the parliamentary majority have done much throughout the country to get things going along these lines.

Democratic transformations

The new majority with the participation of the communists has effected important social democratic transformations.

Within its very first year in office, popular consumption went up as a result of the increase in minimum wages and social benefits. Long-term reforms have been brought about in the spirit of our proposals. Industrial, financial and credit monopoly groups have been nationalized, the administration has been decentralized, the working people's rights extended and a tax set on large fortunes; the working week has been reduced to 39 hours, retirement is now effective at the age of 60, and a fifth holiday week with pay has been introduced; unprecedented measures have been taken in the occupational training of young people and the development of research, a public works fund has been set up and young people are being helped to start farming.

There is ever greater recognition of the FCP's long years of activity designed to raise national production, and this has been an inducement for us to make fresh efforts.

Just now there is a consideration of other draft reforms, like the return to the old practice of electing administrative councils in the social security system. The need for this is urged by the sad results of the activity in the area by the employers and the reformist trade union Force Ouvrière. A decision has been taken to introduce proportional representation in the elections to municipal councils.

Contrary to the assertions of the rightists, who claim that these reforms are a source of diverse difficulties, what has been done signifies major progress and holds out fresh advantages for France.

The working people are now in a better position to take action, and this has helped them to score greater successes. This will be seen from the lessons of the struggle for the 39-hour work-

ing week without any pay cuts, and the victories scored at the Citroen and Talbot enterprises,¹ achievements which were inconceivable when the rightists were in power.

This policy has already yielded some results. The drop in production, which was still in evidence at the beginning of 1981, has been halted, there are signs of a moderate revival of the economy, and the growth of unemployment has been slowed down.

Of course, capital problems (like jobs, the need to relax inflation, etc.) could not have been tackled within the 18 months, especially in view of the fact that every step forward has to be taken in bitter class struggle.

Sharp class confrontation

Having been deprived of political power, the right-wing circles and the employers, in possession of powerful instruments of pressure, began a vigorous campaign in the economic, political and ideological spheres for the earliest return to a policy of austerity with respect to the working people. On the plea of the actual need to make considerable efforts to develop production, these circles raised a propaganda outcry about the burdens allegedly falling on the enterprises (social deductions, wages); they assert that the first period of the left-wing government has been a fiasco.

The rightists and the employers have deliberately striven to sabotage the new policy in an effort to block its realization and have not hesitated to encourage speculation against the national currency and the flight of capital. They have refused to make fresh investments, while appropriating the government subsidies earmarked for the purpose. They have resorted to diverse forms of pressure to continue running the enterprises — even the nationalized ones — in the old way, that is, exclusively from the standpoint of financial profitability. Those who made a mess of things under the old regime have even escalated their drive. Some have cast doubt on the legality of the new majority, cynically admitting that they believe the present constitution to be acceptable only to the extent to which it enables the right-wing forces to stay in power. Others have not hesitated to hurl the grossest abuse at the government and the President of the Republic.

The objective of those who represent the moneybags is to preserve their privileges and to create the conditions for a return to power.

Rightist and employer pressure

One must say that despite the government's reaffirmation of its resolve to meet its commitments, some of the concrete measures it has

taken bore the imprint of fierce pressure from the rightists while enabling them to execute diverse moves, something they were quick to capitalize on.

There was, for instance, the freezing of wages for four months, which had a negative effect on the working people's purchasing power; the retreat in the 1983 budget from a fair distribution of the tax burden, and in particular, fresh concessions for the owners of large fortunes; the draft reforms within the system of social security, which cast doubt on some of the working people's gains, although the financial state of the system could be balanced out in other ways.

Similarly, the plan for a restructuring of the metallurgical industry envisaging the closure of some enterprises does not meet the goal of winning back our domestic market, while the policy in coal mining does not now help to fulfil the promises relating to the boosting of national production.

Finally, there is also the questionable law which not only holds out an amnesty to the mutinous OAS² men, but effectively provides them with moral and financial rehabilitation; although they had been sentenced for the bloody crimes they committed toward the close of the Algeria war.

External constraint

Among the obstacles hampering the activity of the left-wing majority is the "external constraint."

The crisis which has gripped the capitalist countries has naturally had an effect on the French economy as well. Despite the loud discourses by the advocates of the policies conducted by Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher, this crisis has continued to deepen. There are more than 30 million unemployed in the OECD³ countries, more than 11 million of them in the United States. France is the only industrial capitalist country where the growth of unemployment slowed down in 1982, and where the gross national product increased — by roughly 1.5 per cent. The policy pursued in the United States and other major capitalist countries — notably the dollar's very high exchange rate, the artificially high interest rates, the shrinking of international trade, and the hampering of economic ties with developing countries and the socialist states have all had an exceptionally negative effect for the French economy. Although France has put up some resistance to such aggressive and negative methods, it has nevertheless been influenced by them.

The communists are not at all inclined to

underestimate the realities of the world crisis of capitalism and its noxious effects on the national economy. Still, the FCP does not believe that our country is in the grip of some "external constraint." It has a broad field for independent action, above all because the crisis has not been imported into France in any sense: the basic causes of the crisis in our society are rooted in France, within the entrails of the capitalist system itself. The world capitalist crisis is there because the crisis of the capitalist system is raging in every capitalist country. In all the capitalist countries, this system has proved to be incapable of satisfying the national and popular aspirations and in meeting the crucial demands of social development.

Capitalist management

The communists believe that the gravity of the crisis demands of the left-wing forces' government the adoption of large-scale and anti-capitalist measures, a view that was expressed both before and during the presidential campaign. Today, the FCP, being simultaneously a fighting party and a governmental party, declares: We say "yes" to the necessary national efforts, "yes" to the stringent approach to the administration of the economy and the management of individual enterprises and the use of public funds. But it also declares that the efforts of the new authorities will be ineffective unless there is a change in the substance of industrial management.

Since the autumn of 1981, our party has tirelessly exposed the illusory faith in the "employers' good will." It has insisted on the need for greater firmness and more clear-cut demands on the employers as the inevitable compromises are hammered out and concluded.

In the atmosphere of constant pressure on the part of the employers, the government has given considerable aid and credit privileges both to loss-making enterprises faced with difficulties and also to others, and has confined itself to minimum increases in taxation.

But this has not induced the employers to abandon their goals, which they had earlier set themselves in their quest for financial profitability. This includes restructuring and the elimination of jobs, the closure of enterprises in France and investment abroad, ever greater accent on the financial aspect of industrial activity and a policy of excessive specialization within the framework of the export drive. The French owners of large fortunes have exported their capital and engaged in currency speculation to the detriment of the franc. In 1981, investments in France dropped: less than one-

half of the profits earned were ploughed back into production.

Prerequisite for correct line

That is why, the FCP believes, in face of the difficulties there is a need to muster the country's constructive forces so as to continue the line of social and national progress and to get down to the necessary changes in the management of enterprises owned by the state. The communists do not want to see the conditions created for a return of the right-wing parties to running the country. Our party is working hard to consolidate the left-wing line and to honor the commitments made before the general elections for the benefit of the working people and the whole country. But in view of the inadequate weight of the communists within the majority and the mounting pressure of the rightist circles and capital, the pressure from reaction can be neutralized and the left-wing political orientations in running the country maintained only with the help of broad and vigorous action by the working people.

Only this kind of direct mass intervention, above all in production itself, could help to change the character of industrial activity, so as to make it more effective and to make working conditions better. We believe that among the conditions making for efficiency is also the need to have the working people trained to a higher standard, with greater skills, with fuller information and broader possibilities for professional growth. The high level of their training is the prerequisite for making use of scientific and technical progress and so boosting productivity and the competitiveness of enterprises and for a display of mass initiatives.

With that aim in view and also in order to continue the efforts started in May 1981, there is a need to establish new criteria of management. The management of enterprises, both private and public, should accept the new logic which differs basically from the old one that still prevails in most of them. There is a need to create the maximum potentialities for increasing jobs, raising the skill standards of the working people, increasing demand in the public sphere, while economizing on capital in its value and material forms. The growth of the working people's purchasing power and the simultaneous financing of economic growth, the modernization of the country's productive potential can be brought about if the waste of resources to which the employers are habituated is halted.

Consequently, our proposals in the economic sphere envisage both a drive against material and financial losses, and higher returns on in-

vested capital to obtain the maximum of resources required by the working people, by the enterprises and by society.

Acting in this spirit, the FCP has urged the working people to "get a grip on the economy," and to intervene in the system of management. The communists induce them to stand up for the enterprises which are now being jeopardized as a result of the arbitrary acts of the capitalists; to seek to reduce waste in every sector and to lower the underloading of capacities; to prevent the employers from refusing to start or, conversely, from stopping the production of goods for whose making France has all the necessary conditions; to prevent the waste of capital and material resources for the sake of producing goods for export when this does not meet the country's needs or for the sake of maintaining parasitical forms of business.

Our party believes that policy in the sphere of credit, prices and investment and the drive against inflation will be effective only if the evil is cut at the root — within the system of management by capital — instead of engaging in austerity that undermines social progress, reduces the working people's consumption and stunts economic growth. Such growth is necessary, but if it is to be effected, the bourgeoisie's old recipes, which have brought about the crisis, will do no good; new means are required to attain new goals. In this sense the public and nationalized sector must play the leading role, providing a reference point and acting as the motive force of the country's whole economic and social life. For the time being, things are still different.

Broad rights for the working people at every level of management and the possibility of enterprise committees exerting a direct influence on the activity of these enterprises — that is what would enable the nationalized sector to do much in combatting unemployment, in winning the domestic market, and establishing new forms of mutually advantageous international cooperation.

Field of activity for the communists

The true "experts in production" (to use an expression of the President of the National Council of French Employers, which he applied to the owners of enterprises) are in fact those who work at these enterprises: the skilled workers, the foremen, the office workers, the technicians and the engineers. They are the ones who should be given fresh rights and powers, above all in the key sphere of management.

Consequently, the communists' approach

does not pursue any other objectives except those of construction. It is not designed to substitute one monopoly for another, but to pave the way for pluralism into a field that has up to now been the preserve of the few.

There is no doubt that the French Communist Party is best able to give the working people a lead in this necessary intervention. Here, the communists have before them an important field of struggle to unite the popular forces for consistent, constructive and responsible action so as to advance in the chosen direction.

Our party will multiply its efforts to check the appetites of the forces of capital seeking a comeback. It urges fuller use of the new advantages which the country has had at its disposal since the victory of the left-wing forces. This would help to overcome both the external and the internal difficulties, force the crisis to retreat, and to get down to tackling the problems faced by France.

Acting in this spirit, the FCP has started a broad, nationwide campaign for a renewal of the economy, for social progress and rights for the working people. It has urged the working people and the whole nation to give a French response to the crisis.

In this struggle, the communists have no other purpose than to satisfy the people's aspirations and the country's needs. We are convinced that experience will show the French people how much they need a strong Communist Party so as to take fresh strides along the road of progress.

1. See A. Zoughebi, "Important Factor in Social Struggles," WMR, No. 1, 1983.

2. OAS, the acronym for the ultra-right terrorist outfit ("secret armed organization") which operated in France in the late 1950s and early 1960s and which strove to prevent the granting of independence to Algeria. — Ed.

3. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, of which most industrial capitalist countries are members. — Ed.

Communist anti-crisis proposals

Jack Phillips

Alternate member, CEC,
Communist Party of Canada

The depth of the economic crisis in Canada is indicated by official statistics. The unemployment rate rose to 12.7 per cent of the work force late in 1982 — a level equalling that of 1936. *Statistics Canada* reported last November that 1,388,000 Canadians were classified as unemployed. However, the Communist Party of Canada and the trade union movement estimate that 2,000,000 would be a more correct figure. The discrepancy arises from the fact that a significant percentage of the jobless have stopped looking for work and are not registered as being unemployed. Many of these hidden unemployed people are members of the younger generation who have never held a steady job since leaving school.

Official government statistics show unemployment rates ranging from 6.7 per cent in the province of Saskatchewan to almost 20 per cent in the province of Newfoundland. Young people are the hardest hit, with 21 per cent of the labor force between the ages of 15 and 24 out of work.

With the rate of unemployment so high, the capacity utilization rate in industry was down to 68 per cent.

The crisis affects nearly every sector of the

economy. Particularly hard hit are many regions and municipalities which are entirely or largely dependent upon one industry as a source of employment. For example, in the Sudbury region in Ontario, Canada's major industrial province, two nickel producing companies have extended their summer plant closures until January. As a result, the local unemployment rate has shot up to 40 per cent.

What is the federal government's policy in this situation?

Speaking at the Liberal Party convention, Finance Minister Marc Lalonde said that the "recession is teaching firms that they can do with fewer workers."¹ However, the "terrible discipline of the market forces" would rapidly increase productivity during the next two years. This was one of the government's top priorities but "high unemployment alone will not do the job. Industry must be given the incentives to modernize its equipment and to do research and development."²

The key word in these remarks is *alone*. It informs us that the Liberal government intends to give generous help to make big business more competitive on world markets, with no prospect of eliminating mass unemployment.

With government revenue shrinking as a result of the crisis, there is a trend at the federal and provincial levels of government to finance aid to big business by cutting back on social security programs.

The government has undertaken further attacks on living standards. Legislation has been enacted at the federal level and by all provincial governments except one (Manitoba, with a New Democratic Party government) to hold the wages of government and other public employees to a level well below the rate of inflation. The federal government's wage restraint program virtually takes away the right to strike from government employees by prolonging current collective agreements for two years.

Despite all denials by government spokesmen, the program is designed to eventually include workers in the private sector. Also, many employers in the private sector are demanding that workers make concessions by giving up working conditions and benefits they are entitled to under the terms of their collective agreements. If the working class accepts these demands, it will mean that cuts in real wages will be the order of the day, because wages will go up slower than the cost of living. That is why big business is pressing hard to eliminate cost of living clauses from collective agreements.

When Canada's largest trade union center, the Canadian Labor Congress, at its 1982 convention, adopted a policy of no concessions — no giving back of what had been won in collective bargaining — big business launched an all-out offensive to defeat this policy. The aim was to isolate and defeat those unions going into negotiations for new collective agreements and to divide the labor movement. Their theme song is, "We have a common problem and we have to work together to find the solution." The news media, which are dominated by big business, are working overtime to win sympathy for the "sad plight" of the monopolies.

It must be admitted that the dominant monopolies and the governments which serve their interests have achieved some success in getting workers to go along with their policies. In addition to psychological pressures around the idea that it is better to make concessions than to be unemployed, there is a wide feeling of insecurity caused by the economic and social policies of the government. The very existence of a huge army of unemployed workers tends to undermine the confidence of many trade union members, in terms of defending what they have won and fighting to improve their wages and working conditions.

The working people's thinking has been conditioned by many things, such as relative prosperity and economic expansion for most if not all of their working lives; a tendency to see the present crisis as a temporary weakness of the system and not as a recurring factor; reformist and class collaboration trade unionism, which gained a strong influence during this period; the linkage of the trade unions to the New Democratic Party (Canada's social democratic party) as its political arm; a most sophisticated propaganda campaign designed to discredit the trade union movement, in particular by resorting to anti-Sovietism and anti-communism, and the pressure to turn people toward individual rather than collective solutions and away from class struggle policies.

In the early stages of the crisis, workers tended to believe that it would be of short duration. Instead, they found themselves in long, deep-going crisis. Their first reaction, in the main, was to wait and see, and that also applied to some union leaders. However, this should not be construed as meaning that the trade union movement has adopted a policy of retreat or that the workers will not fight back if given the correct leadership.

In a number of cases across the country, workers in the private and public sectors have demonstrated a high degree of militancy by refusing to make concessions, resisting layoffs and wage restraints, and supporting demands for higher pay and better working conditions. However, the situation is uneven. That makes it necessary to determine which sections of the working class are prepared to struggle and what must be done to ensure success.

Obviously, a new situation confronts the working class in Canada, one that calls for sound strategy and tactics to counter the offensive of monopoly capital.

The Communist Party is giving serious attention to the problem of the subjective factor, that is, the consciousness of the working people. It is necessary to carefully study and appreciate their responses and attitudes to the present crisis. The situation calls for patient but effective steps to overcome the illusions and fears which still restrain wide sections of the trade union movement. There is a need for both the use of tested forms of struggle and tactics and the development of new methods.

The communists and other left-minded persons in the trade union movement are asking the following questions:

— Can victories be won in this period, even though some say the trade union movement is faced with the inevitability of an organized retreat?

— Can wages and living standards be protected and improved?

— Can wage restraints be smashed and the demands for concessions defeated?

The Communist Party has answered all of these questions in the affirmative, along with other left-wingers in the labor movement.

The Catholic Church also has felt the necessity to speak out against the economic policies of the federal government. On December 31, 1982, the news media published the text of a statement decrying unemployment by the Canadian Catholic Conference of Bishops. The statement has been welcomed by the trade union movement and the Left. One quotation will indicate the reason for the wide interest it has aroused: "Labor unions should be asked to play a more decisive and responsible role in developing strategies for economic recovery and employment. This requires the restoration of collective bargaining rights where they have been suspended, collaboration between unions and the unemployed and unorganized workers, and assurances that labor unions will have an effective role in developing economic policies."

Clearly defined alternative programs by individual trade unions and the trade union movement as a whole, as well as by the Communist Party and the New Democratic Party are what the situation calls for. Such programs could stimulate the labor movement to engage in united economic and political action to defeat the offensive of monopoly capital and to turn Canada in a new direction.

While the Canadian Labor Congress has adopted an action program which has been welcomed by the Left, that program has three major weaknesses. First, the tendency to treat wage controls and the restriction of collective bargaining rights as things in themselves, instead of linking them with the fight for labor's alternative economic program.

Second, the narrow approach to political action by the top leadership, which is to give more money and more support in general to the New Democratic Party. We cannot object to the trade unions supporting a party of their own choosing in opposition to the parties which speak for the monopolies. Political action is necessary in order to reinforce the economic struggles of the workers. But when that party does not support the policies and needs of the Congress, it invites justified criticism.

In the province of British Columbia, the leadership of the New Democratic Party has made it clear that it regards militant action against wage controls as a threat to the party's chances to form the next government in that

province. When Edward Broadbent, federal leader of the party, was interviewed by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation about the possibility of the Labor Congress conducting a general strike against wage controls if necessary, he replied: "The position of the New Democratic Party in respect to observance of the law is well known."

The New Democratic Party has been rather consistent in voting for legislation to send strikers back to work against their will. This has raised the demand that if that party wants the support of organized labor, then organized labor has the right to demand support from the party.

The election of a New Democratic Party government will not in itself take Canada out of its present crisis. What is required is a firm, anti-monopoly government which would include the New Democratic Party, possibly as the major element, but would also include representatives of the national and democratic forces of Quebec, the Communist Party, popular mass organizations, small business, and certain sections of Canadian capital.

The most effective political action the Labor Congress can undertake at this time is to mobilize its membership in support of its alternative economic and social program. That would help to create the conditions for wide resistance to the policies of monopoly capital and would win many allies for the labor movement.

The third area in which the Labor Congress has fallen short is in going all out to organize the unemployed. The very undertaking of such a program at the federal, provincial and local levels would be a major blow at monopoly capital.

As in the 1930s, the Communist Party of Canada is the only political party with a clear-cut, realistic program to take Canada out of the economic crisis.

The Communist Party has advanced the following minimum program for the Left in the trade union movement as a basis for mass, rank and file participation in the struggle for new policies: public ownership and control of natural resources and energy; public ownership of U.S. multinational branch plants in Canada; international cooperation in opposition to the harmful policies of the multinational corporations; the maintenance and extension of real purchasing power; control over the introduction of new technology; resistance to speed-up; opposition to all forms of class collaboration; shorter work week with no loss in pay, and longer paid vacations; organizing the unemployed; ensuring that women enjoy equal

pay for work of equal value, and upgrading the role of women in the trade union movement; a trade union program for young people and full rights on the job for immigrant workers.

The Communist Party is demanding that workers should have jobs or unemployment insurance benefits for the duration of unemployment, at the rate of 90 per cent of previous earnings. Young unemployed workers who have been unable to enter the active labor force should also be covered by unemployment insurance. The party insists that there must be no evictions from homes, no repossession of personal belongings, and no utility shut-offs. It is also calling for a moratorium on mortgages on all homes and farms for those unable to meet their payments.

Further, the party has advanced the demands for an increase in social security benefits, such as pensions, family allowances and welfare payments; a crash public works program at trade union rates of pay; an improvement in minimum wage standards, and a civilian training program for young people.

The party's program to overcome the current economic crisis is linked with the fight for peaceful coexistence and the prevention of war. It is also linked with the fight to end Canada's economic dependence on the United States, which dominates Canadian industry and trade.

This dependence aggravates the effects of the general crisis of capitalism in Canada. Canada is more dependent on the USA than any other

industrialized capitalist country. In 1981, direct U.S. investment in Canada was nearly \$45 billion. U.S. multinationals enjoy very strong positions in the Canadian economy. Fifty per cent of Canadian industrial output is produced by U.S.-controlled corporations. American capital in the rubber industry, transport engineering, oil and gas extraction, and the petrochemical industry amounts to 70 per cent of the total. The USA accounts for approximately 70 per cent of Canada's foreign trade and about one-third of this is made up of intra-company exchange between U.S. corporations and their Canadian branches.

Many U.S. branch plants in Canada are being closed. This means that the fight for a Canada First policy, in relation to U.S. imperialism, is an integral part of the fight to put Canada back to work and to provide full employment and rising living standards in a world at peace.

Speaking to the October 1982 meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, William Kashtan, General Secretary, summed up the central task of the party in these terms: "Our task is to help the working people to find a way out of the present crisis through united action to defend people's living standards and peace, strengthen the electoral positions of the working class and democratic movement, and advance the struggle for new policies and for a new government to implement them."

1. *Toronto Globe and Mail*, November 6, 1982.
2. *Ibid.*

Big changes on small islands

A whole group of Asian and African countries have proclaimed a socialist orientation. The paths which lead revolutionaries and patriots to the realization of the need to fight for a society based on equality and social justice are different. So are at times the interpretations of socialism and the ways and means used to achieve socialist goals. But while specific experience is distinctive, the strategy of radical change has certain common characteristics; it is aimed at ending imperialist exploitation, assuring the state control of the commanding heights in the economy, promoting cooperative and other forms of collective labor, drawing the masses into public life, caring for the people's welfare, and working for the unity of progressive democratic forces at home and abroad. The policy of renewing the life of society is generally accom-

panied by progressive changes in foreign policy orientation.

On the following pages representatives of Mauritius and the Seychelles tell about the process of transformation that has begun in both insular states, a process so typical of countries set on freeing themselves from neo-colonial bondage and effecting social and economic changes in the people's interest.

MAURITIUS: THE PEOPLE HAVE MADE THEIR CHOICE

Aneerood Jugnauth
Leader, Mauritian Militant Movement,
Prime Minister of Mauritius

For 14 years after Mauritius had gained independence, our country was governed by the Labor Party in coalition with the Social Demo-

cratic Party. The latter is an extremely rightist party in spite of its name while the Labor Party was supposed to be more liberal.

No fundamental change came about in the system that had existed during the colonial days. More and more people became poor. There was a lot of corruption and wastage. The government tried to curtail democratic rights and freedoms. In fact, general elections were postponed for a long time. Nor did they hold municipal elections but merely appointed their own people municipal councillors. They passed some anti-democratic and anti-popular laws, such as the Public Order Act and the Industrial Relations Act, a law that they borrowed from the Conservative government of England. That law was very reactionary and anti-labor. It limited trade union freedom and the bargaining power of the workers.

In short, people could feel that independence had not made life any better. On the contrary, rights were curtailed, the people were reduced to real poverty.

Therefore when our party, the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM),¹ came on the scene with a socialist program the masses responded to it. In 1976 we almost won. We were short of only two elected members to have an overall majority in parliament. But this did not dishearten us and we worked harder than ever. We convinced the people that during the 1976 election campaign many things were said against us that were pure inventions to frighten simpletons. In the end people realized that the future depends on socialist changes, which our party and the Mauritian Socialist Party (MSP) in coalition with it called for.

Even before the general election on June 11, 1982 we knew we were going to get a big majority. But we never expected that it would be a sweeping victory of 100 per cent. The MMM/MSP coalition won 60 of the 62 seats. Two seats went to the Rodrigues People's Organization (RPO), a progressive socialist party that had all our support and was operating on a small island where we did not put up candidates. Thus all seats are now held by an alliance of three parties: MMM, MSP and RPO.

On coming to power, we inherited an economy that is seriously ill. Paradoxically, the trouble is due in part to the fact that we had a few years of real good price for sugar, the chief Mauritian export. The extra money that sugar brought into the country was not channelled for development. It was just allowed to go into the pockets of big business people, multinationals, while the workers got only a little bit of it. The years of boom changed the habit of living. People started spending more freely and

acquiring more luxuries. And when the price of sugar fell the pinch was felt at once.

When hard times came we found ourselves in great difficulties. Imports increased considerably whereas exports remained stagnant, so that we had a balance of payment problem and a commercial deficit, and there were even budgetary deficits. The government in those years had recourse to borrowing and so we owe a lot, a big public debt, especially an external debt. We have to spend 40 per cent of our revenues for the servicing of the existing debt. Under the previous government there were two devaluations: one of 30 per cent and the other of 20 per cent. But since we import more than we export, the measure did not do us any good.

With elections approaching, investors from capitalist countries got frightened that there would be changes, and so investment in the country slowed down. Some firms and factories closed down and the unemployment problem became more acute. There are now more than 80,000 people unemployed in Mauritius, or more than a third of our working population.

The moment we came to power we set out to put the economy in order. We had to borrow from the International Monetary Fund although the conditions that are laid down by it are admittedly very hard. We also had to adopt austerity measures. We managed to explain it to the population that there was no other way out and that we would have to undergo many sacrifices in order to relaunch the economy. Government members set an example by agreeing to a cut in salary and renouncing privileges that had existed before. We hope that in two or three years' time we shall be able to readjust the economy and then to gradually bring about the changes we have promised in our program, that is, to reshape the infrastructures and move from a capitalist to a socialist system of economy.

We are going to nationalize transport. We have set up a state corporation which will gradually take over the whole transport sector throughout the island. The next thing is the harbor because it is a vital sector of our economy. We want to nationalize Air Mauritius. We are setting up a state trade corporation to control part of the trade. The government program provides for the nationalization of 20,000 acres of land in the next five years. The land will be distributed among rural workers to be tilled on a collective, cooperative basis. To carry out this experiment, we want to nationalize two estates with factories.

All this calls for a revision of our legislation. The constitution as it is today was made to protect the rights of private owners, the inter-

ests of the private sector. It provides that if the government takes over any private property it has to pay the commercial value of the property immediately and in cash and that the person who gets the payment is free to export his capital. So we are working to amend the constitution by providing that whenever it is necessary in the national interest to nationalize any property the government will do so paying a reasonable value for the property by instalments and that the money must stay in Mauritius to be used for economic development.

The very first session of the newly-elected parliament repealed the Industrial Relations Act as well as the Public Order Act, which the previous government used against the working class. We are totally with the workers and are doing everything to promote their welfare. The trade unions will be brought into planning the state budget. Our plans include the construction of inexpensive housing for low-income population groups. We are going to democratize the education system and the health services.

One of our priorities is to consolidate the democratic system. We have made sure by amending the constitution that general elections take place every five years. We have restored by-elections as well as municipal elections. Municipal elections took place in December 1982. Although the government had to take unpopular austerity measures, the masses realized that it is ultimately for the good of the country and their own good. People again placed their confidence in us in the municipal elections. Out of 126 contested seats we got 115.

There will also be some other important amendments to the constitution. The government plans to proclaim Mauritius a republic.² True, this is no simple matter because it implies that many existing laws will have to be amended. We have a team working on that.

The national problem is very important in Mauritius. Our country is inhabited by people from Europe, Asia and Africa confessing diverse religions and belonging to diverse ethnic groups. There are Hindus, Christians, Mohammedans, people of Chinese origin, people from Madagascar — in short, people of every color of skin and the most diverse religions and languages. In the past politicians played on this to divide the population, to incite one community against another in order to hold on to power.

Ours is a fundamentally different approach. We want to contribute to the formation of a Mauritian nation. This implies molding a Mauritian way of thinking and fostering Mauri-

tian patriotism. But at the same time we cannot forget that we are people from different places, with different languages and different traditions. There is a strong majority in the MMM who believe that all islanders must be allowed the freedom to use their languages, confess the religion of their ancestors, enjoy their distinctive cultural heritages. These values must be preserved. Developing side by side and in close contact, they will ultimately form a complete whole known as the culture of the Mauritian nation.

And here we see a very practical example of solving the national problem, set by the Soviet Union, a state comprising a number of republics and inhabited by numerous nations and national minorities. Without losing their historical and cultural heritages and being free to use their languages and enjoy their cultures and religions, they live as one family united by the common ideals of social justice, equality and universal welfare. This is exactly what we want to achieve in Mauritius, and we hope we shall be able to solve the communal problem in this way.

The foreign policy of Mauritius is based on non-alignment. The previous government, while preaching non-alignment and professing to refuse submission to any foreign influence, fully sided in practice with the imperialist powers. Our position is entirely different. In the international sphere, in the United Nations, the OAU and other organizations, we want to follow a real non-aligned policy. Its underlying principles are respect for the freedom, independence and sovereignty of every country, without any interference in the internal affairs of other states.

The previous regime took a very negative view of cooperation with countries which we call progressive and socialist, such as Madagascar or the Seychelles. Still less did it approve of relations with the socialist countries of Europe although it had established some ties with the Soviet Union. Our aim is to promote friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all countries on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference.

We are deeply convinced of the usefulness of regional cooperation. We do not think you can expect much from the so-called 'North-South dialogue'.³ There has been a lot of talking going on without any concrete results. We believe there should be more dialogue between South and South, that is, between Third World countries. It is our view that every country has to solve its problems by itself. That is why we began by developing cooperation among the small insular countries of the southwest Indian

Ocean. Mauritius, Madagascar and Seychelles have set an example. Their Foreign Ministers met recently to lay the framework for cooperation. We hope some other insular states will soon come in so that we can search together for ways of strengthening and expanding economic relations in order to make a reality of what is known as economic self-sufficiency.

One of our most important foreign policy activities is the effort to contribute to the maintenance and promotion of world peace. We are doing all in our power to mobilize our people and to help mobilize other peace-loving peoples for action against the growing militarization of the Indian Ocean.

This is a matter of special importance to Mauritius. Before giving us our independence the British excised the Chagos Archipelago, which includes Diego Garcia Island. Afterwards they leased Diego Garcia to the Americans, who have since set up one of the most sophisticated nuclear bases there. That base is now a threat not only to Mauritius but to all littoral countries and, indeed, the whole world.

Our government stated its position with absolute clarity from the first, saying that the Chagos Archipelago is part of our territory. Taking an uncompromising stand on the matter, we amended the law on the national frontiers of our country whereas the previous government refused to do that. During talks with the British on compensation for the material damage suffered by the people who had been removed from Diego Garcia,⁴ we underlined that the subject had nothing to do with the issue of sovereignty. The compensation was intended for people who had been driven out of their homes, deprived of all property and thrown like dogs onto the streets of Mauritius. The agreement on compensation in no way restricts the Mauritian people's sovereign title to their territory.

Therefore we are fighting on two fronts. First, because the Chagos Archipelago and hence Diego Garcia are territory illegally taken away from Mauritius, and secondly, because we want it to be demilitarized in the interest of world peace and all nations of the world. Being close to Diego Garcia, we are exposed to a very great danger. But in any event, no country can really be said to be outside the danger zone. The current frantic arms race is undermining the prospects of preserving peace. In these circumstances the smallest incident can cause friction and conflict that may, in turn, bring about war. No power on earth can pretend that it will come out victorious. That war would mean the extermination of humanity, the destruction of civilization.

We feel that any person with common sense, any person who loves humanity, who loves his country, should do everything possible to preserve peace and prevent another world war.

1. Founded in 1969. Its program says that the goal of the MMM is to lead the country out of its present impasse and put it on the road to development and genuine socialism. — Ed.

2. The nominal head of state at present is the Queen of England. — Ed.

3. A phrase applied internationally to various contacts between two groups of states — capitalist and developing — on questions affecting a wide range of problems of economic relations. For details, see "Behind the Ups and downs of the 'North-South Dialogue,'" in WMR, No. 8, 1982. — Ed.

4. Mauritius ratified an agreement with the British government binding the latter to pay 80 million rupees to the expelled inhabitants of Diego Garcia. Thus London admitted its responsibility for the hardships experienced by the islanders as a result of its illegal action. — Ed.

THE SEYCHELLES: DEFEND GAINS

Joseph Belmont

Leadership member,
Seychelles People's Progressive Front,
Minister of Labor and Social Security,
Republic of the Seychelle Islands

Lately the name of our country has repeatedly appeared in the world press in connection with reports about attempts to destabilize the situation in the Seychelles and overthrow its regime. We know who the plotters are. They are Seychellois who have left the country or who were deported for activities incompatible with the principles and objectives of our people. After forming what they call a "revolutionary resistance movement" — actually a reactionary organization — they planned to carry out a coup and restore the capitalist order of the past, and so they sent mercenaries to the islands in November 1981.

Those people plan and carry out their subversive actions with external aid and support. This was the conclusion drawn by the UN commission which investigated the circumstances of the bandit-like attack. The commission said the South African government was involved in the attack which our own people foiled with the help of some friendly countries.

The plotters said that they would not give up. Attempts at destabilization continued. In 1982 they tried to incite a rebellion in the army. Subsequently we uncovered a further plot in London. We know the names of the plotters' leaders and the government is using this information to show our people that the threat to our country is very real. The people must realize the need to be always vigilant and fight

attempts to overthrow the present regime, to destroy what we have built in more than five years.

Our enemies hate us because, ever since assuming power in 1977, we have invariably taken a progressive, socialist approach to the country's development problems. Our program is clear. We want to provide equal opportunities to all Seychellois, to give them education and jobs, help them build a home for themselves, provide medical service and care for old people. And we have achieved notable results in the past years.

We have thoroughly restructured our education system. It is free now. Schooling lasts nine years and is equal for all. There are no more colleges for the privileged as in the past. We have also started on a program of setting up free kindergartens and chreches.

School-leavers go within the framework of the National Youth Service into what is called Youth Villages where they spend two years living together as one collective, on the principles of self-reliance and self-management. The previous system cultivated individualism. We are certain that it is in a collective that young people can fully prove their worth and shape comradely, fraternal mutual relations that will last throughout their lives. In Youth Villages they come to appreciate labor, familiarize themselves with various trades, become aware of the social necessity of labor and are enabled to improve their knowledge in whatever field they want.

We have made progress in other spheres as well. We are carrying out a housing program to enable every family to build a house of its own. The government also helps them through a loan scheme.

We have established a system of social welfare. We do not want our old people to become beggars as they did in the past. There is a pension for every person over 64 years of age. We build homes for old people, doing everything to ensure that those who have contributed to society do not feel neglected.

To guarantee everybody a decent life, the state needs a dependable economic base. Our situation is compounded by serious problems due largely to crisis phenomena in the world capitalist economy that seriously affect a small country like ours.

Another reason for our economic difficulties is that previously the tourist industry was fostered at the expense of basic industries like agriculture and fisheries, which were in an embryonic state. Tourism became the main industry. Due to the criminal attacks of mercenaries, the attempt to incite rebellion in the

army and other destabilization actions, the flow of tourists to the islands dropped sharply. It will readily be imagined how this told on our economic situation.

We are now doing our utmost to diversify the economy in order not to have to rely too much on tourism. Our aim is to shift the emphasis to what we produce ourselves and above all to achieve self-sufficiency in food. We want to get our agriculture going. The waters washing our islands abound in fish but until recently Seychellois fished in coastal waters only. We have set up a national fishery development company with a fishing fleet of its own. We have tackled the development of remote islands which were neglected before. We are now trying to develop food production, livestock farming and fisheries on these islands.

All these activities are directed by the state under a national plan drawn up for five years and adjusted every year. The state plays a growing role in the economy. We have state enterprises, farms and other entities that are operating successfully.

In the autumn of 1982 the government took steps to improve the financial and economic situation. It imposed a 70 per cent tax on profits derived from business in the country by Seychellois living abroad. This measure is justified because that money went out instead of being used for the development of the national economy. It will also help to reduce absenteeism.

According to a government decision published in the same year, interest on Seychellois' deposits in foreign banks is taxed 50 per cent. This measure is intended to ease our financial situation. It is also sound politically, being directed against those who selfishly exploit the country's natural resources.

The leading and guiding force in the social and economic changes under way is the Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF),* a vanguard party with a mass base. The country is divided into 23 districts and in each district there is a party branch. Branch committees maintain close links with the population and bring its needs to the notice of the party leadership and the government. They educate the people politically and explain the Front's policies to them.

*The SPPF was founded in 1978 on the basis of the Seychelles People's United Party, which had existed since 1963. It has listed its main objectives as follows: preserving the economic and political independence of the country, promoting people's democracy and creating a socialist state in which all citizens will enjoy equal opportunities and be guaranteed the satisfaction of their vital requirements. — Ed.

These policies are evolved by the highest decision-making body of the SPPF — the congress — which takes place every year. The latest congress (October 1982) stressed that unity and discipline are decisive for building socialism. It empowered the Central Executive Committee of the party to nominate members of branch committees as distinct from the past when they were elected. The aim is to prevent the infiltration of committees by alien elements who would like to check the country's advance to socialism.

The CEC is the executive arm of the party. It is elected every three years at the party's congress. The activity of district committees is directed by the SPPF Secretariat, which has coordinators to maintain contact with the CEC.

Our party is very strict in regard to the admission of new members. Applicants for membership are put on probation for six months during which they are tested for political maturity and conviction. The branch committee concerned ascertains how well an applicant understands the party's goals and tasks and how he approaches current problems facing the country. The final decision on admission is taken by the CEC.

The progressive, socialist choice made by us determines the general trend of our foreign policy, which is positive non-alignment and firm resistance to interference in internal affairs. In

line with this policy we want the Indian Ocean to be a zone of peace and demand that the foreign military bases existing there be dismantled and no new ones be set up. At the same time the Seychelles government supports the idea of strengthening and expanding co-operation among the countries of the Indian Ocean and of developing trade, mutual economic assistance, cultural exchanges and other relations in the region.

We who have chosen socialism are linked with our brothers of socialist countries by special ties. These are ties of solidarity and co-operation based on respect for the independence and sovereignty of each country. We are very grateful to the socialist countries which have helped us from the first and we would like to share with them whatever experience we have gained over the past years.

We have gone through hard times. Our enemies expected us to break down and fail. But our people have furnished proof of their resolve and made notable gains.

The President of the Republic, SPPF Chairman France-Albert Rene, has said that we will not deviate from our chosen path. Everybody agrees with the President and supports him. Our enraged enemies would like to throw us back. But we are prepared fight and to defend our achievements, and defend them we shall.



With the weapon of truth

Boris Ponomarev, *Communism In a Changing World*, New York, Sphinx Press, Inc., 1983, 266 pp.

This profound, meaningful book, published in the USA, is a contribution to the defense of world peace and to the development of cooperation among all peoples, not least between the peoples of the USA and the USSR. Written on a suggestion by the Sphinx Press for the American audience, this book by Boris Ponomarev, alternate member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, is of international significance, for the truth knows no national boundaries.

The author says in his introduction: "Though the anti-communist inventions are groundless and have no basis in fact, they are by no means harmless. Anti-communism is damaging because it envenoms relations between nations, justifies an arms race that has reached a magnitude never before matched in world history, creating a psychological build-up needed for another world war, because it misguides Americans, and tries to provoke fear and hatred of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In such circumstances, it is important to refute allegations with facts, to counter them with first-hand information. And that is why this book about communism in our

rapidly changing world has been written" (pp. xii-xiii).

Unquestionably, this book will be welcomed by all who are sincere in their search for the truth, in their quest for peace and social progress.

Impressive is the fact that it is calm, well-reasoned, and profound. It lets the truth of the theory and practice of scientific communism stand on its own feet, so to speak. It deals with basic questions of the theory and practice of communism, counterposing their true substance to the distorted and misrepresented interpretation given of them by communism's adversaries.

In a short review it is impossible, of course, to fully go into the range and depth of the book's subject; and a review should never be a substitute for reading this kind of book.

I shall dwell briefly only on some of the points raised in this interesting and useful book. It convincingly refutes the claim that Marxism-Leninism has outlived its significance, or that it is only valid for one country or region. It shows the contrary, namely, that Marxism-Leninism is a viable science that grows and is enriched from year to year as it digests, analyzes, and generalizes new experience and developments.

The author draws widely upon the vast experience of many communists and workers' parties. Naturally, he gives much of his attention to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the communist parties of other socialist countries. Many pages are devoted to communist and workers' parties of capitalist countries — the FRG, France, Greece, Italy, Great Britain, Portugal, the United States, Canada, and Japan — and to the communist parties of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and other countries of South and Central America, and also of Asia and Africa. The positions of these parties on crucial questions of our times are given fairly and in their own words. This includes their positions on problems of the struggle for peace, against the threat of war, the arms race, the condition and defense of the interests of the working class, farmers and farm laborers, youth, women, oppressed minorities, intellectuals and technicians, the middle strata and much more.

A compelling section of the book tells why the communists today, as in the past, condemn terrorism as a method of political struggle. The more than 100-year-old struggle of the communists against the terrorism of the anarchists and "ultra-revolutionary" Trotskyite sectarians is an indelible historical fact. The fraudulent plots hatched up in the secret ser-

vices of imperialism such as the outrageous fabrication of a socialist plot against the Pope are unequivocally at variance with the position of all Marxist-Leninist parties.

What emerges from the book's presentation are the vast areas of agreement, above all on questions of the struggle against the threat of war, common to all communist and workers' parties, compared to which their differences are, indeed, quite subordinate. The book shows how this general like-mindedness on the decisive matters of peace and social progress arises from adherence to a common theory, scientific socialism. As the author justifiably stresses, it is another matter when policies and ideology come in conflict with basic principles. And life and experience have a way of revealing and correcting such aberrations and defects. Lessons learned from mistakes also contribute to the ever-growing cohesion and unity of the world communist movement.

Everything discussed in the book is highly topical, including such questions as relations between communist parties, patriotism and internationalism, and the need for unity and alliance in the struggle for peace and social progress. And everything is analyzed within the framework of resolving the most important question facing humankind as it approaches the 21st century: preserving peace and preventing the ultimate disaster of nuclear war.

Some pages of this polemical work deal with the attacks on socialist democracy. The psychological warfare waged by world imperialism, led by the USA, against the Soviet Union, other socialist nations, and the national liberation movements stresses such ignominious slanders as "totalitarian," "violations of human rights," etc. The author refutes this canard, which blocks the road to good-neighborly relations and understanding among the peoples. He writes: "The intensification in recent years of attacks on socialist democracy by the enemies of socialism has put the question of the interrelationship between democracy and socialism in the forefront of the international ideological struggle" (p. 73).

The author, citing Lenin's prophetic words that "consistent democracy, on the one hand, is transformed into socialism and, on the other, demands socialism,"* answers the question: "What is socialism all about?" Defining it in terms of the new Soviet constitution and actual Soviet practice, he gives pertinent facts showing how real socialism answers the demands of consistent democracy. These include the direct participation of the people in running the af-

*V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 452.

fairs of state and society, the role of the trade unions and work collectives, and how socialist democracy guarantees the rights of the people to work, rest and leisure, health care, housing, education and so on.

Enemies usually depict the communists fighting for peace and social progress as people lacking a sense of homeland and alien to the concept of patriotism. They tag this label onto everybody acting against the militarist, arms-race policies pursued by imperialism, particularly the imperialism in their own countries. Boris Ponomarev writes: "Bourgeois propaganda would have us believe that patriotism and internationalism are incompatible and contradictory. In fact, however, patriotism is not to be separated from internationalism. A true patriot cannot fail to be an internationalist any more than a consistent internationalist cannot fail to be a patriot" (p. 223).

Many facts are given in the book to show how the communists always stand in the front ranks of all who defend the national interest, freedom, and independence. The author recalls, among others, the Resistance struggle of the French Communist Party during the Second World War. It became known as the "party of the crucified": 75,000 French communists went to their death before the firing squads of the nazis while the French big bourgeoisie, those who tried to portray the communists as unpatriotic, surrendered to the nazis (p. 221). In all countries occupied by the nazis, the communists headed the battle for national freedom — Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, in Germany itself, Denmark, Belgium, Norway and elsewhere, and not least of all, the Soviet Union.

"But apart from being patriots, communists are also internationalists. Internationalism was not invented by anyone. It sprang from the thick of life, not from the heads of thinkers. Factories were barely coming into existence when the workers learned from experience that their enemies were not workers of other nationalities, as their employers would have them believe, but the employers themselves, though they were of the same nationality as the workers they exploited" (pp. 222-223).

Dealing with the significance of proletarian internationalism, the author points out that, first, it makes the struggle against the threat of war and against the arms race more effective; second, it stands for the unity of all workers of all countries in the struggle against exploitation and domination by monopolies, for social change and socialism; third, it is a powerful ideological and political weapon of the communist movement. "Proletarian internationalism is the basis for the solidarity of the independent fraternal parties, and for the organic combination in their policy of the working people's national and international interests" (p. 228).

The communists of the United States welcome Boris Ponomarev's book as a valuable contribution to overcoming the poison of anti-communism, to bringing the truth so essential to safeguarding peace and achieving social progress. As such, it is fully in accord with and a service to the best national interests of the people of the United States. It is equally so for the peoples of all countries.

James West

CC Political Bureau member, CPUSA

Following Lenin's behests

Trevor Munroe, *The Working Class Party. Principles and Standards*, Kingston, Vanguard Publishers Ltd., 1982, 211 pp.

The Worker's Party of Jamaica (WPJ) pays constant attention to studying and implementing the Leninist principles of party organization and the standards of party life. The experience accumulated in this area is generalized in a book entitled *The Working Class Party. Principles and Standards* written by the WPJ General Secretary and published in Kingston. It arose out of a course of lectures given by comrade Trevor Munroe to candidate and full members of our party.

The book deals with problems relevant not only to the WPJ but, as the author points out, to any "party — communist or non-communist — which is taking up the difficult task of guiding the people in the struggle against imperialism, for genuine national independence and social progress" (p. 9).

The book is written in allusive, simple and, in places, even conversational language, which takes into account the specific character of the local audience and makes it possible to explain the essence of Marxism-Leninism's important theoretical ideas to people whose cultural level is low, while maintaining scientific precision.

The author begins with a brief digression

into the history of the international communist movement — from the first works of Marx and Engels and the formation of the Communist League in 1847 to our day. At that time, 136 years ago, this League was the only genuinely revolutionary political organization in the world, but now, the author notes, there are over 90 communist and workers' parties throughout the world which are "the most powerful and influential force in the modern world and no MX missiles, no . . . submarines and the other things which they (the imperialists) are seeking to invent are going to change that fact" (p. 26). Munroe proudly emphasizes that the WPJ is an integral part of the international communist movement, whose main support is the world socialist community.

The book then examines the concrete questions of party building on the basis of the classics of the founders of Marxism-Leninism and of examples from the experience of fraternal parties of the socialist countries. First of all, the author dwells on the problem of the criteria which should guide the WPJ in admitting new members.

Can the doors be open to politically backward elements just because they happen to be oppressed or exploited? In answer to this question, Munroe first gives a detailed analysis of the condition of the working class of Jamaica. He writes that life has long since proved that conscious revolutionary struggle is the only road to the liberation of the proletariat from the yoke of capital, but not all workers as yet understand this truth. There are a number of reasons for this: capitalism "makes vast sections of the working class backward at the same time that it makes a small section advanced" (see p. 37), and seeks to disunite the working people in this way. Among them there are those who feel there is no point in struggling, others who themselves have illusions about becoming proprietors, and still others with narrow egoistic ideas who do not wish to make any sacrifice for the sake of the common struggle against the system of exploitation, a sentiment which is especially noticeable among the workers at small enterprises.

The problem is worsened by the fact that in Jamaica, as in many newly-independent countries, the proletariat comes under the corrupting influence of the numerous petty-bourgeois strata, with their inconsistency and contradictory political views. "One day dead against capitalism and imperialism when times are bad for you as a petty capitalist; the next day totally for the system when things improve," the book says (p. 40). One should also not underestimate the influence of the bourgeois

mass media, which subjects the workers to intense ideological pressure with the aim of weakening their struggle, engendering distrust toward socialism and convincing them that the capitalist system is immovable.

In addition, the proletariat itself is heterogeneous; ruined peasants and petty artisans constantly swell its ranks, making inevitable differences between the advanced and the backward workers. What would a party become if all and sundry desirous of so doing could enter it? It is obvious that it would not be in a position to fulfil the role of vanguard and, instead of raising the entire working class to the level of consciousness of its advanced detachment, would itself lag behind the backward sentiments. That is why, Munroe underlines, in order to avoid cluttering our party with unstable, vacillating and opportunist elements, membership in it should be open only to the advanced and most conscious representatives of the working class, peasantry and intelligentsia, who are dedicated to the cause of national liberation and socialism.

It is the author's view that, in these conditions, the communists of Jamaica must, first, make the working class more conscious; second, build up the working class organizationally; and, third, always remember their responsibility before the people and the party's ultimate aim of "overturning the class system of capitalism" (p. 45).

This chapter is closely connected with the next, which sets out what is required of the party itself. Munroe explains in detail the essence of the party's definition as the conscious and organized vanguard of the working class. The party must be a genuine revolutionary school for the best representatives of the working class, and must help them to gain political experience, ideological training and theoretical knowledge. The author gives a reminder that party members must learn the laws of social development, understand why it is inevitable that the proletariat and its allies will eventually win over exploitation, and clearly see the prospects and tasks of the revolutionary movement. For this reason the WPJ always sees to it that every member studies in the programs of party internal education and ideological instruction and masters the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism.

Munroe dedicates one chapter of the book to the rights and duties of communists. Each one, he writes, must participate actively in the work of a party branch where he pays membership dues, carry out particular tasks and be accountable for them. The author cites relevant clauses in the WPJ constitution and program, em-

phasizing that they are the same demands made of the communists of all countries.

The book gives a lot of space to the main guiding principle of the organizational structure and internal life of the party — democratic centralism. The chief merit of this principle is that it combines the strictest centralism with broad democracy, the authority of the leading bodies with their election by and accountability to the party masses, discipline with the communists' creative activity, and freedom to discuss party policy with the obligation of every member to fulfil the decisions taken. This unity of democracy and discipline ensures the fighting efficiency of the proletariat's revolutionary vanguard. In explaining how the principle of democratic centralism is implemented in practice, Munroe uses as an example the preparatory work done by the communist parties of the Soviet Union and Cuba for their congresses. Long before the congresses opened, all the communists of these countries were able to study closely the drafts of the main documents, frankly expressed their opinions, and made proposals, comments and amendments. The WPJ, too, adheres to this practice: three months before its first congress opened in December 1978 the communists of Jamaica received the draft constitution and program. The additions made during the discussion were then taken into account when the supreme party forum approved these documents.

The author shows convincingly that the principles on which the organizational structure and activity of the proletariat's political vanguard are based are a striking contrast to those of the bourgeois parties, with their disregard for the elementary norms of democracy, lack of discipline, hypocrisy and corruption. The people of Jamaica have repeatedly seen for themselves that the bourgeois politicians are lavish with election promises but quickly forget them after gaining power. The WPJ is also very different from the progressive petty-bourgeois parties, which underestimate, in particular, the importance of raising the political consciousness and organizational level of the masses in the struggle for social emancipation.

The book also discusses the party's approach to the mass organizations — the trade unions and the organizations of women and youths. Relying on some of Lenin's works like "A Letter to a Comrade," "What Is to Be Done?" and "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back," Munroe stresses that the party must act in the midst of the people, win the confidence of the masses, and guide and lead them.

The theme of the last part of the book is the strategy and tactics, and forms and methods of

class struggle. Munroe writes that the party's paramount task is to learn how to assess correctly the correlation of political forces in the country in order to make a timely response to any change in the situation. He skilfully explains the theoretical propositions with examples which are understandable and familiar to the audience.

Imagine, the author says, that you are in a boxing match. Your strategic task is to win the 15-round meet as quickly as possible. This also determines your tactics: in the first round you attack continuously and it seems that victory is near. But in the second round you suddenly receive a heavy blow; success has roused the opponent. It is obvious that you need to change your fighting tactics in this situation, and give up any idea of winning in the initial rounds. You have to retreat and go on the defensive since the duel is not in your favor. And only when you have caught your breath can you attack again.

Or take another example: the opponent is considerably stronger and bigger than you, but you know he lacks staying power. What do you do in such a case? The correlation of forces will indicate that it is necessary first of all to wear down the opponent and move to the offensive at the end of the match. But in the first round you were lucky enough to deliver a good punch. The correlation of forces has changed in your favor. You change tactics, move to the attack and win in the initial rounds (see pp. 190-191).

From these examples the author leads his listeners to the conclusion that the tactics of revolutionary struggle are also determined by the correlation of forces. He quotes Lenin, who said that is impossible to win without learning how to attack and to retreat correctly. Lenin said that anyone "who is out to think up for the workers some kind of recipe that will provide them with cut-and-dried solutions for all contingencies, or promises that the policy of the revolutionary proletariat will never come up against difficult or complex situations, is simply a charlatan."* Munroe notes in this connection that the communists' duty is always to take into account changes in the situation, "to learn how to change with the maximum rapidity, to supplement one with another and to adopt tactics to any such change" (p. 211).

These conclusions are of great practical significance for our party, especially today when the Seaga government's anti-popular policy of returning Jamaica to a path of pro-

*V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 38.

imperialist orientation is accompanied by repression against the communists and all left forces.

The book under review is a reflection of the constant attention paid by the WPJ General Secretary to ideological work and to the propagation of Marxism-Leninism. "What we do in politics," he writes, "is determined by what is needed to make the working class more revolutionary and more ready because it is they who are going to get rid of the class system, not what is in our heads, not the strength of our feelings" (pp. 186-187).

However, we believe that the significance of this book is not limited to Jamaica. In the Carib-

bean, interest in scientific socialism is greater than ever before. Even though the working class of the region is young and as yet politically inexperienced, its revolutionary character is developing. As a result, more and more people are interested in the programmatic aims of the communist and workers' parties and the principles and standards of their organization and functioning. And though it is meant for WPJ members, Munroe's work could be useful for all who are interested in these questions, whether they live in Jamaica or in other countries like ours.

Rupert Lewis
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Workers' Party of Jamaica

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