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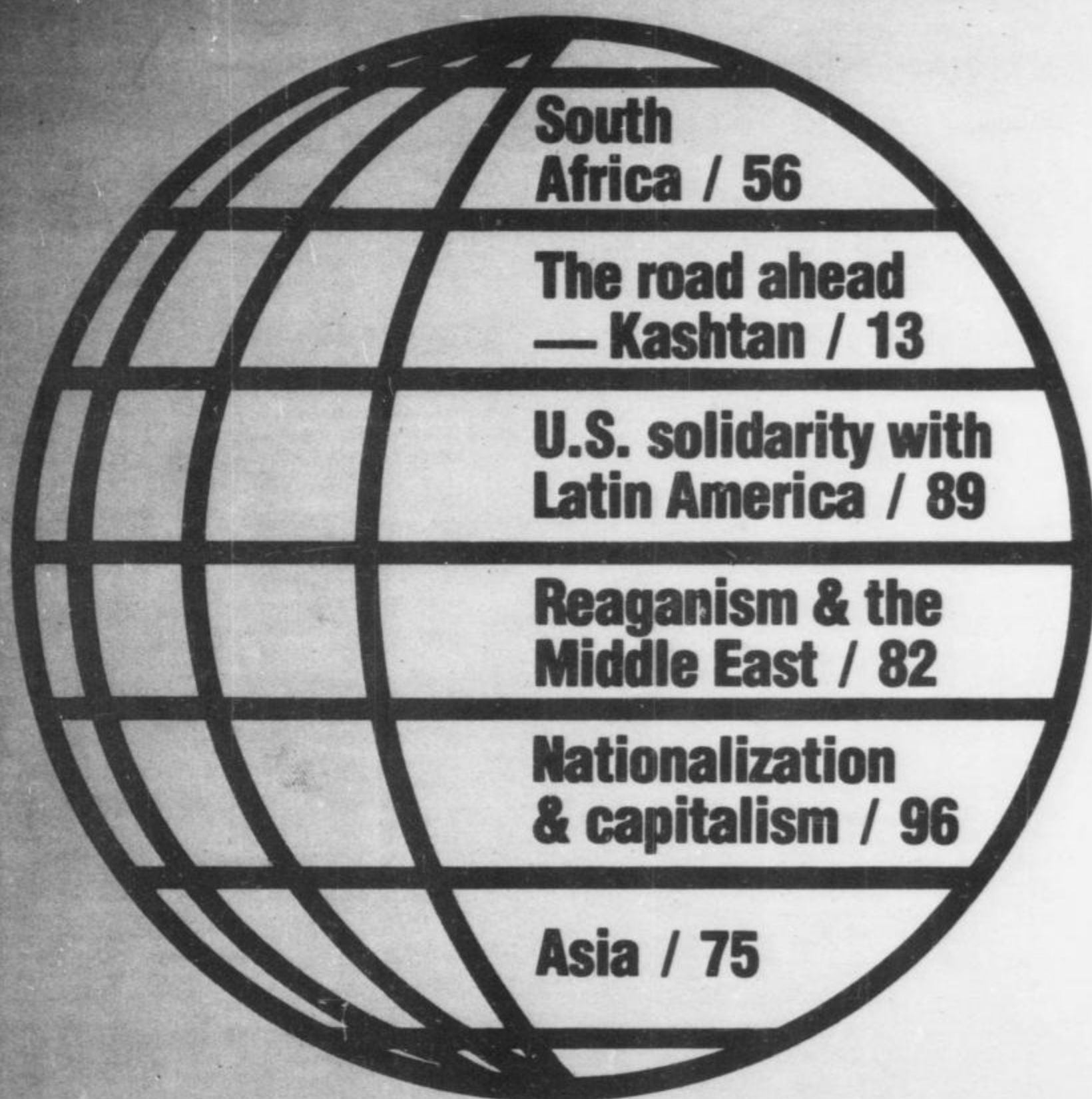
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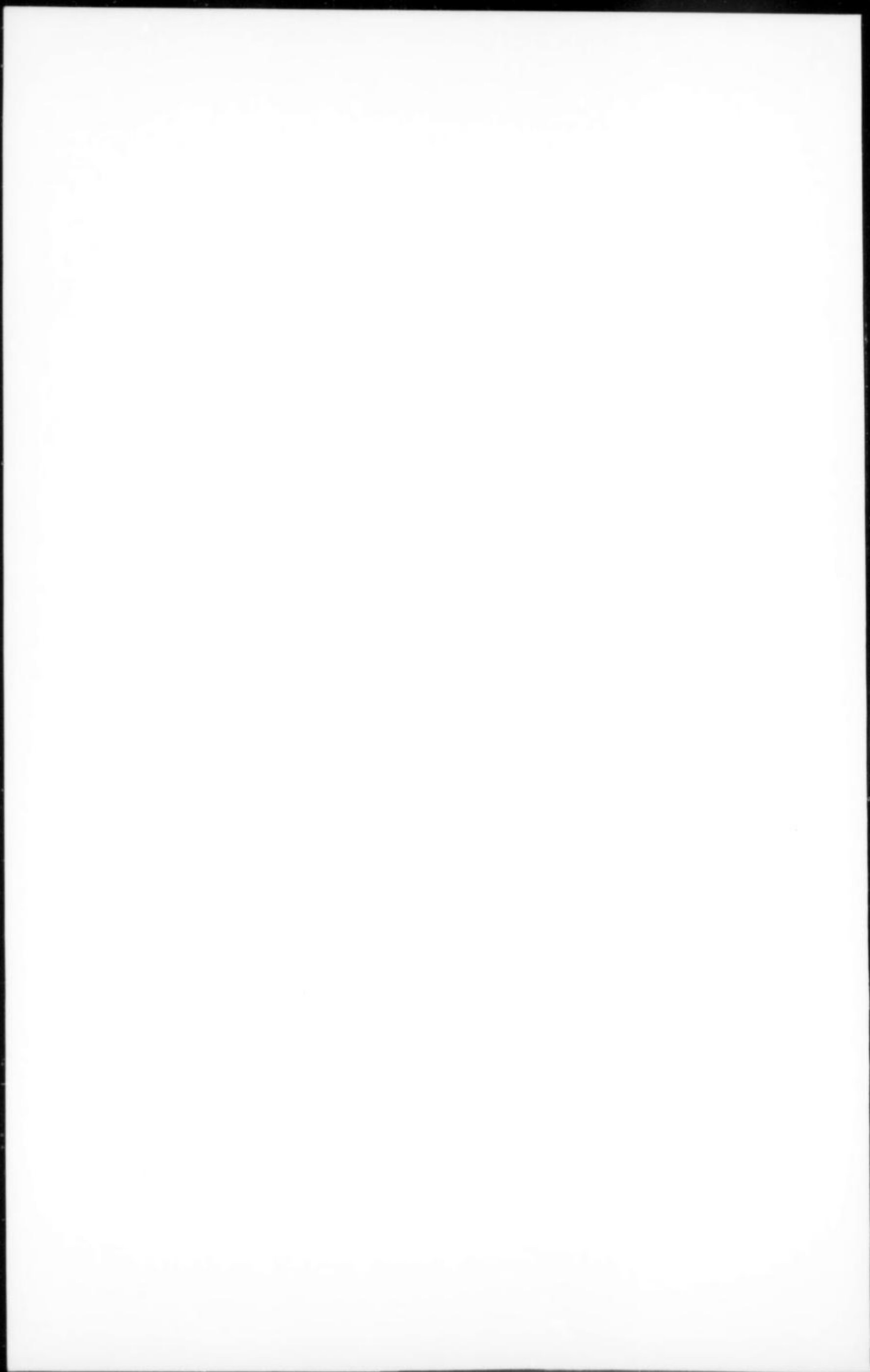
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features

National Responsibility and Internationalism of the Communists

Dimitr Stanishev – CC Secretary,
Bulgarian Communist Party

EVER since Marx and Engels advanced the slogan of 'Workers of All Lands, Unite!' in the *Communist Manifesto* the question of the national responsibility and internationalism of the Communists and the correlation of the national and the international has been central to the latter's revolutionary, transformative activity.

In stressing the indissoluble link between these two components Georgi Dimitrov noted: 'Far from coming into conflict with the struggle of the working people of individual countries for national, social, and cultural freedom, proletarian internationalism ensures, thanks to international proletarian solidarity and militant unity, the support needed for victory in this struggle.'¹

A distinctive feature of the international communist and working class movement ever since its emergence, the class approach to the national and the international has nothing in common with national nihilism. On the contrary, it decrees the strictest account of the specific features, traditions, and conditions of the struggle. Further, it rejects nationalism, which is alien to the working class and all other working people and conflicts with their vital interests. The experience of the fraternal parties, which are guided by this class approach, is the most eloquent proof of its unfading significance.

At all stages of its activity—in the struggle against bourgeois rule, in the building of the foundations of socialism, and today, in the process of building a developed socialist society—the Bulgarian Communist Party, founded in 1891 as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, has effectively combined national responsibility with internationalism. The principles of proletarian internationalism were proclaimed in its very first documents stating that the liberation of the Bulgarian working class was the immediate goal but that its attainment was closely linked to the victory of the proletariat in other countries.

In a long, tense, and uncompromising ideological and political struggle the Bulgarian revolutionary Social Democrats championed the Marxist understanding of internationalism. As early as 1903 the party purged its ranks of revisionists and opportunists. In the international revolutionary movement it sided with the RSDLP, led by Lenin, and with other left currents, resolutely breaking with the Second International, whose leaders had betrayed proletarian internationalism. It took a

fearless and consistent stand against the imperialist war, fighting for peace and international working class solidarity.

Our party warmly welcomed the Great October Socialist Revolution and gave its utmost support to the Republic of Soviets that stemmed from it. The BCP was a co-founder of the Communist International, joining it without reservations and, under the leadership of Dimitrov and his associates taking the path of transformation into a party of the new, Leninist type.

The Bulgarian Communists proclaimed that it was their duty to make the maximum effort to defend the young workers' and peasants' state that had emerged in Russia. The party's stand on this matter was expressed most succinctly and eloquently by Dimitrov, who called the attitude to the Soviet Union the touchstone of the internationalism of proletarian revolutionaries. His words were recognition not only of the USSR's immense role as the trail-blazer of the new society but also of the fact that its all-sided reinforcement was a powerful factor of the acceleration and deepening of the world revolutionary process, of the accomplishment of socialist revolutions in other countries and on other continents.

From Lenin's postulate that the socialist revolution could triumph first in one country taken separately sprang important conclusions about the national and international responsibility of the Communists. The prospect that opened with the maturing of objective and subjective conditions for the breakaway of individual countries from the capitalist system made it incumbent upon communist parties, in applying the principles of revolutionary theory, to give their closest attention to national conditions, traditions, and interests.

For the BCP adaptation to the new conditions was a double-sided process. On the one hand, it steadfastly drew upon the rich experience of the international communist movement, of the Soviet Union in the first place, using it in keeping with the distinctive specifics of its own country. For instance, it saw Lenin's postulate on the formation and consolidation of the alliance of the working class with the working peasantry as a prerequisite for the victory of the socialist revolution. In the course of a quarter of a century it was the organiser of or participant in four armed uprisings against capitalism and fascism in alliance with the left-wing forces in the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union. On the other hand, in discharging its internationalist duty it extended diverse support for the revolutionary struggle of the working people of the capitalist world. Hundreds of Bulgarian Communists participated in the Great October Socialist Revolution, in the struggle against the foreign interventionists who tried to stifle it, in defence of Republican Spain, and in the Resistance to the Nazi invaders in a number of countries.

Two vivid events in the life of our party in the period between the two world wars compellingly demonstrate how the Communists combine their national responsibility with internationalism. In the anti-fascist rising of September 1923 the BCP resolved the problem of preventing the establishment of a fascist dictatorship in Bulgaria and, at the same time, carried out its internationalist duty by its efforts to stem the further geographical spread of the brown plague. At the Leipzig trial in 1933 Dimitrov brilliantly demolished the monstrous charges made by the fascists not only against the Bulgarian people and our party but also against the ideals of the entire international communist and working class movement.

During the years of struggle against capitalism and fascism the Bulgarian Communists could always rely on the fraternal support and solidarity of the Communists of the whole world. The contribution made by the international communist movement and the progressive forces to exposing fascism's atrocities in Bulgaria following the defeat of the uprising of September 1923 and to Dimitrov's triumph in Leipzig, and the decisive role played by the Soviet Army in the success of the armed anti-fascist uprising of September 9, 1944 are engraved for all time in the

grateful memory of the Bulgarian people.

The need for combining the national responsibility of the Communists with their internationalist duty acquired particularly great significance after the victory of the socialist revolution in Bulgaria.

The victory itself was won under the leadership of the BCP, which was keenly aware of its national mission of putting an end to bourgeois rule and to exploitation of man by man on Bulgarian soil. This victory was simultaneously our people's contribution to the attainment of the key international objective of the progressive forces, namely, the defeat of Hitlerite fascism in the battles against which tens of thousands of soldiers of People's Bulgaria spilled their blood at the consummating stage of the War. Lastly, as an inalienable component of the transition from capitalism to socialism on a global scale, the revolution of September 9 was an achievement not only of the Bulgarian people but also of the international working class.

The socialist revolution saved Bulgaria from a new national catastrophe, preserved its territorial integrity, restored its independence and sovereignty, delivered the people from bourgeois political oppression, and unfettered their energy. By giving scope to the creative forces, it gave rise to the political and material conditions for surmounting backwardness, ensuring accelerated economic and cultural development, and attaining the age-old aspirations of the Bulgarian people—freedom, democracy, and social justice.

After the revolution the BCP focused on dependably consolidating the new social system and advancing successfully along the road of socialism. The Communists tackled this task in keeping with the interests of the Bulgarian working people refracted through the prism of the class interests of the international proletariat. Our experience of socialist construction has demonstrated that the party can carry the full burden of national responsibility and at the same time steadfastly fulfil its internationalist duty.

In building the new society the Bulgarian Communist Party steadfastly applied the general laws of the transition from capitalism to socialism. Todor Zhivkov, General Secretary of the BCP Central Committee, had good reason for calling the socialist revolution of September 9 a 'repetition in the main of the Great October Socialist Revolution . . . in our conditions'.² The party bore in mind Lenin's words that it is necessary 'to seek out, investigate, predict, and grasp that which is nationally specific and nationally distinctive, in the *concrete manner* in which each country should tackle a *single* international task'.³ It was precisely by combining general laws with the country's distinctive features that as early as at its Fifth Congress in 1948 the BCP mapped out a balanced programme for building socialism through the creative application of Marxism-Leninism.

The party was not frightened and did not retreat before the incredible difficulties of the initial period. Bulgaria had been ravaged by local fascism and pillaged by the Nazis. Its level of socio-economic development was among the lowest in Europe: a weak industry, a small-commodity, fragmented agriculture, and glaring backwardness in education, public health, social security, and so on. All this had to be taken into consideration while the decisions of the Fifth Congress were being put into effect.

The BCP contributed to the theory of the socialist revolution. This contribution is exemplified by Dimitrov's postulates that the people's democratic state is a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and that the work cooperatives of farming households are a socialist form of farming under which the cooperative members retain ownership of the land collectively cultivated by them.

As early as at the initial stage of building the new society the Bulgarian Communists proceeded from the view that steady promotion of cooperation with socialist

countries, above all with the USSR, was the condition for carrying out national tasks. The building of socialism in Bulgaria would have been inconceivable without assistance from the USSR and without broad mutually-beneficial links to other fraternal states. The party has always regarded internationalism and international cooperation as the 'earnest of our country's independent existence, successful development, and progress towards socialism'.⁴

True to the behest of Lenin, who said that after the victory of the proletarian revolution the new system would influence the rest of the world primarily by its economic achievements, the Bulgarian Communist Party has always regarded the building of developed socialism as both its national and international task.

The historic CC plenary meeting of April 1956 was a milestone in the history of the BCP: it restored the Leninist principles and norms of party life and laid the beginning for the party's reinvigorating April policy. The subsequent period saw the collective thought of the party headed by Todor Zhivkov make many creative contributions to the theory and practice of socialist construction. These included the introduction of socio-state principles in the guidance of culture, science, and the economy and new guidelines on major issues—such as the relationship between the state (owner) and work collective (master of socialist property), the objective operation of the law of cost, the most expedient use of commodity-money relations under socialism, and the further development of socialist democracy.

These fundamental guidelines and principles, all our achievements in building the new life are an expression of the combination of the BCP's national responsibility and its internationalism. They are helping to accelerate the building of a developed socialist society in Bulgaria and intensify the impact of triumphant socialism on the working class and other working people in industrialised capitalist countries and on the national liberation movement.

The Bulgarian Communist Party learns from the vast experience of the international communist movement and of the socialist countries, chiefly the Soviet Union. At the same time, we feel that for the fraternal parties our own experience, applied in keeping with their national specific, can serve as a source of ideas, viewpoints, and concrete attitudes. Some of them can draw lessons from the BCP's revolutionary practice of the period of legal and illegal, of peaceful and armed struggle against capitalism and fascism. Others can use our example in the management of socialist construction.

Against the background of the serious economic upheavals in the capitalist world, socialist Bulgaria is developing at stable and ever faster rates. The leading place in its economy is held by industry, which accounts for 68 per cent of the social product and 58 per cent of the national income. Priority significance is attached to branches of industry that have become the locomotives of scientific and technological progress: electronics, electrical engineering, heavy engineering, heavy chemistry, steel, and power engineering. Our agriculture now produces three times as much as in 1939 despite the fact that the number of people engaged in it has decreased to one third of the 1939 figure. Much headway has also been made in science, culture, and public health. The Bulgarian people's living standard is rising steadily. Socialist democracy is developing. The trend towards the gradual conversion of the state into a state of the whole people is growing more and more pronounced.

Our country is today looking for and finding forms, ways, and means for intensifying the socialist economy by speeding up the utilisation of scientific and technological breakthroughs. At its plenary meeting in February 1985 the BCP Central Committee adopted a programme which may be called a platform for combining socialism's advantages with scientific and technological achievements.

In Bulgaria, said Todor Zhivkov, the building of a developed socialist society 'is, in our view, of international significance. Our people's successes in building mature

socialism are enhancing the attractive force of communist ideas, of existing socialism. At the same time, our experience is *confirmation of the epochal significance of the Soviet model, of the universal importance of the basic laws of the transition from capitalism to socialism and the building of the new society.*'⁵

The victory of the socialist revolution opened up favourable opportunities for an active foreign policy on the part of the BCP and the People's Republic of Bulgaria. With a strictly scientific analysis of the multiform, dynamically developing international situation underlying it, this policy has for four decades been steadfastly serving the interests of the people and the creation of peaceful external conditions for building the new society. In addition, it is helping to consolidate the positions of socialism, the forces of peace and progress on our planet.

The BCP attaches special significance to cooperation with fraternal countries. With the emergence of the socialist world community the relations between national contingents of the victorious working class have evolved into state-to-state relations of a new type determined by the essence of our advanced social system and the common interests of the fraternal peoples. These relations are founded on the basic elements of socialist internationalism, namely, respect for the sovereignty and independence of individual countries, advantages of cooperation, mutual assistance, and comradely support.

Our people have always linked their successes in socialist construction and their present and future with the promotion and consolidation of friendship with the Soviet Union. A model of socialist internationalism in action, the relations between Bulgaria and the USSR indisputably corroborate the correctness of Dimitrov's precept on friendship with the Soviet Union being the cornerstone of Bulgaria's foreign policy.

We regard as a natural process the coming together of the community's member-states and the levelling up of their economic development. This process is predicated on the objective interests of peoples, on the interests of world socialism. At the present stage the fraternal countries can advance successfully and rapidly only by perfecting the international socialist division of labour and by cooperating in all areas of life. The Bulgarian Communists see in this coming together and cooperation, in the deepening of socialist economic integration a major condition for the most effective solution of the nation's problems and of the problems of the socialist community as a whole.

The beginning of a qualitatively new stage of the interaction of the economies of socialist countries was laid by the decisions passed at the CMEA Economic Summit in Moscow last June. The Declaration 'Preservation of Peace and International Economic Cooperation', adopted by the summit, notes that the further development and perfection of cooperation and the extension of specialisation and complementary production will facilitate the 'economic and social progress of each country, the promotion of the living standard and cultural level of their peoples, and the strengthening of the might, unity, and cohesion of the socialist states'.⁶

Bulgaria's membership of the socialist community is one of the main prerequisites of its independence and all-sided development. This immeasurably increases the potentialities for safeguarding national interests, participating in the decision of cardinal world problems, and contributing to the consolidation of socialism's positions in the world. The prolongation this year of the Warsaw Treaty further enhances our national and international responsibility. The might, unity, and cohesion of the socialist countries are the basic condition for the preservation of world peace and the further development of the world revolutionary process. The BCP sees the further strengthening of unity among the fraternal states in all areas as its paramount duty.

The charge that is sometimes made against the Communists of socialist countries is

that for the sake of national-state interests they are prepared to go so far as to abandon the class approach, to sacrifice their internationalist duty. These are totally unfounded allegations. There is no need to prove that between the aims of ruling communist and workers' parties, on the one hand, and those fighting in the non-socialist world, on the other, there neither are nor can be contradictions of principle. Both the former and the latter are inalienable components of the international communist movement, of the world revolutionary process, and are in equal measure interested in its speediest development, in improving the living standards of the working people, and in safeguarding and consolidating peace throughout the world.

It is well known, for example, that the mutually beneficial economic relations of our community countries and a number of capitalist states enable the latter to create new jobs, ease the bitter condition of the unemployed, and so on. On the political level, the promotion of these relations contributes to building mutual understanding and confidence between countries. Bulgaria's relations with capitalist countries are maintained with the principles of peaceful coexistence as their basis for we regard this as a specific form of the class struggle on the world scene between socialism and capitalism. This form is today vital for the preservation of world peace, for saving civilisation.

Faithful to their internationalist commitments, the BCP and the Bulgarian government continue to extend moral, political, and material support to peoples fighting for national liberation or defending their independence. This is a question chiefly of economic and cultural cooperation with most of the Asian, African, and Latin American states, of solidarity with their aspiration to make international economic relations fair and democratic. We condemn state terrorism, undeclared wars, and acts of aggression aimed at forcibly changing a social system, and the fanning of old and the creation of new hotbeds of tension and conflict. Our support and assistance to these countries are steadily increasing despite the huge investments needed for Bulgaria's pressing national tasks. This is yet another manifestation of the internationalism of the Bulgarian Communists.

In international politics today the principal aim is to exclude war from the life of nations, to establish lasting, just, and democratic peace on the planet. For this purpose we are working to end the arms race, prevent the militarisation of outer space, reduce armaments, destroy the accumulated stockpiles of nuclear weapons, and achieve general and complete disarmament.

The Bulgarian people are convinced that the threat of war brought to the world by imperialism can be eliminated. One of the conditions for this is not to forget the lessons of the Second World War. Reaction's attempts to destroy socialism 40 years ago failed ignominiously. There is even less hope for attempts of this kind under the present world balance of strength. A key element of this balance is the military-strategic equilibrium between the USSR and the USA, between the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and NATO. Hence the determination of the fraternal countries to prevent any upsetting of this balance, which was achieved at the price of enormous efforts.

The indivisibility of peace and socialism requires no proof. It is a historical reality brought to life as far back as October 1917. For the Communists peace is an indispensable condition of social progress. That is why the international communist movement, which is the most influential political force today, is so active in pressing for the creation of a mighty anti-war front of peoples.

Communist and workers' parties are working under very diverse and specific conditions. Each of them is independently charting its own policy and defining the aims, directions, forms and methods of struggle. The relations between parties rest on proletarian internationalism, solidarity and mutual support, respect for independence, equality, and non-interference in internal affairs. Strict compliance

with these principles is essential to the promotion of comradely cooperation and to the consolidation of unity.

The BCP shares the view that the responsibility of the Communists and the significance of their unity increase as their common international tasks grow bigger and more complex. It is our firm belief that proletarian internationalism with its class content has in no way exhausted itself and cannot be replaced by anything; it remains a key principle of the communist movement. Moreover, we are witnessing a growth of the importance of the international solidarity and unity of action of all the anti-imperialist forces on a broad democratic foundation for the attainment of peace and social progress.

The improvement of all forms of cooperation—expansion of party-to-party links, mutual study of experience, frank discussions and consultations, and coordinated actions on the international scene—helps to create a situation in which there are sincere comradely relations between the communist parties. The BCP gives scrupulous attention to the promotion of such relations. We are making wide use of the rich experience of the CPSU and the fraternal parties of other socialist community countries. They have made it a practice to keep each other constantly informed and to share their plans for the future in all areas of party and government activity. This is helping to work out correct solutions to the problems involved in building the new society.

The BCP maintains active relations with communist and workers' parties of capitalist and developing countries, including those parties with which it has some differences of opinion on individual issues. Our cooperation with revolutionary-democratic parties is steadily expanding. It may be noted with gratification that these contacts are making it possible to surmount various prejudices relative to existing socialism and foster the understanding that it is necessary to counter the anti-Sovietism and the anti-socialist campaigns of the imperialist forces. Developments are bearing out that international cooperation between the ruling parties of socialist countries and the parties fighting in the capitalist world is not hindering the work of the latter. On the contrary, it provides them with further evidence of socialism's historic advantages and opens up new possibilities for progress.

A productive form of the international activity of the BCP and its leadership is the comprehensive and frank exchange of views with foreign Communists visiting Bulgaria. During the past year alone Todor Zhivkov had talks with 82 leading personalities of fraternal parties and national liberation movements, while members of the Political Bureau and Secretaries of the BCP Central Committee had similar meetings with more than 200 representatives of those parties and movements. Numerous contacts at the summit and other levels took place during visits by our delegations and working groups to foreign countries. Such meetings unquestionably help to reinforce international cooperation among the Communists and to express the BCP's consistent and steadfast adherence to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian, socialist internationalism.

We believe that divergences of views on various issues should not prevent coordinated actions by fraternal parties, especially where the issue concerns basic problems of the struggle for peace, against imperialism. Moreover, such actions do not impede cooperation on a broader basis with all the anti-imperialist and anti-war forces. Such cooperation can only help the Communists to work out a common or similar stand on the most important and crucial issues of the day.

In recent years there has been a series of regional meetings of communist and workers' parties, international theoretical conferences, symposiums, and so forth. The most important of these in Bulgaria was the conference to mark the centenary of the birth of the great son of the Bulgarian working class Georgi Dimitrov. These meetings and conferences prove that a collective discussion of the widening range of

problems of the world revolutionary process is a natural need of the communist movement.

However, it is our view that neither bilateral nor multilateral and regional meetings and consultations can replace a world forum—an international conference of fraternal parties. We are now seeing ever more clearly the significance of Lenin's thesis that the 'workers' struggle in all countries for their emancipation is only successful if the workers fight jointly against international capital'.⁷ Today, with the economic life of the capitalist world being internationalised, finance capital's transnational corporations are increasingly coordinating their actions in their attacks on the living standards and gains of the working people. The bourgeois parties, including conservative, nationalistic, and even fascist, are acting ever closer together against the forces of democracy. The most reactionary imperialist circles have started a coordinated, savage campaign, a crusade in the real sense, against the socialist countries, the national liberation movements, and the working class.

In this situation when imperialism's bellicose policies are confronting humanity with the threat of a nuclear catastrophe and when the peace initiatives of the socialist community are spurring unprecedented anti-war activity by millions of people, an inestimable role can be played by an international meeting of communist and workers' parties.

The revolutionary gains of the peoples are closely linked to the consistent struggle waged by the Communists. The future of humankind and the settlement of the social problems facing it depend to an enormous extent on a further enhancement of the role and the contribution of the communist movement in the efforts to consolidate peace. That is what makes the deepening of solidarity and interaction among the fraternal parties and the further strengthening of their unity and cohesion such a pressing question. Life is demanding a more active participation by the Communists in the anti-imperialist and anti-war movements together with the Socialists and Social Democrats, with all progressive parties and currents in order to preserve peace and civilisation.

There have been problems and difficulties in the communist movement in the past, and there are some today. But we now have the experience of transcending them. This experience is compelling evidence that the only sure way is to unite and combine actions on the basis of the tested principles of proletarian internationalism.

We do not for a moment doubt that in the international communist and working class movement solidarity, unity, and cohesion will acquire higher and more effective forms in the near future in keeping with the actual aims and prospects of our common revolutionary cause. The Bulgarian Communist Party will continue working tirelessly in this direction.

¹ Georgi Dimitrov, *Works*, Vol. 10, Sofia, 1954, p. 115 (in Bulgarian).

² Todor Zhivkov, *Selected Works*, Vol. 4, Sofia, 1975, p. 178 (in Bulgarian).

³ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 92.

⁴ Georgi Dimitrov, *Works*, Vol. 14, Sofia, 1955, p. 297 (in Bulgarian).

⁵ Todor Zhivkov, 'A Historic Victory of Crucial Significance', *Kommunist*, No. 7, 1985, p. 105.

⁶ *Pravda*, June 16, 1984.

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 109.

Guided by the Interests of the People

William Kashtan – General Secretary,
Communist Party of Canada

HUMANITY is confronted with a choice on which its further existence depends: peace or war? In an effort to halt the course of history, the aggressive forces of US imperialism and some of their NATO allies have taken the path of confrontation and arms race which leads to war. US imperialism has not given up its intention of crushing socialism, which stands as the main obstacle to its claims to world domination. Nor has it given up its design of crushing the national liberation movements. It has taken on itself the 'right' of armed interference in the internal affairs of any state in the name of so-called national interests, actually the interests of the US monopolies. As a consequence, it continues exporting counter-revolution against Nicaragua. It threatens Cuba, the Middle East, and southern Africa. It supports the counter-revolutionaries in Kampuchea and Afghanistan. It pursues a policy of state terrorism on the pretext of combating terrorists.

But there is another path of development—the path of peaceful coexistence, of detente and disarmament based on equality and equal security, the path fought for by the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community of states, the communist and workers' parties, and the peace movement. Inseparable from this path is the aspiration of the peoples to assert their right to decide their own destinies, to control their own resources, and to consolidate the freedom and independence won by them. The resolution 'The Road Ahead' passed by the 26th Convention of the Communist Party of Canada in April 1985, defines the priorities in today's world: halting the arms race, removing the danger of nuclear war, and taking practical measures to achieve disarmament. It should be clear to all of us that social progress has no future if peace is not won.

On Soviet initiative talks were started with the USA in Geneva on a wide range of issues related to space and nuclear weapons, all of which must be considered and resolved in their interrelationship. This approach is the key element of the talks. It implies compliance with the entire spectrum of understandings reached earlier, for the spread of militarisation to outer space, which is what Reagan's Star Wars aim at, would destabilise the situation in the world, accelerate the arms race, and increase the danger of a nuclear confrontation. The Soviet Union was speaking not only for itself when it insisted on the interrelationship of all these issues. It was speaking for the world's peoples, who ardently want the prevention of an arms race in outer space and its cessation on the ground, this being a vital guarantee of a peaceful life.

The Star Wars program proclaimed by Washington goes together with the continued development and manufacture of new types of strategic offensive armaments—the MX missiles, the Midgetman systems, the Trident IIs, the heavy bombers, and the long-range cruise missiles. Moreover, the stationing of US intermediate-range missiles continues in Western Europe. These measures taken together, arising from the Reagan policy of confrontation, add to the danger of war involving the most destructive weapons. At the same time, they are evidence that the USA has not given up its effort to achieve military superiority, a first strike and winnable nuclear war strategy. It stands to reason that the Soviet Union, as it has repeatedly declared, will do all in its power to prevent the USA from attaining such superiority over itself and its allies. If the USA persists in continuing its space program it will jeopardise the negotiations in Geneva and the entire arms control process. A good beginning may prove unproductive because the US administration

continues to pursue its dangerous course.

What is important for Canada is that the Conservative government be made to speak up against the US Star Wars program and confrontation, as some other NATO allies of the USA have done. Instead the Mulroney government gives way to US pressure. It has undertaken the modernisation of the DEW line (the North Warning System as it is now called) and the building of 52 radar stations. The Pentagon has included this system into its strategy for war in outer space. None other than the US Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger linked space militarisation research with the modernisation of the DEW radar line. He also declared that there might be a time when US launchers targeted on the USSR and other socialist countries would be placed on Canadian soil. Canada will thus become a launching pad for attacks on the Soviet Union, despite the weak denials of senior members of the government. If it is fully drawn into the Star Wars program, it will be a pawn in the hands of US imperialism. Capitulation to pressure from Washington opens up Canada to becoming a potential battle-field and bombing target.

All this is covered up with reassuring statements claiming that the research side of the Star Wars program is a 'prudent' course. This is also the purpose of the hypocritical assertions that such research will reinforce international security and reduce the threat of a nuclear war. Actually, the SDI is neither a research nor a defensive program. It is an aggressive project for stationing nuclear weapons in outer space. The deployment of US nuclear missiles in Western Europe has not enhanced the security of Europe, and the Star Wars program will not enhance the security of the world. It will instead make the threat of war hanging over humanity more tangible.

Its tacit support of the Star Wars program and modernisation of the DEW Line is part of the Canadian Conservative government's sharp turn towards more rapid integration into the US empire and towards militarisation. It has declared its intention to support US foreign policy, to increase Canada's military expenditures and contribution to NATO, and to pursue a course of freer trade by lowering tariffs and other trade barriers. The dominant sections of Canadian monopoly have evidently opted for a policy of continentalism. Canadianisation is being replaced by Americanisation. This reorientation of direction mirrors the growing crisis of Canadian capitalism in a shrinking capitalist world system.

The different factions of monopoly capital in Canada see two options open to them: one, to move deliberately towards closer integration with the USA or, two, the development of a comprehensive long-term strategy to develop and strengthen the Canadian economy. The latter option was pursued by the previous Liberal government under Pierre Elliot Trudeau. But the Conservatives claim that integration with the USA is an inevitable process. In the name of this inevitability they play down the significance of the nation's sovereignty and independence as a luxury it cannot afford. They assert that the orientation towards the American market is the only way out of the crisis, and that free trade with the USA is the solution to the ills facing capitalism in Canada.

This turn to Washington raises a question: is our program, *The Road to Socialism in Canada*, still correct when it speaks of an 'antagonistic partnership' between Canadian monopoly and US imperialism or is there now more 'partnership' and less antagonism in this relationship? This antagonism still continues, of course. It is an objective fact. However, it has now been subdued in the overall struggle of imperialism against socialism and the national liberation movement. In return for this line-up with US global strategy, monopoly interests in Canada hope to get substantial war orders from the Pentagon and 'enhanced trade' with the USA. In this way they hope to overcome the economic and structural crisis afflicting the Canadian economy.

This reorientation of Canada towards integration with the USA comes not when US imperialism is in the ascendancy, but when historically, it is in decline. The partnership has no solid foundation and is doomed to failure. The high US balance of payments and trade deficit may lead to a serious economic decline in the USA. This would have catastrophic consequences for Canada: it would undermine manufacturing in Quebec and Ontario and destroy entire industries, thereby adding to already high unemployment.

The sharp turn by the Mulroney government to a surrender of Canada's national interests, its sovereignty and independence, has evoked widespread concern and opposition in the labor and democratic movements, among patriotic Canadians, and even among some bourgeois quarters. Liberals and the New Democratic Party have condemned the Conservative government's half-way support of the Star Wars program and of US plans to deploy nuclear weapons on Canadian soil. The struggle for an independent foreign policy is gathering momentum.

Peace-loving and patriotic Canadians approve this criticism of the Tory pro-US orientation by the NDP and Liberals. But more than that is required to change the situation. As was clearly stated at the 26th Convention, it is the opinion of the Communist Party that the situation demands the formation of a Canada-wide alliance of all truly patriotic and democratic forces strong enough to stop the government's turn towards total subordination to US imperialism. A powerful people's movement is required outside of parliament to strengthen Canada's independence and sovereignty, a people's movement which would focus its attention on the battle for independent economic development through nationalisation of US branch plants, banks, energy, and natural resources, opposition to free trade with the USA, and an independent foreign policy centred on peaceful coexistence and disarmament based on equality and equal security, a democratic Canadian culture, trade, scientific and cultural relations with the socialist countries, and economic policies leading to full employment. It is only nationalisation of US holdings in Canada that can lead to the achievement of economic independence for Canada. This in turn would create new opportunities for extricating Canada from NATO and enable it to pursue a truly independent foreign policy of peace.

Of particular significance in this connection is the emergence of the Council of Canadians embracing non-monopoly interests, professionals, and intellectuals, Liberals and NDP members, and sections of the trade union movement. The Council of Canadians arose in opposition to the sell-out of Canada to Washington. Its program calls for independent economic development, for opposition to free trade, and for an independent foreign policy and a strengthened Canadian culture. The new organisation could have a significant role to play in asserting Canada's national interests. It merits critical support by the progressive movement.

Another recent important event has been the meeting in Vancouver of peace representatives to explore the possibility of forming a Canada-wide Peace Coalition. This would be a step of great potential for uniting all peace movements around common demands, whose essence is support for an independent foreign policy for Canada and, more particularly, opposition to Canada's involvement in the arms race, especially in the Stars Wars program.

Our party will do everything in its power to help strengthen this process of unity and co-operation among the peace forces and extend the peace movement to all parts of Canada. We see it as our task, with patience and tact, to help Canadians understand that imperialism, and more particularly US imperialism, means war and aggression, while socialism means peace. Our party gives increasing support to the regional peace councils and the Canadian Peace Congress. In today's situation we feel it is important to win more support among the people for their anti-imperialist positions and extend their links to the other peace movements.

The prospects for the formation of a Canada-wide Peace Coalition and the many peace rallies that have taken place in the USA and Western Europe give the lie to the claim that the peace movement is on its last legs and is fading away. Rather than being on its last legs, one may expect a new upsurge of peace action in light of the adventurist Star Wars concept proclaimed by Washington. The slogan of action adopted some time ago by our party and made a central issue in the last federal elections—'Unite to stop US imperialism, for peace, jobs, and Canadian independence—Put Canada First'—has particular significance today. Our party aims to make it the slogan of the Canadian people in defense of Canada's sovereignty and independence and their struggle to prevent war.

The effect of the USA's selfish policies has been totally negative on the state of affairs in the capitalist world. With its high interest rates US imperialism is pumping capital from its allies and the developing countries into its own economy, funding at their expense its program for a gigantic arms build-up, and thereby significantly cushioning the impact of its budget deficit. However, the enormous growth of this deficit and the high interest rates are creating a potentially explosive situation not only in the USA but in other capitalist countries as well.

Canada, like other capitalist states, is engulfed by the crisis of the capitalist world system and by developments in the USA. Despite talk of recovery in Canada, the economy has really not got off the ground, except for the big corporations and banks as can be seen in their rising rates of profit. In Canada cyclical crisis and structural crisis tend to merge. Cyclical crisis have become deeper and last longer. Rates of production have declined. Excess industrial capacity continues. Bank and trust company bankruptcies, which have grown more frequent, are a relatively new phenomenon. The financial system tends to become more unstable and the budget deficit keeps growing.

It is indisputable that although 'recovery' is almost two years old, unemployment continues to stay above ten per cent and experts now say that there are no prospects of reducing it until 1995, if then. More than ever before Canada is a society in which real wages and purchasing power are declining, poverty is growing, and living standards are deteriorating. Class distinctions in education, culture, public health, and leisure are becoming more pronounced.

Monopoly strategy uses two ways to get out of the crisis—a sharper competitive struggle for markets and growing attacks on the condition of the working people and the rights of the trade union movement. The latter way is mirrored in the government policy of austerity and maintaining a high level of unemployment. The right to strike in the public service is being threatened. Reactionary sections of monopoly want to take the working class back to the Stone Age, to deny them the rights they have won.

In the face of the monopoly offensive the conditions for the class struggle are changing. The times of 'easy' corporate concessions have gone. The monopolies have steered a course towards confrontation with the working class, insisting upon further wage cuts, the imposition of a two-tier wage system,¹ and the elimination of a number of benefits. Workers have been placed in a dilemma—either make concessions and hopefully keep their jobs or fight back with the fear of losing jobs.

Experience is showing that gains cannot be maintained without battles, where necessary, on the strike front and without an organised battle for new economic and social policies, for the preservation of jobs and for full employment.

With the aim of heading off sharp class confrontation, the government is seeking to inveigle the trade union movement into some form of 'social partnership', some form of class collaboration. It is offering to hold consultations with them. But the consultations they are working for seek not to overcome unemployment, protect the rights of working people, or ensure that working people will become the beneficiaries of the scientific and technological revolution. Rather, they are aimed to get the

agreement of the trade union movement to collaborate in overcoming the contradictions of capitalism at workers' expense. It is asserted that 'we are all in the same boat' and must tighten our belts. But how and whose belts are being tightened? Workers' wage increases since 1977 have been below the rate of inflation, while in the past three years wages have declined by over two per cent annually. But corporate profits increased by 45 per cent in 1984, while the banks reported a profit increment of 15 per cent.

The critical economic situation places the working people before the need for greater unity and more militant action. At the grassroots level there is a growing tendency to reject class collaboration and to support co-operation among left forces with the Communist Party among them. For their part the Communists believe that the interests of the working class and its allies would be best served by a democratic alternative program that would unite them around the demands for preserving gains and for ensuring the right to jobs. We will therefore go on opposing class collaboration and concessions to monopoly, staunchly championing workers' interests, strengthening the left forces, and helping to draw up a program of joint action.

The line of thought is shared in the shops, mines, and the trade union movement. Provincial Labor Federation conventions, including the latest Canadian Labor Congress convention have declared in favor of repulsing monopoly and government anti-labor policies. While many of the good resolutions that have been adopted unfortunately remain on paper, they nevertheless show the state of mind of the working class. Among working people there is spreading recognition that the monopoly offensive can be pushed only by united struggle. The temporary setbacks experienced by some sections of the working class are being replaced by rising militancy, by a more organised fightback as seen in the growing number of strikes. The trade union movement is pressing more energetically than ever for a reduction of hours of work with no reduction in take-home pay. The drive to organise the unorganised is being taken up with renewed vigor, with particular attention to organising workers in the retail industry, which employs large numbers of women. The participation of women in strikes has tended to unite the women's movement and trade union movement. The fightback by pensioners has compelled the government to retreat from its intention to de-index pensions.

In the developing situation of growing fightback on the economic front, our party sees as a central task that of working to unite the working class and democratic movements, the NDP and Communist Party, on a common platform of struggle against monopoly power and for the elimination of US control over the Canadian economy. This could facilitate the formation of a popular majority outside parliament to beat back the offensive of monopoly and its Tory government against the working people. In working for this aim the Communist Party emphasises that there are no solutions to the crisis without profound democratic changes.

The scientific and technological revolution raises in sharp focus the need for a fundamental change of society to ensure that technological breakthroughs bring the working people a higher living standard rather than unemployment and further hardships. If jobs are abolished who will purchase the goods produced? What industries ought to be developed to provide jobs for working people thrown out of work? Can capitalism with its drive for profits solve these problems or only worsen them?

Monopoly and its ideological myrmidons, without answering these questions, tell working people that scientific and technological progress will by itself take the economy out of the crisis without bringing any significant social changes, that working people have nothing to fear from the scientific and technological revolution, that it 'won't hurt.' But all technological changes achieved to date in conditions of

capitalism have led to more unemployment, not only for workers in industry but for white-collar workers as well. Working people are not opposed to technological change. They are not Luddites out to smash the new machines. But they do expect and properly so that they will be beneficiaries of technological change, not its victims. So far they have been the victims. The working class is right in demanding guarantees against the negative effects of scientific and technological progress under capitalism and declaring that they will fight for such guarantees.

Communists in the trade union movement advance these basic ideas while demanding that the working class have a say in all questions concerning technical change and plant closures. Working people must be guaranteed opportunities for retraining and new jobs without loss in pay. To prevent the loss of jobs in Canada legislation must be adopted to forbid the transfer of productive capacities to other countries.

Our party will fight more aggressively than ever for nationalisation of key industries under democratic control. It proposes that nationalisation goes together with a Canada-wide public investment program to create jobs and expand the economy. It is estimated that such a program will need roughly 10 billion dollars to cover affordable public housing, the extension of health services and the education system, the enlargement of the transport network, measures to protect the environment, the establishment of recreational areas and green belts, a universal, free child-care system, and a comprehensive training and retraining program. The government must be pressed into translating this into reality.

Instead of curtailing unemployment insurance with the aim of building up a pool of cheap labor it would be fair to increase unemployment insurance to 90 per cent of a person's earnings and extend it to cover the entire period of unemployment. There should be a special fund for young people presently not eligible for unemployment insurance. We are demanding a drastic increase of welfare benefits and allowances. While these measures do not remove the causes of capitalism's crisis they would help ease its consequences for working people.

Not only the working people in the cities but the family farmers, too, feel the effects of the crisis. The number of farm bankruptcies has not been higher since the 1930s. Among farmers, too, a spirit of militancy and fightbacks is shaping up. The basis exists for unity of workers and farmers—the National Farmers' Union and the Canadian Labor Congress—around a common program of action directed against monopoly. Our party gives every support it can to the demands of the farmers and to their growing struggles.

This applies with equal force to the fightback of the cultural community. The government's retraining program is being emphatically denounced by that community for it is weakening the Canadian identity and opening the door to the further Americanisation of cultural life. This cultural policy is not separate from the pro-American imperialist orientation of the government and its more open pro-monopoly policies. The Communists hold that the fightback on this front cannot be left to the cultural community alone. The struggle for a democratic Canadian culture is part and parcel of the struggle for Canadian independence, peace, and social progress.

The growing militancy of the working people is also seen in the movement for full equality for women, for ending discrimination against them in the workplace and in everyday life. The Communist Party has always supported and will continue to fight for these demands. Our party takes pride in the fact that we have been able to attract a growing number of younger women to our ranks. They, together with women comrades who are veterans of our movement, are playing an increasingly important role in the further development of the working class and democratic movement.

While the issue of the national rights of the French-Canadian people seems to have

temporarily subsided, it would be shortsighted to believe that the issue is gone and forgotten. It remains a constant factor in the political life not only of Quebec, but of the country as a whole. This is why the party will continue as before to campaign for equality and the right of self-determination for Quebec and for this right to be embodied in the Canadian Constitution. This issue can only be solved by accepting the realities stemming from the distinctive specifics of our society.

Our party gives continuing attention and support to the just demands of the Native peoples: self-government, recognition of their land claims, and the inclusion of the relevant provisions in the Constitution. The government has been compelled to recognise in words their right to self-government, outside the framework of the Constitution. Acting through the provincial governments, monopoly is moving heaven and earth to prevent agreement and to retain unfettered control of the rich natural resources on the lands of the Native peoples. In view of the pro-monopoly stand of the provincial governments, the federal government can altogether put aside the decision of the problem. It is the duty of the working class and other democratic forces to assist the Native peoples.

What is shaping up in Canada and has been for some time is the combination of the class struggle, the democratic struggle, and the national struggle, all combining more and more with the struggle for peace, which, in a sense, ties them all together in one knot. With people's movements arising on all sides we see our task as that of helping to unite them into a major political force which could eventually take the shape of a People's Coalition—a democratic, anti-monopoly, and anti-imperialist coalition. As a step in this direction we have called for a people's majority outside of parliament to counter and check the Tory majority inside of government. This is advanced not as an electoral tactic for a future election but rather as a slogan of mass action for today and tomorrow, for the mass movements of the working class and the working people generally have the decisive role to play in the struggle for democracy, social progress, and peace.

The country's economic potential and productive forces are large enough to satisfy the Canadian people's basic needs, the demands for jobs, housing, education, medical care, and pension security. The right to a job, like the right to live, should be a sacred right. What stands in the way of progress is the power of the monopolies, the transnationals, and the banks, who place their profit interests above everything else. It is that power which must be broken if the way is to be cleared for fundamental reforms, if Canada is to strengthen its independence in economic, foreign, and cultural policies, and if the working class is to protect its interests and win a policy of full employment.

No other party except the Communist Party of Canada states these facts. No other party except the Communist Party of Canada helps the working class to understand these basic facts, and demands that new priorities be established, priorities based on the maximum satisfaction of people's needs, not the maximum profits of the corporations and the wealthy.

In this period of growing crisis of capitalism, Communists correctly link the defense of the immediate needs of the working class and working people generally with the struggle for fundamental change, the struggle for peace and socialism.

In restating the immediate aim of the Communists and all other progressive forces—that of averting the threat of a nuclear war and safeguarding peace—it must be said firmly and unequivocally that this aim can be achieved. While the US Star Wars program, the deployment of new US missiles in Western Europe, and the USA's accelerated arms program all add to the danger of war, world war is not inevitable. The balance of forces in the world has not changed in favor of imperialism. Imperialism has failed in its efforts to crush the national and social liberation movement. The peace forces are gathering new strength. Significant sections of

monopoly interests favor peaceful co-existence. Above all, socialism, the decisive force for peace, is growing stronger. It is that strength, ensuring military-strategic parity, which in the first place deters imperialism and gives it no opportunity to unleash a world war.

The growing threat of war, US imperialism's crusade against socialism, the neo-conservative drive against the rights and interests of the working people, and the need for effective international solidarity with the socialist world and with the national and social liberation struggle of the peoples of developing countries—all make it necessary for communist and workers' party to consolidate ranks on the basis of internationalist principles. Our party will continue to work in this direction.

This year we marked the 40th anniversary of the victory over fascism. A statement adopted by our party's Central Executive Committee on the occasion declared: 'Don't allow the fatal mistakes that led to World War II to be repeated. This time a like mistake could result in the end of human life on Earth. The common enemy is the arms race and a nuclear war no one could win. Peaceful co-existence, detente, and disarmament based on equality and equal security are the path to peace today. War can and must be prevented before it starts.'

Nor should one overlook other lessons of history: that anti-Sovietism and anti-communism are a source of military danger to the world, and that the absence of united action of all peace forces against imperialist aggression is fraught with the threat of a new global catastrophe. It is basic today to remember that the Soviet Union was the decisive factor in defeating fascism and achieving victory; that the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole are now the principle factor in preventing a world nuclear disaster. This immutable fact must be used to counter the attempts to impute to the USSR and the USA an 'equal responsibility' for the present tense international situation.

It is imperialism which is the source of the war danger. This danger springs from imperialism and its inherent laws, not from the contest of the two social systems. The decisive role in preventing a nuclear war is played by the socialist community supported by all of the planet's democratic and progressive forces. In the present tense international situation the Communists see as their task not only the struggle to end exploitation and oppression, but also and in the first place the struggle to save human civilisation from a nuclear holocaust. This adds a new demension to the historic mission of the working class.

¹ New workers get a lower wage.—Ed.

No to the Debt Bondage Imposed by Imperialism

Athos Fava – General Secretary,
Communist Party of Argentina (CPA)

THE US imperialist policy of plunder directed against developing countries, Latin American ones included, is a widely known fact condemned by the overwhelming majority of the world community. The 'great northern neighbour' has long treated Latin American republics as a habitual sphere of plunder and economic subversion. Their peoples, like other peoples of the Third World, not only overpay for finished products and raw materials purchased from monopolies but virtually bear the brunt of the economic crisis of capitalist powers as a consequence of unequal financial relations, primarily fettering debts. Latin America's foreign debt, which is mounting at a dizzy rate, exceeds 360 billion dollars now. One of the main victims of this bondage is my country, whose development recently entered a new stage, with the class struggle going on against the background of a revival of civilian institutions.

Our Tasks in the New Situation

Over sixteen months have passed since Argentina's military dictatorship was succeeded by a constitutional government under Raúl Alfonsín. As soon as the government was formed, the CPA described it as bourgeois regormist and heterogeneous, for along with patriotic and anti-imperialist elements close to the people it represents rightists compromising with the oligarchy and imperialism.

The present cabinet is under pressure from pro-imperialist reaction, on the one hand, and democrats, progressives and labour, on the other. Subsequent developments will depend on who wins the upper hand.

The political project of the CPA, which we continuously specify, is aimed at defending and consolidating democracy and putting an end to coups in Argentina. Our current policy is pivoted on the struggle for the establishment of a National and Social Liberation Front of anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist forces that could bring into being the rudiments of people's rule.

Our party is working for the fulfilment of this task in the atmosphere of an acute crisis inherited from the dictatorship. The situation is compounded by the indecision and vacillation of a government under pressure from the right and the left, as we have noted. The strongest pressure is being put, and shamelessly at that, by the oligarchy, foreign monopolies, domestic big capital, which is associated with imperialism (above all US imperialism), and the USA, which is operating through the Pentagon, the State Department and its Embassy. They want to nullify the more positive aspects of government policy expressing themselves in the consolidation of democratic institutions and respect for civil freedoms as well as in the conduct of foreign policy.

Home and foreign reaction is infuriated by the introduction of freedom of speech and the prosecution of members of military juntas guilty of the overthrown regime's crimes. After all, the current trial is an indictment of all inspirers of coups and internal state terrorism. Besides, reaction is trying to make a volteface in foreign policy by excluding from it defence of the principle of non-intervention in Central America, support for the Contadora Group and, lately, condemnation of the amoral, criminal embargo on trade with Nicaragua announced by Reagan. There are persistent attempts to force the government into revising the position which it has adopted by calling for an end to the arms race and signing the Delhi declaration against Star Wars. Reactionaries look with distaste on the substantial extension of trade and cultural relations with the socialist community, primarily the Soviet Union.

The situation is most complicated in socio-economic life. In this sphere, vacillation and concessions on the part of the government betray its class character only too noticeably. They are largely due to the foreign debt, one of the worst economic maladies left by the dictatorship.

Legalised Plunder

The dilemma confronting Argentina—freedom or dependence—cannot be resolved without settling the problem of the foreign debt. This problem is nothing new to us Communists. Like the Malvinas crisis, it fully reveals the contradiction between the interests of US imperialism and the Argentine nation, which will not ease off in spite of likely changes in both the Argentine and US governments.

The foreign debt, a new way of modernising and increasing dependence, is the chief topic of an intense political and social controversy on the continent whose outcome is bound to have a notable impact on constitutional stability and the future of democracy.

The debt is one of the forms of neocolonial dependence aggravating all our problems. There are two prospects now: one, staying dependent and obeying the dictates of the IMF, and two, resisting usurers and rescheduling payments on both principal and interest for ten years. The latter solution is the only one acceptable to the people, since it would pave the way for liberation.

We Communists see this problem as connected with our political project. In the coming elections, our candidates are going not only to campaign for the defence of democracy, social justice and the formation of a National and Social Liberation Front but to demand a moratorium.

We need not cite many figures to show the plight of the Argentine people. Wages are not enough to meet even elementary needs (they only cover 30 per cent of family expenditures, according to the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses). Inflation exceeds an annual 1,000 per cent and literally swallows the people's incomes.¹ The demand for labour has fallen off by nearly 40 per cent. The number of industrial workers has diminished by 500,000 and over one million are unemployed or hold part-time jobs.

Eight million Argentines live in poverty. In Buenos Aires Province alone (the richest), 1.8 million children are underfed. Official data indicate that in 1970 poverty affected about 10 per cent of our compatriots; today their proportion is set at 30 per cent. It is certainly due to dependence that in terms of per capita income Argentina has slipped from tenth place in the world in 1928 to fiftieth today. Technologically, we are lagging farther and farther behind developed countries; this is also true of agriculture, into which some innovations have been introduced.

The external debt is an instrument used by imperialism in alliance with the old and new domestic oligarchy in an effort to increase and perpetuate dependence by shifting the burden of its current crisis and the insane arms race on to somebody else's shoulders. The foreign debt of Argentina, a country of 30 million people, averages 1,600 dollars per inhabitant.

Over the past five years the republic has spent about 22 billion dollars on interest payments, or three times more than it owed in 1976 and as much as the cost of two projects like Parana Medio, the project of the century that is to alter the face of the country.²

However, economic plunder by imperialism and its Argentine partners goes further than that. In addition to the 5.5 billion dollars exacted from us every year in interest payment, we make other payments under fraudulent deals designed to pump out money, with the result that we annually lose another 14.7 billion dollars.³ Plunder has made Argentina, a creditor country before 1947, one of the world's biggest debtors.

The long-term plunder of national resources is made worse by high interest rates, an excessive exchange rate of the dollar and a great discrepancy between low prices for raw materials exported by developing countries (including Argentina) and high prices for the finished products imported by them. Here is how prices for our export have been going down: whereas in the 1976/1977 agricultural year we needed 156 tons of wheat to purchase one tractor on the world market, in 1984/1985 we need as much as 270 tons. As regards plant, spare parts and other imports, the terms of trade turnover have deteriorated still more strikingly.

How It Is Done

Developing countries consider that the fundamental requisite for their progress is to establish a new international economic order (NIEO) making it possible to end an unjust state of affairs and opening a new chapter in world economic relations.

The struggle against debt bondage is inseparable from the battle for a NIEO, which the UN decided on in 1974. The main purpose of a NIEO is to safeguard national sovereignty over natural resources, end the economic inequality of nations and establish a system of trade favourable to developing countries in order to improve their financial position.

The imperialists want to make us pay for the arms race. Their policy tells on us directly in the form of an increasing external debt. The US government raises interest rates and the dollar exchange rate to obtain from other countries money needed to meet its deficit caused by enormous military expenditures. These rose to 391 billion dollars in 1984 and are expected to stand at 597 billion dollars by late 1989. To support Washington's war preparations, the peoples of the non-socialist world, including the working class of the United States itself, must pay as much as 1.5 billion dollars a day from their pockets.

The foreign debt of our republic offers US financial capital powerful levers for influencing either directly, or through the IMF the long-term orientation of the economic policy of our state, primarily in respect of industries from which the USA can derive huge profits, as it now does from the oil industry, the service sector and finance. The fact that most credits are short-term (half of them fell or will fall due between 1984 and 1986) and that they cannot be repaid compels Argentina to renegotiate its debt time and again and makes the country still more dependent.

No country tied to the IMF by treaties may alter parity without the consent of the IMF (or, in other words, without US approval). Argentina, which joined the IMF after the 1955 coup, is likewise denied the right to make sovereign decisions on its currency. It follows that ever since it came into existence, the IMF has been an instrument of capitalist, primarily US, expansion (this is particularly true today).

The IMF makes the signing of a treaty with any country conditional on lowering wages, increasing unemployment, expanding exports to the detriment of domestic consumption, devaluating the national currency, abolishing protectionist measures, restricting the public sector, reprivatizing industries and cutting expenditure for social needs, that is, investing less in civil engineering, education, the health service, and so on.

The technique of granting loans is a refined system of consecutive traps. First a country finds itself unable to pay its debt and so is granted an 'interim credit' which adds to the debt; thereupon the debtor is offered new and increasingly harsh terms of granting loans needed to pay interest. The result is an endless period of debt bondage, inflation and mounting privations for the people. An important spring of this mechanism is the policy of inadequate adjustment of wages, intended to prevent it from keeping pace with inflation.

It is typical of the current stage in the development of imperialism that capital is exported mainly by the private and not the public sector, investments going above all

into finance and not the production sphere. This also applies to Argentina, which borrows chiefly from private banks generally engaged in speculation. In the 1977-1982 period, the debt grew (more than 90 per cent) mainly as a consequence of purely financial transactions involving no purchases of machinery or other products.

About 70 per cent of the debt is owed by the public sector; moreover, the money has been lent on the security of state enterprises. The rest, or 30 per cent, is owed by the private sector and the state is going to pay it, using the device of underwriting exchange rate losses. This mechanism of plunder and this method of granting credits may be described as the principal factor for debt growth. Today mortgages shackling our country add up to 48.420 billion dollars. This debt is close to 70 per cent of the value of the annual national product and is all the more dramatic because in 1975 it equalled only 10 per cent of GDP.

A considerable part of the debt owed by the private sector is a result of fictitious loans taken by enterprises and individuals; they remit their funds abroad (mainly to the USA and Western Europe), only to bring them back in the form of loans allegedly granted by foreign banks. After doing shady business on the home market, speculators export the same funds without declaring this to be in payment of the debt. In this way 9.524 billion dollars was exported before 1982; the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic recorded them as 'flight of unaccounted capital'.⁴

Furthermore, in the 1976-1983 period, our economy lost about 30 billion dollars, which was spent on purchasing property in Canada, Spain, the USA, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay or was deposited in US and European banks. The Argentine economy virtually found itself bled white.⁵

The reason why domestic supporters of the IMF insist so strongly on repaying the debt is that they are also creditors, for they export capital and then lend it to our country on guarantee. In other words, they grant 'themselves' loans which become part of the foreign debt. As a means of paying the debt, they propose selling public enterprises and ceding control of oil (whose reserves are non-renewable), and ultimately declare for a complete sell-out of the country to ensure that the upper section of Argentine society is paid interest abroad, along with imperialist monopolies and big banks.

The main lines of economic development for the 1985-1989 period, worked out by the present Minister of the Economy, provide for payments on the debt as a purely technical matter. This approach may have fatal consequences, since five years from now interest payments on loans will amount to 23.5 billion dollars plus another six billion dollars in the form of dividends and licence payments. In other words, the nation will lose 29.5 billion dollars. Yet part of this amount, or 25 billion dollars, would be enough to pay wages in both the public and the private sectors over a year. It would be enough to raise real wages by 20 per cent in the next five years. As for the rest, or 4.5 billion dollars, it could solve the housing problem of 750,000 poor families. Should the official plan materialise, this would compel the country to solicit in five years' time a further loan amounting to 5.6 billion dollars. As a result, Argentina's debt would exceed 50 billion dollars.

Moratorium: A Solution Dictated by Life

Noted economists and officials of Argentina have submitted proposals for ways of effectively opposing IMF claims. The demand for a moratorium is gaining ground among the progressive forces of the country, which must either go on taking its cue from the IMF and so increase independence, or desist from the current practice.

The point at issue is whether our people are to work for themselves or for the US monopolies and the domestic oligarchy. A struggle is under way over who is to foot the bill of the crisis, whether we, as has been the case so far, or they. This is why we Communists say that the implementation of unfair agreements with the IMF must be

blocked and that all debtors must come out jointly against paying the shackling debt and, first of all, demand an *immediate moratorium*. We proceed from the fact that all the terms of refinancing through a stand-by⁶ or 'interim credit' now under discussion are mere varieties of the IMF diktat. We therefore propose *freezing the debt for ten years, that is, refusing during this period to pay either principal or interest, and spending the funds released as a result on advancing the national economy, raising wages, creating jobs and meeting social needs*.

The 'recommendations' of the IMF are certain to disrupt the nation's economic life. To follow them is tantamount to unconditionally accepting the dire legacy of the dictatorship and clearing the decks for another 'strong government', another coup aimed at 'restoring order' after deliberately creating a state of chaos. The fact is that Argentina's technological lag, by increasing as a result of applying IMF recipes, would aggravate the socio-economic situation to the utmost.

Should our country continue paying interest, it would be left with less money for internal investment, real incomes would decline, the exchange rate of the dollar and interest rates would go on climbing, with inflation as a consequence, the tax burden put on people would become heavier and unemployment would grow. The home market would shrink still more and this, in turn, would hamper production while monopoly concentration would assume greater proportions due to the failure and closure of numerous small and medium enterprises.

The pursuit of an IMF-imposed 'policy of adjustment' would lead to the sale of all or some of the paying public enterprises, the steady growth of tariffs and public service charges, a reduction of internal credits and the abolition of state regulation and controls vis-à-vis the subsidiaries of transnationals and powerful domestic groups in the interest of 'free enterprise and a free market'.

Prompted by the widespread opinion that Argentina cannot repay its foreign debt, we propose a realistic solution. An unrealistic thing to do would be to stay tied to the ominous system under which we must pay interest on interest, draining the country of its lifeblood and incurring an ever steeper growth of the debt.

Contrary to our adversaries' most pessimistic forecasts, a moratorium on the debt of the Third World could not cause a world-wide financial and economic collapse. While the debt is staggering, it falls short of even ten per cent of the value of the annual GDP of industrial capitalist countries. The loss of this sum would not be irreparable for them while for us it is tantamount to ruin. The moratorium would, in particular, put world economic activity and trade on a sounder basis and help remove the effects of debt accumulation, which generally express themselves in decreasing consumption, growing inflation and unemployment and a reduction of investment. The debt is not vitally important to the creditor and seller countries, let alone the debtor and buyer countries. This means that the solution we propose might interest industrial powers, where it could help revive the economy, production and trade, create new jobs, and so forth.

All this is evidence that the peoples of Latin America and the Third World as a whole can and must join efforts with the working people of the USA and other industrial capitalist countries against the policy of Reagan and transnational monopolies geared to the nuclear arms race.

The debt is a political problem facing lenders and borrowers alike. This explains why Fidel Castro has said that industrial creditor countries can and should commit themselves to pay the debt of Latin America and other regions of the Third World to their own private banks. They could do this if they cut military expenditures ten to twelve per cent. This would damage neither their economies, nor their taxpayers' purses.

However, this proposal is not appreciated by a handful of US and British banks, for their *private property interests clash with the national interests of even the creditor*

countries. Big private banks admit that the debt injures the world economy but have no intention of making the slightest concessions. This invites the question: since the debtor countries and their governments undertake to pay the private debt, turning it into a public one, why cannot the governments of credit-or countries undertake to pay the private debt to their own banks?

Our proposal for a moratorium is consonant with a political approach to the problem advocated by numerous heads of state, politicians and other public figures of Latin America and the world. Besides, it offers creditors an opportunity to cut the Gordian knot of debts which they themselves do not expect to recover.

In the light of the grave economic crisis and the revival of democracy in our country, won at great cost, the proposed moratorium would directly help remove the causes of instability. The CPA considers that this solution must by all means rest on an alternative liberation programme backed by the people and intended to meet their aspirations. This would also promote national unity, which is mentioned so often, on a patriotic basis and raise a solid barrier to military coups.

What uses could Argentina make of the 5.5 billion dollars which it pays annually on interest if a moratorium were declared? In addition to many other things, it could feed 2.3 million indigent families. We could cite other calculations giving an idea of the colossal proportions of the plunder affecting our people. For instance, the interest to be paid in 1985 now equals the value of 50 million metric tons of maize or 41 million tons of wheat, or three national wheat or five maize harvests.

Our Potentialities and Prospects

The IMF must be resisted, for Argentina cannot pay its debt in today's situation, as we have said. Resistance is perfectly possible, since the situation is favourable both at home and abroad.

In spite of the stagnation gripping our country, we annually put out 70 billion dollars' worth of products. A moratorium would enable us to release funds and increase investment from 20 to 25 per cent. The economy would have from 14 to 17.5 billion dollars for internal investment in production.

Argentina trades with many partners. Ten per cent of its output is purchased by the USA, 25 per cent by Common Market countries and the rest, or from 60 to 70 per cent, by Latin American countries and the socialist community. But it is little known (because nobody speaks about it) that the USA only accounts for 20 per cent of our imports while 35 to 40 per cent comes from Latin America.

Naturally, the United States and Western Europe supply us with plant, spare parts (for the chemical, steel and other industries) and other capital goods. In the event of reprisals, we could purchase most of these products from Latin American countries, non-aligned states, our West European partners, who would refuse to support an eventual economic blockade, and the socialist countries, with which we have a favourable balance of trade.

We have vast resources enabling us to hold our own against imperialism: we are self-sufficient in energy and food-stuffs and could double grain output without much effort. The consumer goods industry meets the nation's requirements and as for heavy industry, it is at a fairly high level notwithstanding the recession of recent years.

The Republic of Argentina has substantial and varied mineral resources and its public enterprises retain their strategic positions in the power and atomic industries, electronics, communications, steel, petrochemicals, transport, trade and finance. Besides, in spite of the lag registered in late years, we have a potential of specialists who can be used for the independent advancement of the nation. Small and medium enterprises are in a position to cooperate in various forms (tested earlier) in using advanced technology, making purchases, and so on, thereby increasing their present national role.

This activity could also create a more favourable climate for Latin American unity. Obviously, the tasks we Communists set are not easy. But neither is the present situation. We are at a historical crossroads and the future of Argentina as a sovereign nation is at stake. What would have happened if in May 1810 the leaders of the liberation movement, who were faced with the urgent task of fighting for independence, had begun by talking about difficulties? Had they done so, Argentina would still be a colony. It is with due regard to the lessons of history that we all must also approach current moves against the foreign debt, for they are an important part of the struggle for the second and final liberation of our country.

There is a close connection between defence of the constitutional system, peace, democracy and freedom, on the one hand, and anti-IMF activity, on the other. The debt ruined thousands of people in the years of dictatorial rule. The problems of getting rid of it and reinforcing democracy are therefore inseparable in the people's liberation movement.

In combating the disastrous effects of the debt, we are going to organise mass actions against inflation and taxes, which hit the people, against declining wages and salaries, the closure of enterprises and the economic crisis in the provinces and regions, the health service and education. This struggle should begin at grassroots level. The IMF is our chief enemy now and the working people must counter its policy with their unity and growing activity. This is the only way to lay the groundwork for a National and Social Liberation Front.

We consider it important that the proposal for a moratorium be backed up by mobilising the people, by democratic unity and a minimum programme which we believe should comprise the following demands: nationalise the main areas of foreign trade, nationalise private banks, establish rigid control over trade, lay the foundations for a new taxation system (levy taxes primarily on non-productive lands and big fortunes), end the monopoly plunder of the state, and organise effective popular control over price-fixing and government in collaboration with the trade unions and other public organisations.

We call for the broadest possible patriotic movement of all Argentines against paying the debt. This issue is now central to the Communists' activity; it requires new efforts towards improving and implementing the political project whose pivot is the formation of a Front for Democracy.

The debt is a problem that does not concern Argentina alone but the whole continent. It is an economic and political issue and is becoming a revolutionary issue in step with developments, as Fidel Castro has said.⁷ The struggle to settle it is one of the major tasks facing the peoples of Latin America today. It will undoubtedly be backed by the broadest sections of society; it will contribute to continental unity, which José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar dreamed of, and will be part of the common battle of developing countries for their definitive independence, for the establishment of more equitable economic relations in the world.

¹ To reassure the population somehow, the government has been carrying on a propaganda campaign that has given rise to quite serious hopes; on June 14 last, it announced an 'anti-inflationary' plan which implies still more faithful compliance of the national economy with IMF 'recommendations'.

² The reference is to the major hydroelectric power project to be built on the middle reaches of the Parana, with Soviet assistance.—Ed.

³ This amount is commonly held to be made up of, among other things, remitted profits, less favourable terms of trade turnover, overstatements or understatements in foreign trade invoices and land rent speculation.

⁴ See *Clarín*, July 3, 1983.

⁵ See *Tiempo Argentino*, May 4, 1984.

⁶ For details, see *WMR*, No. 6, 1983, pp. 42-43.

⁷ See Fidel Castro, *La impagable deuda externa de América Latina y del Tercer Mundo, como puede y debe ser cancelada y la urgente necesidad del Nuevo Orden Económico Internacional*, Havana, 1985.

The Vanguard's Guiding Role in Socialist-Oriented Development

Ali Nasser Muhammad – CC General Secretary, Yemen Socialist Party, Chairman, Presidium of the Supreme People's Council, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen

THE growth of the Yemen Socialist Party's guiding role in the various areas of our society's life is a natural phenomenon springing from the objective needs of the country's onward development. Material and cultural progress objectively heightens the significance of the conscious, organising element, whose enhancement is the decisive subjective prerequisite of the successful advance and consummation of the process of transition to socialism.

The extension of the magnitude and the complication of the tasks related to socio-economic and cultural development increasingly require an ever higher level of scientifically substantiated political and organisational leadership. This need comes also from the spread of the creative activity of the people, their increasingly active participation in the administration of the state and in production management, and the steady development of democracy in society. Other factors that must be taken into account are the rising significance of the propagation of scientific socialism, the education of the working people in the spirit of revolutionary theory and its principles, and an unceasing effort to extirpate survivals of the past in people's thinking.

Moreover, the growth of the party's leading role is linked to the character of the situation in our region and the world as a whole. The YSP is a militant contingent of the Arab national liberation and the world revolutionary movements. As a ruling party it bears a special responsibility for the outcome of the increasingly brutal and acute struggle in the Middle East between the forces of imperialism, Zionism, and reaction, on the one hand, and the forces of freedom, peace, and progress, on the other, a struggle that is a link of the global confrontation between socialism and capitalism. We are aware of this responsibility and strive to carry out our historic mission honourably, using our modest potentialities and relying on the support and solidarity of allies and brothers in the Arab world and the world over.

The foreign policy line of our party and government is entirely consonant with the country's domestic policy and is designed to ensure the external conditions conducive to the full attainment of the aims of the national democratic revolution oriented towards the socialist prospect. Underlying this line is our determined opposition to imperialism's strategy, to its aggressive militarist plans in the Middle East and other parts of the world, our striving to strengthen militant solidarity with the revolutionary movement of the Arab peoples, and expand and deepen all-sided cooperation with socialist countries, with the Soviet Union in the first place. Moreover, we are striving to promote internationalist links with the international working class movement and unite more closely than ever with peoples fighting for national liberation, social progress, and peace. It may be stated with confidence that this policy, charted and consistently implemented under the leadership of the Yemen Socialist Party, has significantly enhanced the prestige enjoyed by Democratic Yemen.

In the recent period society's life, the development of the revolutionary process in the country, and the global situation have posed us with some new vital problems. An analysis of these problems on the basis of scientific socialism and in the light of the theoretical and political provisions of the party Programme has become central to the

preparations for the Third YSP Congress in the party and throughout the country. There have been significant discussions in party organisations and work collectives of the working document adopted by the CC at its 14th plenary meeting last February. This document spells out the ideologico-political and organisational orientations of the preparations for the upcoming congress. It focuses the party's attention on realistically summing up what has been achieved, on drawing up and generalising positive experience, assessing successes on their merits, boldly revealing errors and shortcomings, and mapping out concrete ways and means for further progress. The preparations for the congress are seen as a militant task, whose successful fulfilment depends on a conscious and responsible approach to it by all organisations, functionaries and rank-and-file members, and a profound understanding by them of its political significance.

As the 'vanguard of the Yemeni working class acting in alliance with the peasantry, the revolutionary intelligentsia, and other strata of working people',¹ our party has no interests other than those of the working people. It sees the highest and only sense of its activities in serving the people, and precisely on this account is acting as the leader of the people. The party defines the prospects for society's development and charts the political line, works out the methods for implementing it, and organises control of compliance with adopted decisions. It guides society's economic, socio-political and intellectual life, and unites, coordinates, and directs the work of all the links of the administrative system. It defines the main tasks of state and public bodies and ensures the selection, promotion, and movement of all executive cadres.

However substantiated, realistic, and correct policy may be, it is no more than an empty sound if there is no organisation capable of bringing this policy to all the working people, showing them that it is correct, and mobilising them for putting it into effect. Constant, unbroken contact with the people and day-to-day leadership of their struggles and creative work spring from the essence of the aim for which our party has been formed and functions—the revolutionary transformation of society and the transition to socialist construction. This aim can only be achieved by constant political education and organisation of the people. Valid in its entirety here is the rule formulated by Lenin that 'the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we rouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary'.²

We regard work with people, in the various mass organisations, as one of the most important elements of political leadership. By its unremitting efforts on behalf of the working people's interests and by its tested and realistic programme guidelines and political line the YSP has won considerable, merited prestige among the people. But the status of society's leading force cannot be decreed once and for all. It has to be constantly reasserted and consolidated. This makes high demands of all party members, who have to be in the thick of the people, know their concerns and problems, and have the ability of finding the proper approach to every person. They have, in fact, to be always in the forefront—work indicators, level of consciousness, and in a moral respect. By their make-up, profound ideological commitment, and intolerance of shortcomings and survivals of the past they have to serve as models for everybody, and win confidence in the party.

The party's relationship with organs of state authority and economic management and with public organisations is likewise linked to the question of leading the people, of representing their interests. Our point of departure is the underlying thesis of scientific socialism, which declares that state power is one of the key instruments for radical socio-economic, political, and cultural changes. The alignment of class forces and the character of authority undergo changes as these transformations come about and the revolutionary process develops. The class essence, the people's democratic content of this authority deepens.

As the ruling party, the YSP holds the central place in the political system in Democratic Yemen. This priority over state bodies is one of the features characterising political life in the present epoch generally, regardless of the social system in one country or another. It is the party in power that forms the government, decides on who is to fill top posts in the government, and defines domestic and foreign policy. At the same time, the YSP's status differs qualitatively from that of any ruling bourgeois party. Together with the state authority it represents not a privileged exploiting minority but all the working people, in other words, the vast majority of the population. Moreover, since the most advanced members of the working class and other strata of working people unite in the party, it receives not only the legal but also the moral right to head society in accordance with the interests of the working people and the principles of scientific socialism.

The building of the country's state apparatus, notably the procurator's office and people's control bodies, has been completed during the past few years. The perfection of legislation has continued and new acts have been passed fostering socio-economic progress and the reinforcement of constitutional legality. The measures that have been taken to make the people's councils of different levels more efficient and enhance the role of state organs in mapping out and controlling compliance with domestic and foreign policy have justified themselves.

In the process of building the state apparatus there were weaknesses and negative aspects—inflation of personnel, inadequate knowledge of the scientific principles of leadership, miscalculations in the placing of cadres, bureaucratic propensities in the actions of some executives, and a low level of executive discipline. Some executives, especially in managerial bodies, were selected and promoted not on the basis of objective criteria but on family-tribal, parochial, and other considerations. These practices, representing a burp of outworn social relations, were not cut short resolutely and opportunely in all cases. Moreover, there were cases of an unjustified, subjectively-motivated distrust for cadres.

Previous party forums had compellingly and concretely shown the harm of misconceived ideas, that are spread from time to time, about the character of the relationship between party organisations and the administrative-managerial apparatus. In some cases party organisations acted instead of this apparatus, taking over its functions, and in others attempts were made to use administrative measures in order to belittle the role of leadership by the party. Instead of harmony and efficiency there were conflicts, lack of coordination. We consider that it is vital and urgent to remove shortcomings of this kind. For this purpose it is necessary to draw more attention to the theoretical and practical training of officials of state agencies, to improve the organisation of the work as a whole, to apply the principles of scientific management creatively, and to strengthen executive discipline. Our party attaches particularly great significance to drawing into administration as many working people and their organisations as possible. Party organisations have to invigorate political and ideologico-educational work among officials of the state apparatus in order to foster its development and turn it into an effective instrument for the creative implementation of the party's political guidelines.

The trade unions, the people's defence committees, the League of Yemeni Democratic Youth, and other public organisations are an indispensable channel of the YSP's contacts with the people, an instrument for mobilising the people to put deep-going socio-economic reforms into effect. They play a very large role, expressing and championing the interests of the social strata represented by them, helping the people to control the work of the state apparatus, and accentuating the people's democratic character of our political system. We do not intend to relax our efforts to assert democratic principles in the life of these organisations, enlarge their mass base, and reinforce them with trained cadres devoted to the party.

An expression of the leading, guiding mission of the YSP as a party of the new type is that it in fact embodies the objective need for linking scientific socialism with the Yemeni working class movement, ensuring a constant and unbreakable bond between theory and practice. 'Without revolutionary theory,' Lenin wrote, 'there can be no revolutionary movement. . . . *The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory.*'³

The theoretical provisions that our party addresses to the working people are not an invention. They express, 'in general terms, actual relations springing from an exacting class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes'.⁴ In other words, the party gives the people a scientific theory that explains actual laws of society's development and allows the working class and all other working people to understand the conditions, aims, and prospects of their struggle.

One or another form of the class confrontation predominates at each stage of the revolutionary process. In our country the prevailing form today is the sharp ideological collision between the YSP's course, which expresses the interests of the working classes and strata, and the course of the forces of imperialism and reaction with their efforts to undermine the progressive social system in Democratic Yemen. These are efforts to reduce our system to the traditional model of a state that is formally independent but in fact subordinate to neocolonialism, to distort and emasculate the essence of the socialist orientation chosen by the people. The struggle for minds continues unabated, and as a whole the situation today is characterised by a wider dissemination of the ideas of scientific socialism, which are becoming an effective factor of society's intellectual life. A new social consciousness is taking shape—the consciousness of the working class with its inherent revolutionary approach to reality and to the tasks of remaking this reality. However, old reactionary customs and values still retain their influence, thus reflecting the socio-economic and cultural backwardness inherited from the epoch of colonial slavery.

In combination with the inevitable difficulties of development and with circumstances of a subjective order—lack of experience and of properly trained cadres—this bitter heritage is a major hindrance to the ideological education of the people. So far the ideas of scientific socialism are spreading chiefly to cover more ground. Hence the special significance of effectively repulsing the actions of the ideological adversary, who has considerable experience of bringing psychological influences to bear. He is actively trying to use survivals of outdated social relations and also the fact that the scientific approach to the realities of life has not yet sunk deep roots in society and that petty-bourgeois thinking is still strong. Our enemies are using the situation in the region in their efforts to plant 'consumer society' stereotypes and values in the minds of the people and advocate the way of dependent parasitical development, which is incompatible with the socialist orientation.

In order to raise ideological and educational work to the level of the aims of the present stage and to inhibit and paralyse the influence of imperialist propaganda, we feel it is necessary to make ideological propaganda more effective. We mean to inject more planning and purpose into this work, to coordinate various actions more efficiently, and place them on the level of an object discussion of specific problems. We are trying to develop ways and means of approaching different social strata on the basis of a correct understanding of their sentiments, inclinations, and specific status in society. Of course, we are endeavouring to build up the material basis of ideological work and boost the training level of propagandists. We are setting up propaganda groups at regional and provincial party committees, drawing up work methods for them, reinforcing our ideological cadres, and appointing the best trained and tested comrades to this sector.

The ideological and political tempering of members and probationary members of the YSP on the basis of scientific socialism and proletarian internationalism has been

and remains the main aim of the system of party education. Despite the advances that have been made in this area, there is still a need to improve its content and methods. This means ensuring the conditions in which party members can assimilate revolutionary socialist theory more profoundly, becoming more convinced that it is correct, growing more vigilant in political terms, widening their educational horizon, and acquiring the ability to lead the working people.

We see the purpose of ideological work in basically restructuring the social consciousness, in delivering it from the influence of reactionary notions, of bourgeois norms, values and ideals. In other words, the molding of the new citizen, who is armed with a scientific world-view and approaches problems of social development from consistently class positions, a citizen who consciously, militantly, and with a lofty sense of responsibility takes part in the process of revolutionary social renewal.

The circumstance that the YSP is a ruling party is not a guarantee of its leading position in society, and does not signify that its decisions will be carried out automatically and without hindrance. The leading role does not materialise by itself. It calls for complex work and colossal effort.

Ideological, political, and organisational unity is indispensable for successful work by the party. This unity has been and is the foundation of its ability, in the face of any difficulties, to lead in the struggle for national and social liberation, in progress along the road opening up the socialist prospect. Party unity rests on the principles of class consciousness and voluntary work, and it requires organisation, perseverance and militancy. Of course, the foundation of foundations is ideological unity, but this alone is not enough. In a party of the new type, in a party of revolutionary action, ideological unity must be and is reinforced 'by the material unity of organisation which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class'.⁵

In our approach to this issue we are guided by a concrete assessment of the specifics of the YSP's social composition: quite a few of its members from among workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals, and other strata of working people are still susceptible to the influence of non-proletarian, often even precapitalist ideas and notions. This is a consequence of the fact that the influence of the petty-bourgeois element is still strong in the country, while the working class, despite its active role in the national liberation and social struggle, is only continuing to work for the leading position in the balance of class forces and the system of political relations. Moreover, we should bear in mind the complexity and duration of the process of the transition of revolutionary democrats to scientific socialism, a process that takes place against the background of an acute class struggle which assumes diverse forms.

All the greater then is the responsibility of YSP members, whose duty is to implement the party's line purposefully and energetically, to safeguard it against all sorts of attack, to take a conscious attitude to their duties and to the fulfilment of their tasks, and steadfastly comply with the norms and principles of inner-party life.

We attach the utmost importance to enlisting new members into the party, to screening and carefully selecting those who wish to join. During the past five years the YSP membership has grown visibly, now numbering over 30,000 people. This is a natural process springing from the steady rise of the party's prestige among the people and the growth of its leading role in society. But we are not speeding this process. The party admits to membership only those who have in fact proved that they are joining it consciously and voluntarily, that they are motivated not by a desire to get some advantages and privileges but by a need to join the ranks of revolutionary fighters for the cause of the working people. In this context special significance is acquired by efforts to bring the party's proletarian make-up more sharply into focus, to heighten the representation of workers in it in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Changes have taken place in the country's social structure as a result of socio-

economic reforms. These are heterogeneous changes, for they continue to be determined by the multiplicity of economic systems, but all in all they are consistent with the interests of democratic renewal. Economic development has led to a growth of the working class in terms of numbers and of its proportion to the rest of the population. The decisive factor here is the expansion of the state sector, whose contribution to the gross national product rose from 41.6 per cent in 1980 to 46.2 per cent in 1983. However, the most advanced and organised contingent of the proletariat—factory workers—remains numerically small. The working people are greatly fragmented among small enterprises. The bulk of them, as I have already noted, still do not have a high level of class consciousness. The surmounting of these negative phenomena is not an overnight matter. It takes time and hard work.

Democratic centralism underlies the structure and the entire work of the YSP. It embodies an inseparable coupling, an organic synthesis of centralised leadership and broad inner democracy, and is the guarantee of meaningful party policy permeated by unity of thought and will. Moreover, it is the condition of the party's high level of organisation and mobility, and of the unity of its ranks.

As was shown compellingly by Lenin, democracy and centralism are not two different concepts but two sides of one and the same principle. Together they comprise the pivot around which all inner-party relations are built. Disregard of any of these two aspects is fraught with serious consequences.⁶ A formal interpretation of party democracy may generate organisational and ideological looseness, negligence and a weakening of the party's militancy. On the other hand, excessive centralisation kills initiative, gives party work the features of administration, and turns party organisations into a purely executive authority.

Phenomena of this kind—formalism and armchair administration—were to be observed in some YSP organisations. The planning of party work was reduced to the submission 'to the top' of the relevant papers, while the work itself was reduced to the drawing up of reports, the adoption of resolutions, and the mechanical implementation of directives from higher bodies. This adversely affected the day-to-day ideological and political education of party members and all the working people, control of compliance with adopted decisions, and the contacts with the people. The party has a powerful weapon against these harmful tendencies, and this weapon is collective work by leading organs from top to bottom. This is the guarantee against subjectivist, one-sided decisions and ensures an in-depth discussion of all matters and an account of the opinion of competent comrades. The experience and knowledge of one, even the most outstanding, leader cannot replace the experience and creative strength of the collective. But this collectivism does not mean the obliteration of individuality; on the contrary, it presupposes personal responsibility for compliance with jointly approved decisions.

In the development of inner-party democracy and in improving the methods of the party's work an immense role is played by criticism and self-criticism. Aware of its revolutionising significance, the YSP constantly has recourse to this tested ideological and organisational instrument. Criticism and self-criticism help us to promote the political and production activity of party members, bring difficulties to light, chart the ways and means of transcending them, and ensure the mobilisation of the entire people to achieve social progress.

Inner-party democracy does not exist in isolation from party discipline, whose essence is determined chiefly by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard, by its devotion to the cause of the revolution, by its ability to establish contact with and draw close to the workers and other strata of the working people and, lastly, by the correctness and scientific substantiation of the party's political strategy and tactics, by the ability of its members to make the people see this on their own experience. This discipline is achieved in the process of revolutionary struggle, in a

situation in which revolutionary theory is assimilated creatively. Its foundation is the understanding by every party member of his or her responsibility for the people's future.

We who in this corner of the Arab world bear the banner of struggle for the triumph of socialism face a hard but noble task, that of perseveringly strengthening the party's unity, enhancing its vanguard role, ensuring the durability of the progressive political system, and deepening the ongoing socio-economic reforms. More than ever before the Yemeni workers, peasants, and intellectuals, members of the YSP in the first place, are determined to discharge their duty of defending the revolutionary gains, building up the country's economic and defence potential and surmounting the weaknesses and miscalculations encountered in the course of the revolutionary process. This will ensure our progress along the road we have chosen to follow.

¹ *Programme of the Yemen Socialist Party*, Aden, 1978, p. 1 (in Arabic).

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 498.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, pp. 369, 370.

⁴ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 498.

⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 415.

⁶ This is considered in detail in the article 'Regarding the Ideological Foundations of Democratic Centralism', in this issue.

Normalisation of World Economic Ties: A Vital Task of Our Day

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CONSIDERABLE changes are under way in the modern world, with new processes transforming the structure of international relations, and it is important to analyse them from the standpoint of the prospects for political development and for economic cooperation between socialist and capitalist states.

In the context of the overall situation on the globe, not all these processes appear to be favourable; what is more, many of them are a source of alarm. The greater the impact of global phenomena on the state of affairs in the individual countries and regions, the more justified this alarm is. For all the fundamental distinctions between the economic organisations of the capitalist and the socialist countries, there is ever greater interdependence and internationalisation of economic life in the modern world. Many negative tendencies and contradictions inherent in the economy of the imperialist powers, notably the United States, are regrettably, being internationalised.

International tension, which has markedly grown through the fault of the aggressive circles of imperialism, above all US imperialism, goes to increase the threat of a global thermonuclear conflict and to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability for business cooperation between countries with different social systems. The militarists have taken the line of confrontation and the achievement of

military superiority, and have been whipping up the arms race in an effort to secure their foreign-policy and external economic interests by force. All of this tends to destabilise international relations, to divert vast funds from productive use, slow down social progress and to have a negative effect on the development of world exchanges.

The anti-detente processes run into irreconcilable conflict with the economic cooperation of states belonging to the two social systems, and there is fairly clear awareness of the fact among bourgeois economists as well.¹ The economic and political factors of detente mutually determine each other, although politics undoubtedly has the last say. That is why one cannot expect any substantial progress in trade between socialist and capitalist countries without an improvement of the international political climate. But the system of international economic ties itself requires improvement. Most states on our planet, especially the developing states, suffer from its present state of disrepair, which also does some harm to the interests of the socialist world.

Following the gravest postwar crisis of 1980-1983, there is evidence of some revival in the economy of some capitalist countries, but the effects of the crisis have far from been overcome. In 1984, industrial output in the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was only just above the 1979 level. Following two years of reduction and stagnation, the volume of world trade has begun to increase (in constant prices).

For all that, unemployment—a record high for the past 40 years—remains an acute and explosive problem. It is true that the inflationary process in the capitalist world has slowed down, but the growth of consumer prices in the OECD countries has, none the less, continued. The state of investment activity is of especial importance in correctly assessing their economic prospects, and in Europe it is still flabby, mainly because the level of loading at the existing production capacities is low. Although profits have gone up somewhat, profitability remains at the lowest level in history. The maintenance of high bank interest rates signifies that it still pays to invest in finance rather than in fixed capital.

On the strength of those facts, the recovery which has started in the world capitalist economy can hardly be expected to become stable, in view of the numerous and complicated problems which weigh it down. Even the OECD's own forecasts for its member-states once again suggest some decline in economic growth rates.

The greatest source of alarm is the growth of military expenditures, which in the imperialist centres have assumed such proportions that they threaten to undermine not only international security, but world economic ties as well.

The international financial system, with a special role for the US currency, is being destabilised. The arms race and the drive for military superiority fall as a heavy burden on the US budget, with the vast deficits being increasingly covered through the national debt. The record government borrowing is the main reason for the excessively high bank-credit charges and the artificially spiralled value of the US dollar. The US Federal Reserve System's policy of keeping interest rates high, tends to stimulate an influx of capitals into the country and to force other states to keep their interest rates equally high in order to stem the drain on capital. The result is a situation which does nothing to encourage new investments by business, and so naturally tends to slow down economic growth. That, for its part, goes further to aggravate the problem of the US budget deficit, as the national debt interest rapidly approaches something like a fifth of total expenditures.

The US trade and balance-of-payments deficits have been steadily growing because the dollar's high exchange rate makes US exports less competitive, and imports, cheaper. The US government has been covering almost one-half of these deficits by attracting foreign capitals, whose influx is not yet being stemmed even by the prospect

of a lower exchange rate for the dollar, because profits from capital investment are much higher in the United States than they are in other countries. Besides, a recent change in US tax regulations has exempted foreign investor dividends from taxation. The money flowing into the United States is mostly used not for productive purposes, but for investment in banks or securities, and that is, of course, an unhealthy economic phenomenon.

One can hardly accept in all seriousness the view that the vast US trade deficit tends to stimulate the export of goods to the United States from other countries, and so also their economic recovery. In actual fact, there is a one-sided outflow of resources from the exporting countries, which goes to reduce investments in their own fixed assets. Besides, the artificially high exchange rate of the dollar has turned the United States into an exporter of inflation to the rest of the world, because buyers have to pay more and more for imports at dollar-denominated prices (such as energy resources). Many politicians and economists believe that the funnelling of vast amounts of money to the United States and the growing cost of imports tend to slow down the rate of development and lead to mass unemployment in Western Europe. France's Minister for the Reconstruction of Industry and Foreign Trade E. Cresson recently declared: '... America's monetary policy, which draws European capital toward the United States, prevents us from investing and, as a result, from modernising our economy and industries.'² A French journal says: 'The honour of unwillingly helping the US economic recovery has been bestowed on Europe and the Third World.'³ Let us add: and also the doubtful honour of funding the mammoth US arms programme.

If these financial mechanisms are allowed to operate for a long time, there is bound to be an explosion with grave consequences for all the states of the capitalist world.

In these conditions, the developing countries gigantic debt—according to IBRD estimates, \$900 billion at the end of 1984—poses an especial danger, since it requires annual payments of more than \$150 billion in debt servicing. Up to 50 per cent of the debtor countries' export revenues now goes into the servicing of their debt (as compared with 'only' 36 per cent in 1979).⁴ The net influx of resources into the developing countries in the form of credits, capital investments and official aid from the OECD countries has given way to a net outflow,⁵ which further narrows down the Third World's already limited potentialities for economic development.

International financial mechanisms in the world capitalist economy have become a powerful instrument for the redistribution of incomes in favour of the imperialist powers, while the developing debtor countries find themselves in a state of bondage. Their ability to pay is not improving, because their attempts to increase their export revenues keep running up against almost insuperable barriers. After all, the first thing they have to do is to pull themselves out of the grave economic crisis in which they were plunged under the impact of the recession in the leading capitalist states, to achieve high rates of economic growth, and to increase export-oriented production, primarily of manufactured goods. There is bound to be a need for expanded imports of machinery, equipment, spare parts and materials for maintaining and developing the national industry, while the burden of debt-servicing payments and the dwindling export revenues keep working the other way, towards a reduction of imports. Besides, the decline in demand and the worsening of the terms of trade are having a negative effect on exports from developing countries; from 1980 to 1983, they dropped by 26 per cent. The US economist W. Klein has estimated that in 1981 and 1982 these countries lost \$79 billion only from the sagging prices of the fuel and raw materials they export.

Analysing the problem of the Third World's ability to pay its debts in the context of the Latin American region, Fidel Castro, First Secretary of the CP Cuba CC, emphasised in an interview with the newspaper *Excelsior* that all the calculations and all economic, political, historical and moral considerations 'lead to the conclusion

that Latin America's external debt cannot be repaid and must be written off'.⁶ A 10-12 per cent reduction of the military expenditures of the creditor states as a source for covering the developing countries' external debt could be a reasonable solution of the problem.

The solution of the acute financial and monetary problems is being complicated by protectionism. Assuming global proportions, it now no longer necessarily takes the form of higher customs tariffs: it is much trickier and more diverse, including import quotas, 'voluntary' limitation of exports and tough regulations. It has been estimated that the industrialised capitalist countries spend from 3 to 5 per cent of their national income on subsidising their producers and exporters. The efforts to protect them from foreign competition were first made only in agriculture, but they now also involve various industries.

These are primarily lines of production which find themselves in dire straits because of rapid technical progress or short-sighted technical and economic policies. They include both 'old' industries—metallurgy, automobile-making, the rubber industry, ship-building, and textiles—and modern ones like home electronics. The industrialised countries, says an Indian newspaper, continue to preach morality to the developing countries about the need to liberalise their imports, while they themselves ever more extensively resort to tariff and non-tariff restrictions to keep the developing countries' exports out of their own markets.⁷ Roughly 40 per cent of the exports from Asian, African and Latin American countries, and an even higher percentage of exports from the socialist countries are being subjected to various kinds of restrictions.

Why this resort to protectionism? It is frequently motivated by the need to protect jobs, but this is not so. In actual fact, the profits in the protected industries are used to introduce modern technologies which have the effect of reducing employment.

There is no justification for financially and industrially strong capitalist powers using protectionism to entrench their domination in the world economy and to exploit the former colonial periphery.

The various discrimination measures used by imperialism in trade with developing and socialist countries are in crying contradiction with the need to improve the health of the world economy. What is especially intolerable is the use of trade bans, and credit and technological blockades to exert political pressure. However, these methods are being continuously used by the United States and also by other NATO countries under its influence.

Whenever the imperialist powers block some channel of economic exchanges with the developing and the socialist world, they narrow down the potentialities for their own exports and are deprived of important marketing outlets. Meanwhile, if the effects of the grave economic crisis are to be overcome, the United States, Western Europe and Japan are badly in need of invigorating their foreign trade—both with the developing and with the socialist states.

Major shifts in the arrangement of economic and political forces, in the structure and geography of world production, and in its technical basis exert an influence on international economic ties.

First, whereas trade between the metropolitan countries and the colonies used to have the leading role before the war, over the past 40 years it is trade between the industrialised capitalist countries themselves that has been most dynamic. Although the socialist states' share of world industrial output has gone up to one-third, there has been no proportionate increase in their share of trade. The developing countries account for about 9 per cent of the world's industrial output, but their involvement in world exports has fluctuated (21 per cent in 1960, 17 per cent in 1970, and 25 per cent in 1983), and has declined in the recent period.

Second, there is also evidence of substantial shifts in the relation of economic and

export potentials of the United States, Western Europe and Japan. In the early postwar years, the world capitalist economy characteristically had one centre, but it now has three imperialist world centres in rivalry with each other. Since the latter half of the 1970s, there has been a tendency towards a relative weakening of the economic strength of the West European centre.

Third, striking changes are under way in science and technology, and the world economy has not been spared their effects. Electronics, robots and manipulators, nuclear power, space technology and jet flight, sensitive and super-precision control and measuring instruments, new materials, and biotechnology are among the science-intensive technologies which tend to revolutionise production, transit and communications, to raise labour productivity, and open up fresh potentialities for a marked rise in living standards. Software, the most refined and capital- and labour-intensive product of scientific and technical creativity, is acquiring exceptional importance for national and world economies.

The leading powers are increasingly concentrating the manufacture and export of high-technology products in the capitalist world, while many traditional and less sophisticated lines of production, especially those in a state of decline or polluting the environment, are being gradually transferred to the periphery—the developing countries. Among them are textiles, industries of the fuel and energy complex, metallurgy, chemicals, the assembly of engineering and electronic products, etc. From 40 to 60 per cent of exports from some Third World countries consist of leather goods, garments, radio and photographic goods, household electrical appliances, communications facilities, travel and athletic goods, toys, and ornaments.

However, the transfer of a part of the production capacities from the industrialised to the developing countries is a haphazard process which takes no account of the latter's vital interests. Since the decisions are taken by individual transnational corporations, instead of the governments concerned, the structural shifts in evidence in the economy of the leading imperialist powers (so-called re-industrialisation) and of the developing countries are not in any way tied in with each other. That hampers the establishment of a rational division of labour and leaves the shaping of it to the play of market forces. That is why the emergence of 'new industrial states' goes to intensify the competitive fight on the world capitalist markets.

Fourth, cheap labour-power is the main economic prerequisite for a rapid development of exports from these countries, but the importance of this factor could be markedly weakened by the fresh twist in the scientific and technical revolution spiral which involves automation, the use of robots, energy-saving technologies, and so on, and so could once again bring about substantial shifts in the structure of world industry and trade. The capitalist states, which are now in the process of restructuring their economy, are confronted with the need to create new jobs for the manpower which is made redundant in the process of automation.

Fifth, there has been a gradual decline in the share of fuel and raw materials in international trade, giving way to an exchange of new hardware and technology. There is also a rapid expansion of the export of services, and not so much of the traditional ones, such as transport, insurance, communications and tourist travel, as of the new ones, like equipment leasing, computing and data processing, construction of turn-key projects and engineering, various consulting services, and the sale of licences. The value of service exports from the United States already comes to 40 per cent of its commodity exports.

With the ever growing role of the infrastructure of the world economy (transit, communications, data processing, banks, stock and commodity exchanges, storage facilities, etc.), the conflicting character of this development stands out in ever bolder relief: it is increasingly concentrated with the leaders of the capitalist world. By monopolising middle-man functions to a much greater extent than exports and

imports, the transnationals acquire tremendous power both over production and over consumption—to the detriment of the interest of many countries. It is estimated that the transnational corporations now control over one-third of world trade and handle up to two-thirds of the raw-material commodities and a sizeable part of the manufactures exported by the developing countries.

The urge to make scientific and technical progress mankind's common asset is quite natural, but for the time being the results of the scientific and technical revolution are unevenly spread. The industrialised capitalist countries derive ever growing advantages from their concentration of the modern scientific and technical potential. The 'brain drain' from the developing countries, which has acquired considerable proportions, helps a handful of imperialist powers to increase their one-sided appropriation of the fruits of scientific and technical progress.

Those are some of the features of the present global economic situation, which is highly unstable and undergoing major changes that merely intensify the contradictory nature of its development. The mechanism of the world economy does not accord with its new state and needs to be reformed.

For the time being there is no hope of any prescriptions being soon found for the treatment of such grave ailments, as this requires radical changes in socio-economic relations both within countries and between them.

The movement for a new international economic order opens up the prospect for democratising relations in the world economy and easing its inherent conflicts, but it is meeting with powerful resistance from those who find the status quo amenable.

It is not hard to anticipate that in a world divided into two socio-economic systems and two groups of states differing in development levels there will be sustained struggle for international cooperation based on genuine equality and mutual advantage, ruling out any discrimination and exploitation. Its objective is the complete equality and consideration of the interests of all the participants in international economic relations: socialist and newly liberated countries, and large, medium and small industrialised capitalist states.

It is now no longer possible to put one's trust in force solutions. The way out of the mounting difficulties can be opened only by voluntary, equitable and mutually advantageous cooperation and the formulation of a mutually acceptable economic strategy.

Within the structure of world trade, exchange between states with different social systems is relatively small—3-4 per cent of total volume—but in the recent period, the industrialised capitalist countries have accounted for up to 26-30 per cent of the socialist countries' foreign trade, which testifies to the considerable importance of these exchanges for us. Although the OECD countries' trade ties with the socialist countries are only a fraction of that they, too, Western Europe in particular, cannot afford to ignore this magnitude both for economic and for political motives.

However, for the time being such business cooperation is still going through hard times. In the first half of the 1970s, trade between the CMEA countries and the industrialised capitalist countries grew at an average of 22.7 per cent a year, in the latter half of the decade the rate dropped to 13.2 per cent, and in the early 1980s, the slowdown in the rate of trade growth gave way to stagnation. In the recent period there have been signs of some recovery, still a very unstable one.

CMEA Countries' Foreign Trade with Industrialised Capitalist Countries
(bln roubles, current prices)

	1975	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984*
Turnover	38.0	68.7	71.4	71.2	73.9	75.0
Export	14.6	32.8	33.7	35.8	38.6	40.0
Import	23.4	35.9	37.7	35.4	35.3	35.0
Balance	-8.8	-3.1	-4.0	+0.4	+3.3	+5.0

* Estimate

Source: CMEA Countries' Foreign Trade, Moscow, 1980 pp. 28, 34, 36; ibid., 1983, pp. 28, 35, 42 (in Russian).

The socialist countries' present business relations with the non-socialist world cannot be considered normal. Apart from the overall worsening of the international situation, they are being influenced by the state of crisis in the capitalist economy. The planned economic system and mutual cooperation have, of course, largely safeguarded our community from the impact of external economic elements, but have not made it entirely insensitive to that factor. It now hampers the clearance of debt and payment of interest on it, and complicates the export of raw materials, foodstuffs and finished products from the socialist states. In their relations with the non-socialist world, they incur losses because of the unfavourable export-import price ratio, the towering interest rates, the depreciation of the capitalist currencies, the protectionism, and the discriminatory trade and credit policies of the West. The restrictions on the purchase of the latest hardware and technology likewise do something to harm the interests of socialism.

Our community actively advocates the normalisation of the world economy, including relations with the industrialised capitalist states. That is favoured by the economic outlook in most CMEA countries. Up until 1983, the difficulties arising from the switch of the economy to the way of intensive development did, of course, make for some slowdown in the rate of economic growth, and the same difficulties also caused some narrowing of their export and import potentialities. The need to service freely-convertible currency debts also had an effect: the debt reduction was being achieved mainly through a curtailment of imports from the non-socialist world, since the expansion of export was heavily hampered by the protracted depression in the capitalist world. However, in 1983 and 1984, the state of affairs in the economy of most countries of our community improved. The rate of their economic growth increased by more than one percentage point, the balance of settlements with the West improved, the net hard-currency debt diminished and was made manageable.

The socialist countries have been setting a noteworthy example in organising international economic relations by their economic cooperation within the CMEA framework, which is based on the principles of equality and comrade solidarity, and also by their cooperation with developing states, which rules out any unilateral advantages and which ensures assistance in building up a modern national economy.

Considering that, if the old mechanisms of the world capitalist economy are preserved, a sharpening of its contradictions could result in a grave collapse, we advocate global negotiations on the most acute problems of the international economy. The CMEA economic summit held in Moscow in 1984 reaffirmed the community's constructive stand on the question of realising the proposals contained in the 'second basket' of the Helsinki Final Act. The socialist states want equitable scientific and technical cooperation with the West and a reciprocal extension of access

to high-technology markets. For their part, the imperialist powers, which have leading positions in some lines of science and technology, often seek to use not only to obtain economic advantages, but also to exert political pressures. Thus, the United States has imposed on its NATO partners a decision to intensify bans on the supply of high-technology products to the socialist countries.

The CMEA economic summit showed that in strengthening their collective economic potential, these countries do not at all try to fence themselves off from the rest of the world in the scientific and technical sphere, where exchanges and contacts are necessary. The only point is that one needs to be sufficiently strong in the vital areas of scientific and technical progress in order to resist blackmail and pressure, whenever necessary.

Many other problems which have accumulated in East-West economic relations also await their solution. In particular, the need to improve the commodity structure of exchanges is being keenly felt. On the one hand, the CMEA countries' exports to the developed capitalist countries are dominated by fuel, raw material and food products, which account for over three-quarters of the aggregate exports, and manufactures, for only a quarter, with machinery and equipment coming to 7 per cent. So far there is no sign of any shift in this area for the better. Such a structure of export opens up few prospects for its expansion. On the other hand, there is an undesirable decline in the CMEA countries' import in the share of investment goods: machinery, equipment, etc.

These structural problems can be solved only through an extension of East-West business contacts and an improvement of the economic terms of exchanges.

Socialist economic integration, which goes to increase the economic and technical potential of its participants, also expands the potentialities for maintaining stable and long-term trade and economic relations both with the developing and with the leading capitalist countries prepared to cooperate on the principles of equality and mutual advantage. The socialist community countries' external economic ties could act as a stabilising element in the world economy. For all the differences of interest, they are prepared to seek optimal solutions for its regulation, creation of favourable conditions for trade, achievement of the long-overdue restructuring of production and world trade, rational use of capacities, manpower resources, and raw and energy resources of the globe, and environmental protection.

It is important to consolidate and multiply everything positive that was achieved in international relations in the 1970s. This calls for constructive efforts by all states to strengthen mutual trust and develop equitable political and economic cooperation.

The main condition for improving the health of the world economy, and expanding international trade and aid to less developed countries is an end to the arms race, a start on the reduction of armaments, and the maintenance of the military-strategic equilibrium on ever lower levels. Every step along this way meets the aspirations of mankind and gives hope of averting a nuclear catastrophe and escape from many economic ills.

The new Soviet-US negotiations on arms control in three spheres give hope of saving hundreds of billions and even trillions of dollars from being 'jettisoned' (the effect of military expenditures, as Marx says in *A Critique of Political Economy*). This money could be used for other and much more appropriate and humane purposes, such as investment in major international projects for solving global problems, supply of food and medicines to the inhabitants of the poorest and most disadvantaged countries, and the development of industry, agriculture and science.

A suspension and termination of the arms race could result in considerable economic growth and invigoration of economic ties. It could mean the greatest conversion of the world economy in history, gearing it to the satisfaction of peaceful human wants, and thereby also taking the competition between the two different

social systems out of the military sphere and concentrating it in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

It is also important, of course, to work to improve the world economic situation irrespective of the outcome of the Soviet-US negotiations, for just as a reduction of armaments helps to improve the world economy, so a development of economic ties between states with different social systems helps to strengthen peace and revive the detente.

That interconnection was visually demonstrated over the past several years, especially by the phase of crisis in the world capitalist economy. The obstacles created by the US administration to the development of its ties with the socialist countries did not ease but aggravated the crisis. Members of the business world, especially those in Western Europe, who argued the importance of developing these ties have now proved to be right, and even the US administration is forced to reckon with the criticism of its policy of sanctions and embargo.

Two major interstate economic alliances—the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the European Economic Community—could play a big part in activating world economic ties in the existing conditions. Unfortunately, the establishment of direct contacts has been delayed, but the fact is that it could now help to improve the economic outlook in both parts of Europe and reduce the effects of the US monetary and financial policy, which poses a danger to Western Europe.

In short, the normalisation of the key conditions for the development of world economic ties, above all those between the capitalist and the socialist countries, is an essential prerequisite for solving the fundamental problems of our day and strengthening peace. All the nations stand to benefit from a change of international ties for the better.

¹ Jürgen Nötzold (FRG) says that so long as no agreement has been reached on security policy, there is an ongoing argument within the Western alliance about whether economic ties with the CMEA countries make sense from the political standpoint. *Europa-Archiv*, No. 14, 1984, p. 438.

² *Newsweek*, February 18, 1985, p. 52.

³ *Monde diplomatique*, June, 1984, p. 13.

⁴ Review and Appraisal of the International Development Strategy of the Third UN Development Decade. UN DOC. 4/39/115 E/1984/49, p. 9.

⁵ According to the IBRD, the net influx of capital from private sources into the Third World (about \$16 billion in 1981) gave way to a new outflow (\$7 billion in 1982).

⁶ *Granma*, March 30, 1985.

⁷ *Times of India*, June 12, 1984.

the party

Grassroots Activity Growing

Horst Dolhus – Political Bureau member and Central Committee Secretary, Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED)

PREPARATIONS for the Eleventh Congress of the SED, in April 1986 are in full swing throughout the GDR social fabric. The atmosphere of optimism and enthusiastic work highlights the role of primary organisations: they are the centres of the party's political activity and the organisers of the effort to implement the truly popular policy mapped out by the SED Central Committee; they create a climate of trust in the party's relations with working people. Guided by the directives in the speech of Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the SED Central Committee, at its Tenth plenary session and in the session's documents on the party election campaign, primary organisations, acting in close alliance with work collectives, are doing their utmost to fully implement the decisions of the Tenth Congress of the SED. The 2.2 million party members and candidate members have set themselves the task of attaining high production levels so as to create the best possible conditions for the building of developed socialism in the years ahead.

Preparations for the congress have demonstrated the mobilising power of the tried and tested course of the SED—that of ensuring unity of economic and social policy in the tackling of the principal task.¹ Remarkable movements in the sphere of production have been launched throughout the country, with the aim of turning the pre-congress year of 1985 into a particularly successful page in our country's history, a year of major accomplishments in the job of comprehensively strengthening the GDR. Good conditions have been created for this: in 1984 our national income increased by 5.5 per cent, net industrial output by 8.5 per cent, and labour productivity by 7.7 per cent. Working people are successfully striving to fulfil and, in some cases, to overfulfil the national-economic plan quotas for the current year. The country's combines have promised the SED Central Committee to exceed the target for net product by 1.7 billion marks (the three-day total) and for labour productivity, by one per cent. This means that the objectives of the socialist emulation campaign in honour of the Eleventh SED Congress are not easy ones at all.

The Communists are at the head of the movement, a fact confirmed, among other things, by the reports party organisations, work collectives and mass organisations made to mark the 40th anniversary of the victory over Hitlerite fascism and the liberation of the German people. The maturity and activity of the Communists have increased, and so has working people's confidence in SED policy. Its results fill the

hearts of party members and all our citizens with pride and encourage them to make their work even more effective. Life has demonstrated again that the SED acts in the name of the people and enjoys their confidence, and that its decisions serve the interests of the masses. Our party has always held that close unity of its ranks and firm links with the masses are indispensable for further progress. The SED is the core of the country's political system, the politically conscious and organised vanguard of the working class and all other working people.

We maintain that the present stage and the new conditions of struggle make greater demands on the way a Marxist-Leninist party discharges its leading role; the responsibilities of its primary organisations are therefore increasing, and for the following reasons:

- the steadily widening scope of the social transformations connected with the building of developed socialism; these processes are becoming intertwined more closely and intricately both nationally and internationally;

- the growing role of the GDR working class as the subject of political power and prime motive force of society; constant efforts to strengthen the union of workers, members of farmers' cooperatives, intellectuals and all other working people remain at the centre of the SED's attention;

- the great demands of the SED's present economic strategy aimed at making the fullest possible use of the GDR's material resources and intellectual potential and thus attaining an objectively necessary economic growth rate that would make continued unity of economic and social policy possible; the effort to raise labour productivity is entering a new stage in this context;

- the need for continued promotion of cooperation with the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries in the drive to strengthen socialism and peace. The common approach to the development and improvement of comprehensive ties and to close cooperation in the political, economic, ideological and other fields was reiterated at the meeting of Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, with the leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries in Moscow in March 1985; the SED is fully committed to this approach and dedicated to its internationalist duty;

- the increased gravity of the class confrontation with imperialism and the threat to peace and human survival stemming from the man-hating policy of US imperialism.

All this makes increased demands on the militancy of each of the more than 58,200 primary and 26,800 shop organisations of the SED, on the leading role of its bodies, and on the personal political example each Communist should set everywhere: at the enterprise, in the work collective and in his neighbourhood.

Steady growth in the militant effectiveness of primary organisations, lively work among the people and efforts to mobilise them to fulfilling social tasks are extremely important for the SED to exercise its leading role successfully.

Acting in accordance with its Programme and Central Committee decisions, the party is directing and organising the development of society, above all through the everyday activities of its grassroots elements, through the Communists. They are the SED's direct links with the working masses, and it is their activity that is enhancing the party's strength and influence, for they play the key role in the life of the party. Hence a vital task of its governing bodies is to tangibly assist and direct grassroots elements, because they provide the framework in which each Communist conducts most of his political work and in which party decisions are conscientiously implemented.

The Communists working at the centrally-run industrial and construction combines² bear a particularly great responsibility because these big economic organisations are the backbone of our planned socialist economy and employ experienced collectives of workers, scientists, researchers and managers. The results

of their efforts largely shape the dynamics and stability of the GDR economy.

The party is working tirelessly to ensure that the level of ideological, political and organisational activity of primary organisations at the combines should rise with the growing complexity of their tasks. It is especially important to strengthen these organisations at the leading enterprises of the combines, improve their work on the basis of special programmes of action, enhance the political efficiency of the party secretaries councils,³ hold regular consultations with activists, and set up Communist groups for promptly dealing with any matter in key sectors of production. Last year, these primary organisations admitted over 23,400 candidate members; 89.6 per cent of them are employed directly in production. This highlights the SED's close ties with the working class and adds to the party's strength and prestige at the combines.

Our party has always believed that systematic efforts to raise the political and theoretical level and improve the occupational skills of the SED's members and cadre are a decisive factor contributing to greater militancy of primary organisations. Party courses are the most widespread form of political education: attended by 1.5 million people, they arm Communists with the knowledge of Marxism-Leninism and promote their ability to conduct mass political work in a lively and convincing manner. Over 90 per cent of primary organisation secretaries, 77 per cent of party bureau members and 45.6 per cent of all SED members and candidate members have completed party-school courses lasting three or more months. Since the Tenth Congress, more than 244,400 Communists have increased their knowledge in district schools and at factory courses of party education. This has noticeably enhanced the militancy and ideological firmness of SED organisations at the grassroots level and enlarged the well-trained cadre of the party.

The SED Central Committee sends detailed information about its decisions to all organisations up to and including collectives at the local level; district committees conduct seminars and help to train and educate candidate party members. In this way we not only place great responsibility on primary organisations but also create conditions that enable them to honourably discharge their duties.

The election campaign began in the primary organisations this month, and special importance is attached to it in connection with the preparations for the Eleventh Congress. To make a new contribution to the strengthening of our socialist republic, to the consolidation of peace for the sake of our people's wellbeing and human happiness is the foremost objective of the campaign which relies on each Communist's great social activity and on the firm links between the party and the masses that are confident in it.

As the Eleventh Congress approaches, primary organisations and all our citizens are engaged in a lively discussion of the future tasks and demands of socialist construction and of the topical issues raised by the struggle for peace and social progress.

'The party is wherever there is a single Communist.' Proceeding invariably from this principle, leading SED bodies strive to have each Communist active in the day-to-day struggle to implement CC decisions, and give particular attention to ideological and political education which is at the heart of all party work. We link political education closely with the fulfilment of economic tasks, differentiate our ideological activities, recruit hundreds of thousands of well-trained people for political work among the masses and teach Communists to conduct a serious dialogue with working people, the paramount party mission of every SED member and organisation.

Primary organisations are increasingly focusing their efforts on economic matters. This is borne out by mass movement for a worthy welcome to the forthcoming congress. The common slogan of this movement, launched jointly with the trade unions, is, 'High performance for the good of the people and for peace! Forward to

the Eleventh SED Congress!' Combines, plants, factories and production cooperatives have added other slogans expressing the essence of many valuable initiatives that have generated a broad response far beyond the boundaries of individual combines and industries, and have even spread throughout the national economy—such as the initiative 'Fewer workers producing more goods'. The slogans drawn up in close cooperation by SED primary organisations, trade unions and the youth organisation include 'Higher performance means stronger peace', 'Compare performance for better results', 'Farming experience Plus Science equals bumper crops' and 'Working hours are the time to produce'.

The prime task of any combine, any economic agency and the entire national economy is, we believe, to follow the plan scrupulously every day, rule out the slightest lags, and do everything to ensure fulfilment and even overfulfilment of quotas—in accordance with the commitments undertaken by workers. This is precisely the objective of the programmes of action drawn up by primary organisations, the principal tool of the political guidance exercised by grassroots party organisations in the economic sphere. The practice of entrusting party members with specific assignments connected with the implementation of these programmes has also proved useful. A diversified effort in this direction is under way, for instance, at the leading enterprise of the petrochemical combine in the city of Schwedt. Under the common slogan 'Ideas—Solutions—Patents', collectives including special party representatives, are set up to fulfil definite assignments. Besides, special ad hoc groups of party activists are organised to focus their work on concrete assignments. In order to successfully fulfil the 1985 plan and additional commitments, primary organisations orient workers on the solution of scientific and technological problems and the fastest possible introduction of the results achieved into production.

Each of these mass movements is a result of the SED's political, ideological and organisational guidance of working people's efforts to fulfil the national economic plan.

We hold that in directing their efforts it is very important, first, to elaborate a thorough ideological substantiation of economic tasks. Success is possible only if the work is based on the workers' conviction that the party has taken the right decisions. Major objectives such as higher productivity at lower cost and maximum production efficiency attained through the introduction of new products and technologies demand that work collectives and their leaders change their thinking and increase its scope.

Second, to make comprehensive intensification of our economy a success, primary party organisations seek to exert a principled and comradely influence so as to improve the work of state and economic management agencies. The director-general of a combine, a foreman, and the head of a workteam are all political leaders of their collectives and organisers of production. They must discharge their functions ably. Primary organisations must make sure that man should always be at the focus of all efforts to implement our economic strategy. That is why the SED Central Committee insists that any careless attitude to proposals and critical remarks by working people or any negligence in implementing party decisions must be ruled out because this could weaken the people's confidence in the party.

Third, the new stage in the implementation of the SED economic strategy makes increased demands on the political and professional efficiency of the party cadre and all working people, on the personality of the working man. In order to ensure the economic surge planned for the 1990s, it is especially important to effectively use the higher level of working people's education and the considerable scientific and technological potential of the GDR. That opens up a broad field of activity for party organisations.

Fourth, continued unity of economic and social policy makes it incumbent on

primary organisations to take unflagging care that the struggle for high economic performance should be linked organically with the planned attainment of social targets. In other words, before any decision is taken, its political and social consequences should be thoroughly assessed, the aim being steady improvement of working and living conditions.

Fifth, it is important for the Communists to develop the ability to vigorously remove unwarranted differences between the principal aspects of the economic record of individual collectives. It is a major responsibility of party bureaus to thoroughly analyse each success and make it public knowledge.

In their drive to ensure vigorous fulfilment of economic tasks by every Communist and all other working people, primary organisations will, during the forthcoming election campaign, discuss ways of gearing political leadership still better to the demands of the present stage in the realisation of the SED's economic strategy, ways of ensuring, wherever this or that organisation operates, a level of production development consonant with the criteria of comprehensive intensification formulated by the SED Central Committee.

Further development and all-round consolidation of our socialist state is closely connected with the work of the 18,500 committees of the GDR National Front, and of mass and civic organisations. By vigorous involvement in their activities and comradely cooperation with them, the grassroots elements of the SED are in fact putting into effect a major aspect of the party's role as the leader of society. Each Communist's work in mass organisations, in people's representation bodies and in National Front committees is an important party assignment deserving all possible assistance and support and calling for systematic stock-taking, evaluation and moral encouragement on the part of primary organisations.

This is particularly true of work in the trade unions, the school of socialism and the biggest mass organisation of working people,⁴ representing their interests and with great responsibility for all-round strengthening of our social system and stable economic development. As many as 550,000 SED members have been elected to plant, factory, and local trade-union committees.

The Free German Youth (FDJ), a union with a membership of 2.3 million, including 500,000 Communists, is also in the front ranks of the builders of socialism as an assistant and a militant reserve of the party. The SED expresses its appreciation of the accomplishments of young innovators at reviews of creative scientific and technological work and values the conscientious efforts of the 35,000 young men and women at central youth projects the union has sponsored. To welcome the forthcoming Eleventh Congress, the FDJ has launched a special production drive named after Ernst Thaelmann. The SED Central Committee has approved the FDJ Central Council's request that 100,000 FDJ activists—young workers and members of farmers' cooperatives—be admitted to the party as candidate members. SED primary organisations invariably extend comradely assistance to young people and work to raise new, militant comrades-in-arms for the party.

The SED attaches great importance to the perfection of life within the party and strives to make every Communist feel that he is respected in the primary organisation, that experience is shared with him, and that he is taught how to act in accordance with the party Rules on his rights and duties. An atmosphere that is open, sincere and creative and that helps in the shaping of truly comradely relations also means a great deal. SED leaders seek to make the efforts to explain to the Communists the interconnection between the party's policy and its specific practical application, and to mobilise SED members for real tasks should be the main content of the life of its grassroots units.

We hold that it is important for life within the party to keep stimulating the Communists to fresh activity, imbuing them with a purposeful and constructive

concern for what is new and promoting their ability to make up any lag. A highly demanding and comradely atmosphere gives an impetus to the collective wisdom of SED members, makes them more active and disciplined, helps to develop democracy within the party and promotes the Communists' joint action and close unity.

The SED wants primary organisations to be as effective and specific as possible, to concentrate their efforts on key questions and issues arising before Communists as they implement the decisions taken, and to pay due attention to party members' individual abilities and level of education.

Collective work of party committees, diversified involvement of party members in volunteer civic affairs, lively meetings for education, information, instruction, joint discussion of urgent issues, and exchange of experience—all of these are important facets of the drive to perfect life within the SED.

Since our party maintains close links with the masses and enjoys great prestige among them, new fighters for the common cause keep joining its ranks. Primary organisations bear a serious responsibility for the individual selection and admission of candidate members, for moulding them into SED members worthy of the name. In 1984, over 63,000 candidate members, including more than 45,000 industrial workers, were admitted. The share of the working class in the SED membership has increased to 58.1 per cent; members of farmers' cooperatives make up 4.8 per cent and intellectuals, 22.4 per cent. The party's social composition will continue to be regulated through primary organisations so that, in accordance with its programme, the SED should remain the conscious and organised vanguard of the working class, of all working people in the socialist GDR.

As demands on primary organisations increase, so does the role of the district committees that guide them and that have the duty to encourage creative independence of party collectives and their committees, to sum up advanced experience and realistically assess what has been accomplished.

In the course of preparing for the congress, many district committees have stepped up their everyday work and assistance to primary organisations; contacts between them have become firmer and more regular. The methods used include monthly conferences attended by party secretaries, improvement of party committee members' skills, classes for party activists, assistance from volunteer instructors, formation of special working groups, drives to assess results and exchange experience.

The SED Central Committee supports these efforts by the district committees. Our party will continue to do its utmost to have the primary organisations linking it directly with all working people tackle the tasks they face in a militant spirit.

¹ In the view of the SED, the principal task is to raise the material and cultural living standard, proceeding from high rates of production growth, greater effectiveness of scientific and technological progress and increased labour productivity.

² There are 167 such combines in the GDR, with more than 6,000 primary organisations of the SED comprising 562,000 party members and candidate members.

³ The council conducts regular conferences of the secretaries representing the party organisations of all combine enterprises. These coordinating bodies have been set up because some branches of the same combine may be located in different parts of the country, thus placing primary organisations within different territorial divisions.—*Ed.*

⁴ The Federation of Free German Trade Unions (FDGB) has 9.3 million members with industrial workers making up 51.4 per cent.

Guidelines for Mass Struggles

David Moraes – CC Political Commission member, Communist Party of Bolivia (CPB)

THE Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Bolivia (February 1985) met in a difficult and complicated situation notable for the deepest economic crisis ever experienced by the country and for disquieting signs of a political crisis.

The political and organisational decisions adopted by the Congress, the prospects it opened up and the unity it showed entitle it to be described as an outstanding event in the life of the party and the working class movement of the country.

The 577 delegates were elected by regional, special and local conferences.¹

Messages of greetings from allied and friendly Bolivian organisations aroused enthusiasm among the delegates. The Congress responded with long applause to greetings from 50 communist and workers' parties, including the fraternal parties of all the socialist countries, as evidence of solidarity on the principles of proletarian internationalism.

Both the Report submitted by J. Kolle Cueto, First Secretary of the CC, on behalf of the outgoing leadership and the debate gave much attention to the international situation. Speakers pointed out the gains of the forces struggling for peace, democracy, social progress and socialism, gains typical of the present epoch. They analysed the marked exacerbation of the contradictions of the capitalist system and exposed the insane plans of imperialism, which is pushing humanity to the brink of nuclear disaster in an effort to check the march of history. They stressed the role of the Soviet Union and the socialist community as a whole in the removal of the war danger and the significance of the struggle of all peoples for peace and national and social liberation.

The Congress approved a document which notes the prime importance of strengthening peace and resisting the war menace posed by imperialism and its bid to militarise space. It passed resolutions expressing solidarity with Cuba, Nicaragua and the peoples of El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile and other countries. Particular attention was devoted to the democratisation processes going on in the south of our continent.

Speaking of the external debt as a form of brutal imperialist exploitation, as well as of unequal exchange and IMF pressure, the delegates came to the conclusion that it is imperative to offer collective resistance to the transnational companies and financial capital and bring about a new international economic order.

The Congress spoke highly of the meetings held by the communist parties of South America and declared for similar meetings at world level, thereby confirming the party's desire to contribute to the unity of the communist movement.

Both the Report and delegates' speeches focused on the inner political and economic aspects of Bolivia's development since the Fourth BCP Congress (1979). They reaffirmed the party's earlier conclusion that democratic changes which had occurred after the downfall of the Bánzer regime in the late seventies and the miscarriage of attempts to preserve the dictatorship were primarily a result of mass struggles. The disintegration of fascist structures was also furthered by economic stagnation and crisis throughout the social reproduction system. Subsequently these adverse phenomena became more pronounced as the pace of inflation quickened and the people's living and working conditions declined, which had a decisive social and political impact.

The political processes that took place in the country in those years culminated in the rule of the Democratic Popular Unity (DPU) Front (October 1982-November 1984).

The Front, set up in the process of resisting the Bánzer dictatorship, comprised the Left Nationalist Revolutionary Movement, Communist Party and Left Revolutionary Movement as well as some other parties and groups expressing the interests of the working class, the peasantry, the middle strata and the democratic section of the bourgeoisie. Its popular, democratic and anti-imperialist substance was reflected in its programme, which blamed US imperialism and the domestic oligarchy for the backwardness and dependence of the country. Accordingly, the programme called for the establishment of 'a constitutional regime guaranteeing the people full exercise of their sovereignty and enabling Bolivia to achieve national liberation, independent economic development and genuine social justice'.²

The DPU Front won a majority in three elections but reaction invariably tried to thwart the democratisation process. One of the attempts to this end was the military fascist coup carried out after the 1980 elections by a group under García Meza associated with drug traffickers and set on imposing a regime obedient to imperialism and dependent on the domestic oligarchy. But terror against the working people and their democratic and revolutionary political organisations, the trade unions, peasants, student and human rights associations could not curb the anti-fascist resistance of the masses, DPU and other popular forces. This struggle, backed by a solidarity campaign of international progressive opinion, helped isolate the dictatorship and ended in the defeat of García Meza and his successors.

The result was a considerable extension of the opportunities and prospects of DPU as exponent of a government programme and an instrument of implementing it and an alternative to anti-popular rule.

Faced with the inevitable accession of DPU to power and unable to prevent it, the oligarchic sector of private enterprise and the right-wing parties put forward a 'democratic institutionalisation' plan that afterwards was supported by the Left Revolutionary Movement. The plan called for recognition of the 1980 election results, the convocation of parliament on their basis and the election of one of the three candidates who had won the largest number of votes to the office of President of the Republic.

The Communist Party rejected the plan. Considering with good reason that the representation of reactionaries in parliament was by no means a reflection of the political realities of 1982, it proposed new elections which could consolidate the alignment of forces in favour of DPU. The CPB position was backed by the Left Nationalist Revolutionary Movement.

However, a dramatic deterioration of the economic crisis and the legitimate hopes which the people placed on the future rule of the DPU Front plus their desire to end fascism and rightist domination as early as possible (all of which advocates of an 'institutional' solution skilfully exploited) necessarily told on the position of the Front leadership. It was compelled to agree to the immediate convocation of parliament, which elected Hernán Siles Zuazo, the DPU candidate, to be head of state.

The DPU regime was, in our party's opinion, a fact of historic significance. This is why the overall results of its activity received particular attention in the Report and the debate. It was a noteworthy aspect of the analysis made that, while noting the achievements of the DPU Front, we concentrated on difficulties and unsolved problems and their causes.

By the time the cabinet was formed, the Report said, the economic crisis inherited from earlier regimes had gone from bad to worse; the private sector refused to invest in production, capital flight was on the rise, illicit business had assumed unprecedented proportions, speculation was rife. The state apparatus was essentially paralysed.

When the implementation of the DPU programme became the order of the day a polarisation of forces began; the various classes, parties and public organisations

turned out to hold differing or even mutually contradictory views; the ideological struggle intensified. The limitations and dilatory character of the government's economic policy came out as the people, who continued to suffer from the crisis, made their demands.

While agreeing that an early solution was needed, the government put it off again and again. The Report pointed out that there was no clear-cut plan for financial and economic measures to end the crisis and liven up production.

The steps taken were purely traditional (barring a few) and out of keeping with the programme guidelines of DPU. This, in turn, led to a further devaluation of the peso and a decline in purchasing capacity and living standards while helping boost the profits of oligarchic groups, paradoxical as this may seem at first sight.

Although some of the measures proposed by the Communist Party were accepted, the inefficiency of the state apparatus in regard to taxes, finance and foreign exchange operations had a negative impact on wages policy as well. The government did not really implement its policy aimed at controlling the main economic levers, curbing and overcoming the crisis, stepping up production and providing conditions for a new model of economic growth. The possibilities of pursuing it gradually diminished due to contradictions and unfavourable changes in the alignment of forces.

The economic crisis closely interlocked with the political one. More and more evidently, it was imperative to reform government in order to carry out a democratic, popular and anti-imperialist programme. And as this could not be done, the outdated administrative mechanisms of a dependent capitalism became another factor hampering the government's efforts.

Against the background of a greatly intensified struggle for the implementation of the DPU programme and with due regard to the nature of the economic measures adopted by the government, the Communist Party in October 1984 put forward a package of fundamentally new proposals which provided for the participation of the working class and trade union movement in their implementation. These proposals were intended to avert a further drop in living standards and called for a reorganisation of foreign trade and finance, effective state participation in the distribution of consumer goods, and the nationalisation of some enterprises. To surmount departmental barriers detrimental to the public sector, the party called for the establishment of a central agency to improve management of the sector.

However, our initiatives failed to win approval because of contradictions among our Front partners and met with resistance from the ultra-leftist, sectarian part of the trade union leadership. Thereupon the Communist Party, which held two ministerial posts, decided with due regard to the interests of the working class and the people to step out of the cabinet, since 'the depth of the crisis, the blocking of the project from various sides, and the loss of time for the solution of economic and political problems due to the criminal offensive mounted by the Right and imperialism made it impossible for the present government to implement the project in the current artificially shortened constitutional period'.³

Making a general assessment of the democratic process, the Congress pointed out not only difficulties and shortcomings but positive developments. The more important of these were the defeat of the drug traffickers' fascist dictatorship, the formation and growth of the DPU Front, the programme drawn up by it, the electoral victories over fascists and rightists and the formation of a government involving the CPB as party of the working class.

While economic measures failed to curb the crisis to a sufficient degree and fell short of meeting the people's aspirations, neither did the IMF succeed in imposing its 'remedies'. Indeed, following a hard, bitter campaign, the government accepted some of our party's proposals reflecting the demands of the working class movement; it deferred debt payments to international private banks, authorised the public sector

and the state to import raw materials, food products and medicines, and introduced a mobile wage scale to maintain the purchasing power of wages.

Worthy of special note is the decision on worker participation in the management of COMIBOL, the biggest state mining company. The decision was of historic significance, for it legalised worker participation in production management. Furthermore, it was important in terms of the prospects for economic, political and social development. The population was drawn into large-scale preventive health care measures. Advances were made in foreign policy. Most important of all, the regime respected civil rights and freedoms.

The Congress concerned itself especially with the working class and trade union movement, which exerts considerable influence on diverse aspects of the nation's socio-political life, since it is chiefly through the unions that the working people carry on their struggles. Communists played a key role in actions against the Bánzer regime, above all during the formation of the Trade Union Unity Front, the reshaping of branches and leading bodies and the defence of workers' demands.

The working class offered the dictatorship under García Meza firm resistance. Members of our party made an invaluable contribution to the solution of complicated problems, including those of preserving illegal structures and restoring the legal mass trade union movement. The role of the movement under DPU rule was examined with due regard to the experience of the fight against the tyranny, a fight which was carried on under the banner of national and social liberation and coincided, in effect, with the trend of the DPU Front. Nevertheless, the opportunities which the masses had after October 1982 to participate in organised fashion in political, economic and social decision-making, and hence in the realisation of the programme, could not be used (with a minor exception).

This, as well as the stand taken by the trade union movement on certain other issues, shows that the concept of democracy of the masses formulated by the party and the slogan 'From both grassroots and the government' were not entirely taken up by popular forces.

This state of affairs is due, first of all, to our own omissions, contradictions within the cabinet and the impact of a deepening economic crisis. Some of the blame must be put on anarcho-syndicalist currents wielding a measure of influence in the trade unions, which opposed participation of the working class and other working people in political activity on the false plea that the trade unions are independent. Uniting on an anti-communist basis together with Trotskyists and other ultra-leftist groups, they tended to undermine the democratic process and to injure the organisation and unity of the working class movement by pursuing their sectarian, adventurist line.

Our party, it was said at the Congress, holds solid positions in the trade unions, which lend an attentive ear to its opinion. In spite of certain difficulties due to its participation in the government, the CPB is a political force enjoying higher prestige among the workers than any other party. It owes this to its correct strategy and the efforts of its activists, who maintain Marxist-Leninist principles in relations with the trade unions.

As part of a general political analysis, the Congress examined the role of parliament, the armed forces, the church and the employers.

Under DPU rule, delegates pointed out, parliament became a bulwark of reactionaries and rightists, a nest of plotters. Having secured a majority, they raised obstacles to the enactment of important laws meeting the interests of the people and the nation. Parliament became a battlefield where Communists gained new experience of struggle against the oligarchic system of dependence as they upheld the people's new option.

With reference to the problem of the armed forces, the Congress noted the existence of diverse trends among them. Alongside the 'dirty job' which Bánzerism

assigned to the military, recent years saw García Meza's successors relinquish power to the DPU Front. After October 1982, opportunities presented themselves for the consolidation of the group of officers and generals who proceed from the community of the interests of the military and the people while remaining loyal to corporate norms. This trend is evident but it cannot be regarded as irreversible.

When discussing the party's attitude to that section of the church which has associated itself with the people's liberation, the Congress reaffirmed the conclusions of the Fourth Congress; it stressed that the CPB seeks dialogue and cooperation with the Catholics and members of other religious groups.

Drug traffic and traffickers, a burning issue in Bolivia, claimed much attention at the Congress. Drug traffickers have armed units of their own and are in close contact with fascist elements. Their criminal business involved the 'Butcher of Lyons', Klaus Barbie, and still involves other European and Latin American fascists. Our party insisted again on the need to take proper measures to eliminate this disgraceful activity.

With regard to the formation of oligarchic economic groups, the Congress underlined that they are a product of capital concentration and centralisation. These groups command enormous resources derived from bank credits, public funds, speculation on difficulties caused by the external debt and increased exploitation of labour. Operating through the Confederation of Private Employers of Bolivia, they openly interfere in politics, and take part in the struggle for power. After October 1982 the oligarchy, backed by some cabinet ministers, put pressure on government agencies and tried to destabilise the situation; it called lockouts, closed down enterprises, suspended banking and commercial operations, and grossly violated laws and decrees on taxation, wages, and so on. All this went some way towards undermining the positions of the DPU government.

And so, with the struggle of the working class and other working people and progressive forces gaining momentum, the Communist Party together with its allies worked out as a realistic alternative to oligarchic rule a vastly important programme intended to develop a popular, democratic and anti-imperialist revolution. The implementation of this programme, which won indisputable popular support, was a major success of the CPB and its line.

Nevertheless, key provision of the programme could not be put into effect. The Front's setbacks were due above all else to imperialist and oligarchic intrigues. At the same time, contradictions within the Front and the government born of interests and concepts alien to DPU showed that not all our partners were determined to meet their historical commitments.

Proceeding from Lenin's concept that 'self-criticism is vitally essential to every live and virile party',⁴ the party took stock of its own mistakes. Specifically, we did not prove strong enough to undermine the positions of the dependent oligarchy and imperialism. We allowed non-collective leadership of the DPU Front and the government and occasionally took our cue from other forces, especially in respect of traditional economic measures. Communists virtually failed to gain access to public finance and foreign policy.

As our party sees it, a further negative fact was that not all the party members involved in the working class and popular movement supported firmly and consistently the ideological and political struggle against reformist and petty-bourgeois concepts, against economism, against infiltration of the country by 'yellow' organisations using radical and ultra-leftist talk as camouflage.⁵

The Communist Party was unable to bring about effective implementation of the adopted policy; its message did not always ring out clearly enough among its allies and occasionally failed to reach the masses. Nor did the party do all that was necessary within the Front and the government to couple struggle with unity.

In the end, the DPU lost the character of a force organising and mobilising the people due to a multitude of internal and external contradictions and factors limiting its possibilities. As the alignment of forces changed to its disadvantage, the programme 'dangled'. Its blocking from within, that is, on the part of the government, made rescue from above impossible. As a result, DPU did not finish what it had undertaken; worse still, it began to lose strength, a fact described by the Congress as likely to open the way for this or that variety of oligarchic, imperialist offensive.

The mid-term parliamentary elections imposed by US imperialism contrary to the Constitution broke off the lawful government's term in office. The elections took place in an atmosphere of fraud and foreign pressure and enabled fascists and rightists to carry out the operation known as an 'electoral coup'.⁶ In these circumstances, the Communists did not at all consider the election campaign a strategic factor making it possible to resolve the economic and political crisis. Nevertheless, inasmuch as the elections were a real battlefield, the CPB in common with other popular forces joined in the contest to avert a return to the past. In the course of the struggles that unfolded, it strove to lay the groundwork for a new unity, needed by the working class and other working people for future struggles in every form.

Analysing past experience and taking account of the dependent capitalist character and backwardness of the country as well as the existence of oligarchic groups, the Fifth CPB Congress reaffirmed its strategy for a popular anti-imperialist revolution oriented to socialism.

With a view to achieving its goal, the CPB called on the parties and organisations adhering to similar positions to join efforts in order to reorganise and expand the social base of the political alliance intended to steadfastly carry out the programme for such a revolution. Within such a democratic alliance, historical responsibility must be assumed primarily by the working class as well as by the peasantry, the middle strata, small and medium producers, handicraftsmen, intellectuals, students, religious leaders and servicemen, in short, by all who are dedicated to the interests of the people and the nation. Once again, the Congress put it on record that the communists are resolved to strengthen their bonds with the working class and other working people so as to ensure that the hegemony of the proletariat in the class alliance guarantees victory.

Assessing the party's organising work, the Congress stated that the experience gained to date makes it possible to consolidate achievements and move on to building a mass party.

In the period under survey, the CPB has taken deeper root among the proletariat, grown both quantitatively and qualitatively and become stronger by admitting to its ranks many loyal sons and daughters of the working class, peasantry and other sections of the people. 'Without overestimating our successes, we may say that ours is the best-organised party of the country and, unquestionably, the first party of the revolutionary left.'⁷

To enable the party to advance to new positions, the Congress called for better methods and greater efficiency and amended the CPB Rules. It recognised the advisability of rendering greater assistance to Communist Youth and stepping up work among women Communists, and approved the principles of functioning of the National Pioneers Union.

One of the items on the agenda was the party's new Programme. The draft will be discussed by an extraordinary congress.

Proceeding to the election of leading bodies, the delegates complied with the request of J. Kolle Cueto not to nominate him for election to the Central Committee. The new leadership includes young members along with experienced Communists of the older generation. Simon Reyes Rivera, tried and tested leader of the miners, the

working class and the people, a prominent Communist, was elected First Secretary of the CC.

The Fifth CPB Congress, described by the First Secretary of the CPB CC as 'historic and victorious', reflected the tasks of the proletariat's vanguard with due regard to its real potentialities. It gave Bolivia's Communists new strength that will help them apply their new strategy, achieve closer unity and advance the party. The Congress also formulated political and organisational guidelines for the fulfilment of current tasks according to the exigencies of the struggle of the proletariat and the need to reshape the programme of the democratic, popular, anti-oligarchic and anti-imperialist forces.

¹ *Unidad*, February 23-March 1, 1985.

² *Declaración política de la UDP, Bases de programa de gobierno*, La Paz, 1980, pp. 5-6.

³ *Unidad*, November 24-30, 1984.

⁴ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 452.

⁵ See Simón Reyes Rivera, *Un congreso histórico y de victoria*, 1985, p. 7.

⁶ Meaning the parliamentary elections held in July 1985. As none of the pretenders to the post of head of state won an absolute majority, the issue was referred to parliament, which declared in favour of Víctor Paz Estenssoro, leader of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement.—*Ed.*

⁷ Simón Reyes Rivera, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

new experience

Our Interviews When the Situation is Red Hot

Joe Slovo – member of the leadership,
South African Communist Party (SACP),
Executive Committee member, African
National Congress of South Africa (ANC).

Q. The world is closely watching the stormy events in South Africa. The progressive forces and all honest men on the Earth support the African people's courageous actions for their legitimate rights and condemn the terrorism of the apartheid regime. How do the SACP and the ANC assess the nature of the present moment, the motive forces of the anti-racist protest, and the immediate prospects of the ongoing struggle?

A. We are in a new phase of struggle in South Africa. It is absolutely clear from the events that if we, as a revolutionary movement, effectively seize the present exciting moment, an historic moment, the prospect of achieving people's power is perhaps within our sight.

And we say this for the following reasons. Three conditions are known to set the stage for a basic social transformation. It is, first, a deep-going crisis within the ruling establishment; second, ferment among the people, which express a desire for change and a readiness, if need be, to sacrifice life to bring it about; and thirdly, a revolutionary movement which is accepted by the masses and which has the strength and the capacity to guide the build-up towards victory.

Now, it is clear, looking at the situation in South Africa, that these three conditions have not yet matured, but that they are beginning to converge for the first time all three together. Indeed, the regime faces the deepest economic and political crisis. The ruling class is fragmented, it is divided, it is in a more conflicting situation as a ruling class than ever before in its history. On the other hand, the ferment amongst the people is growing daily before our eyes. And despite the endless killings,¹ a growing number of workers and youth are showing that they are not daunted by death, that they have developed a contempt for death in the struggle. Finally, the ANC-led liberation front clearly stands unchallenged today as the leading force of the protests.

An important indicator of the people's accumulating energies is the combination of organised activity with spontaneous eruptions and the adoption by the masses themselves of new forms of struggle which are emerging on the ground. For example, young people are taking their own initiatives to organise themselves into small mobile

combat units which engage the police, which deal with informers, and so on. Unprecedented pressure is being put on all the collaborationists in the black communities. Black policemen can hardly continue living amongst their own people: The government has announced that over a hundred homes of black policemen have been burned to the ground.

The mass legal organisations, like the United Democratic Front² and the trade union movement, are growing by leaps and bounds in strength by the day. In the urban ghettos the regime's civil administration has virtually broken down. In the place of the government's so-called community councils, which they tried to impose on the people, the people are creating their own community structures which have the potential to develop into embryonic organs of people's power. And although the government still has the brute force and power to occupy and send in the army and the police, the capacity to administer civilly in these areas is completely at an end, and this is recognised by the authorities themselves.³

A serious determinant of the state of the class struggle is the activation of the South African workers. There has been a veritable explosion in the growth of black trade unions in the last year or two, and for the first time in South Africa's history black trade unions outnumber white trade unions. In addition, the black trade union movement is not restricting itself to struggles of a purely economic character. The black trade union movement is aware that there is no way to fight the capitalist exploitation without coming out against the whole racist structure.

The trade union movement has already shown that it has the capacity to become a very important factor in this overall struggle for national liberation. In November 1984, there was a political general strike in the Transvaal, the most successful in our history: for two days it halted the whole of industry. In the Eastern Cape, there have been many more strikes of a general political character. The strength of the working class and its activity in the liberation struggle open up deep prospects of a general political national strike which at the right moment could have a marked impact on the future build-up of revolutionary and insurrectionary forces.

Q. What is the role of the Communists and their allies in developing the revolutionary consciousness of the masses? In which forms and along which lines has the SACP acted in mobilising the people to resist apartheid and the attempts to deprive the Africans of their homeland?

A. The SACP is a part of the broad liberation front headed by the African National Congress. This liberation front shares the common immediate platform of winning the objectives of the national-democratic revolution. And we believe that this struggle demands a broad patriotic alliance which embraces all classes among the dominated national groups. Within this alliance, the working class has a very special role to play, without which complete victory cannot be guaranteed. We do not want to see in South Africa a repetition of what has happened in many other parts of Africa, where the fruits of sacrifice and victory of the indigenous people were undermined by new exploiters with black faces.

The SACP, which celebrated its 64th anniversary at the end of July 1985, represents the true historical aspirations of our very large and very experienced proletariat. And we fulfil our mission both as part of the anti-fascist front, and as an independent vanguard of the working class. In the present period, we must multiply our efforts on all fronts as a party, while asserting the SACP's independent role as well as its role within the alliance. We are working harder than ever in the field of spreading the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, particularly amongst the working people, and in the consolidation and growth of the underground.

We have to be on the alert against the attempts by internal and external reaction to undermine the partnership between the party and the ANC, between the ANC and the world socialist forces. Anti-communism and anti-Sovietism are designed to

emasculate the revolutionary content of our national struggle, but at the moment we are convinced that the overwhelming majority of patriots, not just Communists, in our situation believe that the real key to our future lies in this life-giving alliance between the ANC and the SACP, and the life-giving relationship between our movement as a whole and the progressive forces throughout the world, and particularly in the socialist countries. This is something that we have always cherished and will safeguard in the future.

Q. The racist regime's brutal repressions have aroused public opinion on every continent to the point at which even the US ruling circles have to say something to distance themselves from its leaders, 'America's true friends', as Reagan put it. Do you think that in these conditions apartheid could be further isolated internationally? How does the SACP see the role in this of the communist and working class movement and of other progressive forces of the world?

A. The minor volte face on the South African question in some circles of the US ruling class is in no sense, we believe, a measure of its humanity. Historically speaking, what we could call the 'Reagan factor' is more responsible than any other external factor for the actions of the South African regime which are outraging world public opinion. These circles can now no longer ignore the very significant upsurge of feelings amongst the US public, especially over Pretoria's brutalities. There is a growing loss of confidence in Botha's capacity to hold the fort on behalf of international capitalism and US imperialism. They are frightened that they will lose all, that is, maintaining South Africa as part of the Western alliance and the capitalist system generally. The cracks that are beginning to show in the US ruling class on the question of apartheid, whatever their motivations, indicate in particular the growing possibilities of organising an effective campaign against the South African regime.

Well, what can the world working class movement do? We would be grateful of greater material support on every aspect of our struggle through the trade unions and in other ways. It is simultaneously important to put pressure on the Western governments and to demand the imposition of mandatory sanctions against the racists. We expect such assistance from every party, from every working class movement and, indeed, from every democratic force in the world.

Apartheid is the Nazism of the modern period, and the struggle against it transcends the class framework. The potential does exist, therefore, to mobilise against apartheid the broadest spectrum of forces so as to shorten the pain and anguish through which our way to victory lies.

Q. What is the SACP's attitude to mankind's key problem: the defence of world peace?

A. All the revolutionary forces of the world have a fundamental desire for world peace. We are aware that our struggle for freedom, which may involve revolutionary violence, would be made irrelevant by a nuclear holocaust. That is why the struggle for world peace remains at the top of our agenda. The South African Communists seek to expose the policy of imperialism aimed to frustrate the efforts on disarmament, nuclear disarmament in the first place, and implement the Star Wars programme.

We see the fight for liberation and the struggle for world peace as an indivisible process. We also believe that it is now more urgent than ever before for the world communist and working class movement to assert their togetherness in the world struggle for a life of peace and a life of social justice. The other side does come together, does plan together against us. At its latest Congress in 1984 our party reaffirmed that we must embrace our comrades and brothers everywhere in the world in the quest for peace, for liberation and socialism.

¹ According to obviously understated official reports, more than 450 people—men, women and children—were killed in the first half of 1985.—Ed.

² Set up in 1983; it brings together hundreds of organisations and movements opposed to apartheid.—Ed.

³ As in the introduction of the emergency in 36 districts of the country in July 1985.—Ed.

In the Mirror of the Press

TACKLING CONSTRUCTIVE TASKS

Social life in the socialist community countries is now marked by a high level of labour and political activity of the masses. Below are brief reports on the tasks and creative efforts of Communists in some of these countries.

NÉPSZABADSÁG: *Unity Is Not Monotony*

That is the caption under which the Hungarian Communists' newspaper carried an interview with A. Ernszt, First Secretary of the Csepel District party committee of Budapest on how the decisions of the 13th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP), held in March 1985, are being implemented. The working people of the district, he said, highly appreciate the fact that the party's supreme forum gave a realistic analysis of the way traversed. They are satisfied that it examined the problems and difficulties in every sphere of social life and brought out their causes. The Congress worked out a clear-cut and well-grounded programme for fulfilling the tasks it set. One of the key tasks before party organisations now is to explain the programme to broad strata of the working people.

It is no exaggeration to say, he went on, that it is very hard to translate into 'local idiom' the large-scale tasks which the Congress set. There is no lack of good intentions and readiness to act. But even today some people still think that the solutions to all the problems will descend 'from on high'. In this respect, Csepel does not find itself in any special situation. Very many in the district expect directives 'from above' before tackling problems like helping young people to obtain housing, showing greater concern for pensioners, and eliminating all kinds of inconveniences faced by some strata of the working population.

It is not among the tasks of the party organisation to 'reject' legitimate expectations, but we have to explain to the population that the possibilities for a radical solution of some pressing problems are limited. One should bear in mind that our intentions to raise the people's well-being will be translated into life only when the necessary economic basis for it is created.

Party organisations need to raise their work to a higher level so as to meet the demands of the present moment, and to get rid of all the manifestations of formalism as soon as possible, A. Ernszt said in conclusion.

SCÎNTEIA: *Concern for Management Efficiency*

The organ of the Romanian Communist Party Central Committee considers the role and responsibility of factory party organisations in managing economic activity in the light of the experience of the Communists in the Romanian capital.

The Bucharest municipal area now has 214 large plants, factories and combines, and the ability of local party activists to make efficient management of production central to their organisational work crucially predetermines success in fulfilling state assignments, the article says.

Almost four-fifths of the fixed assets in the capital's industry have been built up over the past three or four five-year plan periods and, the paper believes, the main task now is to make the fullest use of these material and technical facilities. The paper calls for broader application of the experience of leading Bucharest enterprises where production runs in a three-shift cycle and where there is constant control over the optimal loading of equipment. Party organisations in work collectives labouring below their potentialities, says the paper, should make an in-depth analysis of the reserves for boosting production and spread progressive work methods more vigorously.

PRAVDA: Reporting-and-Election Party Meetings

The organ of the CPSU CC carries a report on a conference of Republican, Territorial and Regional party leaders convened at the Central Committee to discuss the holding of party meetings to report on work done and to elect new party officers.

The Soviet people, it was said at the conference, have given inspiring support and backing with concrete labour achievements to the CPSU's domestic and foreign policy, and its line of accelerating economic and social development, increasing responsibility for assignments and renewing important aspects of the life of the society. But the main effort still lies ahead. In the few months before the 27th Congress of the CPSU, the party is to:

ensure successful completion of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan by the national economy;

conduct the reporting-and-election meetings in party bodies on a high organisational and political level; and

analyse in depth the way travelled since the 26th Congress of the CPSU to map out the tasks for the long term.

The participants in the conference made a thorough examination of the way of implementing this three-fold task. It was said that the best preparation for meetings, conferences, and congresses is fulfilment of the state plans—without any downward adjustments—and creation in each labour collective of an atmosphere of high labour endeavour and an urge to advance to new frontiers.

It is important to hold the reporting-and-election meetings in a workman-like manner, without show or self-complacency, and in an atmosphere of high exactingness. That is what follows from the instructions of the April 1985 Plenary Meeting of the CPSU CC, which called for greater demands on each party member for his or her attitude to their public duty, the fulfilment of party decisions and keeping the party member's reputation unblemished. It was stressed that while taking care of experienced cadres there is a need to get rid of those who fail to display initiative, who are inert and who shun down-to-earth organisational work in the masses, and scrupulously to observe Lenin's principles of cadre policy, seeing to it that no one is promoted for reasons of personal loyalty, friendship or fellowship, as it has happened in some places.

The distinctive feature of the reporting-and-election meetings today is that they are simultaneously to discuss the drafts of a new edition of the CPSU Programme, changes in the party Rules, and the guidelines for the country's economic and social development. The content and political meaning of these documents, *Pravda* says, need to be brought home to every man and woman.

The periods of reporting on the work done and election of new party officers is to last several months. It is highly important, it was said at the conference, to impart such quality to this drive and all other work in the run-up to the Congress that the Soviet people should see that the CPSU has made a realistic assessment of the situation, that it is well aware of the pressing problems, and that it is confidently working for their solution with the whole people's support.

Documents

Brazil

PRESERVE UNITY OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES

At a conference of leading party cadres in June 1985, Salomão Malina, CC Executive Committee member, Brazilian CP, considered the new situation which had taken shape in the country. The text of his speech was carried by the newspaper *Voz da Unidade*.

Important steps for Brazil's future have been taken in the short period under President Sarney's administration, and the Brazilian CP clearly and unambiguously supports them. The Communists believe, for instance, that the amendments to the electoral legislation, the extension of suffrage to illiterates, and the legalisation of a number of political parties add up to very substantial gains.

Today, S. Malina went on, we can freely breathe, freely think and feel in the full sense of these words. The experience of the latest strikes staged in the country shows that, while the obsolete labour legislation continues to be in force, it was not applied to the strikers. That is also a major victory which, alongside the other developments, is a source of optimism.

The authorities' clear stand in insisting on the observance of land legislation and the implementation of a new agrarian reform—despite the fact that the reform is, of course, a far cry from what we seek—are a highly positive fact, testifying to the need to defend the developing political process and to fight for its continuation and greater depth.

It is perfectly obvious, nevertheless, that there are attempts within the government itself and outside it to exert pressure in order to frustrate or, at least, to sidetrack the process. There is a real danger coming from the political forces which supported the dictatorial regime and have visions of its return.

That being the situation, the Communists believe that their duty is to support, without the slightest hesitation, the circles within the government and the Democratic Front¹ taking a consistent stand for meeting the popular demands. That is necessary because, if the authorities fail to live up to their commitments to the nation, they will lose support, and that is not in the interests of progress.

The new situation also generates some issues connected mainly with the build-up of the legal Brazilian CP. The Communists' withdrawal from other political associations, in particular, the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) does not at all mean that they are taking a hostile attitude to this or any other body in whose activity they used to be involved. The Communists will continue joint struggle with the PMDB and maintain friendly and comradely relations with it, and this also applies to the other democratic forces. At the same time, it is the business of the Communists alone to build up the legal BCP.

Anti-communist prejudices will still be found among a section of the population. An important drive to eradicate these will have to be started, for the party's legalisation in law does not suffice. The time has come for us to voice our views on all the meaningful social problems and let the people judge them. The Brazilian Communists are guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism, using it as an instrument to analyse the national reality. It is a great truth of Marxism that if man is capable of understanding history, he is also capable of making it. We shall seek, therefore, to comprehend history, and the future will show whether we are capable of making it, S. Malina said in conclusion.

¹ A broad alliance (formed in 1984) of the most progressive democratic forces in the Brazilian society from among members of various political parties, including the Communists, and trade unions and other mass bodies. It has been acting on a common platform of struggle against imperialism, and for national independence and social progress.—Ed.

A Personal Impression

RIZOSPASTIS: Voice of Truth

ONE recent report said that *Rizospastis*, the printed organ of the CP Greece Central Committee, is the most popular of all the Greek morning and evening papers. Its weekday and Sunday editions are most widely circulated. That is a great achievement for a newspaper which has been published legally for only the last 11 years.

The way to success has been long and hard. *Rizospastis* means 'radical', and it has its beginnings at the turn of the century. It was started as a progressive newspaper before the founding of the CP Greece, and became the organ of the party's Central Committee 67 years ago; since then it has remained the Greek Communist's instrument of propaganda, agitation and organisation of the masses.

Over the decades in which the country was ruled by reactionary dictatorial regimes, *Rizospastis* was printed in a small format, with a very modest layout, and circulated in the underground, but it always reached the remotest parts of Greece to rouse the people to struggle.

One of its heroic pages was revealed to the public during the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the country's liberation from the Nazi occupation. Last autumn, the municipal council of the Athens district of Kalitea purchased a small house in the sleepy street of Scra. A meeting was held here to tell its story: from 1942 to October 1944 its deep cellar housed the Communists' printing shop—literally their underground printing shop. Together with *Rizospastis*, it also printed the organ of the National Liberation Front, *Free Greece*, and combat handbills.

Work was carried on under the very noses of the invaders and their local henchmen, with the printers not risking to come up for a breath of fresh air for weeks on end. A Victoria brand electric rotation machine was first converted to a foot-drive and then—to make even less noise—to a hand-drive. The few people who knew about the printing shop kept it a secret even from members of their families. None of the Communists who were caught and tortured by the Gestapo gave the paper away.

After the war, the party put the printing shop in mothballs and only recently, when the little old houses in Athens were actually threatened with demolition, it was decided to open up the old cellar and to set up in Scra Street a Museum of the Resistance Press, in gratitude to the heroes of the communist press, far from all of whom survived the fighting against the Nazis and the bands of local reaction.

The collapse of the Black Colonels dictatorship in 1974 opened up new horizons before the paper, which emerged from the underground with well-earned moral authority. It was no easy task to switch to the new way, I was told by Tanassis Karteros, CP Greece CC member, and the paper's editor-in-chief. We needed a real printing works if we were to turn out a daily in a fairly large printing, by Greek standards, and we were short of skilled personnel. It took time to solve the problems that faced us. Only three years ago, *Rizospastis* got its own printing works and moved into its own editorial offices, which are staffed by men and women trained by the party and dedicated to it.

Donations and thousands of hours' work put in on 'red subbotniks' (volunteer work days) helped to build the Party House in which the apparatus of the CP Greece CC is now housed. It is a large modern building next to the Perissos station of the Athens underground. The building stands on a thoroughfare with a steady stream of cars. On the other side, across the overland metro lines, stand the buildings of industrial plants. A group of young men are on duty at its gates round the clock—the time for vigilance is not yet past.

The editorial offices and the printing works are housed in one of the wings of the

building. There is not all that much space, and the journalists do not have much elbow room, but they are able to file their stories and keep in constant touch with the paper's correspondents in various parts of the country. International information is provided by teletype from the Athens News Agency, TASS and the Associated Press. The paper has its foreign correspondents: in Moscow, in several other socialist capitals, and also in Paris, New York, Brussels and London.

I was highly impressed by the printing works, round which I was taken by Dimitrios Epikaridis, who is head of the printing shop and a veteran of the party press. It is staffed by 170 persons, mostly Communists and Young Communists, who handle facilities that are among the most advanced in Greece: photo-setting and high-speed multicolour printing machines. The printing works not only turns out *Rizospastis* and other periodicals of the CP Greece, but also the youth weekly, *Odigitis*, and fulfils other orders.

Rizospastis is now on sale at all the newspaper stalls in Greece, and its billboards will be seen in the central thoroughfares of the capital. The Sunday issue, which is tastefully got up, is delivered door-to-door by thousands of party activists in neighbourhoods inhabited by workers, employees and hand craftsmen. On weekdays, volunteer distributors will be seen at dawn by the factory gates. The voice of truth reaches the working people first thing in the morning.

"Are there any outstanding material-supply problems?" I asked the paper's financial director, K. Nikoitsos.

"In contrast to the bourgeois press, we do not, of course, make a point of making a profit at any price. The price of the paper is always kept at the statutory minimum. The news-stand keepers, who work on a sales commission, are naturally interested in the glossier publications. What is more, not all of them sympathise with the Communist Party politically. That is why a fairly large number of unsold copies is still returned, and that amounts to a net loss. Nor do we overdo the paid advertisements. Besides, private entrepreneurs are not eager to let us have theirs either.

For all that, the financial deficit of *Rizospastis*, which the party helps to cover, is relatively small, and here we must put in a good word for the Communists and sympathisers who are helping the paper. These are usually people of average means who, for various reasons, mostly in memory of friends and relatives killed in the fighting or in the torture-chambers, send in short notices together with remittances of cash. Besides, despite the growing cost of newsprint, printer's ink, etc., the paper's costs are lower than those of bourgeois publications. Both journalists and printing workers receive small wages fixed by the party, often working without pay and devoting their leisure time to what has become their life's work.

Rizospastis has been and continues to be a tocsin awakening people to conscious thought. It has united under the party's banner many of the veteran fighters who were at one time misled by the revisionists' splitting activities, and has helped the CP Greece to win influence in the trade union movement, and to develop the struggle of women and young people. *Rizospastis* has backed every class battle or action by the democratic forces, its active support often tipping the scales for success.

The newspaper acts both as agitator and organiser in the preparation of any large-scale political action. It carries articles on the subject of the forthcoming demonstrations, interviews with prominent public leaders and authoritative specialists who are often not Communists, progress reports on preparations in various parts of the country, and finally, a concrete plan of action itself, with an indication of the exact place and time of the meeting of the participants.

That is how it was, for instance, on August 6 of this year when a double living chain of hand-holding children and adults ringed the venerable Acropolis during a 10-day peace action in Greece. *Rizospastis* carried wide all over the country the slogans of that 10-day action: 'No to Star Wars!', 'Turn the Balkans into a Nuclear-Free Zone!',

'The Mediterranean Must Be a Sea of Peace!'. On its pages, spokesmen for anti-war, women's and youth organisations united in the mass movement known as the 'Acropolis Appeal' welcomed the USSR's unilateral moratorium on all nuclear blasts.

The serious and well-argued articles in *Rizospastis* produce an active interest not only among working class readers, but also among the broadest strata of the working population, and command respect even among political opponents. Attempts to weaken the paper by means of court injunctions have repeatedly failed. I was told at the editorial office that not a single court case started against the paper has been won.

A year ago, as *Rizospastis* was marking ten years of its legal existence, a thousand people packed the auditorium at Party House for five successive nights to take part in a broad discussion which helped to show the great way traversed by the paper on a steady upgrade, and also to bring out its weaknesses and difficulties. Many constructive remarks and proposals were made. Summing up the debates, General Secretary of the CP Greece CC Charilaos Florakis, said:

"We want our *Rizospastis* to reflect, most responsibly, simply, vividly and convincingly, the character and policy of our party, to give the working people the fullest possible information, to shed light on the substance of their struggle, and the meaning of the genuine changes and objectives of socialism, on all that is progressive and democratic in our society."

He then addressed himself to all the Greek journalists who love their country and who cherish national independence and detente, and urged them to report the truth about the mortal danger of thermonuclear war, to help turn the Balkan Peninsula and the Mediterranean into nuclear-free zones and to fight for the triumph of peace and international co-operation on earth.

Rizospastis and its collective of editorial and printing workers are trying hard to fulfil the responsible tasks set by the party before the paper.

Athens-Prague

Vladimir Shelepin
WMR staff member

In Brief

ANGOLA

The Central Committee of the MPLA—Party of Labour has decided to call the party's Second Congress in December 1985, to sum up the results of the activity of party and state organs in the country over the ten years of its independent existence, to approve the guidelines for the further development of its economy and to introduce amendments into the party Programme and Rules.

BULGARIA

The Bulgarian CP is preparing for its 13th Congress with emphasis on improving the quality and increasing the numbers of its ranks. In July 1985, it had over 912,000 members, 87,000 more than in 1981; workers made up 53 per cent of those who joined the BCP in that period.

CONGO

More than 1,500 members of the Congolese Party of Labour were trained at the Higher Party School in Brazzaville in 1979. Party schools now also operate in all the nine regional centres of the country.

DENMARK

This year's traditional festival of *Land og Folk*, the central organ of the Communist Party of Denmark, was the largest ever in the number of functions and participants. Among the main topics of the political discussions on international issues held during the festival were invigoration of the struggle for peace, detente and disarmament, for getting the country out of NATO's nuclear planning group, and for turning Nordic Europe into a nuclear-free zone. The festival grounds were dotted with pavilions presenting expositions of books, photographs and placards.

JAPAN

Representatives of 27 communist and workers' parties took part in the work of an international symposium on the struggle for preventing nuclear war, and banning and liquidating nuclear weapons, which was held in Tokyo in July 1985 on the initiative of the Communist Party of Japan.

LEBANON

The Lebanese CP, together with a number of other progressive parties and organisations in the country, has joined the National Alliance Front, which was set up in August 1985 at a conference of patriotic forces from among Lebanon's Moslem and Christian communities. The Communists assessed the establishment of the Front as a crucial step in hammering out a democratic programme to meet the interests of the overwhelming majority of the Lebanese.

LUXEMBOURG

The Communist Party of Luxembourg has come out in support of the idea of setting up a zone in Central Europe free from chemical weapons. The CPL CC Executive Committee has emphasised that the country's government could even now do much to realise the initiative by issuing a unilateral declaration of its readiness to turn the territory of Luxembourg into such a zone.

MADAGASCAR

A collection of Lenin's articles on youth has been issued in Malagasy by the Imongo Vaovao Publishers. There has been a steady growth of interest in Marxist literature in the country.

MEXICO

The alliance of left-wing forces, which includes the United Socialist Party of Mexico, the Socialist People's Party and the Mexican Working People's Party, has won 29 seats in the elections to the National Congress, the state legislative assemblies and local organs of executive power which were held on July 7.

SPAIN

Anti-NATO is the keynote of this year's autumn political propaganda campaign of the CP Spain. Under a decision of the party's Executive Committee, special emphasis is being laid on the establishment in the various districts and provinces of the country of what are known as platforms for a referendum on the problem of Spain's membership of NATO, and on more vigorous struggle for its withdrawal from that bloc.

TUNISIA

Al-Tariq al-Jadid, the weekly newspaper of the Tunisian CP, closed down by the authorities in early April on a charge of 'insulting' the King of Saudi Arabia and the royal emirs, resumed publication in July 1985. The paper was banned in the past on several occasions, but it has never abandoned its stand for the interests of the working people, democracy and national sovereignty.

VENEZUELA

The Seventh Congress of the CP Venezuela, to be held in late October 1985, is to discuss, alongside the CC Report, amendments to the Programme and Rules of the CPV and also the establishment of a new governing body, a National Secretariat of the CPV CC, with the administrative functions.

YUGOSLAVIA

The Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia has decided to convene the party's 13th Congress in Belgrade in June 1986.

exchange of views, discussion

Regarding the Ideological Foundations of Democratic Centralism

An international study group formed by the *WMR* Commission on Problems of Theory considered some aspects of the relationship of ideological and organisational principles in the work of communist parties. The group consisted of **George Toubi**, CC Secretariat member of the Communist Party of Israel, **Unni Krishnan**, National Council member of the Communist Party of India, and *WMR* staff member Professor **Igor Naletov**, Ph.D. The following is a summation of the exchange of views.

* * *

AS the organisational principle of communist and workers' parties democratic centralism has, in the course of many years of international verification, proved its viability and efficacy. The experience that has been accumulated compellingly indicates that a party can fulfil its historic revolutionary mission only if it complies with this principle. This experience refutes the argument, offered by some quarters, that democratic centralism is outdated and does not fit in with the present-day conditions of the class struggle. There is an obvious need to go on developing its content, perfecting its forms, and rectifying the deformations to which it is subjected as a consequence of the social-reformist and anarchistic trends infiltrating the communist movement.

All this induces addressing once again the questions of how the ideological and organisational principles of parties are combined in theory and practice. The life-giving propositions advanced by Marx, Engels and Lenin provide the irreplaceable foundation for answering these questions.

The principle of democratic centralism is the outcome, deduction an result of the application of dialectical and historical materialism to the organisational principles of a revolutionary party. A key provision of scientific methodology, determining the successful solution of problems of party building is the recognition in fact that there is an inseparable dialectical relationship between these principles and the communist movement's ideology.

Condition of the Revolutionary Party's Vital Activity

In its strict sense, democratic centralism is a principle of organisation and a form of building implicit in the Marxist and no other parties. This is determined by the content of the ongoing class struggle of the proletariat and by the role of the

revolutionary vanguard in this struggle. 'Unity on questions of programme and tactics,' Lenin wrote, 'is an essential but by no means a sufficient condition for party unity, for the centralisation of party work. . . . The latter requires, in addition, unity of organisation, which in a party that has grown to be anything more than a mere family circle, is inconceivable without formal Rules, without the subordination of the minority to the majority and of the part to the whole.'¹

Only a united party with a single leading body, with the lower bodies subordinated to the higher, with the mandatory—not formal but actual—subordination of the minority to the majority, and with strict party discipline can direct the efforts of the working class, the working people, and all other progressive forces towards the overthrow of the exploiter system and the building of a socialist society. Cardinal aspects of its activity are collective decision-making on all matters and collective leadership, with the congress having the most authoritative and binding say. The composition of a congress is established democratically, i.e., by all the Communists, on the basis of a proportionate elected representation of the party organisations. Inalienable elements of democratic centralism, as the underlying principle of party building, are also the election of all leading bodies from top to bottom and their periodic accountability.

In its turn, a dialectico-materialist correlation between the party's ideological and organisational principles presupposes the recognition that there is indivisible unity between democracy and centralism as the two sides of the party's organisational structure. Conformity between organisational and ideological norms is achieved, provided such unity is in fact observed, in a flexible interdependence between democracy and centralism. From the standpoint of Marxist dialectics, no centralism is conceivable without democracy. This is, above all, because it concerns an organisation with a very distinctive quality—a party of the working class, which presupposes full equality between its members and between all its organisations and rules out the superiority of any single group over another, of any directing element except the authority of collective opinion. These are universally known postulates of Marxism-Leninism. But what is quite obvious and indisputable from the standpoint of theory is not always the case in practice. This is due not only to anybody's subjective interpretation of provisions of theory or to errors, but to the actual conditions of the class struggle itself, to the objective contradictions that arise in the process of the communist and working class movement's development.

A real contradiction between a party's ideological and organisational principles may manifest itself chiefly in the fact that *ideological* unity among a party's members is not in all cases accompanied by their similarly firm *organisational* unity. Conversely, organisational unity does not always rest on total unity of views on all matters without exception. The dynamics of this relationship should therefore be watched closely: minor ideological differences may—under some circumstances—escalate and erupt into a fullblown ideological and organisational split in the party, while organisational errors may lead to an intensification of opportunist or anarchist tendencies and ideological degeneration.

Whatever the arguments about deviations from the organisational norms of the communist movement being permissible on the pretext that these norms are not that much relevant to the movement's ideological basis or the assertions that some ideological indulgences are 'harmless' and will not affect the role and organisational structure of the party, they must be approached critically. Nor is there justification for violations of the party Rules, even if it is argued that they are necessary to the leadership for surmounting differences and do not prejudice the essence of the matter, namely, ideological-political principles. In the history of the communist movement there have been quite a few instructive examples of how and in what these departures ended: in parties prone to them a crisis situation will break out sooner or

later. The link between ideological and organisational principles will then appear to be particularly self-evident and immediate, but this lesson very often proves to be belated and errors become harder to correct.

Unremitting and painstaking work is needed to preserve real unity between the party's ideological and organisational principles. This is strikingly exemplified by the struggle waged by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the revolutionary movement of Russia. To have a profound understanding of this experience it is vital to go into the essence of Lenin's method of thought and revolutionary action.

On the theoretical and practical levels Lenin devoted colossal attention (especially in the period the party was being formed and it was winning the working class of Russia to its side) to questions related to organisational structure, to the letter of democratic centralism, seeing it as a fundamental prerequisite of the victory of the socialist revolution. Lenin saw the party's *centralised* structure and the close-knit unity of its ranks as a paramount condition of its work, of winning prestige, and establishing links to the masses. He considered that the successful implementation of its programme for structuring its ranks along the principle of democratic centralism was vital to the party's very existence. However, this in no way signified that he gave organisation priority over ideological principles, that questions concerning the theoretical substantiation of aims, of intellectual unity in the party are secondary, or that one task is unrelated to the other.

Two Tendencies of the Petty-Bourgeois Approach

Steadfastly abiding by the principles of revolutionary dialectics, Lenin combated all manifestations of a petty-bourgeois approach to questions related to the revolutionary movement's strategy and tactics, chiefly against opportunism, which is the most dangerous. But even in opportunism he distinctly discerned two forms, two tendencies of apostasy from the objectives of society's socialist reorganisation.

One of these is a deviation (or deliberate departure) from the Marxist party's organisational principles while complying (at least outwardly) with the party's ideological policy guidelines and slogans. For those who represent this line, centralism is the principal target of criticism. From their viewpoint, the party's centralised structure leads to the leadership's isolation from the rank-and-file. As they see it, a mass party, and a genuinely socialist organisation should be such, must not close access to its ranks for anybody wishing to join.

Lenin distinctly traced the basic orientation of this tendency in the revolutionary movement of Russia. Renunciation of the principle of strict party commitment and the 'elasticity' of organisational requirements, on which the opponents of centralism insist, open the door for all elements of discord and vacillation, of which there are quite a few among intellectuals and even in the working class itself.

Needless to say, to deny access to the party or drastically limit the admission of working people who honestly want to join the revolutionary movement means to push the organisation into a parochial framework, to lose all prospect for developing the struggle for socialism. However, it is just as dangerous, for the sake of enlisting as many members as possible to admit all who seek admission without ascertaining the qualities of the applicants. Quite obviously, the filling of the party with chance elements almost inescapably leads to a weakening of its ideological and political line, to an erosion of the purity of its principles. Fully aware of this danger, Lenin insisted on the appropriate provisions in the Rules: a member of the party can be that person who not only accepts its programme but is personally involved in the work of one of its organisations, works for the attainment of its aims and the strengthening of its prestige among the masses, strictly complies with its decisions, and abides by the single party discipline. The Leninist posture requires the formation of a party whose members do not merely register themselves as such but are admitted to one of the

party's organisations.

The more widespread the title of party member, the better, argued a right-wing opportunist leader. We could only rejoice, he said, if every striker could proclaim himself a party member. But this, as Lenin pointed out, means in fact debasing the revolutionary movement to the level of 'economism' and 'strikism'.² Further, it reduces everything to trade union activity in place of the charted programme for all-sided and conscious proletarian struggle. It is evident that the political aims defining the party's class image and its essential distinction from social-reformist parties cannot be advanced by 'every striker'.

Loose organisational formulas are a cover also for distrust in the working class, in its genuine revolutionary strength, and its ability for mass revolutionary actions. They are a cover for reliance on the anarchist, seditious sentiments in the petty-bourgeois milieu. More, this attitude is evidence that there is no clear understanding of the party's role in the class struggle.

This opportunist trend, brought to light by Lenin, is essentially as follows: it starts with rewriting the party's organisational principles and often ends up renouncing the basic revolutionary content of its activity. The erosion of the bedrock of democratic centralism emasculates the ideological content of the movement itself.

History gives us one more specimen of apostasy from the aims of the communist movement, namely, the *second tendency* that leads away from the movement's mainstream. This deviation begins with a retreat from the ideological principles of Marxism-Leninism, with philosophical, theoretical revisionism and leads, if it does not meet serious resistance, to the emasculation of the movement's revolutionary content. Initially, as the party's organisational creed, democratic centralism remains in most cases beyond criticism. The disagreement will be confined to this or that postulate of Marxism, to purely theoretical or even philosophical issues.

In his analysis of the experience of the RSDLP Lenin noted that from the very beginning the differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks were not confined to questions of organisation. Soon after the Second Congress it became quite evident that there were visible divergences also on questions related to the end goals of the class struggle, to the party's role in this struggle, to the role of the working class, and to its attitude to the other classes of capitalist society. The inner cause of the differences was the Mensheviks' covert renunciation of the party's ideological principles.

The Third RSDLP Congress, which asserted the Leninist norms and principles of party life by specifying the relevant provisions in the Rules, noted at the same time that assimilation of the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, of its entire ideological wealth, was the only correct way to unite the workers and the Communists. In this context Lenin noted that unity was a great thing but that what the working class needed was *unity among the Marxists* and not unity with the adversaries and falsifiers of Marxism. There could not be, he wrote, a strong socialist party if there was no revolutionary theory to unite all Socialists, a theory from which they drew all their commitments, a theory which they applied to their methods of struggle and work.

To defend such a theory, whose credibility is borne out by experience of the international community of Communists, against unfounded attacks and against attempts to stifle it does not mean being an enemy of a critical analysis and the development of theory. 'We,' Lenin wrote, 'do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists *must* develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an *independent* elaboration of Marx's theory is especially essential for Russian socialists, for this theory provides only general *guiding* principles, which, *in particular*, are applied in England differently than in France, in France differently than in Germany, and in

Germany differently than in Russia.¹³

What Lenin said in his day about Marxism has now acquired direct meaning also in relation to the ideas of Leninism itself. Systematical study of the actual situation in one's own country, analysis of the specifics of the class struggle in it, and enrichment of the theory of revolution and the forms and methods of organisational work with account of the experience of the international communist movement—these are all major aspects of the activity of a party that strives to express in full the aspirations of its people.

Instructive material for a study of the second trend, which we are considering, is provided by Lenin's struggle for the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty and withdrawal from the imperialist war. The situation in the party's leading bodies at the beginning of 1918 was such that on the question of a peace treaty Lenin found himself in the minority. The heart of the matter was mainly in ideological and political differences. Lenin's line was opposed by Trotsky and the so-called Left Communists, a group that suggested beginning a 'revolutionary war' against imperialist Germany without delay. Although this group's stand was adventurist it was supported in that period by a number of party organisations.

However, Lenin did not see even this dramatic situation as absolutely hopeless in terms of the operation of democratic centralism. In continuing the ideological and political struggle against Trotsky and the 'left' opposition he decided to appeal to the *entire party*. A crucial and urgent question such as peace had to be resolved, in his view, by the party's highest organ, by its congress.

During the preparations for the Seventh Extraordinary Congress Lenin published an article in *Pravda* under the heading of 'The Revolutionary Phrase', and followed this up with a series of articles in which he compellingly showed the need for a peace treaty. His argumentation dialectically embraced the entire range of processes, links, and relationships. He opposed the demagoguery of the Left Communists with a concrete analysis of the situation, accentuating what was central and paramount in the entire web of contradictory factors: the world's first socialist state had to be safeguarded. To sacrifice it to eloquent rhetoric meant deceiving the hopes of the working class and the peasantry, who trusted the party. Hence the need for a peaceful respite for building up the country's economic strength, reinforcing its defence capability, and creating an army. This argumentation crushed the pseudo-revolutionary phrase-mongering of the Left Communists, who refused to reckon with reality, with the obtaining historical situation, and continued to cling dogmatically to the methods of a 'world revolutionary war'.

Ultimately, the party's CC adopted Lenin's motion for the immediate signing, despite their piratical character, of the peace terms laid down by Germany. The struggle against the 'left' opposition did not end there, but the main objective was attained. The experience of grim tests, of the real threat of losing all revolutionary gains, and, not least, of the persevering and energetic explanatory work among the people resulted in the party's largest organisations, one after another, adopting resolutions in support of Lenin's line, moving away from the Left Communists, and making it clear that they did not agree with the latter on the issue of the peace treaty. The triumph of Lenin's stand was definitively codified by the party's Seventh Extraordinary Congress.

A lesson of dialectics is that problems of the relationship between the party's ideological and organisational principles must be considered in all their complexity and contradictions, understanding that the crux of the matter is always not in the *form* of decision-making, not in the form of these or those actions, but in their actual *ideological content*. In this sense the question of what constitutes truth is not, needless to say, resolved by a simple majority vote. While the dialectical understanding of the revolutionary process is our guideline, we cannot discount the possibility that at some

stage its content may not be entirely consistent with its form. And vice versa, the form may be fundamentally at variance with the content. For example, while the formal requirements of democratic centralism are observed there may be a departure from its ideological content.

Not always and not all members of the party are genuine Marxists. In some cases even leading posts are held by persons with remnants of bourgeois or petty-bourgeois views, by persons who have not profoundly assimilated Marxism-Leninism and have not become properly imbued with the spirit of the proletariat's class struggle. Thus, those who rely solely on the letter of democratic centralism, forgetting its ideological content and revolutionary purpose, are taught bitter lessons by dialectics. Democratic centralism, a principle that is remarkably lucid in terms of its theory and effective in practice, is thus not only discredited in the eyes of the party rank-and-file but degenerates, losing its genuinely Marxist content, into a pitiful semblance of what it ought to be.

Some Lessons from the Experience of Struggle

We have considered two opportunist trends that may surface in the communist and working class movement to one extent or another. In their approach to the question of the correlation of ideological and organisational principles both conflict with the Leninist stand that there is indivisible unity between these principles and between democracy and centralism. But in considering them in their, so to speak, 'pure form', it should not be forgotten that in the actual historical context such tendencies do not exist separately from one another. On the contrary, they dovetail, intertwine, and mutually complement one another. They are unquestionably 'communicating vessels'. Pushing along different routes, they link up, ultimately determining also the attitude to democratic centralism itself as the Communist Party's underlying form of organisation.

But it would be wrong to depict opportunists as being entirely hostile to democratic centralism. When they find themselves in the minority they advocate 'democracy'. However, the numerical growth, that as a rule they insist upon, through an influx of ideologically and organisationally unstable elements can only intensify ideological discord and vacillation in the party and promote bureaucratic (at the top) and anarchist (among the rank-and-file) sentiments. The rhetoric about 'democracy', about the need for a 'mass' party is no more than a cover for the actual intention of diluting the party with a petty-bourgeois substrata and winning the majority with the support of such a 'mass' base for consummating the party's degeneration and pushing it irrevocably onto the track of reformism.

The opportunists' hostility for democratic centralism has quite distinct boundaries. Whenever they succeeded in 'taking over' the leading bodies of a party, and in enlisting the majority in its organisations to their side by devious devices, an amazing transformation occurred: it was hard to find more fervent advocates of 'centralism' than its former detractors. Easily assimilating the second part of the principle (centralism) and forgetting their former ardent 'fidelity' to democracy, the opportunists turned the party's organisational norms as spelled out in the Rules into a means of imposing subjective political decisions upon the party rank-and-file, using democratic centralism as an integument divested of any real Marxist content.

The experience of communist and workers' parties clearly indicates that an effective preventive against these dangers is strict compliance with all the norms of democratic centralism and, at the same time, the strengthening of the ideological commitment of the Communists. Every Marxist-Leninist party is concerned about averting the danger of a minority on this or that specific issue becoming an *organised minority*. In equal measure, it seeks to avoid factionalism of another kind—the formation, the setting up of an opportunist *organised majority*.

In the revolutionary struggle, while accentuating attention either on the organisational aspect or on questions of ideologico-theoretical work, sight must not be lost of either the former or the latter aspect. This work cannot be reduced, for instance, solely to a course of lectures and to the dissemination of Marxist writings. It should involve all the members of the party in political and ideological discussions and for that reason requires the creation of the relevant conditions, giving every party member the opportunity freely to state his opinions even if some of them conflict with the views of the leadership.

In addition to general recommendations, Lenin suggested some quite concrete steps making it possible to bring the party's ideological and organisational principles into line with each other. For instance, just before the Third RSDLP Congress was held he mapped out a programme of action directed at preserving the party's unity and putting an end to factionalism, defining in this context the orientation of some specific but, in his opinion, desirable modifications in the Rules. He felt that in the prevailing circumstances it was of the utmost significance that in the Rules there should be firm guarantees of the rights and duties of party members, regardless of whether on some particular issue they were in the 'majority' or the 'minority'. 'It is necessary,' he wrote in his address *To the Party* on the eve of the congress, 'to include in the party Rules guarantees of the rights of any minority, so that the disagreements, dissatisfactions, and irritations that will constantly and unavoidably arise may be diverted from the old, philistine, circle channels of rows and squabbling into the still unaccustomed channels of a constitutional and dignified struggle for one's convictions.'⁴ In the given situation, he noted, the preservation of unity and consistent compliance with democratic centralism would be helped by guaranteeing the rights of the minority to representation at congresses.⁵

These propositions were formulated by Lenin in a specific historical context, in keeping with the situation taking shape in the RSDLP. There is every justification for assuming that many of them remain valid and of practical value for various fraternal parties today, in a different situation.

The main thing Lenin felt was crucial to put an end once and for all to was struggles for office and clannishness, which intensify divisiveness and bureaucracy in the party and its isolation from the masses. What he advocated was by no means argument for the sake of argument but a battle of opinions that helps the workers to understand questions related to politics, to acquire a more profound comprehension of their significance, and resolve them with more determination.

While conducting extensive ideological education, the Bolsheviks made a huge effort to reinforce the party's *organisational unity*, to increase the effectiveness of democratic centralism. The experience of many parties testifies to the vast importance of this aspect of the matter, i.e., the strengthening of organisational unity even when there are some ideological divergences.

For example, during the preparations for the 15th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel in 1965 there sprang up an opportunist opposition that called in question the fundamental principles of the party's policy. The opposition was clearly in the minority, but it was nonetheless decided to publish the programme provisions of both the majority and the minority. It was only later that it became clear that this was inconsistent with the Leninist principle of democratic centralism and the party's Rules, which in a situation of this kind require the enunciation of the platform of the majority. Though this decision was meant to avoid a split in the party it was a deviation from party norms and confronted rank-and-file members with the alternative of choosing between the programme of group A (the Marxist-Leninist majority) and the programme of group B (the opportunist minority), but in the long run this did not prevent a split in the party.

Of course, there is a minority and a 'minority', the crux of the matter lying in the

sources of diverse opinions and the forms in which they are expressed. Often, in beginning a factional struggle persons holding opportunist views resort to all means to win the support of the party rank-and-file, circulate documents, and use even the bourgeois press for this purpose. The question is thereby moved out of the bounds of inner-party democracy and degenerates to the level of petty-bourgeois, anarchistic practice, which is totally impermissible for the Communists. Matters related to the life of a party must be settled at the party level, and nothing can justify helping the bourgeois propaganda to interfere in party affairs, to judge them from a standpoint that has nothing in common with a Marxist view.

The experience of the Communist Party of India shows that in defining a correct course of action it is of the utmost importance to work out clear-cut ideological criteria for assessing it and chart the rules for holding party discussions. Of course, various opinions on this or that issue must be taken into consideration. All of them must be respectfully and scrupulously examined. Democratic centralism is a mechanism not only of party debates but also of decision-making, of defining the ideological and political course, of taking a party unitedly into action, of expressing the will of the party rank-and-file.

This aspect of democratic centralism—the strength of the party rank-and-file, the opinion and will of the Communists, the role of local organisations in deciding cardinal issues of party policy—is very topical indeed under present-day conditions. Lenin constantly spoke of the need for keeping rank-and-file members informed of the state of affairs in the party leadership, of everything that concerned the party's life. He regarded unity as the affair of, in fact, every party member, more, of every class-conscious worker.

Lenin expressed his confidence in the party's collective mind with extraordinary power: '*More light!*—let the Party know *everything*,' he wrote, 'let it have *all, absolutely all the material* required for a judgement of all and sundry differences, reversions to revisionism, departures from discipline, etc. More confidence in the independent judgement of the whole body of party workers!—they, and they alone, will be able to curb the excessive hotheadedness of grouplets inclined to splits, . . . to imbue them with the 'good will' to observe party discipline, . . . to cool the ardour of anarchistic individualism. . . .'⁶

* * *

Lenin's theoretical heritage and the experience of the fraternal parties bear out that nobody can be a consistent Marxist if he rejects democratic centralism as the party's organisational principle. Similarly, it is inconceivable for a person who distorts the theoretical content of the doctrine of Marx, Engels and Lenin to go on regarding himself an adherent of democratic centralism. The Communists cannot sacrifice fundamental provisions of the theory that are the foundation of ideological and political unity of thought, much less use an organisational form to camouflage the absence of a firm Marxist-Leninist stand. The guarantee that each fraternal party fulfils its leading political role in the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress lies in unity between the ideological and organisational principles guiding the Communists.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 387.

² *Ibid.*, p. 261.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 211-212.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 460.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 460-461.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

viewpoints

PEACE MUST BE UPHELD IN ASIA

In December 1984 our journal sponsored a round-table discussion of problems related to peace and security in Asia and the Pacific.¹ With this selection of contributions *WMR* continues the publication of articles received from fraternal parties on this important and pressing subject.

Despite a Policy of Terrorism

Abdus Salam — CC Secretary, Communist
Party of Bangladesh

WITH the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state in the early 1970s a new vista opened for a change for the better in international relations in the South Asian subcontinent. The most significant factor bringing the prospects for the growth of democratic tendencies in the region closer was the defeat of the US-backed Pakistani militarist regime in the war that it started against our people. However, severe blows were subsequently inflicted on the positive process that commenced in South Asia.

The reactionary military who came to power in Islamabad sent Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, head of Pakistan's civilian government, to the gallows. His murder was not simply the signal for the start of an acute political internecine struggle. Bhutto's political course was not to the liking of US imperialism, which had put its stake on the regime of Zia ul-Haq. Bhutto is dead.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the leader of Bangladesh's liberation movement and the nation's President, was brutally killed in 1975. There is now not the shadow of a doubt that the motivation for this murder was by no means solely the dissatisfaction of the Bangladesh military with Mujibur Rahman's policies. Recall the Washington government's unconcealed irritation over the Bangladesh President's external and domestic policies. Mujibur Rahman is no more.

Lastly, let us name one more of a string of crimes—the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Who perpetrated it? Was it just the work of two Sikhs? The answer is not so simple. Everybody knows of the CIA's web of intrigues

against India and its independent foreign policy. The Reagan administration clearly stated its displeasure over the course and outcome of the non-aligned movement's Delhi summit (1983), at which Indira Gandhi played a very prominent role.

US imperialism wants the countries of South Asia to be ruled by regimes subservient to it. In the past few years several score high-ranking US military and political figures have visited Bangladesh. Military collaboration between the USA and Bangladesh is expanding. The Pentagon wants the military regime to give the US Navy the right of entry into Bangladesh's territorial waters and access to the port of Chittagong and the islands of Manpura and St. Martins, where it plans to build supply facilities.

Some countries of the vast region of Southwest Asia have been included in the area of operations of the US Central Command (Centcom). After the collapse first of CENTO and then of SEATO the Pentagon is again planning the formation of new aggressive blocs. There has been continuing US pressure to turn ASEAN into one of these blocs.

To veil their aggressive designs the imperialists are persisting with their efforts to spread in Asia the propaganda lie about a 'Soviet threat', a lie that sometimes bears bitter fruit.

Calumny and slander can be effectively countered by showing the peaceful and anti-imperialist essence of the policies pursued by socialist countries. In particular, I have in mind initiatives such as the non-projection of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation to Asia, Africa and Latin America; the Soviet commitment to a policy of non-first-use of nuclear weapons; the statement addressed to nations with naval vessels in the Indian Ocean to refrain from sending large naval squadrons, from conducting exercises, and from enlarging and modernising military bases in that ocean. There has been a wide response among the peoples of South Asia to the perseverance of the Soviet Union, which is acting together with many non-aligned nations, in pursuing a course towards creating favourable conditions for improving the political climate throughout the region.

This course is being countered by the militarist, undisguisedly expansionist strategy of the USA, by its support of anti-people, despotic regimes, by its subversive activities and interference in the internal affairs of other countries. This is giving rise to strong anti-American sentiments among the peoples of South Asia. In keeping with the growing potentialities for resistance to imperialism's plans it is the duty of the Communists to work for unity and understanding in the peace movement. We take every opportunity to stress how important it is to coordinate the actions of the anti-imperialist movements, to draw the masses into these movements, and line up public opinion behind the forces of progress.

Although the peace movement in our countries is not as large as we would have liked, we are developing more effective ways of expanding and reinforcing it. It is our view that the democratic aspirations of the peace forces will not be arrested by a policy of international terrorism—the assassinations, conspiracies, and coups.

Differences Must Be Settled by Negotiation

Hông Tung – CC Secretary,
Communist Party of Vietnam

In pursuance of its Asian-Pacific doctrine Washington is taking steps to reinforce the military alliance between the USA, Japan and South Korea and simultaneously expand strategic collaboration with China. The military-political activity of US-controlled blocs and individual states is contributing to the appearance of new flashpoints of armed conflict.

Southeast Asia has long been a theatre of rivalry between imperialist powers. Today, the fierce clashes between peoples fighting for national independence and socialism, on the one hand, and the forces of neocolonialism, on the other, are not abating. The situation is being significantly compounded by the course pursued by China, which, following the USA's defeat in Vietnam seeks to 'fill the vacuum' and extend the sphere of its influence. Both these countries are using local reactionaries against the three independent states of Indochina and, by means of 'small wars', trying to turn Southeast Asia into an explosive region.

To attain its expansionist and hegemonistic aims Beijing resorted to military action along the frontiers of practically all neighbouring countries. The imperialists and the hegemonists are trying to subvert socialist construction in the countries of Indochina and, despite the humiliating defeats suffered by them they have no intention of abandoning their aggressive plans.

In unison with the imperialist forces and other reactionaries, the hegemonists are shrilly accusing Vietnam of 'aggressive actions', slanderously calling the three countries of Indochina a 'weapon of expansionist communism to intimidate adjoining countries'. In the meantime, they are themselves conducting subversive actions against the Kampuchean people, who have lived through the terror of genocide presided over by the Pol Pot regime that had close ties to Beijing, and are not ceasing their predatory raids into Vietnam's border provinces while slanderously charging it with 'attacking and seizing Chinese territory'.

The solidarity of the socialist countries is the decisive factor of the struggle against imperialism and hegemonism, for the preservation of peace and life in the world. Friendship and unity among the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea in the confrontation with the common enemy is the dependable guarantee of their present successes. The very fact of the existence of our countries and their successful development is a powerful stimulus of the struggle for independence and sovereignty in other Southeast Asian countries. We feel that it is important to reinforce the link of the struggle for national sovereignty and social progress with the struggle for peace, hold the banner of socialism on high, and clearly distinguish the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary line from nationalistic ideology enveloped in pseudo-revolutionary garb in order to deceive the people.

After the many wars that were forced upon our country, the Vietnamese people aspire for peace on the basis of independence and territorial integrity. This is crucial to restoring the country and improving the conditions of life for the people. Socialist Vietnam consistently pursues a foreign policy of peace, of establishing goodneighbourly relations with the other states of the region. Regretfully, in response to these good intentions we are encountering hostile actions. But Vietnam is prepared to forget all that was negative in the relations between it and some of our neighbours and seeks to settle differences by negotiations on the basis of equality,

mutual respect, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. These are indispensable conditions for the creation of an atmosphere of stability and peaceful coexistence in Asia and the Pacific.

The People Will Not Succumb to Threats and Blackmail

Kanharith Khieu – Editor-in-Chief, the newspaper *Kampuchea*.

FOREIGN policy adventurism, a course towards psychological warfare against socialism and towards political, economic, and military confrontation with countries of the new world; the looting of developing nations and shameless exploitation of the working masses of the capitalist world; aggression against the independence and freedom of sovereign states, and violence and terror against peoples defending their freedom—such are the instruments used in international affairs by imperialism, notably US imperialism, which thereby creates a serious threat to all humankind.

With the accession of the Reagan administration, the White House has been openly pursuing a policy of exporting counter-revolution accompanied by undeclared, overt and covert wars, and acts of state terrorism. It is not at all unexpected that, having fallen into the grip of megalomania, US imperialism is according considerable attention to Asia and the Pacific with their huge proportion of the world's population, enormous mineral resources, vast quantity of cheap labour, and important sea routes. In that region the USA has stationed its largest contingent of armed forces second only to that in Europe. Moreover, Washington would like to control the economic and military international alliances in the region and turn them into an integral militarist system subordinated to the USA. This is the essence of the Pacific community project now being hatched out by the imperialists. In addition to its strategic significance, this community is seen as a means of isolating 'stubborn' nations, particularly the three countries of Indochina, with the ultimate objective of forcing them to their knees before US might.

Beijing's subversive stand is prejudicing the cause of peace and detente. In Southeast Asia it continues to sustain tension, prodding two large groups of states—the countries of Indochina and ASEAN—into confrontation, and extending assistance to the reactionary gangs entrenched along the frontiers of Kampuchea, Vietnam and Laos. The Chinese mass media are trying to sell world public opinion a distorted view about the character of the disinterested assistance that Vietnam, the USSR, and other fraternal socialist countries are extending to Kampuchea, and to depict our revolution in a perverted light. Beijing propaganda is going to the extent of describing the Pol Pot butchers as the 'true representatives' of the Khmer people. Every year, with the aid of intrigues, our detractors are pushing the United Nations Organisation into an absurd position on the so-called 'Kampuchean problem'.

The People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea has stated repeatedly (a point of view shared by many personalities in influential quarters of ASEAN) that the imperialists and the hegemonists are at the back of the threat to peace and stability in Southeast Asia and the entire Asian continent. The 'Kampuchean problem' exists

solely on account of their assistance to reactionary Khmer groups. Regretfully, in the ruling circles of ASEAN there are elements that continue to flirt with the enemies of the freedom of nations. But People's Kampuchea will never succumb to threats and blackmail.

Our people's central problem is to restore and organise life on our long-suffering land as quickly and as effectively as possible. For Kampuchea the right to self-determination—a slogan its enemies love to flaunt—means, above all, the eradication of the Pol Pot groups and the realisation, after the horrors of the bloodthirsty reign of terror, of the right of Kampucheans to life. We are prepared to resume relations of friendship and solidarity with China, such as existed between our two countries in the past, but only on condition it gives up its hegemonistic ambitions.

Peace is the common property of the whole of humanity. However, in our region this does not always find proper understanding, especially in rural communities. A serious factor inhibiting a mass anti-war movement in non-socialist countries consists of the actions of the local reactionaries, who resort to bloody repressions, blackmail, and intimidation against its participants, and imprison or even assassinate progressive civic and political leaders. Also, a negative influence is exercised by the relatively low level of mass media development in the three socialist countries of Indochina and the strong pressures and strict censorship to which progressive newspapers and journals are subjected in other Asian countries and the Pacific.

However, the Communists can and must play their important role even in the face of these difficult conditions. The Marxist-Leninist parties of the region have close links to the masses and built up considerable experience of ideological activity. We are waging a hard struggle. The enemy employs craft, and depends upon support from world reaction. But today it is growing increasingly clear to public opinion that the Communists are a force without whose participation no acute socio-economic and political problems can be resolved.

Having experienced war, the people of Kampuchea know only too well the value of peace. That is why we wholeheartedly support the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union and the other member-states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, and the proposals of the Mongolian People's Republic for a convention on mutual non-aggression and the non-use of force in the relations among Asian and Pacific nations. Only unity and joint struggle will lead to the triumph of peace.

Towards Unity of Action for Common Aims

Representative of the Communist Party
of Pakistan

THE 1970s were a very eventful decade for Asia. The glorious victory of the Vietnamese people over the US aggressors, the national-democratic revolution in Afghanistan, the overthrow of the shah's regime in Iran, and the growth of the liberation movement in other parts of the continent eroded imperialism's positions. There was a visible consolidation of economic and political relations between Asian countries and the Soviet Union. SEATO and CENTO ceased to exist under the

impact of these positive changes.

The imperialists and their local sycophants have not accepted and, of course, will never bring themselves round to coming to terms with the democratic, progressive changes. The USA continues to look for opportunities in our zone for building more military bases and is attempting to bring Turkey into a new military pact on NATO's eastern flank. The so-called Regional Cooperation for Development, an organisation consisting of Pakistan, Iran and Turkey and formerly an economic appendage of CENTO, has resumed its activities. Simultaneously the USA is endeavouring to benefit by the unceasing tragic war between Iran and Iraq.

US imperialism has formed the Rapid Deployment Force with the declared aim of suppressing revolutionary and liberation movements. In a map recently published in Washington Pakistan is marked as a region of interest to the USA in the context of using the Rapid Deployment Force. There is information to the effect that the latter have been permitted (in the event of a 'crisis' situation) to use some Pakistani military bases.

Pakistan is being turned into a regional policeman guarding imperialist interests. Pakistan's military budget has been more than trebled over the past nine years. On Pakistani territory the USA is training and arming counter-revolutionary bandits and in broad daylight infiltrating them into Afghanistan. Bases for the Rapid Deployment Force are under construction at Gawardar and Jewni (Baluchistan). The Pentagon strategists are supplying Pakistan with high-tech armaments, including F-16 fighter-bombers. The latter can carry nuclear weapons, which the reactionary dictatorial regime is eager to possess and may soon start producing.

Following the assassination of Indira Gandhi new evidence has come to light indicating that the dictator Zia ul-Haq is giving massive support to the Punjabi separatists engaged in subversive actions against non-aligned India. Pakistan's rulers are openly demonstrating their hostility for their eastern neighbour. In Pakistan there are upwards of ten camps in which 6,000 Punjabi terrorists are being trained. Pakistani Air Force aircraft are intruding into India's air space, while groups of armed men raid its territory. Or, take a fact that is of propaganda significance: the Information Minister of Pakistan exchanged gifts with anti-Indian terrorists in Lahore.

In this situation our party feels that the paramount aim is to coordinate the actions of the forces working to attain genuine independence from imperialism and society's progressive restructuring with those of the forces of peace and social progress throughout the world.

Much has still to be done to make the peace movement in Asia more effective. In our region, as everybody knows, its growth rate is relatively slow. Nonetheless, the process of the growth of the people's political consciousness is developing. The Communists and other peace forces have become more active in promoting public relations, focusing on making the people aware of the danger of a global nuclear disaster. With support from the working class we have to continue working to involve the broadest sections of the population into the peace movement. We feel that it is important to pay special attention to ensuring the participation of intellectuals in this movement. Further, we believe it is both possible and necessary to draw patriotic religious personalities into the movement for peace.

Regular exchanges of information between fraternal parties on questions related to the struggle for peace are vital for the attainment of common aims. We should keep every person informed of the content and significance of the peace initiatives of the socialist countries and strengthen unity of action between the working class and progressive and democratic elements of the entire continent, who form an inalienable part of the movement for peace and socialism.

Principal Condition of Success

Representative of the Communist Party
of Nepal

ON account of its geographical location our small country attracts the special attention of US imperialism. The latter is trying to encircle non-aligned India with a ring of hostile states, and make Nepal a part of that ring.

The Washington administration is intimately concerned with rearming the Nepalese army. Nepal is being visited by advisers and experts from the USA. 'Quiet interference' in our internal affairs is all the more dangerous because near Nepal there already are flashpoints of tension fuelled by reactionary pro-imperialist regimes.

For our people the struggle for peace and detente is thus a vital need. Despite the fact that this struggle is being waged in the face of difficulties, the peace fighters have registered some successes. In Nepal there is a Peace Committee. It has convened a representative conference, which was attended by 375 delegates.

However, the prejudices and delusions generated by the notorious 'superpowers concept', which obscures the fundamental distinction between Soviet and US foreign policy, persist. Hence the task of the Communists to explain the essence of the peace initiatives of the socialist and non-aligned countries, which bourgeois propaganda so cunningly tries to discredit. It is our duty to help our people see through the hypocritical and demagogic rhetoric of imperialist politicians, of members of the US administration in the first place, who are using a screen of verbiage to conceal their aggressive intentions. We can note with pride that here we have had quite tangible successes.

Another task is to draw as many people as possible into the peace movement. In this context I should like to mention two circumstances. First, the involvement of large numbers of people is a condition of effective action and, second, such involvement makes it easier for progressive and democratic elements to explain their platforms to the public and fosters the growth of the population's political consciousness.

A major positive role is played by visits to Nepal by delegations of peace forces from other countries. We have been hosts to representatives of the World Peace Council, the Labour Party of Great Britain, and guests from the Soviet Union, Canada and Asian and African countries. Meetings with such delegations, which consist of people of diverse political views and persuasions, provide our people with vivid evidence of the scale of the peace movement and are an earnest of the success of their own efforts on behalf of peace.

¹ See *WMR*, No. 3, 1985.

Neoconservatism, Reaganism and the Middle East

Rafic Samhoun – CC Political Bureau
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THE present ideological and political trend of neoconservatism in the capitalist countries, whose core is the ideology and politics of the US ruling circles, has formulated a programme cutting across the progressive tendencies of world history. The Communists, a sizable part of the working class movement and the national democratic forces are perfectly well aware that neoconservatism and its core, which has entered the political lexicon under the name of Reaganism, is for all practical purposes seeking to turn the social development of the world in such a way that all the peoples and countries, their economies and politics, culture and way of life should ossify within the framework of capitalism for all time. The advocates of Reaganism claim that global 'law and order' can be ensured only by a retreat to a period in which the 'mailed fist' of imperialism had the last say in world politics. Such a state of affairs can be attained by bending the world to the dictates of US monopoly capital and its allies.

Let us note that those who have already escaped from the clutches of imperialism, including the socialist states, face the prospect of violent counter-revolutionary restoration of the capitalist order, while those who are still striving for independent development face the prospect of being saddled with neocolonialism. Neoconservative propaganda has either hushed up or demagogically pooh-poohed as 'insignificant' costs of 'end-of-century modernisation' the inevitable loss of national sovereignty and cultural identity by most countries of the world community under such a global suspension of social progress. These costs, it is claimed, will be more than compensated by the establishment of international 'accord and peace', economic 'prosperity' and other 'benefits' that will automatically descend on those who follow in the wake of the capitalist, or to be more precise, the US 'super-monopoly' civilisation.

The reality itself and its comprehension are, in fact, being stood on their head at the 'think tanks' of the bourgeois propaganda machine. Class inequality is presented as divine justice, the exploitation of labour by capital, as the condition for economic progress, the monopolies' diktat as the pledge of universal affluence, the cult of violence as a society-defying biological law, neocolonialism as disinterested aid, anti-communism and anti-Sovietism as a 'holy struggle for freedom, against the evil', and so on. Imperialist propaganda extolls the barbarous idea that 'if you want peace, prepare for war', spreading the mad message about some need to establish US world domination, since 'Pax Americana' is allegedly capable of instituting 'global order' by force. In domestic politics, all peoples and countries are advised to increase their military spending, to assert a system under which the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer, and to help assert new forms of the developing countries' dependence on world imperialism.

But what are in reality this 'peace' and these diverse 'benefits' which neoconservatism holds in store? One finds the answer in an analysis of the ideology and politics of Reaganism, which reflects in the most explicit forms the true objectives of reaction and which now seeks to introduce some new elements into its struggle against world-wide and national social progress. That is best seen in the 'hot spots' of the world, where imperialism has been trying to solve social, ethnic and international problems by force. One such spot—not a spot, in fact, but a whole region—is the Middle East.

Ideological Combinations and Political Goals

The time of colonialism has passed, but imperialism makes use of a large arsenal of instruments to re-establish its positions in the developing countries, with political and economic instruments having the crucial role. But more than ever before, it now concentrates on the ideological back-up of its aggressiveness, its purpose being to build up a *common ideological front of imperialism* by rallying ultra-right ideological and political trends on the international, regional and national levels, without dropping the 'USA über alles!' idea.

In the context of the Middle East, that means shaping an alliance of Reaganism, Zionism and ultra-reactionary ideology of certain Arab circles for a 'crusade' against communism, the Soviet Union and the national liberation movements. Imperialism is trying to put this reactionary alliance on some kind of religious and moral footing and to turn it into something like a global force.

There is some reshuffling of ideological tenets for these purposes: repudiation of the 'old nationalism', which is said to be isolationist and accenting 'native' specifics; the 'new nationalism' being offered instead lays emphasis on the interests not only of the United States, but of the whole 'Atlantic community'. The ideological basis here is provided by claims that the USSR and socialism are the ultimate embodiment of spiritual and material 'evil', that the national liberation movements are a product of 'international terrorism' sponsored by the socialist countries, and that total suppression by every means is in store for both.

In that context, attempts are being made to bring together reactionary trends in various religions in a single ideological and political bloc, with claims being made that all religions provide historical vindication for capitalism. Thus, a reactionary leader of the Evangelical Church Jerry Falwell, who heads the 'moral majority' in the United States and enjoys the support of the Reaganites, has declared that the 'Holy Bible contains the answers to all the questions. . . . Socialism turns man into a slave. . . . Biblical texts contain indications of freedom of enterprise, the Jews engaged in commerce, and so capitalism is sanctified. . . . The Jews are above all the Israelis, and Israel is a bulwark of the free world,'¹ and so on. Such are the arguments of the back-up propaganda designed to get some trends in Catholicism, Judaism, and so on, to take joint action in the common fight by all reactionary, religious fundamentalists against the national democratic movement and the Communists.

In the Middle East, Reaganism has similarly encouraged the trend in Islam which is hostile to all that is freedom-loving and progressive, which coalesces with Washington, and which is soft on Israel's aggressive line and the Zionist ideology, while opposing the interests of broad masses of Moslems. Hence the support for reactionary religious dogmatists clamouring for the adoption of archaic forms of Shariat as the fundamental law in some countries, something that could hurl their peoples back into the Middle Ages, that complicates the situation in the region,² and is at odds with the progressive attitudes of the Moslem masses.

Politically, this line amplifies the propaganda of a 'unity of Arab-US interests', forcing some Arab states into a position of 'neutrality' in the clash between the national liberation movement and Israel. The policy of surrender to the aggressor is being covered up with calls for 'normalising' political, economic and cultural ties of all the Arab peoples with the Zionist state, on the plea that the Middle East is the cradle of religious civilisations, the 'great bridge' between them, and the place where the three principle religions of the world—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—originated and where they have coexisted side by side in a spirit of tolerance.

In Lebanon, for instance, some isolationist leaders proceeding from such ideas advocate an alliance with Israel, support of the Zionist militarists' aggressive line towards the Arab national liberation movement and identification with US imperialism, including a readiness to conduct its strategy in the Middle East. Some

reactionary Egyptian leaders, for their part, have called for a 'public opinion U-turn in Egypt from the anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist nationalism of the Nasser period to Western cosmopolitanism, which is hostile to Arab nationalism and which asserts that Egypt is a part of the European civilisation and so must coexist with the Zionist ideology'.³

Nor is the effort to unite the ideological and political forces of reaction against the forces of progress the only weapon in the Reaganite armoury. It is not so much the knocking together of religious and political alliances, as the 'divide and rule' method that is now being used in the internal political life of the Arab countries when dealing with broad masses of people and trying to suppress the class struggle in defence of the working people's interests in the face of imperialism, national reaction, and Zionism. In the Middle East, the United States has been heating up hostility between members of various denominations, and ethnic and other communities in an effort to spread religious, sectarian and national fanaticism. That is expressed in full US backing for Israel's policy in the 1980s, which is designed to fragment the countries in the region on denominational and communal lines into mini-states: Moslem, Christian, Coptic, Maronite, Sunni, Shi'ite, Druze, and Alavite. Once locked in mortal hostility with each other, they would serve as an instrument for undermining the Arab peoples' combat cohesion, and the unity of their true patriotic and national interests, so assuring Israel of 'secure' geographical boundaries and making it possible to establish US-Israeli hegemony in the region.⁴

This strategy is being backed by some reactionary Christian leaders in the Middle East, notably in Lebanon. 'Lebanese nationalism', 'civilised pluralism', 'Mediterranean civilisation', 'minority problems in the East' and similar other ideas boil down to the assertion that Christianity allegedly provides the basis for a Christian civilisation, and Islam, for an Islamic civilisation, with the Christian-Lebanese ethnic entity constituted by the natives of the mountainous and maritime areas, and the Islamic-Arab entity, by the natives of the plains and the sandy deserts. The 'Mediterranean civilisation' idea, for instance, ultimately envisages the demise of the 'Arab civilisation' to give way to Lebanon's 'Mediterranean identity', but of a Lebanon isolated from its Arab background.

The progressive, general democratic and liberation principles, which are recognised by the Marxists and revolutionary democrats as being a part of the concept of Arab nationalism, are being countered by some reactionary Moslem leaders in the Arab world with a historically false and politically reactionary concept of some 'Eastern culture', while Arab nationalism is rejected as an allegedly extraneous concept fabricated centuries ago by the West for the purpose of causing the break-up of the Ottoman Empire. On the strength of that logic, Arab nationalism (which also means its positive aspects) no longer has any historical justification, so making the Arab people's current struggles meaningless. That is yet another argument for the Lebanese isolationists' surrender to imperialism.

Those are the ideological and cultural points on which there is now a meeting of reactionary religious minds, whether Christian or Moslem. Clad in Moslem garb, the 'Ottoman concept' ties in with the preaching of 'Lebanese nationalism' and the concepts of other local sectarian nationalists donning Christian garb. All are against the national movement in its progressive social emancipation sense and try to conceal from the working people the class substance of the social relations and contradictions, and the true content of the interests of imperialism and reaction, bringing to the fore religious, sectarian and national contradictions, splitting the nation on communal lines, camouflaging its class stratification and diverting attention both from the real internal enemy, and from the dangers of imperialist pressure.

In this way, the ideological war against the forces of national liberation, progress and communism is used by Reaganism as a means of paving the way for the policy of

imperialism, whose objective is economic plunder by the monopolies of the developing countries' national resources and world domination by the US ruling circles.

What Reaganomics Has in Store for the Arab World

Conservatism is now trying hard to toughen up the system of capital's exploitation of labour, as will be seen from the cutbacks in social programmes inspired by Reaganomics in the developed capitalist countries, the redistribution of the national income everywhere in favour of the monopolies, the arms race, and so on. The ideologists of neoconservatism admit that this kind of economic policy is aimed to free from the tax burden the 'economically active elements', i.e., the capitalist elite, the self-styled creators of wealth for others, since, it is argued, 'the money of the rich ultimately makes for the well-being of the poor'.⁵ Dominating, as it does, the centres of the world capitalist economy, Reaganomics cannot but have an effect on the economic and social condition of its periphery, including the Middle East region.

On the one hand, the artificially high exchange rate of the dollar and interest rates, designed to cover the US budget deficit created by the vast growth of military expenditures, have caused capital to flow from the West European and Third World countries into the coffers of the US monopolies, a policy which, says one French journal, boosts the US economy at the expense of economic modernisation in Western Europe and economic development in the Third World.⁶ It is common knowledge, for instance, that Middle East oil is 'working' for the economy of the United States and helps to bolster its international positions.

On the other hand, Reaganomics also has an impact on the internal economic condition of other states, once again for the benefit of the United States and its closest allies. In the Middle East countries taking the capitalist way of development, Washington has encouraged a 'free economy', with its typical features—steadily growing unemployment, declining real incomes for the working people, lower taxes for the corporations, cutbacks in state spending and their effect on economic life, and ever higher military appropriations. All of this is impacting on every aspect of the economic condition of the Arab region hand in hand with a weakening of its 'economic immunity' to the arbitrary acts of the Western monopolies.

In countries either striving to break with capitalism or to reduce their material dependence on imperialism, Reaganomics supports the social strata and groups calling for a policy of 'economic infitah' (open door), abandonment of planning, a whittling down of the role of the state sector all the way to its liquidation, and assurance of predominant positions for the private sector. For all practical purposes, that also creates the prerequisites for new forms of dependence on the US-controlled transnational corporations, and the bolstering of domination by foreign capital and the local bourgeoisie, its junior partner.

New nuances of imperialist social policy in the developing world assume clearer contours in connection with those external economic effects of Reaganomics. In the colonial period, the imperialists mainly supported local feudal lords in the area, and in the early periods of the Arab countries' independence, the remnants of the class of feudal lords and the compradore bourgeoisie; they now increasingly seek to find common ground with the top section of the national bourgeoisie and some strata of the parasitic and bureaucratic bourgeoisie. Once in power, these new ruling circles in some Arab countries which had earlier reflected the attitudes of the petty-bourgeois strata, gradually edge away from defence of the national interests and the interests of the petty bourgeoisie itself to provide social support for imperialist expansion.

All of this is ultimately aimed to continue the exploitation of the Middle East countries within the framework of the world capitalist market by means of diverse instruments, such as the gap between the extremely overstated prices of goods

exported by the West and the extremely understated prices of the raw materials and initially processed products imported by the West. The same purpose is served by the armaments being supplied by the imperialist powers to the region on condition of no resistance to Israel's aggressive acts, the inflation of the military budgets of many countries, and the enslaving debts which they are forced to shoulder.

One gets an idea of the economic exploitation of the Arab peoples from the computations of authoritative economists showing that from 1977 to 1981, seven Western companies had a net profit of \$90 billion from operations involving Middle East oil; the assets of ten US and West European oil companies operating in the Middle East total almost \$360 billion, or more than the gross national product of all the Arab states, whose population comes to 180 million.⁷

The inevitable result is a general economic and social decline in most countries in the region, and a sharp drop in living standards for broad masses of working people who have to bear the full brunt of the crisis. Among the consequences of such a state of affairs are the 'hunger riots' in Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Sudan, and the threat of similar developments in other countries. The life of luxury led by a section of the Middle East bourgeoisie does nothing to alter the fact that imperialism is plundering, virtually without control, the national resources and is waxing rich on the savage exploitation of the labour of tens of millions of Arabs.

Endless War: Another 'Boon' for Imperialism

Reaganism's economic piracy in the Middle East breeds interventionism, racism and violence, of which the shock forces are the United States and Israel. In the United States itself, these features of neoconservatism are manifested in the fact that tens of millions of US citizens are victimised by discrimination and brutalised by exploitation simply because their skin is of a different colour. The same neoconservatism in Western Europe supports reviving neonazism and revanchism among certain West German circles. In Africa, it provides practical props for apartheid. In the Middle East, neoconservatism reveals its racist and bellicose stripes through its unlimited military, economic and political support of the Zionist regime in Israel. Against that background, political acts, like Reagan's Nazi-grave visit in the FRG, are not accidental in any sense. Reaganism wants to see the imperialist countries in 'strategic cooperation', and so has been unsparing in the use of resources to build up the US-Israel alliance. That being so, it is not surprising that not a decade has, in fact, passed without Israel's starting a war against one or more Arab states, and in each of the five wars it has waged up to now, the United States has invariably given it military support and financial aid.

All of that is common knowledge. However, following the signing of the 'strategic cooperation' memorandum in 1981, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and the revival of 'strategic cooperation' in 1984, relations between the United States and Israel have been raised under Reaganism to a qualitatively new level, so that the distinctions between the interests, objectives and even tactical tenets of the two countries tend to disappear.

The examples are numerous. The 'strategic cooperation' memorandum provides not only for the establishment of a common military apparatus (joint commissions under the chairmanship of the US and Israeli defence ministers), but also for the erection on Israeli territory of storage depots and facilities for US troops, provision by the Israeli Air Force of air cover for the US military contingents being ferried into the region, Israeli naval patrols of marine communications used by the United States, and regular joint exercises and manoeuvres.⁸

The joint military operations by the two countries within the framework of 'strategic cooperation' are now no longer confined to ever larger deals for delivery of the most modern weapons to Israel. There is now direct US complicity in acts of

aggression against the Arab peoples, whereas in the past that was exclusively the business of the Israeli invaders themselves. Let us recall that US imperialism began its undeclared war against Lebanon after the Israeli aggression had failed to attain its political and military objectives, and it looks as if the United States intends to rehearse its attack following the fiasco of its 1983 intervention.

Far from excluding, this, in fact, tends to step up independent Israeli acts encouraged by Washington, which also gave the 'green light' to Operation Iron Brain, the storming by Israeli troops of West Beirut, following its three-month steadfast resistance, the Sabra and Shatila massacres in September 1982, and the fanning of the intra-Lebanese and Lebanese-Palestinian friction as a pretext for returning to Lebanon a US marine contingent, but a larger one than that which was there on the eve of its sudden pullout from the country. The idea of a need to 'disengage' the warring factions, which was then mooted, was used as a pretext for starting another military gamble in the Middle East.

The tactic of playing off local contradictions and the split among the national liberation forces is being used not only in Lebanon, where the civil war is being stoked up. Let us also recall the partition of Cyprus and similar plans being hatched for breaking up the national unity of Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and the countries of the Arabian Peninsula. To some extent that also applies to Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India. There are patent attempts to deepen friction and conflict on issues which could well be settled by peaceful means, through negotiation. The friction is deliberately inflamed by internal and external reaction to bitter and bloody clashes in order to divide the forces opposing imperialism. Witness the Iraq-Iran war, which has undermined the potential of both countries and which has knocked them out of the anti-imperialist front.

As for Lebanon and the Arab-Israeli contradictions, the United States has undertaken within the framework of 'strategic cooperation' to keep ensuring 'Israel's security', and not to recognise the Palestinian people's national rights, a stand expressed in practical terms in the high-handed rejection by the United States and Israel of the idea of an independent Palestinian state, their flat refusal to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and their concerted efforts to wipe out the Palestinian people. An outcome of this line is the feverish activity over the past several months by the Reagan administration, Israel, Arab reaction and right-wing Palestinian forces seeking to break up the ranks of the Palestinians under the recent Amman agreement between King Hussein and Yasser Arafat, the project for a 'United Arab Kingdom', the 'Reagan plan' and the Camp David accords. The idea is, in effect, to put paid to the Palestinian problem or to reduce it to an issue over the future of no more than a part of the territory of the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip, which Israel occupied in 1967, leaving in the area a number of Palestinians acceptable to Israel under dual—nominally Jordanian, but actually Israeli—domination. This creates the danger of the PLO's dissolution, with an end to its mission as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and poses a threat to their very survival, and the independence of Jordan itself.

US-Zionist propaganda keeps trumpeting that such a solution would allegedly bring peace to the Middle East and help to 'normalise' Arab-Israeli relations. However, it has to take the form of a US-Israeli-style 'peace', which means the Arab people's surrendering to the United States and Israel. But can peace and social progress be ensured by the line of strengthening Israel, the forward US staging post and bridgehead in the Middle East used for putting down the rising national liberation movements in the area? That is not a realistic prospect. Israel and the United States have already had, time and again, to retreat in the full sense of the word, whenever the national liberation forces took a resolute stand in defence of the interests of the peoples in the region.⁹

Nor are there any real historical prospects for Reagan's plans of using the Middle East as a bridgehead against the Soviet Union and some countries in Southern Europe, Asia and Africa.

Washington regards the peoples of the Middle East as chips in its geopolitical game of winning world domination. It is a policy that has inflicted immense calamities and sufferings on the Arab peoples. The ideological back-up of aggression and war, the enshrinement of terrorism as state policy, the conduct of its ultra-reactionary strategy by the present US administration and its henchmen in other countries amount to a desperate attempt by the most bellicose circles of the monopoly bourgeoisie to stem the catastrophic deepening of the general crisis of capitalism, and to weaken existing socialism and the national liberation forces in the world.

But these plans of imperialism and its allies are opposed by the mighty socialist community, headed by the Soviet Union, by the forces of national liberation, and by the millions of working people throughout the world yearning for peace and social progress. Despite some temporary retreats by the national liberation forces which have now and again occurred in this or that country or region, it remains an incontrovertible historical fact that, far from surrendering, these movements have been consolidating their international positions and fighting back against the current unprecedented offensive by imperialism.

Another thing is also evident in more concrete terms. In view of the situation in the Middle East, in the face of the efforts by the United States, Israel and local diehard reaction to knock together a 'strategic consensus' on the basis of the common class interests of its participants and the idea of a 'Soviet' or 'communist threat', it is no longer possible to accept the continuing split within the ranks of the broad progressive national patriotic circles. They are faced with a common danger: the attack mounted by these three engineers of 'consensus' against the common patriotic, national and social interests of the Arab peoples.

That is why, more than ever before in the past, there is now an imperative need for unity between the countries of the region and the Soviet Union, a tried and true friend, for a broad anti-imperialist alliance, the Arab front of progressive forces, including workers, peasants, petty-bourgeois and intermediate strata of town and country, and the patriotic intelligentsia. Such an alliance within the framework of each Arab country and on the all-Arab scale can alone help, with the support of the socialist community, to halt the fierce offensive by imperialism, and to open up realistic potentialities for the peoples of the Middle East attaining genuine sovereignty over their national resources and realising their aspirations for freedom, economic independence and social progress.

¹ Quoted in Guy Sorman, *La Révolution Conservatrice américaine*, Paris, 1983, pp. 133, 138.

² In order to destabilise and undermine the progressive regime in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the Moslem Brotherhood, for instance, has set up in the Arab Republic of Yemen over the past five years, with Saudi Arabia's financial support and US encouragement, 520 religious schools and centres, and 12 schools for leadership training where, apart from religious subjects, students are also trained in the use of weapons.

³ *Al Mouwajaha*, April 1985.

⁴ For details see *WMR*, No. 1, 1984, pp. 98-104.

⁵ G. Sorman, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

⁶ *Monde diplomatique*, June 1984.

⁷ *At-Talia*, June 27, 1985.

⁸ *An-Nahj*, No. 5, August 1984, pp. 56-57.

⁹ Over the past several years, US-NATO troops have been forced to withdraw from Lebanon; Israel has had to pull out its army from most of the country.

US-Latin American Class Solidarity

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NEW trends are gathering momentum in the US working class. They attracted national attention in September 1981, when the main organised sector of the working class as represented by the AFL-CIO initiated an anti-Reaganism Solidarity Day march and demonstration of 500,000 in Washington.

Later, the AFL-CIO leadership abandoned its traditional electoral policy—'reward your friends and punish your enemies'—that tied it to the twin political parties of monopoly capital (the Democratic and the Republican parties), and asserted its independence by designating its preference for a presidential candidate in the 1984 elections even before the Democrats had nominated him.¹

Subsequently, the AFL-CIO and a number of its affiliated unions, together with other independent unions, have provided more manifestations of this tendency. One could single out, for instance, the activities of the AFL-CIO leadership, 26 international unions, and many trade union locals, notably Local 10 in San Francisco of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), in solidarity with the indigenous African peoples' struggle against the vicious and shameful apartheid regime.

Commenting on these and related events at the party's Central Committee Plenum in December 1984, Gus Hall, CPUSA General Secretary, said: 'The actions of the trade union movement, both leadership and rank and file, must be seen in the framework of what was reflected in the election campaign and what is taking place in South Africa—the growing role of the working class and the trade unions in the struggle against the racist regime as well as the involvement of US imperialism. These actions are prompted by feelings of class solidarity, and anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist sentiments.'²

The growing internationalism among US workers is especially noteworthy in relation to their class brothers and sisters of Latin America. Events of recent date warrant the conclusion that more and more working people in the United States are coming to realise that, to quote Marx, 'disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts.'³

Solidarity activities at this stage are spearheaded against US imperialist intervention and undeclared overt and covert warfare against the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. They are also aimed at supporting the struggles of the peoples of the subregion against reactionary regimes.

In 1983, when it became apparent that the Reagan regime was out to strangle the Sandinist revolution and destroy El Salvador's Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, exchange visits of US and Central American trade unionists were seen as a very important means of backing Nicaragua. A delegation of three Central American republics addressed press conferences and large meetings in West Coast cities that began in Seattle and ended in Los Angeles. Sebastian Castro represented Nicaraguan trade unions in the delegation. He told thousands of unionists and other US working people about the changes that had come about in his country after the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship. Castro pointed out that before the 1979 revolution only 6 per cent of Nicaragua's workers were organised whereas today 60 per cent are organised. He warned that the White House was moving to open ended intervention against Nicaragua. Other delegates—Marta Alicia Rivera of El Salvador and Miguel Angel Albizu of Guatemala—spoke of the repression of trade union rights in their

countries.⁴

The Central American unionists were invited to the USA by top officials of the California Federation of Teachers, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

In July 1984, thirty-four US unionists reciprocated the Central Americans' visit and reported their observations. The report of the delegate of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE) so impressed the union's General Executive Board that it demanded the Reagan administration end its threats, and urged 'UE districts and locals to help build pressure on the Reagan administration and Congress to halt and reverse the current military activities directed against Nicaragua which threaten to escalate into outright intervention.'⁵

Last November, when overt armed intervention by Washington against Nicaragua seemed imminent, emergency rallies, marches and picket lines—overwhelmingly of unionists and other working people—mushroomed in cities across the USA. Rallies attracted hundreds of people in Boston, Denver, Detroit, San Francisco, Minneapolis and other cities. Monitoring these demonstrations, Alexandra (Sandy) Pollack,⁶ Central American Solidarity Coordinator for the USA Peace Council, called on workers and working class organisations to head off an invasion of Nicaragua by US forces, by swamping members of Congress with telephone calls and mailgrams demanding that Congress halt escalation of interventionist moves by the White House.⁷

Following a mass meeting of workers in December 1984, where trade unionists reported on a visit to Nicaragua, the Seattle City Council voted unanimously to establish sister-city ties with Managua, the Nicaraguan capital.⁸

It is noteworthy that the unprovoked and criminal aggression against Grenada on October 25, 1983, by massive US invading and occupying forces, in flagrant violation of the Charters of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States and the laws and Constitution of the USA, alerted US working people by signalling the likelihood of similar aggressions against other Caribbean and Central American states.

As a result, more solidarity activities were developed, especially in regard to the patriots of El Salvador. The determined struggles of that small country's people against the imperialist policy of intervention, which is being carried on with the aid of the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon to perpetuate the rule of an indigenous oligarchy in league with two score transnationals, have won broad public sympathy.

An indication of this solidarity was the formation of a National Labor Committee in Support of Human Rights and Democracy in El Salvador on the initiative of 16 US national unions, including four of the biggest. In March 1984, the Committee organised a rally in Washington. The rally took place after a fact-finding visit to El Salvador by a delegation of US labor leaders, which issued a report on the devastating consequences of imperialist intervention.⁹ The report pointed out that in San Salvador 'every trade union hall has been either vandalised, bombed, or burnt,' that there is no trade union freedom in the country, and that workers had been tortured and many of them had 'disappeared' or been murdered. The leader of the delegation addressed the rally on the steps of the Capitol. He called on the demonstrators to come out in defense of the Salvadoran people.

The rally was one of the forms of organised protest against Washington's support of Central American reaction, such as the resolution adopted by the 1983 convention of the more than 1,000,000-member United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America which declared: 'We strongly urge the cutoff of US military assistance to the oppressive regime of El Salvador. . . . We strongly oppose covert or overt US aid to overthrow the government of Nicaragua, and urge the

withdrawal of CIA and military involvement in Honduras. . . .'¹⁰ Much earlier, the West Coast Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) instituted a boycott of shipments of all military and related goods to El Salvador. 'We take this step,' said ILWU President James Herman, 'to express our profound revulsion at the reign of terror which has been imposed upon the people of El Salvador by their government, . . . the systematic murder of over 9,000 workers, peasants and students (now estimated to exceed 50,000.—*J.P.*), . . . the assassination of Archbishop Romero, . . . the total destruction of whatever civil and political liberty existed. . . .'¹¹

Efforts have also been made to aid the Honduran people's struggles against that country's ultra-reactionary regime, a proxy of imperialist intervention against Nicaragua. A trade union delegation from Philadelphia visited the Honduran Ministry of Labor to express concern for 'missing' labor leaders. However, when delegates spoke at a rally to protest against the presence of US troops in that country, they were immediately arrested and deported at gunpoint.

Many solidarity actions launched over specific issues achieved their purpose. In 1984, the National Labor Committee in Support of Human Rights and Democracy in El Salvador put pressure on the US State Department on behalf of several Salvadoran unionists jailed by the government, with some of them fingered for elimination by ultra-rightist death squads. Seven were released, and torture of others was terminated.

Nor are my compatriots indifferent to the fate of refugees from Central American reactionary dictatorships. The racist treatment accorded by US authorities to desperate Haitians fleeing the brutal repression and murder gangs of the Duvalier dynasty sparked indignation among broad sections of the public. The Committee for International Support of Trade Union Rights (CISTUR), with headquarters in Northern California, issued a call for a trade union sanctuary for Central American unionists fleeing death or imprisonment.

US workers do not confine their solidarity activities to Central America and the Caribbean but extend them to all the peoples of the Latin American countries.

In 1982 US trade unionists backed the working people of Argentina in their efforts to oust the anti-labor, anti-people military dictatorship responsible for the 'disappearance' of 30,000 men, women and children. Their campaign involved the 580,000-member American Federation of Teachers, the 100,000-member California Conference of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (San Francisco, San Jose and San Mateo), and many local unions. Thirty-seven local unions and councils organised a demonstration in front of the San Francisco consulates of Argentina and Chile. The demands of the workers of the two countries were widely publicised.

In 1983 Brazil Labor Information, an organisation of top officials of a majority of US and Canadian unions, joined the international campaign of pressure on the Brazilian government, which sought to obtain labor's compliance with IMF-inspired wage cuts and social programme reductions. Earlier, leading officials of the auto workers, machinists, steelworkers, clothing and textile workers, rubber workers and a number of other international unions, as well as a group of regional and local union leaders, joined in sponsoring a North American Union Campaign to win unconditional freedom for Brazil's persecuted trade unionists: metalworkers leader Luis Inacio da Silva and three other leaders.¹²

Deep sympathy for the plight of the Chilean people has been a constant feature of activities of US working people. Assistance to Chilean refugees in diverse forms began in 1973, soon after the putsch that led to the overthrow of the democratically elected government under Salvador Allende and the installation of the hated Pinochet regime by US transnationals and government agencies in collusion with Chilean oligarchic and military circles.

In its main political resolution, the CPUSA's 21st National Convention (1975) noted: 'The movement for solidarity with the people of Chile, who are in a life-and-death struggle against the fascist junta, is growing in all parts of the country, with many trade union, church, peace and other people's organisations participating. . . .'¹³

The resolution lists the forms in which US working people identify themselves with the Cuban people: 'There are numerous activities in solidarity with Cuba, including the Venceremos Brigades which assist in construction and agriculture, as well as cultural, health and labor delegations and a number of resource and information committees. All these are graphic expressions of anti-imperialist solidarity involving broad sections of the people of this country.'¹⁴

The CPUSA, Gus Hall pointed out earlier, is 'an important factor in movements against US imperialism in Chile and in the organisation of movements against the plots, attacks and intervention by US imperialism in Cuba.'¹⁵

The growing recognition by US workers that they have a common interest with Latin American workers in struggles against the transnationals is another stream feeding the swelling current of their internationalist consciousness. In 1981, the 1,300,000-member United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (IUF) called an international boycott of the Coca Cola company in support of the Guatemalan union's strike for wage increases. The strikers won a settlement, and were even paid their wages for the many months in which they had been on strike. Israel Marquez, former general secretary of the union, said the IUF campaign had strengthened the popular and democratic movement and brought it a step nearer to bringing down the Guatemalan dictatorship. However, the union was compelled to continue over a long period its battle for decent wages and working conditions. Not until early this year was the IUF able to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement with the company's licensee.

The linkage of the superexploitation of Latin American workers and joblessness in the USA is becoming more and more obvious to US workers. This came out in reports of various delegations which visited El Salvador and Nicaragua in 1983. '... We are concerned,' one of the reports said, 'about the way big US corporations use workers in poor countries to run away from the wage standards and working conditions we have here.'¹⁶ Another report noted that while Nicaraguan workers had been exploited and forced to work for three dollars a day under the Somoza dictatorship, US workers were being denied jobs.¹⁷

The extreme folly of helping the transnationals to rip off the Latin American workers surfaced at the 1984 Convention of the California Federation of Labor. The Convention took note of the ability of the Phelps Dodge transnational to hold out against a 15-month strike of its workers in Arizona, because it made superprofits by exploiting foreign workers, including those of El Salvador.

The foregoing specific instances of internationalism among US workers do not adequately reflect either the scope of this process, or the breadth of its composition.

Solidarity with the struggles of Latin American peoples has been evident in numerous actions sponsored by civil rights, religious, women's and other organisations and involving large numbers of trade unionists and other working people. Placards, banners and slogans against the aggressive schemes of the present US administration and in support of the just struggles of Latin American peoples have been invariable attributes of rallies called by the AFL-CIO, and were also displayed during a 350,000-strong march on Washington in July 1983.¹⁸ Similar placards were conspicuous among the one million marchers in New York City who demonstrated support for the special UN session on disarmament.

There is no question that the internationalist current is gaining ground. Even so, it would be wrong to overestimate its strength or scope, for they are limited by existing

US economic and political conditions. In some large and powerful unions, traces of the new current are faint or non-existent. A number of trade union leaders, including top officials of the AFL-CIO, have not yet discarded cold war blunders. Even the exchange of information between US workers and their Latin American class brothers leaves much to be desired. Much remains to be done for internationalist ideology to spread among the working people of our country.

It would be wrong, however, to belittle or underestimate the potentialities of the progress already achieved in this respect. To do so would make for passivity and discourage the use of what has been attained. A more correct conclusion would follow from contrasting the present with the recent past.

Except for a few and far-between solidarity actions initiated mainly by left-wing forces, including the CPUSA, the past record of the main organised sector of the US working class is modest. Nevertheless, the picture would be incomplete without at least a brief statement of it.

US organised labor's policy toward Latin America took shape in the period of the disintegration of Spain's empire and the seizure of her colonial territories in the Western Hemisphere by US imperialism. Under the successive leadership of Samuel Gompers (1886-1924), William Green (1924-1952), and George Meany (1952-1979) the American Federation of Labor (the AFL-CIO after merging with the Congress of Industrial Organisations) virtually became an instrument of US state monopoly capital's expansionist aims. The AFL, incidentally, was the first working class centre in US history to openly endorse capitalist exploitation and commit itself to the extension of US capitalism both at home and abroad.

Even before their merger, both the AFL and the CIO worked in Latin America to build forces and institutions to forestall social revolution. Both operated through the Inter-American Regional Organisation of Workers (ORIT), which until the early 1960s was one of the main hotbeds of anti-communism. ORIT faithfully supported US government policy. It endorsed the overthrow of the progressive Arbenz regime in Guatemala and the Goulart administration in Brazil, US armed intervention in the Dominican Republic, and the US-British inspired ouster of the Guyanese government under Cheddi Jagan, who had won three elections.¹⁹

However, the mounting resistance of Latin America's workers to this organisation, which had disappointed them, led imperialism to the conclusion that the organisation, being purely professional, was no longer useful enough. And so, in 1961, US monopoly capital with the aid of the CIA and the top leadership of the AFL-CIO set up a 'non-profit' corporation with Meany as President and J. Peter Grace, a top business leader, as chair of the board of trustees.

The corporation was given the title of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) and the mission of destroying class struggle unions in Latin American countries and converting them into organs of class collaboration, into partners of owners, managers and governments. Unions which defended regional and national interests against domination and tutelage of the US transnationals were labeled 'communist' and 'Soviet-dominated', and anti-communism and anti-Sovietism were propagated and promoted by all available means. To accomplish its mission, AIFLD received abundant funds through CIA conduits, the State Department and other official sources, as well as through labor unions, universities and other institutions. Of course, such activities resulted in the splitting, takeover or destruction of Latin American unions.

Virtual collusion between the AFL-CIO leadership and the transnationals to perpetuate the superexploitation of the 'southern neighbors' also betrayed the interests of the US workers. It cost them millions of jobs and curtailed their prospects for better working and living standards. Since the same transnationals exploit US workers, strengthening them by escalating the exploitation of Latin America's

peoples also meant reducing the US workers' opportunities for struggle. The low wages and oppressive working conditions imposed on Latin American workers competed with and dragged down the wages and working conditions of US workers. The continuous reduction of disposable income, the inequitable terms of trade dictated by the transnationals and the debt bondage of Latin American countries (over 360 billion dollars by the middle of 1985), mainly to US banks, steadily narrowed down the market for goods produced by US workers.

Capitalism in the USA developed 'more shamelessly than in any other country,' Marx wrote.²⁰ And as it passed from free competition to monopoly and imperialism the shamelessness of its development increased manifold. The pro-imperialist *U.S. News and World Report* documented this, declaring: 'Over a period of nearly 150 years, US armed forces swept into Central America and the Caribbean more than 60 times to topple governments, install friendly regimes, aid or suppress revolutions, and support American (US) business interests.'²¹

As we have seen, the top leaders of the main labor unions share in the responsibility for this shameful record. They compounded their policy of betrayal by concealing their activities from the rank and file of the membership, who in the main were deprived of their right to know and decide the policies of their organisations and the purpose for which their dues funds were expended.

However, the tendency toward increasing working class solidarity with Latin American peoples' struggles, which has gathered momentum among US workers during the 1970s and 1980s, has already begun to change these basically undemocratic practices. When Lane Kirkland, AFL-CIO President, accepted Reagan's offer to join the Kissinger Commission and endorsed the pre-fixed Commission proposals for stepped-up US interventions in Latin America, 19 elected officers of AFL-CIO local unions released a joint statement for the press. The statement said that its contents reflected 'the growing opposition within the labor movement to current US policies in Central America, and the resistance of an increasing number of unions to any AFL-CIO support for those policies.'²²

This instance was indicative of US labor's internationalist solidarity with the working class of Latin American countries. A number of powerful objective factors give promise of its continued growth.

First, among the multiracial and multinational workers and workforce of the USA there are upwards of 30 million people ethnically related to the peoples of Central America, the Caribbean and South America. They have become an increasingly active political force for a neighborly US policy of friendship and cooperation.

Second, the palpably glaring contradiction between the US trade union leadership's policy of working hand-in-glove with the transnationals in Latin America and attempting to defend working people's interests from oppression and plunder by the same corporations in the United States itself is a growing spur of US workers' solidarity struggles. In late years monopoly capital, particularly its military-industrial complex, in which the transnationals are a major section, has accelerated its drive to slash wages and living standards of the US working class and other working people.

Third, the direct threat of nuclear disaster and the danger of local wars turning into a global incineration of life on our planet are growing. This compels people holding different views and social station, as well as diverse organisations, to cooperate in struggles to avert this danger and revive international detente.

US workers' use of these objective factors in their struggles requires rejection of the conventional foreign policy positions of the AFL-CIO leaders. As Gus Hall points out, they 'sow confusion and create diversions' from the pressing tasks of the working class.²³

Ideologically and organisationally, an offensive is necessary against US state monopoly capitalism's jingoist, racist and war-provoking foreign policies. The

growing current of internationalism among US working people, particularly among organised workers, merits all-out support.

The CPUSA is working to accomplish these tasks. Its 23rd National Convention (1983) adopted proposals for 'bringing an advanced understanding of the issues and dangers of the US policies of aggression in Central America to the freeze and trade union movements,' 'showing the connection between the policies of exploitation and plunder,' and 'explaining the relationship between the racist and anti-working class policies at home and the imperialist policies abroad.'²⁴

¹ See George Meyers, 'White House Versus Working America', *WMR*, No. 7, 1984.

² *Daily World*, December 27, 1984, pp. 9-10.

³ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 17.

⁴ *Daily World*, December 1, 1983, p. 13.

⁵ *UE News*, December 24, 1984, p. 9.

⁶ Alexandra Pollack was a member of the National Council and the Peace and Solidarity Commission of the CPUSA. She perished in a plane crash en route to Nicaragua. The party leadership extolled her as a 'true heroine of our time' who 'raised high the proud banner of internationalism' and 'strengthened bonds of solidarity and kinship between the working people of the US and those of Latin America, the Caribbean and Cuba.'

⁷ *Daily World*, November 10, 1984, pp. 3 and 11.

⁸ *Daily World*, December 29, 1984, p. 5.

⁹ *Political Affairs*, October 1984, p. 28.

¹⁰ *Daily World*, May 10, 1984, p. 15.

¹¹ *Labor Today*, March 1981.

¹² *Economic Notes*, July-August 1982, p. 10.

¹³ *Toward Peace, Freedom and Socialism*, New York, 1976, p. 85.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *The High Crimes and Misdemeanors of Monopoly Capitalism*, New York, 1974, p. 37.

¹⁶ *Daily World*, June 7, 1984, p. 10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ The action marked the 20th anniversary of the 1963 'March on Washington' led by Dr. Martin Luther King, the Afro-American leader.

¹⁹ See Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy*, New York, 1969, p. 374.

²⁰ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 343.

²¹ *U.S. News and World Report*, October 17, 1983, p. 36.

²² *Political Affairs*, October 1984, p. 28.

²³ *Political Affairs*, May 1984, p. 3.

²⁴ *Basic Document, Adopted by the 23rd National Convention, CPUSA*, New York, 1984, pp. 31-32.

Public Ownership Potentialities Under Capitalism

Willi Gerns – Board Presidium and
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The demand that some sectors of the economy should be handed over to the state under democratic control is pivotal to the DKP's programme line of bringing about a turnaround to democracy and social progress. But it is not only the Communists who want these sectors to be withdrawn from private capitalist ownership and transferred to public ownership: it is a long-standing slogan of the working class movement. After the country's liberation from fascism, it was written into the programmes of the Federation of German Trade Unions and the basic documents of many individual trade unions.

HOWEVER, as capitalism boomed, living standards rapidly rose and employment remained relatively high in the 1950s, the issue ceased to be controversial, for it seemed that capitalism was quite capable of coping with its crises and unemployment. Indeed, bourgeois propaganda no longer spoke of 'capitalism': the social system in the FRG was declared to be a 'social market economy', 'free market economy', or even an 'affluent society'. The working people were induced to believe that private ownership of the means of production and so-called free enterprise were the basis of economic progress, an idea backed not only by the conservatives, but also by the social democratic leaders. All of this had an effect on the thinking of the broadest strata of the population. Private ownership of the means of production became a 'sacred cow', and the demands for nationalisation were not merely brushed off, but were regarded by the masses as something 'unconstitutional'.

The development of the capitalist system over the past several years has once again been beset by crisis processes, and with the growth of mass unemployment there has been a definite change in people's thinking: doubts have grown about the 'self-healing forces' of the economy based on private ownership of the means of production, and the sceptical attitudes tend to appear above all among industrial workers and employees who are trade union activists, and especially in industries that have been hardest hit by the capitalist crisis: steel, ship-building, and marine transport.

That being so, the trade unions have once again been demanding an end to the private capitalist structures of ownership in some sectors of the economy. The Ninth Congress of the trade union of employees of state institutions, transport and communications, for instance, demanded a transfer to public ownership of privately owned marine transport enterprises, and the 14th Congress of the metal-workers trade union (1983) — the nationalisation of key industries and corporations dominating the market, with special emphasis on the need to nationalise the steel industry, and to enable the trade unions to exert a crucial influence on the policies of concerns in other industries.

There was a sharp division within the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) on the issue: the Young Socialists and the Working group on Wage-Labour declared themselves to be in favour of the idea, while the party leadership took an obdurate stand against it. At the Essen Party Congress (1984), the group's chairman, R. Dressler, argued that the nationalisation demand was made necessary by the fact that

Another in our series on the problems of nationalisation under capitalism and the role of the state in running the capitalist economy. See D. Sarlis, 'Nationalisation: In Whose Interest?' *WMR*, No. 2, 1984; and R. Atzenhofer, W. Silbermayr, 'Nationalisation: A Problem of Class Struggle', *ibid.*, No. 6, 1985.

'political action was required with respect to steel production, the coal-mining industry and the shipyards, where the old production structures were falling apart. . . If the development of the industry itself is being or can, as some believe, be blocked by a form, an ownership doctrine, it is no longer right to leave to the discretion of the shareholders matters relating to the ruin of whole areas, and dwindling supplies of energy and raw materials, matters on which the livelihood of tens of thousands of working people depends. The remodelling of the structure of the old industrial regions to safeguard and give them a future is a political task.'

However, SPD deputy chairman J. Rau rejected such demands in his report on the party's economic policy, adding: 'There is evidence of a partial revival of the ownership fetishism among the left-wing forces. . . A change in the form of ownership does nothing to solve a single structural problem, but merely kindles hopes which are actually not destined to be realised.' He was followed by nearly the whole SPD leadership team who came out on the rostrum to kill a resolution advocating the nationalisation of key industries.

While the Communists take a resolute stand for the nationalisation of some economic units under democratic control, they are aware both of its potentialities and of its limitations. The transfer to the state of some enterprises and industries under capitalism is not in any sense a cure-all for the endemic diseases of the exploitive society, but our assumption is that it could help to create the conditions for a successful drive to wind up the capitalist exploiter system.

In an economy whose substance is determined by private capitalist and above all monopoly formations and within the framework of the bourgeois state, nationalised enterprises continue to be capitalist or rather, state-capitalist units, i.e. their functioning is subject to the economic laws of capitalism, a fact most emphatically established by Engels in his *Anti-Dühring*, where he says that neither the transformation of enterprises into joint-stock companies, nor their transfer into state ownership does away with the capitalist nature of the productive forces. The modern state, he says, 'is only the organisation that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the general external conditions of the capitalistic mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds in the taking over of the productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers — proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head.'¹

But Engels also stressed that as it is brought to a head, it topples over. 'State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution. This solution can only consist in the practical recognition of the social nature of the modern forces of production, and therefore in the harmonising of the modes of production, appropriation and exchange with the socialist character of the means of production. And this can only come about by society openly and directly taking possession of the productive forces which have outgrown all control except that of society as a whole.'²

Engels proceeded from the assumption that the means of production would eventually outgrow the potentialities of management by joint-stock companies, so that their takeover by the state would become economically inevitable, whereupon '— even if it is the state of today that effects this — there is an economic advance, the attainment of another step preliminary to the taking over of all productive forces by society itself.'³

Socialism alone can resolve the conflict between the social character of production and the capitalist mode of appropriation, and so eliminate the incurable defects of capitalism, which are engendered by its fundamental contradiction, and the

indispensable condition is the establishment of the political power of the working class in alliance with the other working people, which means establishing a totally new state, and also converting all the basic means of production into state property, or for some sectors of the economy, into co-operative property. That alone provides the basis for the balanced development of the economy and the society for the benefit of the working people.

That is the principled approach which determines the DKP's policy. We also resolutely reject the right-opportunist views that state enterprises under capitalism are already an 'element of socialism'. The working people cannot hope to gain any important advantage from mere nationalisation under the economic and political power of big capital, without democratic participation by the working class in management and without its control. Numerous examples are provided by the operation of state-owned concerns in the FRG.

Thus, Volkswagen is mainly in the hands of the state, for even after its partial reprivatisation, the state continues to own 40 per cent of the fixed capital (one-half belongs to the Federation, and the other to Lower Saxony), which under a special decree ensures a majority vote at general meetings of share-holders. Still Volkswagen is run like any other capitalist enterprise: like other major car manufacturers, it makes brazen use of its strong positions on the market to raise prices and sack personnel in droves, or to reduce working hours with pay cuts.

The picture is similar in the power industry, a sizeable part of which is in the hands of the state or is under its control. With the Treasury holding some of the stock, and the votes in the governing bodies allocated by special legal provision, the generation of electric power is effectively a part of the state sector, although big capital is also directly represented. The state's share holding, often a complicated arrangement, gives it impressive positions in other sectors of the energy industry as well. Thus, it indirectly owns the bulk of the facilities for the mining of brown coal. The Saarberg (owned by the Federation and the Saarland) and the Ruhrkohle joint-stock companies, in which the state is represented both directly and indirectly, control the mining of most of the hard coal. But the state's prevalence in capital investments and its influence are not used either for the benefit of the collectives of the power enterprises or for the conduct of an energy policy benefiting the working people. On the contrary, ordinary consumers of electricity — workers, employees, farmers and artisans — are robbed by the high charges, while a part of the profit extracted from the personnel of the power enterprises is funnelled to the bank accounts of the big capitalists by means of the preferential charges allowed to the concerns.

Both these examples show that mere nationalisation of economic sectors does not suffice. It can be used for the benefit of the working people only if — at the very least — it includes effective participation by the working class and its organisations in management and control, with due observance of the interests both of the collectives of the enterprises taken over by the state and of the working class as a whole as represented by the trade unions.

That is why we, Communists, do not confine ourselves to demanding nationalisation, but always back it up with a demand for democratic workers' control. The DKP Programme for the steel industry, for instance, says that the steel concerns must be expropriated and nationalised under democratic control, with any subsidies earlier received by the owners being offset in the compensation. Participation by personnel in the management of the mining and metallurgical industry, the Programme stresses, must be extended, with representatives of the collectives and the trade unions assured of a majority on the supervisory council, of the right to defend all their interests and to back the workers' struggle. They would have the duty to account to the working people, who would have the right to recall these representatives whenever their activities are unsatisfactory.

Indeed, the main point is above all to establish democratic control over the planning of capital investments, production and employment at state-owned steel mills where the working people have a say in management, so as to prevent mass sackings, to ensure controlled instalment of high technology and combine it with social progress (shorter working hours, more humane working conditions, higher wages), to prevent erroneous investments and allow the use of uncommitted funds to create new jobs and apprenticeships. Such planning would reckon with the needs of the region and of the local authorities. Any further concentration of industry with its negative effects on the environment should be avoided, relative decentralisation of production facilities, promoted, control over state subsidies from the standpoint of their social effect ensured, and the concentration of power in the hands of a few giant concerns halted.

However, even the transfer of some sectors of the economy to the state under democratic control does not, of course, amount to socialism or to an 'element of socialism', for even with such control it is impossible to abolish the laws of capitalism and surmount its genetic defects. Nevertheless, nationalisation can ease many of the problems facing the working people and on the whole improve the conditions for their struggle, because the successes scored at the state-owned enterprises could give heart to workers in other sectors of the economy.

That is why in the course of the discussion over the nationalisation of this or that sector, we, Communists, have opposed not only the right-opportunist illusions about state-owned enterprises being an 'element of socialism', but just as vigorously rejected the leftist attitude, which is a flat denial of the need to fight for nationalisation under capitalism, on the plea that it falls short of socialism.

Let us take a clear look at the question of why the problems produced by capitalism, especially the problem of employment, can be eased at state-owned enterprises with democratic control.

In the state sector of the economy, the government's budget policy can have a more immediate effect on the nature and volume of production than it can in the private-monopoly sector of the economy. Private enterprises can be induced to wind up one type of production and start up another, one required by the society, only through indirect measures, by means of definite fiscal and write-off policies, and subsidies, and only with the prospect of higher profits. By contrast, nationalised enterprises can be made to re-orient their production by the mandates of their owner, the state, since they will receive the necessary funds directly from the state budget. State orders can be placed with such enterprises either directly or through state banks. The result would be a higher level of employment with the use of treasury funds, while the bulk of the appropriations would not flow to private monopoly banks in the form of profits. Besides, even a partial nationalisation of the banking sector would make it possible to limit to some extent the influence of the banks on government economic policy.

We believe that even under capitalism nationalised enterprises can be managed on the basis of other profitability principles than those operating at private capitalist enterprises. While the ratio of profit to invested capital is the main thing for private business, criteria of social benefit need to be taken into account at state enterprises in deciding on the level of profitability. If the manufacture of, say, equipment for environmental protection is organised at a shipyard facing shutdown, the state could include in its profit-and-loss statement some very tangible items, such as the saving of funds that would otherwise have to be expended on removing the negative ecological consequences, economies on the payment of unemployment benefits (since the working people would not find themselves out in the street) and also considerable revenues for the treasury in the form of taxes on the wages of those who have kept their jobs.

In contrast to private enterprises, state-owned enterprises are to some extent influenced in their activity by political as well as economic factors, which is why they

can be run even without any profit (if only for a time), and with subsidies from the state budget, while any profit they make is more easily used to improve working conditions, especially to reduce working hours and so increase the number of production workplaces accordingly.

When suggesting such approaches we are, however, fully aware that they are no more than potentialities. Those who run state enterprises will act in that way only to the extent to which the working class and its trade unions put pressure to bear and secure democratic control and a say in management, and only in the presence of these factors.

Whether the potential of nationalised enterprises is used at all and to what extent depends on the balance of class forces, on the consciousness, organisation and readiness for struggle on the part of the working class, and above all on the forces in command of the state owning such enterprises. The greater the influence of the working class and other anti-monopoly forces in the state and the society, the more broadly will the potentialities of nationalised factories and plants operating under democratic control be brought out.

Social pressure can now already be more successfully exerted on the state and the nationalised enterprises than on private corporations, for the capitalist state, as an entrepreneur, is more receptive to pressure, while the private entrepreneur's ownership is based on capitalist property and he does not have to seek confirmation of the legality of his status in any kind of voting. By contrast, the parties administering the capitalist state under a bourgeois parliamentary system have to keep passing the test of elections, and this creates the conditions in which some concessions can be wrested from the capitalist state when due pressure is applied. Besides, as an entrepreneur, it cannot — like the international monopolies — sidestep pressure from the working class and the trade unions by transferring its operations to other countries.

Problems affecting the industries most heavily hit by the crisis are naturally in the forefront of the current discussion in the FRG over the issue of nationalisation. But it would be wrong for the class-conscious forces to confine themselves to these problems, as they would risk taking the same stand as those who merely urge a 'distribution of the burdens of the crisis among all the groups of the society'. It is well worthwhile to put forward far-reaching demands in the current debates, such as simultaneous nationalisation of the key sectors of the economy, which are crucial from the political and economical standpoint. That is why the DKP's Programme says that, in conformity with articles 14 and 15 of the Fundamental Law, and also of the provisions of the provincial constitutions it 'demands a transfer of the key sectors of the economy from the ownership of monopoly capital to public ownership under democratic control. The DKP believes that the primary task is to effect nationalisation and establish democratic control over the major banks and insurance companies, the energy and steel concerns, and the nuclear and weapons industry. Nationalisation measures, notably compensation of losses, should not result in an even greater enrichment of monopoly capital.'

Those who use leftist arguments to deny the need to fight for nationalisation under democratic control should consider, among other important points, the response to the demand on the part of big capital and the politicians who safeguard its interests. They have fiercely resisted the nationalisation plans, despite the fact that public ownership in the FRG has up to now been directly and indirectly used to boost the profits of big capital. The ruling circles fear that calls for further acts of nationalisation, together with the establishment of democratic control, as suggested by the working class and its trade unions, could cast doubt on the 'sanctity' of private ownership, and that the workers and employees may find themselves contemplating life without private entrepreneurs, and indeed an even better life without them. These fears among the powers that be are not altogether groundless. We Communists, believe

that the most important outcome of the nationalisation debate which has involved a section of the working class is its positive effect on the shaping of the class consciousness, for this creates more favourable conditions for the struggle for radical social transformations and for socialism, whose construction is the only possible way of truly doing away with the defects of the capitalist exploiter system.

Big capital and the forces representing it in politics not only reject any steps for nationalisation whatsoever, but seek to reprivatise the state-owned enterprises which look like making a profit. This process began in the FRG in the late 1950s. Under a barrage of talk about 'distributing capital among broad strata of the population', the shares of the state-owned Preussag concern were sold off, so that 78 per cent of its joint-stock capital was transferred to private ownership. In the same way, Volkswagen was partially denationalised: 60 per cent of its capital was sold off in the form of 'small shares' to private persons. In 1965, the Federal government reorganised the Feba holding company in a similar way, so that the Federation's share in its capital dropped to 36 per cent. Similar measures are being contemplated with respect to Lufthansa. Bonn's right-wing coalition seeks to re-privatise even the public utilities, notably the collection of garbage. That would result in tough measures to intensify the work of those employed in this field, and would sharply increase the charges the working people have to pay for these services.

What has been said shows that the working class and its trade unions must work hard to put through the nationalisation measures and set up democratic control in the face of the existing obstacles. This is a task that can be fulfilled only if the need for such measures is driven home not only to the main mass of the workers and employees of the enterprises and industries concerned, but also to a majority of the whole working class, so as to muster it for vigorous struggle to realise this demand.

¹ Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1959, p. 384.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., footnote p. 383.

Winning Over the Young

Fritz Eriksen – CC member, Young Communist League of Denmark (DKU)

THE attention of various political forces in any society is always focussed on young people, because they are the embodiment of the future. The young generation entering upon adult working life will subsequently have to bear the main brunt of the class struggle, which is why work among young people has always been a task of great importance for the Communists.

Those who rule the bourgeois world encourage disunion, individualism and passiveness among the young, especially in times of crisis. Their problems are presented as being purely personal instead of social ones. The competitive struggle for work and a place in the society is used for putting forward slogans such as 'Every man is the architect of his own fortune' and 'Where there's a will, there's a way.' Such slogans tend to distort the minds of many young men and women.

All of this tends to undermine the young people's confidence in themselves and their

future so that they may succumb to the influence of conservative and extreme-right wing circles, or seek solace by keeping up with the latest trends in fashion, go in for drug abuse, drinking, etc. Yet others try to establish 'havens' for themselves to live in some sort of communal isolation. But alongside such negative trends, a growing number of young people are protesting against the lack of prospects in life and yearn to change the state of things. Here we have a vast field of work before us.

Some groups of young people in Denmark make up their own isolated communities and spontaneously take a negative attitude to their surroundings, often hardly knowing what or who it is they are protesting against. These young people are unaware of the lessons learnt by the working class that joint action, unity and solidarity can raise the working people to a better life. The Communists are working hard to help such groups to withdraw from their isolation, to join in the struggle against the capitalist system and its defects, together with members of the young and older generations who are already consciously organised and carrying on this struggle. We attach primary importance to involving young men and women in trade unions and teaching them respect for the working man, which is so important for comprehending the experience of the revolutionary section of the working class.

Work among young Danes is carried on by the Young Communist League and the Communist Students' Union, which are autonomous, but which are united by the bond of common responsibility and sense of duty in the struggle for peace, and their common adherence to Marxism-Leninism. Our League's most important task is to win over young people for the working class and to educate them as conscious fighters for the working people's emancipation from capitalist exploitation. In view of its potentialities, the League has concentrated its activity above all in the fields of securing employment and education for young people and the struggle for peace. Here, incidentally we are guided by the objectives of the current UN International Year of Youth: 'Participation, Development, Peace'.

Under the capitalist crisis, young people especially suffer from its effects, primarily from unemployment, and that is also characteristic of our country. The number of jobless in the recent period has fluctuated round 300,000, or eleven per cent of the able-bodied population; among young people up to the age of 25 years, the figure is as high as 30-33 per cent. The sharpness of the problem is also being emphasised by the fact that up to a third of those who are left without a job or an apprenticeship do not receive any unemployment benefits and are forced to live on social relief alone. Since the authorities announced that there can hardly ever again be hope of full employment, the prospects for many young men and women have been bleak. Nor do their university degrees help. What is more, the high level of unemployment among higher-school graduates is a disincentive to further education.

The apprenticeship system is in a poor state. Last year, more than 26,000 apprentices were deprived of their training places and so were unable to be duly qualified. Many of them have filled the ranks of the unemployed. The need to take out bank loans to pay for education falls as a heavy burden on the shoulders of the young. Their total debt comes to more than eight million kronen, and this has kept many young people from entering upon occupations requiring education of any length.

The bourgeois government's economic policy of overcoming the crisis hardships through 'austerity', and reducing consumer demand has hit hard at the interests of the young as well. That is why young workers have been actively involved in the working people's strike action, the largest over the past fifteen years, in which about half a million men and women took part and which brought life in the country to a virtual standstill for a fortnight in March and April of this year.

Apart from participation in such general struggles against the capitalist exploitation, young people have organised their own actions in defence of their rights and interests through the Apprentices' and Young Workers' Association (LLO). The

DKU has always highly appreciated the importance of the LLO because many of its members look to an active role in the working class movement. Despite the rebuffs by the reformist leadership of the Danish Trades Union Congress, the LLO has successfully cooperated with the progressive forces. As a result, many young men and women come to understand that by joining the trade union they can join forces with the adults in doing much more to satisfy the specific interests of the young.

However, it would be wrong to fail to see that the sympathies of some young people for the trade union movement and their faith in its effectiveness tend to be dampened by the reformist leaders' policy of surrender, concessions and even neglect of the problems of the young. Our League has shown itself to be the most active and consistent champion of the interests of the young, taking a line which clearly shows the difference between reformist policy and resolute action. In the trade union movement, we have supported all the initiatives for improving the economic condition of the jobless young. We also favour greater efforts by the trade union movement with secondary school senior graders who are about to enter upon adult life.

The League devotes much attention to the political seasoning of young people and their involvement in the organised struggle. The bourgeois mass media try hard to create the impression that politics is something arcane that ordinary people cannot hope to understand. Besides, the ruling parties' breaches of their promises are commonplace, a state of things which naturally makes many scorn politics. This applies to bourgeois parliamentary democracy, which is, indeed, a far cry from genuine democracy and merely helps the professional politicians to go on cheating the people. Bourgeois propagandists have also tried to turn this feeling against the policy of the CP Denmark, claiming that it is even duller and more perverted than that of the other parties. We rebuff this anti-communist propaganda by showing that the Communists' policy springs from the interests and aspirations of the popular masses. At the same time, it is important for the DKU to remember the well-known truth voiced by Georgi Dimitrov at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern: '... The Young Communist League is not a *communist party of the young*,... but an organisation which has its own specific tasks. Its methods, its ways of working, of educating, of fighting must be adapted to the concrete level and demands of the youth.'

Indeed, success of the work among young people crucially depends on the capacity to satisfy their requirements and meet their ideals, and on the ability to find a way to the hearts and minds even of those who are not capable right away of understanding and supporting every aspect of our policy, but who regard it as an alternative to the capitalist system. We believe that it is important to have clear-cut political and economic demands, simply and understandably formulated, such as 'No to NATO Missiles', or 'Apprenticeships for All Who Want Them'.

In the recent period there has been a growth of spontaneous youth protest action in Denmark. Various groups have come out against the manifestations of injustice: some have taken over empty houses with exorbitant rents; others have refused to pay for food in restaurants and eating places, thereby attracting public attention to their desperate economic plight; while others, on the contrary have demonstratively staged hunger strikes. Such forms of action have often unwittingly developed into political protests against the capitalist society. The members of our League have given them support in most cases. The main thing is that such actions should not result in sectarianism or isolation, but should be a prelude to mass joint actions in defence of the interests of the young.

Protests against the deployment of US nuclear missiles in Western Europe in the 1980s have helped to involve young people more actively in the struggle for peace. That has also happened in Denmark, where various groups of peace fighters have united in the National Campaign 'Stop the Nuclear Missiles'. It has forced the Danish parliament to dissociate itself from the started deployment of these missiles in other

NATO countries, and the government not to accept this at meetings of NATO's governing bodies. The movement has shown itself to be a force to be reckoned with, and a great part of the credit goes to our youth.

We believe that the following tasks in the mass struggle now come to the fore: a freeze on nuclear weapons, including the deployment of US missiles in Western Europe; endeavours to make Scandinavia a nuclear-free zone; Denmark's withdrawal from NATO's Liaison Committee for Nuclear Planning; opposition to the Agreement on reinforcements which allows the United States to use Denmark as a forward base for its aggressive strategy; and an independent Danish foreign policy to help ensure peace and disarmament.

These clear and sufficiently concrete objectives create the basis for involving broad masses of young people in sustained struggle. It is important that the desire of the young to live in peace should find its expression in a multiplicity of activities forming a complementary link with those of the rest of the peace movement. Last year's Youth Conference on Peace is a good example: ten workshops were set up in which it was possible to take part in discussions of specific subjects. A number of new youth peace committees were set up.

Of course, the members of our League, together with other youth organisations, did much to promote the Conference and involve young people in the anti-missile and anti-war struggle. At the same time, we have arranged our own major measures — and not without success. Within the framework of a signature-collection drive to a petition against nuclear missiles organised by the nation-wide movement 'Stop the Nuclear Missiles', the League initiated action under the slogan: 'Send the Missiles to Those Who Ordered Them!'. We called on young people to make large cardboard mockups of missiles to be filled with postcards containing the text of the petition addressed to the Danish government. The campaign was a great success: more than 100,000 postcards were sent out. While being happy over these successes, we are aware that we are far from having reached our main goals. We intend to step up our efforts in support of the anti-war movement.

The number of measures in defence of peace does not, of course, always automatically result in a higher level of awareness, and a growth in the number of peace fighters does not necessarily produce a clear-cut orientation. That is why we believe that it is so important to keep explaining to the young that it is imperialism which is to blame for the arms race, that the threat of war comes from the United States and NATO, and that socialism and peace are indivisible.

In all our work we seek to rely on the rich experience of the international communist and working class movement, which suggests the following lesson: it depends on the efforts of the working people, including the young, to make the right to life in decent conditions more than a 'theoretical' right, to make it a right in actual fact. Today, as in the past, we can safeguard the peaceful future only by active, conscious and organised struggle against imperialism, militarism and reaction.

A Political Report Over the Tonlethom— the Morrow

Sándor Czorcsik – Representative
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member

As our aircraft took off from Kampuchea's Pochentong Airport, we had our last glimpse of the silvery, sunlit waters of the Mekong's intertwining tributaries and, at their junction, of Phnom Penh over which a new morning was rising. The Khmers call the Mekong the Tonlethom, or Great River. On it depends the harvest of rice and fish, and it determines many of the folk customs. For instance, there is the popular festival called the Return of the Waters. After the rainy season the arm linking the Tonlethom with the Tonlesap, the Greak Lake, turns from north to south, and the river gives that natural reservoir the reserves taken from it in the dry months. This festival is a lovely spectacle.

However, as we were leaving Phnom Penh we thought more not of natural alterations but of the steep political twists in Kampuchea's history over the past few decades: liberation from French colonialism, the halting neutrality of Norodom Sihanouk, the pro-US Lon Nol regime, the overthrow of that regime and the assumption of power by the traitor Pol Pot-Ieng Sary clique that started a reign of genocide against its own people.¹

But it is now the seventh year since the People's Republic of Kampuchea was proclaimed by the patriotic forces that expelled the butcher Pol Pot and set the course towards internationalism and the building of a new society. The republic's enemies are fighting it, using the support of the imperialists. They allege that the People's Republic of Kampuchea is a transient phenomenon with no future. Is that true? The reply is given by Kampuchean reality.

Light and Shadow of the Kampuchean Morning

The past six years have been the republic's morning. Our report begins with our first actual, not symbolic, morning in Phnom Penh. It was the morning of April 17.

The previous evening we arrived after the long flight from Prague. We could rest a little longer, but towards six o'clock we could feel that outside the hotel this was the hottest month here, with the thermometer registering 40°C in the shade. We drew the blinds, opened the window and heard the bustle in the street beyond the 'paper' trees thickly sprinkled with enormous, plate-sized orange 'paper' flowers. It was exciting to hear this bustle. We'll explain why.

Of course, any tropical city teems with activity in the relative cool of the early morning, hides at midday, and comes to life again towards evening. So what was there to be excited about? That is so, but this was not any city. It was Phnom Penh. In our minds there live the accounts of witnesses of the Pol Pot tyranny that we read before making the trip. They related how in April 1975, when the orange 'paper' flowers were in bloom, the Pol Pot Angka organisation forced all the inhabitants into the streets.

The clique's insane leaders, who had planned to usher the nation back to the Stone Age, decreed the city's destruction as being the source of ideological 'infection'. The city's inhabitants, barefoot, naked, and hungry were driven along the province's dusty roads to the rice paddies. People perished. Soon Phnom Penh's population of two million, dwindled to only a few thousand inhabitants: Pol Pot's henchmen had their headquarters and prisons there. The capital began to be reduced to ruins. Few people believed that the city, founded in the fifteenth century at Phnom Hill by the legendary

lady Penh, who fished out of the river a tree-trunk with figurines of Buddha bound to it, would ever be restored.

And now, on this morning, the street was abustle again, with crowds of cyclists. A few people were on motorollers and fewer in cars (there's a fuel shortage). People carry and drive to the market baskets full of vegetables and fruit, turkeys, fish, and fabrics. Reckless children run across the street between the bicycles and motorollers. Kampuchea's population is growing rapidly, once more approaching eight million, and in the capital it is reaching 600,000. A troupe with what to us were strange local instruments, sat in a cart, filling the air with a melodious and, we would say, catchy Khmer tune. Actually, this was the morning of a double festival. April 17, the anniversary of the overthrow of Lon Nol, is marked as the day of liberation from imperialist oppression. It is celebrated, although this victory was clouded by the treachery of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary. The other festival is the Buddhist New Year. The Pol Pot regime banned Buddhism. Freedom of religion has now been restored in the republic. In the street we were passed by two Buddhist monks in their orange vestments, with shaved heads, and black umbrellas.

This sketch of a morning in one of Phnom Penh's streets illustrates more than many statistics can do that the city is alive, that the country lives.

That same morning colleagues from the Kampuchean information agency and our interpreter Tanna took us to a meeting marking April 17. The meeting began at eight o'clock. Tanna, a lovely girl with large eyes and a high forehead, learned Russian when at age 13 she began studying at a ballet school in Moscow. At 18, in 1974, she returned to Phnom Penh. Then. . . What happened then we'll relate later.

The building where the meeting was held is set in a luxuriant park. Groups of people dressed in light-coloured clothes were entering the building. Diplomats were driving up in cars—in Phnom Penh that day there were some 40 envoys representing various countries and movements.

The meeting was conducted by the Kampuchean United Front for National Construction and Defence.² A mass organisation, it had fought the Pol Pot regime, and today unites builders of the new society. The leading force of the front and the state is the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea. The Pol Pot group had jettisoned the party's revolutionary traditions and physically destroyed thousands of Communists. But as early as 1979 the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea was rejuvenated on the basis of genuinely Marxist-Leninist, internationalist principles. The KUFNCD includes the trade union, the women's and the youth organisations that have held their first congresses. Different nationalities (apart from Khmers there are nearly 20 in Kampuchea), and the Buddhist and Islamic churches are represented in the front. In short, the new republic's political and national base consists of all the social strata prepared to build a happy future for the people.

The speeches were followed by a concert given by singers and dancers of the revived Kampuchean National Ensemble and also a choir that came from the Soviet city of Orenburg in the southern Urals. Strange as it may seem, the dancing of the two ensembles had a feature in common: it was a story in movement. The unrequited love of a Urals Cossack and the pursuit of a deer by a Khmer huntsman were understood by everybody.

In the park, after the concert ended, we got into a conversation with Y Lon, deputy general director of the Kampuchean information agency, a friendly young man as are many of Kampuchea's executives today.

'What I liked most about this concert,' he said, 'was that it showed that different peoples can understand each other well if their relations are sincere.'

That whole day would have been remembered by us as bright and festive had we not been taken to the former Tuol Sleng school—a solid, three-storeyed brick building. The courtyard was full of sunlight, but children's voices have not been heard in it for a

long time because this was the central Pol Pot prison, and the building is now a museum of the Pol Pot regime's criminal genocidal policy.

On the thousands of photographs the faces are anguished. Among them are photographs of women and children. We saw iron beds with foot-shackles, iron finger-crushers, and sledge hammers that were used to smash heads. In one of the rooms there hung an effigy with twisted arms. And farther — photographs of mass murders. A pit with the condemned to death on their knees and facing the pit. The executors were hitting them with hoes on the back of their heads. Those already killed lay in the ditch they had themselves dug. Then a photograph of a pond full of crocodiles with people being pushed into it.

The display stands give the sum of Pol Pot's criminal activities. Killed or missing without trace — 3,300,000 people. Of these the vast majority were peasants and workers. There were among them 10,000 students (96 per cent of the total student body) and 18,600 medical workers or teachers (90 per cent of the total). The Pol Pot thugs blew up 6,000 schools and nearly 800 hospitals.

The orchestrator and director of this butchery and destruction, the vainglorious Pol Pot — also known as Salot Sar — is likewise to be seen in Tuol Sleng in large and small bronze-coloured plaster-of-Paris busts. Prisoners were forced to cast these busts. An oily, ear-to-ear grin shines on the face of this killer. Hiding behind a mask of benefactor, he sterilised a nation, depriving it of the ability to reflect, remember, or think of a future.

Tanna did not go to look at the display in Tuol-Sleng with us. This only awakens painful memories. Her mother died during a US air raid when Lon Nol was in power. No, she was not a soldier. An ordinary woman from a well-to-do family, she was hit by a bomb in her own suburban garden. The Americans helped Lon Nol in his war against the forces of liberation and rained hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs on the Kampuchean people, taking a toll of half a million lives. Such was the fate of the mother, while Tanna herself suffered at the hands of the Pol Pot assassins. The young dancing teacher, like millions of other inhabitant of the capital, was driven to the rice paddies. There she was forcibly married. She gave birth to a child.

'It was lucky for me that there was a woman doctor among the city slaves,' she related. 'Without her I would have died in childbirth. I had a hard labour and there were no medicines.'

Tanna remained condemned: weak and unable to work she, with others like her, was not wanted by the Pol Pot slayers. The murderous overseer grumbled: he could not kill when he was sober. He drank alcohol and ate human liver while it was still warm. It was only when his wits were addled that he did his gruesome work. But he did not get to Tanna — liberation came.

The murders can be counted. The physical wounds received by people are there to see. But it is hard to take into account or see the spiritual damage that was done to the Kampucheans. Want of faith in life, dimmed consciousness, apathy. Tanna says that after what she has gone through she can no longer take up ballet. But she has recovered her ability to smile, and that is a lot.

Though the sun was blazing we thought the Tuol Sleng dark. Everything linked to Pol Pot is darkness for the country and the people. In the evening we returned to the hotel and fell asleep, forgetting to turn off the lamp switches. The lamps came on at night, showing the walls and ceiling dotted with large black beetles which had flown in from the street. These denizens of the night were quite harmless. Incomparably worse were the human spiders who had spun a web over Tuol Sleng and the whole country. In the light of freedom they had flown, like insects, but they are still weaving their webs, still stinging.

Firm Foundation of a New House

Following the festival we began our working days in Kampuchea. One of these we spent in Bati County, Takeo Province. The road to the county centre led through villages. Externally they look poor with the houses, actually huts, made of palm leaves, standing on piles. In a Kampuchean rural home the main thing is to have a strong foundation.

Two of the county's leaders (neither is over 30) — the vice-chairman of the People's Revolutionary Committee Nuon Bophal and the head of the Committee for Public Education Pen Thach met us in an unusual place, at the Ta Prum Temple, built in the twelfth century when the great Cambodiadesh Empire was at the height of its strength. The temple is reminiscent of the famous Angkor Wat complex, but it is much smaller. The great slabs of stone adorned with carving and the statues of deities (some have been disfigured) make an impressive sight. Nevertheless, we asked our hosts why in taking us on a tour of the county they had decided to begin with antiquities.

'The Pol Pot cutthroats were out to sever the link to time,' Pen Thach said. 'They set children against parents and obliterated the nation's past. Ta Prum shows some of their handwork. Our government is restoring this link, protecting ancient monuments, and giving the people a sense of history. This is exemplified by the silhouette of Angkor Wat towers on the national flag. For our county Ta Prum is the symbol of our national glory. Our present is inseparable from the past, just as the foundation is part of the building itself. National pride is linked to internationalism, to friendship with all the peoples helping us.'

This is the thinking of the young Communist Pen Thach. And it is people like him that the Pol Pot criminals, belonging to the counter-revolutionary 'coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea' that has been the headquarters of the attacks on the People's Republic of Kampuchea, are accusing of ignoring the 'interests of the nation'. As a matter of fact, the counter-revolutionaries are used to turning things upside down.

From history we soon moved into Bati County's present.

Nuon Bophal, who, it turned out, had studied with Y Lon, related:

'In the county there are 90,000 people living in 171 villages. The main occupations are weaving, rice-growing, and the growing of vegetables and fruit, notably of the dumtnot palm. This palm yields sugar, wood, and tough bast. A soft drink is made of the sweet fruit.

'Most of the peasants are united in large mutual-aid groups. Depending on the extent of the socialisation of labour and the implements of production, these groups are divided into three types. In groups of the first type people work collectively: they have many implements in common and the income is distributed according to work. In groups of the second type the land is allocated to families but the principles of collective labour and distribution are fairly well established. In the third type the socialisation level is lower.

'The peasants themselves decide what type of group to form, but members of the county party organisation, officials of the People's Revolutionary Committee, and activists explain the advantages of collective work and help to organise it.

'Nobody starves in the villages now, the people are working in greater harmony, but there are still very many difficulties. Moreover, the Pol Pot violence has to a considerable extent made the peasants suspicious of any sort of innovation. It is not easy to persuade them, but we are trying so that they will see for themselves that our policy is correct.'

All this is a major achievement of the members of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea. There are not very many of them. The party is making every effort to become a mass organisation, but the right to join it has to be proved with deeds. Up until the close of 1984 there were only nine party members in Bati County. Today the

county party organisation has grown to 60 members.

Agriculture is the main branch of Kampuchea's economy. The overall situation in it was described to us by the Minister for Agriculture Kong Samol. A middle-aged man, he puts his heart into his work. He is an agronomist who got his training abroad. Before the Pol Pot take-over he worked in the Ministry for Agriculture. We asked him how he survived the Pol Pot terror. He replied that he lost his entire family. He hid in a remote village in the guise of a peasant. He survived because he was still able to work in the fields and the inhabitants did not betray him. Altogether, more than 7,000 people died in that village.

Kong Samol analysed the reasons for the backwardness of Kampuchea's agriculture. These were, of course, chiefly the war and the Pol Pot terror (many of the irrigation canals were filled with corpses). But there were also factors such as ignorance of modern agrotechniques. The French colonialists had the run of the villages, collected taxes, but did not teach agrotechniques to the people. The peasants grow rice in the old way, gathering no more than a ton per hectare.

The party, Kong Samol said, believes that the mutual-aid work groups are a promising form of labour organisation. They are the vehicles through which modern farming methods can be introduced effectively and the management of agriculture made efficient. They sell their output to the state, which supplies them with manufactured goods. Besides, the pooling of effort is appreciated by the peasants, who formerly had often worked together. However, there should be no rush to set up groups of the first category although these are the most efficient. The peasants have to be persuaded, not compelled to join groups. Bati County is among the leaders in terms of labour organisation. Generally, most of the peasants in the country are united in groups of the second type, with only about twelve per cent of the rural population belonging to groups of the first type.

As yet the government cannot give the peasants all that they need, and for that reason many take their products to the free market. Markets are being enlarged in new Kampuchea, but enemies seek to use them to sell contraband and sow economic anarchy. Hence the task of developing effective ways of managing the market through economic levers.

'Our programmes are far-reaching,' Kong Samol said in conclusion. 'These are to restore abandoned arable land, build irrigation canals, and improve agrotechniques. Fraternal countries are doing much to help carry out these programmes. Today, despite the intrigues of enemies and natural disasters, Kampuchea's annual rice output is nearing two million tons. Our target is 2,500,000 tons. With account of other products calculated in terms of rice, the total per capita figure is now 350 kilos annually. Increasing attention is focussed on technical crops, particularly cotton and rubber. The rubber plantations we are restoring with Soviet assistance will cover 40,000 hectares. Also, we are reconstructing latex-processing plants.'

Such is the state of affairs in agriculture. As regards industry, although we could not get a complete picture, we obtained an idea from the displays at an exhibition showing the economy's present development. Incidentally the very fact that such an exhibition was opened is evidence that the party and government want the people to know what has been achieved and how much more still remains to be done.

The displays included manufactured goods such as metal articles, car tyres, fabrics, and fishing nets. The state sector today consists of over 60 industrial facilities. Compared with 1979 industrial output has grown more than 20-fold, while in only 1984 it increased by 40 per cent.

At the exhibition we met Soviet technicians helping to build a large diesel power station near Phnom Penh. It was designed in the USSR and all the equipment is Soviet-made.

'Fuel will be delivered regularly and there will at once be 50 per cent more electric

power in Phnom Penh,' we were told. 'Four diesel power stations are being placed in operation in the country.'

So far Kampuchea is promoting international economic relations mainly with socialist countries. The neighbouring ASEAN states and other capitalist countries are discriminating against Kampuchea. Of course, this creates difficulties, but with assistance from fraternal countries they are being coped with. The USSR has delivered gratuitously millions of roubles, worth of food, medical supplies, and staple goods. With the aid of CMEA countries Kampuchea is restoring or building public health, transport, and communications projects. Speaking of the republic as a new home of the Kampucheans, it may be said that its foundations are becoming increasingly more durable. These foundations are leadership by the party, the resurging activity of the working people, the rejuvenating economy, and the equitable cooperation with fraternal peoples.

People who have the Decisive Say

We have mentioned a few things about the present. But what is the outlook for the future? This question has been largely answered but we feel that the decisive say here belongs to young people, to children. They are the ones who are to build the future and live in it.

The Pol Pot regime orphaned hundred of thousands of children. The problem of educating them cannot be resolved without efficiently-run children's homes. Such homes are being built. We visited one of them in Kandal Province. It was presented to Kampuchean children by Hungary.

The complex of spacious and light one-storeyed buildings under high bright-red tiled roofs looks like a dragon-fly or an early-century aircraft that landed in a woodless plain. Its fuselage is a long, covered passage, from which hostels, schools, and other buildings extend perpendicularly on either side. At the end of the passage is a large canteen linked to a club. The roof reaches far beyond the walls of the building, forming closed verandahs. Everything here is designed to meet local conditions, but there is a Hungarian mood about the structure — take the tiles. The building materials were brought from the banks of the Danube — as was the equipment: medical, educational, and sports. They even brought instruments for a brass band — and the band is certainly not silent.

More than 500 youngsters between the ages of six and 17 live and study here. Somewhat less than half are girls. Some of the trainees are crippled.

The centre is served by 20 teachers and doctors. The staff is headed by the 30-year-old director Um Saran, a medical doctor by profession, and the Hungarian paediatricist and surgeon Laszlo Simon, who is only a little older than his Kampuchean colleague. In Kandal, Laszlo not only organised health care for the children but kept an eye on the progress of the project, becoming a builder himself for all practical purposes.

The home was built mostly by Hungarian YCLers. They were not paid a wage: they were fed, clothed, and given pocket money. The construction was started in July 1982, and the project was completed within eighteen months. Two artesian wells provide good drinking water, which is in short supply in the surrounding area.

'Given a free hand the children would take a shower ten times a day,' Laszlo laughed. 'They've grown used to hygiene. And they've stopped falling ill.'

At the centre there is for the time being only a four-year elementary school. Classes are conducted before lunch, and then there are vocational classes. In the courtyard, which is still emptyish, they have planted bananas, coconut palms, and papaya-trees. On the centre's seven hectares of land they are growing two tons of rice per hectare.

'Of course, this is not enough for us,' said Um Saran. 'We need about 450 kilos of rice a day. Most of our food is supplied by the state. The upkeep is improving: its monthly cost per trainee is now equivalent to the average wage of a worker.'

The children regard the centre as their home, especially as even Dr Simon has learned to talk in Khmer to them.

The centre in Kandal is one of the many elements of a ramified system of education and upbringing functioning in the republic. The Minister of Education Pen Navouth a quiet-spoken man of 50 with greying hair, described it. The son of a peasant, he climbed all the rungs of the teacher's ladder: from teacher of junior classes to history professor at a school of fine arts and a teachers' training institute. During the Pol Pot regime he lost his parents, children, and many relatives. He worked as a peasant and survived. Today he is captivated with the magnitude of the work.

'Our central aim,' he said, 'is to wipe out illiteracy. None of the preceeding governments, including that of Sihanouk, was able to achieve this aim. Only three years ago there were nearly a million illiterate adults in the country. Today the number of illiterates has halved, and within another year there will be none at all.

'Concern for children begins at the earliest age, but we are still short of kindergartens: the ones that function accommodate 30,000 children. But then look how many children there are in schools: more than 1,700,000 in the elementary classes (1st-4th); 150,000 in classes of the second stage (5th-7th); and roughly 20,000 in the third stage classes (8th-10th). This is one-fourth of the population, something Kampuchean has never known before. Of course, much is in short supply — textbooks, exercise-books, and study aids. But the main thing is that we are short of teachers. They are already being trained at the new teachers' training institute.'

We began our tour of Phnom Penh's educational establishments with the teachers' training institute. It has crash courses, a department training teachers for elementary schools, and a department training teachers for senior classes of secondary schools. The number of teachers already trained exceeds 2,000.

Near the teachers' training institute is the foreign languages institute with 300 students studying Vietnamese, Russian, German and Spanish. Some of the teachers are from Vietnam, the Soviet Union, the GDR, and Cuba. At the institute we met students from Moscow and Berlin taking courses in the Khmer language.

At the medical institute we spoke to Professor My Samedy, the rector. At 60 he is white-haired but very active. Born in a poor peasants' family, he has worked and studied all his life. He was a paramedic, a doctor with an athletic team, went to France and Japan to continue his medical studies. He made a name for himself as a cardiologist. In the 1960s he was the assistant director of the Khmer-Soviet Friendship Hospital, built for Kampuchea as a gift from the Soviet Union, torn down during the years of terror, and now restored.

During the bitter period of terror My Samedy was hidden by mountain folk, whom the professor served medically.

'I must admit that after the dictatorship my mind was in a blur,' he said. 'I believed in the state of the working people, but the Khmer Rouge used these words as a cover to turn the country into a prison. After liberation I decided I would go to my children who live in Paris. For three days and nights I thought, and I stayed. I believed Kampuchea was on the right path, and I was not mistaken. My country needs me, and I need it.'

Many people, educated and decent, are working for the good of the republic and have faith in it. Most are not party members. But some, like Pen Navouth, have joined the party.

The medical institute is dear to the heart of My Samedy. It has 1,100 students at its four departments: paramedical, medical, pharmaceutical, and stomatological (the term of study differs in each). Instruction is in French and Khmer. The rector said that as soon as they got the needed textbooks (the Pol Pot regime destroyed books) they would go over entirely to the Khmer language.

The work at the institute is not enough for the mercurial professor. He is Chairman of the Kampuchean National Olympic Committee and is confident that Kampuchean

athletes will soon be taking part in Olympic Games.

We have mentioned personnel for education and the health services. But what about technicians, personnel for industry? Of course, they are getting priority attention. Skilled workers in ten trades are being trained at a vocational school. Its director, Kie Kola, told us that at the entrance exams there were twelve persons competing for every place. The school does not as yet have a hostel (other educational institutions have the same problem) and the students daily ride their bicycles 30 to 50 kilometres from home and back.

The main institution training technical cadres is the Kampuchean-Soviet Friendship Higher Technical Institute. It is a long four-storeyed building with wide windows facing a highway. In front of it are gurgling fountains, bright flowers, and palm trees. On the wall of the main building are the words: 'Cadres Are the Decisive Factor'.

One gets the impression that the institute is a newly-built project. But that is not the case. It was a gift from the Soviet Union in 1964. Five years later it graduated 52 persons. The Pol Pot regime closed the institute, and of the first alumni only six are alive today. One of them is Om Nian Sarak, who heads the institute.

The rector, helped by students and Boris Redichkin, who heads the group of Soviet teachers working here, took us on a tour. Redichkin is from Rostov-on-Don, where he taught physics at the University.

'We took part in the restoration,' Redichkin said. 'We began the work in the spring of 1981 and now everything is completed: the study rooms, the assembly hall with 400 seats, the laboratories, and the library, which has 13,000 books. The institute has four departments — construction engineering, electrical engineering, hydromelioration, and geology. There are over 700 students.'

All of the teachers noted that the young Kampucheans are studying enthusiastically, with a will. The same was said by the students — Thun Sarit of the electrical engineering department and Chan Sotoni of the construction engineering department. Sarit completed a secondary vocational school and he could have chosen not to resume the hard life of a student. But he says: 'The country needs engineers more than it needs technicians, and I'm going to be an engineer.' Sotoni said she hoped to design buildings that would look modern and yet be in the Khmer tradition. That is the kind of buildings the people like.

At the educational institutions we visited we felt the desire for knowledge that Education Minister Pen Navouth spoke about:

'We want to bring the people genuine, not a distorted socialism. Socialism is the loftiest humanism, which is expressed in love of country and in helping each other. At the same time, humane people must be able to safeguard their achievement, and we are training young people to do this as well. In their world-view the readiness to cooperate with other peoples must be combined with love of one's country, of its history, especially as our history is rich and instructive.'

This was the professor of history talking in Pen Navouth, of course. He had once taught at the School of Fine Arts, a square building of red brick in the national style, which was erected when the French were still here. To be fair it must be said that some French academics and artists did much to preserve and develop Khmer art. But under Pol Pot the school lay in ruins with the jungle creeping over it. Its present heads — the sculptor Tong Sophân and the painter Oum Boun — were among the first to clear away the advancing thickets and restore the studios. Today 480 students are receiving training in painting, chasing, sculpture, fine needle-work, and weaving. The traditions of Khmer art live on.

There is much to give the young artists inspiration. The State Art Museum has been opened nearby. The entire complex of royal palaces is under state protection. A ballet school is housed in one of them. The famous Lkhaon Boran Khmer ballet, which Rodin so admired, has been revived. In the street near the school we saw professional

dancers teaching dancers from the highlands. Every ethnic group in Kampuchea wants to have its own ensemble, and dancers from the Stieng, Mnong, and Fhnong tribes go to Phnom Penh to polish their art. This is only a small detail, but it speaks much of the fact that new relations are forming in Kampuchea between the nationalities inhabiting it.

The magnificent royal palace and the royal pagoda have also been opened to public view. These unique treasures were built by folk craftsmen, but ordinary people were never permitted to enter. Now they can be toured by all citizens. The pagoda is exquisite. The floor is made of silver slabs, the statues of Buddha are of solid gold ornamented with large diamonds and emeralds of dazzling purity and cut. The pyramid of gems is topped by a sitting Buddha chiselled from a giant emerald crystal.

We saw the Kampuchea of today, the young people who have the decisive say about the country's future. The possibility of a peaceful life, education, and work was given to them by the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea and the new republic. It is obvious on whose side they stand, building that future. The foundations of Kampuchean policy have now been defined with the utmost clarity. They were mentioned to us by Say Phouthang, CC Political Bureau member and CC Secretary of the PRPK and Vice-Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

'Our course was defined by the party's Fourth Congress,' he said. 'The people and the party are building socialism with Marxism-Leninism as their guide. On this road we have relied and will go on relying on the experience of socialist countries, of Vietnam and the Soviet Union in the first place. We are firm in our belief that our country's future will be happier than its present. The People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea is developing as the party of the working class that is consolidating its alliance with the working peasants. Its leading role will go on growing because it is rallying the people round itself. The party and the people are indivisible.'

This talk with Say Phouthang brought our visit to an end, and in the evening our journalist friends gave a farewell dinner. We were very much moved by a gift from Y Lon — a painting by a friend of his depicting a Kampuchean mother nursing her child.

'You wanted to see what the people of tomorrow's Kampuchea are like,' he said. 'They have been born.'

There was a grand piano in the room. Tanna went to it and touched the keyboard, playing a piece of Chopin depicting a clash between light and darkness, between defeat and victory. Tanna said that when she lived in Moscow she fell in love with the music of Chopin and Tchaikovsky.

Our last evening in Phnom Penh came to an end. In the morning our aircraft flew over the silvery arms of the Tonlethom, the Great River. The sun was rising over the Tonlethom. It embodied the present and, at the same time, the morrow.

¹ The country's postwar political development is analysed in Say Phouthong, 'Fidelity to the Chosen Path', *WMR*, No. 2, 1985.

² Formerly called the United Front of National Salvation of Kampuchea. — *Ed.*

surveys, information and mail

The Socialist Way of Life

Cultural Values are Within Everybody's Reach

Cultural progress, or the process of steadily building up the cultural potential of society, is a vitally important part of the formation and consolidation of socialist civilisation. The following survey by the working group of the *WMR* Commission for Scientific Information and Documentation tells how this task is being accomplished.

THE cultural policy of socialist countries proceeds from the assumption that the all-round development of the individual is a prerequisite for building the new society. A communist society without a high level of education and culture, without social consciousness, is as unthinkable as without a proper material and technical base. This is why giving every citizen unlimited access to the treasury of science and culture has always been a major concern of socialist states. The material and cultural life of society is so guided as to make this access equal for all, that is, urban and rural populations, workers, intellectuals, men and women alike, or in other words, to ensure that "the fruits of thousands of years of the development of civilisation" are enjoyed "by literally all the working people".¹

Equalising Education Levels

Socialist revolutions have forever done away with all the legal and factual privileges of the propertied classes as regards access to education, by throwing the doors of educational institutions wide open to people of working class or peasant origin, to women, members of ethnic minorities, and others. They have enabled members of every nationality to study in their native languages. Today education in socialist countries at all levels ranging from elementary school to university, including postgraduate studies, is free. What is more, the state pays grants to students and provides them with other benefits.² Thanks to a fundamentally new cultural policy and the introduction of a democratic educational system, it was not long before nearly all the socialist countries attained universal literacy and, furthermore, a fairly high standard of general education. By contrast, 21 million of the 270 million inhabitants of the EEC countries are illiterate, according to EEC statistics; so are 40 per cent of the poorest people in the USA, 44 per cent of Afro-Americans and 56 per cent of immigrants from Latin America.

Continuing "The Socialist Way of Life" series. See *WMR*, Nos. 8 and 9, 1985.

The socialist world has a wide network of vocational, secondary specialised and higher educational establishments; besides, there are tuition by correspondence and evening classes. Virtually everybody has an opportunity to acquire a profession according to his choice and his abilities or to raise his education level. This is seen in the social composition of students in socialist countries, which is now close to that of the population. From half to two-thirds of students in Soviet higher institutions are workers' or peasants' children. In Britain, for instance, only 27.2 per cent of students are children of workers or farmers, according to UNESCO. The proportion of workers among the economically active population of that country is 71.5 per cent, or nearly three times as large as their percentage among students. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates that young people from Swiss "high society" have 23 times more chances to enter the university than people of the same age belonging to lower social categories; in Sweden the corresponding figure is 26, in France 30, in Italy 34 and in the FRG 48.

Most socialist countries are far ahead of the capitalist world in student population. Poland has 101 institute or university students per 10,000 inhabitants and Czechoslovakia 117 against 56 in the FRG and 57 in Britain (see table).

Enrolment in Secondary Specialised Schools and Higher Institutions
(per 10,000 inhabitants)

Country	Enrolment in secondary specialised schools		Enrolment in higher institutions	
	1960/61	1983/84	1960/61	1983/84
Bulgaria	123	107	70	98
Cuba	34	296	28	195
Czechoslovakia	174	188	69	117
GDR	73	101	58	78
Hungary	102	179	45	93
Mongolia	92	119	72	145
Poland	127	200	56	101
Romania	28	573	39	77
Soviet Union	95	164	111	194
Vietnam	...	20	...	23

Source: *CMEA Statistical Yearbook, 1984*, Moscow, pp. 387-390 (in Russian).
Kulturelle Errungenschaften sozialistischer Länder, Berlin, 1981, pp. 369-370.

What the socialist state does to promote general and vocational education yields tangible results. The proportion of intellectuals, mostly of working class or peasant origin, is growing fast. In the GDR, for example, over 660 in every 1,000 people employed in the socialist sector of the economy in 1973 had received a higher or secondary specialised education and by 1983 their number exceeded 830.

The universal accessibility of education makes for the gradual equalisation of the education levels of urban and rural populations, of mental and manual workers. Whereas in 1939 Soviet cities had 218 people with a higher or secondary education (complete or incomplete) per 1,000 inhabitants and the countryside 52, in 1982 there were 748 and 529 respectively. Also in 1939, the number of workers by brain who had received a higher or secondary education (complete or incomplete) was 11 times as large as that of workers by hand; by 1982, persons with these education levels added up to 78.5 per cent among manual workers (or numbered 17 times more than in 1939), 80 per cent among workers and 65.5 per cent among peasants. All socialist countries show

a trend towards equalising education levels. As for equality between men and women in this respect, it is a reality nearly all over the socialist world.

When Cultural Requirements Are Growing

Cultural requirements necessarily grow in step with education. In all socialist countries, people exercise in increasing measure their constitutional right of access to cultural values. The state does everything possible to put the treasury of world culture within their reach and helps them acquaint themselves with the finest artistic creations, primarily by making cultural riches accessible.

Take, for example, books as a key source of knowledge. They are relatively inexpensive in socialist countries and practically everybody buys them, with the result that book sales are steadily increasing and people have sizeable libraries of their own. In the Soviet Union, home libraries have a stock totalling 35 billion volumes. Books in capitalist countries are far more expensive; in the United States, the price of a book averages from 15 to 20 dollars, and so it is understandable that over the past decade book sales there have not gone up although the population has increased by 20 million.

Socialist countries publish fiction in large editions. In 1983, over 8,400 book titles were brought out in 108 million copies in Hungary, whose population falls short of 10 million. The Soviet Union is in the lead in world book publishing. According to UNESCO, the USSR accounts for roughly 14 per cent of the world's book output as to titles and about 25 per cent as to editions (the population of the Soviet Union is a mere 6.8 per cent of the world's). Under Soviet rule, translations alone have been published in a total of 22 billion copies. These are books by authors from 150 countries translated from 70 foreign languages.³ People in other socialist countries, too, are enabled to read the best productions of world literature.

The "mobility" of books has increased considerably thanks to free public libraries. In 1983, the GDR had 18,813 such libraries with a stock totalling 50.6 million volumes and Czechoslovakia, 12,095 libraries comprising 53.7 million volumes. Poland's public libraries have a stock exceeding 108 million volumes. The Soviet Union has 329,000 libraries; its network of libraries is the world's largest. They contain over 4.7 billion books and periodicals read by more than 224 million people, or virtually the whole able-bodied population and all students. This invites a comparison. US public libraries lend books to barely 10 to 15 per cent of the population, mostly students and housewives. Recent years have seen charges for the use of libraries go up steeply in many capitalist countries, with the result that the number of readers has been falling off and some libraries have closed down. In the FRG, 22 libraries were closed in the Rhine and Ruhr areas alone in 1981 and 1982.

The socialist world has a network of cultural establishments meeting the requirements of all population groups. The high potential of these facilities is seen in the following figures: the number of theatres in Czechoslovakia has doubled in the years of socialist construction and that country now has roughly three times more theatres than Austria or Switzerland and twice as many as the FRG; there are 90 theatres operating on a permanent basis in Czechoslovakia, 195 in the GDR, 115 in Poland and 626 in the Soviet Union; Bulgaria's cinemas seat 85 out of every 1,000 inhabitants, Czechoslovakia 67 and Hungary 53 against 36 in France.

The universally accessible treasures of material and spiritual culture are on display in the museums and art galleries of socialist countries. A planned economy enables the state to allocate large funds for the restoration of memorials and the reconstruction of historical towns and remains. The state sees not only to the preservation and multiplication of cultural values but to their wide use for raising people's cultural level. Museums serve as channels for the dissemination of knowledge; they organise exhibitions, using their own collections, invite groups of visitors and offer lectures in factory and village clubs. This is one of the reasons why interest in museum exhibits has

been increasing. In the GDR, the number of museum annual visits between 1970 and 1983 grew by more than 11 million and reached 31,400,000.

A large network of clubs as well as palaces and houses of culture open to all has been set up under socialism for everybody's use. They offer lectures, show films, arrange discussions on various subjects, organise meetings with actors, artists and writers, and help run amateur art and sports groups. These facilities exist in all cities and villages and most enterprises.

Cultural institutions in a socialist state are non-profit entities. Theatre, cinema and concert tickets are inexpensive and practically every member of society can afford them. The function of these institutions is to help people develop high moral qualities and a good taste.

A Vital Necessity for Everybody

Commenting on the cultural advancement of society, Lenin wrote that "in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits".⁴

It is safe to say with due regard to the progress made under socialism in this respect that the desire to study, to get to know the achievements of culture, has become part of everybody's life, a primary requirement. Sociologists estimate that roughly 60 per cent of young Soviet workers are constantly striving to improve their knowledge, to raise their education level. People devote more and more hours to studies (miners, for instance, spend from 5 to 10 hours a week).

Soviet youth read an average of 23 or 24 books a year and spend from 56 to 59 per cent of their free time at exhibitions, in museums, at the theatre and cinema. All this is now part of people's everyday lives, habits and intellectual requirements. Bourgeois society is lagging far behind in culture. In France 58 per cent of the population never read books, 87 per cent never go to the theatre, 78 per cent of young men and women have never attended a concert and over half of the books read in the country are read by a mere 10 per cent of the population.⁵

A brisk cultural life is typical of the overwhelming majority of citizens of socialist countries. In Cuba, every 1,000 inhabitants in 1983 went to the theatre 2,223 times and in Mongolia and Vietnam, 1,877 and 860 times respectively. Bulgarians go to the cinema once a month on the average and Soviet people, 15 times a year. This is an index unknown in bourgeois countries, even those boasting a high level from this point of view, such as Italy (10 times a year) or Spain (seven times). In the GDR, concert audiences more than doubled in the 1965-1983 period, reaching 3.4 million.

Socialism, as well as radically changing the character and ways of enjoying cultural benefits and greatly raising the educational and cultural standards of the population, has created conditions for more vigorous amateur creativity, for the participation of gifted people in the cultural advancement of society. The constitutions of the socialist countries define the extension of opportunities for people's application of their creative abilities and for their all-round development as a key task facing the state.

All the socialist countries train highly competent personnel who are entrusted with organising and directing amateur artistic pursuits. The Soviet Union has 4,000 people's universities of culture in which anybody can acquire a knowledge of the figurative and applied arts. Amateur actors are enabled to perform in palaces and houses of culture, clubs and theatres and to appear on film and TV screens. There are thousands of associations of folk and amateur craftsmen whose creations are regularly exhibited. Operating in Czechoslovakia are 25,000 amateur art companies totalling 500,000 members; they stage nearly 350,000 performances a year. Bulgaria has 18,000 such companies involving about 440,000 people. The situation in other socialist countries is similar.

Many folklore companies, amateur film-makers' studios, art publicity teams and

various groups of musicians and singers create original works. Most of the Soviet Union's amateur theatres stage plays written by their own members. Czechoslovak television has for several years been broadcasting a series of small comedies on subjects suggested by viewers.

* * *

The socialist countries consider that much remains to be done in the sphere of cultural advancement. However, it is evident even now that universal access to education and culture under socialism has brought about radical changes in the working people's inner development. New, socially committed people are emerging who are constantly striving for knowledge and creative activity.

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 72.

² For details, see "State Benefits to Man: From the Womb to the Tomb", *WMR*, No. 9, 1985.

³ The Soviet Union publishes five times as many translated books as Britain and twice more than Japan, the USA or France.

⁴ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, pp. 484-488.

⁵ See Gérard Belloin, *Culture, personnalité et sociétés*, Paris, 1973, pp. 7, 10.

The Reader Wants to Know . . .

The Soviet Stand on Space Militarisation Plans

"I have the impression that humanity is faced with a choice between peaceful and militarised space. Like many of my friends, I would like to know the Soviet position on this issue, for the media in this country say little about it."

Juan Gutiérrez (Spain)

The following answer has come from Professor Yuri Kolosov, Dr Law, who has participated in international forums on the peaceful uses of outer space, some of which were sponsored by the UN, and Yuri Rakhmaninov, Dr Hist., who attended the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

The problem of exploring and using outer space is certainly one of the most acute international problems today. The future of humanity will largely depend on how this problem is solved.

Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, the great Russian scientist, predicted that some day outer space would present man with "mountains of bread and unlimited power".¹ The world is about to enter this stage. The words of the founder of astronautics express the gist of the problem with all its contradictions. Space technology offers immense opportunities to improve life on Earth. Today it helps provide diverse types of communication,

including intercontinental television, improve sea navigation and weather forecasts, explore the surface of the planet for geological, oceanological and agricultural purposes, and so on. Man is making himself at home in near-Earth space; Soviet astronautics has proved that people can work for months in a state of weightlessness. Space exploration can serve the common welfare of humanity, for all countries, big and small alike, have a stake in using its achievements.²

On the other hand, space is becoming an area of extensive military preparations, as Washington's steps to implement its Star Wars project indicate.

On March 23, 1983, the US President called for the creation of a space-based anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defence system. Its purpose is to paralyse Soviet intercontinental missiles while making US territory invulnerable and assuring the United States impunity should it mount a first-strike attack against the Soviet Union and its allies.

A new Soviet pamphlet, *Star Wars: Illusions and Dangers*, stresses that the ABM system is intended to upset the existing military strategic balance in favour of the USA and provide it with unilateral military advantages. These aims can by no means be classed as defensive.³

Prompted by its first-strike doctrine, the Pentagon has set about developing ASAT, an anti-satellite system designed to "blind" and "deafen" an enemy controlling his troops through space communication and navigation systems. The first tests of ASAT (1984) were described in the United States as signalling the beginning of an "arms race in space".

As a result of progress in space technology on this line, the "unlimited power" now being created may translate into a global disaster. It is in the interest of every nation irrespective of its social system to head off such a development.

Having a clear vision of the dangerous consequences which the militarisation of space would have, the Soviet Union has been working steadfastly to bring about agreements that would prevent the arms race from spreading to space.

On March 18 and April 30, 1957, or several months before the Soviet Union launched the first man-made satellite of the Earth, its delegate moved in a subcommittee of the UN Commission for Disarmament that an international agreement be reached on using missiles solely for peaceful purposes. In 1958 the Soviet government insisted in the UN on banning the military use of space by international legal act and on encouraging international cooperation in space exploration. The draft Declaration on General and Complete Disarmament submitted by the Soviet Union to the UN General Assembly in 1959 stressed that military missiles of every range should be abolished and missiles should only remain a means of transport and space exploration for the good of the whole of humanity. The draft Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament Under Strict International Control, submitted by the Soviet Union to the UN in 1962, included a provision to begin a stage-by-stage destruction of all weapons by scrapping and discontinuing the manufacture of all nuclear weapon delivery systems, including missiles of all calibres and ranges.

To raise a dependable barrier to attempts to make near-Earth space an arms race track, let alone an arena of military confrontation, the Soviet government provided in its draft World Treaty on the Non-Use of Force in International Relations (submitted to the UN in 1976) for non-use of armed forces whatever weapons they may be equipped with, including nuclear and other means of mass destruction, in outer space.

In line with the Peace Programme for the 1980s adopted by the 26th CPSU Congress (February 1981), the Soviet Union put forward a package proposal aimed at stopping the arms race and bringing about steps towards real disarmament. With due regard to, among other things, the dangerous nature of the space militarisation plans of the United States, it submitted to the UN a draft Treaty on the Prohibition of the Stationing of Weapons of Any Kind in Outer Space (1981), an idea which won the

approval of the overwhelming majority of nations.

Two years later the Soviet Union proposed going further by signing a Treaty on the Prohibition of the Use of Force in Outer Space and from Space Against the Earth and committed itself not to be the first to place any anti-satellite weapon into orbit. In other words, it agreed to impose a unilateral freeze on such launchings for as long as other countries, including the USA, refrained from doing so.

In 1984, the First Commission of the UN General Assembly discussed the Soviet draft resolution on the "Use of Outer Space Exclusively for Peaceful Purposes for the Benefit of Mankind". The draft pointed out that if extended to space, the arms race would greatly heighten the danger of nuclear war, undermine the prospects for limiting and reducing armaments in general and raise insurmountable obstacles to international cooperation in space exploration for peaceful purposes. The resolution on "Preventing of an Arms Race in Outer Space" was supported by 150 delegations (the USA refused to endorse it) and the resolution "International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" was carried unanimously by acclamation. Lastly, in July 1985, the Soviet Union announced a freeze on all nuclear blasts till January 1, 1986.

Thanks to initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries backed by peace forces, a series of agreements were signed stipulating the peaceful utilisation of space and containing norms which restrict to a degree its use for military ends. We mean the exclusion of space from nuclear tests, the ban on putting into orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear arms or other means of mass destruction, their installation on celestial bodies and their siting in space in any form. Nor should space be used for ill-intentioned control of natural processes.

All the norms of international space law have been formulated under the impact of progressive ideas which — we wish to stress this — the Soviet Union and other socialist community countries have been consistently carrying into practice. However limited these norms may be, they have played their role in preventing military rivalries in space and are sure to play it in growing measure.

The bilateral agreements reached by the Soviet Union and the United States are an important line of struggle for a peaceful space. In 1972 the two countries signed an Interim Agreement on Certain Measures With Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT I) and in 1979, a Treaty on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT II).⁴ A development of particular significance was the Treaty Between the USA and the USSR on the Limitation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (1972) and the Supplementary Protocol (1974), for they bound the signatories not to develop, test or deploy ABM systems or components based on diverse environments, including space. Washington's current orientation to Star Wars is aimed at an outright violation of these provisions.

In January 1985 the Soviet Union and the United States jointly defined the aims of the Geneva talks as "working out effective agreements to prevent an arms race in space and end it on Earth, limit and reduce nuclear armaments and build up strategic stability".⁵ However, the course of the talks so far has shown that the United States deliberately evades a businesslike discussion and solution of this complex problem.

Mikhail Gorbachov, General Secretary of the CPSU CC, has pointed out that the problem of preventing the militarisation of space requires a bold approach. Standards of the past, narrow notions about unilateral advantages and privileges that are, moreover, illusory are hardly applicable in this case. What is needed more than ever is a forward-looking policy based on a knowledge of realities and the dangers which we are bound to encounter if those who today can and must make the only correct decision refuse to shoulder their responsibility.⁶

The evidence of history indicates that it is wiser to come to terms on making no arms than to search for ways of destroying them. Space must be made a peace zone now, that

is, before assault weapons are installed there. This explains why today the effort of the Soviet Union and other peace-loving forces to stave off the militarisation of space is particularly important for the destiny of humanity.

¹ Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, "Believe Me", preface to the pamphlet *The First Model of an All-Metal Space Craft Made of Corrugated Iron*, Kaluga, 1913, p. 1 (in Russian).

- Functioning successfully even now are international space communication systems: Intersputnik (involving mainly socialist countries), Intelsat (most of its members are capitalist and developing countries) and INMARSAT (encompassing a number of socialist, capitalist and developing countries). An international system COSPAS-SARSAT has gone into operation on an experimental basis. Its purpose is the early spotting of ships and aircraft in distress.—Ed.

³ See *Star Wars: Illusions and Dangers*, Moscow, 1985, pp. 8-10 (in Russian).

⁴ SALT II has not come into force due to the US refusal to ratify it.

⁵ *Pravda*, January 9, 1985.

⁶ *Pravda*, July 6, 1985.

From Our Mailbag

The Cardinal Topic Today

The main topic of many reader responses received by *WMR* is that peace must be preserved and consolidated, that the efforts to nullify the aggressive designs of imperialist and revanchist circles must not be relaxed. The following are three letters from our mailbag.

Those Who Encourage Revanchism

I have been an interested reader of *World Marxist Review* for a number of years. I am in full agreement with the opinion, advanced by your contributors, that there is no more important task today than to safeguard humanity against the threat of destruction emanating from imperialist policy, especially from the policy of the present US administration.

Life is making it crystal clear that President Reagan and his backers among the big monopolies linked to the military-industrial complex want the USA to rule the world. They would like to see the course of history conform to their class interests, and to this end they are imposing an arms race on the world, more and more frequently having recourse to overt political and economic pressure, blackmail, and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign nations. My country, Poland, is also feeling the effects of this pressure.

The USA's most dangerous aspiration is to achieve military superiority over the USSR and the other socialist countries, and this is leading to the growth not only of existing arsenals but of their deadliness; the arms race is spreading to new areas, including outer space as envisaged in the American Star Wars programme. I feel that a journal read in so many countries and published in so many languages as yours has the mission of exposing this threat more compellingly than before.

Imperialism's military march, which is endangering humankind, can be brought to a halt by the might of the USSR and the whole socialist community, by their policy of peace. But there is also a need for the will and determination of all of the planet's

inhabitants, of all who have no wish to die in a nuclear holocaust, of those who wish to live in peace and be confident that there will be peace also for their children, for future generations.

In Poland our memories are still fresh about the last war in which six million Poles, or roughly one in every five of my countrymen, died at the firing lines or at the hands of the Nazi invaders. That is why the protest is so vehement in my country against the revival of revanchism in the FRG. It outrages us to see West German statesmen, including Chancellor Helmut Kohl himself, who talks so much about peace and concord, attending conventions of revanchist associations and supporting them. Those in the FRG who are again laying claim to a German state in the 1937 frontiers and questioning the just boundaries established after World War II are in fact only repeating what in recent history is known as the "right of the German people to living space". The whole of Europe, and not only Europe, has experienced the tragic effects of these claims.

I believe that there is a close bond between the revival of revanchist hopes in the FRG and the USA's aggressive policies. The development of West German revanchism is encouraged precisely by the policies of the government in Washington. On the other hand, the slogans and activities of the revanchists against the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the German Democratic Republic are what makes them the USA's natural ally against socialism. I feel the journal ought to go deeper into this bond.

Janusz Krzywicki
Warsaw, Poland

My Motivation for Being a Peace Fighter

I am a student at Dusseldorf University, where I study general linguistics and Germanics. I have been reading your journal for some time. I am very grateful for the information you give of the Reagan administration's plans for militarising outer space.

After endless debates with my fellow-students I have found that in my country very many students and young people generally are apprehensive about these plans. They represent an unparalleled threat to our future, to humankind's further existence. They are triggering a new round of the arms race and signify the spending of colossal funds that could be used to resolve the extremely acute social problems confronting our and other capitalist countries.

There was a big demonstration of over 40,000 students in Bonn on June 15. It was directed chiefly against the new reactionary law on institutions of higher learning that holds out for students a radical deterioration of their condition. With each passing day we are increasingly feeling the consequences of the federal government's growing allocations for armaments and consequent cutbacks in social spending. The trade union of workers in science and education has announced that at present more than 400,000 intellectuals are jobless. That is what comes of our country's militarisation.

Besides, many of my fellow-students and I believe that the preparations for Star Wars will further intensify privation and poverty in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

I am closely following the talks in Geneva between the USSR and the USA. I am hopeful about them and am taking part in the actions of the peace movement in the FRG. I see the Soviet initiatives as a sound foundation for progress, but I am afraid the Reagan administration does not wish such results. This is another motivation inducing me to take part and involve as many people as possible in the actions of the peace movement.

Judith Ferber
Düsseldorf, FRG

It Is a Question of Universal Security

The recent Warsaw Treaty summit was, in my view, a further demonstration of that alliance's effectiveness in a situation in which a serious threat hangs over the world. The summit coincided with the 40th anniversary of the victory over fascism and this underscored its role in strengthening stability and security in Europe and the rest of the world.

The realistic pronouncements at that forum gave international public opinion clearly defined alternatives: a useful, constructive dialogue or a path that may lead to a nuclear catastrophe. In the final analysis it is a question of universal security. It was no accident that the ideas and resolutions advanced at the Warsaw conference had such a wide response among peace fighters in all countries. Unquestionably, the growing approval of the policies of the socialist states is fitting reward for their long years of struggle for peace and disarmament. This is an extremely positive fact.

On the contrary, Reagan and his policies are, at least in my country, Italy, growing increasingly unpopular because of the thrust towards the inflation of the war threat, including the threat in outer space. Decent people were appalled when the US President visited the West German cemetery with SS graves. Plainly, this was encouragement for revanchism and neonazism.

It seems to me that in this situation the prolongation of the Warsaw Treaty was absolutely vital for peace.

**Enzo Bancale
Solaro, Italy**

the book scene

Time-Tested Friendship

The unity and cohesion of the communist and workers' parties on the basis of loyalty to Marxism-Leninism and the principles of proletarian internationalism and their all-round cooperation are the most important condition of the fulfilment by the working class of its great historical mission. That is the keynote of the collection of articles and speeches from 1983 to 1985 on mutual ties between the CPCz and the CPSU, and Czechoslovakia and the USSR, by Gustáv Husák, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and President of Czechoslovakia.

Gustáv Husák is well known to the Soviet people and all the other progressive forces of the globe as a prominent leader of the CPCz and of the international communist movement, a dedicated and consistent internationalist, and a true friend of long standing, who has won profound respect and high authority by his tireless struggle for the victory of the national democratic revolution, for the consolidation of the working people's power and for the transition to socialism, his efforts to safeguard the socialist gains and strengthen the CPCz on the positions of Marxism-Leninism, his personal contribution to the formulation and realisation of the party's policy, and his impassioned stand for peace.

He gives the reader a deep insight into the world-wide historical importance of Marxism-Leninism and shows how it is developed and enriched in the light of new experience: 'For us, Lenin's precepts are not only evidence of the greatness of Lenin's genius, but also an enduring and meaningful doctrine on the revolutionary transformation of the world. The class, internationalist approach, the communist stand on principle, and the struggle against opportunism in politics, the creative development of our revolutionary theory and refusal to compromise on ideology, such are the principles which remain valid both for the individual communist parties and for the international communist movement as a whole' (p. 38).

The dialectical unity and harmonious blend of the national and the international on the basis of the objective identity of the vital interests and goals of the working class and all the other working people are an essential feature of proletarian socialist internationalism. The working class and its political vanguard in each country are, of course, faced with concrete tasks, but they tackle these tasks within the framework of the given historical epoch, in the light of its law-governed uniformities, and with an eye to the common international objectives and the aggregate experience of all the contingents of the working class, especially of those which have advanced farthest in building the new society.

'For us, Czechoslovak Communists,' says Gustáv Husák, 'the fact that in building socialism in our country we are able to rely on the Soviet Union's rich experience was and is of great significance. Making use of Lenin's rich theoretical legacy and the experience of the three revolutions in Russia, and the building of socialism in the USSR, the CPCz has creatively applied the basic principles of Lenin's strategy and tactics to the development of the national democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, and following the victory in February 1984 over bourgeois reaction, to socialist construction. In so doing, our party has borne in mind Lenin's remarkable idea that the 'fundamental revolutionary principles must be adapted to the specific conditions in the various countries'' (pp. 121-122).

The collection provides an opportunity for following stage by stage the development and strengthening of the friendship between the peoples of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union and between the Communists of both countries. The USSR, which had the crucial role in routing the German fascist aggressors in the Second World War, not only displayed solidarity with but also gave effective support to the national liberation movement of the Czechs and the Slovaks that began under the leadership of the Communist Party. As one of the organisers and leaders of the Slovak National Uprising, Gustáv Husák has good ground to declare: 'That period of difficulty for the country's destinies once again amply demonstrated who is our peoples' true friend and loyal ally. It is the Soviet Union, which stood unflinchingly by our side in the tragic days of Munich and which rendered all-round assistance to our peoples' national liberation struggle and the Czechoslovak Resistance Movement at home and abroad' (p. 137). For their part, the Soviet people will never forget that the Czechoslovak peoples' selfless struggle helped to bring on the common victory over fascism.

After the Second World War, with the formation of the community of socialist states, and the extension and strengthening of the communist parties' leading role in every sphere of social life, the content of proletarian internationalism was enriched with the processes generated by socialism. New and effective methods are being developed in depth in inter-party relations, concerted forms of guidance of economic, scientific, technical and cultural construction, and implementation of their jointly formulated foreign policy, which is aimed to preserve world peace, and resist the attempts of imperialism to upset the existing military-strategic parity, intensify the confrontation with the forces of socialism and national liberation, and grossly to meddle in the internal affairs of other countries.

Now that the various spheres of life in the socialist states — politics, economy, science, technology and defence — are developing in ever closer interconnection, cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the USSR is widening and rising to a qualitatively new and higher level.

The building of socialism in Czechoslovakia and other fraternal countries has fully borne out the operation of the general law-governed uniformities underlying the development of the socialist society which were put to their first historical test in the Soviet Union's practical experience and first theoretically summed up by Lenin's party. Gustáv Husák says: 'In-depth study of these uniformities and their creative application in our conditions have become one of the crucial prerequisites for our society's successful development. Whenever they have been ignored or even underestimated, whenever subjectivism prevailed at crucial moments, grave difficulties and problems appeared and even produced a situation jeopardising the gains of socialism' (p. 114).

In the late 1960s, the CP Czechoslovakia and the whole country went through a trying period: counter-revolutionary and right-opportunist forces, supported by international reaction, mounted an attack on the working people's socialist gains. All the attempts by reaction to dismantle socialism in Czechoslovakia have been thwarted with internationalist assistance.

Gustáv Husák was elected First Secretary of the CPCz CC on April 17, 1969, and in a speech at the May 1969 Plenary Meeting of the CPCz CC formulated the main lines of the party's further activity. That vigorous activity enabled the party and the country to pull out of the crisis on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and to return Czechoslovakia to the way of successful socialist construction. It was restored to a solid place within the community of fraternal countries.

Practice shows that difficulties and non-antagonistic contradictions are not ruled out in the intricate process in which the new life is being built, and that these are solved through the correct Marxist-Leninist policy of the communist and workers' parties. In tackling their countries' various problems, the fraternal parties carefully reckon with the interests of the community as a whole and of the cause of socialism and peace.

The book shows that the CP Czechoslovakia has made creative use of the experience of the CPSU and the other fraternal parties and has, for its part, been making a valuable contribution to the store of the Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. This applies above all to Czechoslovakia's achievements since the 14th Congress of the CPCz in 1971 in building the material and technical basis of socialism and in the forms and methods of construction and development of a socialist society. We, Soviet people, regard our friends' experience with great attention and borrow from it what is best.

Balanced interaction and fraternal cooperation of the parties, countries and peoples of the socialist community is one of the most important conditions for our common advance, a process which, far from ruling out the national specific features of the various states, in fact helps to bring out, through the diversity of forms of social relations in them and the peculiarities of national cultural values, the great variety of ways and means for developing the socialist way of life and its internationalist character. The author says: 'History shows that each socialist country's successful rise is ever more closely connected with the strengthening of the ideological and political unity of the whole socialist community, with approximation in politics, economy, and social and spiritual life, and more profound and fruitful co-operation in every sphere. Co-operation within the framework of the socialist community multiplies our forces and provides a reliable guarantee of our independence and stable development' (p. 145).

At the present stage, the socialist countries are faced with many new and serious tasks which they are tackling through joint efforts. There is, above all, a new quality in co-operation, and efforts to create a more flexible and efficient economic ties mechanism to help them advance to the forefront in the technical and technological fields and in the intensification of production and give a fresh impetus to economic integration: 'It is an objective imperative for the Czechoslovak economy to be more broadly involved in the international division of labour, a process based above all on the all-round development of mutually advantageous trade, economic, scientific and technical ties within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and our wider participation in socialist economic integration. Here, all-round economic cooperation with the Soviet Union has an indispensable role to play' (p. 156).

During the meeting between General Secretary of the CPSU CC Mikhail Gorbachov and Gustáv Husák, who paid an official friendly visit to the USSR in May 1985, they emphasised the importance of consistently realising the programme of long-term economic, scientific and technical cooperation between our two countries for the period until the year 2000. It was decided to give a fresh impetus to the work of expanding cooperation and specialisation of production, and pooling our efforts along the progressive lines of science, hardware and technology. It was said that skilful unification of the production, scientific and technical potentials of the USSR, Czechoslovakia and other CMEA socialist countries would promote the balanced

growth of their national economies, help the fraternal parties to fulfil their social programmes and further bring out the creative potentialities of socialism.

The book contains vivid facts showing the steady growth of the scope of the socialist community countries' common interests and common efforts, ranging ever more fully over every sphere of development of the material and technical basis, social activity and cultural and spiritual life. Great and primary importance now attaches to joint efforts by the socialist states to accelerate economic and social development on the basis of scientific and technical progress, which is known to be the key to intensifying social production, raising the people's well-being, and further perfecting the socialist way of life, apart, of course, from helping to strengthen the community's defence capability.

Now that the mounting aggressiveness of imperialism, US imperialism in the first place, threatens mankind's very survival, no task is more important for the peoples than that of averting nuclear war. The socialist countries' joint strength, the author says, serves the interests of peace and of mankind as a whole. The recently prolonged Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance is designed to strengthen peace in Europe and throughout the world, to maintain the existing military parity, and to ward off the danger of a nuclear catastrophe.

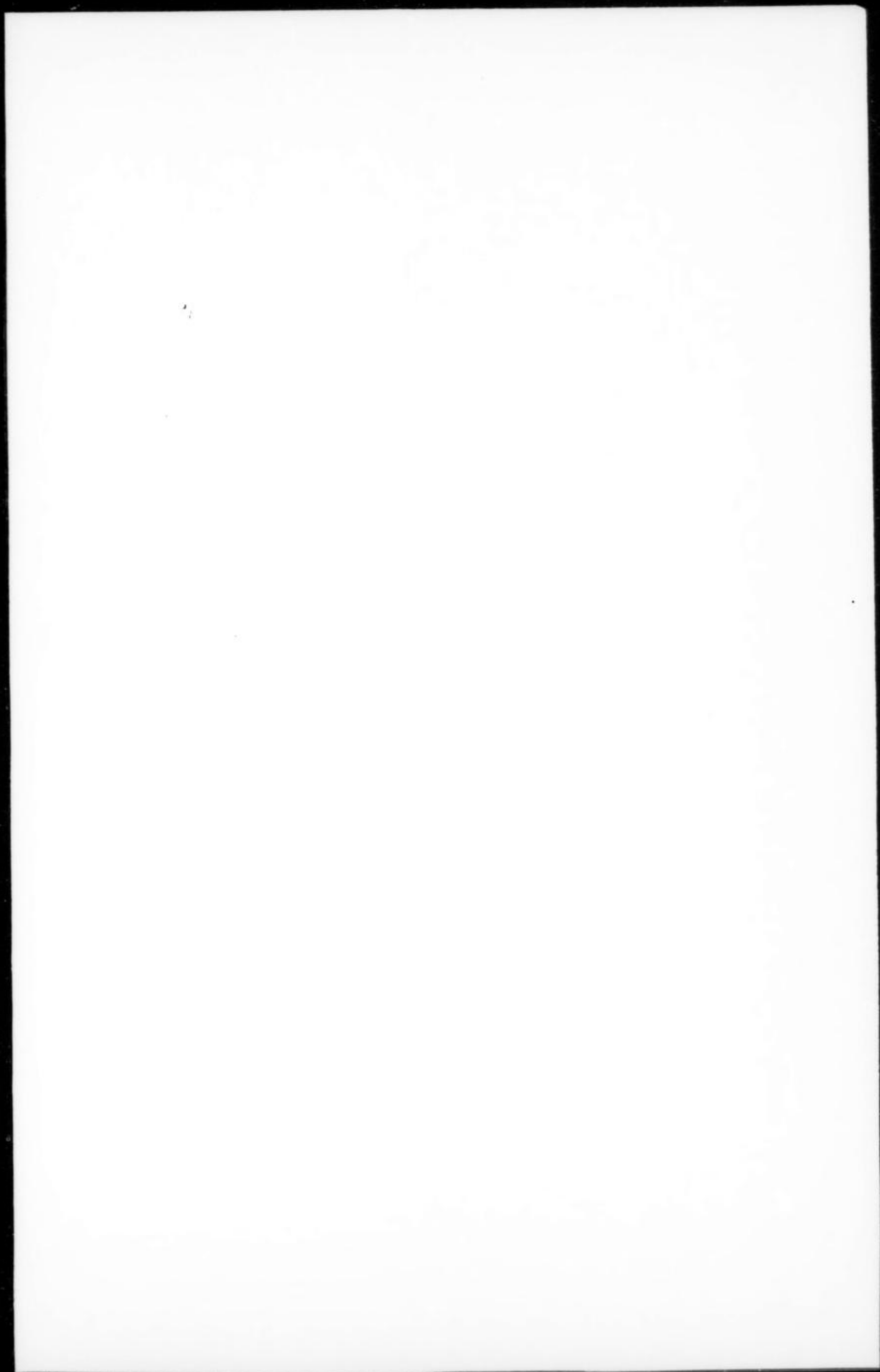
In their efforts to reverse the tide of history, imperialism and its spiritual servitors have mounted a wide-ranging ideological war against existing socialism, in which a key weapon is anti-Sovietism: under its banner, says Gustáv Husák the hostile counter-revolutionary forces have carried on their offensive throughout the whole period of history since the October Revolution: 'Anti-Sovietism is the main weapon by means of which the bourgeoisie strives to undermine the unity of the socialist community and the internationalist solidarity of the communist and workers' parties' (p. 126). This leads to the following unequivocal conclusion: the struggle for the ideals of social progress and peace is closely bound up with the need to rebuff anti-Sovietism.

The Communists of the Soviet Union are justifiably proud of the successfully developing relations of comradeship and friendship, solidarity and all-round co-operation between the fraternal parties and states. 'The friendship of the peoples of the socialist countries is the greatest gain, one could say, our common priceless capital which needs to be cherished and multiplied,'² says Mikhail Gorbachov. The book under review provides vivid and convincing confirmation that these feelings are fully shared by the Czechoslovak Communists as well.

Academician Anatoly Yegorov,
Director, Institute of Marxism-
Leninism under the CPSU CC

¹ V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, P. 465.

² *Pravda*, June 1, 1985.



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